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## "THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER:

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

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, PRICE TWOPENCE.

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Monday, 16th.—DISCUSSION MEETING. Mr. Stainton Moses, M.A., on "The Intelligent Operator at the Other End of the Line."  
Friday, 20th.—Library Committee, at 5.30 p.m.  
" " Experimental Research Committee, at 6.30.

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# The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

No. 329.—VOLUME THIRTEEN; NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR.

LONDON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13th, 1878.

## THE RELIGIOUS SIDE OF SPIRITUALISM.

PERHAPS nothing would be more beneficial to Spiritualism in London at the present time than a series of Sunday morning services and ministrations, of sufficiently good quality to bring together those Spiritualists who now attend other places of worship at the West End. To do this high ability must be utilised, and among Spiritualists some may be found willing and able to do the work, if invited. An alternation of normal and trance addresses would probably answer as well as it did some years ago in Liverpool.

The truest and most solid progress in Spiritualism will be made by philosophical research, although at first sight such method appears to have a destructive effect upon ideality. The poet of past times who might have written sarcastic verses about the details of the plodding work of the astronomer in his observatory, would have had but temporary triumph; that patient work has enlarged a millionfold and more the universe previously pictured to man's knowledge; it has diminished our little world to a fragment of star-dust among countless others pursuing their silent courses in stellar space; it has revealed suns and systems innumerable, and furnished a broader theatre for the exercise of the idealistic and religious sentiments than our imaginary sarcastic poet could have conceived. Just so is it to-day. Those who confine themselves to prayers and praises, but who cannot criticise or investigate, appear for the moment to be in the van of religious progress, but their brethren who investigate and slowly eliminate law after law from patiently verified facts, in the long run will be found to have unravelled the principles by which soul and body are united, and to have placed the truth of man's continued existence on such a basis of clear evidence, that all the great intellectual force of the materialistic scientific world will be powerless to shake the edifice. Mere preaching, either inside or outside Spiritualism, can raise no such structure, and the intellectual world is getting tired of the drawing upon the inner-consciousness for information about a future life, instead of drawing upon evidence which can be verified.

## PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

BY J. E. REES.

In our eager investigation of phenomena which appear to us to be outside the ordinary course of nature, we are, perhaps, liable to overlook the marvellous operations with which custom has made us familiar. Take, for example, the mystery of the "quiet growth" of nature. The universal law of life is and must be growth. This fact is so trite that we do not pause to consider how wonderful it is. And yet to a thoughtful mind how marvellous are the imperceptible processes of the growth of vegetable and organic life.

The stealthy insidious monotony of growth! How impossible we find it to mark the actual transition from infancy to youth, from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age. By quiet advances, by unrecognisable degrees, growth asserts itself, and, with its silent agency, produces manifold results. The keenest observer has never yet determined the actual moment of the change from seed to shoot, from shoot to bud, from bud to flower. We scarcely note the passing day, yet, in its inexorable course, growth acts alike upon body, mind, and spirit.

Nature knows no pause—no irregularity in her course. Following the eternal law of order and of growth, the ceaseless infinitesimal actions of progress succeed each other in unvarying monotony.

The unseen agency of Providence works by operations too minute for observation. In our ignorance we too often forget this, and in our anxiety to discover some great thing

we set at nought the wisdom of nature's laws, and fashion others for ourselves. Yet in this law of growth lies all that we know of compensation here, and all that we can best hope of eternity hereafter.

In early life, when bodily growth is most active, and we are most susceptible to its influence, we little realise the possibilities of our later years. How energetically we declare that we cannot outlive the emotions of our youthful passions, and how assured we are that our principles and sentiments are unchangeable. When our first trouble meets us we cry out that we must die, that no one can suffer so and live; but nature asserts her law, and mind and body alike survive the storm. Later, when the clouds gather again, we stand aghast. Sorrow, calamity, affliction, in their turn assail us; our hearts fail, we feel that life is unendurable, that the crushing load of sorrow and of anxiety cannot be carried, but we are stronger than we know. The anguish of the present becomes the anguish of the past, and still the steady growth of mind and spirit repairs the wasted energies, builds up the shattered fabric. The grass grows over the grave, the spirit reasserts itself. We smile once more; and before we are ready to acknowledge it the quiet, unseen agency of growth has healed the wound, and only a scar bears witness to the agony of the past.

From the cradle to the grave, without one interval or pause, we grow, and when the link which binds the spirit to its tenement of clay is snapped asunder, the silent agency of growth but changes in its course, and, without hesitancy or delay, consigns the particles which formed the body to the promotion of some other organism.

And by every law of analogy, by every argument of reason, the spirit released from its prison must be growing too. It was a keen appreciation of this inevitable law which first drew my attention to the phenomena of Spiritualism, for in them I hoped to find some confirmation of the continued progress of the spirit in the hereafter.

Now, if the spirit lives, as we believe it does, and freed from its burden of flesh continues the existence commenced here or elsewhere, it follows as a natural deduction that it grows. Life without growth is an anomaly, and growth of whatever kind must be in strict accordance with the law of life. It would therefore appear that the spirit released would in no essential differ from the spirit enchained, and that excepting for the fact that it will take place under improved conditions, its progress in the spirit-world must be analogous to its progress here.

This truth, if acknowledged at once, meets the objection most often adduced to so-called spirit communications that they are frivolous and unworthy of spirits.

If growth in the spirit-world bears any relation to growth here, it is gradual, imperceptible, and amenable to an eternal law. There can then be no sudden change at death; the spirit which to-day is with us is no whit different when to-morrow it is somewhere else. This would appear to be the direct teaching of modern spiritism, and if it be so it is in no way in opposition to the laws of religion, natural or revealed. It is contrary to all that we know of the workings of Providence to suppose that any radical change takes place directly the spirit is released from the encumbrance of its bodily frame.

What it has been here, it will, it must of necessity be there, upon its first entrance into the new life. And once there its spiritual growth must be in strict accordance with law. Why should the law for the spirit flown be other than that which governed it here? It is just the recognition of this truth that *growth* is essential to life, which revolts the mind against the acceptance of the orthodox views of heaven and hell. Where there is life there must be growth; where there is growth there must also be progress of some

sort, in some direction; and by every known analogy the growth will be gradual and progressive.

The spirit, fitted by its probationary earth life for a higher sphere, will, following the inevitable law of growth, find, without shock or change, its level, and enter upon an existence in simple continuation of its earth-bound life. And upon the same ground the spirit, which here from lack of education or from perversity has attained a lower standard, will follow the natural laws of its growth.

This being so, the deduction must be that spirits, if they communicate at all, will do so in styles and with objects as varied as our earthly companions. Those who were frivolous here will be frivolous there, and delight in frivolous manifestations; and it is absurd to suppose that the mere release from the body can endow the spirit at once with knowledge or wisdom very far in advance of its earthly attainment. That those who have long left the earth have progressed is a necessary sequence; and if they *could* so far oppose the necessary condition of spirit-life as to revisit earth, no doubt they could teach us much—but—can they? In time the action of growth must carry the spirit further and further from us, and lessen the influences which in its earlier spirit-life may have surrounded it. Here lies the attractive teaching of spiritism, and in this it violates no known law, and if it is contrary to our prejudices, it may be possibly, because "custom doth lie upon us" so heavenly that we are afraid to think for ourselves. If we consider that *growth* is the essential law of life, we cannot believe that at death the spirit finds its finality. If we accept the belief of the spirit's progress, we open up for ourselves and others a future of hope and of satisfaction which we can never find in a stereotyped and final heaven.

#### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

At the last two meetings of the Psychological Society, held at 11, Chandos-street, Cavendish-square, London, under the presidency of Mr. Serjeant Cox, a discussion took place on Mr. W. H. Coffin's paper on Somnambulism.

Mr. F. R. Munton, hon. secretary, read the following letter from Mr. F. W. Thurston, B.A.:—

*To the Secretary of the Psychological Society of Great Britain.*

DEAR SIR,—As cases of madness come under the cognisance of the Psychological Society, perhaps you may think the following case worthy of communication:—I was enabled to watch the sufferer from the first symptom of eccentricity to the final state of raving mania, and I was struck with the fact—it may be a coincidence—that the gradual development of the diseased fancies seem to point to the gradual softening of the faculties in the precise order that phrenologists map down in the lobe on the top of the head. First, he suddenly, and without apparent reason, took it into his head that his previous life had been very sinful, and he commenced to read his Bible all day long, and to change all his habits of life. Here his *Consciousness* was evidently affected. Next he took to watching the heavens with reverent gaze, and to pray to God. His *Veneration* had become touched. A week or so after this he began to give sovereigns away to beggars, and say he was told to do so. The disease had reached his *Benevolence*. A few days after his *Ideality* and *Reason* went together. He imagined the Devil was always standing by him trying to take him away; his reason could not rectify his diseased notion. He could not distinguish at times his very friends; he became raving.

I think this case tends to prove not only the existence of the separate faculties, but the order of them as set down by phrenologists.

As it is the only instance in my personal experience of such development of insanity, I should have been inclined to put it down to a coincidence, had I not remembered that Mr. Coombes in his work has shown that cases of insanity are strong evidences of the truth of his theory. Perhaps the study of other cases of gradual softening of the brain might help us to map the localities of the various functions on a surer basis than that of the questionable practice of craniology.

21, Berners-street, Oxford-street, W., Nov. 20th, 1878.

Dr. Wyld remarked that although almost all physicians admitted natural somnambulism, they inconsistently denied artificial somnambulism; he asserted the phenomena of both to be identical. Physicians aspersed the character of artificial somnambulists, and took abominable liberties by running pins and needles into them. Physicians admitted that somnambulists could write when a book was placed between their eyes and the paper; but what was that but clairvoyance? Mr. Coffin had spoken of the mind arriving at a fine point in these ectstatic conditions; he (Dr. Wyld) had published a theory to explain that in *The Spiritualist*; the mind, so to speak, passed through an aperture, and was enlightened in spiritual realms beyond. His clairvoyant, Miss Tilley, when mesmerised by Dr. Mack, described to the latter the garden at the back of his house in the United States, but persisted in saying that she could see no great cherry tree in the middle of it. Dr. Mack's next letter from America informed him that the cherry tree had been cut down and carted away. He had long suspected that clairvoyance might be injurious to natural

eyesight, and knew of one case of the kind; clairvoyants should not sit too frequently, and should frequently have their eyes mesmerised.

Mr. C. C. Massey wished some physiologist to say whether in the lifting of great weights by mesmeric sensitives more power was exercised than had been stored up in the muscles. If so, the origin of the force must be sought elsewhere.

Dr. Wyld said that the sensitives came out of the state stronger than when they entered it, notwithstanding the muscular exertion.

Dr. Carter Blake stated that soul or spirit power need not be called in to explain the mechanical result.

Mr. Serjeant Cox said that in somnambulism the mind often saw the external world otherwise than through the ordinary channel of the bodily senses; therefore somnambulism was calculated to throw much light on the nature of the soul of man. Dr. Tuke fully admitted that the somnambulant state could be produced by mesmerism; Dr. Carpenter admitted the same, but gave a roundabout explanation to it, which had better have been given in plain English. (Applause.) The speaker then described several cases of clairvoyance, which have been previously published in *The Spiritualist*. He added that cases were daily decided in every court of justice in England, on evidence one fifty-thousandth less strong than had been adduced to prove the majority of psychic phenomena. (Applause.)

Professor Plumtre remarked that Dr. Carpenter woke up one morning to find he had, in an unconscious state, performed some writing, and that the ink was scarcely dry. Dr. Carpenter also narrated how he made a mesmerised woman forget her own sex, then suggested to her—"My dear sir, get married!" She replied, "Oh! Doctor! How can you recommend a wife to a dying man?" (Laughter.) These things were in the last edition of Dr. Carpenter's *Mental Physiology*, which was nearly twice as large as its predecessor, and in which Dr. Carpenter admitted a great deal.

Major Owen expressed the opinion that Dr. Carpenter must be a medium, since he wrote in the trance state.

Mr. Dunlop regretted that the phenomena discussed were not presented to the society at its meetings instead of merely talked about. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. Wyld thought that matter had no existence *per se*, but existed only as a manifestation of force, and that the Divine mind penetrated it anywhere. Man, in his spiritual state, rose nearer to the Divine mind, consequently then had greater power over external nature.

