

The Spiritualist

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(ESTABLISHED 1870.)

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February, 1875.

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

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SPECULATIONS RELATING TO NEW FACTS IN SPIRITUALISM.

DURING the past few weeks some new facts of considerable interest in connection with Spiritualism have been recorded in these pages, and have been attested by careful and reliable observers. The letter of Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, the electrician, is of special value, from the light which it may possibly throw upon a wide range of physical manifestations. He narrated how a negro, who was a powerful mesmerist, made passes over a woman on a public platform at a meeting at Blackheath, and after having freed her spirit from her body, he "willed" that she should go to her own home and touch one of the persons then in her kitchen. A deputation then went from the meeting to the house, and found the people there in a state of consternation, because one of them had been "touched by a ghost." Now, in this case, we have first of all an entranced medium; secondly, we have the spirit of that medium freed from the body and endowed with the power of producing physical effects, for it gave a touch which was felt; had the person touched been able to see the spirit, the latter would have had the features of the individual whose body was in a state of trance in another place. Here then, so far as external appearances are concerned, is the same condition of things which obtains at some spirit circles at which physical manifestations are witnessed; in the latter case there is the sleeping medium, and something with the features of that medium carrying musical instruments about the room, or making itself visible as a materialised spirit. But in this latter example the apparition claims to be the spirit of a dead person; in Mr. Fitz-Gerald's case it was beyond all doubt the spirit of the medium. The assumption is, that at spirit circles the medium is mesmerised by a spirit out of the body, that the spirit obtains control of the medium's organism and of material conditions, then produces physical objects. In Mr. Fitz-Gerald's case a spirit in the body was the moving power in the whole matter; that spirit was a negro, and both the body and the spirit of the medium were acting in a slavish manner under his control, a very serious example of the enormous power of mesmerism. The spirits assumed to produce materialisation manifestations scarcely ever give any religious or moral teachings worth recording; in like manner if the negro who was the prime actor in the Blackheath experiments, had attempted to teach anything to elevate mankind through the medium he was controlling, he would probably have failed; in fact, it would have been the duty of the listeners to educate *him*, so here again the parallel between the two cases holds good.

The question should be solved whether the same effects produced in the experiments at Blackheath could also be effected in the absence of the negro, that is to say, have any mesmeric sensitives the power of falling into a mesmeric sleep, of then quitting their bodies and producing manifestations in accordance with their own

will? Our experience, after attending many hundreds of *seances*, leads us to believe that whatever work it may do, the spirit of the medium is not the driving power in the great majority of physical manifestations; among a few of the lower mediums, who unhappily are not surrounded by good influences, there has sometimes been a depth of untruthfulness and iniquity not natural to the mediums in the normal state. The wickedness has not been of that kind which is assumed to belong to the devil; it has been more that of a savage or of a child, for savages and children can be very cruel to each other at one moment and overflowing with generosity the next; so two mediums may be bursting with jealousy and making desperate attempts to ruin each other by the invention and circulation of false scandals at one moment, yet may be seen giving the last shilling they possess to a beggar in the street, the next.

In the Blackheath experiments, although the body of the medium was in one place and the double of the medium in another, the same consciousness was governing the acts of both; that is to say, the medium willed that her spirit-hand should touch the person at the distant place; she also willed that at the same time her mouth should tell the operator what her spirit was doing; thus one individuality was governing the acts of both bodies at the same time, and this individuality was, in its turn, controlled by a strong-willed negro. Is it the same at materialisation *seances*? Does the spirit of the medium cause the mouth of his entranced body to talk to the sitters, and does it at the same time produce the physical effects seen at the *seance*? One piece of evidence in favour of this hypothesis is, that the materialised spirits never teach anything above the mental capacity of the medium. Or is the medium subject to the will of disembodied spirits, and looking on helplessly while they are producing their manifestations by means of the duplicate bodies? Here, again, those who have had most experience can trace strong evidence of the presence of an individuality not that of the medium. When two or three spirits profess to come through the same medium, and are watched through a prolonged range of *seances*, they are found to possess mental characteristics which differ from each other, and which *never* vary from first to last. And these characteristics are shown in such minute details, as at last to bring home the conviction of the observer that different individualities are at work.

If the medium is thus subject to the will of spirits, it raises the question whether, in many cases, the medium may not have left his or her body years ago, so that the organism is left under the control of other individualities, although, to the superficial observer, it appears to be the same person. Dr. Newton's spirits told us that he had thus left his body, and had years ago tasted all that he would ever know of death; they said that he was but one of a band of spirits using his bodily organism for benevolent purposes, out of love to mankind.

How does the spirit of the medium leave the body? In the Blackheath experiments it left the body invisibly, and had the power of penetrating solid objects, for it found its way to a distant room, in a distant house. At *seances*, spirit hands are often formed in the partial darkness under the table, where they occasionally write messages upon paper or are thrust out so that they can be seen, and these hands are usually the duplicates in form of the hands of the

medium. It is possible that the invisible hand is passed through the table, that it then has some properties added to it so that it becomes what is known as materialised. Possibly matter may have two or three hundred properties, only five or six of which are known to science. The materialised hand, as is now well known, possesses all the properties of the ordinary human hand; it has bones, and skin, and nails, and warm circulating blood. But what is the condition of the hand where it ceases to be materialised, say, near the wrist, and what becomes of the blood running in the direction of the body at the said wrist? One would naturally infer that it runs invisibly to the body of the medium, and that the multitude of forces at play in the human arm are at work between that hand and the medium, although some few of the essentials necessary to make the effects of the forces visible in the form we call matter, are missing. Miss Cook tells us that if at a dark *seance*, while a spirit hand is carrying a musical instrument, any one passes his hands downwards between her and the hand, she feels a shock, but the other person feels nothing. Mr. Herne has told us that if, after a dark *seance* has begun, somebody passes a walking-stick over his head, he feels as if something has been done to interrupt the manifestations. Thus it would seem that there is a vital link between mediums and spirit hands, even while that connection is invisible. Captain James recently sat by the side of Mr. Bastian while the spirits were materialising hands and thrusting them out; he says that the hands ended quite sharply at or about the wrist, behind which they appeared to be supported by nothing. Last Sunday week some materialised hands were formed through the mediumship of Miss Showers as she sat in a dimly-lighted cabinet; she said that she could see the hands as far as the knuckles, where they ended abruptly. Miss Cook informs us that recently, while both her hands were held by a lady in the dark, a materialised hand was given to a gentleman present, who asked permission to trace the arm belonging to the hand to its source; he did so, and found that it ended at Miss Cook's shoulder, upon which he asked the lady (who was his own wife) if she were sure that she had both Miss Cook's hands, and she replied that there was no doubt upon that point. Legs have been duplicated in the same way. Recently a lady of high literary note was sitting by the side of Miss Showers at the supper table, while raps and other manifestations were going on, and the lady put her hand below the table in order to be grasped by some of the materialised hands which were there, and she declared that beyond all doubt a materialised leg came between herself and Miss Showers. The same kind of phenomenon occurred recently at Bristol, and caused much discomfort to some Spiritualists there, in consequence of their being inexperienced in matters relating to advanced manifestations. Dr. Monck was sitting quietly while tremendous raps were coming from the table, for which noises the critics present could not account. The table was of soft wood, and on being examined next day was found indented with the toe of a boot, also with some mud corresponding with that on Dr. Monck's shoes. This suspicious result made him give another *seance* in a stranger's house, at which he sat without boots on, and with his feet tied to the legs of the chair; he also stood upright during a part of the *seance*, yet the raps came with great violence; only disbelievers sat near the table, the Spiritualists present occupying chairs behind

them; at the close of the *seance* they all signed a document to the effect that they could not account for the phenomena witnessed. Recently, while opposite a lady medium at supper at a large table, Mr. Harrison put one hand below the table, and asked the spirits if they could touch him; instantly something which felt like the toe of a boot was put into his hand, although the medium was unconcernedly eating her supper, and had that been her own foot, the leg belonging thereto must have been twenty inches more than its proper length.

This brings us to another point in connection with these manifestations, namely, that if invisible living portions of the human organism are busy between mediums and materialised hands or feet, the invisible portions seem to be endowed with more elasticity than those which are seen by the eye. For instance, musical instruments at dark *seances* sometimes fly a long way from the medium. This elasticity, this pushing asunder of material atoms, seems also to be possible to a lesser degree in the fully materialised organism, and may serve to account for the occasional elongation and contraction of the bodies of Mr. Home and other mediums, as attested by Lord Lindsay, Mr. Jencken, and others.

The power by which these duplications are effected seems to have something of the nature of a single force, and not of a complicated mixture of vital actions, because not merely are portions of the human body duplicated, but in some instances, the clothes also, as in the example of Dr. Monck's boots, and of the coat-sleeves of the Davenport Brothers, which have sometimes been seen over the wrists of materialised spirit hands while the hands of the mediums were secured. In the case also of the hand and arm which appeared at the *seance* with Mrs. Fay in the house of Mr. Crookes, the arm came out in a blue sleeve, and Mrs. Fay was dressed in blue.

