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"THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER:

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

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Nov. 18.—Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, "Experiences in the Home Circle, No. 1."

Dec. 2.—Captain R. F. Burton, F.R.G.S., "Spiritualism in Eastern Lands."

Dec. 16.—Mr. Stainton-Moses, M.A., "The intelligent Operator at the other end of the Line."

Jan. 20.—Mr. W. H. Harrison, "Hauntings."

Feb. 3.—Miss Kislinsky, "Apparitions of the Living."

Feb. 17.—Dr. Carter Blake, "On the Nerve Ether."

March 3.—Dr. Wyld, "Christian Occultism."

March 17.—Mrs. Ellis, "Experiences in the Home Circle, No. 2."

April 7.—Dr. Bloede, "Psychometry."

April 21.—Mr. C. C. Massey, "On some of the less-known Facts of Spiritualism."

May 5.—Mr. D. Fitz-Gerald, M.S.T.E.L., "Recent Research in the Phenomena of Spiritualism."

May 19. These days are purposely left free for the discussion June 2, of any subjects of importance that may arise.

June 16.—Mr. Stainton-Moses, M.A., "Review of the Session."

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The Spiritualist Newspaper

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

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LONDON, FRIDAY, JANUARY 3rd, 1879.

SUGGESTED ABOLITION OF THE WORD "MEDIUM."

Is it not desirable to abolish the word "medium," and to substitute the word "psychic?" The plural of medium, namely "media," has a pedantic sound, and the substitution of the word "mediums" gives would-be clever critics the opportunity of asserting in print that Spiritualists do not understand the English language. The public, in speaking of "the happy medium," mean one thing, and Spiritualists, when using the same phrase, mean another. The word "psychic," first chosen for the purpose by Mr. Serjeant Cox and Mr. Crookes, admirably answers its intended purpose; it has a clear and definite meaning of its own. Our suggestion is, that the best public workers in Spiritualism should for a time use the words "psychic" and "medium" indiscriminately, and that when the word "psychic" has thus been brought more into common use, the word "medium" shall be dropped altogether in its application to spiritual sensitives.

THE BIBLE AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

BY C. J. SNEATH.

(Continued from page 306, Vol. XIII.)

These are examples which Mr. St. Clair forgot to notice; they, however, serve to show how the phenomena of the Bible and modern Spiritualism go hand-in-hand, and must stand or fall together. Hence the advice given to us in one of these lectures to let Spiritualism stand on its own merits. Another physical impossibility connected with modern Spiritualism was the movement of ponderable objects without human contact. "Spiritualists," said he in effect, "tell us that chairs, tables, and musical instruments are lifted up and floated about without visible agency. But how easy it is to be mistaken in such matters. Twelve persons sit round a table in the dark; the imagination is active, the brain in a state of anxious expectancy, the mind unable to calculate distances. Is it impossible to be deceived under such circumstances? We have seen Professor Pepper's ghost illusion; we know the wonderful things which take place at the Egyptian Hall. I have myself seen a man floated over my head, apparently without any support; of course there were wires, but I could not see them. Ladies and gentlemen, is this intended for an argument? We have seen Professor Pepper's ghost illusion; we do know the wonderful things that take place at the Egyptian Hall; but we know also that these illusions cannot be spontaneously produced in private houses for want of the necessary machinery." Yet in hundreds of private houses phenomena have occurred under test conditions which even conjurers themselves declare to be impossible. But can it be that with all Mr. St. Clair's reading on the subject, and with all his knowledge of modern Spiritualism, he has never heard or read of a single instance in which phenomena of the kind have taken place in the light? If not, I will mention one or two examples, with a promise to produce a multitude more if necessary. Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, in his work entitled *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, page 135, says: "On another occasion a very large leather arm-chair, which stood at least four or five feet from the medium, suddenly wheeled up to her, after a few slight preliminary movements. It is of course easy to say that what I relate is impossible; I maintain that it is accurately true, and that no man, whatever be his attainments, has such an exhaustive knowledge of the powers of nature as to justify him in using the word impossible with regard to facts which I and many others have repeatedly witnessed." Mr. Crookes (*Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism*, page 89) says: "On another occasion, a heavy table rose from the floor in full light, while I was holding the medium's hands and feet." "On another occasion the table rose from the floor, not only when

no person was touching it, but under conditions which I had prearranged so as to assure unquestionable proof of the fact." Mr. Jencken, barrister-at-law, in a paper read before a committee of the Dialectical Society (*Report on Spiritualism*, page 117), says: "I have also seen a table lifted clear over head, six feet from the ground; but what may appear more remarkable, I have witnessed an accordion suspended in space for ten or twenty minutes, and played by an invisible agency." Mr. St. Clair either knew these and similar facts, or he did not. If he did not, was he a fit person to deliver three lectures on modern Spiritualism? and if he did know them, why did he suppress the truth? Why so arrange his discourse as to leave persons unacquainted with the subject under the impression that phenomena of the kind now under consideration took place only in the dark. It is hardly fair, I think, to attack even modern Spiritualism with such weapons as these.

We now come to flower manifestations. "We are told," says the lecturer, "that flowers and fruit are brought by spirits into closed rooms. Mr. Alfred R. Wallace tells us that this actually took place in his presence." This is quite true. The account may be found on page 164 of the work already referred to. It is, however, unnecessary to quote it, as I shall have occasion to mention presently a more remarkable circumstance which came under my own observation. "But how do they come?" inquires Mr. St. Clair. "Spiritualists say that they are first dematerialised, but that would be to destroy and recreate. Why not create at once?" It occurs to me that the spirits may be better chemists than the inhabitants of earth. Besides, there are many mundane things all around us equally incomprehensible. We do not understand how it is that ordinary flowers blossom every year, and the aloe, perhaps, only once in a century. We do not know how it is—I beg pardon—we did not know until very recently why ordinary cats have tails, while Manx cats are obliged to do without them. But as these were *bonâ fide* facts, we did not care to trouble ourselves as to the why or the wherefore. "But why not ask for tropical flowers?" Why not, indeed? A splendid test no doubt. If a table moves one foot from the floor, ask that it may move a yard. Little rest would our spirit friends enjoy if they attempted to comply with the wishes of every so-called investigator. Now a spirit is asked to turn detective and catch a thief, now he is required to play at hide-and-seek with a so-called inquirer, and discover a watch which he has hidden for the purpose. A short time ago a writer in one of our daily papers—I think the *Daily Telegraph*—wanted to know if Spiritualism were true, why the spirits did not do something useful? Why did they not come and give him the tip for the Derby? And now we have Mr. St. Clair wishing the spirits to bring us flowers from the tropics, or to instruct us in electricity, or teach us to fly. A few words, now, in reference to the flower *séance* at Mr. St. Clair's house; that is (for I was not present myself), so far as it has been reported by those who were. Mr. St. Clair informs us in *The Spiritualist* that he did not know that there was any necessity to have any suspicion as to the conduct of non-Spiritualists at *séances*. But this is only another proof how little he really knows of the subject. Has he forgotten the case of the late Lord Amberley and the present Dr. Lankester? Has he forgotten the mock *séance* got up by secularists in Digbeth a few years ago? Truly, where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise. Mr. Lawson Tait (who did not sit in the circle) informs us that at this partially dark *séance* he saw the medium's arm twice attempt to reach the bell from the mantelpiece; that he was, in fact, obliged to draw back himself to avoid coming in contact with the arm; and that when the flowers came he saw the medium's arm raised as in the act of throwing them. And why, I ask, in the name of all that is just, did he not at once seize the uplifted arm and

call aloud for a light? It has been said that he was at a friend's house, and did not wish to disturb the harmony of the meeting. But is honesty of less consequence than harmony? Is truth of less importance than a supper? It would seem so, for it was not until the medium had left the house that Mr. Lawson Tait made known the important fact that he had detected the tricking. Was this the conduct of a man of science or of a gentleman? One of the sitters, whose name I do not mention, because I believe he has an objection to its appearing in public, said that he saw a light at this *séance*, which I presume he imagined to be a spirit-light. His next neighbour, Mrs. Franklin, who has been a Spiritualist so long as to be thoroughly steeped in superstition in the opinion of some people, nevertheless could not see that light. The other sitter persisted that he saw it, and so the matter dropped. But at supper-time another gentleman addressed to him the remark, "Oh, you saw a light, did you? I made that with the lucifer matches." Whether he did so produce the light I do not know, but I do know that if he produced the light as he stated that he cheated at the *séance*, and that if he did not produce it he told an untruth after it was over. Perhaps some of you may feel tempted to add that thereby hangs a tale. However, we were determined to establish the honesty of the medium—Mr. Summerfield—beyond the shadow of a doubt, by holding at his request a test *séance* in the light. Accordingly on the evening of the 12th August we met between seven and eight o'clock in the evening at 312, Bridge-street. There were ten persons present besides the medium—seven gentlemen and three ladies. It was sufficiently light to enable us to see with ease the time by our watches. There were two windows in the room, and towards the end farthest from the door, suspended from the ceiling by about two feet of rope, was what the medium calls "a cabinet," but which was simply an inverted sack with an iron hoop at the top and bottom. We could walk all round it. As I was about to deliver a lecture on Spiritualism, the medium requested that I would search him and the room. I said that I would do so if I could have the assistance of another gentleman. Mr. Pembroke was accordingly chosen, and we commenced our work. We examined the floor under the cabinet, and were quite sure that there was no trap-door there. We then examined the sack, passing it through our hands so as to have spoilt any flowers that it might have concealed; but we found nothing. The medium then took off his coat and vest, which we also examined. We then took him down stairs, and passed our hands heavily, I may say painfully, down every part of his body from head to foot, and so satisfied ourselves that he had no flowers concealed about his person. He then requested one of us to walk before him and another behind him up stairs, and to let no one come near him. We guarded him to the sack, and after placing a little stool for him to sit down upon, drew it over his head and fast nailed it to the ground, leaving no outlet whatever. Mr. Pembroke then took his seat about three feet from the cabinet on one side, and I at the same distance from it on the other. One or two hymns were then sung, and in about nine minutes we were told by the medium that the flowers had been brought into the cabinet, and that if we would remove the nails we should find them lying at his feet. We then removed the nails and discovered about twelve flowers of different kinds, fresh, perfect, and wet. We took them and placed them upon the table, not one of the other sitters moving from his place until the medium was released from his temporary prison. How the flowers came into the sack we do not know, but both Mr. Pembroke and myself say most solemnly that we are sure, so far as human beings can be sure of anything, that there were no flowers concealed either in the so-called cabinet or upon the medium's person. Two questions may suggest themselves in connection with this matter. Why did you not hold a test *séance* at Mr. St. Clair's house? When on his way there, the medium said to his wife, "I hope they will have a test *séance*; I shall ask them to search me before it begins." "If I were you," replied the wife, "I should do nothing of the kind. We are invited as friends, and Mr. St. Clair is a minister, and might not like it." But why did you not ask some scientific gentleman to be present at your *séance*? I reply that we thought ourselves quite capable of searching a room and the medium in the daylight; that we had seen how one Birmingham man of science investigated the subject, and did not care to repeat the experiment. And

in reference to that gentleman's message to *The Spiritualist*, in which he informs us that he has neither time nor inclination to investigate such transparent nonsense any further, I will merely remark that although I have learnt from the newspapers that his time must have been much occupied of late, yet that when he calls what he does not understand "transparent nonsense," he only exposes himself to the just criticism of Goethe, which could not, I think, have been more appropriate even if it had been written for the occasion:—

Most learned Don, I know you by these tokens:
 What you can feel not, that can no one feel;
 What comprehend not, no one comprehend;
 What you can't reckon is of no account;
 What you can't weigh, can no existence have;
 What you've not coined, that must be counterfeit.

But indeed we had a well-known London scientist present at our *séance*, who called quite by accident on his way to the British Association at Dublin, and his report may be seen in *The Spiritualist* for August 16th.

