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THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

BY C. C. MASSEY.

AN interesting meeting was held on Monday the 9th Feb., at the studio of Mr. E. Clifford, 52, Wigmore Street, London, for the discussion of the relative “power over evil,” of such influences as “Philanthropy, Art, Spiritualism, Conversion, Roman Catholicism, Temperance.” The speakers were confined to facts, and were listened to with deep attention by a large company. Mr. Clifford himself related to us the following fact, which I am able to give in his own words, as he has kindly repeated it to me in a letter.

“A young man named — about 30, came into an Evangelistic Hall, at the East end of London, nearly a year ago. He was in such a state of disease from drink that he could not even wash his face, and was unfit for human society. He had signed the pledge (he said) nearly a hundred times. He believed in the Power of God, to forgive and convert him, and getting alone he prayed God to convert him, but he said, ‘It is no use my being converted unless Thou takest away the appetite, for I am so weak and unable to resist the temptation.’ From that hour he has had *no* appetite for drink, and his happy and healthy appearance testifies to the result of the change. He earns nearly £2 a week. I can easily let you question him if you like.”

That strong religious excitement should for a short time overpower an evil tendency, without supposing any superhuman agency, is of course easily conceivable. But that this influence should permanently *eradicate* such an appetite as that for drink in a confirmed drunkard, thus not only enabling him to *overcome* the temptation, but removing the temptation itself, appears to me out of the question. We need not, however, suppose what no doubt would be the belief of the man himself, and probably of most religious communities, that there was here a direct interposition of the power of the Most High.

Spiritualism enables us to dispense with these anthropomorphic conceptions which are also so displeasing to philosophy. But it is

probable that intense faith and enthusiasm give spirits power even over our very organisation, and thus effect permanent results which these transient emotions—transient, that is, in effective intensity,—are unable of themselves to produce.

Temple, February 14th, 1880.

TREATMENT OF SPIRITUALISM A TEST OF CHARACTER.

BY THE REV. W. MIALL.

(Concluded.)

The transition is easy from these—the sincerely, though often unreasoningly pious—to persons, who, whether pious or not, are concerned for the integrity of historical Christianity. That the alleged preternatural occurrences, constituting a very large portion of the history of Jesus of Nazareth, and intimately associated with the rise and early progress of his religion, have come to be either denied or doubted, by an enormous proportion of its critics, whether by profession Christian or otherwise, is undeniable. It were perhaps impossible to find a single person accustomed to habits of research, and possessing the smallest amount of mental independence, whose ideas respecting these occurrences have not been modified, and to a great extent determined by modern criticism. I express no opinion—this cannot be the place to do so—on these questions.

I only suggest, that if the claims of Spiritualism can be established, a long array of incidents set forth in the New Testament as having actually transpired, but which recent criticism has eliminated from such records as are reliable, and to be literally interpreted, will be restored to their place of honor, and become invested with the greatest significance, as constituting, to employ the illustration of a profound essayist, the great bell of the Universe, sounded by the Almighty, for the purpose of calling attention to the great truths of Christianity. For men then of learning and insight into the nature and relations of things, and who are concerned to establish the reality of phenomena, asserted to have occurred in the earliest Christian times, to pooh-pooh the assertion of their daily reproduction among ourselves, so proves that they also are so being tyrannized over by the prejudging spirit who holds sway in so many minds, as to throw doubt upon the value of all their other deliverances. Surely, it behoves them, at whatever expenditure of time, or

energy, or even of life, to run to earth this vile imposture, if such it be, or to admit and urge the claims of this greatest unveiling of any age, if so it may be described.

There is another and rather numerous class of forcible Feebles, to whom a passing reference may be desirable. They have given some slight attention to the subject. At first, indeed, they only smiled when indications of spirit agency were reported to them. "Nine days' wonders." "Mere Will-o'-the-wisps, the account of which, is at certain seasons a God-send to Editors, and the staple of agreeable gossip." Persistency on the part of the assertors of the phenomena, however, together with considerable curiosity, and it may be some degree of intelligent interest on their own part, induced them to read a little—most likely a very little—on the subject, to attend a few *séances*, and perhaps to describe themselves as enquirers or even investigators. "Having no root in themselves," *i.e.* having no appreciation, or perception even, of the bearing of the whole subject on the dearest interests of all men, and therefore of the absolute supremacy of its claims on careful and prolonged study, when patience was found to be needed, and difficulties and discouragements presented themselves, they returned to their former attitude of indifference and neglect. Both amusing and irritating is the self-satisfied air with which they attempt to justify their refusal to prosecute further enquiry. They have a store of common place objections, upon which they draw as opportunity serves or policy suggests: "The power of the human imagination is very great;" "the senses are so easily imposed upon;" "Conjurors are exceedingly clever;" "some mediums make a pretty good thing of it;" "reported impostures can't be all false;" "love of prominence accounts for a good deal;" "what frivolities, what absurdities are a good many so called spirit communications!" "what say the majority of our scientific authorities and of our religious teachers?" "How long a time do honest enquirers remain simply such, never arriving at conviction." "You yourself," it has been said to me, "what time you have bestowed on the matter; you are evidently not indisposed to become a pronounced Spiritualist, yet you have seen nothing, know nothing that has availed fully to convince you," &c., &c., &c. The salient points about all these wool-bag opponents, are their strange lack of earnestness, and their apparent ignorance of the fact that difficulties

in the way of the perception of a truth are generally in proportion to its value when perceived, and of the related fact that discoveries in science upon which the most important of results have been contingent, have often been arrived at over obstacles apparently insurmountable, and after experiments and trials and disappointments innumerable and such as have exercised the patience, not only of individuals during a life time, but of many generations of investigators. Perhaps to this class of objectors it may be suggested that they really are not made of the stuff of which in this stage in its history, enquirers into Spiritualism, require to be composed; but that whilst standing aside, modesty should induce them to be however shrewdly observant, at least respectfully reticent.

