

The Spiritualist

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SPECULATIONS RELATING TO SPIRIT IDENTITY.

ONE of the most serious points in the philosophy of modern Spiritualism, and one which may with advantage be established on a much firmer basis than it possesses at present, is that of spirit identity. Mediums seem to vary in transparency to different kinds of spiritual influence, much as different specimens of glass vary in transparency to light. The manifestations through a very large number of mediums may be regularly watched for months, without any clear evidence of spirit identity being obtained, in the shape of revelation of names and dates previously unknown to the medium or any person present in the circle, but afterwards demonstrated to be true. Such evidence is nevertheless occasionally obtained, indeed through exceptional mediums it is lavishly given, and to a certain extent proves the presence of intelligences other than those present in the body; at the same time it is not absolute proof of spirit identity, since invisible intelligences might collect the information and give it through the medium, at the same time professing themselves to be other than they are. This latter hypothesis assumes some of the power to be evil; still there is plenty of evidence that the invisible powers at work in Spiritualism, are sometimes good, sometimes bad, and sometimes indifferent, just the same as with mortals in the body.

One reason why spirits cannot give names and addresses through most mediums probably is, that such proper names contain no ideas, and when spirits have only the power of putting ideas into the brain of the medium, which ideas are then unconsciously translated and sent into the outer world through the organism of the sensitive, it is plain that a name like "Robinson," which contains no idea, but is a mixture of arbitrary sounds, could not be given by this method of communication. On the other hand, supposing the spirit to be able to move the hand or the mouth of the medium, without using the brain at all, then it is conceivable that names and dates of any kind can be readily given. Further, on a critical examination of various kinds of medial phenomena, it will probably be found that the brain is little acted upon in those cases where the mediums are able to give such tests.

This matter of spirit identity is considerably complicated by the fact that the intelligences communicating through many mediums, are in many respects the "doubles" in external appearance and mentally, of the mediums themselves. Canon Calloway, in a paper read at the Anthropological Institute, told how a man saw and talked to the double of himself, and was often outwitted by his second self in argument; that at last the circumstance became so intolerable that he blew his brains out. The Seeress of Prevorst was once frightened at the sight of her own double. In later years a very large number of cases has been collected and authenticated in modern Spiritualism, wherein, while a living person has been in one place, his double

has been seen in another, and on after inquiry, the mortal body has sometimes been discovered to have been in a state of sleep or trance at the time. Cases are on record in which the spirit of a dying person has been seen by one of his friends at a distance, at or about the moment of the death of the body, as in the instance wherein Lord Brougham saw the spirit of a schoolfellow at the moment that schoolfellow died in India. In many of these cases the spiritual sight of the observers may have been opened, or the apparitions may have been what medical men would call subjective visions. In some cases, however, this explanation will not suffice. Some examples publicly narrated by Mrs. Hardinge at the Gower-street Conferences were printed in the first volume of *The Spiritualist*, setting forth how in one case the double was seen by several persons at the same time; it knocked at the door of the house, and pushed against observers in the passage. In another case, a little girl saw the double of her mother, and the spirit covered the child with roses, which were seen by others.

Later still, the study of Spiritualistic phenomena has revealed that the spirit hands which for so many years have been common at *seances*, are in many cases, though not in all, the doubles of the hands of the mediums; also, that the chief voice spirits, who control physical mediums, take on, to a large extent, the form and features of the said mediums when they, by materialisation, make themselves objectively visible, and when they show themselves to many persons at the same time. These materialised forms scarcely ever say anything above the mental capacity of their mediums, or state facts not previously known to the mediums, or make statements about their earth-lives which can be verified.

The action of the double may be further traced in certain kinds of writing mediumship, like that of Messrs. Flint and Mansfield, for the same power of reading and answering sealed letters possessed by materialised spirits, is exhibited unconsciously through the organisms of the two mediums just mentioned, who, however, do not get materialisations at all. Further, the materialisation spirits can control their mediums to write or speak what they please, consequently a certain amount of identity between these two kinds of manifestations is established, although the powers of Messrs. Flint and Mansfield are not usually considered to be related to physical mediumship. Again, the communications through a large number of mediums are said by their intimate friends to be largely coloured by their own thoughts, and in trance mediumship mistakes about physics and other educational subjects which may prevail in the minds of the mediums, are repeated while they are under spiritual influence, so that the question of spirit identity is rendered all the more difficult to solve. Indeed, all these facts taken together, may easily raise the question whether the spirit of the medium may not produce a large number of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, while the body of the medium is in a more or less somnambulant state. To this it may be replied that the medium often sees and speaks to his attendant "double," and argues with him; not only are the head and hands of the spirit sometimes materialised while such conversation takes place, but are busily at work producing various manifestations. There is clear evidence that on certain occasions there has been this approximate duplication of form and of mental characteristics, and it is difficult

to suppose that a medium can possess two spirits. A wild speculation may however be suggested here, which will give an infinite amount of pleasure to Mr. Serjeant Cox. In his last book entitled "*What am I?*" he speaks of the duplication of form in the two halves of the human body, namely two eyes, two hands, two legs, two divisions of the brain, and so forth, and he argues that the germ of one half the body comes from the father and the other from the mother. If everything in the material world has its foundation in a spiritual cause, there must be something of a double nature in the spiritual part of man corresponding to the duplication visible in the body. So if Serjeant Cox likes to accept the further speculation, that while the mother-derived part of the medium is awake and governing the body of the medium, the father-derived part of the medium is in a somnambulant sleep and producing the manifestations, he is welcome to work out the brilliant problem, the seed of which is now placed in his hands.

The usual spiritual theory of the same phenomena is, that an independent intelligence divorced from material conditions, can take on those physical conditions only which it finds about the medium, hence the similarity in appearance and intelligence while manifesting. Supposing the phenomena to be produced by the spirit of the medium, it might be argued that the medium at heart must be excessively untruthful and iniquitous, to deceive people by the use of wonderful powers possessed while in an abnormal state, but this hypothesis is not necessarily true; for instance, a mesmeriser, by the influence of his will, can make his sensitives on the platform do whatever he pleases, consequently if a number of people around a medium firmly desire spirits to appear or communicate, the concentration of all their wills on the medium might produce results for which the medium is no more responsible, than were the youths for their acts while on the platform under the influence of the public mesmerist.

What with mediums who are not clear channels to spiritual influence, and what with the existence of these doubles, the amount of evidence of spiritual identity is exceedingly limited as compared with the vast range of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, so that a more important subject could not be considered than the present, by those who desire to know that the foundations of the whole subject are secure.

AMERICAN MATERIALISATION MANIFESTATIONS.

An examination of the American and Australian periodicals for the past year, will show how widespread are the materialisation manifestations, similar to those now common in England, showing that the whole of the phenomena are deeply rooted in one common source.

The following particulars are extracted from an article by Dr. H. B. Storer, published in *The Banner of Light* of January 9th last:—

MRS. COMPTON'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Mrs. Compton resides at Havana, New York, which is reached from Boston by the Boston and Albany Railroad and New York Central Road to Geneva, thence by steamboat down Seneca Lake to Watkins, and thence three miles by rail. From New York City go by the Erie Road to Elmira, and thence by rail it is a forty minutes' ride to Havana.

I was introduced by letter to Dr. E. W. Lewis, of Watkins, a pioneer Spiritualist, a practising physician in that town for more than thirty years, and a man universally respected and esteemed by the whole community, and I reached his

house on Saturday morning, Dec. 26th, and found him fully convinced, after long acquaintance with Mrs. Compton and numerous *seances* with her—some of them at his own house—extending through several months, of her entire truthfulness and honesty as a woman, and of the great value and importance of the phenomena which occur in her presence. As a physician Dr. Lewis has made intelligent and valuable observations of her condition when in the trance state, and would not be likely to err in judgment regarding the pulseless and almost lifeless being who is found in the deep trance after the *seances* are closed. While conversing with the doctor, Mr. G. C. Hibbard, of Watkins, fortunately came in. Mr. Hibbard has attended nearly every *seance* for months past, and himself possessing inspirational powers of a high order, and being profoundly interested in these new developments, has almost involuntarily glided into the position of conductor of the *seances*. Some one has been found necessary to champion the rights of the medium, in a community which seems to have no conception of the reality of spiritual things, or of the possibility of any genuine spiritual manifestations. I wish here to bear witness to the noble and self-denying position of Mr. Hibbard, who, in the midst of contumely and falsehood, and threats of personal violence to this poor, weak and suffering woman, has opposed the force of his own character, finely expressed in his manly physique, as a barrier to the brutality and prejudice which would very likely have crushed out her mediumship if she had been obliged to stand alone.

APPEARANCE OF AN INDIAN SPIRIT.

Dr. Storer then narrates how the medium was called in from her daily work in a black alpaca dress, and entered the cabinet, which was whitewashed everywhere and without crack or crevice; it had no other entrance save the curtained opening. Soon the "double" of the medium, robed in spotless white drapery, came out, leaving the usual question on the mind of the inquirer, "Was it the medium herself?" Dr. Storer adds:—

But what could I think, when in not more than ten or fifteen minutes after Katie's disappearance, the door again opened, and an Indian form, tall, erect, wrapped in a blanket gathered at the waist, with moccasins and leggings, and wearing a circlet about the head, and what seemed to me a long black feather (although some of our party thought there were two or more feathers), stepped majestically out of the cabinet and confronted us. Observing his position against the casing of the door, I afterwards measured his height, finding him to be eight and one-half inches taller than the medium. He called to us to sing "Johnny Bown," and led off himself, standing by the door for a few minutes, and then marched as closely to us as Katie had done, patted me on the arm, and shook Mr. Hibbard's hand, which was free, vigorously. He remained probably five minutes, entered the cabinet, and again came out. At my request he stood against the white wall, where his whole form could be fully seen, and reached above the door, tearing down some dried evergreen wreaths that had been hung there by the medium, which at first he persistently refused to do, as he said "the medie would be mad." He walked to the stairs, bending over the railing and looking down, and then returned to the cabinet door, standing by which he gave the war-whoop, an ear-piercing and blood-quickenning yell that might have been heard a long distance if in the open-air. After his disappearance conversation with some half dozen voices was kept up for nearly an hour, three hours being occupied with the whole *seance*.