I now return to Mr. St. Clair's lecture, and proceed to notice another specimen of his interpretation of Scripture. I pass over the materialised hand in the palace of Babylon, because we were informed by the lecturer that all learned critics are now agreed that the book of Daniel is not a history at all, but a mere fiction like the *Pilgrim's Progress*, though of course it can do people no harm to hold the old-fashioned view if they like. This permission I trust will be gratefully acknowledged by the professors of Hebrew in our Universities, and by other unlearned persons. But it is to Mr. St. Clair's text, containing, as I before remarked, the account of our Lord's first appearance to His assembled disciples after His crucifixion, that I wish to call your attention. This appearance, we were told, Spiritualists regard as a materialisation, though it is evident from the Evangelist's report that Christ appeared in His natural body, for He said to His disciples, "Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have." And we further read that "They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb, and He took it and did eat before them." If the lecturer had studied his subject a little more, he would have known that neither Spiritualists nor spirits are agreed as to the nature of this appearance, and that it is a well-authenticated fact that materialised spirit-forms have frequently eaten and drank, or at any rate dematerialised solids and liquids. Some persons, the lecturer admitted, might see a difficulty, since St. John, in his account of this appearance, says that "On the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled . . . came Jesus and stood in the midst" (St. John xx. 19). But this passage presented no difficulty to him; he believed it simply referred to the time of our Lord's coming, but that He entered the room in the ordinary way. But perhaps the difficulty is not so easily got over, for in the twenty-sixth verse the Evangelist says, "And after eight days again His disciples were within; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." I can hardly imagine that the Evangelist could have unintelligently written, "Then came Jesus the doors being shut," if he really meant, "Then came Jesus, the doors being open," since he mentions the time of day in the nineteenth verse independently. But it so happens that two of the disciples had during the earlier part of the day been to a village called Emmaus. Jesus overtook them on the way, but they did not know Him. He entered a house, sat down to a meal, and we read, "He took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him, and He vanished out of their sight" (Luke xxiv. 13—34). That is, according to different translators, He vanished, disappeared, became invisible, ceased to be seen. If, then, our Lord appeared in His natural body, and if matter cannot go through matter, here is a difficulty which I must leave to be explained by a minister "who is expected by his congregation to distinctly enunciate nothing which he cannot prove and recommend by sound argument and just consideration, not talking nonsense very frequently." But to proceed. The disciples returned to Jerusalem, and as they talked over with their brethren the wonderful things that they had seen, we read that Jesus Himself stood in the midst. But they were terrified, and supposed that they had seen a spirit, by which we are expected to understand that as the disciples were talking together, there came a knock at the

street door; that one of their number (we are not told which) went down and opened it, found Jesus standing there, and after a few words of salutation invited Him up stairs, placed a seat for Him in the midst, and that then all of a sudden, for what reason we cannot imagine, they were all terrified, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. This interpretation seems a little forced; but really upon the principle that our Lord appeared in His natural body, and that matter cannot go through matter, I am unable to give any other. But suppose the lecturer admits that in this instance he made a mistake, and that this was a spiritual appearance, I fear that this change of position will not prove more beneficial, since he has already told us that a spirit cannot be seen because it is not material. Therefore he has placed himself on the horns of a dilemma. If he asserts that our Lord appeared in His natural body, I reply, "That is impossible; for you have already told us that matter cannot go through matter." If, on the other hand, he asserts that this was a spiritual appearance, I reply, "According to your theory that is equally impossible, since a spirit is not material, therefore cannot be seen at all."

A short time ago Mr. St. Clair preached and published a sermon in commemoration of the thirty-first anniversary of the opening of the Church of the Saviour; he entitled it Intellectual Inconsistency, and the Government came in for a considerable share of clerical irony. When I compared this anniversary sermon with the lectures on modern Spiritualism, I was forced to the conclusion that there were other inconsistencies in the world than those of the English Government; he would have acted wisely had he remembered the old proverb that those who live in glass houses should never throw stones. We were told towards the end of the sermon—"Of one thing we may be sure, and that is that nothing is said on the platform here, which cannot be defended in public debate." But even this assurance is a poor guarantee for soundness either in logic or orthodoxy, if the public debate is to take place in the Church of the Saviour schoolroom, and if its pastor is to write to an opponent (as he actually did write to me), informing him "that he had read so much upon the subject, and had such a degree of acquaintance with it in other ways, that he did not think that anything I could say would be likely to move him from his present position." And it is remarkable that while the anniversary sermon was preached on the 4th August, the letter from which I have just quoted was dated on the 5th.

We now come to the materialisation of spirit-forms. Mr. Crookes tells us, says Mr. St. Clair, that he has walked arm-in-arm with a materialised spirit, embraced her, pressed her lips, and even taken her photograph. "But why did the spirit go away again? Why not stay with us a day, a month, or even altogether, as a Spiritualistic missionary?" This theory is not definite, and it is necessary to enlarge upon it. Was Mr. Crookes a proper person to undertake the investigation? For although he is a Fellow and Medallist of the Royal Society, although he has given to the world several important discoveries which have been highly appreciated, he has nevertheless been designated a specialist of specialists, a second-rate scientist, and has had other equally complimentary remarks applied to him. As, however, these epithets were applied to him after his psychic investigations were published, it may be interesting to inquire what was said of him before. One periodical remarked that the "statements of Mr. Crookes deserved respectful consideration;" another expressed "profound satisfaction that the subject was about to be investigated by a man so thoroughly qualified as Mr. Crookes;" a third was "gratified to learn that the matter is now receiving the attention of cool and clear-headed men of recognised position in science;" a fourth asserted that no one could "doubt Mr. Crookes' ability to conduct the investigation with rigid philosophically impartiality;" while a fifth was good enough to tell its readers that "if men like Mr. Crookes grapple with the subject, taking nothing for granted until it is proved, we shall soon know how much to believe." Yes, and if Mr. Crookes had discovered the trick, or if he had even pretended to have done so, he would doubtless have been looked upon to-day as one of the greatest men of science of the age. But because he has been brave enough to act upon the old pro-

verb, "buy the truth and sell it not," he has been assailed by the paltry contempt and petty ridicule of men who for scientific attainments are not fit to black his boots. And now for Mr. Crookes's discoveries, so far as materialisation is concerned. He assures us that "On one occasion the materialised form, calling herself Katie King, after walking about amongst the sitters for some time, retreated behind the curtain which separated my laboratory, where the company was sitting, from my library, which did temporary duty as a cabinet. In a minute she came to the curtain and called me to her, saying, 'Come into the room and lift my medium's head up; she has slipped down.' Katie was then standing before me, clothed in her usual white robes and turban head-dress. I immediately walked into the library up to Miss Cook, Katie stepping aside to allow me to pass. I found Miss Cook had slipped partially off the sofa, and her head was hanging in a very awkward position. I lifted her on to the sofa, and in so doing had satisfactory evidence, in spite of the darkness, that Miss Cook was not attired in the 'Katie' costume, but had on her ordinary black velvet dress, and was in a deep trance. Not more than three seconds elapsed between my seeing the white-robed Katie standing before me, and my raising Miss Cook on to the sofa from the position into which she had fallen." (Page 105.) He says that on another occasion at Hackney, the spirit walked about in a lighted room for nearly two hours, familiarly conversing with those present; that she walked about the room arm-in-arm with him, as an ordinary lady might have done, and at his request permitted him to embrace her, and even to press her lips so as to satisfy himself that she was a real tangible being. He tells us that for six months the medium, Miss Cook, was a frequent visitor at his house, staying sometimes for a week at a time; that she brought no luggage with her except a little hand-bag, which was unlocked; that she spent the day with his wife or other members of the family, and entered the *séance*-room at night without a moment's preparation. He further adds that it was simply impossible for Miss Cook to have impersonated the spirit-form, even if she had desired to do so. Miss Cook usually wore a black dress, while the spirit-form was draped in white. Miss Cook wore earrings, while the ears of the spirit-form were unpierced. Miss Cook's complexion was dark, while that of the spirit-form was fair. Miss Cook's hair was a dark brown, almost black, while the hair of the spirit-form was a rich golden auburn. But it is simply absurd to suppose that a school-girl of fifteen years of age could have succeeded for three years in deceiving an experienced man of science, while willingly submitting to every test he could devise. Moreover, Mr. Crookes, who knew her well, indignantly repudiates such a suspicion. During the week preceding her departure, Katie, we are told, gave *séances* almost nightly at Mr. Crookes's house to enable him to take her photograph. He informs us that five cameras were brought to bear upon her in the full glare of the electric light each time she stood for her photograph, and that he has no fewer than forty-four negatives of her now in his possession. The remainder of the story shall be told in Mr. Crookes's own words, and remember they are not the words of a sentimental young lady fresh from a boarding-school, but the deliberate utterances of a scientist, whose "statements deserve respectful consideration"—of one who, having investigated the subject "taking nothing for granted until it was proved, has taught us how much we are to believe":—

"When the time came for Katie to take her farewell, I asked that she would let me see the last of her. Accordingly when she had called each of the company up to her, and had spoken to them a few words in private, she gave some general directions for the future guidance and protection of Miss Cook. From these, which were taken down in shorthand, I quote the following:—'Mr. Crookes has done very well throughout, and I leave Florrie with the greatest confidence in his hands, feeling perfectly sure he will not abuse the trust I place in him. He can act in any emergency better than I can myself, for he has more strength.' Having concluded her directions, Katie invited me into the cabinet with her, and allowed me to remain there to the end.

"After closing the curtain she conversed with me for some time, and then walked across the room to where Miss Cook

was lying senseless on the floor. Stooping over her, Katie touched her, and said, 'Wake up, Florrie, wake up! I must leave you now.' Miss Cook then woke, and tearfully entreated Katie to stay a little time longer. 'My dear, I can't; my work is done. God bless you,' Katie replied, and then continued speaking to Miss Cook. For several minutes the two were conversing with each other, till at last Miss Cook's tears prevented her speaking. Following Katie's instructions, I then came forward to support Miss Cook, who was falling on to the floor, sobbing hysterically. I looked round, but the white-robed Katie had gone. As soon as Miss Cook was sufficiently calmed, a light was procured, and I led her out of the cabinet."

And now for Mr. St. Clair's comment. "But why did the spirit go away again? Why not stay with us a day, a month, or even altogether as a Spiritualistic missionary? My first thoughts were 'tell it to the marines.'" And *my* thoughts, if not my first thoughts, on hearing this remark, were those of an old philosopher:—"There came in a wise man and a fool. The wise man heard, investigated, decided. The fool decided." There was a time, I think, when the investigations of such men as Crookes, Wallace, Rutter, Edmonds, and a host of others would have received a far different kind of treatment from the platform of the Church of the Saviour. But, alas! in spite of the declaration of his present pastor to the contrary, we are compelled to hold that all people are not progressive. "Tell it to the marines"—this was, in fact, the sum and substance of the lectures now under consideration. Whatever in the Bible or out of it, in the past or in the present, could not be measured, or weighed by mundane instruments, must be laid aside as unworthy the serious consideration of the great thinkers of the present age. There is a great God above us, it would seem to-day, before whose throne all peoples, nations, and languages are commanded to fall down and worship. His name for all practical purposes is not God Almighty, but a stern, inevitable necessity. "Tell it to the marines"—a grand old argument, and one from which there is no appeal; one moreover possessing this additional advantage, that it can be used with equal success either by the Christian minister against modern Spiritualism, or by the modern infidel against Christianity. What may be the lecturer's scientific attainments, I do not know. There is, however, one thing I think which, as a minister of religion, he has yet to learn, namely, that people have hearts as well as heads; that man is a spiritual being, and has consequent longings and aspirations which no amount of walking through the galleries of the British Museum, no amount of searching and sifting among the fossils and skeletons of the past (a most useful employment in its way) can ever satisfy. Still, the congregation of the Church of the Saviour was not left without a word of comfort. "Do not grieve though Spiritualism be not true; God is good, and man is immortal, even though he cannot come back to earth when he has once shuffled off this mortal coil. The new-born child cannot return to the confinement and restraint from which it has emerged, neither can man return to the confinement of earth after he has taken his departure." But permit me to add that the illustration is not particularly delicate, and not at all appropriate. The new-born child cannot return to the confinement and restraint from which it has emerged, simply because it is a physical impossibility; but he who asserts that the so-called dead are unable to communicate with those they love, is confronted by the universal belief of mankind, and by the ten thousand facts of modern Spiritualism. Moreover, the new-born child has no desire to return. But is this the case with the man who has entered upon spirit life? Has death robbed him of his identity? Is his memory of the past obliterated? He has left behind him, it may be, the wife of his bosom, the child of his love, the friend of his soul. Is he so far removed that he cannot communicate with them, or has he become so indifferent to their welfare that he cares not to do so? Poor comfort this for the dying hour, poor consolation this for the broken-hearted mourner. "Man is immortal." Yes, if you can take Mr. St. Clair's bare word for it, not otherwise; for he has not the shadow of proof to offer, and he knows it. He can advance inferential arguments in its favour, and so can I; but what are they worth to the sceptic? It is not

many years ago since an American bishop stood by the bedside of a dying clergyman who had devoted his days to works of usefulness amongst his people, yet not without a doubt as to a future life; and as the Bishop spoke to him of the evidences of Christianity, a sad shade passed over the old man's face as he exclaimed, "Ah, bishop! the proof, the proof! If we only had it." And we read the same sad state of doubt in those lines of Shelley—

"Who telleth a tale of unspeaking death?
Who lifteth the veil of what is to come?
Who painteth the shadows that are beneath?
The wide-winding caves of the peopled tomb?"

