

The Spiritualist

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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HYPOTHESES OF EXISTENCE.

IN the pure atmosphere of free thought which characterises Spiritualism, many busy minds of necessity frame out for themselves new ideas as to the origin and nature of the universe, and in some instances have built such apparently sound edifices out of their speculations that when they urge their theories with all the sincerity of assured conviction, the sympathising listener regrets that the ideas of one body of thinkers are opposed to those of an opposite and equally earnest body of thinkers, consequently that the opposing speculations cannot all be true.

Several opposed hypotheses of existence have recently been mooted in these pages. Mr. Oxley, from a Swedenborgian standpoint, argues that an influx from the Almighty passes down through spiritual beings to man, through men to animals, and through these again to the mineral kingdom, all being the result of the thought and will of God. Apart from the present absence of direct evidence of real connection between the thoughts of men and the forms of animals, or of such connection being more than assumption, there is another question of a practical nature. If spirits are disembodied men, and if men live only by influx from spirits, how did the first men exist when there were no spirits? Must a miracle be called in to do away with the difficulty?

Directly opposed to the Swedenborgian view is that of the Materialists, who invoke no aid from miracle or assumption, but argue only from that which is decisively known. They look upon man as a development of matter, and not to matter as something dependent upon man. The chemical substances composing the once molten earth, are found to have afterwards been formed into vegetables and animals of the lower kind, until in later stages of development man with his intellect appeared upon the scene; and still, without doubt, he is developing and advancing, as he has done from the days when he walked the earth as a savage, and before that, peradventure, as an anthropoid ape. Thus in its naked simplicity, as Professor Tyndall has put it, the problem of the Materialist is—Are the intellects of such men as Milton and Shakespeare, potential and undeveloped in the molten minerals now glowing in the fires of the sun? When those minerals cool, will development after development, in the course of long ages, produce the intellect of man?

Another problem has been lately mooted in these pages by the Countess of Caithness, who advocates the doctrines of Allan Kardec, to the effect that spirit and matter are developed side by side, and that by a series of reincarnations in different mortal bodies man gains experience until he quits the plane of material things, and passes away to higher stages of existence. This tends to explain the justice of God. The sufferings of one set of human beings as compared with the comforts of another class, the ignorance of the majority as compared with the intelligence of the minority, are not

wrongs inflicted on the less fortunate, for *all* have had to pass through the *same* stages, in gaining that sum of love and knowledge which constitutes the perfected spirit. Moreover, a truly utilitarian principle is involved, for the idea is that man does not quit this or some other earth, until he has exhausted all the possibilities of the earth, so that, as in all other departments of nature, nothing is wasted which has been formed for the education of the spirit. The reincarnationist views are advocated with much ability, and with a pleasing absence of dogmatism.

Bishop Berkeley does away with the material world altogether, and argues that all we know arises from certain sensations acting upon our consciousness in a given order, so that all nature perhaps has a spiritual but no material basis. On this theory alone, so far as we know, can the facts of clairvoyance be explained. A temporary change takes place in the spiritual condition of the individual, and at once the immediate material surroundings are gone to consciousness; the room in London in which the sensitive is sitting has disappeared, and the seer describes scenes and persons in Edinburgh or elsewhere, or, strange to say, describes events of the past or future as if present. What strange power is this? A mesmeric lecturer, by the exercise of his will, makes his sensitive see flocks of sheep which have no real existence, yet the sheep are real to the medium for the time being. How, then, do we know that some greater Power may not be intelligently using the same laws which the mesmerist employs partially and ignorantly, so that by the former men are surrounded by ordinary conditions which they suppose to be material and invariable, but which, after all, are really at root of a spiritual nature?

From our present point of view the latter speculation appears to open a more promising field of inquiry for the solution of problems relating to the nature of existence than do the others. At all events, Berkeley's ideas and those of the materialists have more facts and fewer assumptions to support them; but so long as *any* theory contains a single assumption as one of the links in its chain of evidence, it is weak, and outside the pale of true science, which takes nothing for granted, and admits only facts of nature which every man can prove for himself without doubt.

PUBLIC SPIRIT CIRCLES.

THE question has lately been raised, both in public and private, as to the desirability of the National Association of Spiritualists establishing public spirit circles, and this is just one of those problems in which the minority who have had deep experience as to the nature of mediumship, will be opposed in opinion to the majority who have had but casual experience, and, like Galileo, who formed a minority of one, with all the rest of the world against him, when he asserted that the earth rolled round the sun, the experienced few are likely to be found to be in the right.

Good mediums are mesmeric sensitives, acted upon by all kinds of mental and moral surroundings, otherwise they would not be pliant in the hands of the spirits; they are also usually of warm and impulsive dispositions. If, therefore, under influence, a medium should do anything wrong while exposed to surroundings from which he should be protected rather than encouraged to face—namely, an antagonistic public

circle of prejudiced people, so little interested in the subject that they will attend *seances* they can get gratuitously from the Association, but will not pay the regular fee of any professional medium—if, we say, under these conditions the medium should do anything wrong, the name of the Association which recognises him will be coupled with the deed. Moreover, what good would it do to Spiritualism to bring in, somewhat forcibly, inquirers of the kind just mentioned? Again, with very sensitive mediums there is, beyond mistake, a reflex action between the sitters and the manifestations. When suspicious and low-class sitters are present, or when there is a want of harmony in the circle, the manifestations are often suspicious in a corresponding degree; in fact, we never shall have the highest manifestations until our circles meet in love and truth, with deeply religious aspirations for communion with the highest beings of the next world. The best revelations will not be obtained in circles formed for an evening's friendly amusement, in which the leading desire is to see something wonderful, and to get good physical tests.

Some professional mediums, like the Davenports, can get good test manifestations in the face of the most adverse conditions, and at all times. In such cases the reflex action is not so manifest, but, on the other hand, the development of the phenomena is almost entirely stopped, and they get exactly the same manifestations year after year; by long experience the spirits produce them with precision; they are advanced enough for the audiences met day after day, and there is no reason why the spirits should try to go through the process of perfecting higher results, in the face of the worst conditions. If the spirits tried to produce recognisable spirit faces through the mediumship of Mr. Williams, what trouble and anxiety it would enforce upon him during the earlier and more imperfect stages of the manifestation. Indeed, there is evidence that the medium has to pass through a period of danger from the lower spirits, while gaining this manifestation, so should then be surrounded by the best conditions which Spiritualists can furnish.

If the Association recognised or sustained any professional medium, many of the others would grow exceedingly jealous, and give rise to a great deal of trouble. Further, as all our best mediums are already full of work, and it only spoils the manifestations to give them an overcrowded circle, why take steps to bring about such undesirable results? A second-rate medium always does more harm than good, so far as unsympathetic inquirers are concerned.

On the ground then that if a medium recognised by the Association should knowingly play tricks, or be made to play tricks by undeveloped spirits, or have suspicious-looking manifestations in consequence of the reflex action of inharmonious influences, or should be wantonly and aggressively charged without cause with imposture, the Association might find itself mixed up in an unpleasant manner with police court cases. The Association would, in any case, be sure to make enemies of the more passionate professional mediums not so recognised, and sooner or later would find itself in a whirlpool of trouble and discord, just as private persons have done, who out of pure love to the cause, have taken charge of private circles for a lengthened time, and who know to a certainty there will be storms a-head if the Association should officially take charge of any one or two mediums. The point is doubtful

whether it would do well even to let any of its rooms for public *seances*, though there is no reason why individuals should not hire them for private circles.

In the provinces a mistaken idea prevails that London Spiritualists revel in a profusion of good *seances*, which can only be had in country towns with difficulty and at a great expense. The truth is that the number of good mediums is so few, that the great majority of London Spiritualists have necessarily seen little or nothing of the best manifestations, and we have often thought that if good workers in the cause in the provinces gave a month's notice before visiting London, some steps should be taken, say by private individuals, to enable them to see some of the best manifestations with private mediums during their stay in town. By "good workers" is meant such friends as Messrs. Lamont Brothers, Messrs. Hinde Brothers, Mr. Chapman, and so on. Mr. Steele, who worked for years in the cause of Spiritualism in Clerkenwell, once mentioned to us that none of the richer Spiritualists had ever invited him to witness a good *seance*. So long as there is room at *seances* for any fashionable individuals who attend once as a favour on their part, then go away and pooh pooh the verities they have observed, it is hard and not right that faithful and true workers should be shut out.

The question of what use the National Association shall make of its offices, is intimately connected with the subject now under notice; in any case but a poor and precarious income is likely to be derived from letting rooms for *seances*, and if those *seances* be of a public nature, the Association may before long find its name committed in a way it will not like. Large premises will consequently be far more likely to be self-supporting than small ones in the hands of energetic officers. The Cavendish Rooms, if they could be had at £130 a year, would be more remunerative than small rooms at £70; in fact the balance would be covered at the outset by the rent for Sunday lectures and occasional week-day *soirées*, leaving about six days per week during which they could be let for other purposes.

The National Association could help mediums to give public *seances* if desirable, by making grants to local bodies of Spiritualists who desire such aid, and who will themselves undertake the responsibility of selecting the medium and of taking charge of the public circle.

If the Association resolved to get up one good *seance* each, for its own members only, it would give offence to those who were not asked among the first; whenever a bad *seance* took place, those present would think themselves entitled to another sitting; if the manifestations were good, some acute persons would have grave doubts as to the nature of some of them, and impress upon the Association the imperative duty of its removing those doubts by giving them another sitting; next, the medium would be taken ill, and want a holiday, so that it would take a year or two for the Association to give a good *seance* each to its own members in detachments of eight at a circle; and the working officers, let them do the best they may, would find themselves in permanent antagonism to a dozen or two of the members. Those who have had the arranging of circles, know all these interesting little things from sad experience.

The nature of physical mediumship is such as to tend to make Spiritualism spread by social rather than by public methods, and in this consists much of the strength

of the movement, since social usages are stronger even than political power, the latter being always overthrown in any contest between the two, as all history proves.

