

# The Spiritualist

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February, 1875.

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## Review.

*The Unseen Universe; or, Physical Speculations on a Future State.* London: Macmillan and Co. 1875.

A STRONG impression prevails among Scotch readers of this journal that this thoughtful book has been written by Spiritualists in disguise, for so much of the work as has been quoted in a review in the *Scotsman* sets forth all the first principles of Spiritualism, adulterated with a little dogmatic theology. But the authors are not Spiritualists, and it will be breaking no confidence to state that the *Athenæum* has published that the book is written by two fellows of the Royal Society—Dr. Balfour Stewart, of Manchester, and Mr. P. G. Tait, Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh.

There is a tendency in the human mind not to rest upon the things of earth, but to attempt to pierce the mystery which lies beyond the shadowy veil cutting off the view of the unseen world. The statesman, the philosopher, the poet, those who have achieved greatness and attained the honourable elevation they sought in this life, see the real emptiness of those baubles for which most men strive, so they turn aside from the things of time to consider the things of eternity, and to speculate upon the mystery of existence. Consequently Professor Huxley quits for a time the stones and bones of past ages to give a casting vote at the Royal Institution against materialism, and in favour of the idealism of Berkeley; Professor Tyndall quits his batteries and lanterns to speculate at Belfast upon the origin and destiny of man, and the press now teems with books written under impulses of the same kind. Dr. Balfour Stewart, who has stepped aside from the study of physics to take part in writing the present book, is Professor of Natural Philosophy at Owen's College, Manchester. He was formerly Superintendent of the British Association Observatory at Kew; he has written standard scientific books for Oxford University, and all his life has been a deep and earnest student of the works of nature, from which labour he has never turned aside either in search of social precedence or worldly gain. Both upon its own merits and the respect felt for its authors by the scientific world, the book now before us will command widespread attention.

Having no desire to be captious, stress will not be laid by us upon the bull contained in the title of the book, except to remark that a "physical speculation" must be first cousin to an "imponderable weight." The book displays a deep knowledge of physical science, far too deep to be slighted by the intellectual world; and, on the other hand, it breathes true natural spirituality. Reasoning from a purely physical standpoint, the authors come to the conclusion that the visible universe must have been developed by an unseen power, because, if the living being is traced back to the primal germ assumed by the sceptical biologist,

or to the ultimate atom of the physicist, the question may yet be asked, whence came that germ, or whence came that atom? It is the old story of the Hindoo placing the world upon the back of a snake, and the snake upon the back of a tortoise, and the tortoise upon the back of an elephant, but having nothing left for the elephant to stand upon, the whole speculation fell to the ground for want of a foundation. The authors do well to admit the theories of materialists so far as they go, without denial, but to join issue with them over the facts lying at the boundaries of their knowledge.

Messrs. Tait and Stewart adopt the hypothesis of dissipation of energy. In the present solar system degradation of energy is seen in all directions. The evidence is strong that the sun is slowly cooling, and that the forces of nature are gradually sinking into a state of equilibrium in relation to each other. The authors argue that our visible universe was brought into existence in time by a creative act, or must have been developed out of a previously existing universe. The latter may still exist, and be destined to survive the wreck and ruin of the visible creation of the present. The authors speculate whether there may not be a something within man which survives the things of matter, and they raise the question whether the assumed interstellar ether does not constitute the bond of connection between the universe which is seen and that which is not seen. In this way do they furnish man with a spiritual body over which death has no power. They say:—

“Let us, therefore, begin by supposing that we possess a frame, or the rudiments of a frame, connecting us with the invisible universe, which we may call the spiritual body. Now, each thought that we think is accompanied by certain molecular motions and displacements in the brain, and parts of these, let us allow, are in some way stored up in that organ, so as to produce our material or physical memory. Other parts of these motions are, however, communicated to the spiritual or invisible body, and are there stored up, forming a memory which may be made use of when that body is free to exercise its functions. Again, one of the arguments which proves the existence of the invisible universe demands that it shall be full of energy when the present universe is defunct. We can, therefore, very well imagine that after death, when the spiritual body is free to exercise its functions, it may be replete with energy, and have eminently the power of action in the present, retaining also, as we have shown above, a hold upon the past, inasmuch as the memory of past events has been stored up in it, and thus preserving the two essential requisities of a continuous intelligent existence.”

The men who could pen such a sentence as this were very naturally supposed by the Scotch readers of these pages to be Spiritualists, the only difference between the authors and Spiritualists being that we are able to prove by experiment the position which they have taken up, whereas they have no better foundation to rest upon than hazy speculations evolved in part from their own inner consciousness. They have departed from the principles laid down by Bacon, whilst Spiritualists are walking in the experimental and orthodox paths of science so far as this subject is concerned.

The facts of Spiritualism, which alone can prove the position taken up by the authors, are dealt with in a summary fashion in five short paragraphs of the book now under notice. They begin by calling these facts “pretensions,” and then go on to assert that the spirits described in the Scriptures are represented as appearing to men unprepared to receive them, and consequently were attested by unbiassed witnesses, the most glaring case of the kind narrated in the Bible, namely, that of the appearance of Samuel in the presence of the witch of

Endor having unaccountably escaped their attention. On the other hand, they say that the manifestations recorded by Spiritualists take place, as a rule, in insufficient light or in total darkness, and in the presence of those who are in a state of mental excitement. If our two authors have read anything at all about Spiritualism, we should suppose they have read the works of their brother fellow of the Royal Society, Mr. W. Crookes. If so, they will see that he records that he has photographed materialised spirits by the electric light; probably they mean this method of illumination when they say ‘insufficient light or total darkness.’ As to the other statement, that the manifestations take place in the presence of persons who are in a state of mental excitement, all that can be said is, that we have been present when Dr. Balfour Stewart has tried experiments at Kew with his rotating disc in vacuo; we have also been present when Mr. Crookes tried some of his experiments with materialised spirits, and our testimony is that Dr. Balfour Stewart was rather the more excited experimentalist of the two. Mr. Crookes had the pressure of popular abuse and ignorance to work against, consequently was all the more cool and cautious in making his experiments.

Further, if certain manifestations—especially those with partially developed mediums—are favoured by subdued light, is that a reason that they are not to be investigated? If night favours astronomical observations, is that a reason why stellar phenomena should be studied only by daylight? To be consistent, Messrs. Stewart and Tait should send a circular to all the astronomical observatories in the kingdom, warning their managers to make no observations except in broad daylight, and arguing that anything seen by an astronomer who prepares himself to observe the same shall be set on one side as unworthy of credit. For thus say our two philosophers: “We should not be disposed to credit any communication from the world of spirits that was not made in open daylight, and to those unprepared to receive it and therefore unprejudiced.”

And what is the conclusion of these two intelligent philosophers about Spiritualism? They “do not hesitate,” they say, “to regard these pretended manifestations as having no objective reality.” Now it so happens that the Committee of the Dialectical Society, consisting of educated professional men,—lawyers, architects, literary men, and men of science,—after investigating the phenomena for two years, reported that they had an objective reality. Further, the colleague of Messrs. Tait and Stewart, Mr. Crookes, has in his book registered the vibrations of the raps and of the physical forces at work, by means of self-recording instruments constructed on the same principle as those used by Dr. Stewart at Kew to automatically register magnetic variations; consequently the position assumed by our two authors is virtually that of giving a rude denial to the testimony of truthful people. If the Royal Society told Dr. Stewart that his experiments with his rotating disc never took place, but were a dream, and that the experiments of Professor Tait on the thermo-conductivity of metals had no objective reality, but were the result of visions produced by dinners of a less abstemious character than those which enlivened the members of the British Association at Edinburgh, they would both be treated as fairly and honourably as they have treated Spiritualism; but there would be this difference between the two cases—the proved results of their experiments would be of small importance to the

world, whereas the facts of Spiritualism prove that man has a life hereafter; they also affect the religious opinions as well as the daily life of every member of the human race.