What are the properties of the invisible portions of the organism between spirit hands or heads, and the medium? Can the spirit hands while yet invisible lift a chair? If so a clue is obtained as to the *modus operandi* of moving solid objects at a distance from the medium. This is one of those points which may possibly be readily solved now that attention is called to it. The law of the conservation of energy points out that power cannot be gained in one direction without being lost in another, consequently the power which moves a visible or invisible spirit hand must come from somewhere, and on the hypothesis laid down in this sketch the power comes from the medium. On the withdrawal of much vital force from the whole or a particular part of the body of the medium, it would seem that of necessity that there must be a loss of heat to that part; such is actually the case in practice, for at all, or nearly all, materialisation *seances* for full forms, the medium becomes cold shortly before the manifestations begin. This loss of heat ought to be measured, and it could easily be done—as we pointed out a fortnight ago—by means of the thermo-electrical apparatus invented by Mr. Siemens, on the principle of his pyrometer, but modified so as to be adapted for the indication of moderate temperatures. Vitality is drawn somewhat freely from the hands of the medium at the beginning of a form *seance*, and we have reason to suppose that not a little is abstracted from the spine; mediums often complain of coldness in the back, and of their backs beginning to ache towards the close of a *seance*. If it be found that at the beginning of a

powerful *seance* the temperature of the whole body of the medium is lowered, but more especially the temperature of the hands and of the back, it is evident that a phenomenon is presented which no impostor can imitate. Even those spirits who are not truthful, and are not endowed with good qualities, and who, to save themselves trouble, have possibly sometimes shown their mediums as spirits, must in playing such tricks draw vitality from the medium before they can gain sufficient power to dress them up, and in drawing that power may lower the temperature of the hands of the instrument they use. Consequently, by making careful observations of temperature, it is possible, as we have already pointed out, to take the responsibility of bad acts of this kind off the shoulders of the unfortunate medium, and to fix it upon the spirits. Spirit hands are sometimes formed without perceptibly reducing the temperature of the hands of the medium, perhaps because the vitality which animates the spirit hand may be drawn from the whole body of the medium and not from the bodily hand only; but when a full form is materialised, the drain upon vital energy is so great that the body of the medium perhaps invariably grows cold, and the materialised form not being able to abstract all the vitality from the body of the medium is cold also, but slowly grows warmer as the *seance* progresses. The spirits also draw more or less vitality from some of the sitters at *seances* for physical manifestations, so any experiments to ascertain temperatures ought to be made when very few sitters are present, so that the effects upon the medium may be more distinct, consequently more readily tabulated.

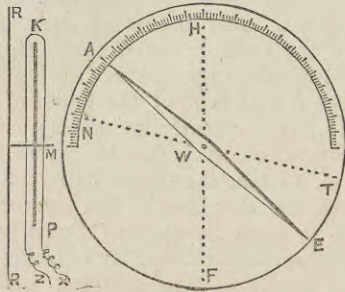
A good physiologist might possibly detect changes in the bodies of mediums during *seances*, which changes no impostor could produce artificially.

ELECTRICAL TESTS POPULARLY EXPLAINED.

Now that the hands and sometimes the bodies of mediums are occasionally duplicated while the mediums are in dark cabinets by themselves, Mr. Varley's electrical test to prove that the hands of the sensitives are not presented as materialised spirit hands is rising into great importance, the more especially because tricky spirits can get mediums out of any kind of material bonds with sealed knots, and can put them back as they were at first, with all the knots and seals intact. The plan was, therefore, devised of making the medium form part of an electrical circuit, so that if his hands or arms should become detached, even for half a second, from the wires, the circumstance would instantly be revealed by the indicating instruments outside the cabinet. Many Spiritualists not versed in electrical subjects have desired that the nature of the galvanometer test should be explained to the public in a more simple manner than has been done in these pages, and that reasonable desire it is the object of the present article to gratify.

The principles involved can be more easily explained by calling attention to the common instead of the reflecting galvanometer. In accompanying cut, Z is a wire passing up one side of a magnetic needle, over it at K, and down again on the other side to X. The needle can turn freely on its axis M, and supposing the part of the apparatus already described to be enclosed in a box to protect it from injury, a light needle R R is attached to the same axis, but outside the box, so as to indicate the motions of the heavier though smaller

needle within. The lower half P of the inner needle being heavier than the upper part, the needle retains a vertical position so long as it is not acted upon by electricity. The light needle R R, of which a front view is shown at A E, will thus hang vertically in the direction H F so long as no electricity passes.



When a motionless magnetic needle is free to turn in any direction, and an electrical current is sent along a wire placed parallel to but not touching the needle, the needle has a tendency to place it-

self at a right angle to the wire, and the amount of the deflection thus produced is greater with a strong than with a weak current.

For instance, let a current of electricity be passed along a wire which is fixed in the vertical direction H F, the needle will swing round notwithstanding that it is heaviest at the lower end E, and will take up the position say of A E, or N T.

An electrical current is sent along the wire when desired, by connecting the ends of the wire Z X with opposite poles of a galvanic battery. Or a medium may take hold of a brass handle soldered to the wire at X, by one hand, and with the other hand hold another handle connected by wire with one of the poles of the battery, so that the electrical current must pass through his body, which thus fills the gap between the handles in the metallic circuit.

But as his body is a worse conductor of electricity than a thick copper wire, the current passes less freely, so the needle instead of being deflected, say to N T by the current, will be thrown from its normal vertical position no further say than A E, where it will rest, trembling slightly as the medium clasps the handles with more or less firmness.

Let the medium unclasp one or both of the handles for the fraction of a second, the electrical circuit will be broken, and the needle outside the cabinet fall back to the position H F.

Let him with his mouth and in the dark connect the two handles with a metallic wire (abstracted from his coat-tail pocket by sleight of teeth), so that he can afterwards remove his hands from the handles without breaking the electrical circuit, the wire being a better conductor than his body the electrical current will then flow more freely, and the needle take up the position N T, thus revealing to the spectators outside what has been done.

Further, suppose the medium to be an accomplished electrician, and to try some plan of substituting a resistance approaching that of his own body, the needle would be violently agitated while the fixing operations were going on, as was the case recently at the house of Mr. Crookes, when two Fellows of the Royal Society tried this scheme.

A reflecting galvanometer is a much more sensitive instrument than the common galvanometer. The magnetic needle is made of a little piece of watch-spring, weighing sometimes but three or four grains; it can swing horizontally while suspended by its centre at the end of a single cocoon fibre; the normal position of the

needle is in the direction of the magnetic north and south, for just the same reason that the mariner's compass takes up that position.

As it would be impossible to read off the slight motions, resembling tremblings, of this little needle with comfort, a small mirror of silvered mica about the size of a threepenny piece, is fixed to it with a fragment of wax. A ray of light is thrown upon this mirror, which reflects it as a spot upon a straight ivory scale, say eighteen inches long, and two feet from the mirror, so that every time the mirror moves but a little, the reflected tongue of light moves, say an inch or two on the scale, so that the amount of its oscillations can be read off with ease. Sir William Thomson invented this instrument, and it is so sensitive that an electrical current too feeble to give a shock, or a spark, or to be tasted when sent through the tongue, can be passed through 3,000 miles of Atlantic cable, and its arrival at the other end be indicated by the aid of the reflecting galvanometer. A weaker current may be employed in this experiment than that generated by placing a penny on the top of the tongue, and a piece of zinc below it, with their outer edges touching; the feeble current thus produced gives a peculiar taste in the mouth, for the human tongue is one of the most sensitive of electrical recording instruments.

Before closing this notice it is a matter of duty to call public attention to the good which Mr. William Crookes has done to the cause of Spiritualism. None but scientific men need of necessity mix up their Spiritualism with their daily business; a man on the Stock Exchange may proclaim his Spiritualism everywhere during the evening, although he would be ruined did he force it upon his clients and competitors in business hours. But as the professional character and qualifications of a scientific man consist in his being recognised as an accurate observer of the facts of nature, it follows that in attesting the improbable truths of Spiritualism, he introduces the unpopular subject into the business of his daily life, so thereby runs greater risk of loss of reputation among his brethren, and avows his convictions under heavier penalties than do others. Mr. Crookes has not been afraid to avow the most unbelievable facts of Spiritualism when they have occurred under those test conditions which physicists have a right within certain limits to demand, and if he has not proclaimed himself a Spiritualist, are not many of the most experienced of our body constrained to admit that the "spirit identity" part of the subject is as yet the weakest of the whole, although facts are accumulating to substantiate this branch of Spiritualism as completely as all the rest?

Mr. D. CAMERON, of Lochiel, dined with the Queen last Saturday. Sir William Dunbar, Bart., attended the Queen's levee last week. The Comtesse Eleonore de Sayn-Wittgenstein visited the Queen at Windsor Castle last Monday, and returned to London on Tuesday with the Prince and Princess of Wales, and King Francis and Queen Marie of Naples. The Countess of Caithness and Count de Medina Pomar are still in Italy.

IS IT SO?—*The Hampshire Independent* says—"The more I hear of Spiritualism, the more I am inclined to think it a delusion on the part of the many, and an imposture on the part of the few. Nothing could be less conclusive than the evidence which is forthcoming for most of the alleged manifestations. Take any number of *The Spiritualist*, for instance, and you will read how such and such a medium was put into a trance, and while in that state declared that she saw so and so, who told her this and that, which is simply no evidence at all."

SPIRITUALISM IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

PHYSICAL manifestations seem to be gaining ground on the Continent. The experiments of the Baroness Von Vay in Austria, with Mme. Pucher in the cabinet, as already related in this journal, are being continued with success; and in Paris, at the circles of Mr. Firman, the ordinary movements of objects, playing of various musical instruments, hand-touching and similar well-known phenomena, are being produced with regularly increasing power. A little Indian spirit is also said to appear sometimes in the light through Mr. Firman's mediumship. A Russian gentleman, M. N. de Lvoff, obtained from the Comte de Bullet the assurance that he had, after sitting *daily* with Mr. Firman for several months, seen in a lighted room, the complete materialised forms of five members of his own family, who came and pressed his hand, talked familiarly of their private affairs, and presented him with bouquets of flowers materialised by them. M. de Lvoff determined to follow the example of the Count, and after sitting fifteen consecutive days with Mr. Firman, had the pleasure of seeing the complete form of his sister, whom he was permitted to kiss on the hands and cheek, while "she pressed her cheek against mine, and tried to calm my joy, which amounted almost to pain."

It would be of paramount interest and a gain to the science of Spiritualism if some reliable observer who has witnessed the materialisations in London through Miss Cook and Mr. Williams, could observe and report with equal accuracy on the points of similarity and difference in these alleged full-form manifestations in the French capital.