MR. SPURGEON ON SPIRITS.

THE following remarks are from the last number of Mr. Spurgeon's periodical, *The Sword and Trowel*, and they have his initials appended:—

We may be very wrong, but we confess a weakness for a ghost story, and cannot help listening to it, and all the more if it makes the blood curdle and blanches the cheek. It is a sort of stolen water, and that, as the wise man says, is sweet. We lived at one time among a people many of whom devoutly believed in apparitions, and wizards, and witches, and all that horrible rout, and often have we heard the most thrilling stories—stories, we believe, in more senses than one. We had sent us for review some little time ago a book upon apparitions, which claims to be a narrative of facts; and as we read it through we said, "Yes, these were facts *where they were done*," and we put the book aside, to be looked up somewhat nearer the end of the year, when our Christmas number might excuse our inserting one or more of the aforesaid *facts*. We are afraid our readers will think us rather a Sadducee, but we are nothing of the kind, nor a Pharisee either; but we do not believe that in nine out of ten ghost stories there is a ghost of truth, and we are not quite sure that we believe the tenth one. The Wesley family undoubtedly were favoured with a very noisy visitant of some sort, and we have no idea what it was, only there is no accounting for the noises which rats make in old houses any more than for the foul gases in new ones. When we meet with a thing which puzzles us we pry into the cause as far as we can, and generally find it out; and if we cannot read the riddle we lay it by to be solved another day, never flying to the old-fashioned resort of dragging in the supernatural. We traced a spirit song, after much investigation, to a foot-warmer filled with hot water, which was being used by an invalid. We found a band of celestial visitants, who whispered to us all night in a country house, and they turned out to be a nest of birds in a hole in the plaster of the wall at our bed head, which hole nearly came through into the room. Nothing supernatural has ever been seen by our eyes, nor do we think we shall ever be blessed with such visions while in this body, for after seeing Robert Houdin and other wonder-workers we are casehardened against the whole set of tricks and sham spirits, and these are the parents of most of the marvels which set silly people's hair on end. As a general rule, when we hear of an apparition, or anything of the kind, we do not believe it to be other than an illusion or a falsehood. The most wonderfully well-attested narratives seldom bear investigation; they are built up upon hearsay and tittle-tattle, and will not endure a strict examination; like most rumours, they fall like card-houses as soon as the hand of truth touches them. Perhaps a few of them appear to be so far true that we may safely say that they are not yet accounted for except upon a supernatural hypothesis, but we should hesitate to say more. Some are evidently the result of strong imagination, and are true to the parties concerned, affecting their fears and stamping themselves upon their minds too firmly to allow them to doubt.

In many cases religious delusions and errors create a tendency to visions and the like, and the most vigorous repression should be exercised by ministers and other persons of influence. A woman once called upon us in great trouble, for she had seen a human form at the foot of her bed. We suggested that it might be her own gown hanging on a peg. No, that could not be; she believed it was either the Lord Jesus or Satan. We remarked that it did not matter a pin which it was, for many saw the Lord when He was on earth, and our Lord Himself saw the devil, and yet was none the worse. To her, however, it was a test matter, and she informed us that she should have known all about it *if she had seen its head*. We inquired how that was, and to our astonishment she told us that she had a likeness of the Saviour, and she should have known him by it, and thereupon pulled out of her pocket a small woodcut which was supposed by her to belike the altogether lovely One. Our reply was an urgent entreaty to burn the horrid thing at once, and to feel certain that if ever she saw anybody at all like that, she might be sure that it was as likely to be Lucifer himself as the Lord Jesus. She was evidently greatly surprised, and we fell fifty per cent. in her estimation, for she had expected to have had the opinion of her own minister, a Methodist, contradicted by our authority. We told her that her minister was a very sensible man, and had dealt faithfully with her in telling her not to be deceived by optical illusions; we question, however, whether we shook her faith, for she had a budget of other wonders to tell us, only our declaration that they were "stuff and nonsense," and our plain statement of the spiritual character of true religion, made her cut the interview very short. Half crazy people come to us in any quantity with such marvels, and we hope we have cured a good many by a little kindly railery; but a considerable number leave us with the impression sadly confirmed in our minds that there are more lunatics abroad than there are in the asylums.

We do not affirm that ghosts have never been seen, for no one has any right to hazard so broad a statement, but all spirits, as such, must be invisible, and the two sorts of human spirits which we know of are both by far too seriously occupied to go roaming about this earth rapping on tables or frightening simpletons into fits. As for angels, though they also, as spirits, are not cognisable by the senses, no doubt they have been made visible to men, and there is no reason why they should not be made so now if God so willed it; it would certainly be a wonder, but we do not see that any of the laws of nature need to be suspended to produce it. We can readily believe that those messengers who keep watch around the people of God would be rendered visible to us and to others if some grand purpose could be accomplished thereby, and if the safety of the saints required it. Whether in these days angels or departed spirits ever do assume forms in which they can be seen is the question, and we have as yet seen nothing to lead us to believe that they do. Others assert that they have seen such things, but, as they generally admit that they would not have believed unless they had seen for themselves, we hope they will allow us to exercise the same abstinence.

MRS. AND MISS SHOWERS are in London. Mr. Algernon Joy is still in Switzerland, so also is Prince Wittgenstein, who will remain at Vevey for the winter. Mrs. Honywood is in Italy at Lake Como.

SPIRITUALISM IN HULL.

THE following notice of a lecture delivered by Mr. Everitt in Hull, is from the *Hull News*:—

On Friday night Mr. T. Everitt, of Hendon, near London, delivered an address at the Sailors' Institute, on "Phenomenal Spiritualism."

Mr. T. Thelwall presided over a moderately numerous audience, and briefly introduced Mr. Everitt, who at the outset remarked that the chairman had truly described him as independent of all sects and parties. His single desire was to help to enlighten his fellow-men, upon a great and all-important subject. True mediums, Mr. Everitt said, were no doubt born such. They were not conscious of any change in themselves, and with very few exceptions they were not aware of any altered conditions, even while the spirit manifestations were taking place through their physical organism; they were simply mediums between the two worlds. He held in his hand a slip cut from the *Hull News*, in which one Mr. Pearce spoke of the modern marvels of Spiritualism as being attributable to satanic agency. That gentleman went on to say that the spirits could not be good angels, and then he referred the matter to evil spirits, seducing spirits, lying spirits, and so on.

To refute these assertions, Mr. Everitt quoted several cases of well-known secularists, who, through spirit communion, had been brought to acknowledge the truths of Christianity. He mentioned the names of the persons referred to, and added that Mr. S. C. Hall had told him that for many years he was regarded as a Christian, but at that time he could not believe in the miracles described in the Bible; scientific teaching all tended to the reverse; but as soon as he saw a modern miracle—as it was called—then he accepted the miracles of the Scriptures. Many more names might have been given to show the fruits of Spiritualism, hence he felt that the preachers had overshot the target when they attributed these wonderful things to the devil. Should they give the devil credit for being a more powerful teacher than those who claimed to be heaven-appointed? People would soon become wiser than their theological teachers; they would know that Spiritualism was a privilege—a heaven-sent one—which their Father in His mercy had sent, not to the Christian Churches in particular, because they turned their backs upon it, but, as it were, to the Gentiles, who had had no hope of a future existence. Mr. Everitt then narrated some of the facts which had come within his own knowledge during his twenty years' experience of the subject, describing many remarkable phenomena. The most marvellous was spirit music, the direct voice, spirit lights, and direct spirit writing. Sixteen written communications had been received from "intelligences," on the subject of the "Truthfulness of the Christian Religion," embracing quotations from languages unknown to those present at the *seances*, and which had subsequently been interpreted. Some of these communications were written at the speed of 150 words per second, and the specimen read by Mr. Everitt was a very able treatise on the subject of Christianity. In conclusion the lecturer said their object was to help to remove the darkness, prejudice, and ignorance, with regard to what were called death and the future life, and also to afford comfort to the bereaved and sorrowing, who looked upon Death as a cruel monster. Spiritualism extracted the sting from death, opened the shining portals of their Father's house on high, gave glimpses of the land which flowed with milk and honey, where the inhabitants never grew weary or faint, where everything was life, and where there was no more death.

At the close Mr. Everitt replied to several questions having relation to the subject of his discourse, and his answers appeared to give satisfaction to all but one gentleman, who desired to enter into an argument on the subject of Spiritualism *versus* Christianity.

The usual votes of thanks having been passed, the meeting closed.

MR. TRUBNER sold out all his first supply of Dr. Crowell's valuable book on Spiritualism in a few days, so it will be three or four weeks before he obtains more from America.

MRS. JACKSON'S LECTURES.—Mrs. J. W. Jackson delivered the first of her series of three lectures last Wednesday, at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, who has kindly lent her drawing-room for the purpose. Mrs. Jackson has two fatherless children to support, and, as the late Mr. J. W. Jackson was a warm promoter of psychological inquiry, friends should take tickets liberally for Mrs. Jackson's lectures.

AN ILLUSTRATED SPIRITUAL PERIODICAL.

BY WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

SINCE the project of the issue of an illustrated monthly Spiritual periodical, of standard character and elegant appearance, was mooted in these pages, I have discovered that there are mediums in private life who possess spirit drawings of remarkable power and beauty, some of them of a symbolical character, others representing scenes and landscapes such as were never seen upon this earth. Consequently it has been suggested that the engraving of many of these pictures would be good work done in the cause of Spiritualism, and prove of considerable interest to the subscribers and their friends.

The suggestion has also been made that unless a large number of portraits were engraved, there would be a difficulty, and perhaps apparently invidious distinctions in making selections. Four portraits could conveniently be published on one page, in ovals with ornamental surroundings, and unless the way were clear to engrave twenty or thirty in the volume, it would be best perhaps to give none.