Despite my expressed determination to leave the representatives of the advanced thought of the day in the hands of those more able to cope with them, I cannot content myself without a very brief reference to persons who, if not of them, are led and influenced by them, and who seem to think that the principles they profess, and the doctrines on which they insist, are incompatible not only with a belief in the truth of Spiritualism, but with a careful consideration of its claims. Is this really so? What is there in the doctrine of evolution, what in that of the unification and conservation of force, what in that of the unknowableness of all that lies beyond the reach of our senses, which renders a belief in the possible reality of these phenomena, unworthy of a sound mind, and therefore beyond the pale of objects the examination of which is capable of being vindicated and justified. Is it in the nature of things impossible that the development of the human being should be perpetuated, that even a refined materiality should be possessed after the shuffling off of this mortal coil; or that the transformation and transmission of life power should go on, the vehicle of that life having first been sublimated by a process which is dissolution, but not destruction; or again that the sphere of the knowable by sensuous means is easier than is currently perceived, including a region about which many have dreamed and many babbled, but which it has been reserved for these later days intelligently to recognize? Here, as elsewhere, I ask only for such fair and patient examination as would be ungrudgingly bestowed upon what claimed to be a new and strange scientific fact, asserted by men worthy of respect and credence. To me it seems that neglect to look at this matter,

and if it be a bubble to burst it, but if a reality to affirm it, and obtain, by whatever process, all possible knowledge of it, is inconsistent with qualities which best entitle men of thought and research to estimation in which every intelligent and just man would desire to hold them.

And now I feel how many there are whose treatment of Spiritualism is very suggestive as to the distinguishing features of their character to whom I have made no, or but very slight, allusion. There is the newspaper-article writer, whose first two or three sentences make two things evident—that he has no personal acquaintance with the subject, and that for knowledge he substitutes contempt and rancorous hate. Then there is the reader of such article, gulled by it and its like, who exultingly, and with an air of laughable self-satisfaction, appropriates it, and is even quoting the smart or would-be smart criticism of his exemplary God-parent. Again, there is the victim of the habit of suspicion. Forgetful of the proverb that it is the “old contrabandist who makes the best custom-house officer,” he has an ear to catch every whisper of fraud, and a heart to chuckle over it. Let there be a story of imposture, whether obvious or only apparent, on the part of some well-known medium, and every feature of his face says “of course, of course; I knew it would so turn out—strange that people can be so infatuated, so deluded.” Then there is an objector of a different kind, with a philosophic air, eyes half-closed and the corners of his mouth drawn down—he conveys, as indeed he wishes to convey, the idea that he “cares for none of these things.” The mere playthings of children—facts only to fools, they have not the power to interest him or disturb his serenity. He knows a thing or two about the properties of the material, the pranks of the imagination, the limits of the possible. Only don't trouble him, and you may amuse yourselves with as much of the ghostly as you please. Time fails me or I could tell of others who from sheer timidity stop their ears and avoid all talk on the subject. They are probably right in so doing. No one study is adapted to everybody, and those whose cheeks pale, and limbs tremble, and whole nervous systems become deranged, at the mere idea of the presence of an invisible departed one, had perhaps better wait their own summons into the beyond region, for further light on this subject. They might else run the risk of mental aberration, and thus their adhesion and its consequences would be made an occasion of reproach. Once more, there are those whose religious belief

indispose, and indeed disqualify them for approaching the subject. They believe not only in Almighty God, but in a devil who is almost Almighty, and attributing this work to him, they naturally cry "avaunt" to all its expositors and advocates. Others there are whose religious beliefs stand in the way of their becoming candid enquirers into Spiritualism. These, more rationally, though by no means with the full reasonableness which might at first seem to mark them, affirm that they have no occasion for the facts and help of Spiritualism. On other grounds, they say they are confident of personal immortality, and what need they more?

I desist, however. As certain persons are said to behold in a crystal distant objects and events elsewhere transpiring, so I repeat, both Spiritualists and anti-Spiritualists, by duly examining in the one case their advocacy of Spiritualism, and in the other their opposition to it, may behold what manner of persons themselves are; and such knowledge may be turned by them to valuable account, for whilst "the proper study of mankind is man," to accurate knowledge of human kind self-knowledge is essential, the first step to it, its prime qualification.

Were it not from fear of being sermonical, I should conclude with a few hortatory sentences. I would find occasion for them in the too general misappreciation of the life that now is, and in the inexpressible folly of either wasting energy in the pursuit of a phantom, or of neglecting to employ it in the interests of a veritable object, the preciousness of which no language can exaggerate. In the small space of time remaining, and to some of us it must be small indeed, we may yet do much that shall promote the world's welfare through all coming time. By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by love unfeigned, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand, and on the left by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, let us approve ourselves the men and women which the age requires, which the study of this subject especially demands, and which all posterity will have reason to regard as its best benefactors. It is surely a worthy ambition, to deserve that those who presently will occupy the places we now fill, should say concerning us.