That materialism is rapidly gaining ground among us, no one at all acquainted with the matter will attempt to deny, and we might as well try to knock down the great wall of China with a knitting-pin as attempt to stop its progress by mere assertions about immortality. But what base assertions cannot do, that, thank God, modern Spiritualism has done and is doing day by day. The late Dr. Elliotson, as editor of *The Zoist*, for many years bitterly opposed modern Spiritualism, being himself a thorough materialist; but at length he saw and believed, and said to Mr. Coleman, "You may tell the world that I deeply regret my folly in so long resisting the truth; when I leave this earth I shall die a Christian, and you may say that I owe my conversion to Spiritualism." The late Mrs. Trollope was also converted from materialistic views, and wrote that Spiritualism "had given a pillow to her old age, which she little dreamt of." But Spiritualism is unpopular at present. The newspapers refuse our facts even though we offer to pay for them as advertisements; the libraries refuse our books even though we offer to present them; public opinion is divided respecting us, some people regarding us as knaves, while others charitably conclude that we are mad. Hence it required no very great amount of moral courage on the part of a minister of religion to stand on his own platform, and coolly dismiss the careful investigations of one of the greatest scientists of the age with, "Tell it to the marines." We were not surprised, for we remembered how the great Stephenson was laughed at as a madman by a committee of the House of Commons, because he ventured to express his conviction that he could convey people from place to place by steam at the rate of twelve miles an hour. And how it was said of one far greater than Stephenson, "He hath a devil, and is mad, why hear ye Him?" 'Tis ever thus:—

To-day abhorred, to-morrow adored,
Thus round and round we run,
But ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.

"Even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand. It is modern Spiritualism." So wrote Lord Brougham, but a very short time before his departure. "But why did the spirit go away again? Why not stay with us a day, a month, or even altogether as a Spiritualistic missionary? My first thoughts were—'Tell it to the marines.'" So spoke Mr. St. Clair from the Church of the Saviour platform on the 14th July, 1878.

"I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say."

SPIRITUALISM IN SPAIN.

For more than a year the private spiritual circle called "Marietta," founded by Viscount Torres Solanot, with the aid of other persons, has held *séances* with a celebrated medium, whose faculties are equal to those of any other medium of the day, especially as regards materialisation. The series of *séances* has just been finished; the scientific labour is now at an end, and ready to be submitted for consideration to the best spiritual centres in Europe.

Some of the Spanish Spiritualists are not in favour of this labour, and the controversy has become almost personal among individuals who are at the head of the Spanish Spiritualists. Viscount Torres Solanot hopes to separate the wheat from the tares in the camp, and to maintain the principles of Spiritualism against the attacks so constantly made on them. He hopes soon to visit London.

THE DARWINIAN THEORY.—Nay, we might sufficiently represent the general manner of conclusion in the Darwinian system by the statement that if you fasten a hair-brush to a mill-wheel, with the handle forward, so as to develop itself into a neck by moving always in the same direction, and within continuous hearing of a steam-whistle, after a certain number of revolutions the hair-brush will fall in love with the whistle; they will marry, lay an egg, and the produce will be a nightingale.—*Ruskin*.

SPIRITUALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA.

DEMATERIALIZATION PHENOMENA.

MR. T. BERKS HUTCHINSON, of Cape Town, writes as follows:—

In my last I promised to give you a few facts in regard to materialisation, which I consider to be of very great value to the inquiring student. One evening, at an improvised *séance*, which took place in August last, we had my three solid brass curtain rings passed, by some strange process, on to the arms of three different sitters; first one, then the second, and finally the third. Mr. Hugh Fisher, a private medium, had his hand tightly grasped by Mr. Williams, and under these conditions the ring passed on to Mr. Fisher's arm quite easily; not so in the case of Mr. Eglinton, who was holding Mr. Fisher's left hand, for he complained of a fearful lancinating pain just above his right wrist, the hand of which was lightly clasped by Mr. Fisher. After enduring this pain for say a minute or two, we heard the brass rings shaken by being taken off the gaselier. At this stage Mr. Eglinton remarked that he felt as if he had lost a portion of his physical arm between the right hand and elbow. I then asked Mr. Fisher to press his own hand and arm (still firmly grasping Mr. Eglinton) in such a manner that he could feel whether Mr. Eglinton's arm was really dematerialised; he said that there was nothing solid from the wrist upwards, and that he could move Mr. Eglinton's hand about just as easily as a detached hand. The idea instantly came to my mind that that particular portion of his physical arm had (by a process well known by spiritual chemists) been literally dissolved, leaving only the spiritual part of that portion of his arm as the connecting link with the detached hand. (See *The Seat of the Soul*, by Gillingham, and 1st Cor. xv. chap., I think where St. Paul alludes to the natural and spiritual body.) I asked the invisible surgeons whether I was correct in thinking that before the ring was passed on the arm they dissolved the fleshy portion, and then passed the brass ring through the spiritual arm, just as you might pass your own hand through air, smoke, or water. The operators confirmed my theory by giving three emphatic raps, and corroborated that again by the direct voice.

At this stage Mr. Eglinton exclaimed that the ring was on his arm, which was again quite rigid, as in the normal state. We struck a light, and found the three rings on the arms of Mr. Fisher, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Eglinton. Mr. Fisher and Mr. Williams are my very intimate friends, and both brother master masons.

Without insisting upon any theories, I maintain that this phenomenon took place without a doubt, the darkness being as much necessary for the experiment as absence of white light is for developing a negative photograph, or for trying experiments with mixed hydrogen and chlorine gases.

One night, after a materialist *séance*, I was directed to turn up the light, and in doing so inadvertently turned it on too suddenly; the result was a fearful shriek from Mr. Eglinton and Mr. Fisher, who both fell prostrate, and remained in a state of coma for nearly two hours, causing no little anxiety and loss of time to myself and friends.

Before I relate another most astounding fact connected with materialisation, and the supposed passage of matter through matter, I must ask those who have thought over this subject not to say it cannot be possible.

Mr. Hugh Fisher was the medium on this occasion. At times the spirits can do almost anything with his body—such as floating him like a balloon in the air. One evening in September, when *en séance*, he remarked that he felt his body below the chest quite dissolved, and on their feeling, both their hands passed apparently through air. The next instant he exclaimed that he was sinking into the floor of my room, which was literally true, the person next to him feeling only his body to the chest; a cool breeze was playing round the ground. He became very greatly alarmed, but I said, "Don't fear, Fisher; I believe they have dematerialised your body, and let your spiritual counterpart sink through the boards." His voice was quite indistinct, as if coming from a vault or grave. The spirits corroborated my theory.

Through this same medium I have had a spirit hand give me a solid grip of the first and third masonic degree. Mr. Fisher's familiar spirit, or guide, when on this earth, laid the corner stone of the House of Congress in Washington, U.S.A., with masonic rites. His "familiar" once having been a master, accounts for this wonderful fact of getting a master mason's grip from a spirit hand, materialised from Mr. Fisher's body.

Snow me a man who would go to heaven alone if he could, and I will show you one who will never be admitted there.—*Feltham*.

CONVULSUS says they who know the truth are not equal to those who love it; and those who love it are still below those who find delight in the practice of it.

FROM the universal order of heaven and hell, it appears, that evil punishes itself, and tends to its own abolition. Such is the Divine Law in the permission of evil. It is also a universal law that love shall reward itself. Thus it fares with every one just as he wills to others.—*Svedenborg*.

MISS BURKE, the juvenile poetess of such unusual ability, is engaged as assistant secretary to the National Association of Spiritualists for two or three weeks longer. Many friends are believed to strongly desire that she should continue her present work in the spiritual movement; this can only be done by raising the necessary funds by subscription. To start a list Mr. W. Tebb will contribute £3, Mr. Harrison £1, and Mr. Reimers a sum not yet stated. Communications on the subject had perhaps better be addressed till further notice to Miss Kislingbury.

ON THE TRAIL OF A PROPHET.

ELIJAH "INTERVIEWED" BY OUR SPECIAL REPORTER.

LAST Friday morning I was informed, in Folkestone, that a man who believed himself to be the Prophet Elijah had been perambulating the town for some days dressed in sheepskins; at times he blew a horn, drew an assemblage around him, exhorted the people to repent, and "held forth" to the multitude. He was said to be a sensible man, except in believing himself to be Elijah in consequence of revelations from the upper world, made by vision. He was well received by certain respectable people in the town, and had, by invitation, delivered an address to a Sunday school; furthermore, his merits had been appreciated by "the enterprising proprietor of the skating rink," who had engaged him to preach one part of the evening, and had arranged to roast a sheep whole the other, thus delicately blending food for the soul with food for the body. At two o'clock on Friday, the *Folkestone News* came out, and in it I saw that the man of modern psychological experiences had been brought up for judgment before the local King Agrippa. Here is the report:—

On Saturday, a man styling himself "Elijah the Prophet," and who was dressed in a suit of sheepskins, was brought before the Folkestone Bench charged with having caused an obstruction in George-lane.

Mr. Bradley—What is your Christian and surname?

Defendant—I have only one name, and that is Elijah.

Mr. Bradley—That is an assumed name.

Defendant—Well, that is the one given me.

Mr. Bradley—What is your Christian and surname?

Defendant—I have only the one name, and that is Elijah, the name I travel under.

Dr. Bateman—What name were you baptised in?

Defendant—Oh, that's it. Well, I was known by the name of Henry William Whittaker—spell it with two "t's."

Mr. Bradley—You are charged with having, on the 20th inst., wilfully, by a certain board, obstructed a certain thoroughfare, George-lane. Are you guilty or not guilty?

Defendant—I believe there is plenty of room for carriages to pass through.

Mr. Bradley—You say not guilty?

Defendant—I believe there is plenty of room for carriages to pass.

Mr. Bradley—Then you say you are not guilty?

Defendant—I offered to move on. I have been imposed on in Folkestone in a way that is not very pleasant.

Sergeant Woodland said—About half-past eight last night I was sent for to go to George-lane. I saw a lot of people there—two hundred, or more. I saw the prisoner there on the pavement, close to the pillar-box. He was holding up this board. (The board, which was produced, was about eighteen inches square, attached to a long stick. On the board was the inscription, "I am Elijah the Prophet, and will preach at Rye, Sussex. (Malachi iv. 5).") I went across to him and asked him to move away. "What for?" he asked. "If you don't go away I shall be obliged to shift you or move you, I replied." The people began to holla and shout, and I took hold of his wool (laughter), and brought him to the station. I had had several complaints about him. He came with me very quietly.

Mr. Bradley—Do you know how long he has been in the town?

Witness—No, sir, I saw him in the afternoon in Dover-street.

In reply to the Mayor witness said George-lane was blocked up, and the people reached right over to Mr. Major's shop.

Mr. Bradley (to the defendant)—Do you wish to ask the constable any questions?