Mr. W. H. Coffin, in reply, said that, as anticipated, the debate had been confined to the alleged phenomena of clairvoyance, thought-reading, and phreno-mesmerism, naturally predicated of a psychic state so mysterious and unaccustomed as somnambulism, instead of the obvious, undisputed, but little understood conditions of it. So far from a complete sealing of the senses being characteristic (as he understood had been asserted by the learned president), it was obvious that, at least, the muscular sense is essential to even the simplest automatic motions, and he (the learned president) would not deny that ordinary sensible impressions in suggesting and influencing somnambulant manifestations were conveyed by ordinary sensory channels. The senses, however, may be variously and individually suspended or awakened, and, it being abundantly demonstrated that one or more may assume an exalted sensibility of exquisite delicacy, it is conceivable that acts and operations may thus be substitutively conducted in the absence of a sense usually concerned in them. The highly specialised sense of sight being more frequently suspended, the more generalised ones (muscular sense being the lowest) persisting in their inverse order, it is, at least, certain that in a great number of instances of acts performed with the eyes closed, the assumption of the existence of a supernatural perception resembling the power of seeing is entirely unnecessary. It is not, however, surprising that the observation of such phenomena associated with abnormal mental and psychical conditions should have suggested an illimitable extra visual sight; but without absolutely denying the possibility of "clairvoyance," as generally understood (in the absence of a postulate implying its negation), he (Mr. Coffin), in numerous alleged instances investigated by him, had never met with decisive evidences of its existence. To recapitulate—somnambulism, including, conveniently, the phenomena of hypnotism, "biology," trance, &c., spontaneous, artificially caused, or self-induced, presented an infinite variety of conditions, in which every possible combination and interaction of physical, mental, and psychical states are characterised, in his opinion, by the invariable suspension of the will.

The proceedings then closed.

#### A SEANCE WITH MISS COOK.

SIR,—On Thursday afternoon, the 5th inst., I had the privilege of being present at a *séance* at the rooms of Signor Rondi, 22, Montagu-place, the medium being Miss Kate Cook. The other sitters were Mrs. Cook, Signor Rondi, and another Italian gentleman. The medium was only partially concealed from such view as was possible in an unusually bad light by a bit of black curtain screening the back and one side of her chair (the other side being against the wall), but not at all interposing between the front of the chair and the sitter on the extreme left, who happened, by Signor Rondi's direction, to be my fortunate self. Miss Cook, feeling cold, had declined to take off her thick and heavy woollen jacket, which came over her dress, and was buttoned from the throat nearly down to the knees. To this garment I wish to call particular attention. I sat not five feet from the medium, whose every movement was distinctly audible, if not visible. I soon observed something white, now appearing, now disappearing, at her feet. "Lilly" soon afterwards showed herself in close proximity to us all successively, clad in white from head to foot. The medium's dress was of a dark colour, and over it, as I have said,

was the woollen jacket, which was brown, and trimmed with fur. I also touched the hands, arms, and shoulders of the fair figure, proving its materiality beyond question. But that which chiefly makes me consider this account worth publication is the following:—After I had ascertained, so far as touch and sight could inform me, that “Lilly” had not on the medium’s jacket nor her dress, she told me, standing by my side, that I might go up to her medium, and satisfy myself that she was in her chair. I jumped up at once, and Lilly seemed to disappear, rather than to retreat, before me. Almost instantly I was at the medium’s chair, and there, undoubtedly, was Miss Cook seated. Her head had fallen on one side, and I raised her into a more comfortable position. In doing so I found that the jacket was on, and, on passing my hand down the front, that it was buttoned right up as when she had taken her seat. No trace of the white garment of Lilly was visible. I also felt the feet, on which were boots fastened up to the ankles. When “Lilly” came out again I felt one of her feet, which was bare. This was soon, yet not immediately, after I had returned to my seat. But the really noticeable test, in my opinion, was the attire of the medium, as contrasted with that of “Lilly,” looking at the almost inappreciable interval of time between my observation of the one and of the other. At present I wish only to state facts, not to hazard conclusions. “Lilly” has promised me further and better proofs that she is a being physically distinct from the medium. I hope I may be permitted to witness them, for to establish this fact it is clearly necessary to prove more than what to some extent we already know of the inconceivable rapidity with which mediums can be dealt with by the powers manifesting through and upon them. It remains, therefore (at least for me), to be seen whether this most graceful and charming of “form manifestations” affords a physical demonstration equal to its æsthetic and psychological interest.

C. C. MASSEY.

Temple.

#### DEPARTURE OF MR. MARTHEZE ON A VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD.

A FEW days ago, Mr. J. N. T. Martheze, who for a long course of years has been one of the most quietly active Spiritualists in Europe, left England for a cruise round the world. His intention is to stay for a short time in Ceylon and in India, to see what he can of the psychic phenomena described by Jacolliot, so few travellers having their eyes open to intelligently observe that section of the occurrences of nature. After a few weeks stay in Ceylon he will proceed to Java; his next landing place will be California, whence he will travel Eastwards to those active spiritual centres, Boston and New York, on his way back to England.

Mr. Martheze is a native of Holland, but has strong English proclivities. The last letter we received from him came from on board his ship at “The Nore,” in which he expressed his regret at leaving “dear old England, a country which needs so many reforms.” For a long course of years Mr. Martheze has strengthened the cause of Spiritualism in England by the aid of capital, as well as by the intelligent personal study of its phenomena, and had all who were able to do so equalled him in the performance of their duty, and in the use of such powers as are at their command, Spiritualism in England would be in a perceptibly more advanced position than it is at present. The movement here is temporarily divorced from a true friend, whose quiet work has for the most part been unknown, but not unseen by the public, and who would deprecate this notice of the good he has done had he any voice in the matter.

MADAME LUCILE, the mesmeric sensitive, and her mesmerist, M. Donato, are rising in fame in Paris, and drawing large and fashionable audiences. They gave a private *séance* to M. Alexandre Aksakof, of St. Petersburg, who says that he then satisfied himself by experiment of the power of transmitting unexpressed thoughts, and that he intends to publish the details in *The Mesmeric Review* of Paris.

PROFESSOR MAX-MÜLLER ON ATHEISM.—The following is extracted from Professor Max-Müller’s article in the *Contemporary Review* for November, 1878, p. 731:—“There is an atheism which is unto death; there is another atheism which is the very life blood of all true faith. It is the power of giving up what, in our best, our most honest moments, we know to be no longer true; it is the readiness to replace the less perfect, however dear, however sacred it may have been to us, by the more perfect, however much it may be detested as yet by others. It is the true self-surrender, the true self-sacrifice, the greatest trust in truth, the truest faith. Without that atheism no new religion, no reform, no reformation, no resuscitation, would ever have been possible; without that atheism no new life is possible for any one of us.”

### Correspondence.

Great freedom is offered 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.]

#### SPIRITUALISM NORTHWARDS.

SIR,—Whilst on *tour* in the North of England during the past months, I was astonished to learn what wide and rapid progress Spiritualism has made amongst all classes. In every town I visited, large or small, there I found spirit circles and well-developed mediums.

Though almost invariably I was made welcome as an investigator, and received every facility to test all I saw or heard, yet in few places are the sittings thrown open to the public, but are, as a rule, conducted in private. This is excusable. In the provinces gossip is dear alike to the heart of man and woman; and the affairs of one neighbour possess a keen and exciting interest for the other, especially if they vary from the common routine of everyday life. Here, too, the cant of modern criticism lays its verbal bond upon the practice of Spiritualism, and reserves for all who would dare exercise their analytical faculties in this direction the choicest vials of its wrath.

In many instances I have found the circles composed of persons utterly illiterate to an astonishing degree in this age when the school-master is popularly supposed to be abroad. Yet, by constant sittings, they have come to learn of more things in heaven and on earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy, and receive manifold manifestations that are the despair of the most suspicious scrutiny, and set at defiance the sophistry of sages.

In most cases they regard Spiritualism as a religion, and practise it strictly as such.

The mind of man generally associates mystery with divinity.

So common, indeed, amongst them have been occurrences entirely beyond the reach of human power—the mere narration of which sounds passing strange to ears of flesh and blood—that they have come to regard them almost as the commonplace events of every day life.

I remember one evening, on which I was disengaged, walking a distance of about three miles to attend a *séance* held in the humble home of a collier, of whom, with his wife and three young children, together with another “pit man” and myself, the circle was composed. One of the men was a medium of rather recent development. Scarcely had we sat, however, on this night, when he became entranced. He spoke at some length to me concerning personal matters. All he said was true. But he *may* have been but hazarding guesses. I had never met him before.

Towards the end of the sitting I asked what spirits surrounded me.

“There is one,” he said, “near you: a female form.”

“Describe her,” I said.

He then gave the details of her appearance, dress, and the peculiar mode in which she had her hair arranged.

“Do you know her?” one of the sitters inquired.

I smiled with ready incredulity. “No,” I replied.

There was (but one person whom the spirit he described resembled, and she I believed to be living.

“She is very near you,” the medium continued, “and is smiling on you.”

A few days later I received some letters which had been delayed in forwarding from town to town: one contained the intelligence that she whose appearance the medium had mentioned as hovering near me had been dead a day or two before the evening when I attended the *séance*. On this earth she would smile never, never more.

How shall this circumstance be accounted for? Will it be set down as a coincidence,

To use a phrase,

By which such things are settled nowadays.

For in these materialistic times the majority of men cannot, or will not trouble themselves concerning “thoughts beyond the reaches of their souls.”

I have had, in bringing inquirers or strangers to sittings, experiences like to that referred to by Mrs. Georgina Weldon in a recent letter to the editor of *The Medium*. In the presence of the medium they declined to test or examine the facts passing before their senses, and, moreover, seemed meekly apologetic that such a proceeding should be even hinted at, yet no sooner had they left his presence than they ridiculed the sitting as a tissue of trickery. Such persons, by their arrant and unprincipled dishonesty, their baneful criticism, begotten of arch hypocrisy, help, as far as in them lies, to cast a slur and a stain on Spiritualism and its causes, and therefore should they be avoided.

As a rule, however, the greater number of the public are scarcely blamable for their prejudice regarding Spiritualism. They are led to conclusions by an almost universally hostile press, kind enough to coin opinions for them without giving them the trouble of exercising their brains. I remember that, some time since, a paper claiming a wide circulation, and having a certain renown for *raciness*, with that charming candour and bold scurrility which distinguishes modern journalism, declared that “the leading professional Spiritualists should be sent as rogues and vagabonds to the treadmill.”

This exquisite example of the spirit of the press is sufficient to indicate its general tendency. Perhaps no better omen of the future success of Spiritualism can be evinced than the very bitterness with which it is at present assailed. In the vast records of a world’s history we find that the heralding of the most valuable discoveries have almost invariably been laughed to scorn, treated as delusive dreams, or the airy fancies of some fanatic.

ERNEST WILDING.

Sherborne Lodge, Kennington-road, London, Nov. 30th, 1878.

WOULD THE CHAPEL DEACON SYSTEM BE BENEFICIAL TO SPIRITUALISM?

SIR,—In your issue of the 6th inst. there is a very melancholy picture of the condition of Nonconformist ministers; and the picture, as a whole, is, I fear, a correct representation of sad facts. The writer of the article says, "The best preachers among Nonconformists are driven away in their youth by the system, and the Established Church retains its ascendancy, notwithstanding that its greater freedom permits the existence of occasional drinking and swearing parsons." I think, as a rule, the reverse of this is the case. Men of force, men of original power, men of genius, become masters of their positions, while ordinary men become the victims of deacon rule, and, in many instances, go to the Established Church, where they have not to make a position for themselves by pulpit ability and manly independence. It must, however, be admitted that many finely-gifted, sensitive men leave the Nonconformist ministry in disgust with "the system of a teacher of the people receiving his appointment directly from those working immediately beneath him"—a system whose boasted headship of Christ is, practically, the headship of the "leading grocer across the way."

But is the position of a curate any more favourable to mental independence and truth-speaking than that of the Nonconformist minister? The curate holds his curacy by the will of his vicar, and his spiritual superior can subject him to endless petty annoyances and to the bitterest humiliation.

Deacon rule is not an element in all sections of Nonconformity. There is one denomination of Nonconformists where deacons are not, and where the ministers are expected to be truth-seekers and truth-speakers. That church is the Unitarian Church, in which there are ministers who are Spiritualists, and who make no secret of their Spiritualism.

I. M. DIXON.

Hull, December 9th, 1878.

SIR,—No reader of *The Spiritualist* will hesitate to accord to it the credit of being thoroughly outspoken. I venture to conclude that it will appreciate this quality in others, and hence that you will allow me to question the accuracy of certain representations contained in the last number respecting Nonconformist ministers and deacons.