"Many loved Truth and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she had left behind her,
Many in sad faith sought for her,
Many with crossed hands sighed for her,
But these our brothers fought for her,

At life's dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they'd die for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness,
Of her divine completeness.

J. RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE MOHAMEDAN CONCEPTION OF THE DEITY.*

To look at Mohamed's idea of the Deity, there is more in this of the potter that shapes the clay, than of the father tenderly watching over his children.

"Mohamed conceived of god, as the Semitic mind has always preferred to think of him: his god is the all-mighty, the all-knowing, the all-just. Irresistible power is the first attribute he thinks of: the lord of worlds, the author of the heavens and earth, who hath created life and death; in whose hands is dominion; who maketh the dawn to appear, and causeth the night to cover the day; the great all-powerful lord of the glorious throne. The thunder proclaims his perfection; the whole earth is his handful; and the heavens shall be folded together in his right hand,"

And so the "throne verse":—

"God! There is no god but he, the ever-living and ever-subsisting. Slumber seizeth him not, nor sleep. To him belongeth whatever is in the heavens, and whatever is in the earth. Who is he that shall intercede with him, save by his permission? He knoweth the things that have gone before and the things that follow after; and men shall not compass aught of his knowledge, save what he willeth. His throne comprehendeth the heavens and the earth, and, the care of them burdeneth him not. And he is the high, the great."

This power and wisdom is tempered with mercy.

"God is the guardian over his servants; the shelterer of the orphan; the guide of the erring; the deliverer out of affliction. In his hand is the good. He is the generous lord, the gracious, the hearer, the near-at-hand."

Mohamed's moral precepts embody the current ethical sentiments of the Arabs, elevated and formalized and made part of his severely simple, monotheistic view of things. The duties of the Muslim, in addition to the profession of the faith, are the stated repetition of prayer; the giving of alms; the keeping of the fasts; if possible, the performance of the pilgrimage to Mecca; and, above all, patient resignation to the will of God: thus, in the second chapter of the Kuran,—

"Your turning your faces in prayer towards the east and west is not piety; but the pious is he who believeth in God and the last day, and in the angels, and the scripture; and who giveth money, notwithstanding his love thereof, to relations and orphans, and to the needy and the way-farer, and to those who ask, and for the redemption of captives; and who performeth prayers, and giveth the appointed alms, and those who perform their covenants when they covenant, and the patient in adversity and affliction and in the time of violence. These

* A portion of a review in *The Pioneer* (Allahabad, December 25th, 1879,) of Mr. Lane's *Selections from the Kuran*: Trubner & Co.

are they who have been true, and these are they who fear God."

The connection of faith and duty is pointed out in the ninety-third chapter of the Kuran. It is translated by the editor:—

By the morning brightness,
And by the still of night,
The Lord hath not forsaken thee; neither hath he hated thee;
And surely the future will be better for thee than the present;
And thy Lord will give to thee, and thou wilt be well-pleased.
Hath he not found thee an orphan, and sheltered thee;
And he found thee erring, and guided thee;
And found thee needy, and enriched thee?
Then, as to the orphan, oppress him not;
And as to him that asketh of thee, chide him not away;
And as for the bounty of thy Lord, tell it then abroad.

Lastly, the prophet's promises of rest and pleasure to the War-worac Bedawis and the gain-seeking and pleasure-loving Arabs of the cities. It is not without reason that Mohamed's paradise has become a bye-word.

When the calamity shall come to pass,
There shall not be a soul that will deny its happening.
It will be an abaser of some, and exalter of others;
When the earth shall be shaken with a violent shaking,
And the mountains shall be crumbled with a violent crumbling,
And shall become fine dust scattered abroad.
And ye shall become three classes:
And the people of the right hand—what shall be the people of the right hand?
And the people of the left hand—what the people of the left hand?
And the preceders, the preceders!
These shall be then brought nigh unto god
In the gardens of delight,—
A crowd of the former generations,
And a few of the latter generations,
Upon unwrought couches,
Reclining thereon, face to face.
Youths ever-young, shall go unto them round about,
With goblets and ewers, and a cup of flowing wine.
Their heads shall ache not with it, neither shall they be drunken;
And with fruits of the sorts that they shall choose,
And the flesh of birds of the kind they shall desire.
And damsels, with eyes like pearls laid up,
We will give them as a reward for that which they have done.
Therein shall they hear no discourse nor accusation of sin,
But only the saying, "Peace, peace."
And the people of the right hand—what shall be the people of the right hand?
They shall dwell among lote-trees without thorns,
And bananas loaded with fruit,
And a shade ever-spread,
And water ever-flowing,
And fruits abundant,

Unstayed and unforbidden;
And couches raised,
Verily, we have created them by a peculiar creation,
And have made them virgins,
Beloved of their husbands of equal age with them.
For the people of the right hand,
A crowd of the former generations,
And a crowd of the latter generations.

THE MESMERISING OF ANIMALS.