Defendant—Yes, I should like to. (To the constable)—Did I say to you what my grievance was, or was it to another constable? If it was to you I should like you to mention it.

Sergeant Woodland—You said you were Elijah the Prophet. (Laughter.)

Defendant—Did I not mention my grievance to you?

Witness—No.

Defendant—Then it was to another constable; perhaps he is present. I mentioned it to three altogether.

Mr. Bradley (to the Superintendent)—Is that the case?

Superintendent Wilshire—Yes, sir.

Mr. Bradley (to the defendant)—Now you may tell the magistrates your grievance.

The Defendant—When I came into Folkestone about half an hour after sunset yesterday, having walked from Mersham, my first business was to get a lodging, as I came here for four or five nights. That was what I endeavoured to get first of all. I fortunately succeeded in doing so at the "Crown and Anchor." I endeavoured to get it at other places, but did not succeed. I went to the "Crown and Anchor" for the simple reason that the landlady came out and said she had taken a fancy to my sheepskins, and could she do anything in a Christian way for me? I said if she could let me have a good bed I should be thankful. I thought her a good Christian woman, and I said I would like to inspect the bed, but, after agreeing to pay one shilling per night for five nights, I sat down, being very tired, and it being the Sabbath; it came in at 3.30 that afternoon. I sat down by the fire, until about 5.30 I suppose it was, when, her husband having come in and having had a little conversation, I said I should like to wash my hands. I went to the room, and not only washed my hands but decided to go to

bed, for I was very tired. I went to bed, and was disturbed by the landlord coming up and saying he wanted me down below, and that I had made a mistake and forgot myself by going to bed at that early hour. Well, I said I would be down soon, and he came a second time with a constable, and I went down. The grievance was, I had not paid for the bed. I paid the shilling, and then he wanted me to go. I said, "I want my shilling back, because I am entitled to stop here until eight o'clock to-morrow morning." He said, "You won't have that," and his wife chimed in and said, "That is a proper charge for the rest you have already had." (Laughter.) I did not quite agree with that—(laughter)—and so I said it was a dirty trick for Folkestone. I said, "If you want the whole town to hear of this you had better keep the shilling, but if you don't you had better give it to me back." He declined to give it back, nor yet sixpence. Of course I was told to leave the house as soon as possible. I went to three other places, but could not succeed in getting a lodging. Of course I had to stop and look in various directions for a lodging, but whilst I was doing so the people congregated around in a most astonishing way. I suppose they thought I was going to preach, so they congregated in rather large numbers, and I had to move on. But whilst I was staring round in some other direction I was taken in charge by this gentleman (pointing to the constable) in a very fatherly sort of way—(laughter)—who lauded me here, a place where I have enjoyed myself very much. And one thing I can say in favour of this establishment, they have not charged me one farthing for it. (Laughter.) They have provided me with a fire, where I have been up to the present. I was visited by a gentleman (the doctor), and I suppose you know what took place at the examination that was proceeded with. One gentleman came in and said I was decidedly insane, for the simple reason that I was not clad as he was, but even in a superior way, even in sheepskins. I am quite used to being called insane.

Mr. Bradley—What was your object in coming to Folkestone?—To preach, sir.

Were you preaching?—No, sir, I never preach on the Sabbath. I preach on Saturday night after sunset.

The Mayor—Is that all you have to say?

Defendant—Nothing else to say, sir.

Mr. Bradley—If you are discharged do you intend to remain in the town or leave it?

Defendant—My engagements are to stay here until the 24th. I am sent to various places—Folkestone, Hythe, Dymchurch, Romney, and various other places.

Dr. Bateman—You must not preach in the street.

Defendant—Oh no, I preach in rooms and vacant places.

Dr. Bateman—Your appearance is enough to collect a crowd. You need not be astonished at the people believing you to be a lunatic.

Defendant—Not after hearing me preach; I have never found it so before.

The Mayor—In dismissing this case we hope you will leave the town if possible. If you obstruct the pathway again the police will deal with you again as they have done, and we shall deal with you in a very different way. The case is dismissed.

Wishing, in the interests of psychology, to know more about The Prophet and his visions, I went to the "Edinburgh Castle," a new and popular restaurant in Folkestone, where the Prophet was said to sojourn. The landlord told me that he had that day departed for Hythe, after having had a series of visions which revealed to him that certain individuals who had been kind to him belonged to the tribe of Levi. I took train to Hythe, arrived there between six and seven o'clock in the evening, and traversed its almost deserted streets in search of the Prophet. "There he is!" said a boy; and crossing the end of the street in which we were standing was a man all in white, who appeared and disappeared like a sheeted ghost as the intervening houses shut him out from view.

A minute or two later, from the bar of the "Rose and Crown," I saw through the doorway of the bar parlour the object of my visit, the rays of a bright fire throwing his visage and the tea-table before him into high relief. I expressed a desire to speak to him, and the landlord kindly invited me into the inner chamber, where I seated myself on a couch, with The Prophet opposite me, and the tea-table between us, with nobody else in the room.

He was not communicative, nor did I feel altogether justified in putting personal questions to a stranger on the ground that his dress was not my dress, nor his thoughts my thoughts. He had a refined, handsome face, fingers which would have been a study to any chiromancer, so thin were they at the joints next the hand, expanding at the joints next the nails. His complexion was clear, and his cheeks delicately red. His bulky but highly artistic white dress of sheepskins, with the wool outside, gave a stalwart, manly solidity to his frame which it did not naturally possess, and although in the dress he looked exceptionally handsome, I thought that in ordinary costume he would have been set down as a "pretty" and a "weak" man; he had a thin, narrow head, and outside his compensating garb I think

that he would have been a picture of enthusiastic irresolution. His white dress was of the Russian style; it was lined with bright red cloth, and in his vest were articles of jewellery.

While I was silently contemplating him a Stolid Man, who looked like a drover off duty, came in. He sat down on a chair near the head of my couch, bent one arm to the curve usually described by the handle of a jug, pressed the closed fist of the arm upon his knee, brought both his eyeballs to bear upon The Prophet, and continued in that position for the next half hour, until long after the arrival of others, without uttering a word. If he did not then thoroughly understand the Unknown, it was not for want of ocular contemplation; a figure from a wax-works never expressed less desire to apologise for its unwavering gaze than did the Stolid Man. Steadfast was his stare as that of Egypt's Sphinx.

This obtrusive ocular examination, and the recollection that The Prophet "laid himself out" as a public man, were encouragements to me. I asked him whether he had any objection to tell when he first heard that he was the Prophet Elijah.

"Last September," was the laconic reply.

"How did you receive the information?"

The Prophet—"Chiefly by vision. Why do you ask?"

"Because I have known of similar cases. Some unknown power has been brought to bear upon truthful individuals, and they have believed themselves to be in communication with sacred personages, whose utterances were so inferior as not to bear out the claim in the eyes of clear-headed third persons."

The Prophet—"Then you have heard the stupid story of the boys, that I say I came to the earth by sliding down a rainbow."

"Yes. I have heard it, but it was not in my mind."

The Prophet—"Do you know anything of the Spiritualists?"

This sudden home question took me by surprise. I replied, "Yes."

The Prophet—"Have you ever been to any of their seances?"

"Yes."

The Prophet—"What do you think of them?"

"I think that the phenomena of spirit circles are partly of spiritual and partly of mesmeric and physiological origin, and that the facts for the most part are not yet thoroughly understood."

The Prophet—"Is it true that spirit hands and spirit faces are sometimes seen at spirit circles, just as you see me now? I have often wished to be present at a *séance*, but never had an opportunity."

"Yes. In drawing rooms I have seen such things among plenty of other witnesses. But did you think you were the Prophet Elijah before you were told so on authority, by vision?"

The Prophet—"A few days previously I had the idea. The vision came to me at three in the morning; I had then been sleeping for several hours in an arm chair."

"Do you recollect a previous existence to this as the Prophet Elijah, or anybody else; or do you accept the position because you have been told so?"

The Prophet—"I do not recollect a previous existence, but was told of it. Why do you ask?"

"Because I think that, without conscious deception on either side, spirits sometimes try to communicate with sensitive mortals, and that false names are sometimes interchanged by both, owing to misunderstood mental and metaphysical difficulties incidental to the means of communication. What is your mission?"

The Prophet—"To resuscitate in these days the Jewish law."

"A nice law that! 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' to wit."

The Prophet—"I mean the Jewish code modified by Christianity."

Here three men were ushered in by the landlord. One was a thin man, who leant with arms folded against the opposite side of the room, and said little the rest of the evening; the second was an intelligent-looking man, in a

country garb, with some old uniform cloak or coat thrown over it; the third was a noisy, good-natured, foxy-haired man, who claimed at first to come from Birmingham, and who spoke as the superior of the other two. The fancy dawned upon me from their ways, and some passing utterances, that all three were detectives in plain clothes. The Prophet had only arrived in Hythe a few hours previously, it was natural that the police should wish to know something more about him, and the sayings of the Foxy Man, the choicest of which I quietly took down in shorthand, did not display that knowledge of Bible history or language which would have supported the ostensible pretext on which he sought the company of the Prophet Elijah. He ordered meat and drink for himself and the Intelligent Man. These were brought in by a butcher's boy, who remained in the room grinning at the Prophet, while he (the boy) stood with his back to the fire, the breadth of a section of his frame receiving the full benefit of its agreeable warmth.

"I've got to go away from Hythe in a few hours," said the Foxy Man to The Prophet, "but I couldn't leave without seeing you."

"Why not?" said The Prophet.

"Why, to be able to say I've seen you. I come from Birmingham, I do. Oh, you and me together could make a nice little book."

"What do you mean?" responded The Prophet.

"You're so good-looking. That's how you do it. Oh! You're deep. But you fellows shy large towns."

The Prophet—"Why?"

"Because you'd get locked up."

The Prophet—"They wanted to lock me up in Folkestone for creating an obstruction."

"Yes. And in London they'd do it. In a little by-street it wouldn't matter, but in a main thoroughfare you'd draw a crowd and stop the trams; then you'd be locked up. But here you makes your little coin because you're so deuced good-looking."

The Prophet—"I'm afraid of rough talk and rough ways."

Here Foxy seemed somewhat disconcerted, and his subordinate gave a chuckle, with his mouth full of meat.

"Oh, yes," said Foxy, "anybody can see that you are a gentleman—that you are of no common kind. Why don't you talk? You let me do all the talking."

The Prophet—"This is the Sabbath. I'm not at work now."

"It's Friday night."

The Prophet—"It's the Sabbath from sunset to sunrise."

All this time the Intelligent Man was engaged in the doubly congenial occupation of making headway with a plate of meat, and seeing his superior making a failure of every attempt to draw much information from the man in sheepskins.

"Look here, my friend," said the Foxy Man, "a farmer near here writes to me, and says, says he—'Here's Eliza the Prophet a scooping of a cave for hisself in my field'—but you're not Eliza; you're a devilish deal too good-looking for an Israelite. Those little games you couldn't carry on in big towns like Manchester."

The Prophet—"Do you know Manchester? Is it a big place?"

"Yes. I come from there. Why Grinnidge is only as big as—as—as—let me see—How many Grinnidge's would it take to make a Manchester?"

Here the Foxy Man cast his eyes to the ceiling, lost in the intricacies of calculation.

The Stolid Man, with the stone jug arm, who had had his eyes fixed upon The Prophet for the last half hour, here grasped an Idea. He turned to me and said, "You got on better with him; perhaps you'd better say some more."

I thought of recommending The Prophet to call on Mr. Munton, and to submit his experiences to the Psychological Society, but I held my tongue, and the Foxy Man was on too good terms with himself to wish anybody else to "take the floor."

He continued in an aggrieved tone to the assembled company, "If he (The Prophet) now, would only tell me his little tip, I would try to open some holes for him."

Elijah, the Prophet, did not appear to comprehend. It might as well have been Hebrew.

Foxy continued—"Says my wife to me, 'Oh, he (The Prophet) is devilish good-looking, far better looking than you are, and,' says she, 'either he's pulling a string or he's off his puff!' Look here! Won't you give me your autograph?" He added, with a meaning look to his assistants, "We want that."

The Prophet—"What do you want it for?"

