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

No. 321.—VOLUME THIRTEEN; NUMBER SIXTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18th, 1878.

POWER TAKEN TO WORK SECRETLY IN SPIRITUALISM.

WITHIN the past six weeks the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists has taken power to do secret work on its committees, and to shut out the members of the Association from knowledge thereof, supposing it should choose to do so.

There was some years ago much opposition at public meetings to the formation of the Association, on the ground that powerful organisations in various narrow theological bodies had limited the liberties of the public, and had been known to exercise tyranny in individual cases.

For this reason several ardent Spiritualists, like Mr. Oxley, were a long time before they would join the Association at all, and were at last only induced to do so because it exhibited no disposition to trespass upon the rights of the general public.

But this is the case no longer, for without consulting its constituents it has taken the power to hide work done on its committees, by not reporting it to the Council, and it has passed a vote of censure on anybody who publishes proceedings of Committees not so reported.

Thus a chief answer to the public objection of "the tyranny of organisations," namely, that the British National Association of Spiritualists would not do its work in private, but open to the inspection of the public, is no longer valid.

If a member of the National Association now says to the secretary, "I wish to see the unreported proceedings of such-and-such a committee," the secretary is ordered to refuse to show the minutes, but to tell the member he must apply to the Council.

The member will probably reply—"What! Do my stewards, whom I have appointed, refuse to let me see the books in which they enter my own affairs? I will not apply to them, for such application would imply that I recognise that they have a right to refuse to show me how they are transacting my own business." The complainant may then add—"I will get some member on the Council to copy the unreported minutes of committees and publish them." But this has been guarded against by a standing vote of censure against anybody who does so (see appended resolution No. 3), stigmatising such action as a "breach of privilege."

The steps by which this position has been brought about will be seen on reference to the proceedings at the two last Council meetings:—

At the Council meeting on the 10th September last, Mr. Alexander Calder, president, occupied the chair. The other members present were Mr. Morell Theobald, Mrs. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mr. R. A. March, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Cornelius Pearson, Herr Christian Reimers, Mr. R. Pearce, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Miss Houghton, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Mr. A. Joy, and Mr. Harrison.

Mr. Joy proposed, Mr. Theobald seconded, and Mr. Rogers supported—

1. That it is inexpedient that the proceedings of committees appointed by the Council be open for the inspection of any person not a member of the Council. [Mr. Joy subsequently added] "Except by permission of the Council."

Mr. Harrison moved an amendment—

2. That it is expedient that the proceedings of committees appointed by the Council be open to the inspection of all members of the Association.

This was not seconded, and the original resolution was carried, with nobody but Mr. Harrison voting for the amendment.

Mr. E. T. Bennett moved—

3. That it be considered a breach of privilege on the part of any member of the Association to make public comments and criticisms on the proceedings of its committees, and on the action of individual members on those committees, except as they are brought before the Council by their own reports or otherwise.

This was seconded by Miss Houghton, and supported by Mr. Theobald and Mr. March.

Mr. Harrison moved an amendment—

4. That this Council, being responsible to its constituents for the transactions of its committees, repudiates all attempts to cut off any of the proceedings from its own knowledge by allowing committees to withhold any

of their business, and recognises the established principle in public life that the full publishing of proceedings, and the avoidance of secrecy, are necessary in all bodies which claim the support of intelligent members.

He said that he moved this amendment partly because committees had entered official business on their minutes which they had not brought before the Council. In short, he wanted the broad light of day to fall upon all business transacted, and considered that any secrecy about work done would sacrifice the rights of private members, would aggrandise power into the hands of the Council, and would be a just argument against having an organisation in Spiritualism.

The amendment was not seconded, and the original resolution was carried, with nobody but Mr. Harrison voting against it.

At a subsequent meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, last week, voting on the subject was resumed, and various attempts to secure publicity were overthrown, as reported on page 186 of this number of *The Spiritualist*.

Mr. Calder, the President, scarcely ever votes at Council meetings, so his opinions cannot be gathered from the reports.

In reference to the above proceedings Mr. Harrison says to his constituents:—

"1. I have represented your interests to the best of my ability, but if you, like the Council, think I have done wrong, please write to me to that effect, and I will willingly and respectfully bow to your decision and that of the Council, and send in my resignation.

"2. But if I have acted rightly, the 'position' is that the Council refuses to hear you; it has rejected my several protests and suppressed the final notice of motion I gave in on your behalf; I can therefore do no more, and it is for you to decide what course you will take.

"In any case, I am tired of standing up for the public rights all alone, with not a single supporter or sympathiser present. I therefore hope that you will select somebody else to carry through for you the principle of "the abolition of power to do secret work in any Spiritualist organisation." I think Mr. C. C. Massey, of the Temple, one of the best representatives to invite to carry on this work with efficiency, supposing that he be found to approve the principles at stake. What his opinions are I do not know, but as I have done my share in the face of great discouragement, I wish to retire from further action in this matter.

"How far in the direction of secret work Mr. Bennett thinks that a public organisation ought to have power to go, I do not know, but he recently rose and objected to the minutes of a committee being read to the Council, on the ground that the minutes might contain something of a private nature. This is going even farther than keeping things secret from ordinary members.

"The claim to the right of secrecy is likely to injuriously affect the interests of the National Association, so it is an unfortunate step. I have had no alternative but to oppose it from a sense of duty, and to publish the public proceedings, therefore have had no power to do otherwise than I have done, and have had no power to keep silent."

*UNDER the laws of a neighbouring State, a mesmeric physician, or, as she is more generally called and better known, a "faith" doctor, was prosecuted for illegally practising medicine; but the evidence was direct that she never used medicine, and the laugh comes in on the regulars who incited the arrest.—*Boston Sunday Herald*.

MESMERISM.—M. Donato, in *The Revue Belge du Spiritisme*, gives the programme of a proposed general Association of all the principal mesmeric societies. Several societies have already promised their alliance. *The Revue Magnetique*, of Paris, edited by M. Durville, will probably be the organ of the Association.

A MOVEMENT is on foot to present a copy of a standard work on Spiritualism to leaders in society, and to all the members of the peerage, because books are not liable to be torn up like newspapers, but to be placed in the household library. Full particulars, with a printed list of the names of those already supplied, may be obtained on application to the Branch Office of *The Spiritualist* newspaper in London.

THE DEATH AND FUNERAL OF THE LATE MR. GEORGE THOMPSON.

WE regret to have to announce the departure from this life of Mr. George Thompson, the Anti-Slavery Reformer, and late M.P. for the Tower Hamlets. He was so firm a believer in the communion of this world with the world of spirits that, on each of his last visits to the United States, he had sittings with nearly all the best mediums; his daughter, Mrs. Nosworthy, of Liverpool, has a number of manuscripts by him about these *séances*, given to her as the only Spiritualist in his family besides himself. It is further worthy of note that Mr. George Thompson, whose work extended over three continents; who risked his life and braved the rancour of American hatred and violence for the sake of the American slave; who toiled for the oppressed natives of India; and who worked for the Repeal of the Corn Laws, made, while very feeble, his last journey by rail to bid farewell to a medium (Mrs. Tappan), and shrank not from bearing his testimony publicly to the then most unpopular cause of modern Spiritualism by taking the chair at Mrs. Tappan's meetings. His last appearance in public was when he sat by the side of Mrs. Tappan and Mrs. Nosworthy on the delivery of her farewell address at Southport; this was some time after his appearance at the Town-hall, Leeds, on the Slave Circular Question, as recorded in the sketch of his life in the *Leeds Mercury*. He leaves three daughters, and for more than twelve months one of them, Mrs. Nosworthy, has been almost constantly with him; he missed her so when her family returned from Leeds to Liverpool that she was obliged to return to reside with him, in order to prevent his endangering his life by following her to Liverpool against the advice of his medical advisers, who said that he was not strong enough for the journey. Mrs. Nosworthy says that their common faith in Spiritualism did much to place them in close sympathy with each other. As his last hour drew near, and when he was almost unable to articulate, Mrs. Nosworthy sat with him reading from the literature of Spiritualism such extracts as she deemed most appropriate; and one of his favourite poems, in which he used always to join her in the refrain, was Lizzie Doten's "He giveth His beloved sleep," pasted by his own hands into a volume of her poems, inscribed thus in the writing of the authoress, "To the Hon. George Thompson, this humble volume is presented with the best wishes and sincere regards of Lizzie Doten. Boston, May 7th, 1867."

Mrs. Nosworthy and her sister Edith were the only relatives, save two grandchildren, who attended George Thompson in his dying illness. They decided not to have an ostentatious funeral, for their father was, like all great men, of an unassuming nature, and had asked for the interment of his remains "in the most simple manner." Hundreds followed his remains to the grave, although not a soul but his own family had been invited.

The following particulars about the funeral are extracted from the *Leeds Mercury* of Oct. 11th last:—

Yesterday forenoon the grave closed over the mortal remains of the late Mr. George Thompson, a well-known friend of the negro-slave, and a powerful advocate of civil and religious liberty, who died at his residence in Francis-street, New Leeds, on Monday evening. It was the desire of the friends of the deceased that his funeral should be conducted in as quiet a manner as possible, and in this respect their wish was fulfilled. The funeral procession, which left the late residence of the deceased about eleven o'clock for Burmantofts Cemetery, consisted of a hearse drawn by two horses, two mourning coaches, and the private carriages of Mr. Joseph Lupton and Mr. J. Wales Smith. In the first of the mourning coaches were Mrs. Nosworthy (Mr. Thompson's eldest daughter), Mrs. Chesson (his second daughter), Miss Edith Thompson (his youngest daughter), Miss Chesson, Mr. F. H. Thompson, and Mr. R. Nosworthy. In the second coach were Mr. F. W. Chesson, Mr. F. A. Nosworthy, Dr. Hitchman (Liverpool), Mr. C. H. Braithwaite, and Mr. Alfred Braithwaite. At the cemetery a number of gentlemen had gathered, anxious to pay a last tribute of regard and esteem to the memory of one whom, when living, they had revered and honoured for his many sterling qualities, and for his works' sake. These included Sir Henry M. Havelock, Bart., M.P., Mr. J. Barran, M.P., the Rev. E. R. Conder, Mr. Joseph Lupton, J.P., Mr. J. Croft, J.P., Mr. W. H. Conyers, Councillor Lucas, Messrs. Henry Dyson, J. Whitley, John Calderwood (Liverpool), J. Wales Smith, John Barran, jun., &c. Shortly before the mournful procession reached the cemetery a heavy shower fell, but the rain ceased as the procession entered the gate, and the funeral service was concluded before there was a repetition of the

heavy rain.—The Rev. Canon Jackson conducted the service, the first part of which took place in the chapel. After reading the 39th and 90th Psalms, and the lesson from 1 Cor. xv. 20, &c., the rev. gentleman said he might be allowed, before they left that place to carry to their last resting-place the mortal remains of their departed friend, to remind them that the service of that day had a double aspect. It had one aspect towards the dead; it had another aspect towards the living. The aspect towards the dead that day was a very blessed one. His were very noble gifts consecrated to a very noble end—for the amelioration of the sufferings of man; for the freedom of the captive; for bread to the hungry. His gifts were nobly consecrated to the highest interests of man, and thereby to the glory of our God and Father. Let them go back to the world again, to its cares and to its temptations, more than ever impressed with this glorious truth, that "whether we live, we live unto the Lord"—and if we lived to the Lord, we should live for our brethren—"and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; living or dying, we are the Lord's." The hymn beginning, "Lo! round the throne at God's right hand," was then sung, and the coffin was afterwards carried to the grave, where the remainder of the service was read by the Rev. Canon Jackson.

The following letter has been received by Mrs. Nosworthy, the daughter of Mr. Thompson, from Mrs. Helen P. Bright Clark, daughter of Mr. John Bright, M.P.:—

"One Ash, Reechdale, October 9th, 1878.

"My Dear Madam,—My father desires me to express to you something of the sad interest and sympathy with which he heard this morning of the death of his old and much-esteemed friend George Thompson. He wishes me to say that as my sister is to be married tomorrow, and her intended husband's family may be here afterwards, he is not sure whether it will be possible for him to attend the funeral, which he should very much wish to do; but he would be obliged if some one would kindly let him know the day, and time, and place. If he should be prevented from attending you will not think it is from lack of affectionate respect. He has just gone off with my sister, who is to be married at Southport, or he would have written himself.