The position taken in the article to which I refer, with regard to the proceedings of the British National Association of Spiritualists in relation to a recent scandal, I think to be erroneous. I will, however, confine my remarks to matters upon which it may be conceded that I am more likely than some others to possess the materials for an intelligent opinion. After some forty years' tolerably extensive acquaintance with the officials reflected on, I may be presumed to know something alike of their excellences and of their faults. If it should be thought that such experience may be presumed to have produced a mere partisan, I reply that my divergence from the popular theological creed, and my indifference with respect to questions of polity, have availed to sever me from all parties, and to make me independent of them.

With respect to Nonconformist ministers, I would say that whatever objection may be taken to the method of their appointment, and however certainly that method may allow of the occasional selection of vain, weak, and inefficient men, who by their incompetency will invite the hostility of the ignorant but influential, such misadventure, so far from being the rule, is the rare exception. Everywhere there are ministers who, in the absence of the status which connection with the Established Church would involve, are occupying a position of influence in middle-class society, such as only talent, energy, and high moral excellence could command. It is true, indeed, that "individuals of culture, æsthetic proclivities, and of independence of character cannot live in the midst of petty tyranny;" but then, in the great majority of instances, these qualities are associated with—indeed they imply, because they generate—that social power which will either prevent or stamp out such tyranny. To speak of the "best preachers being driven from Nonconformity," and to connect the ascendancy of the Established Church with such alleged fact is, I think, to be oblivious of the very marked progress of Nonconformity during the present century, and no less so of the circumstance that, whilst all possible respect is due to many of the established clergy because of their invaluable scholarship, and to many others of them for their practical devotedness to the various welfare of the community, it is yet admitted by candid men of all parties that the most effective pulpit oratory is to be found for the most part among the Dissenters. Between myself and the greater number of Nonconformist teachers there is but little in common. I feel it to be all the more incumbent upon me to insist on their general superiority to the weakness and ignorance with which they are credited in the article in question.

But about the deacons. It is not the first deliverance respecting them with which *The Spiritualist* has favoured its readers. My impression is that the writer has pursued a course upon which, I fancy, he would be "pretty considerably" severe in the case of another—that, viz., of generalising upon utterly insufficient data. He has been acquainted, apparently, with some one or two instances of diaconal assumption, and has inferred that deacons are generally pragmatical and tyrannical. Now, the position of deacon among Dissenters is, in most cases, analogous to that of warden among Churchmen. Should we be justified in branding all churchwardens with the disgrace which some have merited? Or—the gods screen me from the effects of my temerity—are editors all without reproach?

What manner of men are Dissenting deacons? I reply that, in the very decided majority of instances, they are men who owe their official standing to the voluntary suffrages of their fellow-worshippers, to whom they are well-known, and by whom they are highly esteemed. They are men who devote much time, and thought, and energy to the secular interests of the congregation, and are invaluable as the advisers of their minister and the friends of the poor. True, in some instances they, when wealthy, may be tempted, as rich men are wont to be, to arrogance of spirit and conduct, and in others, when ignorant, may lack the

ballast which larger information would supply. This, however, is only to say that they are like other men, and it should be remembered that in all such cases the remedy is at hand, and is generally easy of application. What I affirm is, that on the whole they deserve to be held in honour, and not subjected to ridicule.

Just glancing at one other matter, I will venture to suggest that, if popular novelists may indulge in caricature and find material for it in the social position of their puppets, it may be doubted whether the same course adopted by others with respect to any class of living persons does not savour of that variety of vulgarity the name of which I will not offend by employing.

I feel how irrelevant is the discussion of these matters to the proper work of *The Spiritualist*. The responsibility of introducing them, however, is not mine.

WILLIAM MIALL.

Dalston, December 9th, 1878.

SIR,—In your leader last week on "The Venerable Order of Deacons," you state that some time ago "it was innocently suggested at a public board meeting that the relations between an organised body of Spiritualists and mediums should be similar to those which exist between ministers and their flocks;" and, if I understand you rightly, you disapprove of such relations in the former case, on the grounds that "the deacons hold meetings about the rash preacher (who has taught them a little true religion), discuss his mode of living, &c., judicially deal with a variety of offences not recognised as such by the British law, and adjudicate upon evidence in a manner unknown to courts of justice."

Now I cannot for the life of me see that any valid objection can be taken to the proposition in question on any grounds similar to those referred to. I cannot imagine that there would ever be the slightest danger of a medium being subjected to a system of vulgar tyranny and petty persecution by reason of his having taught Spiritualists "a little true religion," or any other praiseworthy action. On the other hand there would be—to my mind—one very great advantage in the relationship proposed. If half a dozen members of a "flock" bring a charge of, say, drunkenness or swindling against their "minister," the remainder of the congregation—represented, I suppose, by their deacons—are bound by every consideration of self-respect, and in justice both to the accused and the accusers, to investigate it, and to pronounce whether, *in their opinion*, it can be sustained. It would never do for them to ignore charge after charge of this description, with the cynical observation that it was six to one the drunkard or the swindler was on the side of the accusers, or that it is folly to expect ministers to be so "immaculate" as never to swindle or get drunk, or that, certain legal formalities being impracticable, the matter had better be let alone. And if the above-mentioned suggestion were fully carried into effect, cases of imposture on the part of mediums—and that such cases have happened again and again is patent to every investigator—could not be ignored, or met by a testimonial, but would rightly be regarded as being fully as disgraceful in a medium as drunkenness or fraud could be in a minister, and as equally reflecting disgrace upon anybody that could calmly allow what they hold as truth to be dragged in the dirt by those whose motive is gain.

I am the more interested in the suggestion referred to, since it distantly resembles—or, rather, puts in an entirely different form—one which I myself made "at a public board meeting" some time ago. In answer to the statement that the British National Association of Spiritualists was "taking judicial functions" upon itself in venturing to pronounce an opinion as to whether a medium whom it had repeatedly introduced to inquirers, and upheld as altogether trustworthy, had or had not been guilty of an attempted deception with which he was charged, I suggested that a medium does, in some respects, stand in relation to Spiritualists much as a minister stands in relation to his congregation. It was a statement of opinion as to a matter of fact, implying that Spiritualists would not be justified in allowing a medium to go about simulating spiritual phenomena, or in allowing a charge of so doing to be brought against a recognised medium, without making or seeking to make some inquiry and some protest. I may say now that I cannot understand how it is possible to uphold the contrary proposition. Surely no Spiritualist would suggest an expediency which would here be synonymous with complicity or with heartless indifference. No doubt—and I have some reason to recognise the fact—it is not only a painful, but also an arduous and ungrateful task, more especially whilst the major portion of the London Spiritualistic press maintains its present attitude, to take the part of Spiritualism, and of truthseeking Spiritualists, against those materialisation mediums—nearly all of whom are possessed of some genuine powers—whose money-making frands have been detected by the latter. Yet I trust that no one claiming to be a Spiritualist would on this account—through any fear of the onus, the travail, or the misrepresentation that may befall him—propose to sacrifice Spiritualism and Spiritualists to these mediums. Nevertheless, we shall assuredly do this—we shall consummate what has already been commenced—if we fail to recognise the relation which actually exists, whether we like it or not, between Spiritualists and those who go forth to the world to illustrate, or to parody, the most prominent facts of their philosophy or of their creed. In the same way as the Sandimanians, or the Irvingites, and the tenets they hold, would be disgraced by a series of public frauds, unacknowledged, unatoned for, and unrepented by them, on the part of men whom they put forward to represent their views—in the same way, but to a much greater extent, are Spiritualists and Spiritualism disgraced when recognised mediums are found masquerading with false beards or linen masks upon their faces, muslin or newspaper around their limbs, phosphorus bottles in their hands, and confederates at their elbow; and when such antics are virtually condoned, or, worse, encouraged by a *testimonial*. Then, such incidents are even more discreditable to Spiritualists than to the mediums, and tend to make Spiritualism appear a thing that no man with self-respect would willingly touch. Before the intelligent truthseekers who must be our judges, and

who may be our disciples and our successors, Spiritualists are on their trial, as well as the medium, when the latter is arraigned for fraud.

From the highest standpoint—that whence we may scan eternity—from the standpoint which all Spiritualists should take—the only expediency to be seen is perfect singleness of purpose in seeking and standing by truth, whether it may appear to tell for or against us, whether it make us weep or rejoice. Let us study Spiritualism—phenomenal Spiritualism—in its dark as well as in its brighter aspects; and let us set to work to purge it from the trickery which, like a cankerworm, is blighting and soiling some of the fairest flowers that can cheer and brighten humanity. I call upon you, sir, to aid in this work; and I do not think you will fail us. Let us have, in regard to the known proceedings of some mediums, and the revelations which have been and can be made in relation to them, a little of that perfect openness, that absence of all secrecy and concealment, which you advocate so strongly—and, as some of us think, so unnecessarily—in relation to the proceedings of the British National Association of Spiritualists. I would have no persecution of mediums; but, for the sake of Spiritualism—which should be their cause as well as ours—and for their own sake in the future, I would have their misdeeds brought to the full light of day.—I am, sir, yours in truth,  
 DESMOND G. FITZ-GERALD.

Brixton, December 9th, 1878.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE PLAY OF "MACBETH."

SIR,—The reading of Mr. Coffin's lecture on Somnambulism, reminds me of Shakespeare's play of *Macbeth*; none of the other plays, and no other play, poem, or novel that I recall, presents so much to interest the Spiritualist. First, the witches with all their wild doings, and sayings, and wickedness, and prevision, and holy truths, leading and misleading to ends that are really terrible and fatal. Then the old hags riding the air, and using the cauldron and strange ingredients and concoctions; their use of charms, and rounding about in the circle, with their songs and mystical number, &c.

"And three again to make up nine  
 Peace!—The charm's wound up."

These are not fanciful beings exactly, but what had been supposed to be in a measure true existences, as the natural history of witchcraft shows. Then we have the vision of the dagger with the "Art thou not fatal vision sensible to feeling as to sight, or art thou but a dagger of the mind?" making feeling or touch the test of objective reality, as in the case of Christ and His wounds. Further on we have the ghost of Banquo, only seen by Macbeth—

"Thy blood is cold;  
 Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
 Which thou dost glare with!"

quite another kind of ghost from that of Hamlet's father. It is strange that Macbeth, in those superstitious days, should seem to think the appearance to be a new phenomenon,

"The times have been,  
 That, when the brains were out, the man would die,  
 And there an end"—

giving the brain the honour of being the seat of life over the heart or soul.

Fourthly, we have Lady Macbeth as a somnambulist:—

"Since his majesty went to the field, I have seen her rise from the bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all the while in a most fast sleep. . . . A great perturbation of nature; to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching."

Again—

"You see, her eyes are open"  
 "Ay, but their sense is shut."

Now, from my great experience in mesmeric somnambulism, I can say that this description is true to nature, and hence a most interesting matter to refer to.

HENRY G. ATKINSON, F.G.S.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.

A SEANCE AT NEWCASTLE.

SIR,—The alleged exposure of mediums is not, as at first appears, an unmitigated misfortune, for the mishaps have tended considerably to induce persons with medial power to solicit to sitters to so place them that whatever phenomena may occur they cannot for a single moment be considered to be the active agents in their production. Previous to her alleged exposure at Blackburn, Miss Wood always insisted on the application of such tests as the observers might devise; but after such unfortunate experience there and on her return to the North, she has learned that the application of still more stringent tests than those in previous use does not necessarily imply lack of confidence in her as a woman, but rather a want of knowledge, both on the part of mediums and observers, as to the best methods to adopt to ensure undeniably genuine phenomena. In consequence, she has been sitting in the rooms of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Psychological Society for form manifestations, without ever entering the cabinet, and keeps continuously in distinct view of the observers. Before furnishing your readers with the notes taken down at the time of a *séance* I attended on Sunday morning, Nov. 24th, I should like, in view of the prevailing desire for the abandonment of cabinets, to draw attention to the misleading ideas the use of such a term creates. I find, when reading over my notes to persons who have not been at a *séance*, that the use of this word "cabinet" leads them to think of some closet, or consulting room, or piece of furniture with boxes, drawers, and other like facilities favouring dexterous manipulation; whereas there are no such things, nor any semblance of them, in the rooms of the Newcastle Society, and without the least tinge of casuistry it may truthfully be affirmed there is no cabinet. Though it must be admitted that if a medium is once permitted to go to the innerside of the curtains (suspended from an iron rod in a corner of

the room where there are neither cupboards, closets, nor windows), and remain their unobserved, however briefly, the curtained recess may in that brief moment invest it with all the possibility of a conjurer's cabinet.