STRANGE stories reach us from India of the feats performed by a native mesmeriser, named Buni, whose mesmeric power would appear to be found quite irresistible by the lower animals, upon which he exclusively exerts it. He gives *séances*, to which the public are invited to bring all manner of ferocious and untamable wild beasts, and, like the Ancient Mariner, holds them with his glittering eye. In a few seconds they subside into a condition of cataleptic stiffness, from which they can only be revived by certain "passes" which he solemnly executes with his right hand. An account of one of these *séances* states that a snake in a state of violent irritation was brought to Buni by a menagerie proprietor, enclosed in a wooden cage. When deposited on the platform it was writhing and hissing fiercely. Buni bent over the cage, and fixed his eye upon its occupant, gently waving his hand over the serpent's restless head. In less than a minute the snake stretched itself out, stiffened, and lay apparently dead. Buni took it up, and thrust several needles into its body, but it gave no sign of life. A few "passes" then restored it to its former angry activity. Subsequently a savage dog, held in a leash by its owner, was brought in, and, at Buni's command, let loose upon him. As it was rushing towards him, bristling with fury, he raised his hand, and in a second the fierce brute dropped upon its belly as though stricken by lightning. It seemed absolutely paralysed by some unknown agency, and was unable to move a muscle until released from the mesmerist's spell by a majestic wave of his hand.—*Daily Telegraph, July 20th.*

THE HON. J. L. O'SULLIVAN informs us he is writing a book to be entitled "Experiences in Spiritualism."

AN extraordinary prize of 3000 francs has been awarded by the French *Académie des Sciences* to Mr. Crookes, F.R.S., in recognition of his recent discoveries in Molecular Physics and Radiant Matter.

MRS. WOODFORDE desires us to announce that she and Mr. J. C. Husk are now holding their Wednesday evening *séances* for physical manifestations, at 4, Keppel Street, Russell Square, London.

MR. W. EGLINTON, the medium, will leave London next Monday for Leipzig, where he will give *séances* to some of the Professors at the university. Afterwards he will visit other cities on the continent. It is to be hoped that he will refuse altogether to give cabinet *séances*, and will sit only under test conditions.

MRS. HOLLIS BILLING.—Mrs. Hollis Billing, the medium, left this country last week for America, bearing with her the good wishes of all who knew her. Her mediumship was of a remarkable character, and of especial interest to those who are studying the problem of spirit identity. A little testimonial was given to her before she left, and for Mrs. Billing's sake it is to be regretted that the one or two persons who got it up, did not send a single word of information about it for the readers of this journal, among whom Mrs. Billing has so many friends.



UNCONSCIOUS CEREBRATION.

BY HENRY G. ATKINSON, F.G.S., AUTHOR OF "LETTERS TO MISS MARTINEAU."

SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON says very truly that "what we are conscious of is constructed out of what we are not conscious of," therefore unconscious cerebration is fundamental and before conscious perception. Our ordinary thinking then, is in fact inspiration formed for us, and not by us; even the sense of effort is not the effort itself, which is an unconscious impulse of which we become conscious. The idea that the mental state is the effort or will itself, or the efficient power, is mere illusion; as much so as that the fire is hot, the feeling in the fingers, or the pain in the tooth. Consciousness is the exponent of the underlying action, from which may come much we may not comprehend, as in the dream, and what may really have no definite meaning.

Sir Edwin Landseer painted a picture, he called "The Kind Star." It was a female figure or angel, with a star on the forehead, decending to a dying stag; but no one could make out what it meant. Was it a Midsummer Night's Dream, or what? So I made up my mind to ask my old friend, the painter himself. "Well," he replied, "I don't exactly know. I thought it a pretty idea anyhow, and that it would make a pretty picture." So poets often are impressed to write good but unmeaning lines, as in the case instanced in respect to Coleridge. I myself have often half dream-ing, noted down what I thought a good idea, and afterwards could see no meaning in it.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.

THE BLACK STONES OF DOLLICH.

BY J. A. CAMPBELL, B.A.

To Beauchamp Duff, Esq., of Hutton, I dedicate this in memory of long ago.

Forgive, old friend, the faltering rhyme,
With which I seek to fan the flame,
And kindle into life again,
The Spirit of a better time.

Or has it faded with the day?
The grand old day of tale and song,
Or rather only slumbered long,
To wake again as true a lay?

Fain would I hold the latter true,
That for the grim destroyer Time,
The gate is barred to Fancy's clime,
And that he dares not break it through.

* * *

'Tis a legend vague of the olden time,
Something mysterious and partly true;
Culled from aged lips in our Northern clime,
And bearing a charm for myself and you.

Though self-taught science may laugh in scorn,
And believe no more than its eye can see;
Unheeding the silent witness borne,
By a world's unwritten history.

Still in ev'ry age has the mind of man—
It may be tutored by none, save God—
Believed or dreamed, since the world began
That mystery shrouded the path he trod.

* * *

A castle stately and fair, and tall,
Crowning the brow of a lofty steep;
Dark ivy climbs up its moss-grown wall,
And over its turrets grey lichens creep.

Our path lies up through the rugged glen,
Where the crags have assumed a fantastic shape,
As they tower aloft, in their massy strength:
Here mailed warrior—there grinning ape.

The last was the castle's lady fair,
(As the ancient crones still love to tell);
Who was doomed that hideous form to wear,
By a spiteful saint at a holy well.

And there to the left, by the Devil's Leap;
So they call the rocks that o'erhang the pass,
I have searched for the legend that caused the nave,
But like many another 'tis gone, alas!