"May I add how much I unite with him in his regard for your father, whom I remember very well, and whose earnest and devoted service to the cause of freedom and justice everywhere I was taught from childhood to reverence."

THE WILLIAMS-RITA CASE.

An experiment might be tried, the result of which would have some influence on the public committee now considering the Williams-Rita case.

Four or five years ago, when cabinet manifestations were regularly far better tested than they are at present, as proved by scores of certificates then printed in *The Spiritualist*, it was discovered beyond doubt that when the clothes of a medium were changed in the presence of witnesses, and the medium afterwards taped and sealed in test cabinets, common white drapery, or in other words "masquerading gear," was brought in from some place unknown to clothe the forms.

We suggest that Mr. Williams and Mr. Rita might each offer to give a *séance* to a few persons who bear them no ill-will, and who, they know, would not treat them unfairly, yet at the same time whose testimony carries weight with the public—such witnesses, for instance, as Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. C. C. Massey, Mr. Stainton-Moses, and Mr. Fitz-Gerald. Let the medium go alone to the house of one of these Spiritualists, let identifiable white drapery belonging to the investigators be locked up in a box in the presence of all the witnesses in one room, then let them sit in the dark in another room with the medium, and see if the spirits will bring in the marked drapery from the locked box.

If they do so, the onus will then rest upon the committee of saying authoritatively, if they can, who put the drapery where it was found in any particular case, and how far the normal consciousness of the medium was concerned in the matter.

What is wanted is that there shall be no imposture in the matter; that materialised forms or mediums (it is the committee's duty to attempt to decide which in this case), shall not secretly use masquerading gear to make themselves resemble individuals they are not.

Tricks and practical jokes are often played by genuine materialised spirit forms, as all those Spiritualists who have had most experience with them are fully aware.

We further suggest that our Dutch friends should draw up and unanimously sign a full report of what took place at the dark *séance* immediately before their cabinet *séance* with Messrs. Williams and Rita, and send it to the committee. The report might show whether the mediums were subject to some greater power than their own on that particular evening. If so, the committee can then set to work to decide the question of the amount of individual responsibility of mediums and spirits throughout the evening.

MRS. WELDON AND THE LUNACY LAWS.

AT Bow-street Police-court on Saturday, Mrs. Weldon, of Tavistock House, presented to Mr. Flowers the formal information which he advised her to prepare, setting forth the details of an attempt made to place her forcibly in a lunatic asylum, in order that the question of granting summonses against her husband and the medical gentlemen who signed the order for her incarceration might be considered.

Mr. Flowers, after perusing the document privately, said that some of the allegations made therein, if supported by the evidence of witnesses, would no doubt entitle her to legal redress; but some of them appeared to be rather vaguely made, and it might be difficult to prove them by such evidence as could be received in a court of justice. It seemed to be conceded that she was for a time locked up in a room, and that would amount in law to an illegal arrest; but the ejaculations of persons employed in the execution of what was no doubt an unjustifiable design upon her liberty could not be regarded as lawful testimony, unless they could be brought home to the individuals who actually uttered them. For example, it was not enough to assert generally that one of the party exclaimed, "Seize hold of her. It will be worth £1,000 if we get her into an asylum." At the same time, the fact of her detention, even for a single hour, was a sufficient ground for an action at law, and he (Mr. Flowers) felt disposed to advise her to consult her legal adviser about the matter. The Commissioners of Lunacy had the power to take up the matter if illegal steps had been taken to place her under restraint, and it might be worth while to confer with them on the subject.

Mrs. Weldon said that she had already done so, and her application had been very courteously treated; but she was informed that they had no power to take up her case unless she had been actually confined in an asylum by undue means. The fact that the attempt to imprison her was defeated by her having luckily escaped from her assailants and taken refuge in the house of a friend, appeared to deprive the Commissioners of the right to interfere.

Mr. Flowers hardly thought that the powers of the Commissioners were limited in that way. At any rate, she could bring an action for false imprisonment.

Mrs. Weldon felt that some difficulty would be experienced in that direction. In the present state of our laws affecting the rights of women, it was doubtful if a married woman could bring an action against any one without the privity of her husband; and it could hardly be supposed that a husband would sanction any legal proceedings against himself.

Mr. Flowers admitted that a question might arise on this point, but in the peculiar position in which she was placed in regard to her husband—a mutual separation having been agreed to between them—it might turn out that she was entitled to plead. At all events, it was not in his power to give her any assistance in the form of a summons or otherwise, upon the facts as alleged before him, in the absence of verbal proof, and therefore he could only repeat his advice to her to consult with a solicitor.—*The Observer*.

BELIEF IN SPIRITS IN INDIA.

In an almost alarmingly instructive yet decidedly interesting paper in the current number of the *Contemporary Review*, Professor Monier Williams treats of the progress of religious thought in India and the prospects of Christian missions. After passing through many phases, the religion of the mass of Hindus at the present day is described by Professor Williams as "simple demonolatry." Where European education has really acted upon the native mind, this is, of course, no longer the case; but the demon-worship is not confined to the lower classes. It pervades Hindu society. "From the cradle to the grave" men and women believe themselves to be pursued and persecuted by malignant spirits. There is, indeed, a spirit-host of another kind—an army of benevolent spirits, reinforced by the deaths of righteous men, saints, and ascetics, and these are perpetually at war with Ganesa and his demon powers; but the success of good spirits is not sufficient to dissipate the gloom and the fear which constitute a large proportion of the religion of India. Every evil that flesh is heir to has its representative demon, from the drought that destroys a population to the peculiar form of jungle fever that harasses a village. On the other hand, every beneficent agency of nature stands for a good spirit. The rain spirit is in perpetual conflict with the demon of drought, and the angel of light carries on unending war with the prince of darkness. The vague speculative pantheism which has a profound attraction for the Hindu mind, and more or less pervades all the great philosophical systems of the East, has borne practical fruit in an immeasurable efflorescence of polytheism, which again is neither more nor less than a deification of those secondary causes which modern science teaches us to classify and to command. The habit of referring everything to the action of demons is naturally associated in the Hindu mind with an unlimited power of believing in miracles. If typhus is expelled from a village by the clearing out of a poisonous drain, the villagers are convinced that the thing has been done by a charm. If the engineer told them that he possessed a miraculous power of curing typhus, they would at once believe him, and would probably offer to worship him. A Bengal civil servant, in a valuable letter published in last week's *English Independent*, mentions that once, when travelling in India, he noticed a dilapidated and deserted shrine of the small-pox demon, Debi, and asked the eldest son of the chief proprietor in the district to explain the circumstance. The explanation was that, in spite of the wages paid to the priests, the village had continued to be ravaged by small-pox, until a native vaccinator, who "brought a mysterious knife with him," which had been

given him by the Government, "made a mark" on the children and saved them from the scourge. The priests found their occupation gone, and went elsewhere; but the villagers evidently interpreted the facts to mean that the vaccinator had command of a demon more powerful than Debi. It can be easily understood that, for persons in this state of mind, simplicity, rationality, naturalness, common sense, may stand positively in the way of the acceptance of a religion. The ordinary Hindu, Professor Monier Williams points out, thinks the wild exaggerations and extravagances of the Ramayana and Mahabharata immensely superior to the plain story of the Gospel. "Our Bible is too soberly matter-of-fact in its narrative, too severely simple in its diction, too sublimely sensible and practical in its teaching, too artlessly natural in its record of supernatural events, to satisfy a Hindu's craving for the monstrous and the marvellous. I have no hesitation in affirming that, if it had been recorded in our Scriptures that the Founder of our religion had on any particular occasion dislodged the sun and moon from their places, brought them down upon the earth, and made them rebound like indiarubber balls back to their proper positions in the sky, without harm or advantage to any living thing, the ordinary Hindu would have had less difficulty in accepting our Bible in place of his own as the one true revelation."—*The Christian World*.

MR. ENMORE JONES informs us that he is getting up a meeting "to meet our old friend and co-worker D. D. Home, and also Mrs. Katie Fox Jencken," at the Langham Hall, next Thursday evening.—Mr. J. J. Morse will give a trance address to the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism in a few days time.—On Thursday, last week, a social meeting of the Dalston Association was held, at which Mr. March, in the absence of Mrs. Corner, presided; owing to the entertaining powers of Madame Ourry, Mr. March, and others, a lively evening was spent.

THE WINTER SPIRITUALISTIC MEETINGS.—The following is the prospectus of the fortnightly discussion meetings of the British National Association of Spiritualists, session 1878-9, at 38, Great Russell-street, London:—November 4, Mr. Bonwick, F.R.G.S.—"Soul Ideas amongst the Ancient Egyptians;" November 18, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald—"Experiences in the Home Circle, No. 1;" December 2, Capt. R. F. Burton, F.R.G.S.—"Spiritualism in Eastern Lands;" December 16, Mr. Stainton-Moses, M.A.—"The Intelligent Operator at the other end of the Line;" January 6, Baroness von Vay—"Visions in Vessels of Water;" January 20, Mr. W. H. Harrison—"Hauntings;" February 3, Miss Kisingbury—"Apparitions of the Living;" February 17, Dr. Carter Blake—"On the Nerve Ether;" March 3, Dr. Wyld—"Christian Occultism;" March 17, Mrs. Ellis—"Experiences in the Home Circle, No. 2;" April 7, Dr. Bloede—"Psychometry;" April 21, Mr. C. C. Massey—"On Some of the less-known Facts of Spiritualism;" May 5, Mr. D. Fitz-Gerald, M.S.Tel.E.—"Recent Research in the Phenomena of Spiritualism." May 19, June 2—These days are purposely left free for the discussion of any subjects of importance that may arise; June 16, Mr. Stainton-Moses, M.A.—"Review of the Session." If the public will aid a little before November 4th, there is a plan afloat to publish these papers in a book. Particulars may be obtained from Mr. Stainton-Moses, 38, Great Russell-street, London.

PSYCHOGRAPHY.—*The Banner of Light* (Boston, U.S.) says:—It gives us great pleasure to place before our readers the following tribute to one of the most devoted advocates of Spiritualism in England, whose books should be in the hands of all Spiritualists. It is from the pen of a noted American Spiritualist:—"I see that 'M. A., Oxon,' our able and scholarly English brother Spiritualist, has found time amid his multifarious duties to write and publish a capital little volume on *Psychography, or Direct Spirit Writing*, intended particularly for the enlightenment of earnest, intelligent people, who, in order to accept our facts, only require the evidence to be placed before them in a reliable and convincing form. In accomplishing this the author has been as successful as he has been in his previous efforts to elucidate and present other important truths in our philosophy. His object has been to present within convenient space a record of facts bearing on one form only of psychic phenomena; and he deals in facts only, with little comment, advancing no theories, but has left the intelligent reader to make his own deductions, frame his own theories, and account for the facts as he may. Psychography is the most convincing of all the forms of Spiritual phenomena, and the author, in this volume, has condensed in a small space a record of the most complete and successful spirit manifestations, through direct writing, which have occurred in America and Europe."

THE SPIRIT-WORLD.—The very grave is a passage into the beautiful and the glorious. We have laid our friends in the grave, but they are around us. The little children that sat upon our knees, into whose eyes we looked with love, whose little hands have clasped our neck, on whose cheek we have imprinted the kiss—we can almost feel the throbbing of their hearts to-day. They have passed from us—but where are they? Just beyond the line of the invisible. And the fathers and mothers who educated us, who directed and comforted us, where are they but just beyond the line of the invisible? The associates of our lives, that walked along life's pathway, those with whom we took sweet counsel, and who dropped from our side, where are they but just beyond us? not far away—it may be very near us, in the heaven of light and love. Is there anything to alarm us in the thought of the invisible? No! It seems to me that sometimes when our heads are on the pillow, there come whispers of joy from the spirit land, which have dropped into our hearts thoughts of the sublime and beautiful and glorious, as though some angel's wing passed over our brow, and some dear one sat by our pillow and communed with our hearts to raise our affections towards the other and better world.—BISHOP SIMPSON, in the U.S.A. *North-Western Christian Advocate*.