These remarks are essentially necessary to aid the reader in more definitely valuing the notes of the *séance* I have referred to as occurring on Sunday, November 24th. On that occasion Miss Wood was the medium. There were nine persons present, seated in semi-circular form around the medium. The medium was robed in a white jacket belonging to the society, and was seated in an armchair facing the outside of the curtains, in full view of the observers, throughout the entire sitting. A chair, with tambourine and bell lying on a seat, was placed against the wall on the left hand of the medium, and after she had been sitting a short time the chair and other instruments were drawn within the curtains, on the inner side of which there was nothing previously to this that could be moved. The bell then commenced ringing vigorously, and continued to do so while the observers sang four verses. After a short pause of the bell-ringing, a white shroud came out from the inner side of the curtains; it was apparently about five feet high; it hovered around the medium, but twice it was observed to move to a distance of about two feet. When it was asked to bring the tambourine from the inner side of the curtains it retired thither, holding the curtains apart, and assumed a recumbent posture, as if sitting on a chair. After a pause of about five minutes the shroud arose, brought the chair from the inner side, placed it on the outer side of the curtains at the right of the medium, and then slowly glided to a lady seated at the extreme end of the circle, on the medium's left, and handed the lady the tambourine. While the shroud was seen standing and moving about, the medium was all the while talking in a manner unusual to her, and, by request, her face was turned to the right, so that I could distinguish her features, while the shroud was on the medium's left handing the lady the tambourine.

JNO. MOULD.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

DR. FORBES WINSLOW'S STATISTICS.

SIR,—The *Court Journal* having got hold, rather late, however, of the amazing postulate of Dr. Forbes Winslow, and published in their number of Nov. 16th—Doctor Winslow's statement, as "a startling fact," that "10,000 persons of unsound mind are confined in the lunatic asylums of the United States, driven mad from over excitement caused by Spiritualism"—I sent to that newspaper Dr. Crowell's statistics of the real state of the case at once, taken from *The Spiritualist* of March 2nd, 1877, which I am happy to find the *Court Journal* has had the grace to publish in its last number, that of Nov. 23rd, as follows:—  
 "We recently stated upon an authority that 10,000 persons of unsound mind are confined in the lunatic asylums of the United States. In consequence of this report Dr. Crowell made a formal application to all the asylums to ascertain the truth of it, when *fifty-nine* was the number; but as a few returns were omitted, they might amount to seventy-six."  
 SCRUTATOR.

THE HEALING POWERS OF MESMERISM.

SIR,—A short time since, in recording in your valuable paper my obligations to Mrs. Loomis, I mentioned that I had induced a lady (a fellow-patient of mine in the hospital which I attended) to consult her. Her case was an obscure one, complex in the highest degree, and her suffering of many years' standing. During my stay in the hospital she underwent a terrible operation with no good result whatever, and shortly after leaving it she was told that a similar operation was absolutely necessary. It was at this juncture that I induced her to consult Mrs. Loomis. Under her care she has attained, without the torture of operation, instrument, or powerful agency of any kind, to a degree of health and vigour wholly unexpected by her, and inexplicable upon any generally received hypothesis. The noticeable point in her case is, her utter disbelief in any spiritual agency—I had almost said, in any agency whatever beyond Mrs. Loomis's natural ability—but I believe she does now accord a certain credence to the clairvoyant powers of her benefactress.

As Mrs. Loomis undertook this case at my request, and has carried out a most difficult and arduous cure without fee or gratuity of any kind, I feel bound, in common courtesy, to make the facts of the case known. The medical data I cannot of course ask you to publish, but I will gladly furnish full particulars to any inquirer who may desire advice and probable relief.  
 J. E. REES.

34, Nightingale-road, Clapton, December 5th.

It is hard to personate and act a part long; for where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavouring to return, and will peep out and betray herself one time or another.—*Tillotson*.

To cultivate sympathy you must be among living creatures, and thinking about them; and to cultivate admiration you must be among beautiful things, and looking at them.—*Ruskin*.

On Monday evening next, at the fortnightly meeting of the National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, London, Mr. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A., will read a paper on "The Intelligent Operator at the Other End of the Line."

At a recent public meeting of Spiritualists held in Manchester, Mr. Lithgow, of Hayfield, said that *séance* holding had progressed in the New Mills district so extensively, that the proprietors of mills and workshops had posted notices in their establishments prohibiting the holding of *séances* upon their premises.

The Lancashire District Committee of Spiritualists works in unison with a number of little Spiritualistic societies which carry on Sunday meetings and engage trance speakers. The committee states that the total number of members of these societies is 500, and estimates the total number of Spiritualists in the district at 2,588.

## THE ACTION OF ONE MIND UPON ANOTHER.

BY J. G. CRANSTOUN.

I SEND a response to Mrs. E. L. Nosworthy's letter in *The Spiritualist*, November 15, 1878, entitled "A Psychological Experience:"—

In the very interesting case described in the above letter, Mrs. Nosworthy's daughter appears to have been conscious of the ideas in her mother's mind without her mother having communicated those ideas to her in any normal way, this probably taking place through an abnormal state of sympathy, the child being a sensitive and medium.

I find in Professor Perty's excellent and exhaustive work (according to the known data up to the date of its composition), *Die mystischen Erscheinungen der menschlichen Natur*, Leipzig, 1872, a great number of analogous cases of abnormal sympathy.

In response to Mrs. Nosworthy's expressed wish, I give a short account of some of these cases, but beg to refer her to the book in question:—

"George Simler, a teacher in a large school, lived in intimate friendship with another teacher, but in a state of hostility with a third (M.). One morning at two o'clock Simler awoke in great uneasiness, felt his limbs grow cold, his blood retire to the heart, a strange creeping sensation in his limbs, increase of pulse, giddiness, and confusion of the senses. He thought first of calling out for help to M., but his pride restrained him. At length he got up, ran through the corridors and the courtyard, and then felt better. His friend the next morning related to him the following: 'I had a remarkable dream last night about you. I saw you lying stretched on your bed, struggling with death; you were threatened with an attack of apoplexy; I wished to run for a doctor, but an unknown force held me back; then I thought to awaken M., but your will opposed it. I do not know what occurred afterwards, only I was very uneasy about you.'—Vol. I., p. 41.

This seems to be an exactly analogous case of thoughts in the mind of one friend being sympathetically present in the mind of another.

"A delicate child of an estimable clergyman became aware of the death of his father before he knew of his illness."

"A boy began to weep violently without any known cause, and when at a distance from his mother, at the very hour of her death."

"A child residing eight hours' distance from his mother became violently ill, without any apparent cause, during the night in which its mother died."

"A wife of a merchant in Stuttgart fainted suddenly when visiting a friend, the same moment in which her son was killed, at a distance, owing to an accident with a cabriolet."—Ditto pages 42, 43, and where numerous similar instances are related.

"The simplest example of sympathy is the so-called 'Thought Contagion,' whereby persons in the same society, at the same moment, begin to speak upon the same subject. Hare Townshend succeeded often with the following experiment:—All the members of a certain society bound themselves, so soon as an expected guest should arrive, to force their thoughts to a certain pre-agreed subject, without, however, speaking of it, or making any allusion to it. The expected person arrived, and he immediately began to speak of the subject so agreed upon and thought of by the others."

Schopenhauer (Part 1.) says:—"Direct communication of thoughts is so certain that I advise any one who has a weighty and dangerous secret to preserve, never to speak in the remotest way relative to the circumstances in question with the person who ought not to know the secret, because during such conversation he cannot avoid having the whole affair present to his thoughts, whereby suddenly a light can pass to the other, discovering the secret, in spite of silence and dissimulation.

"My hostess in Milan asked me once at supper to tell her the numbers of the three lottery tickets which she had just bought; without the least delay or reflection I named two of them correctly, but in consequence probably of my excite-

ment at her praise of my success I named the third one wrong."

Professor Perty gives the following striking case of antipathy:—

"A Countess Königsaker, who resided in Styria during the latter half of the last century, never could endure the sight of any of her five children; whenever any one of them was brought near her, or into her room, she fainted. This took place even from the time of their birth, and this although she loved them tenderly. It became necessary to bring them all up away from her. The eldest son, an officer, twenty-four years old, had the strongest desire to see his mother, and with his father's consent he was introduced to her, at a party, as a stranger, but she immediately, on his being presented, fainted away."

Mr. Perty also relates a case, very curious, particularly as having occurred in England, the religion of which country consists mostly in the ardent and sincere worship of the gods "Gold" and "Rank:"—

"A farmer's son in Suffolk showed, even in earliest youth, the greatest dislike to all kinds of money, which he would not willingly either look at or touch. All endeavours to cure him of this failed. On one occasion, without his knowledge, some copper coins were placed in his pocket, but when he accidentally put his hand into his pocket and felt them, he drew it back with horror, and remained an hour in convulsions. A similar trial was made with silver money, but the effect was even worse, so much so that his life was feared for."—Vol. I., pp. 46, 47.

It would be interesting to know if these two extraordinary cases of antipathy could have been accounted for by the state of mind of either of the parents from the time of conception to birth. Reincarnationists would allege that these antipathies had their cause in some occurrences in a former incarnation.

The authorities for the above cases of sympathy, with many others, are given in Perty's work, but lest any one should wish to know them without referring to it, I give them here:—

*Portas Magiæ Naturalis*, 1597; *Bibliothèque du Magnétisme*; Meunier's *Ani des Sciences*; *Journal de l'Âme*, 1857; Kieser's *Archiv*; Kluge's *Animal Magnetism*; Borellus's *Observations*; Eckartshausen's *Aufschlusse zur Magie*; Schopenhauer's *Paralogomena*; Becker's *Bezanberte Welt*; Bähren's *Lebens Magnetismus*; Digby's *Theatrum Sympathicum*; *Magikon*; Wolfart's *Neues Asklepion*; Choulant's *Gesetzentwurf des Thierischen Magnetismus*, 1841.

As to the nature of the vision seen by Mrs. Nosworthy's daughter, I refrain in this communication from expressing any opinion on it.

Switzerland, 1st Dec., 1878.

## WHEN AND WHERE WAS THE FIRST SEANCE HELD IN ENGLAND?

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

DEAR SIR,—In *The Spiritualist* of November 22nd I observe that you express a desire (at the meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists) to know "where the first séance in England was held, and who were the witnesses present at it." I believe that I can answer you that question. I do not remember the date; but calling on my friend, Mrs. Crowe, authoress of *The Night Side of Nature*, she invited me to accompany her to a spiritual séance at the house of Mrs. Hayden, in Queen Anne-street, Cavendish-square. She informed me that Mrs. Hayden had just arrived from America, to exhibit the phenomena of Spiritualism to people in England who might feel interested in the subject. There were present Mrs. Crowe, Mrs. Milner Gibson, Mr. Colley Grattan (author of *High Ways and Bye Ways*), Mr. Robert Chambers, Dr. Daniels, Dr. Samuel Dickson, and several others whose names I did not hear. Some very remarkable "manifestations" occurred on that occasion. I afterwards had frequent opportunities of visiting Mrs. Hayden; and though, at first, disposed to doubt the genuineness of the phenomena, such convincing evidence was given me of spirit communion that I became a firm believer in the truth of it.—Believe me, dear sir, faithfully yours,

JOHN MALCOLM.

Clifton, Bristol, Nov. 27, 1878.

## THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE DEBATE ON CAPTAIN BURTON'S PAPER.

The usual fortnightly meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held at 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening, the 2nd instant. The chair was taken by Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, M.S.Tel.E., and the rooms were crowded to excess; the paper to be read being by the renowned traveller, Captain R. F. Burton.

The Chairman—Ladies and gentlemen, I have to go through a work of supererogation in introducing to you a gentleman with whose reputation at least you are already well acquainted. I have to introduce you to a gentleman who of old did great service to Spiritualism by defending the Davenport Brothers when they were unjustly attacked. I have to introduce you to a gentleman who, if he believed that Spiritualism or any part of it were a great truth, would, without any doubt, unhesitatingly and fearlessly stand up and support his convictions; I have to introduce you, in fact, to the modern Bayard, our English *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*. After paying to him a *devoir* which sounds like a compliment, but which is not one, I have to say that I stand here rather anxiously awaiting what Captain Burton has to say in relation to Spiritualism. I know he is not quite one of ourselves; I know he is a very hard hitter, and if there are any flaws in our armour, I know he will make it ring again; but I feel certain we shall take every observation he may make in good part, being certain of the honesty and good intent of the speaker. (Applause.) I feel that I cannot sit down without mentioning the name of Mrs. Burton. (Applause.) Captain Burton is in my eyes, and I believe I represent the feeling of all those who know him, or even only know his reputation, one of the finest specimens of manhood I have ever had the honour to stand beside, and I must say of Mrs. Burton that I consider her the finest specimen of womanhood I have ever met. She is a lady of high birth, but she is something more, something higher than that. She is a true woman, who has over and over again stood beside her husband in times of trouble and imminent danger, and it is a great honour to me to be in the position of introducing you to our distinguished visitors this evening. With this little preamble, I will at once call upon Captain Burton to read his paper. (Applause.)