Let us pause and rest by that ruin grey,
Kildonan's the name that they call it still;
And the people love to be brought and laid,
For their last long sleep, on the Holy Hill,

'Tis built in old Scotia's ancient style,
With transepts short and a lengthy nave;
You cannot get up to the altar step,
For the place is filled with many a grave.

And here it is that at midnight hour,
When all is still, on St. Kearnan's day,
That ghostly priest and acolyte
Are seen all silent to take their way,

To where, 'neath the lancet windows twain
Of old the great high altar stood;
And sing a mass before the rood,
Of which one says he has caught the strain.

The words that he heard were naomb, naomb,*
And the voice was plaintive, and soft, and low,
The place where Old Donald first really learned
That strange wild sanctus, I long to know.

* * *

* Holy, Holy, Holy, in Highland Gaelic.

'Tis now some fifty years ago,
They were searching the records in Dollich Tower;
And they came on a writ of olden days,
The words of the Prophet of Corrach Mor.

THE BLACK STONES OF DOLLICH.

One in burn,
One in tower;
Seek the third
In ladies' bower.

Mystic Stones,
Dry in rain;
Come fair weather,
Damp again.

Till are found
All the three;
In Dollich Tower,
No heir shall be.

They have searched the burn, they have searched the
tower,

But they vainly seek for the ladies' bower.
Two stones are found, and laid by with care,
But where is the third? Ah, where? Ah, where?

In Dollich Tower is a walled-up keep,
Its door unknown, its window barred;
And doomed is he who dares disturb
The stillness of its phantom guard.

And cursed is she whom wedlock dire
Binds fast to him who dares the crime;
She too shall share the demon ire,
And blindness shadow all his prime.

* * *

The three black stones are still unfound,
The built up tower as close walled round,
As fifty years ago.*

I know not what the truth may be,
The tale I tell as told to me,
And more I cannot do.

THE ALLEGED SUPERNATURAL ADVENTURE
OF MARSHAL MAC MAHON.

WE recently asked that the truth of some alleged supernatural experiences of Marshal Mac Mahon, which had been quoted by *The Theosophist* (Bombay) from a Roman Catholic newspaper, should be inquired into by some of our readers. The following letter from Miss Douglas is the result:—

81, South Audley Street, Feb. 14th, 1880.

"DEAR MR. HARRISON,—I sent to my sister, Mrs. Douglas Bayley, now in Paris, the No. of *The Spiritualist* in which appeared the marvellous adventure of Marshal Mac Mahon, said to have been related by himself, begging her to inquire if there was any degree of truth in it.

"She writes that there is none. Being well acquainted with the Marshal's *Aide-de-Camp*, the Baron de

Langsdorff, she spoke to him on the subject; he said he could not believe there was any truth in the story, or he would have heard of it; however, he took *The Spiritualist* containing it to the Marshal, who declared there was not the slightest foundation for it. Very truly yours,

J. H. DOUGLAS."

SPIRITUALISM IN EDINBURGH.

ON Saturday evening last, a lecture was delivered by Dr. Andrew Wilson, on "The Ghosts of Science," in the Buccleuch Hall, attached to the Buccleuch Church, Edinburgh. The lecture was one of a series in course of delivery on Saturday evenings, on various subjects, chiefly to engage the attention of the more thinking portion of the working classes. The hall, which will hold about 150 persons, was quite full.

The first portion of the lecture consisted of a simple explanation of the action of the brain and nerve force, and wherein consisted sensation and consciousness. The speaker explained the action of rays of light upon entering the eye, enabling us to perceive the various objects around by impressions made upon the senses from the outer world. He then dealt with disorders and aberrations of the brain, quoting instances chiefly from the works of Dr. Maudesley, on subjective phenomena in which images and spectres are projected from the thoughts. He also quoted the account of the seeing of an apparition, given by Dr. Jessop, in the *Athenæum* and other papers a few weeks ago.

At the conclusion of the lecture, which was well received, the Chairman, Mr. Watson, proposed a vote of thanks, on seconding which the Rev. Dr. Adamson, the Pastor of the Church, said, that it was with great pleasure he did so, because of the plain way in which the address had been given. He had previously had no idea how Dr. Wilson was going to deal with his subject, but he certainly thought that it would not be out of place if he suggested that there were two sides to most questions, and he thought such to be the case in this instance, because he was informed there were several millions, he could not say how many, he might perhaps be accurate if he said about three millions of persons in America who were believers in ghosts, and were generally termed Spiritualists. Even in this country there was a large number, including scientific men. Besides, many manifestations and historical facts had to be accounted for, and where the evidence of several witnesses testifying to the same fact, was brought to bear on the subject, it raised another side of the question to that presented by Dr. Wilson, who had chiefly dealt with abnormal conditions of the brain. He, Dr. Adamson, threw out those suggestions for the consideration of the young men present, many of whom were apparently students at the University.

Correspondence.

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

A DEATH WARNING.

Sir,—Twelve years ago, I had four brothers under my professional care. One of them, A. B., went out to New Zealand, ten years since. When riding on horseback in the open country, at twelve o'clock in the day,

* Now January 1st, 1880.

he suddenly heard his Christian name twice loudly called by his brother R. B., whom he had left in England. He reined up his horse, turned round, and expected to see his brother; but, to his great surprise, no one was in sight; much perplexed, he continued his ride. In due time, he received a letter from the widow of his brother, R. B., informing him of the death of her husband at twelve o'clock at night, on the same day that A. B. had heard his brother calling him by name. His death was rather sudden, from the rupture of a bloodvessel in the brain; just before his death, he suddenly called out his brother's name, A., twice repeated, precisely as A. B. had heard it. These were his last words, as he immediately expired.