The second edition of the Baron du Potet's book, *Magie*, is about to appear, with a preface in which he tells men of science that they are welcome to matter as their monopoly, since he has perceived in nature that agency which they ignore, that secret law which alone can prove to men of sense the immortality of the soul and the existence of a God. The German translation of Mr. A. R. Wallace's *Defence of Modern Spiritualism*, published in the *Fortnightly Review*, is appearing in monthly parts in the *Psychic Studies*. A correspondence in the same journal between Mr. Christian Reimers, of Manchester, and Mr. G. C. Wittig, on the subject of the ring-test so frequently given in our spiritual circles, but which the Leipsic writer thinks is *too much* to believe, is illustrative of the lack, in Germany, of those ordinary phenomena with which investigators in England are becoming so familiar. It would surely be worth the while of such mediums as Messrs. Bastian and Taylor to make a lengthened tour on the Continent, so as to bring our hard-working German brethren up to a level with ourselves in the matter of phenomena. They would then be able to give us invaluable aid in working out the problem of Spiritualism from the mental side, the leaning of the German school of thought being towards the philosophic, as ours is towards the practical, solution of things. The second part of the *Report of the Dialectical Society*, translated by Mr. G. C. Wittig, has just been published by M. Alexander Aksakof.

The *Annali dello Spiritismo in Italia*, edited by Niceforo Filalete, and published at Turin, takes as its motto the *dictum* of Arago: "He who asserts that, outside of the domain of pure mathematics, anything is impossible, lacks a knowledge of the first principles

of logic." The *Annali* is a thoughtfully-written journal, from which we hope to give some extracts in a future article.

Correspondence.

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

REMARKABLE EVIDENCE OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

SIR,—In *The Spiritualist* of Dec. 11th, 1874, you printed a letter from me, a letter the main portion of which, in view of the information elicited by it, I will ask you to reproduce:—

In the month of August last, I was staying with Dr. Speer, at Shanklin, Isle of Wight. We had a number of sittings, and at one of them a spirit communicated, who gave his name as Abraham Florentine. He said that he had been concerned in the war of 1812, and that he had lately entered spirit-life at Brooklyn, U. S. A., on August 5th, at the age of eighty-three years, one month, and seventeen days. We had some difficulty at first in making out whether the month and days referred to the age or to the length of his illness, but he returned on the following evening, and cleared up the difficulty.

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

Will the American papers copy and enable me to verify my facts and guesses?

M. A. (OXON.)

Mr. Epes Sargent, to whom I privately communicated the facts of the case, was kind enough to insert for me a paragraph in the *Banner of Light* of Dec. 12th, 1874, embodying the same inquiry. The result was to elicit what the *Banner* calls "one of the most singular and well attested evidences of spirit return which it has been our good fortune to chronicle during a long experience." The matter may best be stated in the words used by the writer in the *Banner of Light* of Feb. 13th, 1875. It will be observed that a misconception as to the meaning of the words "a month and seventeen days" occurs at first, but this is subsequently cleared up, though, according to the widow's account, the age should have been 83 years, 1 month, 27 days. This, however, does not affect the case of identity.

The original inquiry in the *Banner* was this, and the result is quoted direct from that newspaper:—

"At a *seance* in England lately a spirit-communication was received by means of the tilting of a heavy table. The whole table seemed alive, and as though it were being disintegrated in the very fibres of the wood. The gist of the communication was that the spirit was one Abraham Florentine, who died at Brooklyn, N. Y., August 5th, 1874. He said he was in the war of 1812, and then, after an interval, added, 'a month and seventeen days.' Can any of our Brooklyn friends inform us whether they ever heard of Abraham Florentine?"

"No sooner had that issue of our paper found its way to the public, than we received by due course of mail the following reply, which speaks for itself:—

To the Editor of the "*Banner of Light*."

In the *Banner* to-day received here, is a paragraph concerning a spirit who manifested through the medium of a dining-table at some place in England, and gave the name of Abraham Florentine, a soldier in the war of 1812. You make inquiry whether any one ever heard of Abraham Florentine. I cannot specifically answer that question, but having been engaged some fourteen years since in auditing the claims of the soldiers of 1812, in the State of New York, I am yet in possession of the records of all such who made claims for service in that war. In those records appears the name of Abraham Florentine, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and a full record of his service can be obtained in the office of the Adjutant-General of the State of New York, in claim No. 11,518, war of 1812. I think, however, that he there claimed for a longer term of service than that he gave in England, his allowance being for 58 dollars. Let your light shine.

WILSON MELLAR, Claim Agent.

Washington, D.C., Dec. 13th, 1874.

"Pursuant to the advice of our legal correspondent we addressed a letter to the Adjutant-General S. N. Y., asking for the facts, without, however, giving any reason for our request, and received the following courteous reply:—

General Head-quarters, State of New York, Adjutant-General's Office, Albany, Jan. 25th, 1875.

COLBY AND RICH, No. 9, MONTGOMERY-PLACE, BOSTON.—Sirs,—In reply to your communication dated January 22, I have to furnish you the

following information from the records of this office: Abraham Florentine, private in Captain Nicole's Company, 1st Regiment New York Militia, Col. Dodge, volunteered at New York, on or about the 2nd of September, 1814, served three months and was honourably discharged. He received Land Warrant No. 63,365, for 40 acres. The above is taken from the soldier's sworn statement, and not from official records. Very respectfully,—
FRANKLIN TOWNSEND, Adjutant-General.

"Those who are acquainted, through experience as investigators, with the workings of the Spiritualistic circle, will bear in mind that the correct giving of dates is ever a matter of difficulty on the part of the returning intelligence, and therefore the slight discrepancy existing between the length of service given by the spirit Florentine and that embodied in the record, is easily explainable. But the main facts are established: Here is a spirit who manifests under the most peculiar circumstances, and in the most forcible manner, to a circle in a foreign land, whose members are all strangers to the fact that such a being as himself ever trod the planet; a member of that circle asks through an English paper that proof (if any exists in America) may be given him as to the verity of said spirit's assertions, and the same inquiry reaches us by private letter; we then call upon the public for information concerning one of whom we have never before heard; we receive in reply—from a legal gentleman in Washington, whose acquaintanceship we have never had the pleasure of making—the information which leads us to address the Adjutant-General of the State of New York (who is also a total stranger to us), and are assured from data existing at his office that such a soldier did serve in the war of 1812, as claimed. The theory of collusion is untenable here, as the several parties who have given in the testimony are strangers to each other. The chain of evidence is complete. Let those who think they can explain this occurrence on any other hypothesis than that maintained by the Spiritual Philosophy make the attempt."

When that statement appeared, my friend, Dr. Crowell, was kind enough to take steps to obtain additional verification from Florentine's widow. I append his letter, published in the *Banner*, Feb. 20th, 1875:—

To the Editor of the "*Banner of Light*."

SIR,—Upon reading in the *Banner* of the 18th inst. the article headed "Abraham Florentine—Verification of his Message," I examined my Brooklyn Directory, and there found the name of Abraham Florentine, with the address 119, Kosciusko-street. Being at the moment disengaged, and interested in pursuing the subject, I at once sought the street and number indicated, and my application at the door was met by an elderly lady, of whom I inquired whether Mr. Abraham Florentine resided there. The reply was, "He did reside here, but is now dead."

Ques.—May I inquire whether you are Mrs. Florentine, his widow?

Ans.—I am.

Upon my here remarking that I would be pleased to obtain some information about her late husband, she invited me to a seat in the parlour, and our conversation was then resumed.

Q.—May I ask when he died?

A.—Last August.

Q.—At what time in that month?

A.—On the fifth.

Q.—What was his age at time of decease?

A.—Eighty-three.

Q.—Had he passed his eighty-third year?

A.—Yes; his eighty-third birth-day was on the previous eighth of June.

Q.—Was he engaged in any war?

A.—Yes, in the war of 1812.

Q.—Was he naturally active and self-reliant, or the reverse?

A.—He had a will of his own, and was rather impetuous.

Q.—Was his last illness of long or short duration, and did he suffer much?

A.—He was confined to his bed for a year or more, and suffered a good deal.

I have here given the questions and answers in their relative order and in their exact words, from notes taken at the time. During a slight pause following the last answer, Mrs. Florentine, who appeared to be a very respectable lady of about sixty-five years of age and of American birth, inquired my object in asking these questions, when I read to her the article in the *Banner*, which evidently puzzled though it interested her, and I then entered into a full explanation of its purport, greatly to her surprise. She then fully endorsed every line of it, and I left, thanking her, and promising, at her request, to send her a copy of the last number of your journal.

It will be observed that while the spirit of Mr. Florentine states his age to have been eighty-three years, one month, and seventeen days, according to his widow's account it should be twenty-seven days; but this discrepancy is hardly worthy of notice, as either he or she may here be equally mistaken.

As the case stood, before this additional confirmation of its truth was obtained, it certainly was a remarkable verification of a spirit-message, but as now presented it appears to me the evidence is conclusive.

I would add that I have some acquaintance with "M. A. (Oxon)," the gentleman in London who applied in *The Spiritualist* for information of Abraham Florentine, and I can assure your readers that he occupies a very high literary position, and his character is a guarantee against collusion and deception, and I take pleasure in contributing to establish the identity of the communicating spirit.—Yours truly,
EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.
Brooklyn, N. Y., Feb. 15th, 1875.

To me personally it is extremely interesting to find my queries verified by facts. I never doubted that the case would

turn out, as so many others have done, to be true, but the interesting point of observation to me was as to the correctness of the deductions I drew from the singular way in which the communication was made. The vehemence of the tilts and knocks, the (to us) entirely novel mode of communicating, and the evident earnestness of the spirit, and its eagerness in trying to "have its say" were very striking. Doubtless, what will strike your readers more, is the singularly conclusive nature of the evidence respecting the actual return of the departed. Most undoubtedly none of us had ever heard of Abraham Florentine, nor had we any of us friends in America who could have given us news of what went on there, nor, if we had, could they have mentioned to us a fact in which we should have felt no interest. As a plain matter of truth, I repeat that both name and facts were entirely unknown to any of us. And this is one among many instances in my own experience, which I hope to gather up, and record in its place.
M.A. (Oxon).

March 10th, 1875.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION—THE NEW PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

"Is our faith on the sand or on a rock? Is it too brittle to bear touching?"
ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN, 1850.