THE ANTIPATHIES OF MATERIALISM.

BY J. T. MARKLEY, AUTHOR OF "STRAY THOUGHTS ON MANY THEMES."

WHEN not purely scientific, the negations of defiant materialism are obviously temperamental. As a matter of belief, Leslie Stephen, and the hard and dry school of thinkers of which he is a prominent usher, can no more—intellectually—help sneering at the historic religions than Wesley, Bossuet, Channing, or Father Ignatius could help being ravished by the poetry of devotional aspiration. The little that Stuart Mill had of the imaginative faculty was finally lost in the Cromwellian severity of his natural tastes. Such an one could not possibly weep before the gilliflowers, or sigh for a "muse of fire," under the Gothic windows of some old fane in Normandy. Not that such an intellectual giant could not appreciate the botanic delicacy of the one, or the historic tracings of the other; but simply because the hereditary bent of his genius lay in the matter-of-fact grasp of technical propositions. Milton would appeal less to his sympathies than would the non-rhythmic facts of the multiplication table. Indeed, the stern etiquettes of practical and utilitarian inference overleaped the *spirituelle* struggles of devotional tastes, playful fancy, and the involuntary sway of prayer.

In the case of Percy B. Shelley, the glow of reverent feeling was only spitefully checkmated by his intrepid hatred of cant, natural love of moral daring, and political contempt for the pickled humours of history. Possibly he found in the sweet, secret amours of Pantheism all the private awe and poetic satisfaction of soul which orthodox religionists profess to find in creed-books, dramatic prayers, and the evergreen interest of biblical associations, churchal discipline, and the excusable communion of pastoral visitation. At any rate, the masterly sceptic, who gave us *Queen Mab* in his worst moods, and the *Revolt of Islam* in the fruit-tide of his singularly dare-devil genius, cannot fairly be classed with the prosy Materialists of the Comte school. Like Byron, the muse of Shelley was eminently introspective and Spiritualistic—even when the most violent of the passions prostituted creative eloquence to barbarian necessity, or even when the gods were discarded as a playful but effective outrage upon the commonplace priesthood.

Coming to our own time, we discern in the emboldened, but highly original verse of Swinburne, many of the surface elements of musical blasphemy—a kind of Republican scorn for temples, incense, and ripened faiths. The contempt is doubly cruel through the inimitable leverage of front rank genius, which lifts the reader into the "younger day," in spite of pre-disposition and traditionary personal bias. We bow with customary grace at the olden altars, and are about to decipher the tables of stone, when the magic of a new leaven troubles us, until the chorus of *Songs before Sunrise* somehow, with psychological authoritativeness, rings out with attractive clearness Italy's later political births, and the gradual doom of professional devotion in the land of glens and grapes! Still we will not give up our grandest living lyrical poet to the most unpoetic section of all the born Materialists—the Bradlaughites.

The robust anti-theological prejudice of Swinburne must not be confounded with those iadred Materialistic antipathies which only become chronic where imagination is lacking, as a constitutional and religious defect.

Where the intellectual understanding is fairly balanced—by nature or disciplinary training—with the refined emotions of delicate passion and religious instinct, it is difficult for even a sledge hammer force of political Atheism to altogether drive out the soul and its claims, or leave honest thinkers hopeless as regards a future world. In matters of social geniality, high moral status, and superior wisdom, many Materialists are more than equal to the impulsive religionists in depth and splendour of individual character. Indeed, their daily lives defy temptation, and avoid consequent scandals, simply because the tender emotions—which the feebly pious abuse—become a secondary influence under the austere sway of an imperious will-power. This will-power alone is the psychic secret of such unaided moral strength. But the born Materialist—standing out as a critical contrast to repulsive credulity and superstition—is not in full emotional sympathy with nature. Here we

may note the difference in temperament between two such representative characters as Tom Paine, the infidel, and Wordsworth, the Poet of the Lakes.

Both were evidently profound thinkers. The anti-theologian formulated his *Age of Reason* partly through a natural contempt for the ascetic conceptions and pictorial glow of creedal morals; in short, he lacked, constitutionally, the poetic tendency of ceremonial religious faith. It was an isolated but deep inspiration of such faith, or rather the ecstasies which come of spiritual entrancement, which made Wordsworth's semi-Pantheistic predisposition prayerful. The contrast of tastes and feelings—as a natural endowment—may be also seen in the lives and opinions of such men as Voltaire and Fénelon; or, writing up to date, in the violent differences between the French Communists and the Catholics of the Dupanloup school of artistic faith. This definite prejudice of personal temperaments is certainly not to be traced altogether to political passion. If so, how comes it that we have in Victor Hugo the anti-materialist glamour of the highest poetic forms of eloquence and emotion?—lips which can make secular utterances a golden and holy prayer: albeit that the priesthood is cursed with a spleen that is musical?

Algernon Swinburne, as we have also shown, may be classed with Victor Hugo as a conspicuous example that politics may invite, but cannot fully establish, Materialism. It is essentially temperamental—an hereditary, or acquired, bias of the mind. However, it may be noticed as a fact in the psychology of opinions that when politics degenerate into mere extravagant Socialism—as in France, Germany, and Russia—the most sour and unemotional forms of anti-Religionism permeate the entire drift of rebellious programmes. To the stern prophets of Communism nature presents no dreamy sweetness of enchantment; the altars of traditionary and historic religions have no savour of hallowed worship; cathedrals give no archæological pleasantries and instruction; statuary is no breathing stimulant in marble; the graves of the blessed dead are not absolutely sacred; and the pictorial records of spiritual achievement cannot even be tolerated by the political enthusiasts even where and when majestic music ought to relieve a defiant Materialism.

Unfortunately, the extravagant pretensions of priestcraft, in many cases and in divers countries, help on the processes of anti-religious sternness of disposition, more particularly among the overworked artisan classes. Should the natural bent of the individual mind favour this acquired, passionate, and at times justifiable rancour, the cold, hard elements of a chronic Materialism become an abiding, possibly a painful, fact. Prejudice is fossilised; anger assumes the ruffled airs of ultra-fluent declamation; and the sweeping forces of half-lettered scorn assume the importance of a fine art. Here impassioned opinion tries to excuse itself; confronts the mellow beliefs of the ages with affected grace and eloquence deftly bridled, so that weighty opposition is addressed in the confessional language of Troilus:—

"Why there you touch'd the life of our design:
Were it not glory that we more affected
Than the performance of our heaving spleens?"

But even this coincidence with ordinary human nature is too short-lived to make Communist Materialism agreeable.

After the fall of Napoleon III., as is well known, Parisian politics for a time—one of those intervals during which history becomes a sour but splendid frenzy—naturally deepened the hot grooves of defiant Atheism. Down came monuments of the highest artistic beauty. Palaces were as stubble, and their destruction as easy of popular conscience and allowance. The tornado sway of an unreined Materialist will-power played fast and loose with the innocent grandeur of temples, statuary, and poetic groves. The graves in *Père le Chase* were scarcely held in decent esteem; and the radiating sweetness of music and incense became an abomination to the aspirants of anti-religious freedom. We need not pause to ask whether twenty years of a too glittering monarchical prosperity adequately provoked the citizens to destructive malice? It will serve the purpose of this article to note that, rightly or wrongly, the cruel mutilation of the world's most beautiful city was caused—for the time

being—by enthusiastic, unemotional Materialism in the extreme inspiration of its logic.

Not that all Materialists are anti-religious. Far from it. Many of our scientific sceptics are really better, and cleaner, clearer, more abiding moralists than hosts of the impulsive "Sabbath-Christians" of emotional Orthodoxy. The philosophy of such a fact is not difficult to fathom. Those people who are impressed the most readily by mesmeric oratory in heated rooms, and with the pictorial efforts of sustained appeal, are generally of the negative temperament. In many cases they lack the imperious will-power which can repel, and the critical culture which can resist, impassioned addresses; and, finally, if they be ignorant of psychological analysis, they at once yield to even the surface trickeries of popular speech. Therefore, the normal absence of this uncultivated power of will makes them either "mediums" or Methodists. I am not sneering at emotional religionists, whose holy sensitiveness may be genuine, and from God. I only state a temperamental fact. If many men are naturally Materialistic through absolute strength of will, the same power of intellectual resistance is their safety in times of moral temptation.

This at once explains the secret of impulsive, as contradistinguished from meditative, morality. If Huxley, Tyndall, Herbert Spencer, and George Henry Lewes, be Materialists, in the popular acceptance of the term, it is quite certain that their private characters will stand a test of moral comparison with any four of our living bishops, or the same number of equally earnest dissenting divines. But the emotional and impassioned power of soul, which gives fluency and warmth to parsonic and poetic temperaments, seems to be disciplined out of existence in the case of the less refined and intellectual Materialists. The passion for prayer and devotion is completely stifled by a contemptuous dealing with the imagination. Infidels rarely feel the infinite thrill of operatic music, or the subtle sweetness of Keble's everlasting hymns. A severely educated dread of "superstition"—cultivated year after year in *sang froid*—deprives the Gregorian Chants at St. Paul's Cathedral of half their holy power to a modern Secularist. Mrs. Barrett Browning could feel the ecstasy of a "third heaven" in the presence of kaleidoscopic church windows in Italy. Such emblems of profound spirituality would very differently impress the equally scholastic, but less dreamy, Harriet Martineau. The poetess made the abstract and the ideal rise superior to bricks and mortar. Flesh and blood, in the incidents of being, were rendered subservient to the rhythmic and recreative playfulness of a naturally devotional fancy. In the case of the political essayist, the temperament was more masculine, more combative in thought, and free, to a great extent, from the hallowed ravings of poetry. Mrs. Browning was as the southern zephyrs laden with the scents of scenic vineyards, and cooling the violet breasts of softly musical seas. Harriet Martineau resembled the powerful and defiant, yet majestic heavy roll of the November rains as they interpret their strong and fearful force against the dark crags of Iona. They both serve to illustrate my argument as to the law of individual temperaments. Harriet Martineau's inclination towards Materialism—in its intellectual forms—would have prevented her from both feeling and writing such a truly spiritual poem as Mrs. Browning's "Cry of the Children." But in framing a Factory Act to remove the cause of the weeping of the oppressed, the stern, practical utilitarian bent of the unpoetic woman, Miss Martineau, could rise equal to the secular occasion and necessity. Apart altogether from religious and emotional instincts, we might similarly contrast Mrs. Hemans with Frances Power Cobbe, Eliza Cook with Annie Besant, and, indeed, innumerable examples in this normal and hereditary inclination of culture and personal predisposition. The variation and contrast of sympathies may be said to be less moral than intellectual; but the absence of rapture and imagination in some otherwise noble personages will explain the antipodean phases of human attachments. Religion is not always a security against Materialistic antipathies. As a thoughtful and firm believer in Christianity, I don't hesitate to say that many ultra-Protestants have the harsh, non-ideal severity of tastes of the Materialistic philosophy. Calvinism may be one of

our most earnest forms of belief. It is certainly the most stern, unimaginative, ponderously abstract of all the faiths. The winter-tide gloom and vengeance of its cruel tenets are neither sunny nor majestic; not even to the selfish elect. It has no pleasantry of moral introspection. The heaven it proposes is merely a fretful, other-world continuation of the Scotch Sabbath. In fact, the very existence of such a case-hardened programme of monotonous theology prove that its foundations lie deeply incorporated with a cold, materialistic righteousness, inseparable from the soul-chilling, rough-hewn conventicles in which it groaningly lingers to curse and worship its demon-God. Such a creed only coheres by an united effort to repress all intellectual joy. It is the antithesis of wide hope: the antagonist of all beauty. Its periods are frequent when, by a sort of moral tyranny, girls may not laugh, boys climb the hills, or thistledown venture to bloom gaily on the heather. You cannot convince a traditionary Calvinist that the fine tenor voices of Christy's Minstrels will some day be heard in Heaven, or that the daily edition of the *Times*—and possibly *Punch*—will be written and read world without end. In fact, the extreme prejudices of a distorted Christianity speak neither more nor less than a gross Materialism, only relieved of its naked ugliness by some rare examples of self-sacrifice. The motives may be pure, but the conception of God, of love, of nature, of art, and of spiritual joy is eminently secular and anti-emotional. The antipathies of Materialism in matters religious are well shown in the following extract from the *Christian World*: "James Johnstone (acting with Dr. Begg) lately transmitted by post 3,115 book packets to as many ministers in Scotland, denouncing the use of instrumental music in the worship of God in a spirit of the wildest fanaticism, and now he has just forwarded to the same persons *An entirely new Statement of Facts from the Scriptures* to prove that what was in Old Testament times a serving of God had now become a serving of the devil." A few such Christian Materialists would, in Heaven, spoil the legitimate joy of the righteous.