Swedenborg was one of the greatest mediums of modern times, and at the hands of the two gentlemen who have written this book he fares very little better than Spiritualists. The authors say—"Had Swedenborg confined himself to the invisible world, it would have been very difficult to prove him the subject of a delusion, but when he visits the planets and describes their inhabitants, he enters at once upon dangerous ground." They then go on to show the almost conclusive evidence that Swedenborg was wrong in some of his revelations about the planets, just as this journal has shown that the revelations about the physical universe given through trance mediums can in most cases be proved to be not only erroneous but sometimes the very reverse of truth. Granting all this, why do not Messrs. Stewart and Tait carry out their own line of argument so as to deal fairly and honourably with Swedenborg? If they appeal to erroneous revelations about physical facts, why do they not also call attention to those which were not erroneous? Take the well-known fact, printed in nearly every book about Swedenborg, how on the 19th of July, 1759, the seer landed at Gottenburg, and at six o'clock in the afternoon told no less a person than the philosopher Kant that a dangerous fire had broken out in Stockholm and was spreading fast. Stockholm is 300 miles from Gottenburg, and in those days there were no telegraphs. Swedenborg further said that the house of one of his friends whom he named was in ashes, and that his own home was in danger. At eight o'clock he exclaimed, "Thank God, the fire is extinguished the third door from my house." All this afterwards proved to be true. Why do not Messrs. Stewart and Tait deal fairly with the facts, and not, like sharp lawyers, pick out those only which serve their purpose? By what right also do the authors brow-beat witnesses by intimating that self-recording instruments made on the same principle as those used by Dr. Stewart himself at Kew did not register objective realities, but dreams? By what right does Dr. Stewart say by implication that his near neighbour, Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Parkfield, Didsbury, Manchester, was not recording an objective reality when he stated in these pages that a tape knotted round the neck of Mrs. Corner (Florence Cook), and sealed at the neck with a signet ring, was removed at a *seance* in the house of Mr. Wm. Crookes without being cut, or the knots or seals broken, although the loop of the tape fitted close to the neck and would not pass over the head of the medium? He may argue that the admission of such a fact would put mankind into a state of intellectual confusion, whereas the argument should be that it would put *him* into a state of intellectual confusion because he does not yet know all the laws of nature. Would not the facts of electric telegraphy put a savage into a state of intellectual confusion? If so, does that prove that electric telegraphs have no objective reality? Dr. Stewart has written much and thought more about the impenetrability of matter, yet when a practical illustration bearing upon this all-important subject is published, he throws cold water upon the witnesses, and gives unreliable information about such phenomena to the public, in one of the most important books he ever published in his life. The truth of the matter, in all probability, is, that the two pages about Spiritualism in

the work before us were written by Professor Tait, and not by Dr. Balfour Stewart. The fairest and most unbiassed article ever written by any man who had not inquired into Spiritualism was that penned by Dr. Stewart, and published in *Nature* at the time when the British Association met at Edinburgh. Yet two pages in the present book are written in direct opposition to the spirit permeating that article, hence those pages were in all probability written by Professor Tait. Nor is it a small thing that the authorship of the calumny should be fixed upon the right person. Although in the present day whilst Spiritualism is unpopular (except in well-informed and highly intellectual circles) applause may be gained from the ignorant by condemning its truths, a book by such intelligent men will also have to be judged in the light of history when we actors in the present drama shall have departed into the unseen world. In that future time the crude speculations in the book before us will be explained by solved problems, and the writers of that day will tell how Messrs. Stewart and Tait thrust aside the facts which would have proved the immortality of man, how they misrepresented truth to the general public, how they took up the position of a half-developed Galileo who pleaded that the earth rotated upon its axis, but who argued that the telescope and other instruments which could prove the same were delusions and snares, and who further asserted that the phenomena of the heavens which the alleged telescope revealed had no objective reality. Messrs. Stewart and Tait have never inquired into Spiritualism for themselves; they are much in the position of the professor of philosophy at Pisa who refused to look through the telescope of Galileo, but most learnedly argued that the things revealed by his telescope had no actual existence.

Throughout this book, by a process of pure reasoning, based upon the knowledge of the authors of the nature of the physical universe, certain true conclusions are arrived at in relation to the spirit world, the only thing necessary to clinch the arguments being some of the proved truths of Spiritualism. For instance, they say that some of the passages in Scripture must be regarded as figurative, and they add, "May they not be descriptions of what takes place in the unseen universe brought home to our minds by means of perfectly true comparisons and things of this universe which they most resemble?" The truth of this idea has long been practically ascertained by Spiritualists, and has led to long discussions on the symbolical nature of spirit writings and spirit drawings. In Mrs. De Morgan's book, *From Matter to Spirit*, published by Longmans, attention is called to different spirit drawings, all teaching the same truth through varying symbols. Again the authors say: "We cannot easily agree with those who would limit the existence of evil to the present world." This again is well known in Spiritualism to be a proved truth, for all kinds and conditions of spirits put in an appearance, some of the highest greatness and goodness, whilst others are of the lowest type.

On page 163, speaking of the human spirit, they say: "Even if trammelled by the grossest substance, we might expect that at least on rare occasions it should somehow manifest itself." Here, then, they state what their theory demands, and what the facts of Spiritualism alone can prove. They argue that there must be a spirit within man, and that this survives the dissolution of the physical body, yet proclaim that the phenomena of Spiritualism have no objective reality,

quite forgetting that on page 25 they admit that St. Paul once saw a ghost, and that he attached much importance to this proof of the possibility of resurrection. Now, St. Paul must have seen this spirit by one of two methods: either he became clairvoyant and saw with spiritual vision, in which case clairvoyance is a truth, or the spirit materialised itself by some such method as that now common in London. Without one or the other of these processes, both known to Spiritualists to be realities, St. Paul could not have seen the spirit; yet the only methods by which he could have seen the apparition are denied to exist by the authors of the book before us.

The question of miracles is also a difficult one for our two authors, especially when it is considered that their utterances are to be criticised by the scientific world. They will not admit for a moment that Christ was above law, for He spoke of Himself and was spoken of by the apostles as bound in all respects by the law of the universe; so Messrs. Stewart and Tait fall back with some modification upon the old explanation of the action of Mr. Babbage's calculating machine, which, after having worked for a long time by a particular method of procedure, suddenly manifested a single breach in its method, and then resumed for ever afterwards its original movement. This is not the method by which men of science usually deal with the facts of the physical universe. They usually verify or throw aside the assertions of tradition by bringing to bear upon them the more general knowledge of today. The laws which produced the true spiritual phenomena recorded in the Bible are at work now. The influences which produced the hand-writing upon the wall at Belshazzar's feast are equally potent at the present day, materialised spirit hands which do direct spirit writing being common enough. Yet our authors accept without question traditionary records, and deny the reality of the same facts when they now occur in the presence of their most intimate friends.

Towards the close of the book the authors say:—

"The truth is, that science and religion neither are nor can be two fields of knowledge with no possible communication between them. Such an hypothesis is simply absurd. There is undoubtedly an avenue leading from the one to the other, but this avenue is through the unseen universe, and unfortunately it has been walled up and ticketed, 'No road this way,' professedly alike in the name of science at one end and in the name of religion at the other."

Most of the scientific opinions about the spiritual nature of man expressed in the book will be proved hereafter to be true, but proved only by the facts of Spiritualism. One reason why the authors cannot prove their position at present is that they have unfortunately walled up the avenue to the unseen universe, and virtually ticketed it—"No road this way: (Signed) STEWART and TAIT." The book might be made a very good one if some intelligent Spiritualist would revise it, beginning by cutting out the few pages about Spiritualism and Swedenborgianism, by adding a chapter about the philosophy of Berkeley, by inserting observed facts where the authors seek to prove their points by metaphysical speculations, and by ruling the far-fetched "calculating machine" argument out of court, substituting the ordinary course of nature and the usual scientific method of dealing with traditionary accounts of real phenomena. The book should then be rechristened "The Physical Aspects of the Phenomena of Spiritualism," and would be a valuable addition to the literature of the movement.

#### CURIOUS PHASES OF WITCHCRAFT.

"A chronicle  
Of strange, and secret, and forgotten things."  
Shelley.

THE intelligence styling itself "Imperator" has intimated in these pages that there have been times and seasons in history when the millions of spiritual creatures that walk the earth unseen, ordinarily, both when we wake and we sleep, have through unknown causes been permitted to draw nearer to human kind, manifest themselves more palpably, and interfere more intimately in mortal affairs. Such periods are mystically referred to by the most transcendental author of this century, reflecting the secret love of Platonic ages—

Unknown—albeit lying near—  
To men the path to the demon sphere;  
And they that swiftly come and go,  
Leave no track on the heavenly snow.  
Sometimes the airy synod bends,  
And the mighty choir descends,  
And the brains of men thenceforth,  
In crowded and in still resorts,  
Teem with unwonted thoughts.  
When close above their heads  
The potent plain of demons spreads;  
Stands to each human soul its own,  
For watch, and word, and furtherance  
In the shares of Nature's dance.

These ideas present themselves in the earliest human records, run through the primeval mythologies, and enter under many shapes into the traditions and superstitions of almost every race. In the beginning of days it is written that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. This, it is intimated, led to immeasurable evil and wickedness. It were idle to speculate too curiously on the condition of those dim inconceivably distant ages, of which Egyptian papyri and Babylonian cylinders are but now disclosing some hint. Some think there are traces yet on earth of great and long-continued civilisations that arose when her surface presented other features and configurations of sea and land than now. In desert countries there are mighty ruins and monuments of human toil, for which even tradition has no rumour, and vestiges of the long-drowned Atlantis may possibly yet be recognised above the waves. Cloud-capt towers, gorgeous palaces and states, and all that inherited and made them—none can tell how great—may have dissolved and left no track behind; and none can say how close the "demon sphere" and the "sons of God" may have stood to those unknown generations.

But in the first dim light of history the idea and belief in the possibility of close communion between the inhabitants of the earthly and spiritual worlds is found prevalent—such communion as Genesis describes. All know how much of the Greek religion and worship was based on the intercourse of gods and mortals; the heroes and semi-divine personages, around whom the most glorious poetry in the world has crystallised, were the offspring of the gods by mortals. The Greek mind saw nothing strange in the spiritual inhabitants of the Olympian sphere seeking the daughters of men, nor in children springing from such union. Men pre-eminently great were indeed certain to have an origin ascribed to superhuman parentage. Alexander of Macedon claimed Jupiter for his sire. Plato was reputed the child of Apollo, born of the virgin Perictione. Who can surmise in what events, or traditions of events, reaching backwards—perhaps to the

unknown prehistoric times, perhaps of nearer date—such beliefs had their root and warrant.