SIR,—In your paper of this day, March 12th, you insert the prospectus of a proposed psychological society, the object of the society being "the scientific investigation of psychology in all its branches," but "all theological discussion to be strictly excluded." Now surely this is a mistake. The analysis and nature of the religious sentiment and belief are very important branches of psychology, and theology and religion cannot be well separated, though they can be distinguished, no doubt. Then why not discuss, after a scientific method, calmly and deliberately, the psychology of theology, since all that affects or concerns the human mind must be considered as a branch of the science of man and mind? The religious question is one that Spiritualists very freely discuss, and it is not to be avoided. In literary institutions religion and politics may, as a general rule, be excluded; but the investigation of psychology brings you at once face to face with the great question of religion, which is one of the most deeply interesting facts in regard to human nature, and the psychology special to man. The matter is freely discussed in the Dialectical Society, and no harm has come of it. Religion cannot be excluded in psychology, any more than the Geological Society could prevent the facts of geology bearing on the Bible account of creation; nay, even at the Royal Institution we had Professor Max Müller delivering lectures to crowded audiences, including members of the royal family, on the Science of Religion. Then what folly to suppose that the special investigation of man's mind can exclude such a topic. The thing is impossible, and cannot be. For the society to purpose the promulgation of any particular religion, would be quite another matter; science cannot be crippled in that way, and members must be left in perfect freedom. The analysis of the religious sentiment is one of the first questions I should care to write upon, that is, "on the source of religious belief, and its psychological consequences." You might as well try to exclude questions of moral or of political government, or of the affections, or of the relations of the sexes. There must be freedom of thought and freedom of expression, provided that everything unnecessarily offensive be avoided, and any member transgressing would be overruled by the sense of the meeting and the good taste of the chairman; further, as a matter of course, no paper would be read that had not been approved by the committee. I think, sir, you would do good service if you would favour us with your judgment on this deeply important question. But that there should be a society of the kind is what Mrs. Hardinge and Spiritualists in general have long desired. But in the name of science, freedom, and common sense, do not let religion be once more set up as a bar to progress.

There is one other matter that I would urge on the framers of this new society—that ladies be as freely admitted as men, as in the Geographical and Dialectical Societies, and as it was with the Phrenological Society,—which was, in fact, a Psychological Society, and of which I was the last president. Spiritualists are setting a good example in the matter, with such leading spirits as Mrs. Hardinge and Mrs. Tappan. The time is past for excluding women from scientific discussion; and that women should be the companions of men in most things, particularly of an intellectual character, will aid true civilisation, and tend towards social felicity and harmony.

The secularists, again, are setting an example in this respect, and I hope the psychologists will follow it. The Royal Institution is another example in point. At the Dialectical Society, should a member observe that he cannot enter on so and so in the presence of ladies, he is at once hushed down—as indicating that such an observation and reserve are quite out of place. See the noble women now devoted to the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, that admirable Mrs. Butler taking the lead. Whether they are right, practically and in principle, or not, is another matter. I only wish to show how women are free to discuss all social questions whatsoever, both from an intellectual and moral point of view; and the real want of delicacy is rather in the exclusion from topics on which women are quite as much interested as men.

HENRY G. ATKINSON.

Hotel de la Gare, Boulogne-sur-Mer.

[We think it would be best to say nothing on the subject in the prospectus, but to leave the Council and Chairman to settle each case on its own merits.—Ed.]

MRS. COLLIER'S MEDIUMSHIP—A SEANCE WITH CHILDREN—
WHENCE CAME THE BON-BONS?

SIR,—Will you kindly grant me space in your widely-circulated newspaper to draw the attention of its readers to the fact that in a few weeks we in Birmingham shall lose the services of one of our best mediums.

Those friends who have been privileged to sit with Mrs. John Collier, will agree with me, that the phenomena through her mediumship are far beyond suspicion, and are sometimes of a most startling character. Not infrequently tests of spirit identity are given to the circle. Mrs. Collier is *not a professional medium*, hence I can have no other object than to give "honour to whom honour is due." A large circle of sincere friends here feels great regret at the parting, as Mrs. Collier is a lady whose kindness of disposition and open-heartedness at once win over all who have the privilege of her acquaintance.

Some little time ago, when Mrs. Collier was on a visit at my house, she very kindly promised the children that she would sit for them, especially as they had not been admitted to our general circle: they were considered too young. They looked forward with anxiety to the time, as not one bit of fear of spirits disturbs them. They were arranged in a circle—four of them, myself, mamma, and Mrs. Collier, seven altogether. Presently loud sonorous raps were heard, then the bell on the table commenced ringing, and several articles, including a large inkstand, books, &c., which were on the table, became animated and moved about. Our esteemed spirit friend, Mr. B. Hawkes, late of Birmingham, soon gave unmistakable proofs of his presence; he held a lively conversation by means of raps on the table. One of my daughters said, "Mr. Hawkes used to bring us something in his pocket when he came to see us, didn't he, pa?" "Yes," rapped out Mr. Hawkes. "Yes," said I. "Do you think he could bring us something now?" asked the same child. "Yes," thundered Mr. Hawkes on the table. I then put the question, "Mr. Hawkes, will you try to bring the children something to-night?" "Yes" came again in loud knocks. We waited about three minutes, when there came such a crash upon the table, and crowds of little lights of a most brilliant description; but so soon as the articles reached the table all was darkness again; in another instant the same was repeated. Mrs. Franklin, myself, and children saw the stream of light as it flashed from the corner of the ceiling. Thus came seven lots of bon-bons, of a superior description, of about one pound in weight altogether. As there were seven sitters, one lot came for each. When the gas was turned up, the children were in ecstasies at the sight presented, the table being literally covered with sweets. During the sitting my youngest child, a little blue-eyed seven-year-old, said—"I feel some one touching my face and head; now they are patting my back." "Do you feel afraid?" "Oh dear no! pa; the hand feels so soft, and they touch me so gently and stroke my face so lovingly." She might well be without fear, for it was the touch of her spirit-sister, "Lucy," who so frequently visits our circle, bringing flowers for her mamma, and "laying her gentle hands in mine." The children thought it was delightful to be so close to our spirit friends, and to feel them so close to us. I wish every family could be so blessed with the tangible presence of the loved ones gone before.

On another occasion, under strict test conditions and through Mrs. Collins' mediumship, half a sheet of note paper was held under the table, when instantly was written on it—"Dear Mamma—Your loving little girl, Lucy." This was a

note from our child who passed away from earth some fourteen years ago, at the age of four months. We then became deeply interested. One friend was anxious to learn what sort of a girl she was; another was equally anxious to know what she was doing. Another half-sheet of note paper was placed under the table and held as before, when the following was instantly written:—"I have learnt to sing, to play music, and to dance. Mamma and papa will be proud." These two direct spirit messages in direct spirit writing Mrs. Franklin and myself highly prize; we have sealed them up, so that they shall not sustain injury.

So I might go on, but I must draw the line, or else you will. In conclusion, I would say we have few good mediums in this country, while America can boast of quite an army of them; hence Mrs. Collier's Birmingham friends deeply regret the change she is about to make, and should she find the land across the water not congenial to her feelings or pursuits, she will meet with a most hearty welcome among friends here if she will return.

AARON FRANKLIN.

Rock-place, Victoria-road, Aston-park,
Birmingham, March 9th, 1875.

AID TO MEDIUMS.

SIR,—I beg to suggest to my brother and sister professional mediums the idea of offering to preside at the tea-tables on the occasion of the benefit *soirée* to be given to our old and needy co-worker, Mr. Wallace. I myself will do so, and any other mediums who will join should please send in their names to the secretaries. I also suggest that the surplus of some of the National Association *soirées* shall be given every three months towards raising a fund for old and indigent mediums, and of Spiritualists who have worked for the glorious cause until their vital forces are exhausted, and, to the shame and disgrace of the believers, are left in want.

LOTTIE FOWLER.

2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury, W.C., March 8th, 1875.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—But few people seek to develop their powers of mediumship from those elevated notions which should be the paramount intention and aspiration of the soul—to advance themselves in spiritual perfection and beauty; to develop, in short, the *angel within*. This is a lifelong work, beginning here to be continued in heaven; and the attempt to open the spiritual senses or faculties—which is the characteristic of so-called mediumship—should be made with the object of furthering, or assisting that work. We find a few persons, however, actuated by so many lower motives, and seeking "development" with so much incautiousness, that they sometimes fall victims to their own folly and imprudence, becoming disabled for longer or shorter periods, under attacks of brain fever, delirium, or insanity. These cases are, it is true, comparatively rare; but they serve as an indication that there are certain dangers attending the cultivation of open intercourse with the spirit world, against which it is essential to take precautions.

I contemplate with edification, and more or less personal profit, the beautiful evidences given by some individuals of a happy and healthful pursuit of mediumship, in which they have attained to an apparent superexcellence in some form or other, of speaking, writing, drawing, or powers of revelation, prophecy, or healing. Instruments in the hands of beneficent spirits, they are made the benefactors or instructors of their fellow-beings, and through them, as through prepared channels, the blessings of Spiritualism descend to all. Some of these selected instruments become obviously purified and elevated spiritually; while some few, who are filling, unquestionably, offices of usefulness in the cause, fail to give such high indications, though they doubtless profit in some way.

The dangers attendant upon seeking open communion with spirits by the cultivation of mediumship, almost always rest with the seekers themselves. Already the victims of some mental or spiritual deformity, they, by their manner of seeking, lay themselves open to chastisements. Sometimes, in the excess of frivolity, they desire only to amuse themselves in an assemblage of fashionable idlers; sometimes an ambitious egotism lies at the root of their endeavours to obtain communion with spirits; sometimes they are wildly enthusiastic, and foolishly credulous; sometimes, weakly submissive and without strength of character, they become the tools of spirits as they would of designing mortals, did they yield the same unreasonable submission; sometimes they are too dogmatic and

stubborn to take advice from the more experienced; and sometimes they have a lurking hereditary tendency to mental aberration, which might be excited under any circumstances. Whatever may be their errors, innate deformity of spirit, or constitutional weakness, the baffled votaries may look within for the cause of their non-success, or misfortunes.