A very warm affection had always existed between these two brothers, A. B. and R. B. R. B. had been lying in an unconscious state for some time before, and he startled his wife and those who were watching him, by the sudden manner in which he called out his brother A.'s name.

MEDICUS.

February 17th, 1880.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

Sir,—Would you kindly announce, that Mr. Morse will give a trance address at Goswell Hall, 290, Goswell Road, E.C., on Sunday evening next, 29th February. Subject, "Spiritualism, its results and prospects." Service at 7 p.m. By doing so you will much oblige the few earnest friends working in this movement.

H. J. STEVENS, Sec.

"Goswell Hall Sunday Meetings Committee,"
224, Albany Road, Camberwell, S.E.

CABINET SEANCES.

Sir,—In reference to the letter of "A Governess," on the subject of cabinet *séances*, of which she and others disapprove, I desire to say that during the time (about two years) I was in Newcastle-on-Tyne, I attended on the average two or three *séances* per week, at the Spiritual Evidence Society's Rooms in Weir's Court.

Scores of *séances* then (about three years ago) were held, and the medium was sometimes Miss Fairlamb, and at others Miss Wood. They were not placed inside the cabinet, but sat outside, in the view of the circle, which was composed in many cases of from twenty to thirty people, and we obtained good physical phenomena; sometimes materialisations, which we saw gradually grow up to a full form; moveable, animated, and apparently as human as any of the sitters present. True we had to wait longer and patiently for the phenomena to occur, but when they did they were satisfactory, and I certainly see no objection to cabinet *séances* while the medium is outside. But if we can get the phenomena without a cabinet so much the better.

J. T. RHODES.

26, West-Cross-Causeway, Edinburgh.

No Correspondents.

J. M. I., BIRKENHEAD: No special photographic effect would be obtained by substituting the mixed gases for common air. If they were unmixed, the air in the upper part of the glass vessel resting for a short time upon the carbonic acid gas below, and the whole then photographed by transmitted light, there might be a very feeble difference in the photographic appearance of the two halves, because of the different refracting power of the two gases, but we think that the effect would not be strong enough to be perceptible.

ERRATUM: Last week, owing to a printer's error and to the absence of the editor from London, two paragraphs—one about Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, and another about professional mediums—were run on into one, thereby somewhat altering the sense of the sentences.

THE POWER OF EXORCISM.*

BY THE BARONESS ADELMA VON VAY (COUNTESS WURMBRAND.)

One day my husband and myself paid a visit to some friends whose daughter was very ill. The mother was in great distress, as the doctors pronounced it to be epilepsy from which her little one was suffering. Although the mother neither believed in nor approved of spirit communion, yet she was ready and anxious to seek any relief available. We immediately begged the advice and assistance of our spirit-guardians, and the answer, in writing through my hand, came as follows:

"The child is the victim of a malignant spirit: if this influence be removed her health will be restored. She is of a highly sensitive nature, possessed of a susceptible and ductile nervous system, consequently the near proximity of this spirit is tormenting and injurious to her. Only by means of exorcism or conversion of this influence will the child recover. Draw the spirit here so that he may leave the child and speak with you: we will allow him to take our place. As this spirit, one Raimund, is still bound to the earth, he will hearken to the words of mortals and understand them better than any of ours."

We then besought the spirit, Raimund, to leave the little M. and to enter into communication with us.

The pencil which I held was moved to and fro, and after my hand had repeatedly traversed the paper, the following words were written in large type.

"I am here. I am still alive."

Question. Why are you with M.? Are you not aware that your influence is injurious to her?

Raimund. I want a body. I can't torment anybody: I can't hurt the child. She won't do my will and that annoys me.

Question. Come, pray with us.

Raimund. What do you mean? I can't pray. Don't you know I am a murderer? Everything is dark: when I torment her it relieves me. I have been dead a long time and am steeped in iniquity. I come to you as the personification of all that is vicious and degraded; are you not afraid?

Suddenly the movement of the pencil changed, I felt much more composed, and the spirit of the child herself took up the thread.

It was about ten o'clock in the evening, and the child was asleep.

M. I wish to speak to Raimund. Raimund,

* Translated by Caroline Corner, from *Studien über die Geisterwelt*.

I will forgive all the suffering you have caused me, if only you will cease, and will spare my dear parents further anxiety and grief.

Raimund. No.

M. Why not? Have you not tormented me enough?

Raimund. I mean to remain with you.

M. That must not be. God is my salvation: say this after me.

Raimund. There is no salvation for me.

M. Oh! Raimund, you hurt me: cannot you pray?

Raimund. I can curse.

M. Adelma, help me. I would release myself from this spirit, but I am chained to him: or aid me in his conversion. God will grant us power.

Raimund then wrote:

"I have already said that I seek a body on the earth: I must have one."

I answered: You must try to be better, and pray frequently for God's mercy and pardon.

Raimund. That I will never do. The devil will help me.