Captain Burton then read his paper. It was printed in full in the last number of *The Spiritualist*.

The Chairman—I have now to call upon Mrs. Burton.

Mrs. Burton—It appears to me that Spiritualism, as practised in England, is quite a different matter to that practised in the East, as spoken of by Captain Burton. Easterns are organised for such manifestations, especially the Arabs. It causes them no surprise; they take it as a natural thing, as a matter of course; in short, it is no religion to them. Easterns of this organisation exhale the force; it seems to be an atmosphere surrounding the individual, and I have frequently in common conversation had so strong a perception of it, as to withdraw to a distance on any pretext, allowing a current of air to pass from door or window between them and myself. There is no doubt that some strange force or power is at work, trying to thrust itself up in the world, and is well worthy of attention. When I say "new," I mean in our hemisphere. I believe it to be as old as time in Eastern countries. I think we are receiving it wrongly. When handled by science, and when it shall become stronger and clearer, it will rank very high. Hailed in our matter-of-fact England as a new religion by people who are not organised for it, by people who are wildly, earnestly, seeking for the truth, when they leave it at home—some on their domestic hearth, and others next door waiting for them—it can only act as a decoy to a crowd of sensation-seekers who yearn to see a ghost as they would go to a pantomime, and this can only weaken and degrade it, and distract attention from its possibly true object, science. Used vulgarly, as we have all sometimes seen it used, after misleading and crazing a small portion of sensitive persons, it must fall to the ground. I think Captain Burton has selected an admirable title for it—I allude to Zoo-electricity—until a better name discloses itself, but I regret to say that I cannot to-night join in the general applause which greets his lecture. It appears to me to suit all parties. He gives the Spiritualists a *raison d'être*, whilst he knows that he does not believe in spirits from the other world being subject to our uses, calls, and caprices. On the other hand he has not exactly offended the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church to which it is my glory to belong. The greatest anti-Spiritualist cannot accuse him of violating his own common sense, because he has expressed no belief, but simply recounted what is practised in the East. I am sure that I am the only person in this room, perhaps in London, possibly in the world, to whom the construction that the public may put upon the lecture to-night is a thing of vital importance. I am, therefore, unwilling to leave Captain Burton's real sentiments on the subject quite so much to your imagination as I think he has done. He is certainly not a Spiritualist. Like other scientific men and materialists, he believes in a natural force which has no name, which he calls Zoo-electricity, but he does not mean the ghosts that real believers are said to see. I feel he has not done justice to himself, and this is why I have ventured to add this post-script to his address, in the fewest and plainest words that I can find. I need not tell you that he little thought to-night to find his wife amongst his opponents. I now thank you all exceedingly for having listened to me.

The Chairman—When Captain Burton sat down, he made an observation to me to the effect that now he was going to "catch it." I told him he would have to wait some time, but I think he has "caught it" already. (Laughter.) Now I think it is high time that somebody should say a word for Spiritualism as we understand it. I believe there is no very vital point of difference between us after all. We understand each other thoroughly. If the Spiritualist would only say—and it is a question of terms—that the spirits are formed of some kind of invi-

sible matter which is not composed of any of the elements known to the chemists, and which has various very wonderful properties and qualities, I think a great many of the difficulties and differences between ourselves and Captain Burton and other honest materialists might be got over. I will now ask Mr. Wallace if he will be good enough to say something. (Applause.)

Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace—Ladies and gentlemen, I merely get up because the chairman has called upon me, and somebody must set the ball going. I think most of us must have been somewhat agreeably surprised to find that Captain Burton believes so much. (Laughter.) It appears to me, in fact, that he believes everything that we do, only he puts a different interpretation upon it. That interpretation certainly was not very clear to me, and I hope, when he replies, as he probably will, he will throw a little further light upon it. As far as I understand him, he admits all the phenomena which we believe to be real, as phenomena for which there is good evidence. He also appears to admit the existence of other beings than ourselves, for he tells us that what we call spirits, when they appear materialised (which I confess is to some extent an Irish bull expression), can be photographed, are tangible, and can move objects, and yet he expresses his belief that there is nothing in the world but what is human and what is mundane. Now, I should like to know what he means by "human," because, if these spirits are human, that is exactly what we say they are. Therefore, he agrees with us totally. (Laughter.) If they are human, they can only be other human beings, and therefore, as far as I understand Captain Burton, he agrees absolutely with us, and he is really a thorough Spiritualist. I cannot understand the difference; I only ask for an explanation. There are a great many other points on which I could say a few words, but they are really collateral points, and I do not like to go away from the main issue. I think most of us would have liked to have heard a little more of Captain Burton's personal experience. He has told us a great deal that is very interesting, taken from Eastern authorities, about Spiritualism, but nothing about his own experience. Nothing is so interesting as to have the experiences of a man from his own mouth, and as we believe that Captain Burton has had wonderful opportunities, and must have seen wonderful things, I think it would be very gratifying to all of us if he would give us one or two of his own personal experiences. (Applause.)

The Chairman—May I venture to ask if Mr. Wm. Crookes will make some observations?

Mr. William Crookes—Mr. Chairman, your wishes are commands, but I really think I am scarcely entitled to speak after Captain Burton, not knowing whether I am one of the "Red Terrors" or the "Black Terrors" that he spoke of, and also being rather in doubt as to whether I possess a soul or not. (Laughter.) I think when Captain Burton spoke in the way he did of psychic force, he forgot that he was going to mention a little time after a force which he did not give a name to, and subsequently to that a force which he called Zoo-electricity. Now, I fancy what he means by this is the same thing as Serjeant Cox and myself meant by the psychic force. In listening to the very learned and interesting lecture which we have heard, I was struck by the same thing which Mr. Wallace has so well expressed. We heard a great deal about subjective phenomena, mental phenomena, seeing in crystals, and in a drop of ink, but there was very little of objective, physical phenomena. Towards the end we heard some very interesting and wonderful accounts; but I regret, as Mr. Wallace has already done, that we did not hear some of Captain Burton's own experiences. Captain Burton is known as such a very trustworthy, painstaking observer, that anything that he would tell us in connection with the Eastern jugglers would be received with the very greatest attention, and would carry infinitely more weight than quotations such as he has given us from Captain Churchill's book. I think that is all I have to say at present. If Captain Burton would, in answering, give us some of his own experiences, I am quite sure he would confer a great favour upon this meeting, and also on the public in general. (Applause.)

The Chairman—Anyone who would now like to rise and make a few observations will be quite welcome.

Dr. Wyld—Mr. Chairman, if no one else rises I should like to make a very few observations, and to ask Captain Burton a question. Towards the conclusion of his paper he said that he had merely given us a handful of facts, and I think that was about the most important observation in the paper, because if you refer to the literature in this room you will find about 1,000 volumes on the subject that Captain Burton has been speaking of. There is one book in that library which contains all these narratives that Captain Burton has given us, and about twenty times more interesting facts. Therefore, he has given us a mere handful that came to no conclusion. It was a mere narrative of the experience of others, and I feel with the two preceding speakers that the great defect in the paper was the absence of personal experiences. We can all read those books for ourselves, and nine-tenths of those present long ago read no end of facts exactly analogous to those that Captain Burton has given us. The conclusion that he derives, so far as I could find out, was that all these wonderful phenomena have been produced by what he calls the Zoo-electric force. I do not know whether Captain Burton knows anything of Slade and slate-writing. Even presuming that he does, I may still give a short narrative of Slade's accomplishments. I was one of those who witnessed Slade's performances. I had three sittings with him and twenty experiments. A single experiment will be sufficient. I took a slate in my hand, with a piece of slate pencil below it. I held my hand over the slate. Slade was not allowed to touch it, and I got a message containing five family names and a family secret. I should like to ask Captain Burton how that could be derived from the Zoo-electric force. I will put it a little further. I know a lady who puts a slate on the carpet, and sets her foot on the slate. After a few minutes she takes it up, and finds the whole side of the slate covered with long writing in the Russian

language, of which language she does not know a single word. I should like to ask how Zoo-electric force could produce that? Slade was utterly ignorant of any language but English, and not very perfect in that; but in his presence individuals went with slates rivetted together, or tied together, and they got messages in English, French, German, Latin, Greek, Arabic, I think, and sometimes Hebrew; at all events, five out of those languages. I should like, in conclusion, to ask Captain Burton if he will be kind enough to explain how Zoo-electric force can write Greek.

Mr. C. C. Massey—I should be sorry if we parted without making it distinctly understood how thoroughly we all appreciate the very able and valuable paper which we have listened to this evening. Although a Spiritualist *with* spirits, I cannot quite concur in the somewhat, I might almost say disparaging, remarks which have been made by my friend Dr. Wyld; for I think that Captain Burton, in calling our attention to the records of the phenomena, as they are understood and practised in the East, has done us very great and conspicuous service this evening, and has indicated a line of study which I hope we shall not neglect, but which I think Spiritualists in this country have too much neglected. Much of the slow progress of which Spiritualists complain in this country is owing to their persistent, dogmatic, and somewhat conceited ignoring of the phenomena of the same description which occurred in all former ages of the world. Instead of supposing that we have got what Mrs. Burton has well described as some new religion, a new revelation of the last thirty years, all to ourselves—something bran new, which has never been heard of before—we ought to recognise the continuity of these things, and connect what takes place now with what has been observed in all ages of the world. Therefore I think when a person of such distinction as Captain Burton calls our attention to the phenomena occurring in the East, he does us a great service. There is one point of ambiguity which, I think, Captain Burton's paper puts very clearly before us. It is that old confusion between matter and spirit. Now, as long as we do not define our terms, it will always be in the power of a man who admits our phenomena to call himself a materialist, and of a man who does not admit our phenomena to call himself a Spiritualist. I quite understand that any objective phenomena in the world, whether in this life or any other life (if there is another life), when perceived by any external medium—as it must be in our case—would necessarily take a material form. Therefore there is no essential difference between the phenomena of clairvoyance and the phenomena apparent to the physical senses. They would both be, according to our existing state, material, that is to say, objective phenomena. I think the only sound, philosophical distinction between spiritual and material is subjective and objective. It comes to that in the end, and it is very essential that our terms should be defined in some such sense as that. I venture to throw out that suggestion. I feel that it is a very great presumption for any one to get up in this unusually large audience and follow the distinguished speakers whom we have been proud and pleased to listen to. I only wish to recall the fact that in the hour when Spiritualism was most discredited, most decried, and when those who pursued these investigations were actually held up as almost unfit for social toleration, a man of Captain Burton's great distinction, with his character and reputation to lose, and his prospects to imperil possibly, came forward and vouched his personal experience and belief in the face of the world, and, what is more, joined this Association. At the time of the prosecution of Slade I transcribed from the journals of the day, for future use, the language that was then used about Spiritualists, and I hope the time may come when I shall be able to hold that language up to public reprobation. It was said that not only was Spiritualism a matter for the police, but the investigators of Spiritualism ought to be sent to Coventry as socially disreputable. At that very time Captain Burton, like the brave man that he is, came forward and joined this Association; and I say that, whatever he may say to us, whatever doubts he may cast upon some of the cherished beliefs of Spiritualists, we shall listen to him, as persons accustomed to intellectual toleration, with fairness and consideration. But independently of that, I hope, in measuring the degree of cordiality with which we shall receive the vote of thanks which will by-and-by be moved to him, we shall not forget the courageous and almost heroic conduct which he then displayed. (Applause.)