It sometimes happens, however, that the unsympathetic or antagonistic surroundings of those seeking development in spiritual gifts operates upon them injuriously. They are of higher spiritual natures than the coarser-grained beings about them; it is a positive necessity with them to cultivate the mediumship which is latent within; it is as if the unchained spirit struggled for freedom, beating against the bars of its material cage, until permitted to soar aloft, either for short flights from earth to return again, or eternally emancipated by the death of the body, to take that longer flight from which there is no return. In the effort to live out their God-given natures, however, they meet either with coarse jeering and ridicule, sneering indifference and disbelief, or peremptory prohibition. Nervous, sensitive, and delicately constituted, they perhaps receive a shock to the system which either induces a low state of health and nervous depression, or the conflict ends summarily in insanity or death. Sometimes it is the beloved daughter of the family, or the idolized son; or it might be the mis-mated wife of a gross, sensual worldling; or a lonely youth whose poverty may have condemned him to associate with persons surrounded by low spirits, whose influence operates upon him prejudicially. It is well if the victims to such unwholesome surroundings be not the possessors of property, for this too often becomes a temptation to some wicked guardian, relative, or husband, to hurry them off to the safe seclusion of a lunatic asylum, where the proper means to restore them can never be taken, while their property is managed and enjoyed for them. CATHERINE WOODFORDE.

Bernard-street, Russell-square, W.C.

A SEANCE WITH MISS SHOWERS.

SIR,—Allow me to record the particulars of a morning seance with Miss Showers, held under test conditions, partly in daylight, and under most favourable and exceptional circumstances, there being only three persons present, viz., Mrs. and Miss Showers and the writer. I mean by "favourable circumstances" that there was only one "investigator," for I believe it has often been observed that when many individuals are congregated, each one probably requiring his own particular test, the manifestations are frequently less decided and less satisfactory. I also find it, as a rule, to be a prudent plan to allow the controlling spirits to choose their own tests, as they evidently know what they can best do, under the then existing conditions.

On Thursday, the 4th of March, I paid a morning visit to Mrs. Showers, when Miss Showers kindly allowed me to try some experiments.

I asked her to place the points of the fingers of one hand on a heavy table, and at the same time I did the same on the opposite side. Immediately the table was violently thrown over towards me, nearly down to the floor, then, at my request, it righted itself and turned over in a similar manner towards Miss Showers. The legs rapped out answers of "Yes" and "No" by strongly beating on the floor. The medium then placed the point of her forefinger on the top rail of a mahogany chair, which, at my request, rocked to and fro and then rapidly turned round, first to the right and then to the left.

All this occurred in daylight, and must have convinced any investigator that such rapid and decided movements could not have been caused by "unconscious muscular action."

Peter's voice was now heard, and he said he would give me some capital tests.

I tied each of Miss Showers' wrists with narrow strips of calico, and then fastened her hands together behind her back so tightly that the flesh was deeply marked and very cold when I cut off the bindings at the end of the seance. The medium wished me to seal the knots with sealing-wax, but this I did not think necessary to do. I next fastened her bound hands to a staple securely fixed in the wall—she being seated on a music-stool—and then finished by tying her neck fast to another staple. Her feet were tied together by Mrs. Showers.

Having placed a narrow strip of calico round the medium's neck, I allowed the ends to hang down over her shoulders.

A very thick curtain hung across the room, partitioned off a sufficient space to form the cabinet in which we were to be seated.

I then placed myself on a footstool by the side of Miss Showers, and held her bound hands in mine.

Soon after I had taken my position Peter called to Mrs. Showers, who was in the next room, to come and open the curtain. I stood up, and found that the strip of calico had been tied round the neck of the medium in a remarkably neat bow.

The next experiments were made without my holding the medium's hands. My pocket-handkerchief was placed on her lap, with a needle and thread on it.

I asked Peter to sew something up in the handkerchief. In a very short space of time he desired me to open the curtain and to look in, when I found that he had sewn up a piece of the braided hair on the top of the medium's head into the handkerchief, leaving the needle in, and the end of the handkerchief hanging down on the medium's face.

I then placed a board on a chair, with a hammer and nail on it, near the medium, and immediately after the curtain had been closed the hammer was heard hard at work. Then, being desired to look in, I found the nail had been driven fast into the board.

I asked Peter to write me a letter, and placed a piece of paper and a pencil on the board.

Soon afterwards I heard a scratching sound, as if by some person writing, and being again desired to look in, found he had written the following words:—

"Dear Captain James,—I am glad to have given you pleasure. I hope you will often come and sit with Rosie." (Rosie is the name he has given his medium.)

After each experiment I examined the fastenings of the hands and neck, and found them to be as tight as at first.

On the same morning, John King, at my request, wrote some verses through the medium's hand in answer to my questions. They were written off very rapidly, the medium talking to me all the time, and without looking at the paper until her hand stopped.

It appears to me that the great value of Miss Showers' mediumship consists in the interesting variety of the manifestations.

Here we have rappings, tiltings, the raising of tables from the floor, all done in the most marked and decided manner, and certainly not to be accounted for by either electricity or "unconscious muscular action." Then we have spirit voices, both talking and singing, so that beautiful quartettes, trios, and duets are sung in Peter's baritone, Florence's soprano, and Lenore's contralto voices, with the occasional assistance of the aged lady, who, when in this world, probably prided herself on her musical talents, and, lastly, the child-voice of Isabel. Then we have the direct writing by Peter, and the writing of poetry by John King controlling the hand of his medium.

Lastly, the marvellous materialisations of several distinct forms, with their respective dresses, the latter objects not a little puzzling to the most experienced inquirers as to their origin and composition, and as to what becomes of them when their wearers have vanished.

J. JAMES.

Jersey Villas, Tottenham, March 13th, 1875.

GUARANTEEING GENUINE MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—A short time since you were good enough to insert the particulars of a very satisfactory seance I had with Miss Fowler, and which to me as an investigator was very gratifying.

I have read, with no little annoyance, the details of the successful fraud of the Holmes's in America, and although to Spiritualists the facts may not matter much, yet to those who are earnestly endeavouring to ascertain the truth, and who have read Mr. Robert Dale Owen's works, the fact of his being so easily deceived, causes a painful feeling.

Now the first seance I ever attended was at the Holmes's, where I went as a stranger visiting London, and it occurred to me then that the manner in which they conducted their seance was such as to make any investigator uncertain whether the results obtained were due to trickery or not; and I should have come away in a very unsatisfactory state of mind had I not the good fortune to meet Mr. D. D. Home there, who very kindly made my acquaintance, and asked me to accompany him to where he was staying, which I did, and there had tests given me by Mr. Home in a trance state. That decided me to go on with my investigation, and if Mr. Home reads your paper I can assure him the stranger he welcomed then has a very grateful recollection of his kindness.

It is greatly to your credit, and the credit of English Spiritualists generally, that the Holmes's were decided to be

untrustworthy, and the statement to that effect made by you goes far to counteract the feeling caused by their detection in America, at least I find it so amongst my own friends to whom I mention these matters.

Now as far as my experience goes, a great and growing interest is being taken in Spiritualism amongst non-Spiritualists, and it has occurred to me that your National Association would very greatly benefit both Spiritualists and the public generally if it were possible for it to submit all persons professing to be *public* mediums, to such tests as would be entirely satisfactory as to whether they really possess mediumistic power or not, and when the Association was satisfied, to publish the result. No honest medium would surely refuse to place himself, or herself, in the hands of the Association for such a purpose. As to genuine mediums, such a course would be of great service: it would benefit them, and prevent a great deal of imposture.

Mr. Crookes, I see, has again done very much to encourage investigators. His recent experiments with Mrs. Fay have been copied from the last number of *The Spiritualist* into the *Eastern Daily Press*, a paper that has a large circulation in the eastern counties, and which published the "Katie King American deception." Mr. Crookes's account will do much to annul the bad effects caused to its readers by the former quotation.

Nothing is more surprising to me than to have seen a difference of opinion as to the effect of regularly organising the movement. An Association must have more power and weight than isolated individuals; the every-day experience of life shows this most conclusively. And perhaps nothing your Association can do would more really benefit the movement than by undertaking and determining to prevent imposture as far as possible, and to expose any pretended mediums who may be detected in trickery by it. This an association can do much more effectively than any private individual, and if undertaken by it, it would *alone* fully justify its formation.

REGISTRAR.

March 15, 1875.

[This letter assumes that powerful physical mediumship is always associated with good moral character, whereas unprincipled as well as reliable mediums get wonderful manifestations. By the plan suggested by our correspondent, a "shady" medium might get a certificate for genuine manifestations, and afterwards introduce imposture, so as to place the donors of the certificate in a false position. Moreover a medium is a mesmeric sensitive, and an investigator may first be delighted with him because his departed uncle communicates through him, but afterwards condemn the medium because the said uncle who was a bad man on earth, makes the medium commit certain offences. These notions of certifying mediums, always come from those who have had little experience as to the characteristics of mesmeric sensitives.—Ed.]

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF ALLAN KARDEC'S WORKS.

SIR,—In the current number of *The Spiritualist*, just received, you allude (p. 120) to "the newly discovered powers of sleeping persons." Will you kindly give me room to state that these "powers," as well as the materialisation of spirit-forms, and all the other admirable feats of manifestation now being achieved by our spirit-friends, were fully treated of and lucidly explained, nearly twenty years ago, by the devoted pioneer whose works I shall soon have the happiness of bringing within reach of English readers?

The chapter headed "Emancipation of the Soul," in *The Spirits' Book*, gives the explanation of "Sleep and Dreams; Visits between the Spirits of Living Persons; Occult Transmigration of Thought; Lethargy, Catalepsy, Apparent Death; Somnambulism; Trance; Second Sight." The chapter of *The Medium's Book* headed, "Bi-corporeity," deals with "Apparitions of the Spirits of Living Persons; Doubles; Transfiguration; Invisibility." The chapter of the same book headed, "The Laboratory of the Invisible World," treats, in the same broad and lucid style, of "The Garments of Spirits; Spontaneous Formation of Tangible Objects; Modification of the Properties of Matter; and Curative Action of Animal Magnetism."

