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Communications should be addressed to the resident secretary, Miss Emily Kishlingbury, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C., and Post-office orders made payable at the Great Russell-street Post-office.

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The BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS is formed to unite Spiritualists of every variety of opinion for their mutual aid and benefit; to aid students and inquirers in their researches by placing their disposal the means of systematic investigation into the facts and phenomena, called Spiritual or Psychic; to make known the positive results arrived at by careful research; and to direct attention to the beneficial influence which those results are calculated to exercise upon social relationships and individual conduct. It is intended to include Spiritualists of every class, whether members of Local and Provincial Societies or not, and all inquirers into psychological and kindred phenomena. The British National Association of Spiritualists was formed in the year 1873, at a national conference of Spiritualists held in Liverpool, at which all the great Societies of Spiritualists, and the Spiritualists of the chief towns in the United Kingdom, were represented. The amount of the annual subscription to the National Association is optional, with a minimum of five shillings a year. Each member has a single vote at the general meetings, and is eligible for election to all offices. FRIENDS wishing to join the Association, and Local Societies wishing to become allied, are requested to communicate with Miss Kisingbury, Resident Secretary, at the offices of the Association, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C., of whom copies of the Constitution and Rules may be had upon application. The entrance to the offices is in Woburn-street.

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SUSIE FLETCHER, the great American Trance Medium and Magnetic Healer, has taken rooms at No. 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury-square, London, W.C., where, during the month of June, she may be consulted. Terms, one guinea. Treatment to the poor on Saturday mornings free. Will answer calls to lecture.

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# The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

VOLUME EIGHT. NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JUNE 16th, 1876.

## POETICAL INSPIRATION.

THE poet has long been supposed to live nearer to heaven than others; to breathe a purer, a diviner air, and to live by inspiration from the realms above. Spiritualism furnishes evidence that this opinion as to the source whence all inspiration comes is true, and that the poetical gift constitutes one of the highest kinds of what may be called "normal mediumship." All persons who possess strong medial gifts are impulsive and passionate in a high degree, and those of them whose aspirations tend to grow more in an animal than a spiritual direction, are most able to exhibit those tangible proofs of spirit-power which are known as physical manifestations. As the love of the medium for the things of earth departs, and the aspiration for the things of heaven gains the ascendancy, so do the physical manifestations disappear, and while all the emotional characteristics of the medium remain, the life of the individual is passed upon a higher plane, and the revelations given through him from the world above are of a higher order.

There appear to be two kinds of poetical mediumship. In the one the individual passes into a state of trance, and in the other he remains in the normal condition; in the latter case the utterances given through his organism from the world above, are subjected to the criticism of his judgment before they are allowed to pass under the notice of the public; in the first case there is no such restriction. The barrier dividing these two conditions of the poetical mind appears to be a narrow one. Goethe, when writing his poems, would occasionally pass into an almost unconscious state, and his pen, like that of a writing medium, would sometimes be driven without the effort of his will. Coleridge, again, who usually wrote in his normal state, composed and committed to paper one of his finest poems, "Kublai Khan," while in a somnambule sleep. The poetic gift is thus one of the truest and highest forms of inspiration, and as such is inseparably connected with Spiritualism. In recognition of this fact we, some years ago, invited amateur poets in the ranks of Spiritualism to send us short specimen contributions, with the result that a few were received, but not of such quality as to be worth printing. Within the last few days, however, we have discovered a young lady (aged sixteen), who possesses rare poetical gifts, and as a specimen of her work the following lines, which were written by her when thirteen years of age, may be quoted:—

### THE ANGEL'S VISIT.

As the angry wind came sweeping  
O'er the heaving ocean wild,  
Sat a mother sadly weeping  
By the death-bed of her child;  
And she cried in bitter sorrow,  
"Oh, my Father, hear my prayer,  
Grant me that a brighter morrow  
Dawn upon my dark despair."

When lo! a voice said slowly,  
"I have brought a message holy  
From the God whom mortals love,  
Through the starry courts of Heaven,  
Down the purple mists of even,  
Have I borne it from above."  
And the weary mother raising  
Her sad eyes, and upward gazing,  
Saw an angel pure and bright—  
Though his face was pale as marble  
And his flowing robe was sable  
Fringed with rays of silver light.  
Then her bitter tears fell faster,  
With a grief she could not master,  
And more heavy grew her heart;  
Soomed the angel's eyes to glisten  
As he spake, "Oh, sad one, listen,  
Whilst God's message I impart.

