

The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

The Oldest Newspaper connected with Spiritualism in Great Britain.

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"THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER:

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

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, PRICE TWOPENCE.
ESTABLISHED IN 1869.

THE SPIRITUALIST, published weekly, is the oldest newspaper connected with the movement in the United Kingdom, and is the recognised organ of educated Spiritualists in all the English-speaking countries throughout the Globe; it also has an influential body of readers on the Continent of Europe.

The Contributors to its pages comprise most of the leading and more experienced Spiritualists, including many eminent in the ranks of Literature, Art, Science and the Peerage. Among those who have published their names in connection with their communications in its columns are Mr. C. F. Varley, C.E., F.R.S.; Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., Editor of the "Quarterly Journal of Science" (who admits the reality of the phenomena, but has, up to the present time, expressed no decided opinion as to their cause); Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, President of the Biological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (1876); Prince Emile de Sayn-Wittgenstein (Wiesbaden); the Right Hon. the Countess of Gathness; His Imperial Highness Nicholas of Russia (Duke of Leuchtenberg); Mr. H. G. Atkinson, F.G.S.; Lord Lindsay; the Hon. Robert Dale Owen (formerly American Minister at the Court of Naples); Baron Dirckinck-Holmfeld (Holstein); Mr. Gerald Massey; Le Comte de Bullet; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, formerly American Minister at the Court of Portugal; Mr. C. C. Massey, Barrister-at-Law; Mr. George C. Joad; Dr. Robert Wyld; Mr. T. P. Barkas, F.G.S.; Mr. Serjeant Cox, President of the Psychological Society of Great Britain; Mr. Alexander Calder, President of the British National Association of Spiritualists; the Rev. J. Tyrer (Australasia); Mr. Eben Sargent (Boston, U.S.); Sir Charles Isham, Bart.; Mrs. Ross-Church (Florence Maryat); Mrs. Makdougall Gregory; the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof, Russian Imperial Councillor, and Chevalier of the Order of St. Stanislas (St. Petersburg); the Baroness Adelmata Vay (Austria); Mr. H. M. Dunphy, Barrister-at-Law; C. Carter Blake, Doc. Sci., Lecturer on Comparative Anatomy at Westminster Hospital; Mr. Stanhope Templeman Speer, M.D. (Edin.); Mr. J. C. Lummoore; Mr. John E. Purdon, M.B. (India); Mrs. Honeywood; Mr. Benjamin Coleman; Mr. Charles Blackburn; Mr. St. George W. Stock, B.A. (Oxon); Mr. James Wason; Mr. N. Fabyan Dawe; Herr Christian Reimers; Mr. Wm. White (author of the "Life of Swedenborg"); Mr. J. M. Gully, M.D.; the Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D., author of "Unorthodox London"; Mr. S. C. Hall, F.S.A.; Mr. H. D. Jencken, M.R.I., Barrister-at-Law; Mr. Algernon Joy; Mr. D. H. Wilson, M.A., LL.M.; Mr. C. Constant Smyrna; Mrs. E. A. Nosworthy; Mr. William Oxley; Miss Kinslingbury; Miss A. Blackwell (Paris); Mrs. F. Showers; Mr. J. N. T. Martheze; Mr. J. M. Peebles (United States); Mr. W. Lindesay Richardson, M.D. (Australia); and many other ladies and gentlemen.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

VOLUME TEN: NUMBER THIRTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, MARCH 30th, 1877.

OCCULTISM.

SOME time ago, Colonel Olcott and other similarly good and trusted American friends of Spiritualism founded the Theosophical Society in New York, and one of the leading tenets of those who thus banded themselves together, differs from that held by Spiritualists in general in the circumstance that it endorses the hypothesis that a portion of the psychical phenomena are produced, not by departed human beings, but by what the theosophists term "elementary spirits." Another tenet is that these spirits can and ought to be commanded—not obeyed. The low kind of intelligence and morality, and the want of truthfulness in the messages connected with certain physical manifestations, are ascribed by Occultists to sub-human intelligences. This is a fair hypothesis for consideration, the more especially that in all ages and among the early Fathers of the Church a belief was prevalent in the existence of spirits other than human, whose intentions towards mankind were not at all of a benevolent nature. In these modern times, when more is known about the phenomena of mesmerism and the subjective nature of the visions of sensitives, not much faith is likely to be hurriedly placed in the objective reality of nondescript beings perceived by seers, unless their testimony be in some way verified by evidence of a more objective character. Nevertheless the main theory of the Occultist is a fair and proper one to set up, provided it is not idly done, but is advanced by those who, after sifting the evidence, are prepared to give strong logical proof that some of the spirits who produce the lower phenomena have never been in human bodies, and that the lowest intelligence connected with the lowest phenomena cannot be ascribed to the spirits of departed savages, or of men of the lowest type of civilisation. On what foundation (beyond that of merely rallying round the resuscitated idea) the Theosophical Society has hoisted its standard we do not know, because in its prospectus and in the opening address of its president, was no evidence tending to show that the spirits now under notice were not of a low human order; one of the chief points in the address was the announcement of some experiments which a Mr. Felt intended to make in the attempt to raise elementary spirits by chemical processes, like a magician of old. We often wonder why the champions of Occultism have not brought forward the evidence on which they found their opinions, for publication in these pages, thereby opening up the whole subject for free consideration, and have occasionally suggested to some of those interested in the subject that this course should be adopted. As matters stand, shortly after the Theosophical Society was formed it resolved itself into a secret organisation, so that nothing further has been heard of the success or failure of the experiments of Mr. Felt; nor have we yet heard the nature of the evidence on which, as a society, its belief in elementary spirits is founded. Anybody could merely idly re-start the antiquated devil theory, or elementary spirit theory, but to do so with efficiency, it is necessary that he should have devoted much hard work to the subject, so as to be able to bring forward cogent evidence; he ought also to be well acquainted with the modes of thought and modes of expression of ideas by savages, also with the difficulties which departed human beings have in communicating through mediums, before he is able to draw a line between spirits of whom we have some knowledge, and those assumed elementaries who appear to be a mild kind of devils, sucking devils, devils diluted. The theory is a good one for consideration, and we often wonder why no communication on the subject has ever been sent to us for publication, and why the Theosophical Society has not officially set forth the evidence on which the fundamental tenets of its members are based.

THE POWER OF THOUGHT-READING.

The following passages from the late Professor Gregory's book on *Animal Magnetism* show that the mesmeric power of thought-reading exists, quite independently of the presence of the spirits of the departed. The phenomena of Spiritualism can never be thoroughly understood until those of mesmerism are reproduced by students, and both classes of facts are studied together:—

Thought-reading presents itself in every possible variety of form. The sleeper, being placed *en rapport* with any person, can often describe, with the greatest accuracy, the subject that occupies the thoughts of that person. It may be an absent friend, or his own house, or that of another, or his drawing-room, bedroom, study, and so on. All these things the sleeper perceives, as they pass through the mind of the experimenter, and describes with great minuteness and accuracy, so as to excite our astonishment.

Or he goes further; he not only perceives the present, but the past thoughts of the person *en rapport* with him; he shares his memory. Thus he will mention facts, no longer so existing, but remembered by the experimenter.

Nay, he goes still further even than this; for he perceives things once known to, and now forgotten by, the experimenter, who very often contradicts the sleeper, and persists in maintaining his own opinion, until, on further inquiry, he not only finds him to be right, but himself is enabled to recall the fact, which had, as we say, escaped his memory.

We all know that we are apt, at times, to forget facts, which subsequently recur to the memory. But here it would seem that the sleeper sympathises with our past thoughts, as to read what we ourselves are for the moment blind to. At least, this must be admitted by those who ascribe all clairvoyance to sympathy; but it is difficult, in many cases, to distinguish between sympathetic and direct clairvoyance, if we admit the possibility of the latter.

For example, the sleeper describes a room, at the request of the experimenter. He details the form, size, doors, windows, book-cases, tables, carpet, fireplace, sofas, chairs, pianoforte, and so on, and, as he goes on, every statement is confirmed by the proprietor, who sees the whole in his mind's eye as when he left it. But all at once, perhaps, the sleeper speaks of the hangings, or pictures, and says he sees the picture of a dog, a horse, or a man, in such or such a position, with reference to another object. This is denied; but the sleeper is firm. So is the other, and after a long dispute each retains his opinion. But on returning home the experimenter finds that he has been mistaken, and the sleeper right. He now remembers that up to a certain period the picture hung where he had said, but that he himself, or some one else, had changed its position to that described by the sleeper as he himself formerly knew, but had forgotten. Similar occurrences are very common. But they admit of two explanations.

In the first place, the sleeper, in many cases, declares that he reads the thought of the other party, and certainly does so in some cases, even where he is not aware of doing so, but thinks he is looking directly at the objects described. Now, it may be, and this is the phenomenon properly under consideration, that he reads the past thought of the experimenter, and, in some obscure manner, discovers that it is true, while the present thought is erroneous.

Or it may be, that when asked to describe the room, the sleeper, finding the trace in the questioner's mind, follows it up until he comes into direct communication with the object by direct clairvoyance. That this often happens I think cannot be doubted, and we shall see further on that the experiment may be so made as to prove it; but I am also inclined to believe that the former explanation applies in

some cases, and that, in some instances, the mediate and immediate modes of perception of distant objects are mixed or combined.

One frequent form of thought-reading is that of perceiving the contents of a closed letter, or of a sealed packet, or of a sealed box. Some sleepers can do this readily if *en rapport* with a person who knows these contents, but not otherwise. But here it must be noted that, in some cases, the rapport is established without contact, so that it suffices for the sleeper that one person who knows the contents of the closed objects should be present. And lastly, it appears that some subjects, who at one time possess the power of direct or immediate clairvoyance, at other times are destitute of this, and have only that of thought-reading.

Of course when it is done by thought-reading failure will take place, when no one who knows the object to be described is present, while, on the entrance of such a person, the sleeper succeeds. All these things must be carefully attended to in our experiments, otherwise our results have no value whatever, and only lead to confusion. When a sleeper, of the sympathetic class, fails at one moment and succeeds in the next, after a person at first absent has arrived, the idea of collusion arises in many minds; whereas, if we were well acquainted with all the facts, and with their infinite variety, we should see in that result a new proof of the truth of the fact, and the integrity of the sleeper.

Those who meet with cases in which thought-reading is found to be the true explanation of the phenomena should reflect that thought-reading is, in itself, a beautiful and most wonderful fact; and should beware also of drawing the conclusion that, because it applies to one case, or to many cases, of apparent vision, at a distance, it is therefore sufficient to explain all cases, or the only explanation, if it can be called such, that is admissible.

It often happens, as I have explained, that the sleeper or thought-reader is found right as to present facts where he has been supposed to be wrong. But it also often happens that he is supposed to be wrong, and is not afterwards shown to have been right. There are, in fact, many sources of error on both sides, which are often difficult of detection.

Thus the thought-reader may be dwelling on some past event, and be persuaded that it is present. The impressions of past and of present events are of equal vividness in his mind, being, in both cases, internal and indirect impressions. Hence he cannot readily distinguish between them, and may be quite correct, if we could discover the precise time to which his sensations refer. This must be carefully attended to, and our experiments regulated accordingly.

Or, he may receive erroneous impressions from suggested ideas. So powerful is his sympathy with other minds that an idea, directly suggested or indirectly introduced, as, for example, by a leading question, may often produce on his mind an impression as vivid as that caused by the thoughts or memory of his questioner, and all three may become mixed together.

For this reason all suggestions and leading questions should be carefully avoided, and the sleeper encouraged to tell his own story. Nor is the danger of error equally great in all cases. Many can readily distinguish the different kinds of impression, and steadily reject suggested ideas, even while some of them have a difficulty in distinguishing present from past events. Some, again, can do the latter also, and these, of course, are the best subjects.

It often happens that in early experiments the operator is so excited by the novelty and interest of the facts that he does not calmly examine, and involuntarily suggests, by silent sympathy, his own ideas to his subject. But after a few sittings he becomes more collected; he has only the pure desire to hear what the sleeper says; the sleeper is not disturbed by involuntary suggestions, and his sensations come out more pure and less confused.

Besides, his powers improve, and by practice a sleeper, at first confused and often mistaken, may become, if properly treated, a very valuable one.

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 MR. E. W. WALLIS is making a house to house visitation in the East End of London, volunteering information in each home on the subject of Spiritualism.

## RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

BY A BROAD CHURCH CLERGYMAN.

THERE is much which is calculated to interest the student of Spiritualism in the recent valedictory address of Dean Stanley, at St. Andrew's. As the typical Broad Churchman, Dean Stanley must, of necessity, command the respect of those who are certainly the broadest of all Broad Churchmen; who are gradually elaborating a new meaning for the word "faith" by dissociating it from mere credulity, and giving its original idea of belief based upon reasonable evidence; and who alone seem to have succeeded (in the words of the *Westminster Review* for October, 1875) in re-establishing, on what professes to be the ground of positive evidence, the fading belief in a future life—"not," continues this pungent writer, "such a future as is dear to the reigning theology, but a future developed from the present, a continuation under improved conditions of the scheme of things around us." It cannot be too clearly understood, at the present remarkable crisis in the history of religious thought, that this is what Spiritualism claims to do—the validity of its claim being, of course, a matter of evidence—to establish, according to the rules of inductive logic, and as the result of a pure dialectical process, those principles of belief in man's immortality which we have hitherto been bidden to take on trust from a book, or a church, or an individual teacher. Certainly no effort can more thoroughly command the sympathies of the honest theologian and the real man of science than the endeavour to make the results of logical induction and authoritative teaching coalesce, or to point out wherein they differ. The method of mere prescription is failing in its effect. Men will not accept teaching at second hand without hand and credentials. Why should they—or rather how *can* they—when once private judgment is admitted as a factor in the process of faith?

The tendency of looking at matters from a Spiritualistic point of view is at once to put theology in its proper place as one of the sciences—the highest, if we like, but still a science—and amenable to the laws of science, like mathematics or geology. To this then the pseudo-theologian, vulgarly so called, objects, and in place of belief based on evidence, he puts *credulity founded on authority*. The *soi-disant* man of science, so called, equally demurs, because he says the object matter of theology runs counter to what he calls the uniformity of the laws of nature, meaning thereby his knowledge of those laws. You cannot, he asserts, see, feel, taste, and handle the subjects with which theology deals. You cannot make it amenable to the laws of inductive logic; therefore, he concludes, it is no matter for his investigation.

Spiritualism denies the minor premiss in this case. You *can*, it says, see, feel, handle the subjects with which theology deals. It is a matter of inductive logic. Very likely the Spiritualist himself who thus argues arrived at his belief in Spiritualism by an inductive process. He tried false guesses (as Dr. Whewell says) to account for phenomena, and after doing so for a long time, made a better guess, and so got at the true theory. He tried to solve everything by assuming charlatanism, which accounted for some things, but not all; tried to reduce all experiences to imagination, and found that hypothesis failed to cover his facts; then after many other guesses he took the unquestioned phenomena to be *due* to the source from which they claimed to emanate—the spiritual world. He tried that hypothesis, and, using it deductively by way of verification, saw that it accounted for his facts, and therefore gave him every reason to believe that his induction was a valid one.

Now, does this process—which is unquestionably scientific—differ from or square with that of theology—not the theology of Little Bethel, but the theology of the New Testament? There is the crucial question for our parsons and our "followers."

If Christ's miracles meant anything at all beyond simple thaumaturgy, their meaning was *evidential*. When He wished to prove that the maid was not dead, but sleeping, what did Christ do? He woke the maid up, and silenced the scientific people who laughed His "theory" to scorn, by a plain, palpable *fact*. When He attributed disease

to evil spirits, He talked to the indwelling demon, and so proved the possession. He received replies; He eventually drove the spirits away, and so healed the disease. When He Himself was dead, He came back and showed Himself to His disciples over and over again, as they sat in circle. He gave them "signs to follow belief," bade them work miracles for conviction, and told them He would always be with them, not in body, but in spirit, to help them do this, and to continue that method, of which Pentecost was an imagination. He laid down no sort of limit for the prevalence of this matter. He did not hint that this régime was to last only during the lifetime of the Apostles, or for three centuries, when recent testimony rendered it comparatively needless, and that it was then to die out when it was most wanted. *Has it died out?* There is the question to which modern Spiritualism alone is ready to make answer with its splendid negative. This negation is based on fact, not on theory, and therein differs from the unscientific theology popularly but most falsely so called.

Surely, then, as science is adopting a suicidal policy by denouncing spirituality, Spiritualism would make an exceedingly unwise concession if it allowed itself to be disassociated either from science or theology (if we must adopt the popular distinction) as though they were antagonistic. They are not so; and (in the view of parsonic people, at all events) it is the very highest mission of Spiritualism to prove their identity, and that the New Faith is the revival of Primitive Christianity.

Holding such views as these, the clergyman would go into his oratory just in the same spirit as the chemist into his laboratory, expecting that, if certain conditions were complied with, certain results would follow; assured that he could, by using the proper means, enjoy "an hour's communion with the dead," now and in London, just as well as nineteen centuries ago in Jerusalem; that signs would follow belief in his case just as in the case of the early church. There was no distinction between natural and supernatural then—the two horizons blended—why should the case be different now?

The writer of these words is about to put this matter to practical test. During those very days from Easter to Whitsuntide, when he is forced *volens volens* by the course of his Church duties to commemorate the appearance of the risen Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit, he proposes to sit daily at a devotional *séance*—literally for "an hour's Communion with the Dead."

Quite accepting Dean Stanley's position that what is *preternatural* need not be *supernatural*, he believes (rightly or wrongly as the event will prove) that the adjuncts of worship are likely to keep off those low influences which undoubtedly do beset ordinary *séances*, and also to lift the sitters into the possible range of a higher influence than that which science sees stereotyped in its laws of nature.

He has neither time or inclination for propagandism, and has had enough of evidence to convince himself. He seeks, therefore, only the sympathetic co-operation of one or two congenial persons, and does not solicit even this. He can work—as he has worked—alone. Curiosity-mongers will lose their time if they write to him (for has he not a wastebasket?), but those really interested in the matter may address him under cover to the editor.

HONOURS IN OLD AGE.—Our readers will remember that Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall recently received literary recognition from Her Majesty the Queen, worthy alike of royalty, and of the personages in whose honour the gifts were bestowed. In the course of a recent lengthy letter (accompanying some presents of portraits and poems) to J. T. Markley, of this city, the "old man eloquent" thus writes of himself and his equally gifted lady:—"Our close of life cannot be far off. We cannot be here long before we finish our course; we hope and pray that there may be laid up for us a crown of glory. \* \* \* I presume to send you some lines I wrote to commemorate our fiftieth wedding-day. I have read several of the poems in your little volume. I find them charming: full of sweet, overflowing, and pure-heart feeling; graceful also as compositions. My life, like yours, has been one of intense labour; few have worked harder than I have worked since the year 1820, when I printed my first book. But I am thankful to God, and hope and trust that I have striven to advance His glory and the good of my kind. And, surely, if I may humbly say so much of myself, how forcibly I may say it of the labours of my beloved wife."—*Peterborough Advertiser*.

## REMARKABLE EXAMPLES OF SPIRIT-WRITING.

BY THE HON. J. L. O'SULLIVAN, FORMERLY AMERICAN MINISTER AT THE COURT OF PORTUGAL.

MRS. BELL HAMANN, formerly of Boston, now of San Francisco, is a very fine medium, as well as a lady of culture, amiability, and the highest respectability. I was favoured with many *séances* with her during a recent visit to California. The ordinary manifestations of her mediumship consisted of replies written by her to inquirers, or to requests penned by the writer, on pieces of paper, folded several times thick like ballots or pellets, which he would lay on the table before her, as many as he pleased at a time, addressed to friends in the spirit life. These might either be written and folded on the spot, or brought ready prepared. She would take them up one by one between her fingers, and sometimes apply them to her forehead (unopened of course), and then write the replies as she would *hear* them, or have them impressed upon her. The reply would rarely fail to be from, and signed by, the spirit to whom it was addressed, and to be apposite and correct, and often it would contain names and references to various other persons, either in the spirit or the material world, known to the spirit and the visitor, though the medium, as a general rule, would not know the name nor anything about the latter. I took some friends to her, and numerous other visitors frequented her *séances*. This was a mediumship like Foster's, only far better than his, for he gives only the mere names of the spirits to whom the folded pellets are addressed. Sometimes the spirit addressed would not be there. Sometimes spirits not addressed nor thought of by the visitor, yet known to him, would volunteer communications to him.

But within the last three weeks of my stay in San Francisco this lady became also a *slate writer*, and perhaps the finest I know of, as may be judged from what I am about to record. This commenced with small beginnings, but rapidly developed itself. I had numerous experiences of it; and, I may add, simply as a friend, without charge of any fee. I had by this time become quite intimate with her and her husband, who is a physician.

The *modus operandi* was this. The slate (sponged clean with a small piece of pencil laid upon it, at first like Slade's, but afterwards by the direction of the spirits considerably bigger) was held under a common table, about a couple of inches below the table-top, she holding one corner between her thumb and fingers, and I supporting it lightly between mine, at the opposite diagonal corner of the slate. Our other hands were on the top of the table. In this situation it is clear that if she had relaxed her hold, to make any other use of her fingers, the slate must have dropped instantly to the ground, so light was the support contributed to it by me. Nay more—I having once asked to have my hand touched, there was then written on the slate that I should place my entire hand on the top of the slate, which I did, so that the slate was then held up solely by her thumb and fingers at one corner of it. My hand was then copiously touched, stroked and patted, and a ring on the little finger taken off, at my request, dropped audibly on the slate, and again put on, with some little difficulty in pushing it over the thickness of the joint.

Sometimes too she laid the slate on the open palm of her hand, and then directed me to place my hand under hers, so that the entire back of her hand rested on the palm of mine, both hands, thus uniting in holding the slate up to within an inch or two of the under side of the table top. Both of these modes of holding the slate certainly constituted the most complete of test conditions as to the point that the medium's hand could not possibly have had anything to do either with the touching mine and taking off the ring or with the copious writing on the slate, which would take place as will be seen below. These things were certainly done by no mortal hand. She and I were alone in the room; the table was a common everyday one, standing on an unbroken spread of carpet: will Dr. Carpenter consider that they come within the reach of "unconscious cerebration?"

Another point as to the *modus operandi*, which differs from the experiences with Dr. Slade. While the slate was being held under the table, we would not hear the scratching of the pencil in the act of writing, but a steady stream as

of rapid little ticks on the slate, for all the world like the sound of a stream of electric sparks. We would then hear three loud ticks and the sound of the pencil dropping on the slate, as a signal that it was done. We would then withdraw the slate, and *there* would be the message, always distinctly written. And yet, on my once remarking on this circumstance as being different from what occurred at Dr. Slade's, and also with Mrs. Francis (another slate-writing medium at San Francisco), the next time we heard, first the flow of the stream of ticks, and then the scratching sound of writing with a slate pencil, as though to show that they could do that too if they chose.

It was also to be noted that a communication of some length would be given in broken parts, even a sentence being sometimes broken off in the middle. The signal for stopping would be given, as though for rest and recuperation of the force. This will be illustrated below. Seldom would more than twenty or twenty-five words be given consecutively without such an intermission, long enough for me to read, copy, expunge, and rub the slate, and again restore it to its position under the table. It seemed as though some force analogous to electricity flowed down the medium's arm, so as to charge the slate and pencil with some spiritual power, so as to establish the conditions under which the spirit hands were able to act. That no mortal hands were, or could possibly have been there was, I repeat, absolutely certain.

Having thus explained the truly test conditions under which the writing would take place, I now proceed to give two remarkable communications from two remarkable persons, both eminent in the religious world, which I received, in the way described, on the 21st and 22nd January, a day or two before my departure from San Francisco. They were Archbishop Hughes, of New York, and Theodore Parker, of Boston—the one a zealous and ardent prelate of the Roman Catholic Church, the other a Unitarian minister of far-famed eloquence and power, who, while glowing with a strong religious fervour, yet carried a philosophical rationalism into his interpretations of the Bible so far and so deep that orthodoxy generally denounced it as infidelity.