Materialism—be it religious or secular—is an evident shortcoming of the full faculties of the human soul. In spiritual matters it is the severe negation of pathos. It treats tenderness, harmony, intense affection, and the play of fancy with studied scorn. Poetry and the appeals of art irritate Materialism in the same way that the sun irritates weak eyes. It is only concerned with fiction in so far as beautiful "white lies" are combative and satirical. It could only meet Florence Marryatt's ghostly *Open Sesame* with repugnance and pain. It cares not for scenery which cannot be eaten after observation—as in the case of pea-flowered fields and flame-hued apple orchards. Unless it takes on the intrepid reveries of Pantheism, to muse and commune with forests and gilliflowers, the inspiration of unemotional Materialism is essentially the natural outgrowth of a normal defect in spirituality and the more genial glow of a cultivated imagination. Its direct opposite may nevertheless often lead to credulity and superstition.

In this article only the higher intellectual and moral side of Materialism has been referred to in a few of its psychological developments. Neither the calm Platonic grandeur of its dispassionate morals nor the critical earnestness of its studied contempt for tenderness, ideality, or the raptures of art and affection, will fairly excuse the individual repression of the soul's musical playfulness, deep, devotional instincts, and natural interest in tradition, historic religions, and the triumphs of a smiling faith in God. As a countercheck to ordinary human credulity, emotional lunacy, and idol-worship, intellectual Materialism is evidently a divine saviour of society. In its worst forms the strong code of inflexible morals has no *status*; and when under the sway of violent passions it culminates in the revels of the Haymarket. However, as in connection with the most melancholy and rigid forms of Genevan theology we have seen hosts of the world's best prophets and saints, so in the circles of sceptical Materialism also exist examples of the highest gifts, graces, and character. But may not the religion which only favours a skeleton faith, and the scientific infidelity which scorns the rapture of diversified emotion, lack the deeper charms and poetry of life?

3, Park-terrace, Horsham.

THE QUEEN AND SPIRITUALISM.

SOME years ago Mr. Alexandre Aksakof, of St. Petersburg, printed in these pages the details of the Czar of Russia's admission of the reality of the phenomena of Spiritualism, and shortly afterwards the *Daily Telegraph* announced a similar admission on the part of the Emperor of Germany. Both rulers gave their testimony as the result of personal experience. *The Whitehall Review* is responsible for the publication of the following about Queen Victoria:—

It is rumoured in circles not likely to be victimised by an absolute *canard*, that amongst the converts to Spiritualism must be numbered our gracious Sovereign. It is, we believe, a fact that one of Her Majesty's most confidential friends, the late Madame Van de Weyer, was a thorough Spiritualist, and held *séances* at New Lodge, in order to communicate with *quic-quis fuit immortalis* of her husband. If the Queen was, indeed, ever present at these *séances*, the idea at once suggests itself that her motive in taking part in a function of this sort would be something more than mere vain curiosity or a morbid search after excitement. Like her friend, the Queen has suffered a terrible bereavement, and we can well imagine that the hope of penetrating, if only for a second, behind the veil, and of learning the condition of the illustrious personage with whom her life was linked, may have drawn her unresistingly towards the medium and have converted the *séance*—associated as it is in most minds with absurdity and trickery—into a solemnity of rare significance. We have not been informed whether Madame Van de Weyer was what is termed "mediumistic," or whether a third party was introduced in order to interpret the missives from the tomb. Possibly the "wise woman," or, as she is now styled, "trance medium," was employed.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

ON Tuesday, last week, at the ordinary monthly meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists at 38, Great Russell-street, London, Mr. Alexander Calder, president, occupied the chair. The other members present were Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, Mrs. Maltby, the Rev. W. W. Newbould, Miss Withall, Mr. March, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Colley, Miss Houghton, Mr. Stainton-Moses, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. R. Pearce, and Mr. Harrison.

Two new ordinary members were elected. There were two resignations.

Mr. Morell Theobald, for the Finance Committee, reported a balance in hand of £68 7s., recommended payments to the extent of £19 17s. 8d., and estimated the outstanding liabilities of the Association at £50. He said this report, which was the most unfavourable one ever presented, showed how necessary it was that the outstanding subscriptions of some of the members should be paid in.

Mr. Stainton-Moses then read the report of the General Purposes Committee, as follows:—

The General Purposes Committee has had under consideration the financial condition of the Association. It was reported that the liabilities to the end of the year were £113, leaving the December rent to be paid in January of next year; that £21 10s. was in hand, and that rent would produce £12 10s.; moreover, Mr. Bennett estimated that £15 would accrue from the sale of the "Proceedings of the Association." The committee recommend that £25 be taken from Mr. M——'s donation of £50 to meet general expenses; that the £7 which it was proposed to devote to the purchase of a carpet be applied to the general fund. It having been reported that the expenses of printing the *Proceedings* of the Association from May to October were £21 18s. 6d., besides postage amounting to about 18s. per month, it was decided to recommend the discontinuance of the *Proceedings*, unless the expense was guaranteed, since, in the opinion of the committee, the state of the finances did not justify such expenditure. The committee consider that the amount further required, a little over £30, may be left to stand over till December. The programme of Fortnightly Discussion Meetings having been submitted to the committee, in consequence of the Experimental Research Committee having no meeting before the next Council meeting, it was resolved to request the Council to consider the advisability of sending a card of admission to reporters of the press, and of placing a box in the room for donations.

Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald announced, on behalf of the Research Committee, that that committee in its experiments did not consider that it had anything to do with the private characters of mediums, however important that element might be in the work of other committees of the Association.

Mr. W. H. Harrison moved:—

That the minutes of all committee meetings held during the intervals between Council meetings be read in full by the secretary to the Association, at the first Council meeting after they have been passed, and be of no effect and not authorised until they are both received and adopted by the Council.

He said that at the previous meeting the Council had taken power to do secret work in its committees, and the above resolution would remove that evil. At present the Council had no efficient control over its committees, and knew only those portions of the proceedings of each which the chairman of the committee reported, if he made a report at all. He (Mr. Harrison) had written to the most efficient of the many organisations whose good method of working he had watched for years, and had asked on what system the Council kept efficient control of its committees. The system which had worked so well he had embodied in the above resolution.

Mr. Stainton-Moses said that the Council and committees had so much work to do that he did not see how they could take on more.

Mr. Harrison replied that his resolution would give them less work to do. At present the chairmen of the committees had to make reports; but reading over the minutes would leave them little or no reporting to do.

Mr. Stainton-Moses called Mr. Harrison's attention to Bye-law 8, namely—

Reports of all committees shall be made in writing, and signed by each member of the committee, or by the chairman on behalf of the committee.

Mr. Harrison replied that that did not touch the evil of the rights of the members of the Association being infringed by Mr. Bennett's resolution passed at the last Council meeting, recognising a power on the part of committees to keep back in their reports a portion of the work done by them, and censuring anybody who made the secret portion publicly known.

Nobody seconded the resolution, which therefore fell through.

Mr. Harrison consequently gave the following notice of motion:—

That some of the committees of this Council having entered minutes of business transacted which they have not reported to the Council; that a resolution having been passed forbidding private members of the Association to see those minutes without the special sanction of the Council; that the press having been silenced in relation to the said minutes by a resolution that the publication of them will be deemed a breach of privilege—It is hereby resolved that action upon all the resolutions thus changing the constitution of the Association and producing the above results, passed on the 10th of September last, shall be suspended until the members have had an opportunity at the next annual general meeting of saying whether they wish to support a heretofore public institution, which, without their consent, has taken the power to transact secret business, and to shut them out from subsequent knowledge thereof.

Mr. March said that the above notice contained an argument, and he thought that it ought not to be received.

Mr. E. T. Bennett moved that the notice of motion be not received.

This was seconded by Miss Houghton, and supported by Mr. Dawson Rogers.

Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald said that the charges were so serious that they ought to be investigated by the Council instead of suppressed.

Mr. Harrison asked for a division, and that the votes be recorded.

That it be *not* received:—Miss Houghton, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. Morell Theobald, Mr. March, Mr. Colley, and Mr. R. Pearce. Total, seven.

That it be received:—Mr. Stainton-Moses, the Rev. W. W. Newbould, Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, and Mr. W. H. Harrison. Total, five.

The Council therefore refused to receive the notice of motion by a majority of two.

Mr. Harrison, after asserting that no right existed to refuse a notice of motion, gave in two other notices, as follows:—

1. That this Council is of opinion that if it does not inform the members of the Association how each councillor has voted in divisions relating to public questions, yet asks the members to vote for or against him at annual elections, the members are thereby placed in a false position; so this Council pledges itself to adopt measures to let them know how their representatives perform their duty.

2. That the General Purposes Committee is hereby instructed to consider and to report to the next Council meeting the best method of keeping the members of the Association informed how each of their representatives on the Council does his duty.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES.

ON Sunday last a Conference of Spiritualists was held in the Co-operative Assembly Rooms, Monk-street, Derby. Representatives were present from Nottingham, Belper, Walsall, Birmingham, Leicester, Sheffield, and various other places. The morning meeting was opened by the president of the local society, Mr. J. J. Morse, who welcomed to Derby the friends present, as the Conference was held under the auspices of the Derby Psychological Society. The meeting was then made into the Conference proper, and Mr. R. Harper, of Birmingham, was appointed chairman. The morning session was devoted to discussing the status of Spiritualism in the various towns of the Midland district, and satisfactory reports on the whole were presented. Mr. Johnson, vice-president of the Lancashire District Committee of Spiritualists, was in attendance, and gave a lengthy and interesting statement of the origin, use, and present position of that body. The afternoon meeting, after due consideration, passed a resolution to the effect that "A Conference Committee" should be elected, and the following names were accepted by vote as the committee for the next three months:—Mr. Hunter, Sheffield; Mr. Burdett, Leicester; Mr. Blinkhorn, Walsall; Mr. Bodell, Belper; Mr. Mayle, Derby; Mr. Taylor, Nottingham. *President*, Mr. Harper, Birmingham; *treasurer*, Mr. Hitchcock, Nottingham; *secretary*, Mr. Morse, Derby. A Guarantee Fund was then instituted, and nearly £40 was at once entered upon it. The two Conference meetings were well attended. In the evening the hall was crowded to its utmost capacity to listen to an address through Mr. Morse, the well-known trance medium. The subject was "Spiritualism as a Moral Power and Religious Teacher," and the

handling of it gave evident pleasure to all present. Mr. Morse's services were rendered free of charge. Mr. E. W. Wallis, of London, was present and rendered active service. The series of meetings passed off well. The day's proceedings were pleasantly varied by instrumental music, for which those present were indebted to Mr. C. Parker, the treasurer to the Derby Psychological Society.

A TRANCE-SPEAKING FARMER.

DES MOINES, IA., Sept. 2.—Considerable excitement has recently been created in Washington and Johnson counties by the mysterious doings of Noah Troyer, an Amish farmer, living near the village of Amish, in the south-west corner of Johnson county. He is in comfortable circumstances, about forty-eight years old, and has a wife and four children. By birth he is a German, and a member of the Orthodox Amish Church. He is very illiterate, seldom reading a book. The only paper he has about the house, or has read for several years, is the *Chicago Evening Journal*. He has a copy of the Bible in German, but seldom reads it. He has never possessed an English Bible, and his family do not know that he ever saw one. He speaks both English and German. He and his family are highly respectable, and he is noted among his neighbours for his aptness in training horses and telling good stories. He is very strict in his religious notions, conforms rigidly to the tenets of the Amish Church, and will not attend the services of any other.