Such ideas, however, seem confined to the Aryan and Semitic races, and to be strange to the Red Men of America and the black nations of Africa. In India and Scandinavia, no less than in old Greece, sages and heroes sprang from the gods, but a strange transmutation has passed over European conceptions since the triumph of Christianity. As is ever the case, the bright deities of the old religions become the hideous fiends and demons of the new. The solemn oracles and mysteries that stood for the highest national ceremonials shrank and darkened into witchcraft and necromancy, practised by the lowest, most ignorant classes, and commerce with Satan and evil spirits took the place of the loves of the "sons of God" with mortal women. For more than a century Europe has agreed to look upon witchcraft as a huge delusion, the result of popular and scientific ignorance, and to point to the records of witch trials with pity and a sense of humiliation that such follies and cruelties could have been countenanced by the best understandings of the day. It does not seem improbable that the immense records of witchcraft and trials connected with it, existing all over Europe, may be reopened and scanned with different eyes and conclusions. Jean Paul Richter remarks that "ordinary minds make everything in the trials of witchcraft to be the work of imagination. But he who has read many such trials finds that to be impossible," and modern spiritualistic experience throws a strange and startling light upon those dismal records. Preternatural strength and alteration of weights are frequent features, and when to-day we hear of baby mediums, some explanation, though little excuse, may be offered for what has always seemed the incredible barbarity of burning children as witches. One feature runs through all these trials: intercourse between witches and Satan, or the imps he sent, was always assumed and generally admitted, indeed, as the seal and completion of their initiation. Moreover, the offspring of such intercourse were not unfrequent—sometimes Calibans, "oafs," deformed, malignant wretches; sometimes persons of distinguished beauty and genius. Doctor Martin Luther relates in his *Table-talk* that he personally knew well one of these "devil's children," and evidently saw nothing wild or incredible in the idea. In the *Lady of the Lake* the weird grisly priest Brian the Hermit was of no mortal parentage; strange tales were told of his birth—how his mother had watched a midnight fold by an ancient battle-field covered with the bones of men, and the "spectre's child" that was born, beheld the future, and was familiar with the disembodied world. The literature of two or three centuries ago is full of popular accounts of famous witches and "wise women," who would now very probably be ranked as very powerful mediums. The names of several still linger in popular remembrance. To select one—"Mother Shipton" now only suggests a bent old woman with a steeple-hat and nose and chin meeting together; perhaps to Londoners some further notion of a favourite inn. She seems however to have been a woman of extraordinary spiritualistic powers. A curious tract printed at London in 1686, relates that she was born in Yorkshire, and, "as the common story is, that she never had any father of human race or mortal wight, but was begot (as the great Welsh Prophet Merlin was of old) by the Phantasm of Apollo or some wanton aërial demon, in

manner following:—Her mother Agatha being left an orphan about the age of sixteen, and very poor, was once upon a time sitting bemoaning herself on a shady bank by the highway side, when this spirit appeared to her in the shape of a handsome young man, tempted her, and prevailed so far as to gain her. He was as cold as ice or snow." [A similar statement was very generally made in the witchcraft trials.] "From this time forth she was commonly once a day visited by her hellish gallant, and never wanted money." The tract goes on to relate how Mother Shipton was born, and was christened by the name of Ursula by the Abbot of Beverley, how her mother becoming sensible of her evil course retired to a convent; how as the child grew up it was often visited by the fiend its father, and performed many amazing exploits and manifestations. The tract contains a list of her most notable prophecies, and states that "she was advised with by people of the greatest quality," amongst them Cardinal Wolsey, of whom she prophesied that he should never come to York; and indeed, when within eight miles of it, he was suddenly recalled by the king, and died at Leicester. She also foretold the Great Fire of London, many events of the Reformation, the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., and the execution of Charles I. Luckily for herself she lived before the times of the witch-terror, and appears rather to have been regarded as an oracle. At the age of seventy-three she foretold the day of her death, and at the hour predicted lay down on her bed and died. This remarkable woman left an abiding impression on the popular remembrance. Even now a little day-flying moth, common next month in hay-fields, the dark markings on whose wings present something like the profile of a face with hooked nose and chin, is known to the keen working insect-hunters of Spital-fields and the East-end as the "Mother Shipton." The idea of such unearthly connections has never quite faded away. William of Malmesbury has a story truly mediæval in its wildness, how a young man of Rome, wealthy and noble, having newly married a wife and given a grand banquet, did after the feast propose a game at ball, and taking off his finger his betrothed ring put it upon that of a brazen statue of Venus which chanced to be standing near. After the game he went for it but found the finger of the statue, that before was straight, bent round into the palm of the hand, and that his ring could not be got away. Not liking to say anything, he went away, and returned at night with his servants, intending to break the hand, but to his amazement found the finger straightened again, and his ring gone. In confusion he returned to the bridal chamber, but on lying down he felt something like a dense cloud tumbling about, something that could be felt, but not seen; and also heard a voice that said, "Stay with me, for thou hast exposed me this day! I am Venus, on whose finger thou didst put thy ring: I have got it, and will not give it back." He, astounded, dared not reply, and spent a sleepless night. In his *Earthly Paradise*, Mr. W. Morris has told this strange story at length, as he only can tell it; and in *The Ring given to Venus* the reader may learn by what terrible and perilous means the young man was delivered from his unwelcome visitant and recovered his ring.

These marvellous old stories may perhaps be read with different thoughts to what they would have awakened twenty years ago. "Imperator" asserts that the present is one of those epochs of special spiritual

activity for which the mind of man may be hoped to be better prepared than in days when popular ignorance and terror could only be expressed in witch-burnings and murderous violence; though he warns us "the full time is not yet."

Finally, to show how the notion dealt with in this paper still exists and is familiar to other races in distant lands, the following extract from an account of village superstitions in Southern India, written by a native in the present year, is subjoined, quite as wild and grotesque as anything mediæval:—"A few demons are so voracious that they snatch up with avidity balls of rice and curry thrown into the air; some have human mistresses and concubines, and even outrage the modesty of their occasional fair worshippers. At Bodinaikenu, in the Madura District, a certain Chetty bought of a magician a Malabar demon, for Rs. 90, it is said; but ere a day had passed since the transfer, the undutiful spirit fell in love with his master's wife, and succeeded in its nefarious purpose. A pious Hindoo assures me that the woman still lives, leading a very unhappy life with the demon, the husband being long dead and gone." This would be an aspect, undreamt of by Coleridge, of "Woman waiting for her demon lover." X.

#### MRS. HARDY'S MEDIUMSHIP.

BY J. N. T. MARTHEZE.

As Mrs. Hardy has just arrived in London, I feel it my duty to publish what I witnessed two years ago through her mediumship. As a clairvoyant, she gave me several tests; for instance, she described with all particulars, the death of a little brother of mine, of whom of course she could never have heard by any ordinary means. As to physical manifestations, those given through her mediumship are presented so free from all complicated conditions as to possess a peculiar interest, and to give good evidence to those who witness them.

A lady of my acquaintance told me some particulars of manifestations which she had witnessed through Mrs. Hardy's mediumship, in which a spirit dog appeared to be the producer of some of the effects. But she did not give me all the details.

Occasionally through Mrs. Hardy's mediumship, the gas from some of the burners has been put out without the flames from the other burners being affected; this has been done without any motion of the taps, and the two sets of burners were supplied from the same main pipes. The same evening, the spirits put out the flames which were burning during this experiment, whilst those they had extinguished on the first occasion continued to blaze.

70, Palmeira-square, Brighton.

DR. SEXTON AT GOSWELL HALL.—On Sunday evening last Dr. Sexton delivered a discourse on a subject which has recently received considerable attention amongst thinking persons—viz., "The Theory of Human Automatism." A good audience assembled, amongst whom, however, but few known Spiritualists could be noticed. The lecture was mainly devoted to a reply to the address of Professor Huxley, given at the British Association meeting at Belfast, and afterwards printed in *Nature* and the *Fortnightly Review*, and the paper of Professor Clifford, which also appeared in the latter periodical, on "Body and Mind." The audience seemed much pleased with the manner in which Dr. Sexton handled the subject, and expressed a wish that the lecture should be published. On Sunday next the subject of the discourse will be "Christian Morality and its Proposed Substitutes."

#### PERSECUTION OF M. LEYMARIE IN PARIS.

WE have received the following letter:—

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—In the absence of our friend Mr. Gledstones, I have promised him to keep you advised of the course of the medium question here—the Buguet-Firman-Leymarie business, now pending before the Juge d'Instruction, or examining magistrate, Monsieur de la Haye.