Had they been found to adhere still each to his own former doctrine it would not have been surprising to the experienced Spiritualist, familiar with cases in which the continued personality and identity of the disembodied spirit are found to manifest themselves, not only in unchanged traits of character, likes and dislikes, but also in creed and doctrine, religious and philosophical, if not entirely unchanged yet not more than only modified, for at least a time more or less protracted after that change in the conditions and modes of living which we call death. But when we find a Theodore Parker to have now come to be at one with an Archbishop Hughes on such a point as the preternatural, or rather abnormal, conception of Christ by a virgin mother—Theodore Parker, who in his own pulpit has spoken of that mother as “that honest wife of the Nazarene carpenter”—it is certainly a striking fact, implying a new enlightenment or advance in knowledge, now candidly avowed by so noble an intellect and so grand a soul. Nor is the fact less striking that so eminent a dignitary in the Catholic hierarchy as Archbishop Hughes should, while speaking of that point of doctrine as still believed in by him, and while evidently clinging strongly still to his character of a “true Catholic,” yet speak in a way so widely different from what he would have employed in this life, or what his Church would sanction or tolerate from the lips or pen of any of its living prelates.

But my object is not to comment, only to narrate; and in so doing to discharge what seems to have been imposed on me as a duty.

On the 21st January, after various communications from different friends in the spirit world, given on the slate in the manner above described. The last words written on the slate by one of them (who had died in my arms of cholera, in Lisbon) were:—“*I am weak, I feel as though I were just awakened from sleep,*” and I was pressing him to answer another question, when there was written on the slate:—“*Pax vobiscum +.*”

“Is that from some Catholic priest I have known, who means to make the sign of the Cross? If so, please write the name?”

“*Hughes +.*”

Now, I had known in Lisbon a young priest of that name (though no Catholic myself), a man learned, bright and good; and supposing it to be him, I spoke to him as “Father Hughes,” and remarked that I had not known that he had left this life, and begged him to proceed. Then came:—

“*Hughes, Archbishop.*”

Not till then did the thought occur to me of Archbishop Hughes, with whom more than a quarter of a century ago I had had pleasant friendly relations. I exclaimed, “Can this be indeed Archbishop Hughes, of New York?” Three loud raps on the table answered, “Yes.” The thought then passed through my mind, that though his church generally opposed our Spiritualism, he now had found it out to be true, and did not disapprove it. Then came this striking response to my (unuttered) thought:—

“*Yes, Christ is risen from the dead in this faith.*”

“*The stone is rolled away, all may enter in.*” [There was never any punctuation; I have added it.]

“*Oremus [let us pray] that this may become a recognised religion.*”

“*Every true Catholic may worship his Saviour and keep the Blessed Virgin also in veneration.*”

“*Jesus was conceived by a flow of astral fluid; she was a pure virgin; the conception was entirely spiritual.*”

“*The same astral fluid that permeates the whole universe.*”

I here said: “Which I take to be that all-pervading spiritual force which is an emanation from, and universal agent for, the execution of the will of that ineffable and inconceivable Supreme Creator and Father whom we call God.”

“*Yes, and whom we shall all one day see and know [he, then, has not yet done so, any more than we], and whom we all intuitively now know in the—*”

“*Hearts of all good men still in the material body.*”

“*It is full of love and peace and comfort inexpressible the belief—*”

“*This belief in ministering angels.*”

“*It is full of grand and holy truths; it can be made THE [treble underscored] religion, and at the present time it is made to subserve too many unholy purposes.*”

“*I shall come again, Vale*” [farewell].

The above illustrates the point above stated of the broken sentences in which these communications were given.

Then came the following (your readers may remember about an ancient Roman spirit named Glaucus, of 1,800 years ago, whom I have seen materialised, and heard from, in Paris over a hundred times, and who said once of himself that he was one “who had looked upon the face of Him who preached to the men of Athens”):

“*This is true spiritual religion, Glaucus.*”

After this followed some other writings from other spirits of my deceased friends, when this was written:

“*Every Catholic is a Spiritualist in embryo read the creed of the English Church, also Hughes.*”

“*I believe in the communion of saints*” (evidently quoting from the Apostle's Creed as used by the English, and indeed all the Protestant churches.)

“*We are strong for the fight; THE DEAD LIPS MUST SPEAK.*” (I have ventured to emphasize in the print the striking concluding words.)

This was on the 21st. I returned on the 22nd, and found there two strangers, a lady and gentleman, who got very little, though the former was anxious to have a good manifestation of this spirit-writing given to her friend. They soon perceived that I had the appointment, and took their departure. The medium and I then took the slate as before, her husband having this time joined us, and sitting by. This was then written:

“*The woman is too anxious, and seems to put us on our good behaviour.*”

“*Grand and glorious is this truth; too grand to be made a matter of speculation.*”

“*Now let us write you a long letter, and tell you how we can come on such a day as this to you. If you could only see our loving arms about you our gentle . . . you have interrupted me*” (I had in fact done so unintentionally, but the writing presently was resumed):

“*Our gentle kisses on your face and our silent language in*

*your inmost hearts for this is too pure a faith to be made to satisfy the simply curious. Theodore Parker.*" (The medium and her husband had been frequent attendants on his preaching in Boston, and it was of course to them that his affectionate language was addressed; I never saw him).

"*She (evidently referring to the lady who had been there) troubled the waters of the pool and the waters become muddy we could not give you to drink.*"

"*Your (as I copied it) elder brother is a most loving spirit and is ever engaged in working for the good of humanity.*"

I expressed some surprise at this, having of course in my mind my long deceased elder brother.

"*You made a mistake I wrote OUR (underscored) elder brother Jesus, not your William, he is a muscular spirit.*"

I then said something about my elder brother; the next communication was signed "*William,*" and was correct and characteristic of him. He was indeed "*muscular*" in the flesh, a great champion with his fists at Westminster, in 1825, where he often defended his weakly younger brother, who in return often wrote his exercises for him.

I then addressed Theodore Parker, telling him what Archbishop Hughes had written the day before about the conception and birth of Christ, and said that I should greatly like to know *his* present opinion or knowledge on that point. He wrote:—

"*It was a purely spiritual conception.*"

I expressed the wish that if it were possible Dr. Channing (whom I had known well in my youth) might also come, after Theodore Parker should have concluded, though I begged the latter to continue. He only added:—

"*I have ended my discourse the text was this now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept.*"

When the slate was again put under the table a communication then came signed, "*W. Ellery Channing, D.D.*" (but it did not touch on the point of the birth of Christ), and also other communications from others. But I will not lengthen this article still further. I will only add to it that on the following day (23rd), in the midst of other communications, Archbishop Hughes again announced himself with "*Pax vobiscum.*" He probably knew that I wished to say something to him. I then told him that there was a lady of my acquaintance, a strong Catholic, who knew the truth and reality of the phenomena of Spiritualism, yet upon whose mind an influence adverse to it was exercised by the fact that her church disapproved of it, and that the priests generally attributed the communications to Satanic influences through lying spirits; and I asked him what I might say to her from him with a view to tranquillise her mind on the subject. He replied as follows:—

"*Tell her that all true children of the Church are those who believe in ministering angels.*"

"*To the pure in heart only the holy Spirits come.*"

And again later, after I had been speaking of my starting for Europe:—

"*Pax vobiscum +. When you return I will return to you often. Hughes.*"

In another letter I will give you a little more, though this is all having any religious bearing. One thing is apparent from the above, that while still adhering to the Church of which he was a vehement champion as well as a high dignitary, the Catholicism of Archbishop Hughes is now that *esoteric* Christianity which is at the root, and is the life and heart of all the sects, and indeed of all the religions, and which is simply what Christ himself taught, viz., the immortality of the soul, the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of men, in other words, "*our Spiritualism.*"

On the Atlantic, March 17.

LANCASHIRE DISTRICT COMMITTEE OF SPIRITUALISTS.—This committee intends holding public meetings in connection with Spiritualism at the following times and places:—Bolton Reform Rooms, April 1st, Mr. Johnson, speaker; Oldham Temperance Hall, April 22nd; New Mills Spiritual Institute, April 15th, Mr. Taylor, speaker; Manchester Conference Meeting, May 6th. A good meeting was held at New Mills, on Sunday, the 18th inst., Mr. Johnson, of Hyde, speaker. Owing to the labour and energies of Messrs. Lithgow and Wright, of Hayfield and New Mills, a Spiritual Institute has been formed in the latter town, where regular meetings will henceforth be held.

## THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

### INVESTIGATOR'S SEANCES.

ON Thursday, the 22nd inst., the usual *séance* for investigators was held at 38, Great Russell-street, in the presence of nine persons, the chief of whom were inquirers. Mr. Eglinton was the medium. The test adopted was the following:—A pair of dark-coloured, almost black, gloves belonging to a gentleman in the circle, were placed on the medium's hands; a piece of tape was passed through the button-hole and through a slit made for the purpose on the other side of the glove beyond the button. The tape was tied in a firm knot and the ends laid back upon the coat-sleeves, and sealed in two places. Mr. Eglinton was seated only partly behind the curtain which covers the front of the cabinet, with his feet and knees in full view of the sitters. The "*fairy bells*" served as a table across his knees, on which were placed a book and a small hand-bell.

A voice asked the sitters whether, in the case of white hands being projected through the curtains, they should consider that an absolute test. They replied that they should be quite satisfied, provided the seals were afterwards found intact.

In course of time, a white hand was waved through the curtains over Mr. Eglinton's head, and a gentleman present was invited to place his hand inside the curtain and to feel the fingers. Later on a lady was asked to put her hand in at the little window in the side of the cabinet, and she also testified to feeling an ungloved hand. The same thing happened to myself.

During the whole operation the medium was heard to sigh and groan repeatedly, and hearing Mr. Eglinton say in low distressed tones, "*Oh, don't! don't!*" I asked him whether he were awake; he replied in a half dreamy manner, "*Yes, thank you.*" A spirit voice rebuked me for speaking to the medium while under influence, and said it was against the rules, which I did not know before.

At the close of the *séance*, the seals were found intact, and the black gloves sticking fast to the hands of the medium. All present were satisfied of the completeness of the test.

Mr. Eglinton was very much exhausted, and he told me that he always felt great loss of power whenever the glove test was applied. This statement accords with the unusual amount of sighing and groaning, which were painful to hear. The fairy bells and other objects were not removed from his knees during the whole *séance*, an additional proof that Mr. Eglinton did not leave his seat, or move about much in his chair.

The *séances* will now be suspended until the week after Easter.

E. KISLINGBURY,

Secretary to the British National Association of Spiritualists.

A NEW RELIGIOUS SOCIETY.—A circus company, on its way to Australia, recently stopped to see one of the Fiji Islands. While wandering about, one of the members of the company turned a somersault, at which the natives were astounded. Thereafter, the circus men, discerning a rare opportunity for fun, varied their walk by ground tumbling and skilful contortions, maintaining all the time the utmost gravity of demeanour. Multitudes followed them, believing them to be the forerunners of some new religion, in which somersaults were part of the service.—*Investigator.*

DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.—It appears from the *New York Sun*, that "*Cheating the Devil*" was the subject of a sermon in Unity Chapel, Harlem, New York, by the Rev. William T. Clark. He said that the prevalent idea of Christianity is that an elaborate trick is played on the devil in the interests of its believers; that one may sell himself to the devil, and take pay in the pleasures and prizes of the world, and when sick of the bargain escape from its obligations by repentance; roll the sweet bait of wickedness under the tongue until satiated, and then spit out the hook, and leave the devil with his rod and line; buy the devil's goods on a long credit, without paying a penny for them, and then take the benefit of the theological bankrupt act, and leave him to whistle for his recompense. This piece of theological trickery is a substratum for the frauds of business and the chicanery of politics. Bank directors who have squandered the savings of the poor, judges who rob the orphans of trust money, municipal thieves, Congress men and Cabinet Ministers whose hands are full of bribes: all are following the doctrine of cheating the devil. Even among the educated people there are hundreds who sympathise with the man who always took off his hat when the devil was mentioned, not out of respect, but because he did not know what might happen. The idea that a man can cheat and lie until all virtue is squeezed out of his soul like the juice from a pressed orange, and then shuffle off all the effects by some process of spiritual legerdemain, and come out heroic, happy, and holy, is an insult to intelligence.