About four years ago he was troubled with distension of the stomach, accompanied with cramping pains, which was followed by a lethargic condition. About a year ago these attacks were followed by a condition of unconsciousness or trance, in which he talked upon religious matters. These became periodical, finally coming on every day. He would rise about daylight, eat a hearty breakfast, and go about his usual farm-work. About three o'clock in the afternoon the bloating and cramp of the stomach would come, followed by drowsiness, which gradually increased. He would eat a light supper, and, when night came, he would be nearly unconscious. He prepared a low couch in a large room, on which he would lie down and pass into convulsions, which would last nearly an hour. About nine o'clock he would rise to his knees, and utter a short prayer or invocation, followed by repeating the Lord's Prayer; after which he would rise to his feet and deliver a sermon from an hour to two hours long—speaking with a strong voice, which could be heard by three hundred people outside the house. He moves about the room, gesticulates forcibly, and his manner is that of a person earnestly speaking to a large audience. His language is not elegant, yet his discourse is always logical and eloquent, and evinces preparation. He preaches from the Bible, but takes no text. He often illustrates ideas with passages identical with Milton's *Paradise Lost*, yet he never saw that work, and probably does not know Milton ever lived. His discourses are liberal in doctrine, whereas the Amish Church is exclusive and dogmatic. He speaks in the German and English languages. On one occasion, however, he spoke about twenty minutes in German; then for more than an hour in a language unknown to any one present, although there were persons of education and talent listening; and suddenly closed in English, in which he said he had declared the Word of God in three languages, and shown how to gain the ark of safety, and avoid the pit. He sets forth but two Churches: Christ, light, love, charity; and the Devil, darkness, hate, selfishness. He often gives passages of Scripture, and, being questioned the next morning about them, cannot tell whether they are in the Bible or not. He knows very little of what is in the Old Testament. At the close of his discourse he gives a short benediction and the Lord's Prayer, and falls on his couch, apparently exhausted, his whole person having the appearance of a dead man; and, after a few moments' convulsive tremor, suddenly awakes, gets up, and walks out of the house. The next morning he gets up, says he has had a good night's rest, and goes to his work, only to repeat the experience of the day before; and so it has been for months, every night.

The mystery, of course, soon began to spread abroad. At first it annoyed the family very much, as it kept them from sleep and rest; but they could not prevent it; and soon the crowds which gathered compelled them to adapt themselves to the circumstances. Clergymen and physicians have

observed the phenomenon, and are all alike puzzled, but agree that there is no deception about it. When he is speaking, his eyes are closed, his abdomen and stomach distended and hard as stone, not yielding to pressure more than a case of iron. As soon as he passes out of the convulsive stage, the stomach and abdomen at once become naturally soft and pliable. His pulse is remarkably strong, but not increased in rapidity. When he ceases speaking, his pulse becomes rather weak. Several attempts have been made to awake him while he was speaking, but the most vigorous treatment failed even to check his talk.

Every night this has been going on, with but two exceptions. One was when he was attending service in his own church. He was seized with his drowsiness, and determined not to go home, but to overcome it. He, however, did not, but arose in his place and preached two hours with remarkable power, much to the astonishment of the meeting. On Sunday of last week a large number of people was present from surrounding towns and cities. After speaking over an hour and a half, he closed with the Lord's Prayer; but instead of dropping on his couch, as usual, he opened his eyes and quickly said: "My eyes have been opened. I stand before you a natural man. It has been revealed to me that this is the last time I shall speak to you. My work is done, and I am released." His face expressed much joy; but, as he beheld the crowd of people, the change was quickly that of surprise and fear. Since then he has not spoken, and none are more gratified than his family, who had been nearly worn out with fatigue and excitement. They give no explanation of the matter. Indeed, they say they know nothing about it. Troyer knows nothing of what he does or says, and only says he cannot help it. It is the work of the Lord, and he must do His will. The Amish Church generally so believe it to be, and nothing else. Spiritualists who have seen him say he is a medium controlled by a deceased Amish preacher. No person of intelligence believes it to be a fraud. Several medical men from Washington and Iowa City visited him, but what their opinion is has not been made known.—*Chicago Tribune*.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REVUE SPIRITE.

The Revue Spirite announces the death of a well-known Spiritualist, M. Le Comte Adolphe Sadria Poninski. M. E. S. Kasprovicz, the president of the society of which the Count was the founder, writes concerning him as follows:—"Comte Poninski belonged to an old princely Polish family; he held a prominent position in Galicia, which he resigned to go to Leipzig to spread there a knowledge of Spiritualism, sacrificing thus his worldly advancement for the sake of his faith. He was extremely charitable, and put into practice his spiritual theories. He was the founder of German Spiritualism; at Leipzig he formed the "Société Verein für Spirite Studien," and in this city, the centre of materialism, despite the scorn and contempt of the press and of men of science, he continued to battle steadfastly for our belief. His death was very peaceful, and with his last words he affirmed his perfect faith in the doctrine of Reincarnation. He died respected by even his adversaries. He truly was an advocate who did honour to the cause of Spiritualism."

The Revue Spirite contains a curious letter concerning the apparition of a dog. The writer says that he is constantly aware of the presence of a ghostly dog; he has only to think of it and it appears; he sees it, and feels its caresses, and it is his companion night and day. In recognition of the affection which this strange animal lavishes upon him, he has bestowed on it the name of Fidèle. He asks other Spiritualists if they can give him any explanation as to the cause of this strange phenomenon.

The same journal gives a highly favourable review of Mr. Edward Maitland's recent work, *The Soul, and How It Found Me*.

THE reunion of Spiritualists at the first of the winter *soirées* of the British National Association of Spiritualists early next month will, as usual, be a brilliant one, and among the attractions Mr. Barrett will exhibit the working of the new self-recording machinery for weighing mediums during manifestations. The working of the galvanometric apparatus for testing mediums will also be exhibited, in a room semi-darkened for the purpose.

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.]

WHAT TRUTH IS THERE IN HOMŒOPATHY?

SIR,—“B.’s” observations in the study of Spiritualism have doubtless led him to the conclusion that a true view of any “so-called” unorthodox subject is only to be obtained by the study of its literature, by putting assertions fairly (*i.e.*, in accordance with the asserted conditions) to the test on every available occasion, and by keeping one’s self *au courant* on the subject by the systematic perusal of its periodicals. If a thing be true, to know it, to understand it, is to assent to it. Outside the subject, as in Spiritualism so in homœopathy, only the misrepresentation of often conscientious, and, sometimes, of merely frivolous ignorance, is to be found. This being so, the best answer “B.” can get is from himself. Let him do his own thinking, thus:—Let him go to the nearest homœopathic chemist’s, and invest 1s. 6d. in Dr. Ruddock’s *Stepping-Stone to Homœopathy and Health*, and 1s. in the *Pocket Glossary of Medical Terms*, by James Wylde, published by Leath and Ross, 5, St. Paul’s-churchyard; further, let him expend 6d. monthly in the purchase of *The Homœopathic World*, which is written expressly to meet the wants of the unprofessional as well as of the professional, and he will find the true answer come to him slowly and surely, as by reading, comparing, and testing, his mental vision becomes clear on the subject. He will never regret following this advice. I speak from an experience of eighteen years in India and England. My first experience was curing myself of chronic dysentery in the former country. Since my return to England I have been but once under medical (homœopathic) treatment for any time, and that was for sciatica, brought on, I believe, by the work of watching over and attending on one who was suffering from brain fever, and who was safely brought round by homœopathy. The same doctor attended us both.

Yes, many Spiritualists believe in homœopathy, and many homœopaths believe in Spiritualism. I see, on comparing the names with the medical lists, that almost all the medical men who are Spiritualists are also homœopaths. One conviction leads the way to the other, for it is seen that, *mutatis mutandis*, the same *à priori* arguments, and the same misconceptions of ignorance are brought forward by outsiders in both cases. I was totally unable to believe, as the orthodox on both subjects would have one believe, that numbers (and increasing ones) of my fellow-men were either “knaves or dupes,” so, on the first opportunity, I did my own thinking.

HENRY MENARS.

Bath, October 11th, 1878.

ARTIFICIAL MEMORY.

SIR,—I am not acquainted with Stokes’s system, but can do all that his system enables any one to do. Any one who wishes to be able to do likewise, if not inclined to go to Stokes, should purchase *Systematic Memory*, by T. Maclaren, price one shilling: published by F. Pitman, 20, Paternoster-row. I have applied mnemonics to all sorts of subjects for the last ten and a-half years. To make it thoroughly and extensively useful I found it necessary to increase the number of “memory-pegs” to five hundred. This I did by means of the vowels “a, e, i, o, u.” For the hundred given in the pamphlet I substituted monosyllables having the sound (long or short) of “a” in them; for the second hundred monosyllables having that of “c;” for the third, that of “i;” fourth, that of “o;” fifth, that of “u.” The sound mind; the whole system is phonetic. I also found it useful to allow “w” as well as “f” and “v” to stand for “5.” It must be remembered that “Repetition is the mother of study,” and no system can do away with the necessity for it, but “mnemonics” makes the repetition “child’s play.” *E.G.*—I first tested it more than ten years ago, while confined to my bed by a severe attack of sciatica, by learning five hundred French sentences (which I numbered off as I learnt them) so perfectly that given (x) either the number (y), the sentence in French (z), or the English of it, I could give the other two; given x, I at once gave y and z; given y, then x, z, and so on. Well, these sentences I had hardly again given a thought to until a short time back, when two or three steady reperusals brought them all back clearly to my memory, so far as those reperusals have yet gone, *i.e.*, to 350 of the sentences. In forming my “pegs,” I have drawn, where necessary, upon all the languages I happen to be more or less conversant with.

Those who wish to see how mnemonics may be applied to “mathematics” should procure No. 105 of Weale’s Rudimentary Series, entitled *First Mnemonical Lessons*, by the Rev. T. P. Kirkman, price 1s. 6d., Crosby, Lockwood, and Co. I know, as an old mathematician, that any one who masters with understanding the seven pages of “mnemonical lines” therein given, and keeps them fresh in his memory by occasional repetition, has the whole book of 180 pages at his fingers’ ends, so to speak. In lodging such things in one’s head, as say the value of “II” to fifteen places of decimals, I find it useful to let the sound of “z” represent the decimal point. Lastly, I have to say that by help of my disciplined memory I need but little indoor study. I take the shell of my mathematical problems with me, and solve them in my daily rambles about the beautiful scenery round here; or if it is a language I wish to pick up, I can do so, anywhere and everywhere, by turning the pages of it stored up in my memory into “questions and answers” (Robertsonian method), though, of course, only aloud when I am alone. In reading a book, I mark, as I peruse it, the passages worth stereotyping in my head, and, after going through the book, return to the first marked, and commence “pegging.” Wherever I am I need never be idle, can always chew the cud of knowledge, and so bring forth “old things and new.” Let everyone who is led by the perusal of this letter to discipline his memory, remember that it is “Practice that makes perfect.” Every mathematician knows the value of a ready recollection

of formulæ. It is well to appeal to the voice and to the ear-memories as well as to the eye-memory, and to do so effectually no exactitude in giving them can be too great. *E.G.*—It will not do to read $\frac{A}{a}$ as the eye would suggest, but we must give each letter a different sound, say, read the capitals as Greek letters, “alpha by a;” so it will not do to read “P (1 + $\frac{r}{100}$),” “P into one plus r by 100;” but, to prevent ambiguity, we must read “P into the sum of 1 and of the quotient of r by 100.”

H. M.

Bath, October 6th, 1878.

WHAT GOOD HAS SPIRITUALISM DONE?

SIR,—Will you permit me to add my humble testimony to that of others as to “What good has Spiritualism done?” I am only in the A B C of spiritual knowledge, yet have I in the space of the twelve months past been most blest, and I truly believe am a better woman for the knowledge that has come to me. I know no “mediums,” have seen nothing except in my own home, in the stillness of my lonely room; and the spirit who calls herself my guardian first proved her presence and power when, utterly at fault, in great trouble and perplexity, I needed, if ever human soul needed, help and advice. Help, such as an aching heart needs; advice that prevented me from doing a very foolish thing. This my sweet guardian gave me.

My life has been one of much sorrow, and often in the past the burden has seemed more than I could bear. I have long been what people call “religious,” but never felt the blessedness of true faith in my God and my Redeemer till the spirits showed me the new bright light! And since then I know that one prayerful thought will bring their power over me; alone or in a crowd there they are, ready to help and advise. In most trying moments, when much depended on my “yes” or “no,” and I knew not which to say, they have decided for me, when my woman’s weakness and inexperience would have led me into quite the opposite course.