AMERICAN REPORTS OF SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

The most valuable part of the article, indeed the portion which induced us to quote it at all, is that in which Dr. Storer gives evidence that he was present at a *seance* at which there was no duplication of form.

In England the evidence of duplication of form, in some cases, has now so accumulated, as to be absolute, and absolute evidence of the duplication of hands can be obtained at any time through the mediumship of Mrs. Fay or Mr. Williams, for materialised spirit hands are almost daily at work through their mediumship, while their own hands and feet are held by disbelievers. The proofs of duplication of the whole form, in certain

cases, are in the proportion, perhaps, of one out of every fifty of the full-form *seances* which have been held, and whether there was duplication of form at the remaining forty-nine *seances*, there has, in this country, been no absolute evidence. America has not helped us to the evidence, for the *seances* there have been generally reported in such a slipshod manner, and with such a desire to describe something wonderful, that, notwithstanding the wider range of phenomena observed, we do not think that, *in one single instance*, any writer to the *Banner of Light* has had the moral courage to state that the "Katie's" and their kindred materialised there, are the doubles in appearance of the mediums. Of course we do not include the "recognisable face manifestations" in this category, since they belong to a different class of materialisations. Even in the article before us Dr. Storer says *nothing* about the amount of resemblance of the features of Katie, or those of the Indian, to the medium, which is a palpable defect in his narrative. Although in England we have not a quarter of the range of phenomena to examine, possessed by our American brethren, the scientific knowledge of the actual facts is broader and deeper, because they have been put fully on record. This has sometimes been done at the expense of great temporary trials to the media, the real phenomena being sometimes surrounded by what the outer world naturally supposes to be very suspicious conditions, and not a little credit is due to Mrs. Corner (Miss Cook) for the manner in which she asked Dr. Purdon, Mr. Harrison, and others to publish the failures at her *seances*, to make known *all* the facts connected with them, since whatever those facts were, she was not responsible for them; they were due to the action of an intelligent power outside herself.

In one part of his narrative Dr. Storer says:—"A weird phantom, bearing the semblance of a woman, and clothed in a flowing costume of white, glided out." In England we have never seen these full-forms "glide," or resemble "weird phantoms," though truly one or two Yorkshire Spiritualists have recorded some *seances* in which they put in some "gliding." Half length materialised forms can however float and glide in a weak light; for instance, John King frequently floats steadily to the ceiling at the *seances* of Mr. Williams.

EVIDENCE AGAINST DUPLICATION OF FORM.

As already published in these pages, there is evidence that on some occasions there has not been duplication of form at materialisation *seances*, and at the great majority of *seances* there is no conclusive evidence either one way or the other. The best evidence of a case in which there was no duplication is the following, narrated by Dr. Storer:—

On Monday morning, accompanied by Mr. Hibbard and two ladies whom I had requested to go with me, to act as a committee of investigation, I went to Havana, and found Mrs. Compton in a very weak and nervous condition. She had been without sleep for three nights, and was so unwell that it seemed cruel to ask her to sit. However, she desired to accommodate me for the sake of the *Banner* readers, before whom, I told her, I should spread out these facts. Our company numbered eleven persons in the circle room. By my request, Mrs. Compton acquiescing without a murmur, my lady friends entered her bed-room, saw her completely divested of clothing, with the exception of two under-garments, and then saw her draw on a pair of her husband's pantaloons. The basque of her alpaca dress, without the skirt, was then put on, after careful search to render it certain that no extra clothing could be secreted. Then in my presence, the basque was sewed by its points on each side to

the pantaloons, and a ribbon which I tied with two knots closely around her neck was sewed through the knots, and each end of the ribbon sewed to the collar of the basque, so that she had on a closely-fitting coat and pantaloons, sewed together, and so attached by a ribbon around the neck that the clothing could not be drawn up or down. A pair of black gloves was then drawn upon the hands, and sewed tightly around the wrists. I then put round her waist a piece of cotton twine, tying it in two hard knots behind, and the same piece of twine was tied by double knots to the back of the chair on which she sat.

Under these conditions, our semicircle was formed as above described, hands without gloves appearing first at the aperture; and soon the voice of Mr. Webster was heard saying that there was very little power, as the medium was utterly exhausted by too frequent sitting and too much care, but they would do what was possible. He did not think Katie could be materialised. Mr. Hibbard and myself urged that all the power be concentrated upon that one object, and were promised the attempt. After singing for perhaps twenty-five minutes, with occasional intermissions to hear remarks by the voices, it was announced that Katie would appear. Very slowly the door opened, and the light had to be carefully adjusted before she ventured fully to appear; but soon her entire form was seen, dressed exactly as before—trailing skirts, veil and mantle, but with a belt which she gathered in her hands and rubbed together that we might hear its silken rustle. Standing by the door, she addressed me, saying that when she had walked entirely away from the cabinet, she wished me to go in quickly and without moving the chair, feel after the medium and all about the cabinet, and see if I could find her. She stepped out about five feet into the room, and at once I sprang into the cabinet, felt in the chair, swept the floor and the walls thoroughly with my hands, but not a vestige of medium or anything remained.

I came out and resumed my seat, Katie passing along the line of spectators, touching them, and on reaching me, bent over and kissed me twice upon the left cheek; also placing her handkerchief to my face, and allowed the delicate lace of her veil to touch my hand. "Katie," I asked, "what material is your veil made of?" "You needn't look for any, for you couldn't find anything like it on earth," she said. "Is your dress of the same material?" "No—no, different." "Katie, could you appear with jewellery?" "Yes—yes, if there was power enough—power nearly gone!" She returned to the cabinet, and soon again appeared, but remained but a few moments. The voice of "Seneca" was then heard, saying he could not come out. "No power—medie sick—most dead—no power; but he would try!" And soon, to our astonishment, his tall, erect figure stood outside the door. The light was less bright than on former occasions, but enough to see his bare arm as he stretched it out, reaching above the door, and then, at my request, he struck his open palm with great force three times upon the wall. He was dressed apparently as usual, but the power being so much exhausted, he did not go along the entire line of visitors, but came over directly to me, patting me on the hand, and then returned to the door. In his broken English he expressed his love for Dr. Willis, Dr. Storer, Dr. Lewis, and "love for all," and with a command to me to tell pale-faces "medie no humbug—he good Injun," &c., he gave first what he calls the peace-whoop, and then, at my earnest request, the ringing war-whoop, and was gone.

The light was turned up, the closet door opened, and in the chair, tied as we had left her, without the breaking of a thread, or the apparent movement of her person, or in any respect differing from her appearance when last seen, sat the medium, in that fearfully lifeless trance, from which nearly half an hour was required to arouse her.

I will not extend this article by appending any speculations of my own upon this most marvellous exhibition. I submit the facts, and vouch for their entire accuracy.

THE Marylebone Association will hold its annual concert on Monday, February 22nd, at Seymour Hall, Lower Seymour-street, Portman-square.

PASSED TO SPIRIT LIFE.—On Monday, last week, Mr. Samuel Guppy passed to the higher life, at an advanced age, during his stay at St. Ann's Hill, Cork. His many kindly traits, and the important part he has taken in connection with the early history of Spiritualism, will cause his name to be remembered ages hence by all workers in the movement. His earlier days were spent in Bristol, and during a large portion of his earthly career he lived in India.

AN EXTRAORDINARY TEST SEANCE.

ON Wednesday evening last week, a private *seance* was held near Hyde Park, through the mediumship of Mrs. Fay, at which the test manifestations were exceedingly conclusive. We have no authority to mention the names and addresses of any of the observers, Mr. William Crookes and Mr. Harrison excepted, but among the witnesses were some members of Parliament, and other influential spectators. As the *seance* took place in a private house, which Mrs. Fay had never entered before, the tests were of an unusually severe character.

The hands of Mrs. Fay were first firmly bound together behind her back with strips of calico, the first step in binding them being to tie one strip round each wrist separately, with from five to eight double knots, the first one so close to the skin of her wrists, that by no possibility could her hand be slipped through the first loop. Next her hands were firmly bound together behind her back, and the final knot was sealed. She then seated herself close against one of the shutters of the drawing-room, in which shutter a screw, with an iron loop at the end, had been fixed; her bound hands were firmly fastened to the loop of this iron screw. A strip of calico was tied round her neck, and knotted behind; she was then fixed by the neck to another screw in the shutter, so that she could not move her head more than one or two inches. Next a lady tied both her feet together with a rope, the end of which rope was brought out into the room, and held by one of the company, to make sure that she did not move her feet during the *seance*. A shawl was next fastened to one corner of one side of the window recess, and one of the visitors occasionally held up the other corner, so as to stretch the shawl across the recess. Mrs. Fay was thus shut out of sight, with the exception of her tied feet, which projected below the shawl. While in this helpless condition, the shawl was raised occasionally, for the space of about half-a-minute at a time, during which musical instruments were played, whistles were blown, bells rang, figures were cut out of pieces of paper, upon which pieces some of the visitors had previously put their signatures, to make sure the papers were not changed, and several other remarkable effects were produced. A pail was taken out of her lap and placed upon her head, and a glass containing water was raised from her lap and held to her mouth to drink. When the shawl was dropped, the glass—three parts empty—was found sticking in her mouth, she holding on to it by her teeth. The knots were examined instantly after most of the manifestations, and found to be intact.