The places in which the leading events in connection with the history of modern Spiritualism have taken place, should be engraved while it is yet possible to do so. In London, for instance, changes are so prevalent, that buildings and halls connected with the early history of the movement, are liable to be altered and pulled down. Exteriors and interiors of the homesteads in which the *seances* of the Eddy's and Mrs. Andrews have been held, together with pictures representing the *seances* themselves, also the scenes at the photographing of spirits in London with the magnesium or electric lights, should be engraved *now*; a few years hence the power of doing so may be gone.

It usually takes about two months to bring about extensive concerted action in Spiritualism, and although it was desired to enlist enough subscribers in a fortnight, only about two hundred have entered their names, though it is known that many others intend doing so. Some say they will take the journal when it comes out, but as it will not come out unless a sufficient number is guaranteed beforehand, and as it is not desired that those friends who at the present time have heavily weighted themselves with necessary expenses in connection with Spiritualism, should specially take up this matter also, the appearance of the journal calculated to strongly influence people of education and culture, and to ward off the lingering remnant of ridicule and abuse of Spiritualism still rampant in the public mind, depends upon a large number of persons entering their names for a few copies.

As the first volumes of *The Spiritual Magazine* are now worth a guinea each, what will be the value to the possessors a few years hence of the magnificent volume now projected? It will thus be noticed that the present suggestion is not one entailing self-sacrifice on anybody, but it is one in which good is done to the movement and full value for the outlay received by the promoters at the same time.

I have written to friends in the United States, with the view of getting the matter taken up there, for with one foot in America and the other in this country, there is probably plenty of foundation for such a journal, which is not intended to be a narrow or local one, but to serve the interests of the whole movement everywhere. Some weeks must elapse before the support from the other side of the Atlantic can be known, and if in the meantime the list on this side grows steadily larger, in a short time the proposed periodical will be an accomplished fact. There will be a certain amount of support from Australia which can be estimated beforehand, as there is not time to hear from there, and perhaps more may come in from the Continent when the readers of *The Spiritualist* there remember what exceptional expenses a few of our most earnest workers have at present in organising.

This being one of the very rare occasions on which I am before the public—for I fully sympathise with Dr. Gully's views that we ought all to keep ourselves in the background, and to take a pleasure in doing even the humblest kind of work, provided it be for the good of the cause—I seize the opportunity to briefly mention a personal matter. The

Pioneer recently printed in a leading article that a person had written to it expressing disapproval of the money-making spirit of all the spiritual periodicals. The following facts explain how far this misstatement affects me:—Five years ago there was no newspaper in Spiritualism, nothing but monthly literature, all of a magazine character, and the speakers at the Gower-street Conferences complained that there was no newspaper, and that their proceedings were unrecorded. I accordingly started the first newspaper, *The Spiritualist*; it gave shorthand reports, and was adapted to the requirements of the scientific mind; it was published fortnightly, with the announcement in the first number that it was intended eventually to come out weekly. From that day to this I voluntarily gave up an average of half my literary work on other journals, to give time to Spiritualism, consequently during those five years my income has averaged half or less than half what it was before, as the account books of those journals will show. Nobody asked me to do this, so nobody else is responsible; I have never regretted the step, for the consequent knowledge of Spiritualism has been infinitely more than a recompense. A few months later other journals began to come into the field, too cheap to stand any chance of living without artificial aid, consequently the subscription system was introduced, but as I believed in self-supporting principles, I would have nothing to do with the subscription system, and fought against it single-handed without a word of complaint, either in public or private, although about £1,000 a year of the public money was used (I do not say with that intention or from bad motives) in such a way as to tend to drive me out of a field I had been the first to enter. Thus the public, by means of funds which they gave from the highest and purest motives, and which probably did do a certain amount of good to the movement, were, without knowing or intending it, inflicting heavy financial losses on me for years. I did not speak out, because there was no representative body of Spiritualists to complain to; so the matter might have been considered a wrangle between newspapers, and I thought what a pity it would be did such inharmony creep into the movement; moreover, I thought the public would see the injustice of one-sided subscriptions for themselves, and the fallacy of putting a veto on self-supporting principles. When matters were at their worst, I began to talk of these things privately, and feel deeply grateful to Mr. Charles Blackburn for finding some private experimental work for me to do in connection with Spiritualism, over which he made a liberal six months' engagement; for although I have always more scientific literary engagements offered than I can accept, it is too great a strain on the mind to supply the educated public with much advanced information, on heavy scientific subjects, while my thoughts are naturally out of those subjects and deep in Spiritualism. Later still, when I at last gave in to the subscription system which I had fought against for years, Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Oxley started a list with Mr. Blyton as secretary, and although very few Spiritualists were asked to join, in one or two weeks about £200 a year for three years was guaranteed; anybody may have a copy of the list by applying to Mr. Blyton. Thus my "money-getting" spirit has consisted in giving up for five years half my previous income, and standing single-handed for two or three years against about £1,000 of Spiritualists' capital, used without the knowledge of the donors in such a way as to tend to drive me off the stage of action, without my uttering a word of complaint in public, nor for a long time in private, the power I was serving not being that of man. These hardships were entirely my own fault, arising from not speaking out, for when any reasonable case has been put before Spiritualists they have always proved warm-hearted friends; indeed, considering the small dimensions of the movement, the amount of liberality is surprising.

These very simple and very true facts, long unknown even in private, are now made public, for the public life only of public workers is generally known; these, I have discovered, cannot silently "live down" abuse and misunderstanding, so I have thought it well for this once to speak out.

Before quitting this personal subject of my money-getting propensities, as set forth in *The Pioneer*, I have great pleasure in stating that, as I have found Mr. Blackburn—a comparatively new acquaintance—one of the truest friends of later years in connection with my work in Spiritualism, Mr. and Mrs. Varley were the earliest. They made Spiritualism known to me; they first showed me manifestations through Mrs. Varley's mediumship, they introduced me to the best mediums before *The Spiritualist* newspaper was started, and gave me facilities for years for carrying on inquiries, with an amount of disinterested kindness I shall never forget.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION SOIREE.

On Thursday last week, a *soiree*, under the auspices of the British National Association of Spiritualists, was held at the Co-operative Hall, Castle-street, Oxford-street, London. The hall was tastefully arranged with tables decorated with plants, and covered with objects of interest. Among the things exhibited were a lock of Katie King's hair side by side with one of Mrs. Corner's (Florence Cook) showing the striking contrast of colour; some photographs with well-defined spirit-faces, by Hudson, the sitters being Mrs. Ross-Church and Mrs. Keningale Cook; flowers brought by Katie, and pieces of her dress and veil, and her farewell writing, lent by Mrs. Ross-Church and Mrs. Cook of Hackney. A large-sized drawing of spirit-heads massed together in a cloud after the fashion of the angel back-grounds of the old masters, drawn "under influence" by Mrs. Harriett Rudd, of Brixton; a frame of direct writing, minute, but beautifully clear, lent by Mr. T. Everitt; the drawings "by a girl twelve years of age": a book containing portraits of some of the foreign members of the Association; several paintings illustrative of the skill of the artists who will help to illustrate the proposed new spiritual periodical; some photographs of spirit-drawings of remarkable character; eight scenes in the spirit-world given through drawing mediumship; a large photograph of Katie King taken by Mr. Harrison under the magnesium light; various other photographs and drawings were also exhibited.

There was a good attendance, and altogether it was one of the liveliest and happiest social gatherings of Spiritualists which have been held for a long time. Dr. Gully presided, and among those present were Mr. Martin R. Smith; Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S.; Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester; Mrs. Ross-Church and the Misses Ross-Church; Mrs. George Neville; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Martheze, also Mr. Martheze, junior; Mrs. William Tebb; Mr. R. Hannah; Mrs. Rudd; Miss Ponder; the Misses Withall; Mr. N. Fabyan Dawe; Miss Scott; Miss Poyser; the Misses Williamson; Miss Dickson; Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan; Mr. T. Slater; Mrs. and Miss Kisingbury; Major S. R. I. Owen; Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Fitz-Gerald and Miss Fitz-Gerald; Mr. Gledstones and Mr. and Mrs. Chinnery, of Paris; Mr. W. P. Adshear, of Belper; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Rogers, and Mr. Rogers, junior; Mr. Glendinning, of Glasgow; Mrs. Lowe; Mr. E. T. Bennett; Mrs. E. Corner (Florence Cook); Mr. G. R. Tapp; Mrs. Cook and Miss K. Cook; the Misses Eagar; Mr. Ashman; Mr. Charles Hunt; Mr. T. Blyton; Messrs. Haxby Brothers; and other warm friends of the cause too numerous to mention.

The evening was enlivened by music of a superior quality. The Misses Withall opened the proceedings with a brilliant duet, "A Selection from Euryanthe." After the speeches, Mrs. Ross-Church sang with great feeling and power, "The Shadow of the Cross," and later on the same lady gave Kingsley's song, "When all the World was Young," with so much spirit and effect that an *encore* was demanded, Miss Eva Ross-Church played an accompaniment on the piano; Miss Rogers sang very sweetly, "The Cradle Song;" and Mr. Chinnery contributed a song by Rudall, a Spiritualist composer. The Misses Withalls also gave another duet, "Hungarian Dances." The sociability of the evening was promoted by some of the ladies, Mrs. D. Fitz-Gerald, Mrs. Maltby, Mrs. Morell Theobald, Mrs. Kisingbury, Mrs. Rudd, and Miss Withall presiding at the tea-tables.

After tea Dr. Gully took the president's chair, and the business proceedings of the evening began. There was not much speech-making, in which respect this *soiree* was superior to its predecessors in the matter of the promotion of general sociability. At *soirees* three speeches of good quality, and of ten or twelve minutes' duration each, will be found to be sufficient.

DR. GULLY ON HOW SPIRITUALISTS SHOULD MEET.