Twice, when angry feelings would have made me write such letters as might have wrecked my happiness for life, my hand and pen have been taken possession of by my loving guide, and my letters written for me!—written by that Divine law of love that teaches us to forgive our enemies, and love them that hurt us.

And now a new blessing has been vouchsafed me. I twisted a leader in my right hand; I could not use it at all, and was in much pain; a good angel came and manipulated it, and eventually, during a semi-trance into which I was put, my hand was quite restored, not a vestige of pain left!

My spirit friends not only bring me sweet comfort from those I love in the better land, but they are my “Mizpah” here with distant loved ones.

I enclose my card.

A. M. B. Y.

Oct. 9th, 1878.

SIMULATION.

SIR,—The following from Dr. Gregory’s *Animal Magnetism*, published in 1851, 1st edition, p. 102, may be of interest:—

“I have always admitted the possibility of deceit in animal magnetism, when practised for the sake of money. And I believe that cases have occurred of genuine somnambulists who, under certain circumstances, have been guilty of imposition. Let us suppose a person who is really possessed of certain powers in the mesmeric sleep, but who is greedy of gain and vain of his powers. If, as I have shown to be probable, he should on some public occasion find his power much less than usual, or should be deprived of it by over-exertion in previous experiments which have succeeded, not only is his vanity hurt, but his prospects of gain are diminished; and if, as may happen, he does not possess the highest sense of truth and honour, he may try to make up for deficient power by deceit. I have some reason to believe that individuals, of whose power at times no doubt can reasonably be entertained, have, when over-fatigued, or by some chance less lucid than usual, endeavoured to cover failure by deceit. Of course, although I might believe such persons to possess great lucidity at certain times, and to have acted thus dishonestly, simply from the desire to escape the confession of failure and the loss of expected gain, yet I should not use the evidence derived from such cases. It is best to reject all evidence to which any suspicion can attach. There is abundance of unexceptionable evidence, if we only look for it; and I would look with suspicion on the evidence derived from the public exhibitions of those who make a trade of such exhibitions, and use paid subjects.”

OBSERVER.

A SEANCE WITH MISS WOOD.

SIR,—I attended Miss Wood’s *séance*, held in the Newcastle Society’s Rooms, on Sunday morning last. There were besides the medium thirteen persons present, surrounding her in a semi-circle. The cabinet consists of four green baize curtains, suspended from a rod in a corner of the room; the medium sat in an armchair outside of the curtains in view of all the sitters; the light was just sufficient to enable me to distinguish the pointers of my watch, which has a white dial; and to enable us to discern the medium more clearly in such light, a white cambric handkerchief was pinned to her bonnet and dress. She sat a short time, after which the control asked to be allowed to take the medium into the cabinet to obtain power, as it alleged. I objected to this as against the instructions of the committee, when the control intimated that the phenomena should only occur under the society’s prescribed conditions, namely, while the medium was outside the cabinet, and in full view of the sitters; thereupon I assented. The medium then went within the green baize curtains, where she remained about ten minutes, and then resumed her original place. After the singing of a hymn by

us, and a few verses of a second song, a shroud was seen to emerge from the empty cabinet, walk around the medium, and re-enter it on the other side; it made its appearance a second time, carrying on this occasion a tambourine, when a gentleman requested it to come forward and tap him on the elbow, which it accordingly did. It again walked around the medium, varying during the process in length from about four to five feet, then re-entered the cabinet. I asked permission to exchange seats with a friend of mine at the other end of the semi-circle, as his appeared a better point for observation, and on being allowed I placed myself there, bringing myself within a foot and a-half of the medium. The shroud then came a third time out of the vacant cabinet, appeared to be fully two feet from the medium, and about the same measurement higher as it walked around the chair in which the medium was sitting and talking, apparently under control.

I observed closely, but could see no movements on the part of the medium to account for the motion of the shroud, or the more complex fact of its carrying the tambourine, and, in response to a request to do so, tapping the gentleman already mentioned. The shroud distinctly retired ultimately into the cabinet, which I was the first to enter, to find, if possible, any drapery that would account for the appearance which we had just witnessed, but I need hardly add my search was a fruitless one.

JOHN MOULD.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, 10th October, 1878.

ALLEGED ASTROLOGICAL INFLUENCE OF ECLIPSES.

SIR,—It is an aphorism of the ancients that "children born during a visible eclipse do not long survive their birth." A medical gentleman residing in Edinburgh was called to a case in the early morning of the 13th of August last. He found on arrival that a fine, healthy girl had been born exactly at 12h. 20m. a.m. (Greenwich mean time). The horoscope (drawn for 12h. 7m. 16s. a.m., Edinburgh time) shows the moon eclipsed on the zenith, in semi-quartile aspect to Saturn, and hastening to the opposition of Uranus and Mars. The middle of the eclipse took place at 12h. 8m. 2s. Greenwich mean time, according to the *Nautical Almanac*. The child died of diarrhoea on the 25th of August. The facts are beyond dispute, the doctor having been at great pains to ascertain the exact moment of birth, regarding it as a test of the ancient belief before referred to. He was greatly astonished at the child's death, nevertheless.

I may mention that I have records in my possession of several children born without life during eclipses. I have never yet met with any case of a child born during an eclipse attaining maturity. I shall be glad if any of your readers can supply me with well-authenticated times of birth of children born during eclipses, whether they long survived their birth or not.

ALFRED J. PEARCE.

3, Cedars-terrace, Queen's-road, Clapham, S.W.,
October 3rd, 1878.

MR. EGLINTON IN SOUTH AFRICA.

SIR,—Mr. W. Eglinton arrived here on the 4th August, as your readers are doubtless aware by this time. Since then we have had regular *séances* with him three times a week, under the auspices of the committee of the Psychological Society, who will send in their report hereafter. As investigators, no more palpable proofs of immortality could have been afforded us than the manifestations occurring through this gentleman's mediumship. I consider him one of the best sensitives in the world. Although Dr. Monck's sittings with the Rev. T. Colley in full light were certainly the acme of spirit materialisation, they could not always be produced in the presence of sceptics. With Mr. Eglinton the manifestations are generally certain in the presence of either believers or investigators.

Had I the means to spend £1,000 a year for the cause for five years, I would, with him, do a mighty work. At present I can only quietly push my way, as my finances are strictly limited, and people, I find, are very unwilling to pay their share for value received, although they must know the "labourer is worthy his hire." Mr. Eglinton is a gentleman, and knows how to maintain his dignity as such. My confidence in him is consequently very great; not only that his position entitles him to this confidence, but that I have proved him, beyond a shadow of a doubt, to be a grand physical and intellectual medium, the spirit "Ernest" giving us this latter phase.

Your readers may not know who I am, but I may state that, having lived in America for ten years, and in various parts of Europe, and seen all sides of human nature, I feel quite competent to judge when a man is doing what he professes. I think few men would deceive me by palmistry, hypocrisy, or psychological influences, especially if he lived in my own house, as does Mr. Eglinton. I have proved spirit communion to be true long since, the mediums being my own relatives, but not having developed beyond the incipient stages, I decided to invite a good physical medium to South Africa, and, from the high manner in which the press and private individuals had spoken of Mr. Eglinton's powers as a medium, I determined to get him to leave England and become a pioneer, that the most sceptical of sceptics might see and judge for himself. He reached us unattended with confederates and conjurors' paraphernalia, and if he alone, closely intimate as we are with all his doings and movements, can deceive the senses of thirty intelligent and sane persons under crucial tests, then the public must acknowledge him to be gifted with superhuman power in this respect. When in my own *séance*-room, and held on each side by members of my own choosing, he has given such evidence of the presence of a spiritual power, and of the identity of the spirits, that none but a man without brains could say it was imposition. Without filling up your columns with details, I will simply state what I know to be facts:—

1. Loud and powerful raps all over the room, governed by an intelligence having the attributes of a well-educated human being.

2. Spirit-lights floating all over the room, some in the form of a beautiful Latin cross, a hexagonal star (or "double trinity," as the in-

telligences call it), luminous hands of the friends of the sitters, flash signals made by the lights, all appealing to sight instead of to the hearing, as in the case of the spirit rap.

3. Spirit-hands, from that of a child of not a year old to that of a well-grown man, often the small hands of my children being amongst the number. These hands have grasped mine as firm and with as solid a grip as any man could give, and they have also given me the Masonic grip of the E.A. and Sublime Degree. As a Master Mason, I swear this to be correct, and my brother Masons, Mr. J. B. Murrick and Mr. Hugh Fisher, who were sitting with me at the time, can testify to the same thing, as they received the same tests of the presence of a Masonic spirit. Mr. Eglinton, who was no Mason at the time, but who has since taken his first degree, of course knew nothing of our signs and signals; therefore the test is most conclusive evidence of the identity of a Masonic spirit being present at our meeting.

4. My musical box and other instruments have been wound up, stopped, and set going at request; and it has also floated above our heads, taken to different parts of the room as wished, and often struck the ceiling in its flight.

5. Solid brass curtain rings taken off the gas jet where I hung them, and linked on the arms of three of the sitters without their hands being loosened. (This is apparently, but not literally, matter passing through matter.)

7. Direct spirit-painting, drawings, and writing done in total darkness, the sitters preserving corners of the cards provided by us, upon which these wonders were produced, for purposes of recognition. Some are Masonic emblems and allegorical, and the paintings and drawings are beautiful and mathematically correct, and they have been pronounced by competent judges to be true art works.

8. The direct spirit-voices speaking and instructing all of us in matters relevant to the working of the circle, and answering philosophical questions to the satisfaction of all. Two voices have spoken at once, and while the mouth of the medium was filled with water. The teachings of "Ernest" are superior to all those I have heard from the most eloquent ministers of our Anglican Church. We know he is good and holy, for "by the tree the fruit is known."

9. Levitation and floating of Mr. Eglinton and another gentleman, a private medium, over our heads and up to the ceiling, who at our request, have hammered the wooden roof with their hands. They have floated horizontally and perpendicularly, both in the normal and trance condition.

10. Seeing phantom forms and faces, one of them being my darling child "Lily," who showed herself at the gas-light above the heads of us, and was plainly recognised by my wife and a gentleman, to whom the face turned, and imprinted a most audible and tangible kiss on his forehead, reminding him in a voice plainly heard by all that he had kissed her as her body laid in the coffin—a fact which the medium was not acquainted with. She took a pair of gloves which she used to wear, and held them to the flame of the gas until they slightly caught fire. Large spirit forms have floated all over the room and up to the ceiling, twelve feet high, showing themselves quite distinctly by the aid of their own wonderful lights. These manifestations are the nearest approaches to the fully materialised forms which we hope to see in our subsequent researches. Our plan has been to sit without the use of the cabinet; and I am pleased to inform your readers that not once have we used it, the medium at all times, in both light and dark *séances*, being seated by the side of us, his two hands in charge of responsible members of our committee—thus marking an advance in the history of materialisation.

11. Writing done in sealed boxes, with glass covers specially sealed for the test, and once a match was put in one of them in full light before the eyes of the sitters who were examining the box; and there it remains, for scientists to take out of the box, sealed up as it is. Answers written to questions put in sealed envelopes, the answers being pertinent to the questions.

12. Objects taken from my dining-room to the *séance*-room, which must have come through the walls (not literally, of course, no more than a nail goes through a plank of wood, if driven in, the particles only becoming forced aside and condensed, allowing the nail to pass between the atoms). Flowers strewn all over my drawing-room, and arranged in pretty groups. Voices speaking to us when not holding *séances*, often in broad daylight, and other spontaneous manifestations too numerous to mention.

13. Healing by spirit control, and receiving directions quite in accordance with medical science.

14. Trance-speaking through the lips of the medium in various voices, with action and idiomatic expressions suitable to each impersonation. Often giving directions on matters of the most recondite and philosophical subjects.

15. Spirit hands appearing in the light, through a hole cut in the table for the purpose, the medium's hands being secured by two sitters.