Some of the visitors present made a desperate attempt to explain away the facts, by suggesting that she did all these things with her mouth, although her head was firmly fixed to an iron screw by means of the bandages round her neck, and notwithstanding that the power had cut out patterns with scissors. Accordingly, a handkerchief was tied over her mouth, and to make sure it could not be removed while the shawl hid her from view, a postage stamp was fixed to each of her cheeks, one half of the stamp being upon her face, and the other half upon the edge of the handkerchief. When this test was suggested to Mrs. Fay, she instantly accepted it with the greatest pleasure, with the jocular remark that "they had better get a big handkerchief, since her mouth was a large one."

A legal gentleman present remarked that the only solution of the difficulty was the presence of a trained

tame monkey concealed under her dress, but this explanation had to be abandoned, since before the *seance* began, she, by her own desire, had been searched by some of the ladies. As a last resource the lady of the house ironically suggested that she did it all with the tip of her nose, which was consequently recommended to be sealed, but this was, perhaps, thought to be too great a sarcasm upon the credulity of unreasoning scepticism, for it was not done.

Afterwards the dark *seance* began. Mrs. Fay was held by both hands by a stranger to her,—by one who was a most inveterate disbeliever in the phenomena of Spiritualism. He also placed his feet on both sides of Mrs. Fay's feet to make sure she did not move them. Mr. Crookes sat behind Mrs. Fay, and had his hands on one of her shoulders, and a lady present sat with her hands upon the other shoulder. The guitar, and other musical instruments were in the room. The light was put out, and the guitar began to move over the heads of some of the spectators. Soon it began to play, and Mrs. Fay said that she was perfectly sure that none of her spirits were playing it, so it must be one of the sitters.

In reference to the consciousness of the medium in this matter, it may be stated that Mr. Williams has told us that when the spirits take up any instrument from the table, he knows what instrument it is, and if any persons present touch one of the instruments, he is conscious that they are meddling with them, although he cannot tell why he is aware of the fact. Mrs. Fay says her experience in this respect is exactly the same.

At all events, on this occasion she said that one of the sitters was fingering the strings of the guitar, and soon afterwards the guitar was dashed with some violence at the feet of a lady present, upon which Mrs. Fay broke up the dark *seance*, those holding her testifying that she had been motionless all the time that the lights had been extinguished.

Mr. Henry Woods, of the *Times* newspaper, once told us that he had tied and fixed Mrs. Fay in an absolutely secure manner, to one of the pillars in the Crystal Palace, and obtained similar results to those mentioned in this article, and which he could not explain. The editor of the London *Figaro* once published a long article about the said results, and concluded by remarking that they were simply inexplicable.

During one of the experiments described in this article, Mr. Crookes asked Mrs. Fay to order the curtain to be dropped prematurely, in order, if possible, that all present might see the guitar in the air. This was done, though not quickly enough to show the guitar floating, but instead of the instrument being thrown away from her, as on other occasions, the handle of the guitar was towards her hands. The truth is that all the manifestations were done by the rapid materialisation and de-materialisation of two spirit hands, which came off her own and returned to them, as at most materialisation *seances*, and if they could be seen by the spectators, they would be found to be duplicates of her own hands in appearance. The spirits have evidently concentrated their power to do this simple manifestation well, rather than to produce a greater variety of weaker effects, since no medium can be very great in all directions at once. The same rapid retreat of the hands which made the handle of the instrument fly towards Mrs. Fay, has often been observed when deceitful persons, among ostensibly friendly sitters, have struck lights at dark *seances*; on such occasions the instruments have been

seen flying towards—and sometimes actually within—the outstretched hands of the mediums, much to their chagrin, the materialised hands and the real hands being drawn towards each other by the necessitated sudden union of the two.

Manifestations through Mrs. Fay's mediumship usually take place with almost the same precision and accuracy as experiments in physics.

A TRANCE ADDRESS BY MRS. TAPPAN.

(CONCLUSION.)

THE following are concluding extracts from the trance address delivered by Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan at Birmingham:—

The spirit-world in its simplest manifestations answers the question—How can a spirit act upon matter? By saying that every spirit inhabits a material form, which is not palpable to your external senses, but nevertheless is to it material, and the spirit acts upon that form just the same as you act upon your forms. If spirit cannot act upon matter, then you cannot act upon your own bodies, Deity cannot act upon the universe, and the whole system of creation is chimerical. "But," say objectors, "we do not perceive the connecting link between a disembodied spirit and tangible objects like tables and chairs. We are obliged to lift them with our hands or with some adequate mechanical appliances." The spirit-world says, we have in spirit-life other qualities and other properties which are at our command. You are aware that there are impalpable elements surrounding each individual, and those persons denominated mediums possess an aura or impalpable atmosphere which nevertheless is composed of atoms, and this is the substance which spirits employ to control tangible bodies, and which you could employ by force of will if you understood the necessary process, and which, when the matter becomes sufficiently explainable to your senses, as chemistry and astronomy are, you will employ instead of the dull, mechanical processes that now occupy you. A single effort of the will causes you to raise your hand and change the place of a chair with that hand. Now, if you understood that between you and that chair is a subtle fluid, that if you knew the laws controlling it, you could also govern it, you would find the new process of raising the chair very easy. The human will has not yet discovered this, and it has remained for the spirit-world to reveal this to mankind. The world of science says, "What new force or element in nature has been revealed by Spiritualism?" Witness the force of moving tangible and weighty substances without any known mechanical appliance. (Applause.) The next step in the process of investigation is the importance of the fact that the two worlds are united and connected by intelligent communication. Professor Huxley says it does not matter, supposing these things are true, one would not wish to sit all day in the post office, or to listen to the jargon of feeble old women talking. But he knows that is not the point. It does not matter what nonsense comes from the world of spirits, since it is inhabited by just such people as are daily going out of your earth. (Applause.) But can they speak at all? If they can, that fact is of more importance than any other that can be known. It is important to the recipient of a letter that the post office is an avenue of communication; and it is important to those who wish to send a telegraphic message to a friend that there is such a means of conveying that message; and while all the world does not wish to hear what all the rest of the world has to say to one another, if there is a particular person that you wish to hear from, you should be anxious to know, "Is there the means?" and the great question occupying human thought from birth to death is, "Is there any means of knowing what lies beyond death?" (Applause.) And if that question can be successfully answered, it solves a painful and peculiar doubt which haunts from the very years of childhood to old age, the majority of mankind. The very business of Spiritualism is to solve this question to every individual mind; to make it known to humanity that there is a process whereby the two worlds can hold communion with one another, and to point out that it is not an unnatural process, that it is not a process removed from human thought, that it is not supernatural, but only super-mundane, and that it belongs as legitimately to the next step in science as electricity and magnetism belonged to the steps that had been previously taken, and that it must of necessity take the place of and fill in that void and chasm that has existed between

man's spiritual and his material nature, by extending the universe beyond the mere line of the senses, to that impalpable and imponderable, yet real existence, which constitutes the chief portion of human life after all. The dead sea-level of the human senses, to which science must always solve and bring every question connected with matter, does not of necessity refer to that portion of humanity which is not immediately and directly amenable to the laws of so-called matter. For that portion there must be a new set of laws discovered, and this one step of pointing to the communication, or means of communication, between the two worlds, is a solution of these laws. We do not presume to say that these steps of investigation are as yet carefully classified, or that these laws can as yet be distinctly made known and practised by each one in his own library; but we do say that the theory and the facts have been so far attested and explained as to belong to the next step of scientific inquiry in the world, and to constitute the next scientific discovery and basis in human thought; and that it will be no more strange to admit and attribute any fact or occurrence to the presence of spiritual agency than it is now strange to say, "Oh, that is the result of electricity," or, "The telegraph wires were out of order last night, and delayed all the messages." These are all admitted now: a century ago the name of electricity was like Greek to the majority of mankind. (Applause.)

This subtle law, as we have stated, also brings a consciousness of the future state within the region of human probability and thought. The difficulty about all religions and theologies in the past has been that they have put this question too far away, making man's spiritual nature a separate thing, making it remote and too far removed. This does not claim to be a theology, but it bridges over that wide chasm between the supposed spirit and matter, by pointing out that the region of spirit is very much nearer than mankind have supposed, and that in reality, as the ancient poet, Hesiod, said, "Millions of spiritual beings walk the earth unseen." Milton expresses this from the Greek poet, and thousands have admitted it in their speculations and imaginations; but the reality of it has scarcely dawned upon any except those who have the palpable proofs connected with Spiritualism. But that this should be so, and that these millions of spiritual beings have been seeking and are now expressing their existence by this method, and that they come upon you and influence you, even though unconsciously to yourself, has been a favourite belief taught by many religionists. "Guardian angels," "the presence of the unseen host," the "cloud of witnesses," the various processes of religious inspiration—there must be a law for these, and the law must be amenable to the intuitive department of human consciousness, to which we have referred, and Spiritualism offers the external expression of that which always has been in existence, but which the world has not been ready to receive as a science until to-day. (Applause.)