Dr. Gully, in opening the proceedings of the evening, said: As this is a purely sociable meeting, and as I understand that there is to be nothing like discussion enacted, I am not very clear as to the cause of my being here in the chair. It might have been that I was placed here as master of the ceremonies, to introduce you to each other, but as that has already been done, I trust, by one of the best of social introductions, a cup of tea, the only thing that occurs to me to do is to utter a few

sentences on one of the aspects in which the subject about which we all take an interest presents itself, and which has reference to the social character of this very meeting. I believe it is understood generally (and elsewhere I have stated emphatically), that the main object of our Association is to facilitate the investigation and collection of the facts which Spiritualism now presents or may further present. But in this, as in all other subjects of intellectual or moral interest, it is the ever-existing tendency of the human thought to build edifices on the facts; and each spirit of individual man builds his own house in which he lives the interior life. So long as he does this and makes no attempt to drag other spirits into his own house, reviling or despising them if they refuse to enter, this building process can do no harm to any one save the builder; and then only if he has erected a house in which prejudice, persecution, narrowness of thought, and selfishness of aim live with him—a house which he fondly hopes may defend him from conscience, denial of self, pity and love for his neighbour, and exalted thought, which are seeking entrance from outside, and from above. But if out of the facts of Spiritualism a man can find the materials for an abode for the culture of the generous and the loving, the trusting and the long-suffering, the bearing and forbearing, the friendly and the helping spirits who are always about us and joyful to enter in, I cannot but think that it is a good and wholesome work to be ever extracting materials for such edifices from the facts in question. I am quite aware of the peril of drawing conclusions too speedily or too extensively from any subject of experiment whatever, and especially from one surrounded by so many obscurities and contradictions as ours; but, as I said, if the inferences are such as inculcate and lead to the elevation and purification of the spiritual man, no one is justified in saying that they can be harmful to that man: they may not be precise and accurate, and yet be most useful. Now the facts of Spiritualism tell us that we are in reality and essence spiritual bodies, the body of flesh being only a passing phenomenon; that in the life after leaving this last-named body the spiritual man progresses by the same process by which he strives to progress here, *viz.*, by the constant cultivation of his spiritual being, although under more favourable circumstances than can be well obtained whilst the lower needs of the body besiege him; that just in proportion to the constancy and energy of these progressive efforts is the beauty, the power, the peace, the attitude of the spiritual man. As that man is here—on earth—in his body, there is no occasion to wait for the sense of that attitude, peace, and power until he gets out of his body; his heaven or his hell begins here, more certainly than it begins five minutes after his body has drawn its last breath, as is so commonly held. With these facts, the outspring and the essence of Spiritualism, am I not justified in the opinion that of all people Spiritualists should ever have in their thoughts that they are spirits walking the earth, spirits having constant communion with others who need not the earth to walk upon, spirits who can choose the character of the communion which they thus hold, spirits who are accountable for that choice both to the Central Spirit whence all derive, and to all other spirits among whom they abide? All this may be held, and some of it is held, as a dogmatic belief by people who have not looked into Spiritualism at all; but with such, all being indefinite, the idea of spiritual communion being utterly misty, nay, the spirit itself altogether unintelligible and inexpressible, the belief may hang very loosely on them, and cannot force upon them the strong motive and necessity for living as a spirit which Spiritualistic inquirers possess, in their more defined knowledge of the being and the mode of communion of spirit-life out of the body. This was my reason for saying that, more than all others, Spiritualists should live with the constant sense within them that they are spirits—and essentially only spirits—whilst in their earthly career. If Spiritualism led to no other result than this, it would still be a great result, for it would lead to the cultivation of the interior life, and render the exterior life less and less attractive and absorbing—that exterior life-world whence come all our temptations to the material and the evil. We have been told what "the fruits of the spirit" are, and among them prominently is love—such love as puts self aside and lives in and for communion with others—such love as a true Spiritualist ought well to comprehend. It is into this abode of spiritual love, this house built on the facts of Spiritualism that I invite you to enter on social occasions of this kind. Enter where hatred, malice, and uncharitableness cannot live; the air is too pure and light for them to breathe into their coarse and earthly lungs. Enter where pride of place and soul, where sordidness and pride

of purse, are ill at ease, for neither place nor purse gives nobility here. Enter where grovelling meanness and sensual foulness are repulsed at the very threshold, so antagonistic is spiritual love to them. In such a house it is that Spiritualists should meet. They should meet in the knowledge that their several abodes hereafter are in their choice here; that interior progress is the law of their existence now and hereafter; that their heaven or their hell begins here; that when the spirit awakes out of its solid tenement of flesh, it will be either astounded at the darkness around it or enchanted with the brightness, in proportion as it has built up and lived in this house of love within itself. For, within each of us must such a house be made, and will be made if we are constantly conscious that immortality and progress are our essence and destiny. We shall live in spiritual love because the loves of the earthly body and of the material world are well known by us to vanish with that body, though if made our practice here they will cling to our spiritual body, and constitute its darkness and heaviness hereafter, causing its progress to be that of a weak and laden being. We shall live in spiritual love because we well know that only thus can we be in communion with, and be aided by, spirits living in the power and beauty and peace of the spirit-world. In brief, we shall live in spiritual love because so only can we anticipate what that world out of the body is. And all this shall we do because we have assured ourselves that there is a spirit body and a world for it to live in. We are accused of undermining religion; can any extant form of religion offer incentives—nay, forcible constraints—to spiritual life more than our facts do? Is there not a glorious temple capable of being erected on them? A temple to holy love and holy intercommunion, to charity, to purity, to truthfulness, to every spiritual grandeur and grace—a temple, too, not raised by human hands (which may be foul) or filled with human devices (which may be foolish or perverting), but a temple eternal in the immortal spirit-body—in the building of which the artificers have been lofty spirits in communion with ours, and inspired by the Great Central Spirit whose aid we seek in prayer and in conduct of life. Let our volition act to seek such aid and communion, let us, as I said before, be never forgetful, for one instant, that we are spirits, and I feel very sure that such a simple religion of spiritual communion will lead mankind to far different results from those we behold around—from a world filled with pride, money-hunting, self-seeking, low and vile aims and desires—a world which only suffices for the grovelling wishes and delights of the thousands on thousands who refuse to credit the existence of any beyond it! I cannot believe that the Spiritualist's religion could land him in a worse plight than that in which mankind is at this present found to be spiritually. But there should be no crafty rule of churches and priests in our midst, nor great names, nor aristocratic airs and domineering interference. Spiritualism is essentially a democratic agent; it says to a man, "What your spirit is, that you are—no more, nor less; there is no other measure of you than that of your spiritual condition;" it says, "In my circle no fine feathers make fine birds, save the wings of the spirit, which, folded, keep you to earth and earth's evils, but which, expanded and moved by the soul's volition and aspiration, make you great and glorious and shining in far more lofty regions and societies than those for which mortal ambition barter the immortal part of humanity."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, will you enter the abode of spiritual love and kindness in the evening's converse, and talk nothing but what is charitable and teaching—worthy of your elevating, enlightening, and comforting beliefs. (Applause.)

MR. MARTIN R. SMITH ON THE WORK OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Mr. Martin R. Smith said:—I have been asked to say a few words here this evening upon a subject which interests us all very deeply, viz., the progress hitherto made by this Association, and the work that it has been able to perform. I should only be deceiving myself and you if I were to endeavour to prove that any great amount of work had been done, or that we had been able to establish ourselves on a very solid or immovable basis. Nevertheless, something has been done, and that little, I think I may venture to say, has been well done. In the first place the Association, in spite of lukewarm friends and avowed enemies, has actually struggled into existence. This is in itself no small matter, and it is solely owing to the patient industry of a small band of workers; I will not mention their names, for in the first place they are well known to you, and secondly I might inadvertently be guilty of injustice in

omitting some name well worthy of grateful remembrance. Personally I am not of this band; I am a busy man, and I am ashamed to say that in the past I have grudged the time, which others have so patiently given. As I say, the Association has struggled into existence. A well-considered code of laws and regulations has been framed, and a Council has been formed, who meet regularly, and as the attendance book will show, in numbers which prove the interest they take in the affairs and progress of the Association. You may say, "This is all very well, but we as subscribers to the Association, expected some more tangible result in return for our money." If two or three years hence we were to come before you with no more to say than we have this evening, such a remark would be just, and the censure it conveyed well deserved. This evening I think it would be unjust, and I will tell you why. I must look upon this question to a certain extent from a business point of view, especially from an hon. treasurer's point of view, [and I tell you plainly that, in my humble opinion, so long as the funds of the Association remain in their present low condition, there can be little real work done. What we might do, if we had funds at our disposal, is to engage lecturers and hire large rooms where they might be heard. Protect and educate our mediums who were found to require such aid. (Applause.) Support, or at any rate encourage, first-class journals and magazines. Establish schools where our children might receive a rational education. Aid and if necessary subsidise local associations. Give prizes for essays on the great subject which so deeply interests us (Applause), and in these and in a thousand other ways force our creed into a prominence which at present it cannot hope to attain. But all these things cannot be done without a large expenditure, and as we have determined to adhere to the good old principle of cutting our coat to our cloth, we must for the present content ourselves with gazing upon them as the penniless ragamuffin gazes at the good things in the pastry-cook's window. After all, if the ragamuffin had his wicked way of all the good things which he saw, he would probably be exceedingly ill (Laughter), and I think it very probable that if we suddenly came into possession of funds which would entitle us to make all the experiments above mentioned, we, too, might make a mess of it. There is an old saying that "No one can make a wise use of prosperity until he has been trained in the school of adversity," and an older that "We must learn to walk ere we can run." We shall infallibly make plenty of mistakes, and I am one of those who prefer a gentle stumble to a magnificent collapse. I must not forget, however, to remind you of one good thing which the Association has done. The Conference this year was held under its auspices, and I venture to say with mutual benefit and satisfaction. I was sorry to see in one of the spiritual periodicals a letter animadverting rather severely on the Council for having expended the sum of £40 on this meeting of conference. This is not the time or place to defend such expenditure, but I feel sure that when the time arrives for us to give an account of our stewardship, that you will approve the outlay. Much has been said, and in a somewhat bitter spirit against the Association as aspiring to place itself at the head of this great movement. This accusation has been time after time energetically repudiated, but whilst I admit that there is at present no ground for such an accusation, I cannot myself see (even if it were true), that we have the smallest cause to be ashamed of it. In all movements there must be leaders, it is irrational to deny it. They will be furnished by the highest intelligences interested in the matter, and I question very much whether it is not better for us to be guided by the collective wisdom of an Association such as this, rather than by any individual, however gifted, however influential. This Association, if it act wisely, must in time incorporate all these leading spirits, and I must here remind you of an advantage which I venture to think will result from such incorporation. Spiritualists are, as a rule, men of some independence of ideas, and originality of thought, and perhaps the world is not altogether wrong when it goes so far as to charge us with eccentricity. Well, I believe that the mere fact of mutual Association and criticism will tend to put a check on all personal eccentricity, and to control and direct individual aims, for the ideas of very brilliant minds often, like uncut diamonds, derive their highest lustre and their true marketable value, from the finish that is put upon them by the labour of very humble workers. In short, I believe in the collective wisdom of a multitude of councillors. So says also the whole experience of mankind. Be this as it may—either some few individuals, or some society such as this, must take the lead in this movement; there must be officers to every