Dr. Carter-Blake—After about eighteen years' intimate knowledge of Captain Burton, it may surprise many in this Association—it almost surprised myself—when I found that I could not agree with him with regard to some of the points that he has brought forward. He seems to me to go a great deal too far in the direction of what has been, by a particular use of words, termed Orthodox Spiritualism. In the excess of zeal that he has shown on this occasion—although his paper may not quite come up to the mark of those who expected from it a full-flavoured recital of ghost legends, with new scenery, dresses, and decorations—we have had a certain canon of thought laid down against which it is my duty as a Spiritualist most respectfully to protest. We were told by Captain Burton that one of the great tests of knowledge was sensation. Well, I must say that if we were to accept such a theory we would not only be reversing the German philosophy of the present time—the philosophy of the school of Fichte, and Schelling, and Hegel—but we would place ourselves in antagonism to that older, better worn, and more thorough Aristotelian philosophy which has shown us how fallacious the testimony of our senses occasionally is. It is my duty merely to refer to a series of experiments described in the little admirable work on Physiology which has been published by Professor Huxley, which show us that even those persons who have been branded by the name of materialist (and we can all call one another harsh words of five syllables), have been the first to show the fallibility of human sensation. I might say that the present moment is rather an unfortunate one to recall the contests which have taken place between the idealists and the sensualists, when England has to-day to mourn the loss of perhaps the greatest idealist philosopher that England has ever produced,

as well as one of her most accurate and painstaking physiologists. But even in the face of this melancholy fact, although the historian of modern philosophy in Europe has just gone from amongst us, I ought not to allow this opportunity to pass without making some protest against the doctrines of absolute sensualism. Those doctrines have led many people into what has been termed materialism, but which, absolutely, is very often identifiable with what is called Spiritualism by a large number of people. When they see a materialised spirit-form—when they are able to touch it, to feel it, to appraise its weight, or to photograph it—they at once jump to the conclusion that such object is governed by laws dissimilar to those which govern what we know of animate nature. Well, I think that we have another philosophy given to us which seems to have taken the place of the old Greek philosophy, and as a disciple of Spinoza, Schelling, and Hegel, I cannot agree with the sentiments of Captain Burton this evening. But while dissenting from the point of view which he has taken from a purely metaphysical standpoint, I cannot but give my humble tribute of admiration to the profundity, the accuracy, the completeness, and the conciseness of a paper which is one of the most important that we have had. Possibly my old friendship with Captain Burton may induce many to suspect me of partiality, but I hope that none will consider, on account of the length to which I have spoken this evening, that I have been led into diffuseness.

Mr. Thomas Shorter—I do not know that I have any observations to make, especially at this late hour, and in the present heated state of the room. I can only add my testimony to the courage which has been displayed by Captain Burton in coming forward as he has done, not only on this occasion, but also on an earlier occasion, when the fury of the press and of public opinion raged even more vehemently than during the time of Dr. Slade. Captain Burton, as upon a more recent occasion, came forward and publicly gave the benefit of his name and reputation to the genuineness of the phenomena from the Brothers Davenport. Of course I cannot say that I coincide with the views of Captain Burton, but I do not know that this is the proper occasion to controvert his views. I think we have rather to express our indebtedness to him for the facts he has brought under our notice, which are exceedingly valuable, and also to his excellent lady for her most valuable postscript. At the same time I do not think there was that ambiguity in Captain Burton's views which seemed to be implied by the observations of the gentleman who next succeeded him. I should certainly have been very grateful to Captain Burton if he had favoured us with an account of his own experience rather than the accounts which we are most of us familiar with. These are exceedingly valuable, but if time will not permit at present, I trust on a future occasion we may have another paper from Captain Burton, in which he will give us his experience at length. I can only say I hope before we separate there will be some one or more persons present who may favour us with some of their experiences in the East as the result of their own personal observations. I am sure we shall listen with very great respect to any statements which may be made to us by persons of their own observations and experience in the East. As Captain Burton has referred to the crystals, I may say that there is a gentleman present who has had perhaps larger experience in this phase of Spiritualism than any other man in England, and if it is agreeable to him, I hope we shall have a few observations from him with reference to the large and valuable fund of experience that he has had in that respect. It would be easy to give specimens from every branch and phase of Spiritualism in reference to the difficulties which it seems to me would beset any theory of mere life magnetism, Zoo-electricity, or whatever other term may be applied to some mere unintelligent force, that is to say a force distinguished from personality, distinguished from individual consciousness and identity. I think it would be extremely difficult for Captain Burton to reconcile even the facts that he has himself narrated with that.

Mr. Spencer—I wish to say that I have listened with a great deal of attention and pleasure to the paper by my old acquaintance, Captain Burton. I little thought when we have conversed together upon other subjects that he entertained even those notions that he has expressed this evening. I think, under the circumstances, this assembly ought to be exceedingly grateful for what he has already given us, without perhaps calling upon him to do much more. One gentleman remarked that the adherence of a celebrated man like Captain Burton would be a great thing for Spiritualism. Now, my experience has been this, that whenever a man of high reputation has adhered to Spiritualism, the world endeavoured to denude him of that reputation immediately. (Hear, hear.) One gentleman spoke of subjective phenomena, others of objective phenomena. The gentleman to my left has spoken about the phenomena in the East; may I describe some objective phenomena that took place in the West in my own presence? Previously I was not a great believer in what I heard of Spiritualism, although to a certain extent, nay, to a great extent, I believed in what was usually called mesmerism and Braidism, but I believe that one objective phenomenon is worth all the subjective, because there are so many modes of explaining these latter. Any man who believes at all in imagination will show you that everything may be explained by referring it to the imagination. Now I had heard a good deal about table-turning, and I had made some successful experiments, which were published by the authority of the Liverpool Philosophical Society. It was not my idea to publish, but simply to read them as papers; but they thought so much of the experiments that they published them. That far I went, but no farther. On one occasion, when I was expecting to be called as a witness on a Parliamentary Committee with other scientific experts, the committee was broken up before it ought to have been, and I suggested that a few of us from different towns should dine together. Dr. Angus Smith—a Government inspector, and a well-known scientific man—said that he could not join us, as he was going on a table-turning expedition. I tapped my old friend on the shoulder, and said, "Why, nonsense! you don't mean to say you

believe in that?" "Well," he said, "my brother, who is a professor at a mathematical college at Bath, has seen it, and it is very striking indeed." "Well," I asked, "where is it?" "In Jermyn-street." He told me about the celebrated medium, Home. I said, "I have seen people sitting round a table and the table moving, but how can you know that some of them have not moved the table?" "Oh, nonsense," I added, "I should not go to that; he might have machinery there, or at least it might be said so." Professor Berneys, and one or two other chemical professors, were with us, and I said, "Why can't we throw tickets into a hat, with the names of our houses on them, and let us go to which ever house we take out." This was done (with the exception of Dr. Smith, who was only in lodgings), and the lot fell upon a gentleman in Finchley-road. Well, we chartered some cabs, and went to Mr. Home in Jermyn-street, and took him to Finchley-road. I thought it was a species of humbug; or at all events I left my mind rather open to believe it might be so. I was then introduced to Home for the first time, and I must tell you I did not think him the most intellectual man in the world; in fact, I had not a very high opinion of him. There were ten gentlemen together around the table. I was sitting with my back to the fire, and I complained, and I asked if there was a screen they could put there. There was no screen, and, therefore, the table was pushed away from the spot where it was originally placed. I say this to show that there could have been no mechanism of any sort. The table was a heavy old loo table. The table was raised. My hands were upon it, and I looked around, but I could not say whether any foot had been doing anything underneath. In fact, I was sceptical. At last, somewhat excited, I said, "Will you allow me to sit at the table by myself? The spirits that you say you have invoked to raise the table will surely be able to lift it with my hands upon it, and I know I cannot do it myself." After some little altercation, which took up time, this was agreed to. I sat at the table by myself, and told every one to go as far away as possible. The Scotch professor said I was very suspicious indeed, but they left me at the table alone, and the table rose with my hands upon it. Now this was an objective experiment which I do not think can be explained by anything that my old friend Captain Burton has named. I had been taking notes with a little screw pencil, and the angle of the table increased so much that the pencil was rolling off. I said, "The power that has lifted the table will surely prevent that pencil from rolling off;" and there the pencil stuck.

The Chairman—Although this is extremely interesting, I must ask you to be as concise as possible.

Mr. Spencer—I will only occupy your time two minutes longer. The table went down very easily, and I said, "Will you allow me to try and lift it now that it is down?" Three knocks gave assent, and I tried to lift the table; but it stuck to the floor as if it had been glued or screwed. I have always said since that nothing earthly will ever prevent my believing that there are powers of which I know nothing. That was a mechanical power, exercised mechanically. It cannot be included in psychology exactly, but it was a simple objective fact.

Mrs. Hallock—As no one has touched upon one or two points I wish to do so, though I shall not do it very well, I am afraid. I have been extremely interested in the paper, but do not at all agree with my friend Dr. Wyld, that because there are so many volumes containing accounts of these phenomena, we therefore do not need to hear about them from a person who has read, perhaps, more than we have. It is much more agreeable to listen to a person who has read and digested these things than to read them for ourselves; at least, it is in my case. I am very much afraid that this form of "Spiritualism without spirits" is on the increase. I hope no one present will catch Captain Burton's disease, for I think it is almost a disease. I think that many of us are getting afraid that we shall believe in spirits. We think it is so much more fashionable to say there is a sixth or seventh sense. I do not accuse Captain Burton of not being courageous. Of course, that would be a very stupid thing for me to say, but everybody has a wee bit of cowardice—(laughter)—and perhaps Captain Burton was afraid to say it, and has had to let Mrs. Burton say it for him. (Laughter.) I know it is getting very late, and I must not say much; but my quarrel is much more with Mrs. Burton than with her husband, because she complains of people who think it is a new religion. It is true there are such people, and I wish there were a great many more. I think it is not only a new religion, but a renewal of old things which were laid aside, perhaps, with too little consideration. I say it is as a religion that Spiritualism is going to stand. If it is not a religion it will be remitted to the position that it held in the East, and if anybody here has any respect for the state of things in the East that is more than I have. (Laughter.) I care nothing for all those phenomena. I consider that they are trash, although Mr. Massey, who is very much more learned than I am, thinks them worthy of consideration. I think we have heard quite as much about them from Captain Burton to-night as they are worth. (Laughter.) But it is this religion that I want to say one more word about. It is not only a religion, but it is a science, and it is because it is a religious science and a scientific religion that we are going to make it do what it has begun to do, that is to leaven the whole world. The future of Spiritualism will be greater than anything else in the past history of mankind. We are told that history repeats itself. I think it has repeated itself quite enough in some respects, and now we are going to have a new future for the world if Spiritualists are true to the great mission that is presented to them from the spirit world, which is full of spirits in my estimation.

Mr. Harrison—At this late hour I will not detain the meeting more than a few minutes. Like all the preceding speakers, I am sure we are very much indebted to Captain Burton for the very interesting paper he has read to us this evening. I should like to ask one question, and that is, whether there is any physical evidence of the existence of this Zoo-electric force, or of any force not commonly recognised by physicists, coming from the human body. We all know that Dubois-Raymond and

others discovered that electricity in closed circuits is present in the human body, and that it proceeds from the interior to the exterior of nerves: it is also a well-established fact that when people lay hold of the terminals connected with an extremely sensitive reflecting galvanometer, they can get a deflection with it. Mr. Varley, the Atlantic telegraph electrician, and myself, went through some experiments in search of any electricity connected with psychic phenomena, but we could not prove that any current came from our hands, or that electricity caused spirit raps. It appeared as if some chemical action was set up between the surfaces of the skin and the handles we grasped, or the water terminals employed, and that that was the cause of the current. Mr. Varley quite demonstrated this in some cases. Our chairman perhaps could throw some light upon that point, and he is a trustworthy authority on this subject; but I am not aware at the present time that there is any evidence of psychic or Zoo-electric force coming from the human body, and the word "magnetism," applied by some people to mesmeric or spiritual phenomena, is altogether a misnomer. Scientific Spiritualists, who have carefully experimented with the most delicate instruments, have been altogether unable to detect the presence of magnetism. In fact, the human body is diamagnetic. To misuse a word which has already a distinct meaning in physics, tends to implant confusion in the public mind.

The Chairman—It is getting so late that I shall not take up much of your time. Electricity is a science with a very broad back, and anything that has been difficult to understand has often been ascribed to electrical agency. Therefore, I am not at all surprised that Captain Burton has given a new name to what was formerly called the psychic force. I have never been able to find any evidence whatever that there is any electricity whatever produced by the human body. If there is, the quantity is so insignificant in comparison with the great chemical changes continually taking place, that we must presume that in psychic phenomena there is an additional agency at play. In regard to the *raison d'être* of Spiritualistic societies, I really think we must claim some other reasons for our existence than that which has been adduced. We claim, and Captain Burton supports our claim to a very great extent, I think, that there are very great new truths before us which are by no means perfectly understood, and that every facility that can be given for their study is a direct benefit, and one of the most important benefits that could be conferred upon humanity. Before asking Captain Burton to reply to what we have said in relation to his paper, I have only to say that I think if he and Mrs. Burton would discuss the matter thoroughly together, and arrive at a mean between their present conclusions, it would be very much the same conclusion as that which is so popular here. I gather from what Mrs. Burton said that she is a Spiritualist *par excellence*, only she believes in old Spiritualism, and does not exactly believe in the new. I feel that her Spiritualism would be carried a great deal further even than ours; and if she would neutralise her notions by those of her husband, and if on the other hand her husband would sink a little of his materialism in her spirituality, they would then strike out a very valuable average. (Laughter.) I have now to ask Captain Burton to reply. (Applause.)