The Continental mind is, in general, readily receptive of theoretic demonstration; and therefore the works of Allan Kardec, which set forth the principles of phenomena that were yet to come, could be, and have been, accepted on the Continent before the development of the spirit manifestations they explain and imply. The English mind, on the contrary, usually declines to consider any theory until it has assured itself of the facts assumed by such theory; and it would almost seem that the high intelligences who are directing the great movement of the present day have therefore purposely delayed the presentation of those principles in England, in order to allow that presentation to be preceded, as is now

being done, by the production of phenomena which are the visible and tangible proofs of the truth of the theoretic statements he was employed to elaborate.

ANNA BLACKWELL.

13, Rue Lauriston, Paris, March 7th, 1875.

A SEANCE IN PETERBOROUGH.

SIR,—Dr. Monck visited this city, and gave a *seance* of great phenomenal interest, on Wednesday evening. The meeting took place at the Cromwell-road residence of Mr. Robert Catling; the investigators included eight gentlemen and one lady, all of superior intelligence, but whose names, I am requested not to publish. At the same time, I may remark, that all present, with one exception, testify to the phenomenal genuineness of the *seances*; and the gentleman remaining sceptical—a shrewd secularist of strong positive views—could not accept the manifestations without the imposition of more scientific tests than the medium allowed upon the occasion. This statement is necessary, in deference to the adverse opinions of the dissentient investigator, who, notwithstanding his acute suspicions, remained passive to the conditions of the *seance* during the evening.

After the customary exchange of drawing-room civilities, we sat in the usual fashion; two long tables, covered with a white cloth, and closely backed up to each other, being the consecrated altar of the night's ceremonies. Dr. Monck shared the entire south side of the conjoined tables, placed his hands upon the top, and encouraged the friendly familiarities of conversation and song. In this wise we spent nearly two hours. A few raps only relieved the monotony of the Quaker-like proceedings. "Sing," said Dr. Monck, and we warbled popular melodies in a frightful manner, having only one lady present to represent the angel side of human minstrelsy. As songsters, the Christy's never leave London; and certainly we, as an impromptu choir, shall never leave Peterborough by special invitation, if outsiders respect the ordinary precautions against bad health. But the phenomena came at last, and in the full power of the light. Raps came as plentiful as blackberries, and replied to commonplace questions; the candlestick tilted away from any of the sitters; and two books naked (and afterwards covered with a handkerchief), moved as if influenced by some power in actual contact with them. Said Dr. Monck, "That is your psychic force;" and all the sitters, myself excepted, witnessed such peculiar movements of objects for the first time, and seemed considerably interested.

A dark *seance* followed. All joined hands, Dr. Monck being held to his seat by Mr. Catling and the lady sitter. The only tests put forth, previous to the meeting, being the searching of Dr. Monck by one or more of the influential investigators, the company gave the medium the benefit of sympathetic confidence. Hence we had harmony of feeling, if not scientific proofs of the actual phenomena. The wisdom, or otherwise, of this arrangement I will not here stay to discuss, especially as I can appreciate the delicate psychological conditions under which the more startling results are evolved. Almost as soon as the light was turned out, the usual physical manifestations occurred. The spirit "Samuel" controlled the medium; and, in the comparative darkness, books, papers, and pictures flew in all directions; the accordion was played overhead; the sofa tried to kiss the ceiling; golden lights, finger-shaped, full-handed; and finally, in distinct letters, "Jane" became visible in the darkness. All this time the persons holding Dr. Monck continued to testify that they were fulfilling that responsible duty. Apparently, the medium was levitated, for the familiar, guttural voice of Samuel, addressed us in Artemus Ward fashion, downwards from the ceiling. It was past midnight when the *seance* terminated. What a scene of confusion confounded! The light revealed a *tableau* not unsuggestive of a pantomime scene after the street roughs have pelted the policeman. Everything was disarranged. The phenomena had set in like a tide; and the room and the sitters vividly recalled the "young earthquake's birth" of Byron's stormy muse.

JOHN T. MARKLEY.

Albert-place, Peterborough, March 15th.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOLOGICAL DOGMAS.

SIR,—I am sorry to see that your columns have been lately opened to the discussion of religious questions. I am sorry because I believe such discussions to be an absolute waste of time, and further because I never knew an argument on religion which did not end in a dispute.

I do not care how great toleration and liberality of thought

maybe expressed at the outset; the result, viz., bitterness and mutual contempt, is as certain as mathematics.

What object do the disputants hope to attain? Can they be weak enough to believe that any words of theirs can alter the views of their opponents? Does the freethinker hope—can he possibly wish—to take from the Christian his most treasured possession—his “faith?”

Can the Christian hope to entice back into the captivity of religious dogma, the spirit that has once shaken off the fetters.

Will the mother, on persuasion, part with the little infant that lies in her bosom? Can the eagle be made a denizen of the poultry yard?

I cannot hold you, sir, blameless in this matter. You know that the strife is purposeless—that it is one in which there can be neither victor nor vanquished.

Throw down your warder, then, and bid these quarrelsome folks to be at peace, and to reserve their powers of argument for some better purpose.

MARTIN R. SMITH.

Heathlands, Wimbledon.

SIR,—I quite agree with your correspondent, “A. T.,” as to the desirability of excluding discussions on these subjects, but when you are recommended to exclude my views, because they may possibly startle orthodox outsiders, and diminish the circulation of your paper, I am pleased to find that you consider the interests of truth superior to those of *The Spiritualist*.

The letters of ex-Spiritualists, Mr. Pearce, and Mr. Sutherland, are simply attacks on those who have any confidence in spirits, upon those who do not bow down to and acknowledge the divinity of Christ; and if one side is to be heard, your correspondents must be prepared to hear the views of those who differ from them.

Your correspondent “Hopeful,” urges that because these subjects have been written upon by able writers, who knew nothing of the experiences after death, it is hardly likely that these same able men coming back to us from the world beyond the grave, with all their enlarged experiences (“ghosts” though they be according to your correspondent), are able to tell us anything new!

Seeing that many come to renounce their former belief, and others tell us how happy they are in spite of their non-belief, I think this objection requires no answering.

For the reason that I hold such beliefs to be quite immaterial, I endorse your correspondent's protest against these “profitless wrangles.”

Fritz.

Manchester, March 6th, 1875.

SIR,—I most heartily agree with your correspondents, A. T., Hopeful, and C. C. R. Spiritualism will never be advanced by theological controversy amongst its advocates in the public way proposed. We all know well that it has enough to fight against already, let alone stirring up unnecessary prejudice in the minds of popular Christians. Let every man be persuaded in his own mind as to the truth in questions theological. Spiritualism cannot do much to settle knotty points in these, and if I may make a suggestion, it would be to keep the movement free from such controversy. The energies and efforts of its promoters should be directed to the discovery and exhibition of its facts. We want facts. We have abundance of theory. As for myself I do not care a straw, to hear ever so eloquent an address or oration upon the most ancient angel, demon, or demigod, or of primal and perfect states, which I have no proof had, or has, or will have any real existence. My great want is as much knowledge as possible of the facts of Spiritualism, as they exist. Tell us what *is*. My soul longs to hear something about the spirit state, how its inhabitants live, what they do, where it is situated, what is seen there, and all about it, for we are all going there soon. We do not want high faluting or theological wrangles, and I hope the good sense of the majority will so influence matters as to promote real work, not mere words. I, for one, deeply regret the keen relish some Spiritualists seem to have for the discussion of theological questions, and their tendency to push their peculiar views in the front of things, as if the mind could not properly accept the facts without first either becoming anti-Christian on the one hand, or adopting some particular dogma on the other.

Let well alone. All shades of Christians are half Spiritualists already, why then pursue such a suicidal policy as some do, who shock popular feeling by constantly proclaiming the most cherished doctrines of Christianity false, or else insist upon some dogma. I echo with C. C. R., “a plague on both

your houses.” Let us know what you see and hear and feel, from the spirit world, and we will make dogmas for ourselves. Spiritualism may be accepted by all shades of believers; let its best friends then seek *its* propagation rather than their own little pet crotchets in its name.

INQUIRER.

Edinburgh, March 9th, 1875.

SIR,—I hope that you, as editor, and most of your readers also, will agree with me, in thinking it quite a delusion on the part of Mr. Pearce, to suppose that he has “clearly answered” either of the questions I proposed. He has only done that which I asked him not to do. The sentence which he quotes is one which may convey an almost infinite variety of meanings, and can be of no value as a foundation for a discussion. In composition it is not complete, unless the word “being” is substituted for the word “is.” Whether that would express what is intended I do not know.

Even then, who is to decide what the “spiritual sense” is, or what precise meaning is to be attached to the concluding clause?

I most fully agree with your correspondents, who would desire to see discussions of this kind excluded from your columns; and the real object of my letter a fortnight ago, was to illustrate the inadvisability of entering on them, by eliciting the impossibility of obtaining a definite basis to start from. I think, so far, Mr. Pearce has shown his inability to find one.

EDWARD T. BENNETT.

Betchworth, March 7, 1875.

“Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name, and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God?”—PSALM lxxix. 9, 10.

SIR,—The thinking world are rapidly becoming inquirers as to the source of the mysterious power which is asserting itself on all sides. The first cry which greeted the strange phenomena was “Fraud!” The second, “Imagination!” The third, “Natural laws!” We now are unwillingly forced to acknowledge the existence of spiritual influence. Upon this point science has nothing to say, but the religious world rouses itself, and the battle will henceforth be between the servants of one master. “Spiritualism” no longer is a term expressing the many mysteries that the new light makes manifest. “Religion” is used to signify a multitude of forms of worship; “Spiritualism” includes a multitude of opinions and beliefs.

A man may be a religious man in the eyes of some, a heathen in the opinion of others; so a Spiritualist may be regarded as an agent for good or for evil, according to the religious prejudices of those who judge him.