"Oh, I want to show it to my children in years gone by."

The Prophet was too lost in contemplation of high subjects to notice the slip in the last careless utterance.

Gradually it seemed to dawn upon Foxy that The Prophet was not "pulling a string," but was perhaps "off his puff," so he changed the conversation.

"Look here," said Foxy, "as you won't talk on business, tell me about them other things—about the Jewidicial Messiah, who was the son of David."

If a photograph of a man cannot be obtained on a reasonable excuse, manifestly his autograph is the next best thing for easy circulation by post, to furnish presumptive evidence of identity. This demand for an autograph strengthened my fancy that the three men were detectives.

The last train being about to start, I rose to leave.

"You're not going?" good-naturedly said Foxy and the rest of the company in chorus, taking a somewhat sudden interest in me, considering that I had said nothing in their presence. Nevertheless, a kind of feeling of freemasonry had sprung up. We seven, including the butcher boy, formed a mysterious party; we had secrets which the public of Hythe, who were flattening their noses against the window-panes of the "Rose and Crown," strove in vain to fathom, and the people in the bar craned their necks forward every time the bar-room door was opened to catch a glimpse of The Prophet and his highly-favoured visitors. Once let us separate and we became but ordinary mortals, instead of a privileged class. "Shut the door," said Foxy every time it was opened; "I can't keep up conversation if anybody is listening."

But we parted.

As for the Prophet, he is one of those psychic sensitives who are misunderstood by the doctors, the police, the world, and themselves, and who are born to suffer. I heard that originally he was an artist, and that his native place was Hastings.

DESOLATION.

The following lines by Miss C. A. Burke are from *Rifts in the Veil*:—

Wake, wake, O Harp,
 Pour forth thy mournful strain—
 Wake, golden strings,
 To a bygone note of pain;
 Murmur in heedless ears
 The sorrows of these years,
 With an undertone of tears,
 For sad refrain.
 Break, break, O Heart!
 What dost for thee remain?
 Only a bitter past
 Suffered and spent in vain:
 A present with sad skies,
 And hidden mysteries,
 A future, to thine eyes
 The sad past o'er again.

THE LUNACY LAWS.—On Tuesday evening next, at 7.30 p.m., Mrs. Weldon will lecture again at St. James's Hall on "The Lunacy Laws," and at the termination of her address will sing Gounod's sacred song, "Ruth," as well as other selections. A collection will be made to defray expenses.

SUNDAY SERVICES.—On Sunday evening next, at half-past seven o'clock, Mr. J. W. Fletcher, the well-known trance medium, will deliver an inspirational lecture at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, Regent-street, London, on "The Religion of Spiritualism." Mrs. Weldon, whose great vocal abilities are so well known, will attend and sing some sacred selections on the occasion. There will be no collection. It is to be hoped that there will be a good attendance.

MR. BLYTON writes that "Spiritualism, its Facts and Teachings," will be the subject of an inspirational discourse, with questions and answers at the close, to be delivered through the mediumship of Mr. E. W. Wallis, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, on Monday evening next, 6th inst., at eight o'clock, admission free. As the meeting is intended as a benefit one to Mr. E. W. Wallis, the attendance of Spiritualists with their friends is invited. Voluntary contributions will be received at the close of the meeting.

Poetry.

MINISTERING ANGELS.

BY A LITTLE GIRL.

SOFTLY fall the shades of night,
Dimly shines the clear starlight;
Unseen shadows come and go,
Angel forms flit to and fro;
Unknown voices sweetly sing,
Heavenly blessings do they bring,
Spirit balm for soothing those
Oppressed with cares and many woes.
Unseen visitants they come,
From their spiritual home,
To guide the souls of suffering mortals,
Higher, until at heaven's own portals.

BEATRICE NOSWORTHY.

Correspondence.

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

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—In reading a life of De Quincy (by H. A. Page) lately, I have been exceedingly struck with several passages of it, which seem to point so strongly to his having been medial to a very high degree, that I cannot forbear venturing to encroach upon your valuable space to quote a passage. He describes a vision he had, while a child, on the death of his sister. He was about six years old, and he stole secretly to a room where the body of this sister lay. He knelt down by her side, and kissed her in a passion of grief. He then, it seems, fell into a state of trance, only hearing "a solemn wind which began to blow." Then he had a vision, which he records probably from his after memory, for it is needless to say it was utterly beyond a child's comprehension or description. When he awoke from this trance he says, "I have reason to believe that a very long interval had elapsed during this wandering or suspension of my perfect mind; when I returned to myself there was a foot, or I fancied so, on the stairs. I was alarmed, and slunk away." He speaks of it in after years as "wandering from his perfect mind;" and it is strange that the utter incongruity of the whole thing never struck him. In the first place, what does he mean by the perfect mind of a child of six years of age? A child of that age of ordinary mental qualifications would scarcely have any mind at all to speak of, but more the animal impressions of love or fear; kissing the fair little corpse, and being more afraid and confused than anything else.

The remarkable vision this child saw, and was enabled afterwards to describe, appears to me to suggest that the spirit of a child is already, as it were, full grown; but the intellect belonging to the body, *i. e.*, the mental power of deciphering the promptings of the spirit of course is still incomplete and immature. Precocious children seem to have a mental power in this direction, however, that is often astonishing, and if accompanied with health and vigour of body, it leads to great results, or should do so. Throughout the life of De Quincy there are the strong indications of his powerful medial and clairvoyant capabilities; but being totally ignorant of the powers of his spirit, they caused him great torture of mind.

The whole story of his opium eating, his dreaming, and his mental suffering appears to me an exceedingly interesting psychological subject. Throughout his life there are constant references to his spiritual nature and powers; yet both the author of De Quincy's life, as well as he himself, seem utterly ignorant what they meant. Poor De Quincy appears to me to have possessed a body subject in the highest degree to spiritual influences, and alas, instead of learning to welcome and to be thankful for these strange effects, and to understand them, they only seemed to cause him torture and fear, as if he struggled in vain against an unwelcome visitor, a life-long nightmare. His was a sweet, lovely, pure mind, and had he known how to welcome the rays from heaven, and to open his soul to the light, one cannot say of what value his experience might not have been in a spiritual sense. As it was, it is incomplete.

This subject leads me to venture to say a few words in reply to the interesting letter in this week's *Spiritualist*, by Miss Kislingbury, in which she seems doubtful of the real value of Spiritualism for the benefit of mankind. I think it is strange that any one who has taken an interest in this most stupendously interesting subject can possibly for one instant doubt its ultimate value, though well aware of all its shortcomings and drawbacks. It appears to me—though I venture in all modesty and humility to make any assertions whatsoever on matters of spiritual feeling—that Spiritualism answers to the *cries of those in the wilderness* as nothing else can do. By these I mean the men and women of either powerful or poetical mental capacities, such as De Quincy. To these people church or chapel means husks and dry bones. The spirit is gone out of them; and they are ready to say, "If the spirit ever existed it must be somewhere, for it is not here." These people find it in Spiritualism, and having found it, it does not much matter what outward profession of religion they serve—it is all one to them. They have found the spirit; their natures are illuminated: and they, in their turn, find all past religion illuminated.

It must be understood that when I say a Spiritualist, I do not mean only a "wonder seeker," or one who forsakes worship. I mean one who does, however, seek wonders, but not always at *séances*; and one who does not forsake worship, though worship may not mean to him a public place of worship on Sundays or any other day. I mean a Spiritualist—one whose body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; whose whole mind is attuned to the marvels and wonders of creation and science; and one who seeks wonders for the enlargement of his own mind and those of

others: one who prays for wisdom, and one who finds it; one who worships God in spirit and in truth, and one who respects all religion in others, when held in all sincerity and reverence. I think, however, such a Spiritualist must and will find the ordinary forms of religions existing in Christendom at this period very insufficient for his wants, and would grieve to go back to believe that the Church catechism, beliefs, church services, sermons, &c., of the present day, belonging to any Church—Roman Catholic or Protestant—supplied sufficient food either for his spiritual or intellectual nature. Religion of this kind appears to me a dead silence; the only voices which one hears are those of the clergy; and what do they tell us? "Tales of the past?" "True," we some of us feel and know, but still all gone and passed away. We are living still, and each century takes us farther from that time; and as each year rolls by man's soul feels it must learn more, and that the Divine Voice is neither dead nor sleeping; and to be eternally going back cannot be, and is not good for the souls of men, which are governed always by the law of progress. We must go forwards in our religion as well as in everything else. Reverence for the past, but to live for the future, should be our motto. And I believe that Spiritualism may have its vulgar and its sordid side from unspiritual natures in the midst of it, who for the time have put wedding garments on, and that it may lead people to what are called unorthodox views in so-called religious questions, that it may have and has a dark side on which the spiritual sun has not yet shone. It may have all this, but yet I cannot but feel and believe the spiritual sun will shine on the world as it never has shone before, and through the medium of Spiritualism man's nature will be influenced as it never was before. Religion will not be wrapt up in the Bible, clergymen, and priests, who can only now tell us of the past. "We all know it." There is nothing further to be learnt about it. The rule of life is what we want to know, and who has now authority to teach us? Faith has died out from among us, because our prophets are dead! That is no reason, though, that none shall be born again. New cycles require new spiritual dispensations, and it appears to me that clinging to old dispensations, and to the forms of religious worship proceeding from them, would place us much as the Jews of old were placed, inasmuch as they could not receive, or did not, the gospel of the new dispensation, as preached by the man with the divine nature—Christ. Not that I mean to say or infer that I know anything about a new dispensation—such things are too far and beyond me. All I do say is this, that the old dispensation is dying out, or why would real faith be so dead among us? We are now a nation of atheists (if there be such beings), sordid and grovelling in the earthliness of our natures, hypocrites and sensualists, living for this world only, having the outward form of godliness, and none of it inwardly. Just, however, because we are sinking so very low, the still small voice is beginning to be heard that we must rise and gird our loins, that we must turn our eyes to the divine light of spiritual progress; that this light, once shed upon our souls, will forbid the possibility of atheism or sensuality, the two deadly sins belonging to man; we shall feel it in ourselves as a law, not because we have been told so, but because we know it to be so. Even now what an influence for good among the poor and uneducated, Spiritualism ought to have if properly taught. That is, if the spiritual side of man's nature is awakened, as it may be now by Spiritualism, and as it rarely can be in other ways.

The working classes have lost their belief and reverence for church and chapel, because they are given dry bones to eat when they want spiritual food. Part of their natures are for ever being unsatisfied, and so they crave for bodily excitement, strong drinks, and animal passions, something to fill the horrible vacuum. A century or so ago the element of fear was the strongest feature in their religion; fear of the devil caused them, they thought, to love God and obey the Church. That element is disappearing, and with it all obedience, reverence, and moral discipline, which at all events they derived through the teaching of their instructors. That is all passing away. Everything seems passing away; and what is taking its place, or what should take its place? Not Spiritualism as described by Miss Kislingbury—that is nothing but the writhing of uneasy souls, or the flutterings of the flighty ones—but Spiritualism as it should be, ought to be, and may be, and by following which we shall all seek to be better, not because we shall better ourselves thereby, but because all other courses would be repugnant to us. Materialism and sensualism will be impossible to us. The search after wisdom and the knowledge of God will then be the real aim of our lives, to prepare ourselves for the real life of which this is only a type and foreshadowing. The great ones of the earth ought to be the wise and good ones, and the serving ones those still struggling with the sins of their natures. *Séances*, trance addresses, may yet be composed of many inferior elements, and there is much in the investigation of Spiritualism that is disheartening to the mind of the earnest seeker; but that is chiefly because the spiritual part of it is as yet so tainted by us. We are to blame, not Spiritualism. If we purify and strengthen our souls, the atmosphere will float us; and Spiritualism cannot teach us to put spirits in the place of God, neither will it seek to abrogate any Divine rule if it emanated from God, but it will serve to make that rule easy to us: it will teach us to overcome the world and the flesh—if that means to teach us the real use of our bodies as temples for our souls—and it will teach us to take heed to our ways, because there will be no other ways but those towards God possible to us. It will, in short, I venture to hope and believe, take us out of the cloud of darkness under which we are now wandering, and show us by the finger of science and the eye of faith what we are, whence we come, and where we go. Those timorous spirits, however, who shrink from coming out of the shelter of the past, should remain where they are. To them it is not given to know the things of the spirit; the time will come for them; but the brave, fearless ones should boldly come out, and not shrink from the noble duty of carrying the standard of truth, but in all gentleness and courtesy, as the strong protecting the weak, and waging

war with nothing but hypocrisy, selfishness, and all such ignoble vices. Truth may vary in its aspects to different minds. Let each person respect another's honest idea of truth. The germ of all truth is the same: different flowers, but all the same seed.