Buguet was, as your readers know, released from imprisonment nearly three weeks ago on the trifling bail of £40. That highly respectable and worthy gentleman, M. Leymarie, the editor of the *Revue Spirite*, was only released, on the same bail, the day before yesterday. Firman is still at the Mazas prison, nor has he yet been examined. He has, indeed, been once or twice before the judge in his cabinet (this French proceeding called the *instruction* being private), but it was only for a few moments of superficial questioning, in a language which he can neither speak nor understand more than very slightly. He has now been over a month in solitary confinement, made doubly solitary from his inability even to talk with his jailers. His wife has not yet been permitted to visit him, even with the impassable abyss between them of two iron gratings, and about five feet of space between the gratings. A kind intervention by Mr. Washburne, the American minister, obtained for the poor afflicted little lady the opportunity of embracing her husband for a moment on Thursday in the judge's presence. He is to be examined on Tuesday the 25th. It seems that he cannot be admitted to bail, nor allowed to see anybody, until after his examination. This seems to be the French way of breaking down the nerves and stubbornness of accused persons who, being innocent, have nothing to confess, and therefore decline to do so. The man who will only confess himself a rogue is let out early and easily; the one who wickedly will not because he cannot, is properly punished by being treated as though he were one, including the little attention of handcuffs. On Mr. Washburne's demand also, it has been promised that an interpreter shall be employed at his examination. Whether he will be admitted to bail or not afterwards, is far from certain. The judge has intimated that in this respect they deal differently with foreigners, who have less root in the country, than with resident French persons accused. You may also regard it as certain that they will all be ordered for trial, as the upshot of the *instruction*; and a very important trial it will be. Spiritualism, which has passed triumphantly through the severest ordeals of scientific trial before such authorities as Mr. Crookes and others, has now to undergo that of a *police correctionnelle* trial in France, before judges proud of their ignorance of it, and with a still bitterer clerical influence, believed by all the Spiritualists here to be behind the whole proceeding. The accused have, I fear, but a moderate chance of justice.

The position of Leymarie and Firman is complicated, and seriously endangered by a circumstance which I must mention with great regret. Buguet, the photographic medium, has turned round, and not only wholly repudiated mediumship, but accused the others of full cognisance of his imposture and trickery, so as to make them his pretended accomplices. He says that all his pictures were humbugs, and rather seems to claim credit for his cleverness in tricking the easily self-deluded Spiritualists. He even denies having ever pretended to be a medium. I refrain from any epithet in regard to him, or from selecting among the different motives to which this astonishing cause on his part is attributed. Some think he is acting under the influence of bribery from the Jesuits, whom they suppose to be the occult prompters of this crusade aiming to stamp out *le Spiritisme* in France. Others see in this system of defence a cunning plotting of the prejudices of his judges and the general public to curry present favour, and with some reference too to the future prosecution of his profession, that of an ordinary photographer. Others think that he hopes to lighten somewhat the load of his own shame by distributing it over other shoulders as well as his own—together with a dash of spite and resentment against those honest Spiritualists, including M. Leymarie, who now turn from him in disgust and contempt, freely manifested in both language and acts. Whatever may be the real motive of his policy, the fact is unfortunate, as I have told you; and it is to be feared that his declarations, claiming to be in the nature of "king's evidence," may find power and credence with prejudiced judges, against honest and innocent men, despite the scant title to credit attaching to a person in his avowed position. You know how very little—how infinitesimal—



mally little—evidence is good against Spiritualism or Spiritualists in the minds of most of its opponents.

Besides the charge of complicity with Buguet, which was what Firman and Leymarie were arrested upon, the matter of the *seance* at Madame Huguet's is also brought up against Firman, in regard to which you have already published the *procès verbal* on the one side, and the counter declarations of the Firmans on the other, and in this instance I am convinced of his innocence, though it presents a formidable case of appearances against him which can only be judged fairly by persons acquainted with the marvellous phenomena of materialisation, now familiar to you in England, as also in America, but totally unknown, and of course disbelieved, in this country.

Firman is penniless. Is this not a proper case for the intervention of the British Association of Spiritualists to help him, and their own cause, to the means of employing counsel for the proper defence of him and it? He is an American indeed, but has married an English wife. I do not know of any American Spiritualists here, and Spiritualism is of no nationality.

One word more about Buguet's now repudiated mediumship, under the promptings of a policy about which all must form their own opinions. There can be no doubt whatever of its genuineness or of its power, though its exercise was very exhausting to him, and therefore could not yield him the means of supporting the two households with which it seems he indulged himself. M. Leymarie has hundreds of letters attesting the correctness of the spirit likenesses obtained by him. Besides those of the Count de Bullet, the De Veh family, and Mr. Gledstones (including several in which Mr. Guppy appeared, with scrolls covered with his own handwriting, with his signature and characteristic style), I have seen others of a very distinct, marked, and conclusive character, in which appeared persons totally unknown to Buguet, and of the obscurest position in life. I also was present on one occasion when an English gentleman (Major Norton) sat to Buguet. He was accompanied by a friend (a member of Parliament), who happened to be an amateur photographer, as well as an out-and-out scoffer at Spiritualism. The camera was thoroughly examined. The incredulous photographic M.P. went down with Buguet to watch severely the cleaning and sensitising the plates, and afterwards to the dark chamber to assist also at the development of the negative. Everything was all right, and *secundum artum*. Major Norton was a total stranger, who had dropped in with his friend by accident. And yet the result, which was brought up in a few minutes, was what Major Norton recognised as a striking spirit likeness of a deceased aunt of his, which he was sure would astonish the rest of his family. You know, no doubt, the experiences of the Countess of Caithness with him, to say nothing of others in London; and yet Buguet now finds it convenient to disavow the whole, and to repudiate his own mediumship. He *may* be telling the truth now, after about a couple of years of admitted imposture, and he *may* not be acting under the influence of—well, we may politely call it—merited reward for tardy truth; but certainly the appearances are at least as strong against him as they seemed to be against poor Firman when under the fair but angry hands of Madame Huguet. I hope you will call attention to the matter of pecuniary help to Firman to employ proper counsel, otherwise I think him in serious danger before the French tribunals.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

Paris, May 23, 1875.

A private note gives the following additional particulars:—

M. Leymarie was let out of prison three days ago *on bail*. That scoundrel Buguet persists in declaring him to have been his accomplice, and to have had half his nefarious gains; but all the ransacking of the police has failed to trace the slightest indication of collusion on Leymarie's part, and nobody will attach the slightest weight to the assertion of one who has proclaimed himself to be a thorough cheat and liar.

Enemies of Spiritualism wanted to have all the stock of spiritual books at the Rue de Lille rooms seized bodily and destroyed, the rooms closed, and the society broken up; but they have not succeeded in finding a legal pretext, so the books and letters seized five weeks ago have been returned, and poor Leymarie is let out of Mazas. He has shrunk to half his natural size, and looks ten years older; his clothes hang about him like bags; his face is wrinkled, his eyes are sunken, and his beard is full of white hairs. 'Tis really pitiable; but I hope that freedom, air, sunlight, and proper food

will bring him up again. But what a monstrous injustice! to seize and imprison an innocent man, confining him in a cellular dungeon, not allowing him to be approached by any human being but the jailer, while unknown enemies confiscate books and papers, and employ every means to make up a case against him!

There seems no doubt but the authorities are determined to make an attempt to use Buguet as a cat's-paw for attacking the "Société Anonyme," simply because Leymarie, the administrator of the society—(we should say limited liability company)—had written in favour of Buguet in the *Revue* published by that society. Buguet will be tried before long for *escroquerie* (swindling), and the enemies hope to include the society and Spiritism in the verdict, which will undoubtedly be against Buguet, but which I hope they will fail to extend as they hope to do.

## THE PHENOMENA OF SLEEP AND DREAM.

(Concluded.)

BY EDWARD W. COX, SERJEANT-AT-LAW.

THE question here presents itself, Wherefore does the Conscious Self accept the impressions of brain action in dream without questioning their reality, their congruity, or even their possibility? It does not so when the brain is awake. Then the Conscious Self sits in judgment upon the impressions brought to it by the brain, and is enabled to distinguish between the actual and the ideal, the objective and the subjective. Why not in dream also?

The Conscious Self feels no surprise in dream, however strange the vision presented to it, simply because the condition of its relationship to the brain, as the material organ through which alone it can maintain communication with the external material world, compels it to accept the impressions made upon it by brain action as realities having, in the normal state of that relationship, some corresponding external existence by which that action of the brain was caused. True, that the brain has not unfrequently self-produced impressions, as they always are in dream. But the Conscious Self has learned this fact from experience, and setting its Will-Power in action, it tries these impressions by certain mental tests, which enable it, usually, but not always, to discriminate between the actual and the ideal—the fact and the ideal.

The reason why the Conscious Self does not so discriminate in dream may be thus stated. The Will-Power being suspended in dream, one faculty cannot be brought to bear upon another for the purpose of comparison and reasoning as when awake, and therefore all impressions upon the material organ of the mind are accepted as real. The process of reasoning requires the combined action of several mental faculties, and probably also the mental action of the two hemispheres of the brain—or the two minds, as Brown-Sequard calls them. If any of those faculties in one hemisphere of the brain be sleeping, the process of reasoning is impracticable, and those mental impressions are accepted as real because the test is wanting by which the reality and unreality of impressions are determined in the normal condition of the brain.

So far, I have referred only to *ideas* presented in dream—the pictures which the brain paints. But the *emotions* also are called into action in dream, and the Conscious Self receives the impressions of them and feels them. How is this?

The emotions do not come into action capriciously. They can be created only by something presented to them by other of the mental faculties. We do not feel hate, or anger, or love in the abstract. The presentation of some object, real or ideal, by one of the other mental faculties is necessary to the kindling of an emotion. When the object is presented, the emotion follows without the exercise of our Will, and often in opposition to it. So it is in dream. The inventive faculties construct the story, and the presentation of that story to the emotional faculties excites them to involuntary action. Hence it is that in the dream we feel the love, hate, fear, anger, which the incident of the dream would have excited in reality, the events and persons having been accepted as real by the other faculties.