army, or what is it but an undisciplined mob? If the Association is worthy of the post of leader, it will infallibly take it in spite of the clamour of those who love it not. If it is unworthy it will as infallibly fall into contempt, and eventually perish. There are others who maintain that this Association is unnecessary, on the ground that Spiritualism is a private and sacred matter, and requires neither officers, society, nor paraphernalia of publicity. True, friends, as regards personal Spiritualism. But Spiritualism has something more to do than the consolation of the bereaved, or the knitting together of hearts in your family circle. It has a great public work to perform—to open men's eyes, to pour wisdom into their hearts, to abate their selfishness, and to sanctify and elevate their motives. (Applause.) How can it be said then that Spiritualism has not public as well as private duties? As well say that it is an error to have churches and services and ministers of religion, because, forsooth, you have family prayers at home. I would ask therefore those who think that this Association may do good work, to be patient and just. Remember that at the present time we are almost penniless, and that in this state we can do nothing—nothing but watch and wait. Personally, I have no fear of the result. I trust to the kindly assistance of the bright intelligences that hover round us, to preserve us from any serious or fatal mistakes, and further, I think that belief in the truths of Spiritualism is rapidly spreading, and must result in the accession to the Association of numerous and powerful friends who will not grudge their assistance to the good work. Do not, however, let us deceive ourselves. It is a common practice to declare that Spiritualists are to be numbered by thousands. I believe this to be a silly and a mischievous delusion, and that as regards the number in the metropolis, we should be nearer the mark if we were to put them at 1,000, or 1,500. (Hear, hear.) It may be perfectly true that there is a very much larger number, whose attention has been turned to the subject, and who have ceased to regard it with scorn or ridicule, but I am speaking of those only to whom the Association has a right to look for countenance and support. But, friends, although there were these thousands ready to lay their lives down, if necessary, to promote the truths of Spiritualism, let us remember that the Almighty alone can give success to their endeavours. If it please Him in His infinite goodness to grant to our age powerfully-gifted mediums, then nothing can arrest the progress of the movement; they are the persons, and they alone, through whom these truths can be made manifest to the world, and we should do well to look after them more carefully than we have hitherto done. (Applause.) In concluding my remarks I would urge all those who take an interest in this Association, to give to it the eyes, hands, and feet, i.e. the pounds, shillings, and pence, which alone can enable it to do its work. Those who love our beautiful faith should, at any rate, give us the opportunity of trying what we can do. (Applause.)

MR. HARPER ON ORGANISATION.

Mr. R. Harper said that as Spiritualists had possession of a truth which they wished to disseminate for the good of mankind, what was the testimony of the common sense of humanity in connection with everything else whatever, as to the use of organisation? Would the churches have stood as they have done without organisation? A cumulative power existed in organisation. Local organisations were found to be absolutely necessary in Spiritualism, and if a principle were true locally it must be good nationally; organisation was therefore absolutely necessary to give cumulative speed to the chariot of Spiritualism. He narrated how the introduction of theological matters had led to long and wearisome debates in the Council, and how when at length a clause savouring of theology had been placed in the principles of the Association, an overwhelming majority of the members had it struck out altogether. It was difficult and ruinously expensive, as he knew from experience, to get good mediums in the provinces, so the Association should try to remedy this; it should sustain good mediums at fixed salaries. Lecturers should be engaged and sent to those parts of the country, where the local Spiritualists are not sufficiently rich or numerous to engage speakers for themselves. (Applause.)

MR. ROGERS ON POPULAR MISTAKES.

Mr. E. D. Rogers said that a number of Spiritualists had taken it into their heads that the National Association had been started out of spite, to injure some spiritualistic friends. As one who had been a member of the Council from the first, and who had attended very nearly all its meetings, he could testify that on no single occasion had the Council thought or

spoke a single word tending to injure the business of any person or persons, or section of Spiritualists whatever. Whenever any subject had been hinted at, which might be supposed to have a shadow of a shade of an appearance of being intended to injure anybody, the idea had been put down at once for that simple reason, no matter whether it were calculated to do good to the movement or not. Eligible rooms, in every way convenient, had been offered to the National Association within three doors of the shop of Mr. Burns, but were at once rejected, and would not be taken on any terms, for the reasons just mentioned; he should like to see Mr. Burns working with the Association. If anybody thought that the National Association wished to injure any person or persons in their business, or otherwise, it was a mistake. (Applause.) The Association recognised all Spiritualists as brethren, and it had nothing to do with men's religious creeds. (Applause.) It only asked—"Are you a Spiritualist? If so, give us your right hand and work with us." He hoped that the present members would work actively to bring in others, and before sitting down he would move a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was what he purposed doing when he arose to address the meeting.

This was seconded, and carried with acclamation.

A TRANCE ADDRESS ON ORGANISATION.

Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan, in the trance state said:—"Every flower which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." We have heard of organisation to-night. We believe the difference between institutions of men and organisations of God to be that the one is a framework without a soul, whilst the other exhibits the growth of a body from the spirit. When the naturalist hears of a rare plant in distant lands, he crosses continents and seas that he may transplant the wonderful flower, and bring it to his own clime. He sees that room is made for it, that a garden is prepared, and he places it in suitable soil; he takes care that the chilling winds do not blow upon its delicate petals. Spiritualism is a heaven-born plant found in the wilderness of life, growing in a wild and desert place. But the gardeners—the true Spiritualists—desire to take this flower into their own gardens, to remove it from the wild tangle of briars, and to allow it to yield its fruition to the sky and to God. Throughout the world, even in desert places, the hand of God is extended, and He asks for gardeners to attend to the rare and humble flower. We are not building a tomb or a monastery, but making a bright garden, and when this tree of life shall yield its fruit to future ages, when children shall play under its branches, when its shade shall be extended to all—to the poor and weary ones of earth—when the soil around shall grow fertile, we shall not despise this day of small beginnings, wherein the seeds of the fruit of Spiritualism have been planted. Each one should be content to fill the office of water-bearer, since tears of love and sympathy bring forth an abundant harvest of good for the world. (Applause.)

The rest of the evening was spent in singing, music, and conversation.

SUPERSTITIONS OF THE KOROGARS.—Last Tuesday night at a meeting of the Anthropological Institute, 4, St. Martin's-place, Trafalgar-square, London, Mr. J. E. Preece, F.S.A., presided. Mr. M. J. Walhouse read a paper on "A Leaf-Wearing Tribe on the Western Coast of India;" it related to a slave caste tribe in the Madras Provinces, named the Korogars; the women wear cloth round the hips, and a leaf apron behind, about twenty inches square; being outside the cloth it is of no use whatever, any more than an English "pannier," and is probably the dying-out remnant of a prehistoric custom of wearing leaves. The Korogars believe in witchcraft, and by brandings and floggings punish those who send out evil spirits to annoy others. They worship with bloody rites Mari Amma, the goddess presiding over small-pox; the heads of animals are cut off before her by Asadis, at a single blow; they also worship local demons, evil spirits, or goblins, called Bhutas, legions of whom are supposed to be spread over the country. The special Bhuta of the Korogars is called Katu; boiled rice, coloured with turmeric, is laid for her under a tree. They put food on the graves of their dead for the benefit of the spirits. A paper by Mr. Rooko Pennington, LL.D., was then read by Mr. Brabrook, on "Some Tumuli and Stone Circles near Castleton, Derbyshire," in which district he had been digging up some interesting prehistoric curiosities. A paper by Major Godwin-Austen on "The Stone Monuments of the Khasi Hills," closed the proceedings.

Poetry.

SPIRIT TEACHING.

'Twas summer and the flowers were gay,
And day was melting into night;
I sat and watched the changing light
While Philomela trilled her lay.

Then, as pale stars lit up the sky
And hushed was all the scene around,
A spirit by my side I found—
One I well knew in days gone by.

It seemed so like the days of old
I questioned not how it could be,
But harkened as it turned to me,
With signs to list!—and this it told—

"Though lost to sight, we're ever near,
We light the dreary paths you tread:
There is more life among the dead,
Than 'mong the living forms so dear—

"Forms which decay as grows within
The spirit-life, which longs to free
Itself from earth's impurity,
Thus life and light eterne to win.

"No more we seek our body-home;
It sinks to perish in the dust,
Never again to nurture lust,
Nor to reform in years to come.

"Give up false creed, that life is sworn
In mouldering clay whose mission's past:
God's plan allows not a return
To bodies dead, nor creeds outgrown.