ISABEL DE STEIGER.

Kensington, December 27th.

SIR,—Miss Kisingbury has a way of making me rub my eyes. This time I have rubbed them very hard, and have turned to your report of my paper to see whether by chance a misprint had misled her into misquotation.

I find, however, that I am there reported as saying what I did say, that "the whole code," not "the sole code" (a very different thing), of personal religion follows, or may be deduced from, certain facts.

I should most assuredly decline to say that "belief in immortality constitutes the sole code of personal religion." That, I quite agree, is "an astonishing statement." But I never made it. I am not able to approximate to any sort of acceptance of it.

What I did argue was that an age little given to accept any dogma on grounds of mere faith, might derive inestimable help in building up the fabric of personal religion from the fact that one or two of the underlying doctrines have received the sanction of demonstration from objective experiment. The two that I instanced were perpetuated life (not immortality, please; we cannot prove that) and perpetuated individuality, as evidenced by the survival of interests, affections, and the like.

Be it noticed that I reserved in terms, and excluded from my argument, that side of religion which affects God. I argued that we were receiving in these days of fading faith precisely the sort of evidence most necessary to revive it. Perhaps my meaning would be made still clearer if I substitute "an entire code" for the word used.

But whether or not my argument was justified, whether I was right or wrong in endeavouring to show that the Spiritualism I was expounding (which is not by any means that referred to by Miss Kisingbury) is intimately connected with religion (which, again, is not Miss Kisingbury's religion), is a small matter. I hold to my view, but I am entirely able to see that it will not commend itself to one who views Spiritualism from the standpoint which Miss Kisingbury now occupies. And I have seen enough of the divergent views that different minds take of the same truth to acquiesce in the result without further argument.

But the letter in which Miss Kisingbury propounds her views with so much courtesy to myself contains statements which, openly challenged, I am bound to say I cannot accept or agree with. If she will allow me, I will take leave of her, and concerning myself only with the views stated in her letter, confine myself to impersonal criticism.

"Will it save a man's soul to know that he lives for ever?" Certainly not. First of all, he does not know it. He is told so on authority which may or may not induce belief, but cannot give knowledge. And next. If such a belief, assured to him best by the methods of Spiritualism, will not "save his soul," it will, at any rate, be the most potent method that I know of to stir him up to "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling," as one who knows better than most people what that phrase means. And this is the very work which in the sentence next to that which I have quoted is called "religion." It is not all-round religion, but it is a very large portion of it; and I think that an entire "code of personal religion" might be made to hang upon it.

The "burning questions" of Spiritualism—shall I say of the broadest human interests, irrespective of creed or religion?—are, no doubt, the relation of the soul to the Creator, sin, and forgiveness, and that quaint *et cetera*, "many other important and vital points." Spiritualism, it is hinted, can tell us nothing about these; and the allegation is justified (if at all) by the patent fact that Spiritualism does not make Spiritualists perfect.

Well, Spiritualism has told me all that I know about the questions at issue. I will go further, and say that it is the only source from which I have been able to derive any knowledge whatever on the subject. I have been told much by those who conceive themselves to have a prescriptive authority to teach me—some of which I agree with, and some of which I do not—and, exercising the inalienable right of private judgment, I abide by my selection:

"If it be not true to me,
What care I how true it be"

to somebody else? Nor can I follow the argument which condemns such an all-embracing form of belief as Spiritualism, because it does not make its votaries perfect; because they disport themselves as though in "a tea-garden."

Shall we pursue the *argumentum ad hominem*? Where is the religion so potent in its effects, so majestic in its creed, so purifying in its spiritual influence, that its followers are "living sermons known and read of all men;" that all "may take knowledge of them that they have been with" God? Let me know, that I may at once enlist myself in its ranks, and cry like a leper to be cleansed. Are all Christians holy? all Catholics ornaments of the faith? Is the life always, or even generally, the reflex of the belief? Nay, do we not all know noble men who adorn human life, and set examples that all might be the better for following, whose minds, as far as faith goes, are a blank; whose spirit, as respects any belief in the future, or in what the writer of this letter points out as the methods of sustaining spiritual life in the present, is a very Sahara of arid and dreary negation?

"If Spiritualism is teaching us to put spirits in the place of God." It does nothing of the sort. It teaches us to approach the Supreme through those who are His intermediary agencies; to aspire higher and higher, and to use their aid and guidance, if so be, by His mercy in the far-distant future, when ages upon ages have rolled away, when we have purified our souls by the methods they have taught us, we may behold His Face.

And teaching us so, it leads us to cast aside with loathing and disgust that pseudo-familiarity with God and all his plans; that vulgar assumption of intimate knowledge of the scheme of the universe by certain self-constituted privy councillors of the Creator, which is theology's culminating and most hypocritical absurdity.

"If it is to abrogate the rule that we must overcome the world, the flesh, and whatever else to us and in us is Satanic." No! It does the very reverse. Inculcating as one of its cardinal principles that man is what he makes himself, that this life is a school of training for the next, it points out with far more stringency and cogency than any other system known to me the very duties in question, with an infinitely more persuasive voice than any system that in any way sanctions the shifting of responsibility, or the purchase of immunity from the consequences of sin by any method whatsoever.

Miss Kisingbury does not expect from Spiritualism anything better than that it should be a crutch to prop up old forms of faith. Well, they need it badly. But I, at least, expect from it something more; if only this, that it should be the sledge hammer that breaks the skull not only of materialism, but of fossilised orthodoxy. I look to it, after it has run its course and done its duty, for results similar to those produced by the heretical teaching of Christ upon the Judaic Pharisaism and infidelity of that age. As a concrete system I am willing to admit its faults, and shall be content if it and they be abolished together. But as a factor in the religious thought of the age, as a regenerating force operating most strongly within the pale of religious systems that sadly need purifying, I believe it to be imperishable in its effects.

Like Miss Kisingbury, I have always discouraged the formation of private circles, save under carefully guarded conditions. We want more knowledge before such steps can be safely recommended.

May I take this opportunity of thanking a large number of correspondents who have written me kind words of approval respecting my paper, and of begging them to pardon me if I do not reply to them privately?

W. STANTON MOSES, M.A.

SIR,—Perhaps you may be as willing to grant me a little space to express my agreement with some of your writers, as you would be if I found myself impelled to oppose them. We know that the world contains the world in itself, and we believe that God contains all spirits in Himself; at least some of us do. There is a figure in rhetoric in which the container is put for the contained. When a man for whom I have a well grounded respect says that his belief in immortality furnishes his "sole code of personal religion," I put this meaning into it. All motives to love and service, all tendencies to universal right, are contained in the belief or knowledge of immortality. "If man is of yesterday and no to-morrow," it matters comparatively little what may be his course of conduct. When a human being having the ordinary common sense seen among us comes to the certainty that he is to live for ever, and that his society is to be determined by the law of likeness, surely this belief holds in it every motive for personal religion. By religion I mean adherence to the highest right; the keeping a conscience void of offence toward all.

There is nothing more true than that there are great differences between Spiritualists and Spiritualists, between Spiritualism and Spiritualism. This must be so. There are souls at a very uncomfortable and inconvenient point of progress. Still they are souls. As a Christian I believe that God made all, and will redeem all; and if the All-Perfect can bear with imperfection, how is it that I am unwilling to even try to be patient? Whatever others may do or think, knowing myself to be immortal, I must seek the means to purify my soul, and render myself worthy of the higher life to which I aspire. No one could better state the action of the motive power contained in the faith or knowledge of immortality than Miss Kisingbury has done; but the "burning questions in Spiritualism" differ to different persons. An infant turns to the mother's breast. It seeks *personal* nourishment; the mature man feeds himself and others. To an infantile soul the question of questions is—Shall I see again my lost loved ones—my mother? The Church Catholic recognises this want of the greatest number of men and women. Ten "Hail Mary's" are said on the rosary to one "Our Father," yet this love of the Blessed Mother and other holy sainted souls leads right on to the questions recognised as "burning," or all important, namely, "The relations of the soul to God." "If a man love not his brother whom he has seen, how shall he love God whom he hath not seen?" The Catholic spirit recognises all the wants of the human soul, all "the vital points in man's spiritual history and development." It leads also to patience with those who believe, and yet who do not at once act worthy of their faith. How Spiritualists, or Catholics, or Calvinists, or a host of others, can believe all they do, and yet not believe better, is a marvel to me often; but I remember the end is not yet, and will not be in this world, and the means can surely be found by an omnipotent God and Saviour to induce souls to work out their salvation, some cheerfully, and some with fear and trembling. Once I did not believe that this world is "a stern training school for better states of existence," but I believe it now as earnestly as my friend Miss Kisingbury. The dear God was as good to me in my unbelief as the sun is to a green apple. In the loving warmth and light the apple becomes ripe, and its luscious sweetness is very different from its green and crabbed condition. But it is the same apple, and the sun impartially shone on its different states.

Progress is a law of life, and death is a law, and often, if not always, the gate of life. That "Spiritualists forsake worship for wonder-hunting" may be true. But does not the great world of men and women love the things that are new, even to spring bonnets, and a new pattern of prayer books, holy pictures, and holy water fonts—not to mention extatica, and new points for pilgrimages? And is not this very desire for the new and the wonderful a law of progress to the soul? Experience must teach us to expect from Spirit-

ualism as much as we seek in the most unselfish prayer of the soul. Our prayers may not be answered in a day, or a year, but our reward is sure for all unselfish love and seeking. When I say unselfish love, I mean that which does good to others as readily as to ourselves.

I belong to a spiritual circle that makes self-denial and the help of others its two primary rules. We begin by keeping continual Lent. No member of our circle takes tobacco, spirits, or flesh as food; all bathe daily, and seek to keep the conscience as clean as the skin. We get personal improvement in body and mind, and we get manifestations—I say fearlessly—such as others do not get. Into this circle a year ago last June came that honest, true-hearted boy, Willie Eglington. He came to us out of a brain fever, and severe gastric disease, brought on him by high living and getting into discordant circles. He is very, very sensitive, and bad conditions and rich flesh food had made him so ill that for weeks he had no manifestations. I gave my opinion of his state of disease, and its causes, and the remedy. “Joey” was sharp enough to see that I was right, and firm enough to make Willie obey me. For more than a year I was mother and physician to the boy. He had been a smoker. He had drunk wine, beer, &c., as others do—not intemperately, as it is termed, but his health had suffered greatly. In the privacy of our own home, Dr. Nichols and I examined the phenomena. We had what “Ernest” called “a model circle,” and we have never published the most marvellous of our manifestations. Last year Willie went to Holland. He is an eminently friendly person. I was told that he smoked on the way with some sailors. Whether this is true I do not know, for I did not ask him, but our first circle after his return was a very disturbed one. Willie was thrown on the floor in a state of catalepsy; tobacco was put in his mouth, being brought, as I am convinced, through locked doors. He was made awfully sick, and when he came out of the cataleptic state he was told that if he were not careful to avoid all his former bad habits he would go again into the state he was in when he came to us.

I have seen so much of evil results in *séances* from bad habits, that I think the first thing to teach people who seek spiritual manifestations is that they should come into court with clean hands and hearts. If one's theological creed is cruel or merciful according to the state of their liver and digestion, spiritual manifestations may be equally influenced.

As to putting spirits in the place of God, a Catholic should remember that the great charge brought by Protestants against the Church is that she puts the Blessed Mother and the saints in the place of God. People make their way upward through the spirits to the Creator of the spirits. The rivers run into the sea. Our Spiritualism, whether we are called Catholics, Dissenters, or Spiritualists, is what we make it. It is pure, if we are pure. Spiritualism is never to be trodden under foot, or cast out, but our evils are to be trodden down and cast out. Then we shall have the communion of saints instead of dealing with evil spirits.