Captain Burton—If you will allow me I will take the objectors in the order of their coming. Mrs. Burton has informed you that in this last paper I have been "trimming." I think you will own that it is the first time I have ever trimmed, and I can certainly promise you never to trim again. A man's wife knows, perhaps, too much about him. I think it scarcely fair to have his character drawn by his wife. I do not think gentlemen would go to their wives, or that wives would go to their husbands, in order to know exactly what they are. (Laughter.) The chairman first remarked that there is very little difference between my notions and those of the generality of Spiritualists; but he also alluded to an "invisible matter, a substance not known to chemists." Now, how is the existence of this substance proven? By spectrum analysis, or by the human mind, or out of the depth of your self-consciousness?

The Chairman—By the sight.

Captain Burton—Then it is not invisible?

The Chairman—It is always visible to certain persons.

Captain Burton—Therefore it is not invisible. But I object to your phrase "invisible matter, a substance not known to chemists." Mr. Wallace has been extremely kind in setting the ball going, and he also found for the first time how very much I do believe. I believe that the great difference is that the Spiritualist proper—the complete Spiritualist—believes that he is conversing with the spirits of departed beings. That is one of those canons laid down by Mr. Crookes.

Mr. Crookes—I believe that is one of them.

Captain Burton—You called that Spiritualism proper; whereas the belief that it is the work of the Devil you called the voice of the Church, did you not? (Laughter.) Mr. Wallace was kind enough to suggest that I should give you some personal experiences, and I believe the same thing was also mentioned by other gentlemen; but the fact is, at this hour it would be almost impossible. Moreover, at the end of this paper I referred you to a number of things I have written, in which there are my own personal experiences. For instance, alluding to the practice of Sufism, in my *History of Sindh*, I gave an account of a very long training I went through. But I shall be happy to prepare, as one of the speakers suggested, another paper if you choose to hear it. (Applause.) Mr. Crookes, in his extremely kind notice of my lecture, alluded to "psychic force," for which I have chosen to use another word. Psychic force is, I believe, getting out of fashion, and, if I am not somewhat mistaken, my learned friend Serjeant Cox proposed to abolish the use of the term altogether, and to adopt another expression—*pneuma*. With respect to Dr. Wyld, he has come to the conclusion chiefly, I am told, by the experiments with Dr. Slade, that it is possible for a man not knowing Greek to write Greek. He also mentions five other languages similarly written, without telling us, however, whether

any one of those languages was absolutely unknown to every person present.

Dr. Wyld—Yes, in my own case: not in all cases.

Captain Burton—That is the most important point of all, because believing in this Zoo-electricity and the force of will, and believing also in thought-reading, it is to me perfectly evident that if a medium is able to read thoughts, it is simply the action of himself and of those around him. The grand point in question is to know whether those languages were entirely unknown to any one present, and also if the latter had never learned those languages, because if any of them had ever learned the language the knowledge might return. I am sorry Dr. Wyld alluded to a book called the *Isis Unveiled*, because that book is the production of a person who evidently knows nothing of the subject. (Messrs. Blake and Massey: "No! No!") It is a collection of stories, put together without the slightest discrimination between Mussulman and Hindú, and, in fact, it is one of those repositories which may be useful to take up occasionally, but which is not to be quoted as an authority. Mr. Massey very correctly interpreted me, and I hope with him that the truth will prevail in this room and everywhere else. Dr. Blake regretted that he could not agree with me. Now, my friend of many years' standing says that I go too far, while Dr. Wyld says I do not go far enough. Dr. Blake quoted some great German names on the subject of idealism *versus* sensationalism, and very great English names too. In my remarks I was merely speaking of the matter individually. I warned you I did not pretend to any form of truth except what is truth to myself—that it might be true individually, and at the same time not true either collectively or relatively. My old friend Mr. Spencer has told us a long story about a table, and he is right in what he says about the danger of adhering to Spiritualism. It was only the other day that I was treated with some disdain by a lady who heard that I was going to lecture upon Spiritualism. She thought it horrible that I should enter a room where Spiritualists were. (Laughter.) I understand perfectly that if there be such a thing as electric force or Zoo-electricity, it might cause a table to rise without difficulty. We know nothing whatever of the power. Mrs. Hallock has been kind enough, with that peculiar frankness which characterises the sex, to lecture me upon my "wee bit of eowardice." She also seems to have fearful ideas of "Spiritualists without the spirits," and she also finds that this abominable heresy is on the increase. It must be painful to her, as she evidently looks forward to converting the whole world—not in the East, because she disdains the East, and I presume that the West will appreciate her perhaps more than the East. Mr. Harrison has objected that Zoo-electric force does not exist; that, in fact, the human body does not contain any electricity. He qualified the assertion, however, by saying that there might be a little, but not enough to have much effect. That is a matter of dispute, and a number of French and American magnetists and mesmerists still assert that it does. Every one here present understands what "mesmerism" and "magnetism" mean. As a rule, men use the words without attaching any particular theory to them. I do not think we need to be afraid of going too far upon those points. I did not venture to include so well-known a scientist as Mr. Crookes among the red or black terrors. The chairman very properly remarked, "electricity has a very broad back," and wants it. We all know how electricity has been brought to explain every mysterious thing. He objects that I have no stronger *raison d'être* for a Spiritualistic society than that of giving greater boldness to men in expressing their belief, whether true or false, especially when their beliefs are unpopular. I consider such a *raison d'être* as this amply sufficient. The chairman tells us that the true *raisons d'être* are the "new truths" that he finds in it. Without quoting the old saying about what is true not being new, and what is new not being true, I very much doubt whether the "new truths" are so valuable as the new fact of encouraging men to tell the truth about old things. He also advises me to discuss the matter with Mrs. Burton, and to settle our little domestic quarrel at home; in fact, he wants to make me a kind of primal Adam—"male and female created He him." Ladies and gentlemen, I am exceedingly obliged to you for the kindness with which you have received me.

The Chairman—I think it is hardly necessary to ask for a show of hands. Captain Burton hits hard, but open-handed, and we should like to have some more hits from him. I am sure we should like to reply to what he says, and in endeavouring to meet him on his own ground, we shall assuredly strengthen ourselves. *Pro forma* I will ask for a show of hands, according him a cordial vote of thanks.

The proposal was unanimously responded to.

#### THE LAST OF BARON DE PALM.

The *New York Sun* of November 21st contains an account of an extraordinary rite performed under the auspices of the Theosophical Society. The reporter says that it was "a very solemn and very peculiar ceremony, beginning in the Lamasery, and ending in a boat on the bay":—

The four pounds of calcined residuum, which were all that remained of the bodily frame of the late Joseph Henry Louis, Baron de Palm, Grand Cross Commander of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, Knight of Malta, Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, late Chamberlain to His Majesty the King of Bavaria, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, &c., after his cremation in Pennsylvania, were last night cast into the sea with appropriate ceremonies.

This last rite of respect, which was paid by the Theosophical Society, was never before performed in Europe or America, because, as Hierophant Olcott says, the formula was lost in the ages during which the language of the Vedas has been gradually forgotten. This formula has only lately been rescued from oblivion by the Swamee, Dya Nand

Sarasevati, Pandit, the founder of the Arya-Samaj, the great Vedic religious society of India, with which the Theosophical Society has recently affiliated. He has published a Veda Bashya, or commentary on the Vedas, in which the appropriate ceremony for the disposal of human ashes is described. Some weeks ago an account of this ceremony was published in the *Sun*, and last night the ceremony itself, with such variations as circumstances compelled, was performed by the Theosophs.

"The poor old Baron has had his fill of notoriety," said Colonel Olcott, the president of the society, when the writer urged the publication of an account of the ceremony. "My own wish would be to have this final episode kept strictly private."

After some discussion by the council of the society, however, it was determined to authorise the publication, the writer being strictly forbidden to mention name or place, excepting the name of Colonel Olcott himself and Madame H. P. Blavatsky, the real founder of the society, and its corresponding secretary. The discussion, like all the meetings of the Theosophs for two years past, was held at the "Lamasery," at the corner of Eighth-avenue and Forty-seventh-street. The place, which is a spacious French flat and the residence of several Theosophs, has become so well known as a school of mysticism that a reporter, some time ago, called it by the name of the training schools or colleges of the Thibetan priests or lamas, and the society adopted that name.

At the Lamasery, one night last week, their instructions were given to such of the society as were assigned to join in the ash ceremony, and last night a certain small lodge-room in the upper part of the city was rented for the evening. Those who entered were twenty-one in number, including an attendant of the high priest of the occasion. Each one was obliged to pass three guards, giving to the first a small triangular paper inscribed with Sanskrit characters, to the second the grip of the society, and to the third a whispered password. All were muffled in wrappers until their faces were invisible, and several came to the door in carriages. Among the latter was the high priest with his attendant. The priest passed at once to an ante-room, where he remained alone until all was made ready for the ceremony. "He is the same Hindoo who was seen at the cremation," said Colonel Olcott to the visitor, "and whose sudden disappearance was the occasion of so much comment in the newspapers. You will probably not see his face at all, but if you do see it you will recognise his nationality at once."

All the paraphernalia of the occasion, which were very simple, were ready before the arrival of the small company. An altar, seemingly of stone, stood near the upper end of the room. It was about four feet in height, six feet long, and three feet wide. On it was a small pile of light cedar splinters placed in rectangular shape. In front of the stone altar stood the vase in which the ashes have been kept. This was an urn of unburnt clay, covered with Hindoo figures in red and black designs. The urn is shaped not unlike a huge goblet, and has a cover of similar workmanship to its own. Inside this urn were the ashes.

Two handfuls of white dust  
Shut in an urn of brass.

Only in this case the urn was not of brass, and there was far more than two handfuls of the dust. When the cover was removed, in the course of the ceremony, the ashes were seen to be almost entirely white, though in places there were traces of grey, said to be the traces of iron in the Baron's composition.

The company all put on, in one of the ante-rooms, long flowing robes of thin black stuff, similar to those worn by the seven priests at the pagan funeral in the Masonic Temple, in May, 1876. Then all marched into the main room in single file, Colonel Olcott leading and Madame H. P. Blavatsky following next. Marching once around the altar, they stood in three lines, forming a triangle, with the altar in the centre. As they marched, five or six, who were good singers, sang a hymn, or chant, in the Hindoo language, some of them reading the words from manuscript held in their hands, and others apparently either knowing the language or having committed the words to memory.

The meaning of the words was an invocation to Iswara to bless the spirit of the departed brother, and to receive his spirit, as the sea was about to receive his ashes.

When the chant was finished, the celebrant, or high priest, entered from the ante-room, followed by his attendant. Both wore loose, flowing robes of white, and both had their heads covered with black cowls or veils. These veils were of a heavier texture than the heaviest veils the American ladies wear, and concealed the faces of the two Hindoos completely. Their hands were bare, and were slender, sinewy, and of the tint common in Oriental nations. On the neck of the high priest blazed a collar of seven rows of what appeared to be brilliants of the first water. The magnificence of the ornament was almost beyond description. It was the only ornament visible, and his only insignia was a huge emerald intaglio, the design of which was too intricate to decipher, even at a few feet distance. This hung from his collar over his breast. The attendant, a junior priest, wore no ornament or insignia. On the robe of each of the Theosophs was embroidered in white the emblem of the society, excepting that the emblem on the robe of the president, Colonel Olcott, was embroidered in gold.

The high priest walked with solemn steps slowly up to the pyre, the line of Theosophists breaking to make way for him to pass, and forming again when he had passed inside. Approaching close to the pyre, he stood for fully three minutes with his head bent on his breast, apparently in silent prayer. Then he raised his head slightly, and the attendant priest poured over the little wooden pile a small quantity of a golden-coloured fluid, which was known by those present to be *ghee*, or clarified butter. He then threw on three handfuls of spices

and aromatic stuff, and holding in his left hand a small wand of resinous-looking wood, he touched the extremity of it with his right forefinger. It immediately blazed up in a small blue, flickering flame, and with an obeisance he turned to the high priest and handed him the curiously lighted torch.

While the high priest held the torch in his hand the attendant stooped to the urn, and taking up between his thumb and forefinger a small quantity of the ashes he sprinkled it over the pyre. This was understood to typify the original cremation, which, as will be remembered, was performed at Dr. Lemoyne's furnace in Washington, Pa., without religious ceremonies of any kind. Then, as a chant, again in Hindoo, consisting only of thirty or forty words, was sung by the singers, the high priest touched the pyre with the torches. It blazed up fiercely, and a thick, black smoke rose to the ceiling. The perfume was strong and heavy, and unlike anything the writer had ever known.