What has Spiritualism revealed concerning the spiritual world? It has revealed, as we have stated, by the testimony of every spirit which has manifested itself since the beginning of Spiritualism, that it is a continuation of life, that the identity of the spirit commences when it leaves off upon earth, that the consciousness, the affections, the intelligence are the same, that it is the putting off a garment merely, and awakening in another stage of the same kind of existence; that there is in reality no darkness, no terror, nothing connected with the change called death more than there is with the change called sleep, which you go to nightly, because you are aware that to-morrow you will waken, but in death the sleep has an awakening in another stage of existence. The human spirit tells you that the spirit world is that world which lies all around the earth and beyond its atmosphere, composed of those fine substances which you cannot perceive with the senses, but which like electricity and magnetism may be set in motion and made palpable to the senses; and that the aura which surrounds the earth, and the atoms of which the spirit world is composed are just as palpable and are as much arranged in forms and governed by laws, as are the atoms and forms arranged and governed in the material world; that they do not of necessity correspond to, or resemble, or are the exact prototypes of those forms found on earth, but are adapted to the nature of the spirit in the same way that earthly forms and surroundings are adapted to the nature of humanity. In other words, that wonderful spiritual life is a continuation of existence, and should be prepared for here very much as the child prepares in the primary school for the higher departments of learning; just in proportion to the advancement that you attain on earth, so will be your starting point in the world of spirits, and just in proportion as you are

backward and slothful, and ignorant and unspiritual, so will be your starting point in the world of spirits: in other words, each human being here present to night, were death suddenly to come would waken to-morrow with precisely the same mental status and moral condition in which he left this earth; the beginning of the future life is just as you have prepared the way by your earthly life. Nothing can be plainer, nothing simpler, nothing more natural, since death only disrobes you or relieves you of that which is a superfluous form when the spirit no longer requires it, since the spiritual body answers in its structure and formation to the needs and requirements of the spirit in its new-found state. But in the place of the five senses which you require here, and which, if you will pardon us, are only one sense after all—the spirit does not require those five expressions, but has them in one sense, that is, perception. And to prove to you that we are correct, you take a blind person, and the sense of hearing absorbs the usual attention that is given through sight; and the hearing and the touch take the place of the sense of sight; so that the blind can hear the approach of a footstep which you can by no means hear, showing that all the force and tension of the mind are expended in other directions when robbed of the one sense of sight. A deaf person is very acute in vision and in feeling, and will see things that ordinary mortals do not see, and will understand by expression of countenance and features that which you would require to be expressed in words. And take a person blind, and deaf, and dumb, the sense of feeling takes the place of sight, and of hearing, and of speech, and these become so intensified that they can almost know what is occurring in your thoughts. When disrobed of this outward covering which organisation or accident may have made blind or deaf, or impaired in some faculty, the spiritual faculty of sense may be termed perception, which is vision and hearing, and the senses all in one, and which pervades and animates your bodies, making expression in these various avenues of sense, but always in reality the attribute of the spirit itself. For instance, many things pass before the eye which you do not see. If it were the eye that saw you would see them; but it is your thought, and you only see that which attracts your attention or thought. Many sounds occur which you do not hear, because your thought which is really that which hears is intent upon something else; but when your thought or attention is directed to the sound, you hear because you are intent upon that sound. The artist, the speculator, and the geologist go out into the same field. The artist sees the variety of colour, the changes of hue, the landscape; but is not aware of the number of rods or acres of ground he is travelling over, and he has no idea of their value in pounds, shillings, and pence. The speculator goes and he measures with steps of a pace each, and calculates the exact amount of value in the land; but the colour of the leaves he has never once thought of; while the geologist, perhaps not noticing colour of leaves nor number of acres, is intent upon the property of the soil, and upon the period such and such a rock may have had its formation. They see with their thoughts, and you are astonished to find upon visiting the same field, that neither of them have seen articles in common, and you might naturally suppose it to be very contradictory evidence if you had heard it from the spirit world concerning spiritual existence. (Applause.) The spirit sees in the spirit world not what is there only, but what he or she is adapted to see, and as each person takes his own individuality and thought with them, there are, doubtless, just as contradictory representations concerning the spirit world as come from these three different men concerning a particular field. But, invariably, the spirits tell you that they inhabit a real world; that that world is adapted to their condition; that they perceive higher and lower states; and that every thought and feeling and action of life has made up a portion of their condition in spirit life. Also the nature of their employments, which of course would form a chapter by itself, must correspond to and accord with their spiritual condition.

MR. J. J. MORSE is now lecturing in Boston, U.S.

MR. ALGERNON JOY, one of the honorary secretaries to the British National Association of Spiritualists, and who for some time past has been in Switzerland, expects to be in Paris, at the *Hotel des Deux Mondes*, for a day, on or about Sunday next, and will probably call on Spiritualistic friends in the French capital. He will probably be present at the National Association *soirée* next Wednesday. He will visit Geneva and Boulogne on his way home.

MARVELLOUS DIRECT WRITING BY SPIRITS.

THE *Banner of Light* (Chicago) of January 2nd, contains the following account of the direct spirit writing so often received in the presence of Dr. Slade, of New York, one of the most powerful physical mediums in America:

By appointment, arrangements were made to give me a *seance* with Dr. Henry Slade, of New York City, with the following result: I entered the Doctor's rooms in daylight, and took a seat by the end of a large square-shaped table in the *seance*-room, and the Doctor, after lowering the curtains of the windows just enough to darken the room to the shade of an ordinary sunset-light, took a seat on the side of the table, near enough to me, so that we could grasp hands across the corner of the table. He then passed a double slate to me for examination. I found that the slate contained no writing on its surface. He then bit off about one-sixteenth of an inch of the end of a slate pencil, and placed it upon the upper side of the under slate; the slate was then closed upon its hinges so as to enclose the pencil within. He grasped one end of the slate with his right hand, and I grasped the other end firmly with my left hand; we then grasped hold of the other hand of each other, holding the slate away from contact with the table, and instantly I heard a scratching noise upon the inner surface of the folded slates, as though a pencil were being used for rapid writing upon the inside. Whenever we broke the grasp between his left and my right hand the noise would cease, and instantly proceed when we resumed our connection of hands. In two minutes' time, I should think, the noise ceased; and then the slate was opened, to find the inner surface of both slates covered with a well-executed message, which I transcribed to paper at once. It read as follows:—

"DEAR FRIEND,—We can see that this truth is spreading throughout the land, east, west, north and south, because people are tired of faith, and are now looking for common sense. Spiritualism has had its struggles to bring man's mind to the investigation of its truths. Our object in coming is to make man understand the laws of his own being, and to teach him the true love and law of God, and how necessary it is for all to live true to themselves in order to be happy. Spirits have come to earth in all ages, and always will, for God's laws never change: they are to-day as in the past, and for ever will be.
A. W. SLADE."

A chair which stood upon the floor about six feet away from the opposite corner of the table to us, commenced a series of short jumps until it came near the table, and then retraced its steps in a different direction. A small bell which lay upon the floor directly under the centre of the table, floated around underneath, and ever and anon would show itself plainly above the edge of the table on the opposite side from us, ringing all the while to indicate its position. An accordion would measure out tunes when the Doctor placed his fingers lightly in contact with it, although he did not exert any force or even touch the proper place for the hands. He requested me to take it in my hands to see if the spirits could play with me; but they only succeeded in moving the bellows slightly, without producing any musical sounds. A materialised hand showed itself a number of times above the edge of the table opposite to us, and it also came out under the edge of the table directly in front of me, and grasped hold of my beard, and pulled it with considerable force, so that I could plainly see the hand, and what was done. Both our hands were placed upon the top of the table during all of the manifestations not otherwise indicated above. Owasso, his Indian control, entranced him, and said that, if I came at a future time in the evening, they would try and show me materialised faces.

JOHN BROWN SMITH, M.D.

Amherst, Mass.

THE SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE.—Mr. Thomas Shorter, who for so many years has edited *The Spiritual Magazine*, gave up his duties in that capacity at the close of the year 1874, although he continues to write for its pages as heretofore. During his editorial career Mr. Shorter won the respect of all who knew him, because of his intimate acquaintance with the historical phases of ancient and modern Spiritualism, because of his literary and poetical ability, and because of his genial characteristics. *The Spiritual Magazine* is now edited by Dr. George Sexton, a chief representative of the Christian Spiritualists, and one whose intellectual capacity is undoubted. Dr. Sexton announces that the *Magazine* will contain carefully-written articles of permanent value. He informs us that several of the old subscribers to *The Spiritual Magazine* do not know the address of its new publisher; they will find it on reference to our advertising columns.

TRAVELLING IN THE SPIRIT.

In the string of curious experiences selected from the correspondence on Levitation, published in the *Daily News*, of the 20th January last, the following is noteworthy:—

"Airwalker" relates the following:—I dreamed I was in Venice; it was a fine moonlight night, but too warm to sleep. I opened my window and left it, floating away through the air, hovering leisurely and with the utmost ease from roof to roof, and from terrace to terrace, over streets and canals, and witnessing many curious sights in passing before open lighted windows. Next morning, finding myself in extra good humour, and excellent health, I remembered my interesting nightly tour, but I never was in and knew I had never seen Venice but on paper, and there certainly not the roofs and higher terraces. I had quite forgotten this amusing nightly promenade, when, two years later, I, for the first time, saw Venice. I ascended the clock tower, and as soon as I emerged from the narrow trap to the platform of the two gigantic bronze figures, I gave one sweeping look round and knew at once I had seen these very roofs before, and soon I remembered when and how. My guide seeing me shaking, holding on the railing, and staring at the uninteresting roofs, asked whether I was giddy, and called my attention to the adjoining wonders of St. Mark's Cathedral, &c. I assured him I was so far from being giddy that I only wished for a pair of wings to leave him and the platform for a reconnoitering promenade through the air.