"Your earthly body, as it dies,
Yields up its resurrection joy
In spirit-life without alloy,
Fit remnant for God's holy skies."

Hendon.

M. T.

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers.]

WONDERFUL TEST OF SPIRIT POWER.

SIR,—In your last you make allusion to myself and friend witnessing certain phenomena, but we witnessed also Mr. Crookes, F.R.S., tie his medium, Mrs. Corner (late Miss Cook), with narrow tape very tight round her neck, and fastened by six knots and then stitched with silk and sealed with his signet ring, leaving two long ends of the tape for further use; next he tied her wrists together equally tight with tape, and knotted, and stitched, and sealed as above, leaving two long ends as above described; he did the same with the waist, and the same with the left ankle. The medium then lay full length on the hearth-rug and Mr. Crookes laid his library ladder by her side, and fastened the four loose tapes direct to the ladder, viz., at the neck, at the waist, at the wrists, and at the ankle; these four places were all knotted and sewn, and sealed, exactly as the above. Myself and friend, and others now left the room, and as soon as Mr. Crookes had shut out the gas he followed, and stood with us all the time in the adjoining laboratory in gas-light, and looked at his watch, which told us it had taken to do all the fastenings three-quarters of an hour; but in five minutes the medium asked us inside, and on lighting the gas we found the four tapes uncut and as perfect as when first fastened on to her and to the ladder, they lay strawed about, and I retain the neck tape, which my friend saw fastened, whilst Mr. Crookes retains the others. The medium rose up liberated by the spirits, and not by any act of her own. I on another occasion saw a spirit form come out of the medium's cabinet and on returning in again the spirit asked Mr. Crookes to hold the curtain aside so that we all could see inside, and we all saw the spirit go up to her medium who lay in trance on the floor, lift the medium's hand, take the rings off her fingers and bring them to Mrs. Crookes who sat next to me, and I say it is wilful blindness for people not to believe facts like these stated.

CHARLES BLACKBURN.

Parkfield, Didsbury, near Manchester,
December 6th, 1874.

INFORMATION WANTED FROM AMERICA.

SIR,—Will you oblige me by the insertion of the following statement, in the hope that some of your American readers may be able to assist me in identifying the communicating spirit, and verifying his operations?

In the month of August last, I was, staying with Dr. Speer, at Shanklin, Isle of Wight. We had a number of sittings, and

at one of them a spirit communicated, who gave his name as Abraham Florentine. He said that he had been concerned in the war of 1812, and that he had lately entered spirit life at Brooklyn, U.S.A., on August 5th, at the age of 83 years, 1 month, and 17 days. We had some difficulty at first in making out whether the month and days referred to the age or to the length of his illness, but he returned on the following evening, and cleared up the difficulty.

Among the great number of similar cases which have occurred in our circle, I know of none which has not proved literally exact in every single particular. No mistake or misstatement has been made, and I have, therefore, every reason to anticipate that this case is also true. I shall be grateful to any one who will enable me to say positively whether it is so.

The manner in which the communication was made was most singular. We were seated, three in number, round a heavy loo-table which two persons would move with difficulty. Instead of raps, to which we are accustomed, the table commenced to tilt. So eager was the communicating spirit that the table rose some seconds before the required letter was arrived at. In order to mark T it would rise, quivering with excitement in a manner perfectly indescribable, about K, and then descend at T with a thump that shook the floor. This was repeated until the whole message was complete, but so eager was the spirit, and so impetuous in his replies, that he bewildered Dr. and Mrs. Speer completely (I was in deep trance), and caused the process to be prolonged over the whole sitting. If I may venture on a guess, I should say that Abraham Florentine was a good soldier, a fighting man not nice to meet, and that he retains enough of his old impetuosity to rejoice at his liberation from the body which (if I may guess again) had become a burden to him through a painful illness.

Will the American papers copy, and enable me to verify my facts and guesses?
M. A. (Oxon.).

DIFFERENCES.

SIR,—I rejoice to know from Dr. Gully that he is a better Christian than I. Long may he continue so. He has theological beliefs, so have I. He has a right to think as he does, so have I.

Dr. Gully's heterodox beliefs are now clear. The "strolling player" and the "Chinaman" spirits who develop through Mr. Morse, and the vagaries tumbling about in the brain of G. Massey are obvious. If they and others unceasingly strut their diverse heterodoxy in print, or on the platform, I and others claim the right to let the outside public know, that there are orthodox Christian Spiritualists. We cannot allow heterodoxy to play King Stork.

During the last twenty years neither through platform speeches, nor press articles, have I once given out the details of my belief on theological questions. Have heterodox Spiritualists done so? On the platform I have been sternly a Spiritualist, not a theologian.

You and others know that through the press and on the platform for many years past I have avoided theological utterances, and have by voice and pen entreated heterodox Spiritualists to do the same; and direct all their energies to defeating modern Sadduceism, in raising the standard of human immortality and ghost communion.

My opposition to the Association arose when the "principles and purposes" were promulgated. Only a few weeks before that date, I spoke from the platform of the Quebec Institution meeting at the request of the Association, though I declined to be connected with it as a member, because I had no confidence in the getters-up of the Association.

Dr. Gully persists in making the untrue assertion "Mr. Jones loudly proclaims his Christianity as an objection to the Association." My successful opposition was point blank against a clause, which so far as I know, had nothing to do with Christianity. It was against the "only basis" clause; a clause which gave unlimited power to a committee of the Association to ignore past Spiritualistic phenomena, and to guide and dogmatically fix the truth or untruth of future phenomena. My protest aroused attention, and the clause was "resolved" out of the principles. I could have assailed other clauses, I did not, as they were minor; but I had letters from vice-presidents and council, declaring the "nonsense" and "absurdity" of other portions of the "principles and purposes" that were to guide the future of the Association.

The Association has a right to exist; but its structural errors have effectually prevented many men whose names are household words amongst Spiritualists, from being connected with it. Therefore the words "British National" are untrue, misleading, and ought to be "resolved" out.

Dr. Gully objects to a leader, yet he has led off an eight column attack against Howitt, Jones, Hall, Atkinson, and Burns, men not members of the Association, men second to none in the amount of work done to advance Spiritualism—before he was duly authorised by an Association “order in council.” I consider myself a leader, not *the* leader. Some twenty years ago, Howitt, Wilkinson, Coleman, and Jones were the only Spiritualists in England bold enough to unflinchingly face the scorn, the derision of the nation. Each placed by a higher power, I believe, in a position suited to his characteristics, fought, worked and toiled with Mr. D. D. Home, till Spiritualism has become a power in the empire; we therefore were and are leaders of Spiritualists.

While Dr. Gully was piling wet sheets on his patients in Malvern, we in London were piling facts on facts on the impatient public. He gained gold, we gained abuse. The Lord of the heavens and earth has spared the five—Home, Howitt, Wilkinson, Coleman, and Jones to this, the twentieth year, to fulfil their mission. We thank Him for using us as His instruments. Our hearts beat as warmly as at first; but our hair is whiter, our hands less steady, we are preparing for our change; a few months longer it will continue to be onward, and then, thank God, it will be upward.

J. ENMORE JONES.

Enmore Park, South Norwood, S.E.

OFFICES FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

SIR,—It may interest your readers to know that several additions were made to the guarantee fund of the British National Association at the *soirée* on Thursday evening, including handsome contributions from Dr. Gully and from Mr. Chas. Blackburn.

In the opinions of several of the members of the Council and of the Offices Committee, it will be perfectly legitimate for the Association itself to become a subscriber, of, say, £50 to the guarantee fund; because when offices are taken many expenses which now come out of the general income will be altogether saved.

If the Council should take this view at its meeting on Monday next, and if in the meantime a very few more who have not yet joined in this effort will kindly signify their intention of doing so, the Association will be in a position at once to take the best premises it can meet with.

Those who have not assisted in the actual work connected with the secretaryship and the correspondence of the Association do not know how much the present state of things militates against its progress, and against the proper present management of its affairs.

EDWD. T. BENNETT,
Secretary to the Offices Committee.

Betchworth, Dec. 7th.

SUICIDE APPARENTLY CAUSED BY A VISION.

SIR,—Permit me to call the attention of your numerous readers to the following report, from the *Hackney Guardian*, of the 2nd inst., about the suicide of a young woman in Clapton Pond. It would seem from the fact of her seeing an apparition of a young man, and her apparent ignorance of Spiritualism, she must have been terrified to such an extent as to prompt self-destruction. If she had been acquainted with the facts and bearings of Spiritualism, it is scarcely doubtful that, instead of destroying herself, she would have offered the spirit means of communication, to their joint advantage.

In any case, it appears to me one of those cases which require consideration on the part of Spiritualists.

“On Monday afternoon, Mr. Humphreys held an inquest at the Three Cranes Tavern, Mare-street, Hackney, touching the death of Emma Nelson, aged 24 years, who was found drowned in Clapton Pond, on Thursday last.

“Mr. Richard Philips, carrying on business as a warehouseman in the City, and residing at 415, Mare-street, Hackney, deposed that deceased had been a domestic servant in his family for the past five months. He believed that she had neither relatives nor parents, and had come to his service from Stockport, he having received a reference from Mrs. Ferguson, in the Sandringham-road, Dalston. For some time past he had noticed her to be in a desponding state of mind. A month ago she gave notice to leave, stating that she was horrified at seeing a young man she had known some years previously standing by her bedside of a night. On Thursday evening at six o'clock, she left the house saying that she was going to Mrs. Thompson's registry office, Dalston-lane, after another situation, but she never again returned.

“Elizabeth Kerridge, 4, Pear-tree-place, Hackney, said that

at a quarter to seven o'clock on Thursday, night, when passing Clapton Pond she heard a voice proceeding from the water, crying, ‘Save me, help me!’ Witness looked over the railing and said ‘I cannot,’ but she called a young man to her assistance who was quickly followed by a police officer, who said, ‘Hollo, how did you come there?’ to which she made no reply. He then hastily left the spot and witness remained there for one hour and a quarter before the body was recovered.