Thus the emotions are excited in dream, as they are excited in our waking state, by the presentation to them of ideas. Awake, we find love or hate, fear or desire, provoked as much, and even more frequently, by ideal pictures as by real external objects. So in sleep the picture painted by the dreaming fancy invokes the appropriate emotion. But as the ideas of dream

pass through the mind without the direction of the other faculties, so are the emotions uncontrolled by them. In dream the passions and sentiments often prevail with really more fury than ever they burned in our waking state.

But there is a peculiarity in dream to which I invite special attention, for I do not remember that it has been noticed by any of those who have treated of these phenomena. In dream we are all dramatists and actors. The most stupid, equally with the most intelligent, invent plots, construct characters, and frame dialogues. A dream is rarely, if ever, a simple reproduction of one event or series of events. The materials are, of course, quarried from the memory; but they are recombined to make new forms, precisely as with the novelist or the dramatist. Consider what the dreamer does. For every dream that has continuity the mind invents a story, often complicated and ingenious. The actors in that story are as frequently creations of the fancy as revivals of the memory of the dead or representations of the living. But perhaps the most marvellous feature of this strange psychical performance is the dialogue. Each personage in the dream plays his own part perfectly. He converses freely and in keeping with his character, and often this dialogue, as in the acted play, or in the drama of real life, is maintained by half-a-dozen speakers.

What a wonderful process is this! And yet the dreaming mind does it all! That mind constructs a story, invents characters, and improvises a dramatic scene in which the whole dialogue is supplied by itself! And this is not a miracle peculiar to the intelligent and educated mind. It is performed also by the most stupid and illiterate. It is strictly true that every ploughboy is every night at once a novelist and a dramatist, and this, too, of no mean capacity. To me there is nothing in all the strange phenomena of dream so strange as this, or the study of which promises to throw so much light upon the mental faculties and the manner of their action.

But although the mind is the inventor of this acted drama, it is wholly unconscious that the drama it is creating is an invention of its own. That which itself has created, it believes implicitly to be an objective reality. It is satisfied that it sees those places and hears those persons, and that the speeches that fall from their lips are their own, ignorant that it is itself the inventor of that which itself is contemplating.

Is not this a second proof offered by the phenomena of dream that the brain that acts and the Conscious Self that takes cognizance of the actions of the brain are distinct entities? Awake, the brain works, and the Conscious Self takes notice of its working. That consciousness is asserted by the Materialists to be merely the consciousness by the brain of its own conditions. But if it were so, the brain would be as conscious of its own conditions and actions in dream as when awake. It is otherwise in fact. In dream the brain works as in the waking state, but the Self is unable to distinguish the inventions of the brain from the impressions of external objects. This could only be by some change in the relationship of the Conscious Self to the dreaming mind. Such a change implies that they are not identical, but distinct entities. It follows that if there be both the Conscious Self and the mind or brain of whose actions that Self is conscious, the existence of *something* in us, other than the corporeal mental mechanism, is demonstrated.

Thus in the phenomena of dream we find the strongest scientific evidence of the existence of Soul.

A dream is not a desultory flow of disordered images and disjointed ideas; it observes a definite arrangement in the shape of a continuous and connected action, following apparently the same law of association of ideas that governs their advent in the waking state. It is important also to observe that, as in the waking state, the ideas in dream come in succession, two or more never presenting themselves at the same instant. Hence our conception of time, which is consequent upon the mental structure that entertains ideas only in succession, one following another. If the mind had been so structured as to entertain many ideas together, we should have quite another conception of time than we now form. The ideas thus produced by the brain in a stream are presented to the Conscious Self in the same order of succession; and hence that Self, in the normal condition of its relationship to the body, has only the conception of time that results from the successive actions of the brain. But it is something more than probable—it is almost certain—that if the Conscious Self were so far severed from its association with the material organ through which alone it can communicate with the material world, as to receive impressions directly, it could perceive simultaneously what through the mechanism of the

brain it can receive only in succession, and therefore that the conception of time would in such case be altogether different from that which it possesses when informed only through the medium of the brain.

The practical result of this suggestion is, that what we call time is merely a human conception, the product of brain structure; and that to a being differently structured, and to ourselves when the relationship of the soul to the body is changed, time may be something altogether different from that which it appears to us now.

And there is, in fact, a very great difference between the waking and the sleeping mind in its conceptions of time. In dream a whole seeming history will be enacted in an hour, which, to have been acted in reality, would have occupied days or even years. It was the notion of Lord Brougham, based upon a dream of long continued action which occurred to him during a brief slumber in court, induced by the drone of some tedious counsel, that dream took place only when in the act of falling asleep or of waking, and not during actual sleep. But this is contradicted by the experience of any person who has been suddenly awakened from sleep, and who will have found his dream as abruptly interrupted. The fact is, that in dream there is no other measure of time than the flow of ideas. When uncontrolled by the Will, the mind produces and presents ideas with incalculable rapidity. The number of ideas is the count of time to the dreamer. If in a sleep of five minutes as many ideas flit through the brain as in five hours of waking, the measure of time to the dreaming, as to the waking mind, will be the number of ideas and the rapidity of the stream. But in the waking state the mental impressions are corrected by past experiences. In dreams the rapidity of the stream of ideas within, and the absence of any correcting impressions from without, combine to cause an action, that lasts in reality but five minutes, to appear to the Conscious Self as five days.

The psychological importance of this is very great. It serves to correct our notions of time by showing us that it is a human conception merely, and altogether different even in the waking and dreaming conditions of the mind. Faulty notions of time, space, and such like mental conceptions dependent upon mental structure, lie so at the root of popular fallacies, and are so frequent, and yet so rarely recognised even by the educated, that some service may be done by inviting attention to the striking proofs of them that are found in the phenomena of dream.

In sleep the conception of time as measured by external events is not always wholly suspended. The desire to wake at a particular hour often produces the result. But this is not, as some have assumed, the consequence of a measure of time kept by the mind in sleep, for waking during the night, in the absence of an external indication of time, we have no knowledge what the hour is, nor how long we have been sleeping. The waking at a desired hour must be due to some other process than counting in our sleep the march of time. What is that process is a question that well deserves examination.

But my allotted time is exhausted. The subject is so large that I have been unable to do more than touch the fringe of it. The questions it involves, and which, probably, it will go far to solve, are so important to psychological science, that I hope to return to the subject hereafter. I will merely now shortly sum up the principal arguments of this paper—a plan which I would respectfully suggest to all who may contribute to our discussions, as being the best means of impressing that argument upon the memories alike of hearers and readers, besides assuring themselves of the definiteness and value of their own suggestions.

1. Awake, the Conscious Self controls the action of the brain, the material organ through which that Conscious Self communicates with the material world.

2. The power by which this Self controls the action of the material mental organ, the brain, is that called the Will.

3. In sleep the action of the Will is suspended, but consciousness remains. The Conscious Self perceives, and often remembers, the dream presented to it by the brain.

4. But the Conscious Self receives the impressions of the brain action as they are presented, and it is unable to distinguish between the ideas self-produced and ideas that are impressions of material external objects. Hence the implicit acceptance of dreams as realities.

5. In dream there is no discerning of incongruity or impossibility. The cause of this curious condition is that the paralysis of the will prevents the calling in of the aid of the "judging faculties," as is done in the normal waking state.

6. It is a question whether this may not be due in whole or in part to the duality of the mind asserted by Brown-Sequard.

7. In dream the conception of time is lost. Adventures that appear to the mind to occupy a week are really enacted by the mind in five minutes. This is the consequence of the mental structure, which can entertain but one image or idea in the same instant of time.

8. The mind does not measure time in sleep otherwise than by the succession of ideas. It is deprived of the corrections which in the waking state are supplied by external objects.

9. The severance of the Conscious Self from the mind and its operations, so remarkably shown in these phenomena of sleep and dream, are of the greatest importance to psychology, as proving the non-identity of the Conscious Self and the brain as its mental organ, and therefore as supplying almost conclusive evidence of the existence of Soul as an entity distinct from the brain.

#### LUNACY LAW REFORM ASSOCIATION.

On Thursday last week a public meeting, convened by this association, was held at Exeter Hall (Lower Room), to petition Parliament for an investigation into certain cases of persons alleged to have been incarcerated and long detained as lunatics, though they were sane, and also into the whole working of the lunacy laws. Some of the statements made were of considerable interest to the public.

The Rev. John Page Hopps, of Glasgow, who took the chair, said the association asked for three things—first, a simple hearing from the authorities; secondly, an inquiry into the working of the present system; and thirdly, safeguards. As the law now stood, anybody, if any two medical men could be induced to sign a certificate that he was insane, might be conveyed to a lunatic asylum, and there incarcerated for life, and this had been done in many instances without the person so imprisoned having any power to obtain his release. One remedy that they suggested was, that no lunatic who was not dangerous to himself or others should be incarcerated at all; another was, that there should be only Government asylums.

