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## THE METAPHYSICAL SOCIETY.

THE following attempt to give an impression of a typical meeting of the once rather famous "Metaphysical Society," of which I was throughout a member, must not be regarded as in any sense containing a historical report of an individual debate. No such reports were, so far as I know, ever taken. But to a rather diligent member of the Society there were plenty of opportunities of learning the general views of the more eminent members on such a subject as was discussed at the meeting here selected for treatment; and though it is likely that none of them, except of course Dr. Ward, whose paper was really read (though he may have made no final reply), spoke on this particular occasion, as I have imputed to them; and though several of those to whom I have attributed remarks may not have been present at this particular discussion at all, yet I do not think I shall be found to have misrepresented any of their views. If I have, the responsibility and fault are mine.

At the meeting of the Metaphysical Society which was held on the 10th of December, 1872, Dr. Ward was to read a paper on the question, "Can Experience prove the Uniformity of Nature?" "Middlemarch" had been completed and published a few days previously. On the day following the meeting the Convocation of Oxford was to vote upon the question raised by Mr. Burgun and Dean Goulburn, whether the Dean of Westminster (then Dr. Stanley) should be excluded for his heresies