Compare this with the experience recorded by Shelley in his fragmentary Speculations on Metaphysics in his *Essays and Letters from Abroad*, &c., vol. i, 250.

"I was walking with a friend in the neighbourhood of Oxford, engaged in earnest and interesting conversation. We suddenly turned the corner of a lane, and the view, which its high banks and hedges had concealed, suddenly presented itself. The view consisted of a windmill standing in one among many plashy meadows, enclosed with stone walls, the irregular and broken ground between the wall and the road on which we stood, a long low hill behind the windmill, and a grey covering of uniform cloud spread over the evening sky. The scene surely was a common scene, and the hour little calculated to kindle lawless thought; it was a tame uninteresting assemblage of objects. The effect which it produced on me was not such as could have been expected. I suddenly remembered to have seen that exact scene in some dream of long—

"Here I was obliged to leave off, overcome by thrilling horror."

This remark closes the fragment, which was written in 1815.

The present writer may add that he has twice in dreams been in fields, both times the same, evidently English, but as ordinary and uninteresting as those described by Shelley. All their features are perfectly visible to his mind's eye, and he has a secret intimate certainty that they exist, and that some day he will behold them palpably.

X.

NEXT WEDNESDAY'S SOIREE.—At the conversazione at the Cavendish Rooms on Wednesday next the chair will be occupied by Mr. Martin R. Smith, one of the vice-presidents of the National Association of Spiritualists. Mrs. Nosworthy, whose account of the bad effects produced by some "haunted furniture" excited so much interest when published in these pages, will give a reading from one of the English poets. Mrs. Nosworthy has often attracted large and refined public audiences at Birkenhead by her dramatic powers. Miss Beatrice Nosworthy is one of the youngest and one of the best of trance mediums. Mr. Seward, a gentleman who has come to England from California to bring out a new musical invention, will exhibit and give an explanation of his models, which merit the attention of all persons interested in music. They have been examined and approved by some of the leading composers in England, and by the great musical firms, and promise to effect useful reforms in the method of teaching music to the young and in the training of choirs. The invention should have a special interest, music being the most spiritual of the arts. A large number of tickets has already been sold, and the meeting altogether is expected to be a good one. Further particulars will be found in our advertising columns.

Poetry.

SPIRIT MUSIC.

Murmurings on the waters,
Murmurings on the sea,
For earth's invisible daughters,
Are breathing words to me.

We are waiting, we are waiting, on the shores of this better land,
We are singing, we are singing, in solemn strains and grand;
We are happy though we see that thou art pained and troubled now,
For we see the light of spirit-life that hovers round thy brow.

There is music ever playing, playing in this better land,
Solemn music to encourage the upward-struggling band;
Sometimes you catch it in your slumber, or feel it in your heart:—
You will hear it swelling sweetly when the soul and body part.

MARGUERITE, through the mediumship of Mrs. K. C.

Correspondence.

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

INVOCATIONS, AND THE INSPIRATION OF BARRY CORNWALL.

SIR,—The time was when poets would invoke the Muses. That time has passed, and the poet's thoughts flow forth in harmonious numbers quite as well without the invocation. My dear old friend, Barry Cornwall, the poet, who passed away from life but the other day, at the age of eighty-six—the schoolfellow of both Byron and Peel—often told me how the idea, in verse, came into his mind, he could not say from whence, but certainly with no effort or conscious predisposition on his part. He might be at the time in an omnibus, or in the crowded street, it seemed all the same; and he would often run into a shop for a piece of paper on which to inscribe the lines. It is to be remarked, that the thoughts of such “inspired” moments do not hold to the memory, somewhat as it is with the entranced somnambule—with a life within a life as it were, for man is more of a compound nature than is supposed, and his mind is a council chamber determining the choice, the executive will, and the impulse to action. Now, sir, many spirits have pronounced very decidedly against the practising prayer at spiritual circles and inspirational addresses at public meetings, being convinced that it is quite unnecessary, and that it amounts to a superstition, and very many Spiritualists are of the same mind. At least it is so regarded by the outer world and men of science. There is no objection to music, vocal or instrumental, the measure and harmony of which seem to have a spirit-stirring influence; in fact, music was used by Mesmer long since. Also, we know not what certain fumes and perfumes, or incense, &c., might do in respect to conditioning the medium and those present. The question of conditions has yet to be investigated, but is of course the root of the whole question, and the first step in science. We know that the inspiration of the oracles was ascribed to certain fumes arising from the soil of a particular spot, and no doubt there was reason for the belief. Depend upon it the means required are to be found in nature and in the conditions that surround us, and that all prayer and supplication and invocation are superfluous, and are, in fact, superstition. These inspirational addresses remind me of the *improvisatore* of Italy, who used no invocation, yet would speak for an hour in verse on any given subject, and all very clever, but with seldom anything worth recording.

HENRY G. ATKINSON.

18, Rue de la Douaine, Boulogne, France.

RECOGNISABLE SPIRIT FACES.

SIR,—I beg to state that having lately attended two of the materialisation *seances* given by the American mediums, Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, at their rooms, 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury-square, W.C., on the evenings of Wednesday and Saturday, 20th and 23rd instant, successful results and marvels were witnessed which I think should be made known to the readers of your widely-circulated journal.

At the *seance* given on Wednesday evening there were ten sitters, exclusive of the mediums; amongst those sitters were myself and Mrs. Regan, Mrs. Woodforde, Miss Woodison, Mr. Reynolds, and Mr. Smith. After the dark *seance*, which was very satisfactory, we sat for materialisations, in double row, facing an extemporised black curtain with square aperture, suspended from top of the door-frame at entrance to the bedroom. To the left of the curtain was placed a chair, about three feet therefrom, with a lamp, enclosed in a white square screen, which threw a mellow, subdued light on the whole.

The first recognised face to appear was that of my wife's brother, who departed this life in Australia, some years ago; and a most *startling* manifestation it certainly was, for on his being recognised he smiled, bowed, and kissed his hand to his sister, Mrs. Regan. The sound of the kiss was heard; he then disappeared, and reappeared, looking very happy, and said distinctly—“God bless you!” He disappeared, and again finally reappeared, smiling, and in a natural manner bade us “Good-night!” kissing both his hands to his sister at the same time. We all heard him.

The next to appear was a young lady who had been the wife of a gentleman who was present, and he soon recognised her. She kissed her hands to him, and was distinctly seen by the whole of the company. Several others followed in succession, two being remarkable and historical personages—Mary, Queen of Scots, who appeared very natural-looking, and the late Emperor Napoleon, who looked just as when he departed. He reappeared several times and bowed to Mr. Reynolds, whom he knew personally when here. A very beautiful nun appeared, and was recognised by Mrs. Woodforde; she bowed to me, and held her hands as if in prayer. The last to appear was Mr. Reynolds's brother, which was as striking a manifestation as Mrs. Regan's brother. Mr. Reynolds asked him to speak. He replied by saying—“It cost him such an effort;” an expression, it appears, he very often used when in the flesh. He reappeared several times, looking as natural as when here, smiling, and pulling his long beard apart, as was his habit when on earth.

The *seance* of Saturday evening was similar to the one described herein, the relatives of the sitters making themselves as strikingly manifest, especially the second materialisation of Mrs. Regan's brother, who again appeared, and whose voice was louder and stronger when he spoke.

Amongst the sitters at the latter *seance* were Capt. James, of Tottenham, his son and gentleman friend, Mr. Smith, myself and Mrs. Regan, Mrs. Wilkes, Mrs. Woodforde, Miss Lottie Fowler, and Mrs. Bullock, whose mother and sister materialised beautifully, and were distinctly seen. Likewise the husband of Mrs. Wilkes, his gold spectacles looking so real and distinct that you felt you could take them from his eyes.

The wonderful success of these marvellous materialisation *seances* is to be attributed to the special and rare phase of mediumship possessed by those young gentlemen Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, in being gifted with the power of bringing our dearest ones again to be seen and conversed with. In conclusion, I would suggest that it is most essential that the circle should be harmonious and passive to get successful manifestations, and particularly that no one of the sitters at the *seances* should cavil about too much or too little light, George, the controlling spirit of the circle, being the best judge of such matters.

JAMES REGAN.

4, Stanley-villas, Northcote-road, New Wandsworth,
January 23, 1875.

MATTER AND SPIRIT.

SIR,—The following spirit message, given to me in 1866, in reply to the questions put by a friend, will, I think, be acceptable to some of your readers. I have several times recently seen this subject—the connection between “Spirit and Matter”—mentioned in the spiritualistic papers, and on that account have chosen this message as, perhaps, suitable for the present time:—

Question.—What is Matter? Is it an essence coeval with creation, and the contrary to spirit? or, is it the aggregation of centres of forces, acting on our material perceptions; denser, because less utilised by the life of God, and more so in proportion as it recedes from the divine? if so is there not truth in the ancient eastern belief, that matter is evil in itself in proportion to its density?