As to select spirit circles being formed, we cannot be too select, but I cannot be content to take my spirit communion and manifestations secondhand; and others feel as I do. I must know for myself.

After we came into the Catholic Church from the teaching of spirits, who appeared in our circle and spoke through me, teaching us the dogmas of the Church that we knew nothing of (we did not even know the number of the sacraments), I was assailed by many priests and others, who believed that Spiritualism was diabolism. I said, “Why should the devil bring me into the Church?” An archbishop said to me, “I never said it was the devil; but if it were I am much obliged to him.”

A bishop said when some one told him that the devil had brought us into the Church, “I say the Lord sent them if the devil brought them.” After I had been “knocked about” a good deal by those who held the “diabolic theory” of Spiritualism, I became acquainted with a Roman Catholic priest, who was a doctor of Divinity, and the greatest man in the Church on the Western Continent. He said to me, “Do you hold circles now?” I said, “No, I have not done so for some time.” The fact was I had been badgered out of my right and my privilege for the time being. He said solemnly to me, “You must have *séances*; this is the way the Almighty has brought you, it is *your* way, and you must be faithful in it.” After that I held *séances*, and he joined our circle, and often sat with us. I was then put under an obedience to see and record such manifestations in my own mediumship and that of others as I thought were of sufficient importance to be so recorded.

I submitted this obedience in 1862 to the then highest dignitary in the Roman Catholic Church in England. It was confirmed, and a priest was to be set apart to examine my records. This was hindered by the death of this dignitary, who said to me, “I could deny my own faith as readily as I can deny what comes to Spiritualists.”

I have faithfully recorded facts in my own mediumship, and in that of other mediums, during twenty-two years, and I hold my work, or an abstract of it, at the service of the holy father, or any Catholic, or other person who rightly seeks to know what is done and taught by my Spiritualism. I have had the service of the best mediums in the world, and under my own prescribed conditions, sanctioned by my guides and the guides of the other mediums. For twenty-two years we have been members of the Roman Catholic Church, and for twenty-eight years I have been a subjected medium for clairvoyance, clairaudience, speaking, writing, and healing. All this time I have been a student in Spiritualism, not of promiscuous circles, not of mediums against whom I felt a protest. It has been given me to discern spirits, to form harmonic circles, to have *séances* with most marvellous manifestations, and which have tended to the improvement of life. I do not wish to see phenomena unless their tendency is to make men wiser and better. To this end all my prayers and efforts are consecrated. Labour is prayer, and with desire and with deed I labour for the redemption of the Church and the world through Spiritualism.

MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

32, Popstone-road, Earl's Court, London, S.W.

SIR,—Miss Kislingbury's letter last week gave me much pleasure, as it looked through the physical phenomena as if through a mental telescope, at the intelligent power acting in an etherealised form, thinking, willing, doing—a power affirming it is acting under the direction of power still higher, and advising the inferior physical framework called human to yield its trinity of powers, body, soul, and spirit, to that higher power we call God, with hearty joy.

The kitchen powers of cooks may be of vital importance to those who live to eat; but to those who eat to live, that they may examine the physical and mental of their surroundings, and through them enjoy a foretaste of those engagements it will be their inheritance to enjoy after the close of this preliminary life, the mere phenomena through mediums do not suffice.

Physical Spiritualistic phenomena are of essential use to all Spiritualists; but the true beneficial use of them to each person is great, just in proportion as they give knowledge to rest on, before we take another faith journey up toward the uplands of the infinite.

To me the chief end of man is to glorify God by our knowledge and actions, and hereafter enjoy Him for ever—work ample for a finite being.

The public meeting held last October at Langham Hall, through the “service of song,” struck the key-note for 1879 to Spiritualists. When we have shown to the various sections of church organisations that their leading tenets are ours, and ours theirs, we shall band them with us in 1880, for the great event in 1881, registered in the inside of the Great Pyramid before the Mosaic and Christian eras had a place in history. Band them with us in the meantime, in assailing the armies of non-Godists.

J. ENMORE JONES.

Enmore Park, S.E.

SIR,—I wish I had time to answer—as a Spiritualist—Miss Kislingbury's letter. For I think it requires an answer: I think it requires a good deal of answering: I hope that some things in it will be answered. For my own part, I should like to tell her at length both how much I agree with and how much I differ from her; because I think I should represent some other Spiritualists, and because, as I have said, her letter ought not to pass unnoticed, coming, as it does, from one who has been considered as a representative Spiritualist.

But I am too busy, just now, studying out some very beautiful physical laws—made, I doubt not, by One who should receive our worship—to be able to leave my work for more than a brief space. And thus any answer of mine must be indirect and suggestive rather than categorical. But how is a simple Spiritualist to answer some of the questions that Miss Kislingbury puts, and some of the statements she makes, without awakening the *odium theologicum*, without hurting the feelings of those whose most cherished convictions are based upon feeling. I will not bring in here other creedists, considering Spiritualism from their point of view; this might give offence, because all creedists naturally consider their creed to be immensely better than others. I will simply say, meekly but very earnestly, that if Spiritualism—the experimental proof of our immortality, and of the probability of holding intercourse with those who have passed away—if this revelation, which has come to us without any regard for human weakness or respect for human authority, be a *fact*, if it be *true*, then to “cast it out and tread it under foot,” is to ensure our own condemnation. For, as Carlyle says, “A fact is a *divine* revelation; and he who acts contrary to it sins against God.” And this is the case whatever may be, or seem to be, “the teachings” of a fact, the consequences of a truth; whether it confirm, or whether it render ridiculous, the dogmas and traditions to which the human mind tends to cling.

To my mind one of the greatest missions of Spiritualism, accomplished in some measure by every truth discovered, is to relieve humanity from the frightful nightmares which have oppressed it, and under the influence of which it became mentally and therefore morally degraded, and soiled with all the crimes which have been perpetrated in the name of religion. One of these nightmares, in my opinion, is the idea that almost everything in us and about us is “Satanic,” that “the world” is Satanic, that “the flesh” is Satanic. But what I regard as a mediæval superstition, Miss Kislingbury evidently now considers to be a very hallowed religious tenet. In the mere matter of this difference I should endeavour to respect her conscientious belief, and I should claim the same respect for mine. But I think we both are Spiritualists as well as truth-seekers; and what light does Spiritualism throw upon the question at issue between us? Does it give any support to the “Satanic” theory? Does it show us our friends who never “overcame the world and the flesh,” nor dreamed of doing so, worse off than the monk and the recluse who did? Does it not rather, whilst showing us this world as a sphere for useful work, as something to be improved by our earnest unselfish endeavour, and our body as a very beautiful piece of work, to be neither despised nor degraded, tell us, with Theodore Parker, that “The popular theology of Christendom, one of the many errors which man has cast out of him, has much to answer for? It debases God, and it degrades man. It makes us think meanly of ourselves, and dreadfully of our Creator.” And if so, if it does not endorse certain vagaries of faith, is it on this account “a thing to be cast out and trodden under foot?”

Laborare est orare! A friend whom we call “Marquis,” who has communicated with us from “the other side” for several years past, said to us on Christmas Day:—

“You will be surprised to hear I have progressed. I am in the fourth sphere—fifth circle. Work, work, work has pulled me up!”

Another extract from the last entry in our *Notes of Séances*. Of great significance to us, perhaps it may be so to some others. (Sitters, my mother, my wife, and myself.)

“Q. Dear W—, what has kept you away from me?”

“A. Past life. Passed higher now. Shall not affect medium. Shall always come—one of the band.”

"Q. Tell us what kept you back.

"A. My wasted life! . . . We find these things out when we come here. . . . Your medium did suffer when I came before. . . . I am now in the third sphere—sixth circle."

On this occasion the influence on the medium was rather pleasant than otherwise; on previous occasions its effect was to make her very ill. But what I wish to mention is that the control, a relative, had led a very retired, secluded life—one of devotion to a sister and her child; but he had evidently not cultivated sufficiently those faculties and those energies, those opportunities for doing good work, which it is one of the objects of this life to develop.

There is an unwholesome ferment of the mind—utilised in all ages by priestcraft—in which its tendency is to set up idols and to offer sacrifices rather than to do steady, telling work—generally without any excitement in it—with the trustful, smiling confidence in God's goodness, for which the "little child" is our exemplar. In this condition the notion of having a soul "to save" from some horrible doom is a great resource. "Nothing," says Isaac Taylor, "is more dangerous than to indulge notions which tend to make us think our tastes and principles more refined and elevated than those of the Creator and Ruler of the universe. Something of this infatuation very commonly besets ardent and abstracted minds."

Let us not call Spiritualism "a religion." Surely it is something better than this reference to "modes of faith" would imply. It is something which underlies all religions, and constitutes their life when they are not dead. Neither let us call it "the religion"—that which alone can make man "one with the Father." It is something less than that!

DESMOND G. FITZ-GERALD.

6, Akerman-road, Brixton.

SIR,—It may be quite true that testimony of our common human senses is not reliable; but if so, what evidence have we concerning anything material whatever? What do we know, what can we know, of externals, if our five senses are not correct reporters?

We meet an old friend, a father, a mother, brother, or sister. Trusting our senses, we recognise and treat them as such, and take for granted their identity: That sometimes we are mistaken we all know; but this means that we are not mistaken as a rule, though we have only our senses to guide us. Both the friends who meet being sentient, it would seem as if we cannot be mistaken, unless we be so in regard to all physical phenomena.

We place a vessel of water over a jet of burning gas. The water boils, and we infer that the heat of the gas causes the ebullition. No one doubts that such is the case, though nobody can prove the proposition if human senses are not proper witnesses.

We attend a spiritual seance. A table moves, though no one touches it; "raps" are heard upon it, under the same conditions as to contact. Intelligent communications are given through the same channel; the "raps" or "tips" being, therefore, the means used by the occult power which produces these signs, or that the signs are, at least, concurrent phenomena.

We often find that the communications thus obtained contain statements of facts that none present know anything about, or were otherwise familiar to persons present; and we very often find such statements to be entirely correct.

We ask whence such mysterious phenomena are derived, and invariably (if the inquiry be in a sincere spirit) receive the reply that they are simply the work of spirits of human beings who once lived upon earth, and generally of those whom some of the inquirers present very well knew. The said inquirers sometimes recognise the apparent identity of the communicants as displayed in their manners, sentiments, and modes of speech.

Having been educated in the superstitions of those Christian churches which assume and teach that no departed spirits have returned to this earth since about 30 A.D., most of us find much difficulty in realising that the above solution can be the real, the correct one, so cheated have we been "out of our senses;" in fact, out of our capacity for properly appreciating phenomena which, above all others, are of the most importance to the welfare and happiness of mortals.

We, however, persevere in these investigations. Our own best faculties are exercised and thereby strengthened in the pursuit, while at the same time the conditions for further development improve; we at last pass quite through "shadow land," and aim at a stage of progress which enables these same spirits who could once "rap," or "tip," or speak, or write, to appear in *propria persona*, just as they were in life—"like men (and women) walking." We recognise, through our ordinary senses, many of our departed friends and relatives, and have the happiness of finding not a hair of their head scorched even. Seeing them is a crime which would set Smithfield in a blaze again if the torch—that most important argument of superstition—were still available.

Now, if the evidence of our senses is not to be trusted concerning these materialisations of spirits—for such these intelligences invariably declare themselves to be—what evidence have we to offer in proof of the reality of anything whatever concerning what we, nevertheless, most confidently designate as human experience?

The charter of professional Christianity rests upon the assurance that no further demonstrations of the spiritual world are now possible; that, therefore, there can be no other rule of life, or theory of a future world, than was revealed in the Christian era. This is a kind of claim that is common to most existing forms of faith. It is made, no doubt, with a degree of sincerity which is common to all of them, each being the dupe of its own educational system, a system which invades the nursery and dementalses the infant in its cradle. The monster that Hercules slew in his cradle was a guardian angel as compared with that which teaches that a few only of our race can escape a "hell" to which nearly all are doomed, our families and friends included, of course; and yet

the few escaping righteous are sufficiently depraved to suppose they can be happy under such circumstances!