“P.C. William Deaton, 97 N, the constable in question, stated that the last witness informed him that she had heard cries proceeding from the middle of the pond, and he at once proceeded to the White Hart stables, for the purpose of getting a rope, but on his return he found that a brother constable had recovered the body, which was 24 yards from the path. There was no way for the deceased to have got into the water except by getting over the railings.

“The jury returned a verdict of suicide while in an unsound state of mind.”

A CONSTANT READER.

Hackney, December 2nd, 1874.

MRS. FRIEHOOLD'S MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—Permit me to occupy a brief space in *The Spiritualist*, by reporting a *seance* which took place at our rooms on 24th inst. Mrs. Friehold was the medium. She receives nothing for her services, so is a non-professional medium. She is frequently unwell; this, coupled with the fact that strangers often expect great things at the *seances*, necessitates at times her absence. On the 24th we had about twenty persons present, strangers and friends, quite a mixed company. The first spirit who communicated (by raps) was a dear young friend, “Bertha Bowes,” now about nineteen years of age, who passed from earth-life nine years ago. We have communicated with her for nearly four years, weekly, through various mediums and in divers ways. Whenever, wherever, or through whatever medium she speaks by these telegraphic raps, they are always the same gentle, subdued kind of sounds. On this particular evening, she intelligently answered several questions, mental and otherwise; while these questions were being answered, the medium, who is clairvoyant, saw her distinctly, standing close by myself; she minutely described her features and appearance, and said she was smiling, and apparently in conversation with a beloved child of mine of about the same age, who is in spirit life, and in whose company Bertha is generally found when visits are made at our circle; they seem much attached to each other, and always exceedingly happy. Sometimes, when I have told her I could not feel her spirit-touch, she has almost immediately entranced the medium,—frequently her mother, who is an excellent medium,—and thumped me on the back, asking if I could feel *that!* An old lady was also seen and described, standing close to a stranger present, whom he recognized as his mother. Other spirit friends were seen more or less distinctly. An aunt of the medium communicated by raps, which are on all occasions much louder than Bertha's. She also controlled the medium, and spoke a few words of encouragement to the friends present, wishing us to persevere in making “this great truth known to all.”

A stranger next assumed control, and spoke distinctly, and at some length, but in a sad melancholy strain; said she was very unhappy, that her life here had not been a moral one; her name was “Ruth,” and she had died at No. 5, — street; she mentioned the cause of her death, all of which we have since ascertained to be quite correct. This poor unhappy one begged our sympathy and our prayers, and said she would visit us again; she assured us that nothing but a good life here would avail us in the great beyond. What a lesson this! Let us hope there are but few who can hear one “speaking from the dead,” without being “persuaded” to live a righteous life. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

The week before, I am happy to inform you we had Dr. Monk at our circle, and should like to have him again. That *seance* I have reported in *The Medium*, therefore need not repeat it here.

C. S. HUNT.

Seance Rooms, 6, Blandford-street,
Baker-street, Nov. 30th.

THE LATE SUNDAY EVENING SERVICES AT MARYLEBONE.

SIR,—The committee have much pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of £1 from “D. K.,” for which they heartily thank him, thus reducing the loss to £2 11s. 6d. We shall be pleased to hear from any wishing to assist us in clearing off this debt.

37, Wyndham-street, Bryanston-square, W. C. WHITE.

PRIVATE SEANCES IN MANCHESTER.

SIR,—In glancing back at the numerous remarkable manifestations we had last year, both at the residence of the medium and at my own, my eye rests with particular pleasure and fondness upon an evening when the manifestations were not, as in most cases, interrupted by long wearisome pauses, but came like a lovely garland, not even allowing an interval in which to compare the incidents with acquired notions of natural laws, but absorbing all reflections in continuous delight. We used to call this *seance* "the wandering rosebud." We were four, and assembled in my room, the medium, Mrs. Thatcher, myself, and a friend, who came with a pretty little rosebud in his coat, which attracted my notice with a touch of envy I confess. He took his seat opposite me between the ladies. The gas being extinguished, there came quick raps at once. "Communicate?" I asked. "No." "Strike the match?" "Yes." Instantly I obeyed, we looked round searchingly, in vain, and considered ourselves "sold," when, lo! the little flower was in my coat, neatly fixed in the button-hole, on the left side, the medium sitting on the right. "This is quick handiwork!" we exclaimed. Gas out again, but raps immediately. Little flower gone, but where? In searching, it dropped from the head of the medium. It may be time to state that our hands were firmly joined. I put it back again on the head of the medium, and with the same rapidity it went finally to Mrs. Thatcher, who would not give up the little traveller, but kept it. Then we fun on a slip of paper, in direct writing—"Such fun! Such fun! Bertie." Scarcely was the gas out again, when the raps invited me to the match-box, which I had placed previously close by, but it was gone, not to be felt on the whole table. "This is too bad," I said; "you're not leaving some to strike a light!" Then something dropped, and I picked up a match close before me and lit the gas. But where was the match-box? About ten feet away. It was on the carpet, close to the leg of a chair. The quickness of the rosebud was outdone by the fiery match-box. We sat down again in proper order, and our intense mirth and hearty laughter were soon mixed with strange raps, different to the usual kind. "Is there a new friend?" I asked. "Yes." By the alphabet it was spelt, "*Sister of Bertie—Lily.*" After receiving and welcoming our new guest with expressions of unaffected delight, a volley of the two different raps drowned for a while our attempts at further questioning.

We then, after a pause, prepared for the second part. The cabinet was a simple calico curtain with an aperture, and open on both sides. We were, as usual, prepared to see the apparition of Bertie, and as we could not help receiving her always with a kind of solemnity and awe, our previous humorous excitement subsided into a passive frame of mind; therefore how to describe the effect, when suddenly there appeared two heads, pushing each other gleefully to give us the best view! Then, to make sure of breaking the spell of our seriousness, they peeped out simultaneously at each side opening, playing hide-and-seek, until the medium came out of the trance. This most delightful *seance* lives vividly in our memories and the marvellous blending together of its single features took away the impression of the supernatural and transformed it into charming reality.

CHRISTIAN REIMERS.

2, Ducie Avenue, Oxford-road, Manchester.

MR. AND MRS. EVERITT IN HULL.

SIR,—Your readers will, I have no doubt, be interested to learn that Mr. T. Everitt and his estimable wife have been on a visit to Hull, and during their stay here gave two very successful *seances* at my house. You are familiar with the general character of the phenomena which take place through Mrs. Everitt's mediumship, and it is therefore unnecessary for me to particularise. The perfumes came in cool, refreshing wafts, the spirit lights were numerous and brilliant, and the voices were all that could be desired. Zippy and John Watt, however, were not the only spirits who spoke to us. At our first sitting, on Saturday, November 28th, the voice of a near and dear relative, who passed away some four years ago, was heard, first in whispers, and then more distinctly. Several of us were addressed by name, and words of admonition and encouragement were uttered. The spirit gave her name, and one of the persons present clairvoyantly saw and recognised her. Another deceased relative, of whom Mr. and Mrs. Everitt had never heard, manifested through raps, which were heard with sharp distinctness on the piano. The name was spelt out correctly, and this spirit was also recognised by the clairvoyant.

At our second *seance* on the following Wednesday evening, the spirit-friend who spoke to us on Saturday came again. His voice was much stronger (he did not use the tube), and he was able to converse much more freely than at first. He familiarly addressed each member of our family by name, and was particularly solicitous with regard to the welfare of all. One gentleman present got an excellent test from this spirit, who addressing him by name, asked "How is F—?" referring to our friend's little boy, whose name the medium had never heard mentioned. Another and I think still more extraordinary manifestation at this *seance* remains to be told. Raps were heard on the piano, and the same name was given as on Saturday; other and different raps were heard first on the floor, and then on the table, and another family name, unknown to Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, was given; the clairvoyant already referred to then saw and described a whole troupe of our spirit friends coming forward, and thereupon we heard a perfect volley of raps, some loud and distinct, and others so tiny as to be scarcely audible.

The spirit Zippy afterwards favoured us with an unusual and truly marvellous manifestation. After indulging in a little harmless banter with a friend, Zippy prevailed upon him to give a recitation. "*Excelsior*" was the piece selected, and the spirit took it up line by line, reciting it with far greater effect than did our friend in the flesh. The refrain, at first given by the spirit in full voice, and close at hand, receded from us as the piece progressed, and at the close "*Excelsior*" was heard, as it were, in the far distance. Indeed, Zippy's rendering of "*Excelsior*" produced on all who heard it a most thrilling effect, and will never be forgotten so long as memory lasts. Zippy also assisted with great pathos and emphasis in the recital of Longfellow's "*Psalm of Life*," taking up each line immediately on the first word being uttered. The spirit explained that when he heard the first word, he saw the entire line flash from the speaker's brain, and then was able to recite the words simultaneously with the friend "on this side."

To hear our departed friends address us with the direct voice, and for the two other friends to intimate their presence, and give their names by raps, was particularly gratifying, not only to ourselves, but also to Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, especially as the identity of the communicating spirits was further confirmed by the testimony of the seer, who saw and described, so as to be recognised, one of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt's spirit guides. Out of consideration for the persons concerned, I mention no names.

Now, here is a nut for the men of science to crack. Mrs. Everitt, holding hands with two friends, formed a chain in connection with an electro-magnetic battery, and at our request the spirits demonstrated that they had the power to arrest the current of electro-magnetism, so far, at least, as it affected Mrs. Everitt; for whilst a person on either side of her experienced the current in its full force, the medium felt no sensation whatever. The result was the same when Mrs. Everitt was connected with the battery alone. The spirits also, at our request, made Mrs. Everitt feel the shock in such strength as to be almost unbearable. If any of your readers have had a similar experience, I hope it will be made public, as this is the first instance I have met with of a spirit being able to make a medium insensible to an electric shock.* We were not holding a *seance* at the time the experiment was made.