Answer.—Matter is essential to spirit, even as spirit is essential to matter. The Holy Spirit of God is embodied in a spiritual body of the Father. Is it at all possible to conceive of spirit—which is essence—without some degree of materiality, so called now? *Not* in your earthly manner of using that term, but, as the force thrown off, and embodied into surroundings by the presence of life or spirit.

God, the Great Creator *is*. From Him all things are formed.

The fact of substances being condensed together, forming visible living things, proves the fact of the natural presence of a degree of materiality, or rather substantiality and reality, which would not be possible if spirit were spirit only, so to speak. But there is as vast and wondrous a difference in the

degrees of the density of matter, as must always exist between the different spirit spheres, from the highest and holiest, even down to the lowest, coarsest, and most evil. The lower on the scale of existence, from spirit angelic down to men's earth, the denser becomes the materiality. And from evil comes the intense materiality of this earth.

Reality is different from, and yet in a degree corresponds to, materiality.

Materiality is the reality which is cast off and condensed from evil—as reality is thrown off and condensed from the high and pure essence of divine life, in the varied forms of spirit.

Thus animal life is one of the throwings-off, or emanations of spirit life, which vary with the scale of density, down to the evil emanations and purely earthly creations, and forms of evil.

The term "material" thus is an earthly term to apply to the intensely coarse materiality produced by the density of evil.

Otherwise, the correspondences "reality and spiritual substantiality," being the correspondence to material substance, evil only consists in the intensity and power which it has wrought to attract evil to evil, and over good to encrust, as it were, a dense form.

Question.—Clairvoyants say that spirit germs attract to themselves material atoms from their surroundings. What does this mean?

Answer.—It applies entirely to the auras of attraction and repulsion, by which all things in God's universe are preserved in their order.

Any germ of spirit-life must necessarily attract matter or substance around it, in which it becomes clothed in bodily form. In process of time, as evil is subdued, the intensity of the materialism of the earthly body will pass away, and man even in the body will become more spiritualised. Ere this can be fiery trials must come, the world-soul, so to speak, must take the spiritual body form, and pass into a higher state. Thereby will the aura of the entire atmosphere of the earth's universe become purified, evil annihilated or overcome. Then and thus shall the prophecy of the new earth and heavens be fulfilled and the end of earthly things will be at hand.

F. J. T.

St. Leonard's-on-Sea.

SWEDENBORGIAN PROBLEMS.

SIR,—I find in your issue of Jan. 15th a communication from a respected friend (Dr. Berridge), in which he cites a passage from the writings of T. L. Harris, relative to a defect on the part of the Apostles, in their not organising the Infant Christian Church, as an industrial Christian institution, the outcome of the pure doctrines of their Divine Master.

T. L. Harris has taken exception to certain statements, here and there, in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, though he considers Swedenborg to have been the first in whom internal respiration returned to the natural consciousness. And he coincides with most that Swedenborg has written, especially his doctrinal utterances.

He also protests strongly, in *The Herald of Light*, against either Swedenborg's or his own writings being taken as infallible, or as final truth.

Now, it appears to me, that it was utterly impossible for the Apostles to do what Mr. Harris says they are not to be considered free from blame for not attempting.

Our Saviour conquered all the hells, and led captivity captive. But He did not do this for Himself alone. And, though He cleared the world of spirits from all preponderance of infernal power, He could not clear it of that vast multitude with whom mankind were in willing co-operation. And when we remember that there is no possibility of man's living without connection with spirits, it is plain, that as there was no general assembly of Christian spirits in the spirit-world at that time, there could be no such external institution of pure life upon the earth, as would be proof against all external corruption. It needed a true Christian Church in the spiritual world, where good and evil are first separated, before there could be one organised and established here. Hence the primary cause of the early declension of the Christian Church. This our Saviour foresaw and foretold, and also His second advent, which second advent would not have been delayed if all needful means had then existed in the world of spirits.

The reason why the powerful action of the Holy Spirit did not continue, seems to have been that a powerful sphere then existed in the lower regions of the spirit-world, consequent upon, and for the effecting of, the lost judgment upon the

hells of those who lived before the Lord's advent; but this sphere must necessarily have become weaker as Christians arrived in that world, all of whom were only in the rudimentary states of the Christian life. Otherwise they could not have breathed there, either as progressing in their own states, or as mediums for the advancement of Christians in this world. And it seems to me that it is only as a consequence of the formation of the New Jerusalem above, and the execution of a last judgment upon the descendants of the first or external Christian Church in the world of spirits, that "internal respiration," and a new Jerusalem on earth accompanying it, are now possible.

Our Lord enjoined His Apostles to preach the Gospel, to baptise in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; but He did not command them to organise the Christian Church. This, in truth, can only be done by Himself, as now, the Church begins to breathe from Him, mediatorially, through His New Church in the heavens. Preparatory to this divine work, modern Spiritualism seems to me to be the gathering and hewing of the rough materials, out of which the Divine Architect is about to build His new tabernacle, that His dwelling may be with men, and He may be their God.

THOMAS ROBINSON.

2, Hulme's-road, Newton-heath.

THE RING TEST.

SIR,—I believe that a few facts occasionally contributed to *The Spiritualist*, would be more acceptable to its readers, than any amount of mere theorising.

On the present occasion I shall confine myself to the relation of what appears to me a convincing proof of the truth of one of the most extraordinary physical phenomena of Spiritualism, viz., "the passage of matter through matter."

On Tuesday, the 5th of January, Mrs. and Miss Showers kindly gave a dark *seance* at my house. After the usual concert of spirit-voices, accompanied by Miss Showers on the piano, the conditions were broken by one of the party leaving the circle, and we adjourned for a short time to another room for refreshment.

On our return to the room in which the *seance* was held, we formed a new circle, consisting of only six people, and a wooden ring, procured by me in London on that day, was placed on the table in front of me. I held Miss Showers' left hand fast in mine, and pressed firmly against the table, so that my hand was doubled with the knuckles upwards, the medium's right hand being held by my son.

Soon after the gas had been extinguished, I heard the ring move, it then lightly touched the back of my hand, and I thought remained merely resting on it, without having accomplished the test.

I called for a light and then found that the ring had really passed on to my wrist, the upper part of the ring resting on the back of my hand. It must here be remarked that there was not the slightest fumbling during the passage of the ring, that the medium's hand never moved, and that the ring is too small to pass over my doubled fist, even when I am not holding another person's hand.

Of course this kind of test at any particular *seance*, can only be perfectly convincing to one person, viz., the individual on whose wrist the ring is passed, but I defy the cleverest conjuror in the world to perform by sleight-of-hand, the same feat under the same conditions. I can safely assert that I was not biologically.

I. JAMES.

Tottenham, Jan. 19, 1875.

THE SPIRITUALISM OF "LOTHAIR."

SIR,—The deserved encomiums made by your correspondent "M. A.," on Dr. Radcliffe's article in the *Contemporary Review* of December, entitled, "Man Transcorporeal," where the principle is laid down that "No definition can apply to man's spirit in its fulness, except that which is equally applicable to the Divine Spirit," that in fact, to quote Addison, "It is the Divinity that stirs within us," recalls an identical conclusion expressed in the remarkable tale by Mr. Disraeli, called *Lothair*.

It may be remembered how Mr. Disraeli there presents to the reader a young man of more than average intellect, distracted by the various religious problems and controversies of the day, and carried through several trying phases of thought, before the author lands him safely on a theory, as ennobling as it was satisfying, that of man's divinity.

Lothair, in the early stages of the tale, is much under the influence of an American lady of no ordinary amiability and

intelligence, a Spiritualist who diverts him from what she considers a false step that he was about to take. She dies. After her death he is, through a variety of circumstances, again about to be drawn into the same snare as before, when he is suddenly surprised by the apparition of the American lady. The spirit again addressed him with even more than her former force and fervour, against what she considered his old danger, and on this occasion, and under these unexpected circumstances, her advice prevails.

Lothair next tried negation, but this attempt is attended with but little success, for spiritual thoughts once aroused are not so easily set aside. Still, however, his doubts were neither finally settled nor his aspirations fully satisfied, until he meets at Jerusalem with a Syrian sage, who convinces him that, "Man is divine." Fortified by this hopeful assurance, and not doubting its truth, he returns to England a contented man, determined to live a life in conformity, as far as may be, with this his great heritage and responsibility.

Mr. Disraeli has the character of "levelling up," but surely, in the present instance at least, it would ill become me to name this habit otherwise than with respect and acquiescence.

It seems evident that even the Spiritualism of this remarkable book, by means of which Lothair was enabled to act an independent manly part in the face of many difficulties, significant as this is in itself, coming as it does from such a source, was but secondary in the author's mind to what appears to have been the main object of the book, because, indeed, the most important object, that of pointing out to man his true position as man, his true greatness—greater could not exist—his divinity.

As Dr. Radcliffe puts it, "The spirit which animated man, and pervades his body, is but a spark struck off from that Divine Spirit which animated creation." A spark, very far gone from original perfection, original righteousness, we may well exclaim. Truly so, very far gone indeed, as sparks incarnated must necessarily be as a general rule, but still sparks. Moreover, let it be remembered, that if it be once granted that a man's spirit is a spark struck off from the Divine Spirit which animates the universe; then, it naturally follows, that every spirit must have existed before it was incarnated, and, if once incarnated, why might it not be incarnated again? for what has happened once may always happen again. Once admit incarnation, and reincarnation seems a natural consequence, and this one thing is certain, if reincarnation be a truth, then a man's final doom at his death becomes a myth.