Competing railways are sometimes pretty bitter; but it is not until we see intelligent and sincere men declaring that all roads to heaven but their own will surely land their passengers in eternal torments, that we have discovered the bitterness of ticket vendors, or the folly, and darkness, and malice of stockholders and governing councils, or the extravagance of that quackery which is so much despised by most intelligent persons, yet which declares on each of its own gallipots (spiritual) that all others are base imitations, and sure to "damn" the patient they pretend to cure and save.

JOSEPH P. HAZARD,

London.

(Of Rhode Island, U.S.A.)

SIR,—I cannot bear to see so decided an attack on Spiritualism as one of your correspondents printed last week, without venturing to combat it. I have come to my present frame of mind about Spiritualism not from any sudden or hasty change of opinion, but my now decided convictions are the result of long years of thought, inquiry, reading, and observation, here and elsewhere. Those convictions are that progress, mental and other, is the grand road to the Almighty, and that we must all go on learning from the greatest to the least—humbly, reverently, and patiently; and that Spiritualism is at present the greatest spiritual power we now have to wean us from the dry bones of the past and set us on our way to the great future. I abhor dogmatising, even on feelings, so will just say that it is because I feel that there are so many weak souls "tossed about by every wind of doctrine," and so imbued with that vague but terrible fear of Satanic agency rather than of reliance and faith in the power and love of God, that I enter a protest in the attempt to help to cheer and encourage doubting souls. That dread of Satanic agency ought to be publicly sifted. There are a few verses in the Bible which are quoted, I believe, in support of this doctrine, but they entirely fail to convince critical and spiritual people, for to believe so strongly in the devil is to my mind to disbelieve strongly in God, whose Name we say and write so glibly, but in whom we trust and believe so woefully little.

We are of the earth, earthy, and we must have Spiritualism. M.

SIR,—Would to heaven that such a Catholic council as you suggest might assemble to seek religion, not discuss theology; but the cup and the platter are still all-important in the eyes of the priesthood, hence the course of their communion were the reverent leaders forcibly collected would not run smooth, and the end might probably be pieces rather than peace.

We must wait, I fear, until the angel "Fortuitous Concurrence," who brings together in due order the inanimate atoms of the dust, performs the like service for the animate and conscious atoms of it; but the dust atoms have, it would seem, no chairman of their own; their government is apparently quite external and arbitrary. If that be also finally the case with the man atoms, I, their proposed chairman, should be thankful.

But if imperious "Fortuitous Concurrence" pinned me to this presiding as she pinned Cromwell to his, my first act would be to kick out Mr. Bradlaugh, and politely to hand out Messrs. Huxley and Tyndall, in a manner benevolent if "bigoted," for even subdued light is unpleasant to bouncing bat and sapient owl—and then with closed doors await Pentecost.

Yet after all, supposing the Master whose teachings have been brought to us from far India by tender mother "Fortuitous Concurrence," should be seen by the council as the *Light of the World*, the divinest conceivable revelation of the Heaven Father to the earth children, Immanuel to throbbing brains and weary hearts for whom this universe is one mighty manifestation of *God Life*, but who, in seeing *Him* see the *Father*, and are at rest. Is this unlikely? All is Divine that is in Thee, if Thou art not all the Divine.

In our most dull-eyed moments, when stars are stars, not eyes of heaven; when the wind is *not* His angel, and the fire is *not* His minister, and the clouds are *not* His chariots, oh! human-hearted Jesus, Thou art the **Word made flesh!* "Who is the God to whom we shall offer our worship?"—I am, yours ever faithfully,

NO MATTER WHO.

SIR,—The note which has sounded in a letter signed "Emily Kinslingbury" in your last issue will, I hope, recall Spiritualists who have the cause at heart to some of the real objects for which the elder students of the science have contested for so many years. Permit me, then, as one whose first note-books on the subject date from 1853, at a time when many of the present advocates had as yet not devoted attention to the subject, to attempt to check in some way the career of an investigation in which I have always felt much interest, in the hope that more powerful arms than my own may succeed in arresting it in what I must deem to be a downward tendency.

Before that "Niagara is shot" which each individual scientific inquirer must traverse for himself, it behoves us to ascertain whether much of the current literary and oral teaching of Spiritualism is consonant with the modes of investigation practised by the earlier inquirers, and whether the course which has been indicated by some is that which in the history of other sciences has been attended with success.

Spiritualism as a religion has been much praised, and I would in these days, when nearly every school of thought claims a right, and threatens a power to enforce its doctrines upon the minority, inquire what are its qualifications to be placed on the same pedestal with the most peculiar or smallest sect registered by law. If we seek among the ranks of

*The roaring loom of time which weaves for God the garment we see Him by. Let mental culture go on advancing; let science go on gaining depth and breadth, and the human intellect expand as it may, it will never go beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it shines forth in the gospels.—Goethe.

Spiritualists, even among those men whose sincerity of purpose, holiness, and ardour of conviction have made them justly respected leaders, we fail to perceive any unity of belief.

One Spiritualist believes in the immortality of the soul; another denies it.

One considers the resurrection of the body to be an essential article of the faith he possesses; another strongly dissents from this belief.

One considers the fact of the return to earth of the souls or spirits of the departed at a *séance*, or otherwise, to be an essential article of the Spiritualist belief. Another person, not less loyal in conviction to the cause of what he deems to be genuine Spiritualism, finds no pressing necessity to declare that he possesses a soul during life, and refrains from threatening his neighbour with its *post mortem* appearance.

One Spiritualist considers that the revelation given in the various sacred books, commonly accepted by many persons in the Christian, Jewish, Mohammedan, Buddhist, and other religions, was, prior to the advent of the Rochester rappings, all-sufficient to satisfy the intellectual and moral needs of any person whose soul was diseased, and who aspired towards a higher life. Others pity the ignorance of the bygone ages, at the time when the Greek grammar was taught in elementary schools to the living, and the dead were prayed for in their quiet graves. Such are pleased with a new revelation, whose claims to genuineness rest on the ignoral of the hopes of all those persons who, up to thirty years ago, had fulfilled their life career.

One person is perfectly convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena presented through this or that physical medium, and often carries his belief to the excess of expressing faith in the accuracy of the statements which this medium asserts in or out of the trance condition, and obedience to the advice of the assumed "control." His opponent selects this especial medium as a "dreadful example" of imposture, and, as in a recent case, is too ready to condemn him on the flimsiest of evidence, and after the most slipshod investigation.

The Continental medium who is inspired by the teachings of Allan Kardec is fervent in asserting the doctrines of reincarnation, and the ghosts which appear through his mediumship, out of deference to the habitual thoughts of the circle, terminate their addresses by a vehement *Priez pour nous*. The Teutonic spirit, however, passes over the reincarnationist theory with a contemptuous sneer, and although his customer has no objection to pay five shillings for the privilege of an interview with the soul of one of his departed relatives, he has every objection to be so entirely out of the track of nineteenth century progress, as to utter a prayer for the eternal rest of what he conceives to be a departed soul.

One school of observers is vehement in favour of certain methods of test, which are satisfactory to themselves. Rope, cord, broad and narrow, red and white tape have all been supported by successive generations of inquirers. I have often been struck with the sceptic, who at an inquirer's *séance* is willing that some method of securing the medium should be practised which is quite satisfactory to himself, and quite within the scope of the experiments which an *impromptu* provision against imposture might suggest. Yet such a test in the eyes of those who have watched the methods by which deceitful mediums might cheat, and are said to have cheated, is perfectly valueless, and though it serves to satisfy the scruples of the ignorant sceptic, it is nugatory in view of the more experienced tester.

But the greatest difficulty in defining what collective objects may be existing in the aims of all the modern Spiritualists is the introduction of an element which, without offence, may be termed the *bourgeois* train of thought. It has often been a subject of temporary surprise and permanent grief to me to hear Spiritualists on numerous public and private occasions boldly decide offhand on subjects of science, theology, and philosophy with perfect readiness, and with that *aplomb* which might lead the inquirer to fancy that their authoritative decisions were the outcome of years of thought, accumulation of evidence, or vast erudition. The prevalence of this laxity of education, and consequent laxity of thought, has tended in many cases to an undercurrent being developed of theories which, being held by Spiritualists, are often identifiable with the unwritten creed of the science. We have only to look at the advertisement columns of some of the Transatlantic newspapers to understand exactly what I mean. The subjects of the engineer, the telegraphist, or the geologist are not mixed up with the *exuvie* which often cover Spiritualism, but there appears to be some inscrutable law by which the enemy is permitted to shoot all his rubbish on the Spiritualist side of the hedge. Mr. D. G. Fitz-Gerald has in a recent letter referred to this flaw, and it is melancholy that in Spiritualism should continually, either through wilful malice or carelessness, be exposed to difficulties which would crush the upward progress of any other science with the outside world. The *bourgeois* (shall I not rather call it the *épiciér*?) element, is naturally prone to seek for wonders, and the success of the Research Committee's experiments, and of the fortnightly discussion meetings, have been attained in spite of it. The instant the dry light of experiment and the fierce flame of discussion has been let in on the subject, it is remarkable how clear the atmosphere has become, and how few the cases of fraud which are at present known to us. Personally, though I am aware that my opinions are not those of the majority, I think that cases of fraud have never been very prevalent; at least, that they have been confined to other bathymetrical levels than those I know. I carefully guard myself against advocating any of the above theories, as, for the sake of my present argument, I merely wish to show their diversity. Some must be wrong.

I, therefore, have to repeat what I said at the time of the National Conference of Spiritualists (*The Spiritualist*, Feb. 23, 1877), that I "thought that Spiritualism had little influence on our ideas about a future life or theological dogma. To him it offered a number of physical facts, perfectly true, in which he did not see any moral bearing whatever." Those persons who have not definitely made up their

minds as to any given point of theology, and who require the sound of a rap, or the flourish of the *drapeau blanc* of "materialised" grenadine to convince them of the immortality of the human soul, will of course seek in the evidence for such as will satisfy them. But it may be a question whether a belief which is entirely built up on *à posteriori* evidence will be deep, permanent, or valuable. It must also be remembered that a belief in the perfect accuracy of many Spiritualistic phenomena is with many scientific minds compatible with a denial of all soul, spirit, or future life.

If I have in any way led others to consider the fact that Spiritualists have no common creed which any one could propose with the chance of acceptance by all, or without the certainty of the exclusion of a powerful minority, and consequently no "note of unity," I have disposed of the claims of a nebulous, though luminous body to be the illuminator of others unto truth, or, in other words, to be "a new religion."

C. CARTER BLAKE.

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SIR,—It is with no little timidity that I venture to call your attention to the series of meetings I am now inaugurating, knowing how many there are in the ranks of Spiritualism better able to do justice to the subject and carry on the work. But London is too large and the Spiritualists too numerous to have such a dearth of places where the gospel of our instructive religion is dispensed. I believe the duty of the hour is the mission of a life, grasping in essence the undeveloped possibilities of an untraced future; and its faithful performance, seed sown for an infinite harvest. Science is a power, religion a precept, Atheism a circle, in the centre of which Spiritualism exists and plays an important part in developing the intrinsic worth of its surroundings. Born of God, in harmony with science, an epitome of wise truths, boundless in its capacity for good, it can truly be called the soul of science and the intellect of religion. The present is, I opine, an important epoch in the world's history; mind is ceasing to toy with matter, and is evidencing in many ways its real supremacy, and the duty of the hour is to develop to its fullest capacity the "one talent God has intrusted to His people." To this end I invite all friends of the cause to assist with their presence and experience in making these meetings of service to mankind and value to the cause. I present this with no flourish of trumpets, with no appeal for money, with only a desire to serve those who cannot pay for a private interview, and those who desire to have a platform from which something can be heard concerning the religion of Spiritualism. My altar is Truth; my creed the highest law God has revealed unto my soul; and giving as I do the week to professional labour, feel that one day in seven I can best serve God by freely dispensing the gospel of Spiritualism to His people.

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