My spirit-guide then took control and wrote as follows:

"O God, the Father, the Creator, the Lord of All, the Beginning and the End, hear our feeble cry. We implore compassion for this poor deluded spirit. In accordance with the promise of Thy dear Son, send forth a ray of light to guide this miserable creature, and grant him repentance and deliverance. Give heed to his humble beseechings, O God, for Thou art his Father and our own. Amen."

The writing ceased: after a short pause it was resumed.

Raimund. I feel dazed: nevertheless that prayer was good. If you promise to let me speak often with you I will no longer torment the child, M.; if not, I will continue and do her still more harm. Ah! I can't be good. My God, I am irredeemable."

After a brief interval the same spirit wrote:

"God forgive me. Yes, I am determined: I will withdraw my influence over M. if you will pray for me every day."

My spirit-guide then put in:

"His repentance is sincere. I wish you to work the following prayer in silk and hang it round M.'s neck. It will remind Raimund of his promise whenever he draws near her.

"We depend upon Thee, O God. Think not of Raimund's transgressions; have mercy upon him and help him to amend, then will this poor child be released and healed. Amen."

"When an attack is likely to come on, tell

the mother to make ten mesmeric passes over the child."

This transpired on August 27th, 1865. On the following day we received a letter from the mother of the child, in which she said:

"God bless you for your interest and sympathy for my little one. She has had no more attacks: the nightly paroxysms have abated, and she has been more cheerful. I trust in you, my kind friend, and have faith in the goodness of God. But what shall I do if the attacks come on again?"

My spirit-guide then gave a homœopathic prescription for the child, with a supplement to the effect that the mother should not call in any more doctors, as they could do no good, and might aggravate the case. It was no organic disease, but an extremely prejudicial influence acting upon the nervous organism. As soon as this should be removed the child would be restored to health.

Raimund then wrote:

"M. wears the amulet: I often repeat the prayer and find it does me good. This intercourse with you is a great blessing to me. I wish M. to come so that I may ask her forgiveness."

Presently the spirit of the child announced herself, and wrote:

"Yes, dear Brother, I forgive, and am rejoiced to know that you desire to be better. Will you pray with me?"

"O God, help us, poor sorrowing spirits. Forgive us our trespasses, grant us faith, and enable us to overcome temptation. Hear us and help us, we beseech Thee. Amen."

Raimund. I have heard: and will myself pray for strength in order to keep my promise. I am weak and erring still, O God.

Shortly afterwards we received a second letter from the child's mother, stating:

"I have given the medicine according to your instructions. M. has had two attacks lately which caused her intense pain and restlessness. She persisted in getting out of bed and crying 'Go away, go away.' She has also suffered great pain in one foot. What more can be done?"

My spirit-guide wrote in reply:

"Trust in God, and believe our word: the little one shall very soon be delivered from her sufferings. The pain in the foot is part and parcel of the rest. When she calls out 'Go away,' it is that she would chase away the outside influence. Raimund is here and wishes to speak."

Raimund. Your intercession has done me

good: I can pray now. I want to speak to M. Wish for her to come.*

M. I willingly come. My poor mother is distressed about me, and prays continually. This trial is to chasten her spirit. How art thou, Raimund?

Raimund. Better. Offer a prayer for me. . . . Ah, that was good: I thank you, M. Rest assured I will watch over and protect you. I love you now. Forgive my horrible cruelty. O forgive—forgive!

M. I have already forgotten. May God strengthen you, my brother!

Raimund. I thank you, dear child of earth, I thank you pure and holy spirits whom my glance can scarcely reach: I pray for M.'s recovery, and that I may indeed be worthy to be called her brother. In the name of God, I promise not to return to my former wickedness.

The control changed and my spirit-guide wrote:

"You may believe Raimund's words. If his conversion appears rash, it is nevertheless sincere, as you will perceive."

My husband and I continued to pray daily and earnestly for the spirit Raimund, and the child M. In the month of October Raimund came to tell us that he must take his leave, and again he expressed his gratitude and joy.

In the meantime we had received letters concerning the child's state of health, and Dec. the 28th brought the following from the truly thankful mother:

"God be praised: my little one is well again, quite well and cheerful. I thank God sincerely for it, and you for your kind interest and sympathy: may He protect you from such suffering. I believe if the church will not accord her sanction the faithful heart must bow in humble acquiescence, and rather forsake everything than cherish a fault of allegiance. The right way is open to me now; I would advise you to have no more to do with spiritual communication: but to pray continually and earnestly to your guardian angel."

It may here be seen that the mother of the healed child would not believe: as Christ said:

"You have ears to hear and hear not: eyes to see and see not;" and in her blindness was ready to condemn the means of the little one's restoration. Even so did the Pharisees say of our Saviour: "He casteth out devils through the Prince of the devils."

Gonobitz, Austria.

* These *séances* were held at night when the child was in bed and asleep.—C.C.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.

BY ELIZA BOUCHER.