While it blazed the high priest, first handing the torch back to the attendant, in whose hands it flickered and went out, recited a long prayer or invocation in Hindoo. Its meaning in English is as follows, some portions of the prayer, which has already been published in full in the *Sun*, being omitted on account of its length:—

"Do thou, oh soul, by the grace of God and by thine own merits, depart by the best paths to the best regions. Oh, being, may thine eyes be assimilated to the sun. May thy soul go to the wind. Do thou depart by thy merit to the glory of the sun, or be happy on earth, or go to the region of the clouds, or re-enter life where thou wilt be happy. Do thou live contented in the vegetable world, and having entered blessed human life, do thou attain the highest good. Oh, being, do thou glorify thy valour and greatness. May the light of thy mind glorify thee and thy body. Oh, blessed and perfect God, bless this being, and take him to the regions of the blessed. Oh, being, may this body, created by the grace of God, be happy and beneficent. The funeral fire is *kravagada*. We wait that fire to the distance. May it reach the regions of the wind midway between heaven and earth. That fire is rapid in flight. May it take thee quickly to the blessed regions. May other sacrificial fires and the grace of God ever shine in our midst, and bless the learned. Oh, being, do thou depart to the blessed regions. Do thou enjoy perpetual air, the firmament, the blessed body, the equally blessed knowledge and communion with God, and having enjoyed long life and the comforts thereof, do thou again separate thyself from the body and enter another blessed life. . . . Oh, Indra, the Lord of lords, do thou again bless the mortal being and ourselves with the blessed senses and the government of the earth, whereby we may enjoy the earth in a better life. Do thou engage this being, as well as ourselves, in good and pious deeds. Oh, exalted God! bless our people and take this being to the celestial regions and make him happy. Lord, do thou make this being happy in future life. May this funeral ceremony prove a blessing to this being. May the regions of the sky, dark at night, fair in the day, and ruddy in the morning and evening, be a source of blessing to this being. . . . Oh, being, thy mind having traversed the regions of the wind and the light of the sun, has travelled far. . . . May thy mind grasp the light of the sun, the earth, the land, and the four directions, the sea, the rays of the sun, water, the vegetable kingdom, the dawn, the moving universe, the stars and planets, the past and future times, and if thou desirest anything beyond this, may thy mind be liberated from desire by the grace of God."

As the flame from the pyre died slowly away, and the last of the embers was being consumed, the whole company recited in English a shorter prayer. This was done in unison, Hierophant Olcott leading. This prayer was a benison on the departed soul of the dead theosophist, invoking for him all blessings, and closing with the words:—

"Just as water blesses a thirsty person, so may all creatures be a blessing to thee. In like manner may water and all substances by the will of Iswara bless thee, in order that thou mayest be happy wherever thou art. We pray that thou mayest be free from all evils. May He accept our prayer and bless thee always."

The scene was a strange one, and the countenances of all who were present showed that to them the ceremony was solemn. The flickering light of the blazing pyre, while it burned, lent almost a ghostly air to the small room, bare of furniture, and occupied only by the strangely-robed mourners. There was, certainly, the solemnity of a funeral, even if no marked expression of grief was shown.

When the flame had died away, the celebrant stooped to the urn, and taking up a small quantity of the ashes in his hand, he cast it into a brazen vessel filled with water, saying in English of perfect pronunciation, but peculiar accent:—

"As I now scatter the mortal remains of our brother over the waters of the sea, so his spirit has gone into eternity. May the forces of the nature of which he was a part preserve his spirit, as it will his material elements."

This, it was understood, was merely a symbolical scattering, and the actual consignment of the ashes to the sea remained to be accomplished. The little company dispersed, and Colonel Olcott, the writer, the veiled Hindoo, and two other Theosophists, carrying the vase of ashes with them, drove to the river, where a small vessel was in waiting. A profound silence was maintained while the party embarked and proceeded down the bay until it came abreast of Governor's Island, when, at a sign from Colonel Olcott, the boat was stopped, with the bow turned to the east.

Moving to the bow of the boat, the Hierophant, with bare head, and holding the vase breast high, faced in turn the four quarters of the heavens. Finally turning to the east and looking seaward, he raised and extended the vase at arms' length. Then, grasping a handful of the snowy ashes, he scattered them upon the wind, which bore them away. He then poured what remained of the ashes on the waves, saying:—

"Oh, Mother Sea! from whose depths all mankind were evolved take into thy bosom these relics of poor humanity, and guard them against profanation until the cycles are accomplished, and the Great Pralaya come!"

With these words the impressive ceremonies of the evening, rescued now from the oblivion of ages, came to a close.

The boat returned to the pier from which it had started, and the little company, still silent, debarked. As they walked up the street of the city, the Hindoo, without a word of farewell, disappeared in the darkness. The writer looked around in search of him, but he was gone.

#### THE STIGMATA.

ON invitation of the venerable pastor of the parish, I had the happiness, on the 6th day of last June, of administering Holy Communion to Louise Lateau, the well-known sufferer with stigmata. Her home is situated about a quarter of a mile from the church, and is an isolated house on the roadside. On the way a gentleman preceded ringing a small bell, two others followed carrying torches, another supported an umbrella-like canopy over the Blessed Sacrament. A few other devout persons followed. Along the road many were kneeling, and, when we passed, joined in the procession, so that by the time we reached the house, at the early hour of 6 a.m., the number was quite large. Arriving at the humble home, the little cottage was soon filled. Louise had been keeping her bed since the death of Pius IX. She wore, on this occasion, a simple calico dress. The expression of her countenance indicated suffering, and her breathing was difficult. Her eyes were closed, and she appeared insensible to anything in her presence; but when I pronounced the words "*Corpus Domini Nostri*," &c., she opened her mouth and received the particle like any other invalid. I took particular notice of the stigmata on the back of her hands. They have the appearance of a half-red cherry stuck on the skin. Every day after Communion she is immediately in ecstasy for about fifteen minutes, after which she becomes impassable to all earthly things, and is absorbed altogether in God. The Holy Eucharist has been her only nourishment since the 30th of March, 1871. She has no need of eating, drinking, or sleeping, and is impassable alike to the colds of winter and the heats of summer. While she is in ecstasy the people present talk and wonder, she alone hearing nothing of what is going on about her, nor does she see anything. The sisters and other ladies in the room kissed the stigmata on her hands, others applied the crosses of their beads to them. At the end of about ten minutes a venerable gentleman of the company begged us to retire, for, said he, if she should return to her natural state it would be painful to her to see the company.

Louise belongs to the Third Order of St. Francis, and lives in the paternal home with her two sisters. Her father died when she was quite an infant; her mother passed away about four years ago. When the children were young, the family was very poor, but at the present they are comfortably situated. The house is kept scrupulously neat, and adorned with tasty religious pictures.

Bois d'Haine has become quite a pilgrimage. I remarked that it must be quite a labour for the good parish priest to give Communion to Louise every day, but I was answered that it was not, as there were always priests from other parts to do it. The pastor gives only on Fridays. A splendid church in the Gothic style and cruciform has been built at Bois d'Haine. The altars are carved out of white stone. The stained-glass windows behind the altar are particularly rich. I was surprised how Father Wiely, the pastor, had been able to build such a church in a small country village. The answer was, that great families of Belgium, France, Germany, and even England, had come to see Louise, and had left many gifts, and thus enabled Father Wiely to build a church that would be an ornament in any city in the United States. Nearly 3,000 years ago David wrote: "God is wonderful in His Saints." At present He is very wonderful in Louise Lateau. People come from all parts to see the wonder, admire it, and return home giving thanks. Though a poor girl, living in a humble peasant's house, yet she has more visitors than all the sovereigns of Europe.—*Catholic Columbian*.

## THE POWERS OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—The enclosed narrative, headed "Mollie Fancher Again," is taken from *The Detroit Evening News* of the 23rd inst.

Doubtless you have heard of the case, accounts of which have occasionally found their way into some of the public journals.

While living in New York, we often heard of this remarkable case from persons who were familiar with it. Dr. Crowell took special pains to obtain its history, and, strange as the account may seem, it is undoubtedly true:—

"The remarkable story of the Brooklyn young lady who had existed for twelve years without food, and under certain other remarkable conditions, an abstract of which has been published in these columns, has been corroborated by Dr. West, principal of Brooklyn Heights Seminary, in a letter to a lady in Buffalo. After giving a detailed account of the injury she received and its remarkable psychological and physiological effects, he gives a synopsis of her present condition:—

"For twelve years or more she has lain in one position on her right side. For nine years she was paralysed, her muscles only relaxing under the influence of chloroform. For the last three years she has been in a new condition—the limp instead of the rigid. Her muscles are so relaxed that her limbs can be moved without the aid of chloroform. While passing into this state her sufferings were intense. For days it did not seem possible that she could live. Her eyes were open and staring. For nine years they had been closed. Now they were open and never closing day nor night. They were sightless. She could swallow, but take no food; even the odour of it was offensive. During this twelve years' illness there have been times when she had not the use of any one of her senses. For many days together she had been to all appearance dead. The slightest pulse could not be detected—there was no evidence of respiration. Her limbs were as cold as ice, and had there not been some warmth about her heart she would have been buried. During all these years she has virtually lived without food. Water, the juices of fruits and other liquids, have been introduced into her mouth, but scarcely any of them ever make their way to her stomach. So sensitive has this organ become, it will not retain anything within it. In the early part of her illness it collapsed, so that by placing the hand in the cavity her spinal column could be felt. There was no room for food. Her throat was rigid as a stick. Swallowing was out of the question. Her heart was greatly enlarged. Severe pains passed from it through her left side and shoulder. With slight exceptions she has been blind. When I first saw her she had but one sense—that of touch. With that she could read with many times the rapidity of one by eyesight. This she did by running her fingers over the printed page with equal facility in light or darkness. With the fingers she could discriminate the photographs of persons, the faces of callers, &c. She never sleeps, her rest being taken in trances. The most delicate work is done in the night. She performs none of the ordinary functions of life, except that of breathing. The circulation is sluggish, and, as a consequence, there is very little animal heat. She longs to die, but says she cannot, as there is nothing to die. Such is the brief statement of her bodily condition.

"Her mental state is more extraordinary. Her power of clairvoyance, or second sight, is marvellously developed. All places in which she takes an interest are open to her mental vision. Distance interposes no barriers. No retirement, however secluded, but yields to her penetrating gaze. She dictates the contents of sealed letters, which have never been in her hands, without the slightest error. She visits the family circle of her relations and acquaintances in remote places and describes their attire and their occupation. She points out any disorder of dress, however slight, as the bast- ing thread in the sleeve of a sack, which, to ordinary sight, was concealed by the arm. Any article which has been mis- laid she sees and tells where it may be found. She dis- criminate in darkness the most delicate shades of colour with an accuracy that never errs. She works in embroidery and wax without patterns. She conceives the most beauti- ful forms and combinations of forms. She never studied

botany or took a lesson in wax-work, and yet she never mis- takes the form of leaf or flower. Leaves with their ribs or veins, their phylotaxis; flowers, with calyx, corolla, stamens with their anthers, are given with a most truthful regard to nature. Holding pen or pencil in her left hand, she writes with extraordinary rapidity. Her penmanship is handsome and legible. She once wrote a poem of ten verses in as many minutes—her thoughts flowing with the rapidity of lightning. In cutting velvet leaves for pincushions she held the scissors by the knuckles of thumb and forefinger of her left hand, and bringing the velvet with thumb and finger of her right hand, she cut the leaves as shapely and without ravel as though they had been cut with a punch. These leaves do not differ in size or form more than leaves growing on tree or shrub. In the early part of her sickness she cut more than 2,000 such leaves. In April, 1875, she worked up twenty-five ounces of worsteds; to December, 1875, she had written 6,500 notes and letters. She has kept an account of all the expenses of the family during her sickness. She keeps a daily journal, except when in trances of longer duration than twenty-four hours. In passing into the new condition, three years ago, of which I have spoken, she forgot everything that had occurred in the previous nine years. When she was able to speak, she inquired about matters that occurred at the beginning of her illness—the nine intervening years were a perfect blank to her."

J. SIMMONS.

Ypsilanti, Michigan, U.S.A., November 24th, 1878.

IN Torquay about six private mediums are in course of develop- ment; physical, trance, and clairvoyant manifestations are obtained by them.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

HOME and foreign correspondence on the Williams-Rita case still flows in, but throws no new light on a subject which has been already well ventilated.

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