I boldly and emphatically assert and proclaim that what I have seen during the last five years, and especially of late, through the powers of Mr. Eglinton, has proved to me and thirty others that those who have died (so-called) have the power of making themselves known, by appealing to our senses of sight, sound, and touch, and, above all, to our intellectual faculties, by imploring us, for God and Christ's sake, to listen to them, and judge whether they are not spirits or sublimated beings. They emphatically assert and proclaim themselves to be such, and, under such absolute fraud-proof conditions which we impose, none but a fool or a bigot could or dare deny the fact. I implore your readers to practically investigate this subject, as we are doing; the best method of investigation being, in our opinion, to invite a medium to a private house for a certain time, and by the gradual development of the phenomena afford many opportunities for critical investigation.

We shall have shortly concluded our committee's researches, and I will send to your readers, and to the public press here, the result of

their determination. I shall be most happy to let you hear of our further progress; and, coming from such a distant land, I can only hope our proceedings will be watched with interest by those who know both Mr. Eglinton as a medium, and myself as a shrewd investigator.

BERKS T. HUTCHINSON.

2, New-street, Cape Town, September 13th, 1878.

FACTS AND INFERENCES.

SIR,—In Mr. Riko's letter, giving an account of the seizure of the English mediums at Amsterdam, it is said—"Afterwards, on searching Mr. Williams's hand-bag, a small tube, filled with very minute pieces of slate-pencil, was found. These points fitted into a flat, thin fish-bone, or spring, serving probably to produce the phenomenon of writing between sealed slates, if room enough is left to introduce the instrument. After finding the above-mentioned implements the two mediums looked perplexed."

As any one would understand from the foregoing statement that a flat implement for holding the pencil points was actually found in the bag, it is only fair to the mediums to make known, what I have since heard from Mr. Riko, that the "flat, thin fishbone, or spring" was matter of inference only, nothing of the kind being actually found in the bag. They assumed that the bits of slate-pencil could only have been intended for fraudulent writing, and inferred that they must have been used by the aid of such an implement as that which appears in Mr. Riko's statement as an actual fact. For my part, I am certain that nothing beyond the merest scrawl could possibly be written by a thin tool inserted between carefully closed slates, and therefore I do not believe that the trick was ever attempted by mediums in that way. In the face of the writing on closed slates done by means of Slade, Monck, and Eglinton, it is a perfectly gratuitous assumption to take the bits of pencil found in the possession of Mr. Rita (to whom it appears the hand-bag really belonged) as proofs of fraud. It is not every one who has such teeth as Slade, who used to bite off a morsel from the end of his slate-pencil whenever he required a convenient bit for writing. H. WEDGWOOD.

Queen Anne-street, Cavendish-square, London.

SIR,—All true lovers of the scientific methods of research in the domain of psychological phenomena must have felt annoyed at the Williams-Rita scandal. Not only does it make us distrust one of our oldest and most favoured mediums, but it throws a doubt upon many manifestations at *séances* which were hitherto believed to be genuine.

You, sir, propose to do away with "cabinet" *séances*. But surely this would be a mistake, as it would put an end to a very valuable method of obtaining spiritualistic phenomena. The true remedy should be not to do away with cabinet *séances*, but to make them truly test *séances*. No *séance* of this kind can be considered a test unless the medium is previously searched. The policy of allowing him to enter the cabinet untrammelled, unexamined, and free to use his head, hands, and feet as he pleases, always seemed to me very doubtful, as it deliberately encourages fraud, and has no doubt often turned an honest medium into an impostor. My proposal is that at all physical *séances* held for scientific objects the medium should be obliged to change his clothes before the *séance* begins. The clothes, consisting of coloured shirt, trousers, waistcoat, and coat should be provided; at least two persons should be present while he puts them on, and his own clothes should be locked in a box in the meantime. We have heard of spirit drapery being concealed under the collar of the so-called medium, so it is necessary that all the clothes should be changed to make the test complete. *Séances* held with this precaution would be ten times more interesting, and the phenomena could hardly fail to be conclusive.

The Count de Bullet affirms that the spirits are in the habit of bringing drapery, and that as this exhausts power he often provides the drapery himself. Is it possible that the spirits also bring phosphoric oil and false beards? And yet the one is as much a manufactured article as the other, although it does not seem to appeal to our sense of the ludicrous.

All this might be definitely set at rest by examining the mediums before, not after the *séance*, as it is not supposed that the spirits provide the drapery and conceal it about the mediums before the *séance* is held. If the medium were examined in the way suggested, we should have conclusive proof that the spirit drapery was real (should any be seen), and the fact of its being found afterwards on the medium would not prove his dishonesty.

FRED. BARRETT.

Leacroft, Staines, Sept. 28th, 1878.

ALTHOUGH Paris has, practically speaking, no thieves in a population of nearly two millions, it has little theology. The churches are usually empty and the theatres full on Sundays, unless some pageantry is on view at the former.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES.—The Derby Psychological Society, under the presidency of Mr. J. J. Morse, has just issued a circular setting forth a proposed formation of a "Midland District Spiritualists' Conference Committee." The document says:—"The Derby Psychological Society, by a resolution passed at its ordinary meeting on September 11th, resolved upon holding a Conference on Sunday, October 13th, in the Co-operative Assembly Rooms, Monk-street, Derby. The objects of the Conference are:—1st. To receive reports, suggestions, and advice from the friends present, and to receive a deputation from the Lancashire District Committee (Messrs. Johnson and Hartley), who will detail the plans and methods adopted by that body. 2nd. To form a 'Conference Committee' for the Midland Counties, and devise such ways and means as the work presented may require."

THE CAREER OF MR. GEORGE THOMPSON.

From the "Leeds Mercury."

It is with much regret that we have to-day to announce the death of Mr. George Thompson, so well known in past years as one of the most eloquent champions of the slave, and as a zealous advocate of the cause of political and religious liberty. It was perhaps not generally known amongst our townspeople that Mr. Thompson has for some years lived in Leeds, enjoying that quiet retirement not only required by his enfeebled health, but which he had so nobly earned by the public labours of his early life.

Up to within a few years ago Mr. Thompson lived either in Edinburgh or London, being a member at the latter place of the Reform and other clubs. Being in feeble health in 1870, his cousin, Mr. Edmund Donisthorpe, manufacturer, of Leeds, to whom he was very much attached, advised him to remove to this town, and, acting under his advice, he took up his residence at 30, Francis-street, Chapel-town-road. About three years ago Mr. Donisthorpe died. This was a severe blow to Mr. Thompson, but a still greater loss awaited him in the death of his wife, which took place in April last. Since then Mr. Thompson has declined rapidly, and after a week of great suffering he died at a late hour on Monday night.

Mr. Thompson was born in 1804, in a house standing on the site now occupied by St. George's Hall, Liverpool. His father was a man of cultured mind and literary attainments. Very early in life did George Thompson manifest a peculiar talent for discussion. When only a child he harangued a youthful audience from an inverted barrel, and at the age of eighteen was, in London, a prominent member of several metropolitan debating societies. He there attracted the notice of some gentlemen connected with the Anti-Slavery Society, and ere he reached the age of twenty-five he was known throughout England as the eloquent champion of the slave.

Mr. Thompson was not educated at any public school or college. He had, however, the advantage of possessing a gifted and talented father, and what education he did acquire was obtained by his own application to study. In the year 1831 he married Anne Erskine Lorraine, daughter of the Rev. Richard Spy, and in 1834, after having won for himself the name of "the greatest natural orator of his day" (the verdict of his friend Lord Brougham), he proceeded to brave the fierce tempest then raging in America against the noble band of men and women engaged in the abolition of slavery. Here he made the acquaintance, and became the friend and brother for life, of the philanthropist William Lloyd Garrison. Side by side they did battle for the cause of freedom, suffering daily from insult and injury. Mr. Garrison kindly shared the lease of a house for Mr. Thompson's accommodation in the neighbourhood of Boston. They were constantly, whilst here, annoyed by the conduct of evil-disposed roughs who haunted the vicinity, evidently meaning mischief. One morning a gallows appeared erected before the street door, having two nooses dangling from it, one for Mr. Garrison, the other for Mr. Thompson, and bearing the superscription, "By order of Judge Lynch." Five weeks after, a mob of five thousand persons congregated in front of the anti-slavery office, Boston, for the purpose of dispersing one of their meetings, and seizing Mr. Thompson bodily with the view of giving him a coat of tar and feathers. Failing to lay hands on Mr. Thompson, they seized Mr. Garrison as a substitute, but after a sharp struggle he was rescued by the Mayor. The following is a copy of the placard issued to incite the mob. It emanated from the office of the *Boston Commercial Gazette* :—

"THOMPSON, THE ABOLITIONIST.—That infamous foreign scandal, Thompson, will hold forth this afternoon, at the Liberator Office, Nos. 48-46, Washington-street. The present is a fair opportunity for the friends of the Union to 'snake Thompson out.' It will be a contest between the Abolitionists and the friends of the Union. A purse of one hundred dollars has been raised by a number of patriotic citizens to reward the individual who shall first lay violent hands on Thompson, so that he may be brought to the tar-kettle before dark. Friends of the Union be vigilant."

Whilst in America Mr. Thompson, in one of his speeches, made use of the following sentences :—"There isn't a rood of earth on the globe that is not more sanctified by the spirit of liberty than Republican America. Nothing is contraband in this country but truth and honesty." The *Rochester Daily Advertiser* commented on these remarks in its issue of February 25th, 1851, as follows :—"Such are the vindictive and scurrilous ravings of the arrant demagogue and demented abolitionist, George Thompson, than whom the seum of the bastard aristocracy of England does not furnish a more heartless or worthless specimen. Are these epithets too strong? Can any expression be too emphatic in describing that libel upon mankind, that vagrant, ill-begotten apology for a man who can leave his own country and go abroad to abuse, slander, vilify, and blackguard a nation and a people, to whose suffrance and humanity he is indebted for not having his ears nailed to a pillory? . . . For what other nation on the globe would allow such a scamp to prowl amongst its people, slander its institutions, and excite to servile insurrections, without giving the culprit the benefit of the pillory, the bastinado, or the bowstring? Here he gets off by being pelted with rotten eggs, and burned in effigy. . . . This gross and offensive libeller of our country and its institutions, this coarse violator of the sacred rights of hospitality had better go back to England or to Van Diemen's Land, where he may find spirits congenial to his own. . . . England has sent over many shabby fellows to this country to abuse and insult us, but this Thompson is the shabbiest of them all."

On another occasion a number of ruffians surrounded Mr. Thompson's dwelling, and threatened to fire it if the "foreign rascal" who ventured to attack their institutions were not given up. Mr. Thompson

made his escape in disguise, and lay all night hidden in a wood. The mob next threatened to tar and feather his infant children. In this, however, they failed, as in all their attempts. But at length, a price being set on his head, it was deemed best by Mr. Thompson's friends that he should quit the shores of America for a time; and with considerable difficulty he was smuggled on board a small sailing vessel, leaving behind his wife and three young children. Mrs. Thompson and the children followed shortly afterwards. During the whole of his stay in the States he had done noble service in denouncing slavery. To America, however, spite of this rude experience, Mr. Thompson returned twice more. On the second occasion he was created an LL.D., and was welcomed at one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings ever held at Freemont Hall. On the third occasion of his visiting the country, Mr. Thompson witnessed the total overthrow of the iniquitous system he had laboured so hard to abolish, and was an assistant at the ceremony of the restoration of the national flag, he being the invited guest of the Secretary of War (the Hon. E. M. Stanton). Whilst he remained in the United States he delivered between 200 and 300 public lectures, besides innumerable shorter addresses in committees, conventions, associations, &c.

Mr. Thompson was an able assistant of the workers for the abolition of colonial slavery and the apprenticeship system. For his services on this question, Lord Brougham publicly tendered him his thanks in the House of Lords, in a speech delivered on the 16th July, 1838.

Mr. Thompson next directed his attention to the state of British India; and to the advocacy of the rights of the natives a number of years in his arduous life were devoted. In 1841 he entered the Court of Proprietors of East India Stock, and under the privileges of his new position vindicated the Rajah of Sattara, advocated the extension of the permanent revenue settlement of the Upper Provinces, and opposed the Afghan war. Towards the end of 1841 Mr. Thompson joined the crusade against the Corn Laws, and during two years he was a co-worker and agitator with Cobden and Bright, and one of the association known as the Anti-Corn Law League. In 1842 he offered himself, with Lord Nugent, as a candidate for the borough of Southampton; they were unsuccessful. In 1847, however, Mr. Thompson was returned to Parliament as member of the Tower Hamlets by an overwhelming majority, and retained his seat for a number of years.