## A SEANCE WITH MR. WILLIAMS.

ON Thursday night, last week, a public dark *séance* with Mr. C. E. Williams as medium, took place at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, London. The most remarkable circumstance in connection with it was the evidence given of the great extent to which the spirit voices have developed of late through his mediumship. Six sitters were seated round the table, holding each other's hands, those next to Mr. Williams holding both his hands. Under these conditions two spirits kept up a conversation with each other at opposite sides, and from various parts of the room. One strong voice sometimes was about two feet behind Mr. Williams, whilst another was at the back of the sitters opposite to him; occasionally a third voice very near the ceiling would join in. Sometimes the voices came from under the table. The invisible owners of these voices moved freely to all parts of the room, high and low, and occasionally accompanied the musical instruments, which flew about the room like bats. Some of these instruments were heavy, such, for instance, as the large musical box, which went whirling round over the heads of the sitters, and was sometimes placed on the floor at the back of the medium. Once while a partially materialised spirit showed its strong muscular power by winding up the musical box when it was on the floor behind Mr. Williams, another spirit was hammering the wall at the back of the sitters opposite to Mr. Williams with another musical instrument. The *séance* gave conclusive evidence of the performance of physical acts by partly materialised spirits, while the medium was accounted for by being held by the sitters; and these results seem to be fatal to any theory ascribing the phenomena to double consciousness on the part of the medium or to some powers not yet understood connected with the human body. If such a theory could in any case account for the production of one intelligence apparently independent of the medium, it could scarcely account for the evolution of three.

## IRRATIONAL MARTYRDOM.

AMONG Spiritualists are a few enthusiastic and excitable, yet truth-loving persons, who are permanent sources of irritation to the public and of anxiety to their friends. On the false assumption that what is good for themselves must be acceptable to everybody else at any stage of moral or religious growth, they attempt to force Spiritualism upon persons unprepared to receive it, and to whose modes of thought and early preconceptions it is so foreign that if they could be made to take it in, it would infallibly land them ere long in a lunatic asylum. As men dislike to have that forced upon them which they do not want, those so treated break all conditions at the spirit circles into which they ought never to have been almost forcibly thrust; they worry the medium at the time, and afterwards do what they can to persecute all those with whom they have been thus injudiciously forced into contact. Not content with stirring up all this unnecessary inharmony and antagonism while animated with the best intentions, our enthusiastic friends sometimes neglect those daily occupations in the performance of which they were formerly rendering good service to the world, or as the Catechism says, "doing their duty in that state of life in which it has pleased God to call them." By showing themselves to have become unfitted for the duties and responsibilities of this life, they furnish opponents with a damaging argumentative weapon, which is effectively used against Spiritualism, and at the same time they greatly increase the anxieties of those who take a friendly interest in their welfare. Martyrdom in a good cause is the most heroic, the most noble of all acts, but the man who courts the said martyrdom over a trifling thing is to be censured rather than admired. What merit, for instance, would there have been in the days of old, in being burnt at the stake over a dispute as to what was the colour of the light which appeared to the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration? Fanatics in all ages have heaped great sufferings upon themselves by doing battle over trifling and never-to-be-decided points such as this. Spiritualism is plenty strong enough to take care of itself without calling for the irrational martyrdom of any of its votaries over points of detail; and its followers are better employed in strengthening it within,

than in needlessly irritating ignorant adversaries without. Those numerous Spiritualists who are surrounded on all sides by an uncongenial population of hard materialists, ought not to be encouraged when they persist in injuring themselves and benefiting nobody by violently knocking their heads against a brick wall; they are simply irrational to attempt that which is beyond their strength, and unwise to try to force another man to accept that which it is impossible that his mental nature can take in. Some of the best meaning and most faithful of our brethren, after months of this folly—ending in failure which a little forethought should have clearly shown them must come in the end—sit down in tribulation, and believe that

The bottom's out o' the Universe  
'Cos their own milk-jug leaks.

## EASTER EVE—IN 1867.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

THE near approach of, perhaps, the happiest of our Festivals sends my memory back to, I think, the most marvellous of all my experiences in Spiritualism: there may be among your readers some who will thank me for preserving and publishing a record of it.

I did not write concerning it at the time it occurred; yet I can recall vividly every one of the remarkable incidents: they are as fresh in my mind to-day as they were ten years ago, for they "happened" on the Easter Eve of the year 1867: and the Easter Eve of 1877 is now nigh at hand.

Although my recollection of the scene and circumstances is very vivid, I remembered that my friend Mrs. Henry Senior (the widow of Colonel Senior) had made some notes concerning them. I wrote to her on the subject, and the letter she has written in reply I ask you to print in the number of your publication that you will issue on the Easter Eve of the present year.

I need do little more than endorse, which I do, every sentence in her letter. I have had more startling experiences in Spiritualism; but none at once so wonderful and so beautiful, so intensely convincing, so happy in comforting assurance of its holy truth, thoroughly upholding and confirming the faith that has, thank God, been my blessing through the whole of a long life.

I feel impelled to publish this statement; for over the theme there now hangs a cloud of deep darkness; it is sunk very low in the Slough of Despond, and there are among believers in Spiritualism not a few who, frightened at the hideous aspect it is sometimes made to assume, think the higher and holier duty calls upon them to discourage, and not to encourage, it, as an evil delusion rather than a Divine light.

I hold with my honoured and esteemed friend William Howitt that—

The true mission of Spiritualism—and it is a great and magnificent mission—is to recall to the knowledge, and restore to the consciousness of mankind, the Christian faith, with all its divine and supernatural power. Its business is to exhibit the reality of its connection with God, and His angels, with the life and spirit of the Divine Word, and to open our earth-dimmed eyes to perceive all the wealth of celestial wisdom in the Christian revelation.

I can have little hope that my feeble voice will be heard when there are so many loud preachers of a very opposite faith; but I think and feel that I ought to raise it none the less in protest against a teaching that leads very far away from the paths of righteousness into which Spiritualism, rightly understood, and *rightly guided*, cannot fail to conduct us. It is to Spiritualism as the usher to Christianity, or its sustainer, advocate, and propagator, that I refer, when I describe Spiritualism as sent of God to impede the progress of "rationalism," and to destroy the materialistic spirit that "science, falsely so called," is labouring to spread among all classes of human kind.

I might go far more largely into this branch of a large subject, but that I have already trespassed too much on your pages.

I will only add that our faith in our friend Daniel Home has never diminished from that day—indeed, from a date many years anterior to it—to this day. We believe him now, as we believed him then, utterly incapable of fraud.



And we know that on the occasion about to be described fraud was impossible.

It was not a dark sitting: Mr. Home rarely sate with us in darkness; but the light was subdued, and for a few minutes entirely excluded, when an absolute blaze of light filled the conservatory. We saw shadows (but having forms) pass and repass repeatedly, brought out into distinctness by the brilliancy of the light. When Mr. Home was "raised" (as he was twice) the gas in the chandelier was lit: although reduced, it was quite strong enough to mark his gradual progress upwards from the chair to the ceiling.

5, Prince of Wales's-terrace, Tuesday.

Last Saturday (Easter Eve) we had a most wonderful and beautiful *séance* at Mr. Hall's. I had long been telling him that I was convinced that allowing scoffers and unbelievers to come to our *séances* spoiled them, and that if he would but harden his kind heart for once, and allow us to have a *selfish séance*, I was sure it would be good—and last week he said to me laughingly that I *should* have my wish before I returned to Ireland, that Daniel had promised to come to them on Saturday, and that there should be no one asked but myself and Lady Dunsany—and so it was arranged. Lady Dunsany called for me on her way. We found Mr. and Mrs. Hall alone, but Daniel arrived soon after, and said when he entered the room that he had a very bad headache, which would, he feared, spoil our *séance*; however, he sat down and chatted a little, and I then asked him to come over to the piano and "croon," as I called it, as I had observed that his doing so always gave us a good *séance*. He and I went over (we had all been sitting round the fire). He played and sang several things, and then Lady Dunsany asked him for a soft Russian air of his wife's. He had not been playing it more than a minute, when a chair, which was at some distance from the piano, *slid* up to it and placed itself beside him. I was sitting close to the piano on the other side, and saw it move before he did—"Oh!" he said—"Here is Sacha" (his wife, who had left earth), and I felt that we should have a good *séance*. Mr. and Mrs. Hall and Lady Dunsany then came over, and he went on playing some time longer, though his hands became perfectly stiff, and it was evident that they were not moved by his own volition. After a time his hands were withdrawn from the piano, and he became entranced, turned round the piano stool, and knelt down, and with hands clasped, poured forth a most beautiful prayer, begging that God would in His great mercy keep evil spirits from us, and send the good to help us, that He would give us love, patience, and charity, and all that would make us acceptable in His sight, for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ. Mr. Home then came out of his trance, saying that his headache was quite gone; he looked quite refreshed and pleased, and asked us to sit down at the table, which at once began to vibrate and "tremble," and very loud and heavy knocks were heard upon it, and upon the floor and the furniture. Presently the accordion was touched, and the alphabet asked for, and they spelt out "We will play the earth-life of one who was not of earth." Mr. Hall said "That's nonsense," but I answered, "It must be our Lord's life," and so it proved. First we had sweet, soft, simple music, like a lullaby, for a few minutes, then it became intensely sad for some time, and then we distinctly heard through the music the *regular tramp* of a body of men marching, and we exclaimed "The march to Calvary." Then the tapping sound of a hammer on a nail, the ringing sound of metal upon metal, then a pause, and afterwards came a *crash*, and a burst of wailing, which seemed to fill the room and the house; it was followed by the *most glorious* triumphal music we any of us had ever heard; it thrilled to all our hearts, and we were in tears when it was over—it certainly was not of earth. It evidently meant the resurrection of our Lord. We still sat at the table, but nothing more was done for some time; then the curtains—the muslin ones—were draped round Mr. Home, and he was raised from the ground in them; then the spirits spelled out "See what earth does," and the silk curtains were drawn over the muslin ones, and all was made *dark*. I should have said that the lights had been put out after our Lord's life had been played, as we hoped to see spirit-lights, which we did; but we had a dim light from a lamp in the conservatory. Then Mr. Hall's face and chest shone like silver, and they spelled out, "He who giveth shall receive light." The accordion was carried round the circle, played on Mr. Hall's head, then placed on my shoulder next it, and went to Mrs. Hall, on my right hand, and played on her head; then played in the air round the circle (Mr. Home's hand not being near the instrument) "The Last Rose of Summer," and several other airs. Afterwards a great deal of martial music was played by a cousin of Lady Dunsany's, who had been in the Dragoons, and who had "passed away" in India, and who always comes to her. After this the spirit of a child, whose mother had sent Mrs. Hall flowers that morning, came and gave us each a flower. Mr. Home was then lifted to the ceiling. We heard his nail against it, and he said, "Oh, I wish I had a pencil to make a mark." However, he then came down, and Mr. Hall handed him a pencil, in case he should be again raised; and five minutes afterwards he was again lifted up, and made a mark on the ceiling, which will remain there as a proof of what was done. When Mr. Home returned to the table we were all touched by hands on our brows and on our hands. Sacha gave each of us her peculiar little pinch, and I was touched by both H— and E—, and Lady Dunsany's cousin flipped all our hands with a flower. Mr. and Mrs. Hall had repeatedly said to each other during the evening, "We never have had anything like this before," and they certainly have seen more wonders in Spiritualism than almost any one. After a little time the spirits spelled out, "We can do no more. Good night. God bless you;" and we heard the knocks and sounds die away in the distance out of doors, and we felt that it was all over. We were all beyond

measure grateful for being allowed to witness what we could never forget as long as our lives lasted. That burst of music was still thrilling in all our hearts—nothing composed by mortal could ever touch it. I should have said that just before Mr. Home was lifted up to the ceiling the first time, his face and his chest shone with a silvery light, as Mr. Hall's had done. But, indeed, I have not told many of the minor things that took place. It was an evening of wonders.

#### THE SLADE DEFENCE COMMITTEE.

Now that the labours of the Slade Defence Committee are drawing to a close, it is only right to publicly acknowledge what arduous and responsible work its members have done for Spiritualists at large, and for the promotion of the cause of science. When the outrageous step was taken of attempting to get scientific questions decided in a police court, the care and anxiety thrown upon those volunteers who advocated the cause of truth in the face of popular ignorance and prejudice, can scarcely be understood by those who took no part therein. To two members of the committee especial thanks are due, namely, Mr. C. C. Massey and Dr. Wyld, because, unlike the numerous weak-kneed people who run away in times of danger, these two gentlemen voluntarily connected themselves publicly with the movement, and put in an appearance from day to day in the police court when things were at their worst, although previously they had not been taking public action in connection with Spiritualism. They came forward at the most critical of moments to attach their high professional reputations to an unpopular but most honourable cause.