The doctrine of reincarnation has been held, and is now held by most of the higher religions, ancient and modern. It is taught both in the Old and New Testaments, and had gained so many followers among Christians in the middle ages, under the name of Platonist Christians, that nothing short of the sharpest persecution, supplemented by the curses of the Athanasian Creed, could have suppressed it.

Further, it seems probable, that if man be really immortal, his spirit must be either a spark of the great Central Divinity which has had no beginning, or must be eternal in itself. We cannot, so to speak, be immortal at one end, and that which has had a beginning must probably have an end, at least of its individuality.

May not the object of these sparks, being cast forth from Divinity, being sent out, as it were, from the Paradise of Glory, have been in order that each separate spark should learn the knowledge of good and evil for itself? so that, having learned good from evil for itself, it might, by choosing for itself the former, gravitate back in due season towards its great centre, like seeking like, perfect as an independent and self-disciplined individual, perfect as its Father in Heaven is perfect, but still a self-disciplined being, possibly through much tribulation, reaping its individual reward? I have said, "Ye are Gods."

Weymouth.

M. A., CANTAB.

SPIRITUALISM IN EDINBURGH.

SIR,—In the last number of *The Spiritualist*, Edinburgh gets the credit of being associated with Liverpool, Dalston, and Newcastle, as possessing one of the "chief local societies of Spiritualists in the country." The fact, however, is that "The Edinburgh Psychological Society" exists only upon paper; no meetings have been held for many months; at no time did it number more than fifty members, if so many, and I believe at the last meeting they had dwindled down to about a dozen; in fact the society is defunct.

There must be a good many Spiritualists in Edinburgh, but only a few have the courage to avow their belief. The state of Spiritualism here very much resembles what your correspondent Mr. Rendle says of it in Brixton.

Edinburgh.

A SPIRITUALIST.

SEANCES WITH MR. CHAS. E. WILLIAMS.

SIR,—May I ask you to kindly give a place in your columns to the following brief notice of public *seances* held by that most deservedly popular medium, Mr. C. E. Williams, during the past few months, at 61, Lamb's-conduit-street. The public have become so well acquainted with the great and continuous success of his spirit guide "John King," that it has almost appeared to friends a work of supererogation to bring to public notice many accounts of the astounding phenomena taking place there with so much regularity. For Mr. Williams' position has long become so well-established as the leading professional medium for the materialisation of spirit forms and the exhibition of "John King's" spirit light or lamp, that many notices in print would have been sometimes calculated to attract rather too many students of the physical phenomena to his door on *seance* nights, so that the "horns of the dilemma" for him might have become a choice between allowing too great a number of visitors to crowd his rooms, or sending the hungry for good spiritual food empty away. Still it may be gratifying to his numerous friends and well-wishers at a distance to know not only of the continued success of "John King" on most public nights in the recorded phenomena appertaining to his peculiar rôle, but also of recent attempts, some fairly successful, to *materialise* during the dark *seance* without the use of the cabinet. For some months past I have watched these philanthropic spirit attempts to introduce this new order of the phenomena with much interest.

On the first or second occasion, about four months since, when John King appeared lighted up at the dark *seance* without the use of the cabinet, I sat next the medium, and was greatly impressed by perceiving how very much and suddenly startled Mr. Williams himself was by that spirit's unexpected appearance at our side and over our heads. For at the cabinet *seances*, the medium being always entranced, has not been able to participate with his visitors in the act of handling the spirit lamp, nor indeed do I believe he has yet seen it. One Saturday evening lately, each and every sitter present, to the number of ten, if I remember rightly, had the lamp placed by John King on his or her hand, each for a few seconds, and all I think felt, as I have repeatedly done, its warmth (very slight), its weight, or the sensation as of weight, and its hardness. Latterly, too, John King seems to make it one of his strong points, in order to meet all doubt or suspicion if possible, to mount some nine feet or so to the ceiling, so that any of the theorists who might take a fancy to the idea that Mr. Williams had received the assistance of some spirit friend to unloose his cords and melt the sealing wax upon them, would be forced to resort to still further marvellous theorising, and say that he had been elongated some three and a half feet above his ordinary stature of five feet ten. I find it difficult to decide in my own mind whether the materialisation and spirit lamp, the pleasant and friendly conversational voice of John King, or the feats in spirit-photography in which that spirit and his medium have taken part, should be reckoned the greatest among these modern marvels. I know that John King also must instruct occasionally the spirit friends present of visitors to whom he is desirous of showing more than his usual kindness, for very recently the spirit of one who was very near and dear to me, found power to speak softly into my ear, through the tube, words of deep significance to myself; John King giving afterwards, in his fine manly bass voice, without the trumpet, the continuation and ending of that communication.

The harmonium recently introduced to Mr. Williams' *seance* room, seems to be a great acquisition, doing much to promote harmony in a brief time (when manipulated by the fine touch of Mr. H., and accompanied by his musical voice) in all minds present, even if a discordant one should happen to be among them. And when on the subject of music, I may mention a little novelty which lately happened to myself in that department of an evening's entertainment at one of these *seances*. On one of the evenings, when several hats were brought by the spirit Peter, and placed on their owners' heads correctly in the dark; mine, after having been placed very awkwardly indeed at first on mine, to which I called attention, was afterwards instantly altered to the most fashionable position, and then used as a small pianoforte, two small spirit hands on the crown keeping the best of time to the musical box which Peter had just wound up and started, much to the merriment of all present, as well as my own. On that evening, great harmony had prevailed in our circle, and the medium was in fair health also. Though the drain upon his physical powers is often very great when holding a large

number of *seances*, private as well as public, yet his spirit guides seem quite equal to the heavy task of maintaining his general health intact. But all who come in contact with mediums, should never forget, that such gifts as mediumship of a high order ought not to be tampered with, by invitations to too much gaiety or indulgence of any kind, and that that greatest earthly boon, good health, particularly for mediums, should be religiously cultivated, and every moral or other aid offered to these sensitive individuals, which it is in the power of such as benefit by them, to bestow. C.

4th January, 1875.

A MATERIALISATION SEANCE.

SIR,—A distinguished company assembled at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, on Saturday, January 16th, and the *seance* was of a marvellous nature, the different voices of the four spirits being so convincing; at the same time I clairvoyantly saw a spirit form and a light around the medium.

In the light *seance* for materialisations, Florence and the bright and lively spirit Lenore appeared and talked to the company; I walked up to both of the spirits, and saw them face to face, and I saw that they were two distinct persons, and not the medium, as one was rather taller than the other by, say, from two to three inches. I have not enjoyed such a pleasant *seance* for a great while, as the dear spirit friends looked so much like life. The success of the *seance* was due to our observance of the conditions laid down by the spirits, with whom, for one hour, we all had the privilege of talking and shaking hands. As you are in search of truth, I thought I would write these few lines. Yours respectfully, in favour of honest mediums all over the world, LOTTIE FOWLER.

2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury-square, W.C.

SPIRITUALISM IN GERMANY.

SIR,—When I visited Leipzig last August I was deeply impressed with the enthusiasm and activity displayed in the society there, and the firm resolution, after I had stated my experiences, to form circles for developing mediums. Their intention to set to work at once in like manner encouraged me with hopes that at last practical progress would go hand in hand with theorising; but, alas! there is now no sign of life from that quarter, and I feel almost ashamed of my country, which continues to receive facts *second hand*, whilst by a very little trouble it might get them at home. It is nonsense to try to make people believe these fundamental phenomena by verbal arguments; they *must* be witnessed, otherwise the gesticulating and ranting defender of "universality" (not, mind you, "universal") unchangeable laws will get the best of it. A striking proof of this I found in the last number of *Psychic Studies* in a foot-note referring to the ring test reported among my other statements. The editor says: "It could only have been a very clever trick; the ring must have had an opening, or prove to us that spirits can dissolve matter, &c."

Now, I thought my previous reports demonstrated clearly enough that wilful deception in this our private circle was out of question, therefore I did not state all the particulars of the case. I brought the iron ring (taken from my 4 in. telescope) myself. I laid it on the table, and bound the wrist of the medium to that of his neighbour; in a few seconds it was on his arm, and the binding intact. We so often got this remarkable ring test that it grew quite a commonplace affair, and I remember that it was one of the many little incidents in the *seance* reported by Mr. Charles Blackburn.

Ducie-avenue, Manchester.

C. REIMERS.

[The ring test is very common in England; a good instance is published in the present number of this journal, and the test is given at most of Mr. Williams's public *seances*.—ED.]

RECEPTION AT MRS. GREGORY'S.—Last Tuesday night Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, of 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, gave a reception to Spiritualistic and other friends, among whom were Lord Borthwick; Lady Borthwick; Dr. Allman, of Edinburgh; Mrs. Allman; Miss Showers; Mrs. Haws; Sir William Fairfax; Mr. Maitland Magill Orichton; Mr. Clark; the Rev. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A.; Mr. Peele, R.A.; Mr. George Sutherland; Mr. Percival; the Misses Strong; Mr. Barton; Miss Hope; Mrs. Wiseman; Miss Kislisbury; Mr. Webster Glynes; Captain James; and Mr. W. H. Harrison.

SPIRIT DRAWINGS IN BRIGHTON.—The *Brighton Gazette* says:—One of these so-called "sensitives" appears in the person of a lady, residing in Brighton, named Mrs. Catherine Berry, and a number of drawings, about 400 in number, are now on view at the Spiritualist Institution, 82, St. James's-street. Those who belong to the number of the uninitiated have been puzzled to make out the meaning of them, but I am assured by the gentleman, Mr. John Bray, in whose room they are exhibited, that they have a deep and recondite meaning attached to them, and that I want but a deeper spiritual insight to unravel their meaning. They are supposed to represent the beginning of life; to solve in a manner (I suppose with insight) the difficulties which Darwin, Huxley, and other great physiologists and naturalists are unable to do with unaided reason. Be that as it may, this appears to be a curious phase of this new religion.