I enclose my card for your personal satisfaction, but for the present I would only be known to your readers as E. D.
Hull, Dec. 5th, 1874.

DARLINGTON SPIRITUAL ASSOCIATION.—Mr. T. P. Hinde writes:—Sometimes we have interesting and instructive debates at our Sunday morning meetings. Three weeks ago Mr. W. Dixon read an excellent paper on "Woman's Love," which gave rise to a lengthy discussion, extending through the following Sunday morning; it was finally replied to by Mr. D. Richmond last Sunday morning; he endeavoured, with some success, to establish the fact that love in itself was treacherous if not guided by wisdom. The society has added to its comfort at meetings by throwing a wooden partition across to divide the otherwise large room into one large and one small room; in the latter we have placed a powerful stove, so it is now a comfortable room for *seances* as well as meetings. I like Baroness Vay's article very much.

* Battery power was recently applied to one of the materialised spirits at a *seance* of the Eddy Brothers, but the record in the *Religio-Philosophica Journal*, being either of a slipshod character, or written by a person ignorant of the vital points of the experiment, is valueless.—Ed.

MR. EVERITT IN THE PROVINCES.—Mr. T. Everitt writes from Hull, November 30th,—“I am glad Dr. Gully has answered so calmly and effectually those two or three who are opposed to national organisation without either rhyme or reason. All, without an exception, who have spoken about Mr. Howitt’s letters against national organisation, say they are illogical, and they express their surprise at the position he has taken. I may say that all the thinking men of the movement that I have come in contact with, when they have spoken of the National Association, are in favour of it, and before long we may expect to be united in one common bond for the good of our fellow-men; it will be a spectacle worthy of the imitation of all religious sects, to see millions of Spiritualists bound together without a creed and without a pope, for the sole purpose of spreading a knowledge of the glad tidings of man’s immortality. I believe one common platform is the aim of all connected with the National Association, or I would wash my hands of it, but here I find that I can work for the good of man with all my might, without having my private opinions interfered with. None are asked what they believe when they join the Association. There being no formula to subscribe to, persons of every shade of creed, no matter how great the contrast of their views, as Spiritualists feel the truth of the old adage that ‘union is strength.’ They can work with their fellow Spiritualists, in harmony and love for the good of all. I find that Spiritualism is making great head-way in the country. Wherever I have lectured I have had good audiences, perhaps because the discourses are free; hence we want more free lectures. We go to Leeds next Saturday, and then to Liverpool, getting home about the 15th or 16th of December.”

SEAL-SKIN JACKETS.—Except for a very short part of the year the seal lives to all intents and purposes on the open sea. But the female, when about to bring forth, seeks the shelter of the shore, where she suckles and watches her cubs until they are old enough to shift for themselves. At this time, wherever there are seals along the coast, large herds of them will be found from a quarter to half a mile inland. As soon as a herd is spied, the boats are manned, and the whole vessel’s crew, armed with bludgeons and axes, starts upon a “cutting-out expedition,” at the horrors of which humanity may well shudder. The only way to effectually kill a seal with completeness and despatch is by a heavy blow with a bludgeon, or a deep cut with an axe, so as either to crush or sever the nasal bones; and when the boats’ crews have got ashore an indiscriminate slaughter is commenced, the whole herd being often butchered before a single one can reach the water’s edge. The tumult and skurry of the attack over, the real work commences. The adult quarry is skinned with all possible haste, and as often as not with the life still in it. The cubs, who lie moaning and whinnying by the side of their dams, are knocked on the head if big enough to give their fur any value, and if too small to be worth the skinning are left without even the mercy of a *coup de grace*. Old seal hunters tell us—and we can well believe it—that it takes a man some time to get used to such cruel butchery, and that the half-human wailing of the little calves as they flop and roll about the mangled carcase of their mother is something that, until he is hardened to the work, will make his sleep uneasy at night. To put the thing in another shape, we may roughly say that the trim sealskin jacket of which its fair owner is so proud, which becomes her so well, and which keeps out the cold, represents some half-dozen dams who have more or less been skinned alive, while their little ones have been left to die in all the slow agony of starvation.—*Daily Telegraph*.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

VEGETARIAN.—Mouldy cheese consists of uncooked mushrooms (fungus), as a microscope will reveal; maggoty cheese consists of living animals uncooked, so eating it is much the same as eating uncooked earthworms. It is a mere matter of taste, which cheese you choose. If you object to uncooked animals do not breathe, for the dust floating in the air, which can always be revealed by a sunbeam passing across a dark cellar, is rich in animal life: you can, however, escape swallowing this by always shutting your mouth, breathing through your nose, and stopping the latter with cotton wool, to filter out the floating germs. The nose is a natural filter, and those who habitually shut their mouths and breathe through their noses, are much healthier than other people, all other conditions being equal; they are less liable to colds and to contagious diseases. Perhaps it is not well to inquire too deeply into these matters.—“With increase of knowledge there is increase of sorrow.”

A TRANCE LECTURE.—On Sunday evening a lecture on “Ministering Spirits” was delivered at Goswell Hall, Goswell-road, by Mrs. Bullock, under the influence of her spirit guides; Mr. Haxby presided. The entranced medium gave a detailed and minute Biblical description of angel visitants or ministering spirits; she appealed to those who placed their especial confidence in the Bible, calling it the “Word of God, &c.,” and asked if they indeed held the book so dear, why not seek out its spiritual realisation, and thereby adapt themselves to the principles recorded therein. The human family stood in need of salvation, salvation from ignorance and blindness now so prevalent, but the voice of truth and goodness was in its midst, and the medial powers of ancient days were still in existence. Men should depend more upon their own doings, and instead of seeking so much for wealth and place should strive more to do good; then would they receive the peace of God, the rich reward for the actions performed in earth life.

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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

SPIRITUALISM deserves investigation because within the last twenty years has found its way into all the civilised countries on the globe; it has also a literature of thousands of volumes and not a few periodicals.

The London Dialectical Society, Adam-street, Adelphi, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, Bart., M.P., appointed a Committee to investigate spiritual phenomena. The Committee was appointed on the 26th January, 1869, as follows:—

“H. G. Atkinson, Esq., F.G.S.; G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.; J. S. Berghelm, Esq., C.E.; H. R. Fox Bourne, Esq.; Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.; G. Fenton Cameron, Esq., M.D.; John Chapman, Esq., M.D.; Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D.; Charles R. Drysdale, Esq., M.D. D. H. Dyte, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Mrs. D. H. Dyte; James Edmunds, Esq., M.D.; Mrs. Edmunds, James Gaanon, Esq.; Grattan Geary, Esq.; Robert Hannah, Esq., F.G.S.; Jennor Gale Hillier, Esq.; Mrs. J. G. Hillier; Henry Jeffery, Esq.; Albert Kisch, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Joseph Maurice, Esq.; Isaac L. Meyers, Esq.; B. M. Moss, Esq.; Robert Quelch, Esq., C.E.; Thomas Reed, Esq.; C. Russell Roberts, Esq., Ph.D.; William Volkman, Esq.; Horace S. Yeomans, Esq.

“Professor Huxley and Mr. George Henry Lewes, to be invited to co-operate. Drs. Chapman and Drysdale and Mr. Fox Bourne declined to sit, and the following names were subsequently added to the Committee:—

“George Cary, Esq., B.A.; Edward W. Cox, Esq., Sergeant-at-law; William B. Gower, Esq.; H. D. Jencken, Esq., Barrister-at-law; J. H. Levy, Esq.; W. H. Swepston, Esq., Solicitor; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.; Josiah Webber, Esq.”

After inquiring into the subject for two years, the Committee issued its report, which, with the evidence, forms a bulky volume, published by Messrs. Longmans. Among other things this Committee reported:—

“1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls or the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.

“2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.

“3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.

One of the sub-committees of the Dialectical Society reported:—

“Your committee studiously avoided the employment of professional or paid mediums. All were members of the committee, persons of social position, of unimpeachable integrity, with no pecuniary object, having nothing to gain by deception, and everything to lose by detection of imposture.”

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

INQUIRING into Spiritualism should begin by forming spirit circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or professional medium present. Should no results be obtained on the first occasion, try again with other sitters. One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household.

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is usually of no importance. Any table will do, just large enough to conveniently accommodate the sitters. The removal of a hand from the table for a few seconds does no harm, but when one of the sitters breaks the circle by leaving the table it sometimes, but not always, very considerably delays the manifestations.

3. Before the sitting begins, place some pointed lead-pencils and some sheets of clean writing paper on the table, to write down any communications that may be obtained.

4. People who do not like each other should not sit in the same circle, for such a want of harmony tends to prevent manifestations, except with well-developed physical mediums; it is not yet known why. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is a weakening influence.

5. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle gives the higher spirits more power to come to the circle, and makes it more difficult for the lower spirits to get near.

6. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tiltings or raps.

7. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion, let one person only speak, and talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean “Yes,” one means “No,” and two mean “Doubtful,” and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three signals be given in answer, then say, “If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?” Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

8. Afterwards the question should be put, “Are we sitting in the right order to get the best manifestations?” Probably some members of the circle will then be told to change seats with each other, and the signals will be afterwards strengthened. Next ask, “Who is the medium?” When spirits come asserting themselves to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as spirits out of the body have all the virtues and all the failings of spirits in the body.

9. A powerful physical medium is usually a person of an impulsive, affectionate, and genial nature, and very sensitive to mesmeric influences. The majority of media are ladies.

The best manifestations are obtained when the medium and all the members of the circle are strongly bound together by the affections, and are thoroughly comfortable and happy; the manifestations are born of the spirit, and shrink somewhat from the lower mental influences of earth. Family circles, with no strangers present, are usually the best.

Possibly at the first sitting of a circle symptoms of other forms of mediumship than tilts or raps may make their appearance.

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