Dr. Pearce, of Northampton, moved the first resolution—"That this meeting, considering the present state of the lunacy laws to be defective, oppressive, unjust, and fraught with danger to the liberty of the subject, hereby pledges itself to use every lawful means to obtain their reform." He thought medical men should have nothing at all to do with certifying that persons were not of sane mind. He would have the evidence taken on oath. There was every reason to believe that many sane persons were detained in asylums against their will by their relatives, from bad and interested motives, and he related one or two cases of this kind. In one, a man had quarrelled with his son, and the son got him put into an asylum, where he remained for some months. In another case, a man of some property had an only daughter, who married against his wishes. The son-in-law had epileptic fits. A medical man was got to sign a certificate, and he was brought to Northampton in a fly, where another medical man came and looked at him in the fly, and gave a second certificate, and the young man was taken off forthwith to a private lunatic asylum, and the father-in-law gave a cheque for three months' board and lodging. Great injury was done by lunatics being brought together in large numbers in asylums. The effects produced on the minds of many who might under favourable circumstances have soon recovered was to intensify the disorder and make them confirmed lunatics.

The Chairman then called on Mrs. Lowe, who came forward and addressed the meeting for some time. She said she had applied to the Commissioners for permission to go and see Miss Wood, in order to obtain her instructions to some solicitor. The Commissioners had peremptorily refused access. Every patient is, she was advised, entitled to apply through a solicitor for a jury trial; therefore all intercourse with solicitors is carefully guarded against, and all letters from private patients are, as a rule, sent to their incarcerators. In her own case she was kidnapped and taken to a madhouse under the authority of an informal certificate. When she got there the first thing she did was to ask to see the head of a firm of solicitors in Bristol, and that was refused. She then sent a letter to a London firm who had transacted business for her for twelve years. The letter was never delivered, and she was detained for fifteen months. That letter was either shown to the Commissioners, or it was not. If it was, their suppressing it showed malice against herself. If it was not, then the proprietor of the asylum had broken the law, and they ought

to have prosecuted him. But the Commissioners said they saw no reason for prosecuting him. They never did see any reason for prosecuting anybody unless where horrible violence had caused death, and an inquest ensued. There was no greater danger to society than this, that the power of prosecuting was vested in the Commissioners alone. A wrong, which she felt deeply, was, that in some private asylums male attendants were employed in the coercion of ladies. (Cries of "Shame.")

Mr. Fleming, a Poor-law guardian of St. George's, Hanover-square, supported the resolution. He found, he said, when he was first elected guardian, that the medical men who had to examine paupers supposed to be of unsound mind were paid if they could certify them to be insane, but if they could not they were not paid. That had been altered, but the whole system, he thought, ought to be investigated.

The motion was then put and agreed to, and on the motion of Mr. Plumridge a petition to Parliament founded on the resolution was adopted.

A vote of thanks was then given to the chairman, which brought the proceedings to a close.

#### Correspondence.

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

##### SPIRIT IDENTITY.

SIR,—For the sake of the truly honest and honourable young mediums who have lately left the shores of England,—Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, who,—after a series of test *seances* which ought to have been sufficient to satisfy the most incredulous, and for the sake of their worthy spirit guides, who laboured so wisely and efficiently to spread the light of Spiritualism, I think it right to reply briefly to some remarks which appeared in your last issue. Not for myself would I take this trouble, for it is quite immaterial to me what the public at large may think of the work so ably carried on by George Fox, the controlling spirit, at these *seances*; but I consider it my duty to the mediums and the good spirits who helped them, to go out of my way a little to make this simple statement, that in the thirty times or upwards in which I had the extreme pleasure of beholding my departed brother Thomas's face merely, and full form embodiments, and of conversing with him, frequently upon family matters known only to myself and him, I consider I had most undoubted and convincing proofs of his identity. I hope, Sir, this simple assertion, from a man in the full possession of his intellect and senses, will be sufficient for any, even the most sceptical, and beg to remain, yours truly,  
P. LORILLARD RONALDS.

65, George-street, Portman-square,  
May 23rd, 1875.

SIR,—Your insertion of this letter in your next issue of *The Spiritualist* will oblige, as I feel anxious to remove the doubt and suspicion which, doubtless, have been engendered in the minds of many of the readers of your journal by the perusal of the several antagonistic articles which have lately appeared in your paper respecting the recognised materialised spirit relatives manifesting at the ever-memorable *seances* of Messrs. Bastian and Taylor. I certainly felt much surprised at the hostile criticism about the genuineness and reliability of such wondrous manifestations as appeared in *The Spiritualist* two or three weeks ago, and the apparent short-sightedness and loss of memory experienced by the writer on the occasion of his visit to one of the said *seances*, in his omitting to mention the all-important fact of the wife of Mr. Cottrell manifesting in full materialised form to her husband, who was present at such *seance*, and was recognised by several of the sitters from the spirit-photograph taken by Mr. Parkes a short time before. She also distributed a lot of lilies, which she brought with her and took from a pocket in front of her robe. I still felt greater surprise when I found that the letter of Captain James, which appeared in last week's *Spiritualist*, was made the basis of such fallacious argument and illogical reasoning on the writer's part. What has a third party's testimony to do with the ample and weighty mass of primal testimony given and published week after week in *The Medium, Spiritualist*, and other papers? It appears that oblivion has also taken place with regard to such unimpeachable evidence, as the writer has quite ignored and impugned such body of living evidence. He even has the temerity to broadly insinuate that we are not to believe the evidence of our own senses, and that all is

illusory on our part for indulging in such belief. And as a set off, the Holmeses are again imported into the subject as a striking example of such imposition, when the duplicate theory cannot be brought forth, as that has been exploded by the medium Bastian being brought into the circle at the same time the spirit manifested to the sitters. Rather a staggering blow that to theorising "duplicate" editors and sceptical investigators. The Holmeses, with all their trickery and deception, could not manufacture dear departed relations, who repeatedly manifested themselves to their living relatives at the *seances* in question, and which has proved beyond a shadow of doubt the "almighty truth," now established, of our departed ones visiting us in material form again here! Which mighty and glorious fact has been fully proved, and can be proved by a living body of primal incontrovertible evidence at hand.

J. REGAN.

4, Stanley-villas, Northcote-road,  
New Wandsworth, May 22nd, 1875.

#### A WEEK AMONG SPIRITUALISTS IN LONDON.

SIR,—Spiritualists from the provinces, when visiting the metropolis, most naturally inquire, "What news in our movement?" and so I found myself, soon after arriving, in the new rooms of the British National Association of Spiritualists, and to be sure, most pleasant sensations greeted me in this agreeable home for inquirers, even in its present unfinished state. The cheerful rooms, the handy arrangements for access to the literature, are equally inviting. There is the big-sized *Banner of Light*, spread like an ocean before the adventurous sailor, who may feel sometimes a relief in steering again into the homely river; *The Spiritualist*, gliding with more confidence between the shores of spiritualism and psychic force. Then again, the *Medium and Daybreak* will give him an impulse of more unfettered enthusiasm, which may again be nicely blended with his inclination to hold fast to the traditions of his youth by the *Christian Spiritualist*. Should a glance at *Human Nature*, however, remind him that he has lifted himself already too far away from daily life, let him slip across to the British Museum, the sight of which (peeping warningly through the window) might have now and then tugged him gently back to *terra firma*. Let him walk through the drawing-room of his ancestors, the brilliant monkey collection, and when he finally stands face to face with the commanding figure of the gorilla, then he will, regaining the *status quo* of his nerves, exclaim, "Here we are again!" For my part, this kind of shower-bath was not quite needed, for I felt a little cooled down by learning how dissension among Spiritualists had set in, and turned the formerly even, smooth fluid into a kind of cloggy mass, like sour milk after standing. Intrigues of very earthly nature, jealousies and discontent in various forms, mar the harmony; and some people, apparently not satisfied with the amount of respect and attention paid to their individual labour, and disregarding the grand demonstration of after life for all, try hard to secure a *little extra immortality*. Passing over mildly the petty quarrels between mediums (although sometimes assuming painful traces of human nature) as remnants of a departing but struggling materialistic age, we may hope that an occasional "stirring up" will restore the even flow, and a well-organised association, on purely practical technical principles, discarding any one-sided individual interest, will and must fulfil a grand mission.

After having thus seen my anticipation of the new premises so agreeably realised, I lost no time in securing a place at the next *seance* of Bastian and Taylor. The often repeated reports of these highly interesting and impressive meetings make it superfluous to enter into details, but my first experiences in witnessing the appearance of full forms, which have so wonderfully improved in these private *seances*, I may be allowed to describe a little more in my own way. Like all or most investigators, I went from one remarkable phase to the other with renewed caution and even scepticism, until repeated experiments registered the new guest in the list of facts. So I was led up gradually to the materialisations in their various forms, as shown in the opening of the cabinet. The conditions to be observed, however, placed a kind of *barriere* between medium and audience, and although all possible doubts had been set at rest by the most ingenious tests, the mind could not help connecting the appearances in some way directly with the organisation of the medium. But, when a figure steps out, recognised too, and, as it were, mixes with the audience—the last thread of connection with the medium cut off—the fact is so stupendous, so staggering, that all previous training falls short here. I confess the impression was immense, but on the next day I had

almost forgotten all, because there was not sufficient room yet in my brain to place this new fact comfortably between the others.