THE INCREASE OF LUNACY.—At a recent meeting of the Islington Guardians of the Poor, a letter was read from the superintendent of a private lunatic asylum stating that a young woman belonging to that parish was so unmanageable that he wished her to be taken away, and would get her certified and defray all the expenses of sending her to Fisherton House, Salisbury, if the Guardians would consent. Mr. Hicks, the clerk to the Guardians, said they were in a fix never contemplated by the Act of Parliament, for places to which lunatics could be sent were not to be had; the county asylums were all full, and the private asylums nearly always full; they would soon be in a greater fix, and be totally unable to find any asylums to which they could send their lunatics.

THE AMERICAN WORD "SCIENTIST."—The word "Scientist" has been imported into the English language from America, by whom it is uncertain; but we first heard it through the lips of Mrs. Hardinge. It is also commonly used by other American trance speakers. Since then it has begun to travel outside the ranks of Spiritualism; Mr. Serjeant Cox uses it in his book, "*What am I?*" and *Nature*, in reviewing that book, called special attention to his use of the word. The *Family Herald* recently ridiculed it as a Transatlantic importation, not yet forming a recognised part of the English language, though why it should not be adopted, seeing that it is a substitute for the phrase "scientific man," it is difficult to understand, seeing that it economises both time and space. A new Spiritual journal was started some months since in Boston, called *The Spiritual Scientist*, so that will force the word upon us with all the more energy. Still, the journal had better have been called the *Scientific Spiritualist*; because on this side of the water, whenever its name is quoted, the majority of readers will doubt whether it is not an illiterate title or a slang word, ranking in the same category as "ginglings," "stone fences," and "brandy smashes."

SPIRITS IN A LAW COURT.—A justice of the peace in Chicago, who is a convert to Spiritualism, is, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, in the habit of having protracted conversations with Sir Edward Coke, Blackstone, and other authorities, and bringing their experience to bear on the case before him. The other day, during the forenoon session of the court, a case came up for trial. The attorney for the defence quoted a decision which he found in one of the early Illinois reports. It was apparently decisive. The lawyer looked triumphantly at the judge. The latter said, "Wait a minute, I feel the influence." Then the judge grabbed a lead pencil and a sheet of paper. His hand went convulsively, and at the end of five minutes he had scribbled over the entire page. When he had finished he said to the lawyer, "I have just received a message from Judge Lockwood, who was one of the Judges of the Supreme Court at the time this decision was rendered. He authorises me to say that the majority of the members of the then Court who are now in the spirit land, after mature consideration, decided to reverse their former judgment. Please inform the profession of that fact, that they may govern themselves accordingly." The judge then continued, "Under the circumstances, you will see that I can pay no attention to the decision you have quoted, and judgment must be rendered against you." The lawyer remonstrated; and the judge finally agreed to postpone the case for one week, in order to give Judge Lockwood and his colleagues an opportunity to examine the matter again, and see if they are determined to reverse their former opinion. In the meantime, the lawyers of Chicago are meditating whether it will not be necessary for them to burn all their reports if judges in the spirit land are to be allowed to carry on the business of making decisions and of reversing those which they have made in this world.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

MRS. FAY has taken apartments at 31, Brook-street, Hanover-square, W., where she will give *seances* professionally.

THE BARONESS ADELMA VAY, who has fine vocal abilities, has expressed her willingness to sing at one of the *soirées* of the National Association of Spiritualists when she visits London in the spring. The broad liberal spirit which characterises her writings have gained her many friends in this country.

PREVISION BY A SAVAGE.—The subjoined passage will be found at page 86, vol. ii. of Livingstone's *Last Journals*, recently published:—"Suleiman-ben-Juma lived on the main-land, Mosessamé, opposite Zanzibar. It is impossible to deny his power of foresight, except by rejecting all evidence, for he frequently foretold the deaths of great men among Arabs, and he was pre-eminently a good man, upright and sincere—'Thisti,' none like him now for goodness and skill. He said that two middle-sized white men, with straight noses and flowing hair down to the girdle behind, came at times and told him things to come. He died twelve years ago, and left no successor; he foretold his own decease, three days beforehand, by cholera."

THE ST. JOHN'S ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Mr. R. Pearce, late honorary secretary to the St. John's Association of Spiritualists, Clerkenwell, informs us that:—"In May last, at the fifth annual meeting, it was decided to adjourn the Sunday evening meetings of the Association during the summer months. Some of the members thought that the meetings would not be well attended during the summer, and that the Society could not afford to continue them at a loss. There is no doubt, however, that had Mr. Barber and myself been willing to continue to bear the burden of the meetings, *i.e.*, to find speakers, guarantee the due payment of rent and other charges, and to see to the proper conduct of the services, most of the members would have been glad to have had them continued. Neither of us, however, was willing to carry on a work which had pressed heavily on us for so long a time. We did our best for the Association, and both much regret the past things have now come to. When the meetings were adjourned it was arranged that as many members as wished could meet at Mr. Barber's once a week during the summer, and that the Sunday services and other meetings should be resumed in the autumn. At the same time a new committee was elected, with Mr. Cotter as secretary. For some time a few members met at Mr. Barber's once a week, but the number attending gradually dwindled down, and at last these meetings ceased. As you know, the Sunday evening meetings at Goswell Hall were not resumed by the Association; the Committee elected last May has never met, and the members have not had the matter enough at heart to take the management into their own hands. Therefore to all intents and purposes the St. John's Association is dead, although there would yet be time to resuscitate it, and carry on its work on an improved basis, did the members care to do so. Were this done I would willingly do anything I could to help it in any way, so also would Mr. Barber, if we saw a chance of there being thorough unity among the members." The career of the St. John's Association shows how much depends upon a good working secretary, to keep small organisations alive; indeed, Spiritualism is deeply indebted to those secretaries of local societies who attend to the duties of their office. Mr. Pearce, Mr. Steele, Mr. Barber, and others, have kept the St. John's Association alive for years by their steady work on its behalf, and sometimes by paying off small arrears; they now seem likely to give up the work because of the apathy of most of the members.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J.L.—Your note describes only ordinary manifestations.

LIEUT.-COLONEL.—Please see "Answers to Correspondents," published on the 15th of January.

Continental subscribers are requested to be on their guard against overcharges and delays in the supply of this journal. Mr. Gledstanes, of Paris, has sent us a receipted bill for £1 0s. 8d., for the supply of *The Spiritualist* to him during 1874, by a bookseller living in Southampton-row. The proper charge for *The Spiritualist* for one year is 8s. 8d., plus 4s. 4d. postage to Paris, total 13s. Till June last the price of *The Spiritualist* was threepence each number, which would raise the total charge for 1874 to about 15s. Mr. Gledstanes called the attention of the bookseller to his overcharge, but was informed that the said charge was right. Continental subscribers are requested also to see that their weekly copies are started from London every Thursday night, and not delayed before being posted.

MR. COLES, of Chicago, lectured on Sunday at Goswell Hall.

NEXT month Mr. and Mrs. Everitt will go to Portsmouth, and Mr. Everitt expects to give several lectures there and in adjacent places.

MR. HAXBY informs us that he and Mr. Burns are joint secretaries to a committee for the presentation of a testimonial to Mr. Wallace, one of the oldest mediums in this country.

TO-NIGHT a meeting will be held at 110, Islington, Liverpool, the Rooms of the Psychological Society of that town, to discuss a scientific paper by Dr. William Hitchman, entitled "Recent Philosophy of Existence."

A HAUNTED HOUSE.—Mrs. M. Theresa Wood, of Bedford House, Carlyle-square, Brompton, favours us with the following extract from a private letter to her, describing a haunted house in the Midland districts, but the tenants do not wish the exact locality to be published:—"You know Mrs. — family; well, they have a room that is haunted. It seems that last January the youngest daughter E— had a dream that she would die on the 14th of October, 1874, and about a fortnight before that time she was taken ill with rheumatic fever. However, they would not let her die, and she is now recovering; but during her illness something queer has been happening. One night her sister was sitting in the room with her, when all were gone to bed, and the gas was lowered, when she distinctly saw a white figure come into the room, walk up to the bed, look at the invalid, and then walk out again. Another night I think it was Lizzie — and Florence — were sleeping with one of the Miss —, when she said to them, 'Don't be alarmed if you hear a noise, for my door often opens wide and shuts again.' And sure enough they had not been in bed long, before the door-knob rattled, and the door opened. They called out 'Who's there?' but received no answer, of course. When they recounted the incident next morning at breakfast, an old gentleman, a Wesleyan minister who was staying there, said 'Now you speak of it, I will tell you. I have been very much disturbed in the night. I had been in bed some time when I felt the bed raised some distance from the floor, and this happened two or three times.' Then another night Mrs. — and a married sister from London were in the same bed, talking about the little invalid, when in the middle of a sentence they were suddenly served the very same trick. They were too terrified either to shout or move, so had to lie there till morning. I hope I shan't be served the same tricks. I think it would drive me mad. I suppose you are not tired of it yet. I like to hear of these things as long as they don't touch me; so, hoping you enjoy them, and trusting you are all well, with best love to all, believe me, &c."

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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.

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

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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

INQUIRERS 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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