I venture a few observations on the first portion of the truly useful and excellent paper of the Rev. W. Miall, given in *The Spiritualist* of February 6th. His remarks on the fanaticism and credulity evinced in a large proportion of spiritualistic literature, "in which instances are adduced of spirit agency in the absence of evidence, which any child might see to be essential to its verification," are true to the very letter. I remember at one *séance* I attended years ago, with a since noted medium, when even what appeared to me to be evidently the scratching of mice in the wall or partition, was represented as of spiritualistic origin; and at another materialisation *séance* the so-called cabinet was formed of a part of the room, which contained not only a wardrobe, but a door opening on the passage, and although I admit that the latter was locked, still how easily might a second key have been substituted. *Séances* without tests are not only useless, but prejudicial, for at them, although a certain amount of investigation is invited, the expression of doubt is frequently received in such a manner, and the complaints of spirits and medium are of so disagreeable a character, whilst perhaps only one or two novices are admitted to the select circle (although perhaps a paid one), that few would care to express their opinion fully and openly, under the circumstances. All this may seem to the inexperienced cowardly and weak, but still, as old Stapleton says in Captain Marryat's *Jacob Faithful*, 'tis "human natur."

What Mr. Miall says also with regard to theories and facts is excellent. Theories are all very well, but what we need in this comparatively early stage of the movement, for I believe it was cradled about thirty years ago, is facts—stern scientific facts, critically investigated, and attested by clear sighted and intelligent men; and glad am I that Mr. Miall so modestly yet so emphatically points out the folly of under-rating the immense value of enlisting in the cause, the interest and adhesion of men of this class. One convert from the ranks of science is worth hundreds, I had well-nigh said thousands, of ordinary minds.

To the argument, striking as it is, that within the last thirty years or so, this movement, humble in its origin as that of the manger of Bethlehem, has enrolled millions of votaries in all parts of the civilised world, in its ranks, the reply might really not illogically be given,

"Yes, I've heard that the world contains so many millions (I forget the number), mostly fools," but when the names of Crookes, Wallace, Varley and numbers of others are adduced in connection with this "despised and rejected of men" movement, the above shaft, sharp though it be, falls powerless to the ground. Therefore, although I acknowledge that science, as well as theology, has too often taken false and antagonistic views of new truths, yet until the former has been to a large extent won over, no truth has ever become of popular and universal acceptance. Again, Mr. Miall's treatment of the difficulties of investigators is most pertinent. "How comes it to pass that I meet on every hand with persons who have striven, in accordance with accredited instructions, to obtain phenomena, and having signally failed to do so, have equally failed to find any intelligent Spiritualist to take them by the hand, and invite them to a seat in his own circle." Now, although in my limited experience, I have frequently met with great kindness and courtesy from private Spiritualists, yet, that experience both in public and in private circles has been most unsatisfactory. A psychological society was formed in Bristol a few years since, of which I was among the earliest members; no phenomena in my opinion, worth naming were obtained, and the society ere long came to an end; although it numbered some of the most advanced thinkers of the city in its ranks. Afterwards I was courteously invited to form one of a private and select circle, consisting of only a very few friends; again our experience was simply *nil*, whilst with paid mediums, (and I have sat with some of the best), I never met with a convincing test of spirit presence.

In speaking thus plainly, I am in a measure acting up to the advice given by Mr. Miall, to be perfectly outspoken on the difficulties, contradictions, and absurdities which beset the matter on all sides. Thus alone will the chaff be separated from the wheat, and will the true gold tried in the fire come out seven times purified. Well does Mr. Miall speak of the "incomparable importance of the subject." Not one, but every branch of it is of the greatest interest, and glows with a fire of importance, before which all earthly sciences fade into utter insignificance, except as incorporated with this grandest of all subjects of enquiry.

How true are his words "If Spiritualism be not the most deplorable of delusions, its claims

transcend those of every other object or department of thought." If Spiritualists and mediums, or those who witness any psychological phenomena would but remember these words, and reflect on the vast injury they do to the world at large by trifling with, suppressing, or, worse than all, dabbling with deceit, or imposture, for filthy lucre's sake, the most careless would surely pause ere he committed such a sin against the highest and best interests of poor humanity. Creeds, systems of theology, beliefs, interwoven with the infamy of nations, which have grown, as it were, a part of the very life of the people, give way slowly, but surely before the ever advancing wave of progressive thought; and why? Because their originators did not look well to their foundations. Indeed, before the present age, such a thing as scientific Spiritualism was hardly dreamed of; the spontaneous phenomena of apparitions were regarded as miracles, as something to be talked of only in whispers, and rarely mentioned in ordinary cases outside the family circle, nobody apparently feeling their importance, or thinking of asking anything about the laws which regulated their occurrence. Thinking men, therefore, very naturally relegated the whole of them to the realm of superstition and delusion, and thus rejecting them altogether, the scientific mind became materialistic to the very core. *All honour to science* for its outspoken fearless championship of what it believed to be true, in the face of the frowns of the orthodox dogmatists, whose logic was denunciation, and whose argument was the thundering anathema. To convince scientific men, who, whatever may be said to the contrary, in reality give the tone of thought to society at large, and gradually, but surely, "leaven the whole lump," is the task assigned to modern Spiritualism, and every scientific mind enrolled under her banner is as a tower of strength in the face of the enemy. Therefore let Spiritualism seek by every reasonable and dignified means to win over the leading minds of the day, and this in my opinion can only be done by abolishing as far as possible cabinet *séances*, and by developing to the full a few good mediums who will submit to every test which scientific men may require. There should be an elimination by all justifiable means of trifling fanaticism, and undue scrupulosity in the expression of honest doubt, and above all things, all imposture and delusion should be put down. Thus shall future generations honour our brave pioneers, and taking

refuge in the fair structure they have raised, say in the beautiful words of the gentle Nazarene: "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock."

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