The sensitiveness of these forms, when trying to face the light, which was extremely feeble, struck me particularly. They first merely peeped out, shrunk back again, then repeatedly tried, with almost painful caution, as if approaching the light as a sea of water, in which they might be drowned or dissolved by venturing too far. This extraordinary sensitiveness permeated the whole room to my sensation. I felt as if all my finest nerve fibres were spread out: a spider's web would compare as a stout ship's rope to them. Even in asking previously the one or other medium for some possible improvement in the arrangements, the answer betrayed a touch of disturbance in the harmony. At last it seemed to me as if all dead matter in the room began to awaken to a kind of consciousness of intelligence, and I caught myself nearly in the act of asking my chair for permission to sit upon it. In a rough sceptic all this would probably excite imagination into a wrong channel, but to me it was highly suggestive, as showing that in a spiritual circle, more than mere harmony, a perfect equalisation of all individual differences is necessary, so to say, to prepare a vast sensitive plate to receive the picture unbroken and in all its details.

I can only join with all friends in expressing my regret at having to bid farewell to these gifted mediums, but hope that with regained health they may return to continue a work so markedly advanced.

For the sake of contrast, I take the reader at once to an evening with conjurers. Being very fond of trying to find out clever tricks, I took with delight the opportunity to go with Mr. Harrison, who intended to finish up his "dissection" of the puzzling Psycho mechanism; and I confess, in my several attempts (and as many break-downs) to solve that mystery, I was nearly mad with envy to learn that my friend had found it out the first time, and it is but a poor consolation to me that I might have got it also, perhaps, on the second visit, for I remarked at once that Mr. Psycho would most likely refuse to be put on a chair instead of on the glass tube, or to be placed anywhere on the carpet. As a sign of a dawning solution, even the idea of an air-pump flashed through my mind, and I try to suppress my vexation at my slow comprehension by firmly believing that by my own research I should have succeeded in discovering that this clever Psycho is but a fast-living offspring of the happy union of clock-work and air-pump. Besides the clever construction of machinery, there are two most essential agencies at work in these astonishing performances—dexterity of hands, and dexterity of the tongue, for the latter played, in ridiculing poor, deluded Spiritualists, such freaks of impudence, that only a perfect negation of all shame and capacity for blushing would account for such language; and a poor excuse might be advanced only in favour of Mr. Maskelyne, that some fellows, even in the first seats, applaud these vile attacks. We admire when a conjuror does his best work by misleading the observers' attention as to his *modus operandi*; but when disgraceful statements at the expense of respected people assist, the exhibition becomes disgusting. Otherwise, these splendid performances are really delightful, and would be of immense value to investigators, as training them for acute observation. But they are very useful still, as keeping away those ever-ready wiseacres, who had better turn altogether from the movement; for people who fancy they can for a couple of shillings get at the source of truth which costs far-famed, well-trained scientific philosophers years of careful examination, are of no use, and had better join the chorus of washerwomen and easter-mongers in scoffing and laughing down what seems too much for their reasoning faculties.

Spending the following Sunday with a German family and friends at Brighton, I took the advantage of driving the discussion on our subject into the practical resolution of attending a *seance*—the only sensible motive which can nowadays induce me to enter upon this topic, especially with Germans, and so we had a private *seance* with Mr. Williams. The usual physical phenomena were this time so agreeable and fascinating in their character—although the power was not sufficient for higher manifestations—that the often-censured sameness was not in the least felt by me, although I had been present in many circles. The gentlemen felt thoroughly satisfied, and left with the decided resolution to replace verbal discussion by practical investigation. Having thus fulfilled my duty by assisting in promoting our cause, I turned again to my own demands for progress, and enjoyed thoroughly a conversation with Mrs. Woodforde. I soon realised the favourable

accounts of her distinguished medial gifts. Our conversation, which touched on Spiritualism in general, suddenly changed, and my spirit-guide now began to speak to me by the entranced medium. A discourse of over an hour's length then appeared to me only a moment, as we both looked at each other in surprise when learning the advance of time. I shall never forget the beautiful sentences linked together like a wreath of flowers, and in each a kernel of useful instruction. It would be impossible for me to recall all details, but the impression was one of a pure, elevating nature, whatever the source may have been. My question—"Why we often meet such harsh, vulgar opposition?" was remarkably answered, and, as being useful to all new and too warm enthusiasts, may be repeated in a few words:—"Human minds are differently constituted, and Spiritualism is not acceptable to everybody at the same time. Their longings and habits vary like the animal kingdom, and those who prefer to live in holes and caverns must not be forced into daylight. Again, others who crawl slowly along the ground cannot join the bird in its flight. It will come to all," she continued, "but for each in its proper course and time." I felt deeply impressed with this inspired conversation, and in pondering over it now I feel astonished, at times even mortified, to think how foolishly I bestowed my zeal in wrong quarters. In running back in memory to my period of excited activity, I actually catch myself like one standing before a pond and inviting a fish to have a stroll with me over the fields! This lesson I take to heart, and hope to save much trouble to myself and to others by carefully considering beforehand where the subject of Spiritualism may be introduced with advantage. On asking whether my invisible friend would manifest her presence on a photographic plate, I was advised to go to Mr. Hudson, and of course followed this hint, and obtained two different positions of the same spirit at two sittings. If there is a process of preparing a plate with a sham figure which withstands rough polishing, then I could of course not swear to the result in my case, otherwise the operation was gone through exactly as if I did all myself, following Mr. Hudson from the first to the last touch like one half of the Siamese twins. Before sitting down, I mentioned that in my own results I got the spirit figure always on my left side, and, curiously enough, the beautiful, almost classical-looking, form came here on my left side, against the experience of Mr. Hudson, whose figures usually appeared on the right. In the second sitting, when I suggested to Miss Hudson (the medium?) to sit nearer to me, the figure came out on the other side. This was interesting and new to me, the same spirit having evidently shifted its place. Another feature worth noticing was the decided decrease of intensity in the second figure, my own image being equal in both. It tells of a diminution of power. In the third and last sitting not a trace of spirit form could be detected. To me the experiment was highly interesting and pleasing, but Mr. Hudson felt rather disappointed, for he would have preferred to see a recognised face instead. I perfectly understood his feelings, and I hope and nearly feel sure we may have success ere long.

My time for my stay drawing to a close, I resolved to wind up with spending the last evening at the *soirée* of the National Association, and a more agreeable conclusion could not be imagined, there being so many friends drawn together in pleasant, homely rooms. My first searching glance for the "stars" in the cloudless sky caught the face of Mrs. Corner (Miss Cook); but I had to inquire whether I saw aright, for my imagination had, by following her remarkable career, the numberless sittings, and severe experiments, pictured a pale, sickly person, and here I found a fresh and rosy-looking young lady, the very type of life and health. My melancholy expectation was dispelled as if by magic, and even the idea crossed my mind that before long medical men might prescribe in some cases doses of *seances* for the bodily benefit of patients. The cheerful, lively aspect of the assemblage *in toto* spoke for itself, and the forming of new acquaintances seemed to me more a matter of natural disposition than mere ceremony. In fact, I found my "round" among Spiritualists here most delightfully concluded.

But, alas, I know by experience that some little mishap is always in store when I begin to think "This time all goes smooth." After having managed with difficulty to remain another day, to take advantage of an offer to be present at a *seance* with Miss Showers, I tasted a bitter cup of disappointment, for that celebrated medium did not appear. Spoiled by uninterrupted success up to this point, I obstinately believed that even here an extraordinary manifestation would be at the bottom of it—an aerial flight to a great distance—say Sebastopol; and as no return tickets are furnished on such trips, our

waiting in vain would seem quite explicable. However, as no report of that kind confirmed my expectation, I must give in, and take it as a little damper in the otherwise good time I had of it in London.

CHRISTIAN REIMERS.

Manchester, May 15th, 1875.

#### THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY ON SPIRITS.

SIR,—Some time ago there appeared in *The Spiritualist* a copy of a letter sent to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the subject of modern spiritual phenomena, by Mr. Herbert Noyes, if I recollect aright. Now, I never heard whether there was any reply to it, nor do I know what opinions his Grace may entertain on the subject; but anyhow, in the current number of *Good Words* is an article on the *Fallacies of Unbelief*, which is chiefly devoted to the popular arguments against Christianity and miracles in general, and a great deal of it is worthy of perusal by Spiritualists, as well as by orthodox people. For instance, his Grace says: "Certainly, it would seem to be a less practical question if we asked what is the distance between the earth and the sun, than to ask what is the probability that the spirit which I know to be within me, and which by a thread of consciousness binds together all the separate states of my changing life, and which I know for years has regulated all the movements of my material body, shall live and grow and develop itself with ever-increasing freshness long after my mortal body has wasted into dust. . . . To say that religious questions are not practical before you have thoroughly examined them is quite unworthy of a philosopher. . . . The greatest philosophers of past and present times, the noblest spirits which the history of the world has ever produced, have thought and acknowledged that they could find no loftier subjects of contemplation." Well, that is certainly very cheering to us matter-of-fact practical Spiritualists; but my own personal experience goes to prove that to confess myself a Spiritualist is to acknowledge myself a fool. And still more, to admit that I am a medium is to admit myself an impostor, and such, I think, has also been the experience of those Spiritualists in all ages who have made themselves practically acquainted with religious and spiritual beliefs and phenomena, instead of indulging in metaphysical discussions on the subject. Anyhow, that the article in question is valuable at the present time, taken in conjunction with what is recorded of modern miracles, is the opinion of

JAS. F. RHODES.