Further still, it should not be forgotten how earnestly the *Banner of Light* newspaper, and Mr. Epes Sargent, of Boston, worked to raise funds in America; had this not been done the public interests of the movement would not have been nearly so well represented as was actually the case, consequently Spiritualists all the world over are indebted to the *Banner of Light* for its public action in the matter. So far as Dr. Slade was concerned, his frequently expressed desire was that no aid should be given him by Spiritualists; he felt that, under the circumstances, it was no disgrace to go to prison, and he had the knowledge that no Spiritualist would accept the adverse conclusions of his uninformed prosecutors; he, therefore, frequently said that he would rather go to prison, to save expense and trouble to Spiritualists, and to save himself the anxiety of persecution in police-courts. Of course, this position could not be accepted by the movement at large; it would have been a general disgrace to Spiritualism to stand idly looking on while Dr. Slade was being locked up in prison. The practical effect of the attempt of the uninformed to settle a scientific question in a police-court has been to raise him up hosts of fresh friends in Europe and America, and to render Spiritualism a subject of conversation everywhere, so that information about it is becoming more general, and a considerable number of new circles have been formed in private life.

Mr. J. M. PEEBLES has been invited to give a series of lectures on Spiritualism in Calcutta. The *Harbinger of Light*, Melbourne, speaks of his expected early arrival in that town.

THE Lancashire District Committee of Spiritualists has brought out a penny Spiritualistic hymn book, likely to be useful at the Sunday meetings occasionally held under its auspices in various towns.

A NEW medium has jumped into public notice in one of the Western States. She is a dramatic improvisatrice. Coming before an audience, a subject is requested from it, and then the play proceeds. The medium impersonates each character. It is said that spirits take the parts, and each stands ready to take possession of the medium when the preceding character has finished.—*Boston (U.S.) Herald*.

LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On Sunday evening, the 25th inst., the audience of Spiritualists and others at Meyerbeer Hall, Liverpool, was addressed by Dr. William Hitchman, who gave them a philosophical lecture on the "Science of Safety," or the natural aspects of human salvation. The lecturer desired to remind the seekers after truth universal, of the urgent necessity for a review of first principles. He said that it was simply impossible to take a single step in the temple of truth without exercising the "comparative" faculty. Indeed, the value of psychology and Spiritualism, as of all other sciences, must rest on orderly arrangements arising therefrom, together with consequent philosophical classification, scientific axioms, religious formulas, and the whole process of logic and reason, by which we deduce a conclusive inference in each department of natural and spiritual knowledge. Purification of human nature, without true science of safety, he thought, must be relegated to Utopia and Greek calends. In order to solve the problem of "What must we do to be saved?" it was necessary to appeal to the veracity of universal nature, and every form of existence. Moral philosophy could not ignore the facts of physiology and pathology, without injustice, since the salvation of mankind, in its highest and best sense, is not to be put off, with impunity, to the last day of judgment, the second advent of Christ, or any possible saviour of Spiritualism that may yet be vouchsafed, in the providence of God, for the amelioration of humanity. We must really do, or die, in flesh and blood—salvation belonging, as it certainly does, as much to the material life on earth as to the spiritual conditions of heaven. It is not a mere compact with the creeds of Christendom, faith in the state-ecclesiastical, or a bargain, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, that shall take effect at the general resurrection. True and present deliverance of all races of men from the bondage of error, or thralldom of evil, involves a wise appreciation of natural laws; self-culture must no longer be ideal; scientific knowledge, rightly practised, in love, in association with purity of heart and mind, must be suitably adapted to the religion of life in every clime; in the absence of which, mythology knows no end.

## SHADOWLAND.

At the Conference of Spiritualists in February last, a paper was read upon "The Identity of Communicating Spirits," and much ingenious and cogent reasoning used to show that the intelligences which manifest their presence in circles are mostly, at least, identical with the departed human beings they profess to represent. Absolute and convincing proof, it was allowed, could not be had, but faith and strong probability must be admitted to have a large preponderance in determining belief in things seen much more than in things unseen. There has never been wanting abundance of experience and speculations as to the nature and relation of the more usual class of apparitions, and ghosts, warning voices, and the like, have in all ages been unhesitatingly connected with the dead persons from whom they professed to emanate. But there is another class of apparitions arguing spiritual identity of another and stronger sort; and that is the doubles or *doppel gangers* as the Germans call them, of persons still living. Instances are very numerous. Mrs. Crowe's well-known work adduces many, and in the discussion on the paper above referred to, two striking cases were related within the personal knowledge of the speakers. More than one instance is known to the present writer. Very often these appearances precede and seem to intimate the death of the person whom they represent, and are hence popularly regarded as of evil omen. But in many cases nothing has followed them. It is a very strange phenomenon, and difficult to account for in any probable way. Much has been written about the various supposed entities that go to make up a human personality, soul-spirit, nerve-spirit, astral-spirit, aura, umbra, and so on, one of which is supposed to be projected out, and assume the shape of the person "in his habit as he lived." These theories regard all these diverse essences as bound together in one personality, and one of them detached under certain unknown conditions. Some very ancient speculations, however, conceived the idea of this world, and all that it inherits, animate and inanimate, human and brute, existing, double and separate, in some unspeakable, indefinable way and region, and carrying on a dim shadowy counterpart of all that exists and is done upon earth. In the grand opening of his *Prometheus Unbound* Shelley, with spiritual vision, has sublimely embodied this conception:—

Ere Babylon was dust,  
The Magus Zoroaster, Earth's dead child,  
Met his own image walking in the garden;  
For know there are two works of life and death;  
One that which thou beholdest; but the other  
Is underneath the grave, where do inhabit  
The shadows of all forms that think and live  
Till death unite them and they part no more;  
Dreams and the light imaginings of men,  
And all that faith creates or love desires,  
Terrible, strange, sublime, and beauteous shapes.  
\* \* \* \* \* all the gods  
Are there, and all the powers of nameless worlds,  
Vast sceptred phantoms: heroes, men, and beasts;  
And Demagorgon, and a tremendous gloom.

All things of the upper earth are there in strange phantasmagoric existence, and there all actions are repeated, as though reflected in a mirror, and it would not be wonderful if one of the denizens of that shadow-land might sometimes be revealed to the eyes of its antitype in this world.

Certain mystical writers have further declared that the dwellers in the shadow-land have a more piercing vision into futurity than the heavier eyes of their earthly selves can obtain: hence the warnings that often accompany their appearance: and moreover, that in the cases of mighty and, in platonic phrase, demonic men, on whom destiny has laid great issues, their under-world shapes are apocalyptically clothed with symbols of their minds and actions. Last year in the rooms of the Burlington Fine Arts Society there was displayed a very wonderful collection of the works of that special seer of, and converser with, spirits, William Blake. Many of the pictures there had strange and eloquent meanings to the eyes of a Spiritualist. But there were two pictures that puzzled the critics prodigiously, who could only pronounce them incomprehensible. One was the "Spiritual Form of Napoleon," No. 90 in the catalogue. It was, indeed, a picture dark in every sense, and only by close scanning could be discerned the shape of a mighty man with

stern, fixed face, his head crowned with dark rays. He seemed striving to rise, but his feet were chained down. One hand rested on an eclipsed sun, the other seemed to hold up by the heels an indistinct figure ending in an eagle's head; a dead body lay prone beneath, and on each side, like warders, stood an angel form, one looking sadly down, with hands resting on a closed book, the other looking upward with a face of calm confidence; by her side hung a huge key: both were winged, and the wings were full of eyes. The other picture (No. 201) was entitled "The Spiritual Form of William Pitt guiding Behemoth," and still darker and more indistinct in outline than the other. A divine angelic form stands upon a huge dimly-indicated serpent, the head and eyes of which have a diabolically malignant expression. The right hand of the form holds a rein that guides the serpent, its left hand points downward, and streams of light issue from the finger tips: its head is surrounded with a broad, many-coloured composite halo. Above, on each side, stands a figure, one stern-visaged, holding a plough-share directed downwards; the other uplifting a sickle: above them are eclipsed planets and falling stars: under and around the group are confused throngs of fleeing, horrified forms, and under the serpent a dim crowd of figures hold up hands as for deliverance. These compositions, which are of considerable size, were painted during the lifetime of the great men concerned: incomprehensible then, and incomprehensible now, who can read their riddle, unless, haply, they were revelations to the spirit-painter of the co-existing apocalyptic forms of his subjects in Shadowland?

But these unearthly speculations are closely connected with the eternal miracle of existence. "Life, the great miracle, we admire not, because it is so miraculous. The mist of familiarity obscures from us the wonder of our being. Thoughts and feelings arise with or without our will, and we employ words to express them. We are born, and our birth is unremembered: we live on, and in living we lose the apprehension of life. How vain it is to think that words can penetrate the mystery of our being! For what are we? Whence do we come? and whither do we go? Is birth the beginning? is death the end of our being? What is birth and death?" Such thoughts weighed upon Shelley, whose spiritual vision was immeasurably keener than that of other men; and they lead from this mystery of concurrent existence still a step further back into the unknown—to that other mystery of pre-existence on which so many ancient faiths and philosophies are founded. It is one with the transmigration of souls, which to this day regulates the creed and practise of millions. Vague and dark is that world of concurrent double existences, but vaguer and darker still the world of former existences—lives run and spent before—deeds wrought in long past states of being. Theologians have struggled much to conceive when, at what point of time, and how, the sentient soul, as distinguished from mere brute vitality, is infused into the embryo or child—that vital spark of heavenly flame is something distinct from vitality, and need not begin with it. When, how, or whence is it added, so that man may become a *living soul*? It may be, as has been held in remotest antiquity by men to whom much may have been unfolded—men like Pythagoras and the Egyptian and Indian Sages—that it came from and is a continuation of a former life, and that

As old mythologies relate,  
Some draught of Lethe may await,  
The slipping thro' from state to state.

Perhaps in the realms of ante-natal being there may be mourning over an intelligence passing from it to be born into earth-life as amongst us there is lamentation when a spirit "hath forsook her mansion in this fleshly nook." The idea of a former existence seems, at one time at least, to have much haunted the mind of the Laureate. Whatever may be his present opinions respecting Spiritualism, a poem of his, published first more than forty years ago, would now probably subject him to the charge of unscientific, unprofitable speculation. In "The Two Voices" he broaches the thought that to begin implies to end, and that because he has no memory of anything to the contrary he cannot hold for certain that he "was first in human mould." For as we remember nothing of our first year of

existence, so may an existence preceding that be also a blank:—

Moreover something is or seems,  
That touches me with mystic gleams,  
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—  
Of something felt like something here;  
Of something done, I know not where;  
Such as no language may declare.

No, nor perhaps in truth is it good to vex ourselves with thoughts beyond the reach of our souls—of our souls in their present sphere, which they cannot transcend, however unfortunately they may strive to look before and after. One thought we may at least hold fast—that existence—miracle of miracles, and mystery of mysteries—comprehends all times and modes of being. Life before birth and life after death, if such there be, are but some of its many phases, but its secret will never be known. Man may rise higher than the angels, and wrest all her secrets from the earth, but the secret of life will rest for ever in the bosom of God.

The highest mounted soul be't said,  
Still sees the sacred morning spread,  
The silent summit overhead."

### Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers.]

#### HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—I desire, through the mediumship of your valuable journal, to return my sincere thanks to Mr. Hawkins, healing medium, for having cured me of an internal complaint from which I have suffered during the last twelve months. I attended St. Mark's Hospital, City-road, all last summer without obtaining relief, so I gave it up last November; since then I tried various remedies, which had no effect. Last Sunday three weeks I called at 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile-end, where Mr. Hawkins was healing. I seated myself on a chair opposite him. He grasped my hands; presently I felt the warm blood rush through my veins, and after three sittings of about five minutes' duration each, I felt myself perfectly cured. Since then I have had no return of the complaint. Can Dr. Carpenter or Professor Lankester explain the trickery at work here? Mr. Hawkins, although a bricklayer, refuses all remuneration, he being only too anxious to benefit suffering humanity. JAS. CAIN.

142, Burdett-road, Bow, E., March 19, 1877.

#### AN UNPROVED ASSERTION.

SIR,—I had the pleasure of hearing an interesting lecture by Professor Barrett on "Mesmerism and Spiritualism," at Perry Barr Institute, lately, in which he urged the careful investigation of phenomena which are too apparent to be set aside, or extinguished by ridicule.

In relating the incident of the floating of Mr. Home out of the open window of one room into another, he gave an account differing in one particular from any which I have before read or heard of the matter, viz., that one of the four persons present at that time, and who gave their testimony as to what happened, declared that he "never saw the occurrence which the others say they witnessed."