Religion is a growing plant, bearing many kinds of fruit; the religion of yesterday may not look like the religion of to-day, for as the blooms unfold their petals the aspect of the plant changes, though the root and stem are ever the same. Religion is the worship of unseen power; Spiritualism is a belief in the manifestation of unseen intelligence.

Savages worship the unseen power in its two degrees—“good” and “bad.” Ignorant believers in spirit power fail to discriminate between evil and good; all that is wonderful is acceptable to them, or contrariwise, according to the bias of their mind and inclination.

Science can never explain spiritual things. Spiritual must be compared with spiritual before it can be understood.

The Bible is the book that should most commend itself to inquirers after the source of spiritual influence, seeing that it is the only history that combines material and spiritual records in unison. Those who read it from simply a material point of view are offended at many things they cannot comprehend, or bring within the ordinary range of reason. Those who consider it as simply allegorical, miss its value as an historical record; but those who would receive the full benefit of its lessons must read it with due discrimination as to where fact ceases and metaphor begins. How read ye? was the demand of our Lord. In one place we find a history, in another a poem, in another a lamentation, in another a prophecy, in another a vision. The early books of Moses could not have been compiled from personal experience, but must have been records of oral traditions, or the work of direct inspiration. No one has as yet given us so generally acceptable an account of the earth's earliest history as that we find attributed to Moses, and the Jews, to whom we look for the strictest preservation of the earliest writings, have stamped their seal of approbation upon these records as most reliable. What other works have those who discredit these to offer in their place?

Coin in passing from hand to hand may lose the clearness

and precision of the first impression; the image of the king, the date of the coinage, may be feeble and half effaced, but the ring of the metal pronounces its value as long as it can be called a coin.

To these early books our Saviour referred as testifying of Him. With such a direction Christians may well rest content.

Having thus the first link in the chain of evidence as to spiritual history, we go on, book by book, till we find the fulfilment of the promises of the first. Believing the promise we accept the fulfilment, but discrediting the fulfilment obliges our rejection of the promise; the links separate, and the chain dissolves.

Those who reject the sacred writings must account for Spiritual phenomena as best they can; but to those who are content to bring them to the light of Scripture they seem sufficiently in harmony to be considered as carrying on the world's spiritual history into our own times.

Nowhere in that history do we find good and evil inactive. War commenced in the garden of Eden—war still rages, and the end we see not. Is it to be supposed that any spiritual manifestation can be one-sided or unquestionable? God walked in the garden of Eden; was not the serpent there also? Moses performed signs and wonders; did not the magicians do the like? The prophets of God prophesied side by side with the prophets of Baal; Christ himself was led by the Devil to be tempted in the wilderness; the good seed grows together with the tares, and the division of good and evil is reserved for the day of judgment. Why is modern spiritual experience to differ from the experience of the past? Is not the Holy Spirit, in the conscience of all, a fellow householder with the Prince of Darkness? In what do you find good apart from evil, save in the person of God?

Men have the promise of help from an irresistible Guardian, who will direct all those who seek His guidance; such as trust in Him will be safely led through the strait and narrow path that leads to Him.

Those who start at the name of spirit power, as manifested in our own day, would have joined the alarmed cry of those who said, "He is mad and hath a devil." They were not evil men who said this, as far as we know, but they saw a new manifestation of spirit power, and pronounced it at once to be satanic.

Need we be surprised at the present reception of modern evidences of spirit presence and miraculous power? We are mad or have devils. The teachings may lead to God and self-sacrifice, and the more clearly is Satan thereby regarded as transformed to an angel of light.

The difficulty in the way of modern spiritual progress is chiefly on account of its being regarded as a new creation, instead of a continuance of an unbroken line of God-directed communication between heaven and earth. Man is still free, as Adam was, to heed the voice of God or listen to the wiles of the serpent, and those who reject the experiences of the old-world teachings as to the dealings of good and evil with man, will have to realise for themselves what they could have learnt from the history of the past, and must reap the trouble that must precede conviction. In the Bible every species of spirit communion is described, the end, aim, and object of each. We have but to compare our own experience with these, to be able readily to detect the quality of our gift, whence it springs, and whither it is leading us, but those who reject the Bible throw away the touchstone of their faith, and have to find out the quality of their gift by personal hard-won experience.

GEORGE M. SUTHERLAND.

117, Sloane-street.

[It was not from the weakness of indecision that the attempts to introduce theological controversy were not stopped at the outset, but to show that public opinion is against discussing points of dogma, and that the tendency of this journal is to err in the promotion of free discussion rather than in its suppression. Although it was decided at the Liverpool Conference that theological subjects were not to be introduced into the National Association of Spiritualists, some Spiritualists on the Council persisted in bringing forward those points, delaying useful work, wasting money and time, and running the risk of splitting up the organisation; a vote of all the members was then taken on the results of all this injudicious talk, and the decisions of the talkers were very properly swept away by the common sense of an overwhelming majority. Some correspondents have placed before us as a chief motive, the taking of any course which promotes the circulation of this journal; we constantly do things which we know beforehand will temporarily check its circulation. This journal is the only one connected with Spiritualism, which has printed particulars of the Holmes's imposture, and of the spirit-photograph imposture, yet this furnishing readers with truthful and important information causes them to buy much fewer copies than usual on those occasions, for distribution among the general public.—ED.]

The Echo of last Tuesday published some humorous remarks about Mr. Crookes's last article in *The Spiritualist*.

PRIVATE SEANCES.

SEANCES WITH MRS. E. CORNER (FLORENCE COOK), MISS SHOWERS AND MRS. BASSETT, NON-PROFESSIONAL MEDIUMS.

LAST Sunday night a *seance* was held at the residence of Mr. George Neville, 9, Regent's-park-terrace, Gloucester-gate, London, and among the guests present were Mrs. Neville, Mr. Edwin Arnold, Mr. Bassett, Mrs. Bassett, Mrs. E. Corner (Florence Cook), Miss Clémés, and Mr. W. H. Harrison. During the first part of the evening there was a good dark *seance*; while Mr. Arnold held the hands of Mrs. Bassett, materialised spirit hands were busy touching sitters at that end of the table, and carrying objects such as bracelets and keys from one sitter to another. Addresses of a more elevating character than those usually given by spirits with strong physical power, were delivered by the direct voice by James Lombard and Mr. Robinson, two of Mrs. Bassett's guides, and as the power strengthened with the harmonious conditions, the source of the voices perceptibly increased in its distance from Mrs. Bassett, to show that the sounds were not produced by her vocal organs.

Afterwards there was an unpremeditated light *seance*. A cabinet was extemporised, an adjoining room being used for the purpose; Mrs. Corner entered this, and shortly afterwards a living figure draped in white entered the room in which the observers sat. Mrs. Corner, who was not entranced, was terrified when this form re-entered the cabinet, so she asked Mr. Neville to enter, which he did, and found nothing there but Mrs. Corner dressed in black; there were rapping noises about the room. After a time he left the cabinet; shortly afterwards the elaborately robed figure came out once more, moved a chair, and said that as the power was exhausted the *seance* must close, but that Mr. Neville had better follow her into the cabinet. This he did, and he estimated that he entered the cabinet one second after the spirit had done so, yet there was Mrs. Corner in her ordinary dress, and no apparition. Mrs. Corner had never been in the house before, and when she entered it had no intention of sitting for manifestations.

Evidently Mrs. Corner's spirits by long practice can now materialise and de-materialise themselves expeditiously, almost as rapidly as hands are materialised and de-materialised through the mediumship of Mrs. Fay.

Last Sunday week, there was a *seance* through the mediumship of Miss Showers, at which Mrs. Showers, Mr. and Mrs. George Neville, and Mr. W. H. Harrison were present. Miss Showers sat for manifestations like those through Mrs. Fay's mediumship and obtained them, but not with the same rapidity, since it is evident that the spirits improve in their manifestations by practice. The kind of manifestations obtained are described in a letter by Capt. J. James, late of the 90th Light Infantry, whose communication will be found in another column.

After two powerful mediums meet for the first time, it is commonly the case that the one obtains some of the manifestations of the other at the next *seance* after they have parted.

Last Tuesday night there was a dark *seance* at Mr. Henry Cook's, at Hackney; Mr. and Mrs. William Crookes, Mr. G. R. Tapp, and Mr. W. H. Harrison, were among the guests present. The ring-test was given to three of the observers, through Mrs. Bassett's mediumship; when her hands were held, while she had no ring on her arms, a great welded iron ring was strung on her arm. The spirits said that the iron ring, and not the arm, was temporarily divided during the threading operation; it was noticed that each time the ring gave a sound as if it had been struck, at the instant that it came upon the arm. The dark circle manifestations at this *seance* were of the usual description.

SIR WILLIAM TOPHAM has been invited by Captain James to take the chair on the occasion of Mr. Henry D. Jencken, M.R.I., reading his paper upon "Inherited Mediumship" at the Rooms of the Dalston Association on the 25th inst.

EXPERIMENTS IN MESMERISM.—The "Mesmeric Committee" of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism meets for experimental work at 6.45 p.m. on Thursday, 18th inst., prior to the ordinary *seance* at 8.15 p.m. Active measures are to be taken for carrying out the objects for which the Committee was appointed, and experienced mesmerists are requested to offer assistance. Communications should be addressed to the Secretary, "Mesmeric Committee," 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, E. It is pleasing to see that the Dalston Association intends to carry on such useful and interesting work.

BIRTH.—On Wednesday, last week, the wife of Mr. C. E. Williams, the celebrated medium, of a daughter.

LAST Saturday the *Daily Telegraph* reprinted from *The Spiritualist* the most interesting portion of the article by Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S.

A SPIRITUALISTIC *soirée* will be held at Bishop Auckland, on Good Friday, as announced in an advertisement in this issue.

THE sum collected in aid of Mr. Wallace, the medium, now amounts to £70; the sum total will be presented to him in a purse worked by Mrs. Parkes.

AN interesting description of *seances* with Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, by Captain James, has been published in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Chicago).

WE have received a letter from Mr. Serjeant Cox, too late for this week, on the subject of Mr. Crookes' recent experiments; it will be published in this journal next Friday.