30, Corbridge-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

#### THE "FIRMAN" SEANCE.

SIR,—The "Firman" affair in Paris, taken with the *fascos* that have happened in London, gives a perfect denial to those conditions being necessary which are generally laid down and required by the spirits to materialise; for in each case of alleged imposition the manifestation has been given when not only the sceptic or discoverer of the imposition was in the circle, but in the last case you might say "in the cabinet" with the medium. In every case also their preconceived intention of attack was not known to the controlling agents. This being so, would not the best test to adopt for the future be to conceal some reliable and trustworthy person in the cabinet without the knowledge of the medium, whenever the integrity of the same is doubtful? Let these witnesses report their experiences at the end of the *seance*.

GEORGE BLYTON.

2, Albert road, Dalston, May 17th.

A TRANCE lecture will be delivered next Thursday evening by Mrs. Tappan in the Doughty Hall, in aid of unfortunate women, and should be well supported.

RELIGIOUS MANIA.—The *Daily Telegraph* of last Monday says—"Charles Dentith, a young man employed in the steel works of the London and North-Western Railway Company at Crewe, committed a murder under peculiarly distressing circumstances on Saturday evening. About half-past five Dentith's married sister, with whom he resided, left him with her infant in the cradle whilst she went upstairs to attend to household matters. Taking advantage of her absence, Dentith seized a knife, and walking to the side of the cot, plunged the weapon into the skull of the child, killing it almost instantaneously. Dentith is in custody. He has for some years been a regular attendant at a Primitive Methodist chapel in the town, and religious mania is said to be the cause of the crime. He was also a teetotaler."

## THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS IN EUROPE.

## THE KING OF PORTUGAL INVESTIGATING SPIRITUALISM.

By *The Banner of Light* which reached London by last Wednesday's mail we learn that it is now over one year since the Davenport Brothers left America for Havana, Cuba, and during that time they have visited nearly all the islands of the West Indies, also some of the principal cities of South America; but the hot climate of the West Indies had reduced them to such a weakened physical condition, that Ira Davenport was especially advised by the physicians to leave for a colder climate; so they concluded their engagement, sailed from the island of Curaçoa, and landed in Havre after a tempestuous voyage of twenty-three days. Off the Bay of Biscay for five days and nights they were in a tremendous storm. During their stay in the West Indies they succeeded in creating considerable interest amongst the higher classes, consisting of bankers, merchants, and government officials—the bulk of the population being made up of uneducated natives and half-breeds of all nations; the negro element was prominent in many of the islands.

Their success in South America was great; in Caracas, Valencia, Puerto Cabello, and other places in Venezuela, they filled the largest theatres to overflowing for several nights in succession, also giving many *seances* in the private residences of leading citizens. In Georgetown, South America, they gave two public *seances*.

On returning to Europe they landed at Havre, where they passed two weeks, resting and recruiting after the fatigue of the long voyage. From Havre they went south, giving public *seances* in the principal theatres of Nantes, Tours, Angers, and several other places. From Bordeaux they sailed for Lisbon, where they arrived on the 8th of February, and on the 12th gave a private *seance* to the members of the press, causing an excitement only equalled by that of London and Paris in 1864 and '65. Hundreds of small pamphlets were immediately issued by unknown parties, announcing an explanation of the phenomena, and sold in the bookstores, shops, and in the streets. They were immediately sought for by the managers of the theatres and other public places of amusement, and concluded an arrangement with the director of the Theatre Gymnasio for one week, opening on the 16th to a house literally packed from pit to gallery: every ticket having been sold two days before the opening night, hundreds of persons were refused admission. Private boxes, which were bought at the theatre prices, were afterwards sold for three times their cost by speculators, who are always on the lookout to take advantage of any unusual excitement. During their engagement at this theatre they were visited by the king and royal family several times, also by some of the nobility and prominent citizens of Lisbon. The king was highly pleased, as well as astonished, with what he witnessed at the palace in the private *seances*, and took a deep interest in all the different manifestations that were evolved. At Lisbon they received telegrams from the principal cities of Portugal, and made contracts for Oporto, Bruga, Averio, and Coimbra.

Their career in all the cities they visited in Portugal was one continual success in every respect, unequalled by that in any other country in the same length of time; and they were not a little surprised by meeting with quite a large number of Spiritualists, many of them professing the Catholic religion. Having passed about five weeks in Portugal, engaged nearly every day in giving public or private *seances* (creating an interest which will not soon die out), they started for Spain, and arrived in Madrid on the 17th of March, and gave a private *seance* to the members of the Madrid press, which was well received by them all, they, without exception, giving favourable reports of what they had witnessed. It was their intention and desire to at once give public *seances*, but they were prevented on account of the religious holidays, of which they have a great many in this country.

The Davenport Brothers have left Spain, and are now on their way to Brussels.

NEXT WEDNESDAY'S SOIREE.—London is very full just now, so it may be expected that there will be a large attendance at the National Association *soirée* next Wednesday, at 38, Great Russell-street, when there will be an opportunity of talking over the results of the bazaar, the persecution of M. Leymarie in Paris, and other matters of interest. The galvanometric apparatus to be presented to the Association by Mr. Blackburn may possibly be finished by that time, and exhibited at work.

MR. AND MRS. HARDY leave London for the Continent to-day.

MR. PEEBLES has ready for the press, a new book entitled "Radical Doctrines of Spiritualists and Shakers."

THE SPIRITUALIST READING-ROOM IN BLOOMSBURY.—The collection of books in the library of the National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, although not very large at present, is of superior quality. Should contributions of books continue at the rate they have begun, in a very few weeks the finest spiritualistic library in the world will have been established on the premises. Among the articles that are wanted on the premises, but are not likely to be purchased out of the ordinary funds of the Association during this year of exceptionally heavy expenses, are some large looking-glasses (to place over the mantelpieces of the best rooms), two couches, an ottoman, a complete set of the works of A. J. Davis, and some few other things. The room at present unfurnished, and which may possibly be hereafter turned into a philosophical department, requires a carpet, as it has to be utilised for the *soirees*. Unless some of these articles are supplied by private gift, it is not probable that the Association will purchase them for some time to come, as its principle of action is to live within its income, and not to get into debt, although the heavy cost of starting and furnishing new offices may cause a slight deficiency at the close of the present year.

LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—A correspondent says—"It may not be so generally known as is desirable, that there is a discussion society in connection with the above association of Spiritualists, which meets every Friday evening, at eight o'clock, for the purpose of reading literary and scientific papers on the physical, mental, and spiritual constitution of man—scarcely less than concerning those wonderful facts and phenomena now called psychology and Spiritualism *indefinitely*. By some the human body is considered a machine, of exquisite workmanship, it may be, but still a sort of chemical laboratory, in every part of which, day and night, the most delicate and refined processes are being performed, for weal or for woe. Others tell us that this same machinery operates only under the direction of a force, termed the vital principle; whilst a third group of doctors, or teachers, assure us of a soul, and a spirit, which depend not on organic tissues, and live elsewhere, after the collection of physical phenomena has been withdrawn. On the 21st instant all these views were more or less represented by materialists, psychologists, and Spiritualists, assembled to hear an address read by Mrs. Nosworthy, on the subject, "Not Church, but Jesus," in the Islington Assembly Rooms, followed by the usual discussion. And certainly this talented lady exhibited a remarkable display of elocutionary power, that set forth most fully and impartially, before a large audience, those extremely important topics of spiritual philosophy and natural science that bear upon Hebrew and Christian records, and all the scriptures of anthology in every part of the world, barbaric or civilised. The paper was heartily applauded by competent judges of ancient and modern philosophy, and the conclusion of it was, that ecclesiasticism is not the Christianity of Jesus; and that, despite scientific materialism, which awards the same destiny to the holiest as to the most abandoned—a silence of death from which there shall be no resurrection unto life, either for a Nero or St. Paul—the spirituality of Christ is the chief safeguard of the human soul from time to eternity; whilst the continuity of existence, now demonstrated by the science of Spiritualism, will ere long be accepted by mankind at large as the truest and best revelation of each individuality of being, satisfactory alike to the aspirations of heart and intellect.

## MRS. TAPPAN'S LECTURES,

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**MR. J. J. MORSE, INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER**, is now on a Lecturing tour in the United States. He will return as soon as engagements permit. All letters sent to the following address will be forwarded to him in due course:—Warwick-cottage, Old Ford-road, Bow, London, E.

**DR. M'LEOD AND SIBYL—MAGNETIC HEALING AND CLAIRVOYANCE**—Are prepared to receive engagements as above. References kindly permitted to patients and others who have been benefited. By letters only, under cover, to W. N. Armfield, Esq., 15, Lower Belgrave-street, Pimlico, S.W. Dr. M'Leod is also prepared to receive engagements to lecture.

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## EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

SPIRITUALISM deserves investigation because within the last twenty years it 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. Berghem, 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 Gannon, Esq.; Grattan Geary, Esq.; Robert Hannah, Esq., F.G.S.; Jenner 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 cooperate. 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., Serjeant-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.

ENQUIRERS 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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