Professor Barrett's conclusion from these facts was that what is termed "biological influence" would explain the whole.

Can you, or any of your readers, clear up this point, about there being one of the party present who declares that he saw no such phenomena as the floating of the medium? The truth, or otherwise, of this has an important bearing on the case. CANDOUR.

Birmingham, March 27th.

#### ALTERATIONS AT THE ROOMS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

SIR,—In consequence of overcrowding at *soirées* and other meetings of the National Association of Spiritualists, it has been determined to make an alteration in the arrangement of the rooms which will ensure greater comfort in future. This will be carried out during the Easter recess, the premises being closed, as announced elsewhere, from the 29th March till the 9th April. In order to assist the incidental expenses, it has been resolved to give a grand musical and dramatic entertainment, several friends of the Association, eminent artistes, having kindly offered their services. Particulars as to the date and programme will be made known in due course, but as some evening towards the end of April will probably be chosen, the ordinary *soirée* at the beginning of the month will not be held as usual.

E. KISLINGBURY.

#### A SEANCE IN NEWCASTLE.

SIR,—Mr. Ashton's letter, entitled "A Remarkable *Séance* in Newcastle-upon-Tyne," reminds me that I have a similar duty to perform towards Miss Fairlamb and the public as himself. On the 10th of Dec. last, through the kindness of the president of the Newcastle Society of Spiritualists, I was admitted to a *séance* with Miss Fairlamb, at which some ten or a dozen gentlemen were present. The sitters formed themselves into a horse-shoe circle and the medium, who was the only lady present, sat in front of them—not in the cabinet, which was in front of herself, and which was formed in the way which Mr. Ashton has already described. To say that there was no one in the cabinet would be superfluous. After we were comfortably seated, the gas was turned down, leaving a sufficiency of light to enable the sitters to see through the

whole room. A hymn was sung, and almost instantly materialisation commenced in our presence, and in less than ten minutes the materialised form of a lady-spirit emerged as if out of nothing, and stood in full view of those present. Having turned her face and given an earnest look towards myself, and finding herself recognised, she walked around the medium and then dematerialised. She then rematerialised herself, again walked around the medium, and into the cabinet, drew the curtains back with her hands, came out again and again, dematerialised in our presence. The time occupied was about thirty minutes. Now, sir, let me say that the lady-spirit who thus assumed material form, was an entire stranger to all present, except myself, and that I myself had only known her beforehand through psychometric revelations, the substance of which was published in the *Spiritual Magazine* for November last in a paper headed "A Collier's Vision."

The phenomenon, as a matter of course, was a proof to me of two things, viz., 1. That spirits exist, and can appear under given conditions in tangible forms; 2. That in a psychometric vision we can get a true reflex of both of what has existed and of what *does exist*.

JOSEPH SKIPSEY.

Ashington Colliery, near Morpeth, Northumberland,  
March 18th, 1877.

#### CURIOUS STATEMENTS.

SIR,—About two years since, at our family circle, an intelligence manifested itself, and through the table told us its name was "Love," and that it came to tell us of man's immortality; that its place of residence was the planet Saturn; that that planet was inhabited as this is. The intelligence said that it was neither male nor female; that there were occupations there as here. (No description given of them.) It was remarked that all other spirit friends went away immediately the planetary one came, and on being subsequently asked the reason, said that they did it from reverence. I have made these extracts from memoranda written at the time, and place them unreservedly at your service. X.  
Plymouth.

#### A NEW QUESTION.

SIR,—I see advertised in the public prints two books, of which I feel doubtful, like many others. The one is *The Day After Death; or, The Future Life as Revealed by Science*, by Figuier. The other, *Modern Magic*, by Hauffman. As I am precluded by a tedious illness from seeing them at the publishers, can any of your readers oblige me, and others who may be tempted by the titles of these volumes, by saying whether they run in the Spiritualistic line, or the Materialistic? I should be sorry to lose money in any publications of the latter class on these subjects.

I wish also to add that I have had my own share of experience in such manifestations in my own house, being alone therein, as "E. G." has had, only not so violent, and if acceptable I will relate them at a future time. I should also be most grateful to any one who would inform me of any "magic circle" in this city (London) where the higher spirits are invoked with the ancient rites and ceremonies, and phenomena produced at will by well-disciplined psychics. B. A. (DUB).

#### A SPECTRAL DOG AT CARDIFF.

SIR,—There is a tradition here relating to the occasional apparition of a dog, which used to appear lying in the middle of one of the old turn-pike roads, just outside the town. The gentleman from whom I obtained the story, an old inhabitant of Cardiff, and a Spiritualist, states that he himself witnessed the phenomenon more than once, when a young man. The dog was a very large one, and it was notorious that no dog so large was to be found in the town (at that time a small place), or the immediate neighbourhood.

Among other attempted solutions of the mystery, it has been suggested by one of the controls at our circle, that on the spot thus haunted some person had been worried to death by a dog, and passing over in this violent way, and with the idea of the animal fixed upon the mind to the exclusion of all else, the result would probably be that the spiritual body would for a time (greater or less, I presume, according to the intelligence of the individual), assume a form resembling that of the animal causing death.

I do not know whether this solution will be considered a probable one, but it may afford those interested in this department of spiritual phenomena something worth pondering over. We have since learned that the tract of land (on which are the remains of a forest), immediately adjoining the road in question, was at one time the resort of numbers of wolves. A. J. SMART.

Cardiff.

#### SPIRITUALISM AT HOME.

SIR,—I have long been one of the most enthusiastic Spiritualists in America. My husband opposed me for many years, and said that he was sorry I believed in anything so silly, but a little more than a year ago he became convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, and is now developing as a healing medium. Our little girl, aged fourteen, has been a medium for more than a year, and has eight phases of mediumship. She is clairvoyant and clair-audient, also is a mechanical writer; she improvises and sings; plays spirit music on the piano or organ, and, when entranced, talks like one advanced in wisdom. I wish I could describe to you what she sees at our *séances*; the tests that she gives us are really astonishing. Not long since she described an old-fashioned man in our circle. She said he had on a three-cornered hat, a velvet coat, a pair of short breeches, knee buckles, and long white stockings. I told her I never had any acquaintances who dressed in that style; such persons must have lived more than one hundred years ago. She still persisted in saying he came to see me. I was told that I must guess who he was, and when I called the right name they would tell

me. At last I called the name of "General George Washington." The spirit then took off his hat, made a low bow, and said that he had met me at the Centennial, and was happy to be recognised. We are very careful of our little daughter; but few of our friends know of her wonderful gifts. Her spirit guides tell us that they can do almost anything with her, and that she is destined to do good work. Previous to the development of her mediumship she was a little frail being, but now she is well and hearty, with red cheeks and bright eyes, and is controlled to talk almost every evening, and also in the morning before she goes to school.

I am glad to know that the Spiritualists of England are doing such a noble work. Every hour does my heart go out in thankfulness, for the light that is now shedding its bright rays across the pathway of mankind. This angelic doctrine is now much needed to raise humanity to a higher plane of life; for does not Spiritualism teach us that every good act, every pure thought and aspiration, lays a stone in the foundation of our heaven hereafter?

M. A. MERRELL.

Kent, Portage Co., Ohio, U.S.A., March 11th, 1877.

#### TO PRIVATE MEDIUMS.

SIR,—The experience of the last few months has shown me that a large amount of mediumship exists everywhere in private life, which lies undeveloped for want of judicious culture. Never in the history of the Spiritual movement in this country has it been more desirable than at this crisis to foster spiritual gifts in the family circle, by which means truth may be most widely extended and securely established. In brief, Spiritualism will work its brightest triumphs in our homes.

Many of the visitors to the home-centre at No. 8, Upper Bedford-Place, Russell-square, have been anxious to carry back into their provincial districts the means of practically illustrating spiritual truth by personal experimental manifestations. To encourage this I am desirous of entering into correspondence with private mediums, ladies or gentlemen, with a view to the formation of *séances* for the development of various phases of mediumship, trance, inspiration, test, healing, clairvoyance, and the higher physical phenomena, and shall be glad of communication from friends in sympathy with these ideas.

A. C. BURKE.

8, Upper Bedford-place, Russell-square, March 26.

#### A NEW BOOK ON SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—Will you allow me to say, in reference to your obliging notice of my forthcoming work, that the book cannot, under any circumstances, be ready before the autumn; and that the designation "Essays and Reviews" was not intended to be a permanent title, but only to give some idea of the contents of the work?

M.A. (OXON.)

March 24th.

#### EAST-END SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—May I again call the attention of your readers to the case of Mr. E. W. Wallis and his work at the East End of London? Giving his services so freely as he does in the cause of Spiritualism, he should not be left to support the pecuniary burden as well. The fund started to liquidate the debt of £13 stands thus at present:—National Association of Spiritualists, £2 2s.; Mr. Martin Smith, £1 1s.; Mr. W. C. Pickersgill, £1 1s.; Mrs. Lowe, £1. I shall be happy to receive further contributions.

E. KISLINGBURY.

38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury.

#### MORE ABOUT THE BLOMBERG GHOST.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a passage in your paper, 23rd March, wherein it is suggested that I may perhaps know something about the "Blomberg ghost story," as being a relative of Major Charles Torriano, killed at Toulon in 1793, who, according to the narrative quoted by you, was connected with the apparition. There was a *Captain* Charles Torriano, my collateral relative, who was killed in action at Toulon, but I know no tradition in my branch of the family relating to Dr. Blomberg. Some years ago, however, I heard the ghost story, though differing from your version, from two canons of St. Paul's, both now deceased. I will give you the narrative as they gave it to me, premising that I do not believe in Spiritualism, dreams, or supernatural communications from deceased parties.

According to the narrative of these my personal friends—both acquainted with Dr. Blomberg, who was a Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's, and one of whom said he had heard Dr. Blomberg speak upon the subject—the facts were the following:—The father of Dr. Blomberg was Captain Blomberg, of the Hanoverian service. Captain Blomberg came from Hanover to England on temporary leave of absence, leaving his son, then a child, under charge of a brother officer, name unknown to me, whom we will call X. The time for the return of Captain Blomberg had expired, when one evening X., sitting in a room adjoining and opening into the regimental mess-room in Hanover, was occupied in examining some maps lying before him. He happened to raise his eyes from the maps, and saw Captain Blomberg in military uniform standing on the opposite side of the table. "Ah, Blomberg," said X., "I am glad to see you back. Your boy is well." Captain Blomberg replied, "You will never see me more." "Oh, nonsense," said X., "come and breakfast with me to-morrow at nine, and you shall meet your boy." X. then resumed his study of the maps. When he again raised his eyes Captain Blomberg had disappeared. Next morning X. and young Blomberg were in the mess-room ready to receive Captain Blomberg, breakfast being laid for three persons, but he did not come. Thereupon X. inquired of some brother officers then in the mess-room whether they had seen Captain Blomberg the preceding night. They answered, "Some one in uniform passed through the mess-room into the room where you were, but we did not observe whether he was Blomberg or

not." After the lapse of some short time intelligence was received at Hanover that the ship in which Captain Blomberg had sailed from England was lost at sea. Subsequently young Blomberg was brought to England. Somehow—probably from the close connection of the king with the State of Hanover—George III. heard the story, and, in his quick way, said to the queen, "Charlotte, Charlotte, this is a strange story; we must have the boy and do something for him." Accordingly young Blomberg was received into the royal family, and brought up with the princes, with whom in after life he was always more or less intimate. In process of time he entered the church, and also held the appointment of Clerk of the Royal Closet, worth about three hundred per annum, the whole of which sum he devoted to the poor, so long as he held the office. I can give no dates, and no more precise information, and do not personally vouch for anything, except that I have told as I was told. You will perceive that my version differs in several particulars and in the scene of action from your version.

W.M. HARCOURT TORRIANO.

26th March, 1877.

#### THE CLAIRVOYANCE OF THE BLIND.—THE CASE OF MISS JANE NICHOLS.

SIR,—In a paper on "Prophetic Dreams," by the Rev. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A., read at a meeting of the Psychological Society, reported in *The Spiritualist*, the author says:—"It was once mooted in a discussion of this society whether it was possible to dream of using senses which the dreamer in his waking state did not possess, and never had. Harriet Martineau tells of an old lady, blind from her birth, who yet saw in her sleep, and described accurately in her waking state the clothing of individuals." The case was not related by Miss Martineau, but by myself, see *Letters to Miss Martineau*, p. 104 and 151, for a full account of the case and argument thereon.