THE Goswell Hall Spiritualistic meetings have been discontinued; Mr. Wallace delivered the closing one last Sunday. They were carried on at a loss of time and money to Mr. Haxby, and latterly have been thinly attended.

THE publication of the continuation of Mr. Harrison's paper, read before the Dalston Association, is postponed till next week, for want of space in this number. Correspondents should make their letters shorter; several are not published this week because they are too long.

THE editor of the *Evening Standard*, in a good-tempered leading article published last Monday, assumes the personal experiences related by Prince Emile de Sayn-Wittgenstein, in the last number of *The Spiritualist*, to be explainable on the supposition that the two young ladies were making fun of the prince, or that the sister who went to the ball took the second glove by accident, so that the mesmeric influence was unintentionally concentrated upon her.

MR. MORSE IN AMERICA.—Mr. J. J. Morse is engaged as follows, during the remainder of the time he is in America; Greenfield, Mass., during February; Bangor, Me., during March; Lynn, Mass., in April; New Haven, Conn., during May; Philadelphia, Pa., during June. Negotiations are pending, which, when completed, will result in Mr. Morse concluding his visit with an engagement in New York City, during July. Mr. Morse has confined all his engagements to the Eastern section of the United States, so has not travelled far into the interior.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—At the ordinary monthly session of the Council of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism on Thursday, last week, the following were elected honorary members, viz.:—Mrs. F. and Miss M. R. Showers, Mr. J. Rouse, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Bassett, Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Parkes, Mr. and Mrs. W. Towns, Mrs. Catherine Woodforde, Miss Lottie Fowler, and Mr. C. E. Williams. It was also resolved to invite Messrs. Henry D. Jencken and Mr. J. J. Morse to accept honorary membership. The arrangements for the last Thursday evening in April next will comprise a special *seance* with Mr. C. E. Williams. Captain James, of Tottenham, was elected an ordinary member. Among the members present at the ordinary weekly *seance* on Thursday evening last week, were Miss M. Rosina Showers, Mr. W. Standen, and Mr. John Rouse, well-known mediums. An exceedingly interesting *seance* was consequently obtained, the principal feature being the vocal effects produced through the mediumship of Miss Showers. Mr. Standen and Mr. Rouse both described spirit forms present in the rooms; while Mr. Standen was entranced and influenced to play upon the piano under the alleged control of Handel. Mr. Rouse was also entranced, and spoke under influence. Mrs. T. Blyton stated she could see cloud-like appearances enveloping Miss Showers.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND, by BENJAMIN COLEMAN. The author gives some important facts connected with the early movement in this country with which he was identified, and an account of some of the most remarkable of his personal experiences. E. W. Allen, Ave Maria-lane; George Farmer 4, Kingsgate-street, Holborn. Price One Shilling.

TO SPIRITUALISTS, BOOKSELLERS AND NEWSAGENTS.

J. C. ASTON, WHOLESALE AND RETAIL BOOKSELLER, STATIONER, AND PUBLISHER, Agent for the Sale of *The Spiritualist*, 39, Smallbrook-street, Birmingham, supplies the Town and Country Trade, on London Terms, with Periodicals, Stationery, and all Goods connected with the Trade. The largest Stock of Periodicals, &c., out of London. Agencies accepted for any Publication. Established 1842.

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The Directors of the Fire Re-Insurance Corporation, Limited, in inviting Subscriptions for the Shares mentioned above, deem it desirable to state that:—

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Since becoming Directors of the Corporation they have each (by subscribing the sum of One Thousand Pounds to the Corporation's Guarantee Fund) increased their financial interest in the Corporation to the sum of One Thousand Five Hundred Pounds.

Every Share issued by the Corporation has been allotted upon *bona fide* applications only. Not one Share has been given away.

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The remunerative nature of the business of carefully managed Fire Insurance Companies is well-known to their Shareholders.

The returns made by order of Parliament, and other official documents, show that their aggregate annual premium income always exceeds by a large amount the sums paid for claims.

The following summary, compiled from the published returns in 1873, of 72 companies, strikingly exhibits this profitable working:—

No.	Companies.	Income for one year.	Claims Paid.	Excess of Income over Claims.
24	British	£ 5,404,825	£ 2,938,141	£ 2,466,684
24	United States.....	5,337,811	2,681,029	2,656,782
24	Continental	5,170,768	2,327,048	2,843,720

Balance available for dividend and expenses, £7,967,189.

The business of the Corporation being to re-insure a portion of the surplus business of such companies, and receiving from them a premium income exactly proportionate to the amount of business re-insured, it will share proportionately in their profitable working.

The Corporation is already transacting a satisfactory and steadily increasing business; its premium income for the year 1875-6 being expected to exceed £20,000.

The rate of profit that may be fairly anticipated is shown in the following Table of the business position of the undermentioned RE-INSURANCE COMPANIES. The Dividends paid by these for the last two years average 17½ and 22 per cent, respectively.

Name.	Premium Income.	Excess of Premium Income Over Claims Paid.	Dividends Paid Last 2 Years of Return.
Alliance of Vienna.....	£ 86,636	£ 61,404	17½
Security.....	247,272	142,632	33½
Swiss	37,022	14,667	20
Vienna	97,253	66,609	17
Magdeburg	114,504	41,257	7½
Pannonia	115,808	63,597	20
Frankfurter	25,054	11,498	9
Aachen	31,244	12,827	32½
Cologne	82,572	37,585	6

The Formation Expenses of the Corporation were unusually small, and no Promotion Money has been paid.

Applications for Shares will be received at the London and County Bank, Lombard Street, London, E.C., or at any of its branches; or at the Offices of the Corporation.

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER, the GREAT AMERICAN SOMNAMBULIST AND CLAIRVOYANTE, whose reputation is well known throughout Europe and America, can be consulted on either Medical or Business Affairs connected with the Living and Dead. Hours 1 to 8 (Sundays excepted.) Terms, One Guinea. Address, 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury-square, W.C.

MR. CHARLES E. WILLIAMS, Medium, is at home daily, to give Private *Seances*, from 12 to 5 p.m. Private *Seances* attended at the houses of investigators. Public *Seances* at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, on Monday evenings, admission 2s. 6d.; Thursday evenings 5s.; and Saturday evenings, for Spiritualists only, 5s.; at 8 o'clock each evening. Address as above.

ANNIE EVA FAY will present her LIGHT AND DARK SEANCES every evening, at 8 o'clock, at her residence, 21, Princes street, Regent-street. Admission 10s. Mrs. Fay will accept occasional engagements, at 10 o'clock, p.m., at the Residences of the Nobility and Gentry. Tickets for sale at all Agents.

MRS. WOODFORDE, TRANCE MEDIUM & MEDICAL MESMERIST, will give Sittings for Development under Spirit Control in Writing, Drawing, Clairvoyance, or any form of Mediumship. Disorderly Influences removed. French spoken. At home Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Private *Seances* attended. Address, 41, Bernard-street, Russell-square, W.C.

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MR. W. G. SCOREY, MEDICAL MESMERIST AND RUBBER, having successfully treated several cases, is again open to engagements.—Mesmeric Institution, 55, Goldhawk-road, Shepherds'-bush W. Please write.

MISS GODFREY, CURATIVE MESMERIST AND RUBBER, AND MEDICAL CLAIRVOYANT, 1, Robert street Hampstead-road, London, N.W. To be seen by appointment only. Terms, n application by letter.

J. V. MANSFIELD, TEST MEDIUM, answers Sealed Letters, at 361, Sixth Av., New York. Terms, Five Dollars and Four Three-cent Stamps. REGISTER YOUR LETTERS.

MR. J. J. MORSE, INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER, is now on a Lecturing tour in the United States. He will return in or about the month of June next. 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, Piccadilly, S.W. Dr. M'Leod is also prepared to receive engagements to lecture.

MESSRS. HARRY BASTIAN AND MALCOLM TAYLOR, Physical and Mental Test Mediums, from America.—PARLOUR SEANCES every evening except Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday, at 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury-square. Tickets, 5s. each; hour 8 o'clock. For private *seances*, address as above.

SEALED LETTERS ANSWERED by R. W. FLINT, 39, West 24th-street, New York. Terms, Two Dollars and Three Stamps. Money refunded if not answered. Register your letters.

MESSRS. PECK AND SADLER, TRANCE and PHYSICAL MEDIUMS, are OPEN to ENGAGEMENTS in any part of the Country, for Private or Public *Seances*. Terms, as per arrangements. *Seances* (when at home), Wednesday, 2s. 6d.; Saturday, 5s. Address, No. 1A, Nelson-terrace, Cardiff.

TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP FOR FAMILY BUSINESS and Other Tests, Healing or Development, by Spirit Mesmerism, &c. Mr. Olive, 49, Belmont-street, Chalk Farm-road, N.W. Six years practice. Terms—21s. per private *seance*.
A public *seance* at above address on Tuesday evenings, at 7 o'clock, admission 2s. 6d. Also at 15, Southampton-row, Holborn, on Mondays at 3 p.m.

F. PARKES, SPIRITUALIST PHOTOGRAPHER. Sittings *à la seance* by appointment, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The magnesium light used in dull weather or when required. Fee, one guinea per sitting. Address, 6, Gaynes Park Terrace, Grove-road, Bow, E.

THOS. WILKS, BOOKSELLER, STATIONER, CIRCULATING LIBRARY, &c., &c., of 2, Napier-place, Dalston-lane, London, E., respectfully solicits the patronage of Spiritualists residing in the vicinity of Clapton, Hackney, Dalston, and Kingsland.—Information as to Local Association, *Seances*, &c., to be obtained on application. *The Spiritualist* newspaper kept on sale.

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(ESTABLISHED 1873.)

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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. Berghelm, Esq., C.E.; H. R. Fox Bourne, Esq.; Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.; G. Fenton Cameron, Esq., M.D.; John Chapman, Esq., M.D.; Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D.; Charles R. Drysdale, Esq., M.D. D. H. Dyte, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Mrs. D. H. Dyte; James Edmunds, Esq., M.D.; Mrs. Edmunds, James 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 Queich, 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 of 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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