For the promotion of every movement which he believed to be just, and for the benefit of his fellow-men, Mr. Thompson was a most uncompromising advocate. He was a strong supporter of peace, and in 1854 delivered a series of eloquent lectures against the Crimean war.

Mr. Thompson has made two voyages to India in the interests of the natives. He was the chosen representative of the late King of Delhi, as well as the Rajah of Sattara. He returned from his last Indian voyage greatly enfeebled in bodily health, and though able to appear from time to time as an advocate of Justice, Truth, and Freedom, wherever and whenever he might be called upon to speak, he has gradually failed since his last homeward voyage from the enfeebling climate of Calcutta.

As an orator the deceased was particularly fervid and eloquent, and his speeches in connection with the emancipation of slavery will long be remembered. In 1863 a soirée was given in his honour at the Whittington Club, London, and an address was presented to him in recognition of his long and earnest services in the causes of negro emancipation, and of commercial, political, and social reform. In the course of an eloquent speech which he made on that occasion, Mr. Thompson said—"In common with other public men, the principles which have governed me have often been greatly misunderstood, or, at the least, greatly misrepresented. Let me say, then, once for all, in the presence of Him who reads all hearts, and for the satisfaction and assurance of those who may come after me, that I have never in a single act of my public life been decided in my course by any mercenary feeling, or any consideration of pecuniary reward. At the commencement of my public career I was, if not without a purpose, certainly without a plan. My purpose, even from my boyhood, was to employ any ability with which God had endowed me for the advancement of the happiness, and especially the freedom, of mankind. This purpose I was first enabled to carry out in connection with the cause so prominently placed at the heading of the address before me—that of negro emancipation. I cannot remember the time when my heart was not deeply penetrated with a sense of the injustice and wrong done to the negro race by the prosecution of the African slave trade, and the maintenance, in the British colonies, of the un-Christian and inhuman institution of slavery. In my infancy I had listened to the recital by my father of the horrible scenes common on board slave ships during the 'middle passage,' and had conceived a rooted detestation of the accursed traffic. . . . In the year 1828, when I was twenty-four years of age, I was associated with a number of young men who met weekly at the house of a gentleman in the City for the purpose of improving themselves by the discussion, in the way of debate, of questions of public interest. Slavery was one of these questions, the disputants advocating respectively measures of immediate or gradual emancipation. Our debate continued through eleven nights, and ended in the adoption of a memorial to Lord Bathurst, who was at the time Secretary for the Colonies, praying for the introduction of a Bill into Parliament for the abolition of negro slavery."

Mr. Thompson's last appearance in public was made at the Leeds Town Hall on the 21st of January, 1876, at a meeting held for the purpose of considering the instructions recently issued by the Commissioners of the Admiralty with regard to fugitive slaves. Mr. Thompson, who appeared to be in a state of physical exhaustion and feebleness, seconded a resolution moved by Alderman Barran to the effect that the new Admiralty instructions to naval officers respecting fugitive slaves were at variance with the past traditions and most cherished convictions of the English people. In the course of his speech he said his principles on the question of slavery were very

simple. He denied as a blasphemy the doctrine that man could hold property in man; that a man—a dying man—but the equal of every other man, could own a man, and reduce him from the lofty stature of a moral being to a mere thing, was as philosophically impossible as it was atheistical in idea. . . . It would be a glorious day for England when she laid it down as law—immutable, unchangeable, and eternal, so far as this world was concerned—that she should have no complicity in compromising with slavery in any of its forms. They had something better than tradition to guide them. First, they had an express divine law. What did it say? "Thou shalt not return unto his master the slave that hath escaped unto thee." Then they had also the law of the New Testament—"All things that ye would that men should do unto you do ye so even unto them." The idea of a British vessel going into so-called territorial waters, and spurning from her side a panting slave, running away from atheists who had blasphemously called him a slave, was horrible to contemplate. Our duty was simply to give refuge and protection to the slave, and let others reconcile their laws if they could with our conduct. The resolution he had to second scarcely went far enough for him. He cared nothing for tradition—nothing for precedent; the time was come for England to say, "No complicity with slavery." Go into the slaveholders' waters if they would let them. Keep away if they were disliked; take and incur all the damages, but let them stand by their principles.

The following letter respecting the deceased was received two years ago by a Leeds citizen from the Right Hon. John Bright, M.P. :—

"I thank you for your letter, though its contents are sad.

"I am grieved to hear of the feeble condition of my old friend George Thompson. Like most of us, he will have to regret some, perhaps many, wasted opportunities; but I hope the remembrance of noble labours in many noble causes will afford him some consolation in his declining days.

"I have known him from the beginning of his career, and have never known him employ his great powers of speech for an unworthy object.

"The negro—the once bread-taxed Englishman—the once un-enfranchised artisan—the oppressed and suffering everywhere—owe much to him. His eloquent tongue has been their advocate; and so far as right has triumphed during the past forty years, he has aided to secure the triumph. I honour him greatly, and wish I could pay him a visit to tell him how strong is the sympathy I feel for him."

During the years of his seclusion from public life, the deceased was a devoted student of the best literature. He mastered the contents of every book of worth which fell in his way, and took a deep interest in the affairs of the nation—political, social, and moral. Nor did his interest cease here, but extended to the Continent, and, in fact, to the whole world. On the details of the Franco-Prussian war he was a complete referee.

MEMORIES.

Lines dictated under some control by one not normally poetical :—

I.

As from their long and dreary ocean-flight
Over the desolate bosom of the main
Spring's winged harbingers return again,
And by their old beloved homes alight,
Hoping, as when in summer-season bright
They fled, and left them without vent or stain
Of storm or shower, that so they may remain;
But by wild winter's fierce un pitying might
Find but their wreck all faded, crush'd, and torn;
So to our youthful days we oft return,
And find those tender bowers all forlorn,
And thoughts that erewhile made our bosoms burn,
Like withered nests 'mongst many a barren thorn,
Warn us how sad life's lessons were to learn.

II.

Behold! how desolate before—behind—
And far around—Palmyra's ruined fane
Stands in the silence of the Syrian plain:
A fane whose deity, like a passing wind,
Hath with its worship faded from the mind.
A grim hyena and her brood retain
The place whence oracles once spoke—in vain.
Dull, bitter weeds, in rank profusion twined,
O'er the once holy altar cling and creep;
So memories that once were all divine
Within the heart's dark cavern buried deep,
Feel the god vanish'd from the inmost shrine—
The altar choked—its worship now no more,
And we left lonely on the unknown shore.

The *Pacific Christian Advocate* narrates that John Messenger, of Hillsboro, fell and was seriously injured, but not fatally, as he at first supposed. The *Advocate* says: "He states the mysterious fact that at the instant of his fall his sister, who had died two or three weeks before, appeared before him, and plainly said to him, 'You are badly hurt, but you can't come to where I am yet.'"

HOMŒOPATHY AND SPIRITUALISM.

THE question of your correspondent "B." regarding Homœopathy and Spiritualism in your paper of last week may, I think, be thus answered.

Remedial medicine must ever remain an Art, and not a Science, so long as the secret of life, both healthy and diseased, remains unravelled. We have not the least knowledge of the ultimate and intimate process in the body by which any medicinal agent produces its results; we only know what those results are; we register them mentally side by side with the diseased actions for which the agent was successfully administered, and we call that experience, but not science. We know no more *how* an ounce of Epsom salts produces purging of the bowels than we know how an infinitesimal dose of colocynth or arsenic stops diarrhœa. A favourite question of the scorners of homœopathy is "How can the three-hundredth part of a drop of arsenicum tincture arrest colic and excessive action of the bowels?" This may be answered, "When you tell me how an ounce of salts produces the said colic and excessive action, I will tell you how the arsenicum arrests them." Neither knows anything about the ultimate action of the body in the cause or cure in such case, and a great deal of silly joking about homœopathy might thus be spared. Even the most powerful microscope has failed to detect the action of the ultimate molecules of the tissues involved in the action of medicines.

The same microscope, however, aided by other methods of investigation, has brought scientists to a theory that there are ultimate molecules which receive the impression of external agents and react upon them, and that, therefore, medicinal agents act specially on such molecules—molecules so small as to evade optical instruments, and be, as it were, mathematical points. Still remains unsolved the *causa causans* for this receptivity and reaction. That profound physiologist as well as Spiritualist, Swedenborg, maintains that spirit, being the promulgator and maintainer of all material action, is itself the cause in question; and we might stop here and say that spiritual action which gives the medicine the power to excite the receptivity of the molecules, also gives those molecules the power of reacting upon it, and producing the remedial result. This, however, would be basing the whole matter on a theory of the scientists and an assertion of Swedenborg; and in this way we are again driven to the conclusion that we know nothing certain about the immediate action of medicines, and that all medicine, therefore, is empirical. Meantime a Spiritualist, backed by Swedenborg's authority, may readily accept as not only possible, but highly probable, the certain action of the infinitesimal doses so scorned by those who have never taken the trouble to ascertain by experiment whether they have such action. Here is a substance so subdivided as to be impalpable to taste and smell, the three-millionth part of a grain, we will say, which, nevertheless, will give speedy relief to an inflamed throat, and that constantly, the circumstances being the same; is it more improbable that this should cure a molecular disturbance in the tissues of the throat than that a strong solution of alum or some other astringent should? One would rather affirm that, taking the minute subdivision of the medicine into account, it would be more certain to deal with the minute activity of the molecules, wherein the diseased process really is, than a deluge of strongly impregnated water is likely to do. Both remedies may relieve; but unquestionably, as a vast experience of ninety years all over Europe has proved, the infinitesimal homœopathy fulfils much more completely the desideratum so dwelt upon by Hippocrates in a cure, that it should be made "*cito, certè, et jucundè*." One who attributes to spirit the organisation and function of all he sees around him, will not be slow to comprehend that an almighty subtle agent such as spirit is, pervading all matter, should act through matter so attenuated as to be almost itself spiritual; and so the homœopathic treatment of disease would, one would say, be acceptable to a Spiritualist on that score. But experience, which, after all, is the real test and recommendation of a curative method, comes in aid of the spiritual theory. The old method has its successes, but neither so certain nor so pleasantly effected as those by homœopathy. And I say this as one who is no special

homœopath, but has long used *all* methods which he conscientiously believed could aid the sick and suffering.

The question of "like curing like," which is the foundation maxim of homœopathy, is included in the above arguments; but it is not so fiercely assailed by opponents as the infinitesimal doses. In fact, the opposite school has adopted the maxim in not a few instances, and even some professed homœopaths give *nasty* medicine on the "like cures like" rule; they adopt the rule, but cannot swallow the doses, small as they are. IATROS.

SUBJECTIVE OR OBJECTIVE?

SIR CHARLES ISHAM forwards us the following information:—"With regard to Mr. Cogle and the straw hat, a lady and her pupil, staying with me, told me with astonishment, a few days before the account of the above appeared, that they had just seen on their way down stairs, late in the day, three bright stars, fully as large as a shilling, slowly emerge one after another from the tail of a white dog which was accompanying them, and sitting on the floor scratching. The stars disappeared in a wardrobe two or three feet distant. They further remarked that the last one was rather the largest, and a little ragged at the edges."

If the stars were not objective realities, this appears to be a curious case of synchronous subjective vision.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FRITZ.—We decline to publish any anonymous letters about the Williams-Rita matter. Where individual character is concerned, let every writer print his name and address.

COLONEL BUNDY (Chicago).—So far as we know, the National Association of Spiritualists has taken no notice in any way of your dealings with Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, and you have most likely been misinformed. The only way they could have considered them without our knowledge, and the knowledge of the Council and their constituents, would have been in Committee without subsequently reporting it to the Council. If anybody on the Council looks through the Committee books, and finds any official resolution about you in them, a permanent veto of censure stands against him if he makes the minute public. This illegitimate way of doing public business in secret is un-English, and cannot last.

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