The lady was one of three sisters all blind from birth. She was at the time of my report forty years of age, and not only could see in her sleep—a matter long known to her family—but she was also clairvoyant and prophetic. I do not give the particulars, because the editor can take the account from the work if he think it well to do so. In respect to this case, Miss Martineau says: "It seems to me that the most significant thing you have ever written to me—a thing as significant as any one ever wrote to anybody—is that your blind friend, blind from birth, has proved that she sees in her sleep by having been actually *prévoyante* of visible incidents. If you can establish this, if proof or sufficient testimony of it can be duly recorded during her lifetime, it surely will be as vast a contribution to the science of mind and of man as has ever been afforded by any age." I think I have very clearly proved it, both by facts and arguments.

That Bacon believed in prophetic dreams is clear from the account of what occurred to himself; he says: "There be many reports in history that, upon the death of persons in near relationship, men have had an inward feeling of it. I myself remember that, being in Paris, and my father dying in London, two or three days before my father's death I had a dream, which I told to divers English gentlemen, that my father's house in the country was plastered all over with black mortar," and we may be sure that Bacon would not have related this had he not been satisfied that it could not have occurred from any suggestion, or have been a mere coincidence. We may fairly, I think, trust to that in respect to such a thinker as Lord Bacon, and the report is given later in life in *The Natural History*, Cent X., sec. 986.

In the memorials appended to Miss Martineau's autobiography by that noble woman, and her beloved friend, Mrs. Maria Weston Chapman, are the details of two cases of clairvoyance (p. 354, 703). The one case as relating to myself and my own house I can vouch for being accurate in every respect, and it is no use Mr. Cox, or any other, denying facts which competent investigators know to be true, and what all history shows to have been true in all ages, as may be seen in the instance given by Lord Bacon.

HENRY G. ATKINSON, F.G.S.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.

MR. J. L. O'SULLIVAN has just arrived in London from San Francisco.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—Newcastle-on-Tyne, Sunday, April 1st, Freemasons' (Old) Hall, Weir's-court, Newgate-street; evening at 7, subject—"Supernaturalism." Monday, April 2nd, afternoon at 3, local conference; evening at 8, subject—"Spiritualism in Relation to Modern Thought."—Sunderland, Wednesday and Thursday, 4th and 5th.—Keighley, Sunday, April 8th.—Liverpool, Monday, April 9th.—Birmingham, Sunday and Monday, April 22nd and 23rd.—London, Sunday, April 29th.

A STRANGE STORY.—In connection with the above observations on "Dual Consciousness," might be noticed a strange story, which is said to have appeared in the *Revue Médical*, Paris, France. It is to the effect that M. le Docteur Bussy d'Alembert, a noted French surgeon and physician, has long held that life might be prolonged indefinitely in some classes of patients. He has boldly proclaimed his ability to even create life, or, more properly, revivify a body that has been deprived of life from this cause. He found a suitable patient in a Mr. Isaacs. He had the body packed in ice and removed to his office. Here, in the presence of Drs. Dupuy, Dion, Etienne, and Ricord (the two latter members of the Academy of Sciences), he had the body removed from the box. His process is minutely described, it being, in short, a treatment with electricity. The symptoms each hour are given verbatim from the diary of Dr. d'Alembert. The narrative goes on to say that, although Mr. Isaacs recovered his intellect with the renewal of his life, yet his moral faculties were entirely dormant. A postscript adds that the blasphemies and obscene conduct and conversation of Mr. Isaacs having become too horrible, it was determined to discontinue stimulus and disconnect the battery. This being done, the fatal sign of hiccoughing began, and in thirty minutes the animal heat and all signs of life had disappeared.—*Boston Herald* (U.S.).

## PRIVATE SEANCES.

LAST Sunday afternoon, at a *séance* at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, Mr. Williams and Mr. Eglinton were the mediums. The observers present were Mrs. Gregory, Lady Colquhoun, Mr. and Mrs. Moseley, Mrs. Wiseman, Mrs. Ramsay, and Mr. W. H. Harrison. The *séance* was intended to be a dark one, but very feeble daylight found its way into portions of the room through the shutters. The sitters were placed round a table, with their hands interlinked, those of both of the mediums being thus held. Under these conditions a small table went over the heads of the sitters, and was deposited on the top of the large one, and several small articles were in like manner placed in front of the sitters. Direct spirit-voices were heard. Because of the small amount of diffused light in the room, the outlines of one or two draped forms were indistinctly seen when they came between the eye and one of the windows; one of these forms leant upon the shoulder of Mrs. Ramsay; it seemed to emanate in some way from the person of Mr. Williams. Perhaps by practice these manifestations can be obtained in time in moderate light, several minor phenomena being now obtained in daylight, which in the early days of Spiritualism were produced only in darkness.

Mr. Harrison says: "Last Sunday night I attended a private *séance* at the house of a gentleman, the members of whose family have been developing medial powers among themselves for some time past. The sitting took place in the dark, and small objects were moved about near the floor; they rose in some rare instances to the level of the under-side of the table. This shows that the power is normally stronger near the floor than in the neighbourhood of the knees of the sitters, perhaps because it is given off most freely from the hands and feet. This idea is still further corroborated by the circumstance that the spirits were able to move small objects on the surface of the table. Variations in the amount of light had nothing to do with the distribution of power just mentioned, the whole room being in total darkness. I remarked that these movements of objects were made by partly materialised hands, and that the next stage of development was ordinarily the direct spirit voice. In reply to my question whether they could speak to us, they replied 'No' several times; nevertheless, I urged them to try; they then began to gently move a small roll of cardboard on the table, and at last a voice was heard to feebly speak through it; after several attempts the voice became stronger, but never rose to much more than a whisper. The medium, as usual, under such circumstances, complained of a choking sensation, since the spirits always take power from the organs of voice of the sensitive; he said that the feeling was that he had no strength left to govern the muscles of his own throat, which, moreover, became dry while the spirits were talking. I asked the spirits whether their speaking was the result merely of an effort of will, or due to the adoption of carefully devised means; they replied that they had made no special preparations to speak, and were able to do so merely by the exercise of an effort of will. As the power gets stronger the members of this circle will sometimes see the materialised hands thrust out from under the table, or any place near the medium where there is partial darkness; and when, still further on, they see the face which does the speaking, it will be found to be to a large extent the duplicate of the face of the medium. The spirits appear to be divorced from material conditions, and to be able to take on such conditions only as they find connected with the living instrument through which they act."

TRANCE *séances* are occasionally held at 18, Atlingworth-street, Brighton, and an attempt is being made to form a local Spiritualistic society.

CUI BONO?—The idle question is often put, "What is the good of spiritual manifestations?" The summary answer is, that truth is its own good; that to know is a divine satisfaction; and that facts of any sort can never be indifferent to a philosophic mind. "But, then, manifestations are so undignified, so very undignified, so unworthy of immortal beings." And, pray, where was it learnt that immortal beings had any regard for the fancy article we call dignity? It is plain the Creator has none, and why should his creatures? Physical manifestations have little charm for advanced Spiritualists. . . . but this, at least, may be said in their defence—they are eminently useful in compelling the attention of a generation which, like Thomas, will not believe unless they can see and handle. Although we live in a Christian land, where it might be supposed that a life beyond this life was, of all ideas, the most familiar, one has only to penetrate beneath the surface to find what brutish and heathenish ideas of death are entertained.—W. M. WHITE, "Reflections."

PREMONITIONS.—The *New Jersey Messenger* (Swedenborgian), in speaking of premonitions, says: "They are caused by spirits who are always present with man, and are constantly exerting an influence upon him. This influence is generally inappreciable. It does not take away man's freedom. It is not a casual and special instance of Providential care, as the Bible abundantly testifies. If we were more susceptible to their influence, they would keep us from natural and moral danger much more frequently than they do now. The aversions and attractions, and the unaccountable misgivings or confidence which we sometimes experience, are due to their influence. We are subject to both good and evil influences from this source; and we come more fully under the good or evil, according to our character. As we shun evil, and live according to the commandments, we come more fully under the power of the angels, who can protect us from danger and lead us to good. Some persons are more easily impressed by their influence than others, and there may be times when we come more fully under their power than at others. But the angels and good spirits always do the best they can for us. We are always in their presence, and as men advance in spiritual life they will be led more entirely by the Lord, by means of His word and the messengers He sends to us."

A LETTER just received by us from the Rev. Thomas Colley, chaplain of H.M.S. *Malabar*, Malta, states that he has been giving attention while in the East to feats of "Indian jugglery," due in some cases to a species of mediumship.

"LET US look and see whether any and what help can be derived from the spiritual philosophy, as made out by Swedenborg. And here I may say, in passing, that I am not what is termed a Swedenborgian; but a peculiar psychical experience made me gravitate towards him, to hold up my facts in his light, to see what we could make of them. This has led me to look up to him as to one of the most specially illuminated minds since the advent of Christ—one who has done more than any other to make the world of spirit solid ground for men to tread."—GERALD MASSEY, *Concerning Spiritualism*.

HARD TO KILL.—It provokes thought as well as mirth, this solemn procession of defunct theories, culled from the very sanctums of science and religion, wending their way to the world's "receptacle for dry rubbish." Is there not profound significance in the fact that the thing will not be killed? Whole asylums of the reputed insane have been hurled at its head. All the usual means heretofore so effective in sending the devil to the right-about have been applied in vain. Newspaper bullets have been fired at it from every rampart that could conceal a foe, and the heavy ordnance of science and sectarianism, loaded with twenty-four pound theories, crammed to the muzzle with the grape and canister of ridicule, slander, and denunciation, have been brought to bear against it in the open field, and all to no purpose, save to injure the leaders of this furious onslaught, by the recoil of their own artillery. Surely this defeat is not without suggestion. It indicates a Rubicon which Materialism cannot pass, which all exploring science *must*, in order to find the true cause of its invincibility, its perpetual life and growth.—*The Road to Spiritualism* (HALLOCK).

SPIRITUALISM AT MILE END.—On Sunday last Miss Kislingbury lectured to a large meeting of working men, members of the East End Radical Club, Beaumont-square, on "The Spiritualist Persecutions," and "What is Spiritualism?" The room was crowded to the doors, over one hundred and fifty persons being present. In the first part of the lecture Miss Kislingbury showed how Spiritualism had been misrepresented by the press, giving some of the facts of the Slade case, and then comparing them with the statements in the daily papers. After this she gave a short summary of the manner in which Spiritualism can be tested by all who wish to know the facts, by personal investigation. A rather stormy discussion followed, during which Mr. J. W. Lawrence spoke with good effect of his own experiences. His prosecutor, Mr. Hulbert, and two other objectors, also addressed the meeting, and were answered by Mrs. Lowe and another speaker, who told how he had been converted to Spiritualism by the phenomena he had witnessed in the presence of his wife and family. Besides these only two Spiritualists were present. At the close of the meeting there was a great demand for papers and tracts, a large number of which were distributed after a vote of thanks had been passed to the lecturer and chairman.

SPIRITUALISM IN CALIFORNIA.—The Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan writes:—"I have somewhat delayed sending you the result of the trial which took place in San Francisco of the mediums there, though I informed you of the beginning of it. The only point at issue was whether they were liable to pay the license fee, imposed by a city ordinance (fifty dollars a quarter), upon "astrologers, seers, fortune-tellers, and clairvoyants." The particular individual in whose person the cases were tried, in a police-court, was Dr. Mathews, who is a good materialisation medium, but whose advertisements, and sign over his door, announced him as a "clairvoyant." He refused to pay the license fee, on the ground that it involved a violation of the constitutional principle of the "freedom of religion." The case may ultimately go up to the Supreme Court of the United States. We knew beforehand that the decision must be against us in the lower court. But the trial was a moral triumph for us, though Dr. Mathews was sentenced to pay the license fee, and the trifle of £5 fine (though under the ordinance liable to one thousand dollars fine and a year's imprisonment), against which he appealed. The principal witnesses on our side were Dr. Peebles and myself. As I was examined first, my testimony went over the whole ground that Spiritualism was a religion for its believers. Dr. Peebles had not much more to do than to confirm that position, with his far higher authority. We had to show how it was a religion. We showed that it proved that which the churches simply assert, namely—the immortality of the soul, the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man—the relations of men to the life beyond the grave. Our testimony was listened to with profound attention and the utmost respect. There was no ridicule nor scoffing, even by the adverse counsel. The silence through the court was breathless. Some of the jury said afterwards that if that was Spiritualism they wanted to know more about it. The judge charged that it *was* shown to be a religion, and that mediums seemed to perform a function analogous to that of the ministers of religion, in presenting the evidences of that which constituted the basis of all religion, *viz.*, the immortality of the soul. But he said that the city authorities had the power, for the purposes of necessary municipal revenue, to enforce a license fee on all ministers of religion who received salaries or charged fees for their ministrations. At the same time he expressed his satisfaction that the case was to go to a higher tribunal. I think the judge was quite right, and the whole was quite satisfactory to us. The only practical effect has been that the public mediums in San Francisco (of whom there are many) no longer style themselves "clairvoyants," so as to keep out of the scope of the literal application of the city ordinance. I hardly think it was worth while for Dr. Mathews to appeal against such a verdict and sentence, but in point of fact he did so, and the other cases stand over to abide the result of that appeal. The contrast was striking between the manner in which the whole subject was dealt with there, and what passed in your police-court in the Slade affair."

### THE EXPERIENCES AND OPINIONS OF AN ENGLISH CLERGYMAN.

ALL my life I have been conscious of sights and sounds which I never liked to speak of, because I could not explain them. From a child I felt an earnest desire to be holy, and loved to go away by myself and pray.

Soon after my ordination I had a large and difficult parish, and felt overburdened with my own weakness and incapacity. One night when I had been specially troubled in mind, I was awakened by a bright light in the room, and a radiant being came and kissed me on the forehead. This was the first time I had quite distinctly seen a form, and I knew from that moment that my Divine Lord would give me every help I needed.

From strong conviction I joined the Church of Rome, and remained in her communion for fourteen years. I was never happy or entirely satisfied. One night, in Rome, I was awakened by hearing my name very loudly called. I sat up in bed and listened. The voice seemed to be at a distance, and I was on the point of getting up and looking out, when nearer and more distinctly I heard these words:—"Dear child, it is not the will of your Heavenly Father that you should remain in the Church of Rome."

The next day I went to my confessor and told him. He assured me it was a temptation of the devil, and that I must resist it with all my might.

Again and again these words were said to me, and each time more earnestly. At last one night the voice said, "Take care how you resist any longer. You have been granted a blessed gift to hear and to see what is not allowed to others. If you cast away this blessing from you, your responsibility will be heavy, and the result great unhappiness." Then I seemed to be left in a horrible desert place, surrounded by forms of misery and despair. I tried to cry for help, but could not breathe a prayer for some time. I lay quite powerless, and unable to rise or speak. Presently the same voice said—"Jesus said, 'Come unto Me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you'—Arise and pray." Then power was restored to me, and I rose and prayed as for my life. Soon a most glorious sight presented itself. I saw a dazzling light, and from the midst of it a bright figure came towards me. As he stood close to me, I saw that he was weeping, and he said he was mourning at my hesitation. The next morning I did not go to mass, and my mind was filled with an overpowering sense of peace and happiness. I could no longer doubt that it was God's will, and I left the Romish communion.

After my return to England, I was one Sunday in St. Andrew's Church, Well-street. During the service a voice beside me said, "Will you do me a very great kindness?" I answered, "If it is God's will." The voice said, "I ask you in our dear Lord's name, pray for me, that I may advance in the knowledge of God."

As the service proceeded, I distinctly heard the voice joining in all the responses with the utmost earnestness.

Some time after this I felt very anxious to know something of the belief and practice of those calling themselves Spiritualists, and went with two friends to a public *séance*. There were some thirty or forty people present. With the exception of my two friends, I was unknown to any in the room, and my name was never mentioned. There appeared at the other end of the room a shadowy figure with a very noble countenance; he was seen by every one. He called to me by name to come close to him. I did so, and he told me it was he who had asked me for my prayers in St. Andrew's Church. He overwhelmed me with thanks, and asked me to let him hold my hand. I could plainly feel his grasp. Then he said, "If you give me a piece of paper I think I could write." I gave him a visiting card out of my pocket, and he wrote on it, "May God bless you." I have this card now, and also a sketch of him, which one of my friends took while he was talking to me. He told me that if it would help any doubting friend of mine to believe in the fact of another world, he would come to my room any evening I liked to speak to them, but that I should provide a speaking trumpet, as his voice might not be able to reach their ears unless physically formed as mine for hearing a spirit's voice.

I would never go to another *séance*. I felt a great dislike to the whole thing: Indeed, I have been told by my spiritual guide never to go again.

These are the first droppings of the shower that is at hand. I have been told that the end is very near, and that the veil is being lifted between us and the invisible, as the time of our Lord's coming draws near. A terrible time of trial is coming, and there is great danger and evil mixed up with this wonderful power. Many poor ignorant people with pure simple souls, have this power, but do not understand it, and get led into the company of the frivolous and evil, both men and spirits. All men seem to have their "affinities" in the unseen world, and spirits like-minded with themselves are always near them.

We should thankfully receive any message our Lord sends to us by whomsoever He chooses to send it, but it is very wrong to try and call spirits to us.

FALSE IDEAS OF DEATH A SCARECROW.—Spiritualism is no new problem which ought to have taken the disciples of science by surprise; it has rapped at the door of every thinker throughout the ages for a solution. Wanting it, the popular thought, misdirected by a theology that was stone blind, and which remains so, has invested the immortality of its own faith with *grave-clothes*, and converted it into a *scarecrow*—transforming the most beautiful and sublime process whereby humanity is glorified, into a ghastly skeleton, which its ignorance has named death, and converted it into an object of the profoundest horror. It was for science to strip these rags from the immortal spirit. Why has it not been done?—*The Road to Spiritualism* (HALLOCK).

### COCK-LANE AT THE WEST-END.

From "The Morning Post," March 20th.

SINCE the troubles which recently afflicted E. G. have driven him from his home, there have been fresh instances of liveliness in new directions on the part of the spirits. The most notable, certainly, is a phantom brougham which plies between Albert-gate and Hyde-park-corner. The joke it indulges in is less practical than those of which E. G. was the victim, for the brougham neither smashes itself nor any other vehicle. Its strange career is enlivened by constantly playing on the nerves of passers-by, who have witnessed it, in most determined form, charging and apparently annihilating persons who are in the act of crossing the road. These persons, however, are none the worse for the spiritual assaults, and are, indeed, unconscious of the peril so visible to others. This new mystery will no doubt furnish a fair amount of that pleasing excitement which those addicted to the careful investigation of Spiritualistic phenomena so rejoice to indulge in. We subjoin a communication from E. G., with some last particulars of his recent visitation.

To the Editor of "The Morning Post."

SIR,—I beg to thank you for forwarding me the letter of a correspondent on the subject of "Cock-lane at Kensington" (as you pleased to term it), which was from a scientific gentleman who has for some time past been engaged in examining the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism, but has hitherto met with great difficulties owing to all the available professional "mediums" requiring darkness as a condition *sine qua non*. I have replied to this gentleman privately, and shall be only too glad to give him every opportunity in my power to investigate my "ghostly experiences," provided that I can obtain the necessary consent of my late landlord, who is naturally averse to too much publicity on the subject, as detrimental to letting, &c.; I, on the other hand, of course, am only too anxious to get a solution of the phenomena, by any means and on any terms whatever.

I must add that I quitted the house on the 10th inst., and so have no further power of my own to show it to visitors; but some forty or fifty gentlemen have already well inspected it. Should the gentlemen referred to as anxious to investigate the case come to any conclusion, I shall be most happy that he or I communicate the result to you.

I append a list of occurrences, some of which I omitted to send to you before, in my hurry and excitement, and others which have happened since my letter to you of the 5th inst.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

March 19th.

When I ascended with my friend to the bedrooms after the rush of the bedstead, &c., I was brought to a halt on the top landing (as far as which I had rushed as quickly as my legs could carry me) by seeing all the linen out of the press and strewed over the floor, the doors of the press being wide open, which were previously locked. When, after this, we had inspected the rooms and the loft, we returned to the "study," but had only been there a few moments when another bedstead and child's cot overturned in the bedroom opposite the one to which I have referred. Again we could trace no agent. On Saturday afternoon, March 3rd, the bell again began ringing violently, while two visitors were in the house; they ran to the window, I to the door, but, as usual, we could see nothing extraordinary. The same afternoon, soon afterwards, we heard a noise below; we went to the kitchen, from whence proceeded the screams of my wife and a servant, who happened to be there, and who witnessed a table overturn of itself, and in so doing broke off one of its legs. A curious fact came under my own eyes. A servant was putting some Brunswick black on the fire-grate; she had for that purpose two round brushes (such as are used for black lead), which she placed in a saucer. All at once she cried out, "Oh, look, sir!" I went quickly, and found the brushes performing a circular quick motion, just above the saucer, in the air. On Saturday, March 10th, my wife was packing up some things previous to her departure, when she missed her sponges, which she had only just placed close by her, and on searching for them she suddenly espied them up the chimney; how they got there no one knows. Again, a child's worsted sock would not remain on a table on which it was placed, but continually concealed itself behind a box in the "study." A dressing-table in my wife's bedroom walked out, so to speak, from the wall before her eyes, about half a yard, and a chest of drawers on the other side of the room moved of itself. This same dressing-table a day or two later overturned and smashed the ornaments, &c., which were upon it. A shovel also was found with the scoop bent at right angles to the handle, and then broke when touched. From a bookcase in the study some eight or nine books, on more than one occasion, projected themselves one after the other in quick succession on to the floor before me and two others. This bookcase was well examined by several gentlemen, who could trace no clue in this matter or in any other.

### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE readers of this journal would do well to put a stop to the trade tricks of one or two wholesale newsagents in London, who from political or theological motives quietly impede the circulation of journals connected with new or reform movements, by the non-execution or delayed execution of orders received for the same. The remedy is to take away the custom of country booksellers who support such agents; this can be done by transferring orders for books and literature of all kinds to another local newsagent who does not employ and encourage a London firm addicted to the tricks just mentioned, and which have a practical though little known influence on the dissemination of knowledge throughout Great Britain. *The Spiritualist* is published in London on Thursday evening every week, and should be obtainable anywhere in the provinces on the Saturday. The most expeditious method of getting it is to have it posted direct from 38, Great Russell-street, by which method it can be received nearly everywhere in England on the Friday.



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It is easier asked than done. A book on Spiritualism, if it did but sketch the subject, should be very voluminous; and, when written, it would be found to omit more than it discussed or recorded. I cannot write such a book; nor do I think it desirable that any such attempt should be made in the present state of our knowledge.

But I do think it very important that any person who has special facilities for observation should use them, and record their results as best he can. In this belief, I have kept careful records of what I have seen, and from time to time have published Essays and Reviews on the published opinions of others. I have also printed a number of chapters of Personal Research in the Phenomena and Philosophy of Spiritualism, and have selected, from a mass that have been automatically written out, certain Spirit-teachings.

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The volume will be published at 10s. if sufficient names are enrolled as subscribers to show that such a book is wanted, and will pay expenses. I decline pecuniary risk.

I propose hereafter (but not now) to issue two other works,—one "SPIRIT TEACHINGS," dealing with the religious aspect of the question; the other, "RESEARCHES IN THE PHENOMENA AND PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUALISM," dealing with the whole subject in its experimental phases, and with the theory and philosophy of it. These will come in due time if they find a place.

For the present I put forward only "ESSAYS AND REVIEWS." The following friends have kindly formed themselves into a committee with a view of carrying out business arrangements. Those to whose name \* is prefixed will receive names of Subscribers, and Mr. Percival, the Treasurer, will receive subscriptions as they become due.

Details of publication will be given when it becomes clear that the book will meet a demand. Unless a sufficient number of copies—about 500—be subscribed for I shall consider that it is not wise to print.

I respectfully beg that no business letters may be sent to me, as my time is already overtaxed.

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Subscribers who do not wish their names to be published, should inform Mr. Percival to that effect.

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES AT HOME.

Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming 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.

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.

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, considerably delays the manifestations.

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.

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 frequently found to be a weakening influence.

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.

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.

When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should 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.

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 afterwards be strengthened. Next ask "Who is the medium?" When the intelligence asserts itself to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as the alleged spirits are found to exhibit all the virtues and all the failings of humanity.

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