"From the far Islands of the Blest,  
At His dread word I come,  
To give unto the weary rest,  
To lead the wanderer home.

In heaven nothing stirs the calm  
That gives worn souls relief,  
And kindred spirits bear a balm  
To comfort every grief.

"For, in those wondrous halls and bowers  
Where gently fall the crystal showers,  
And swiftly fly the golden hours  
In love and light away,  
Our joyful Allelujah's ring,  
And angel choirs for ever sing  
Hosanna to the Living King  
For ever and for aye.

"Let me bear thy tender blossom  
Far away upon my bosom,  
Through the clear blue morning skies.  
Let him be as one immortal,  
Passing through the golden portal,  
To the mystic paradise.  
If on this cold earth he lingers,  
Soon will sorrow's heavy fingers  
Leave their traces on his brow;  
Yos, O sad one, thou shalt meet him—  
As a radiant saint shalt greet him,  
And though all despairing now,  
Still thy child shall watch above thee,  
More than all things else to love thee,  
Tenderly still guiding thee  
To a blest eternity."

Even as the words were spoken  
Did the angel raise the child,  
And the mother, nigh heart broken,  
Spake in accents low and wild,—  
"Come and soothe this mourning heart:  
Speak, beloved, ere we part!"  
Rose the child-voice faint, yet clear—  
"Come and kiss me, mother dear."

High and higher still ascending,  
As the summer day was dawning,  
Mid the clouds their pathway wending,  
In the glory of the morning,  
Through the happy azure skies  
Till, beyond the golden portal,  
They had reached the land immortal—  
Reached the mystic paradise.

The following is another of her poems, written more recently, and displaying more concentration of style:—

### RESURGAM.

The winter is drawing nearer,  
The autumn is almost done,  
The ruddy fruits in the orchard  
Hang ripe in the golden sun.  
The trees are arrayed in glory,  
And softly the faint winds creep;  
Yet Nature is silently waiting,  
Her season of tranquil sleep.

The swallows—glad heralds of summer—  
Fly forth on their passage again,  
The flowers lie dead in the valley,  
No blossoms are found in the glen;  
And the stream in its sleepy murmur,  
O'er meadow, and upland, and lea,  
Seems to know that with winter is coming  
The loss of its liberty.

And I, too, am silently waiting;  
The daylight is waning, I know;  
The shadows of night are falling,  
Death cometh with footsteps slow.  
Yet surely, surely he cometh,  
And I from the world must part;  
Even now I feel that his fingers  
Are busy around my heart.

I shall not sleep less securely  
That I bear not a wreath of fame,  
And that all I can carry with me  
Is a pure, unsullied name;  
I feel no pang at the parting—  
Life's waves are so hard to breast;  
The battle is all for the mighty,  
I am weary, and longing for rest.

When the spring-time of earth is returning  
The land will awaken again;  
The trees will put forth fresh branches,  
And the river will burst its chain;  
The swallows will come o'er the ocean,  
The violet will hide in the shade;  
The cowslip and delicate primrose  
Will bud in the sheltering glade.

And I—I too shall awaken,  
 And the gates of the tomb be riven;  
 My spirit will then mount upward  
 To the beautiful Courts of Heaven.  
 I shall pass through the "many mansions,"  
 And kneel at the Grand White Throne,  
 And surrounded by countless angels  
 Shall worship the Great Unknown.  
 I shall walk in a land of glory,  
 And out in the golden gleam;  
 I shall see the face of the Master,  
 Of which I so often dream.  
 And I know though the flowers be waving  
 All over my long last bed,  
 I shall live in the hearts that love me—  
 To them I shall ne'er be dead.

The foregoing poem somewhat resembles, in genius and in style, those by the late Alice Carey. For the purpose of comparison, the following lines by Alice Carey may be quoted:—

## THE FOREST.

I once had a little brother,  
 With eyes that were dark and deep,  
 And there in that dim old forest,  
 He lieth in peace asleep;  
 Light as the down on the thistle,  
 Free as the winds that blow,  
 We roamed there the beautiful summers,  
 The summers of long ago.

But his feet on the hills grew weary,  
 Till one of the Autumn eves,  
 I made for my little brother  
 A bed of the yellow leaves;  
 Sweetly his pale arms folded,  
 My neck in a meek embrace,  
 As the light of immortal beauty,  
 Silently covered his face.  
 And when the arrows of sunset  
 Lodged in the treetops bright,  
 He fell in his saint-like beauty  
 Asleep by the gates of light.  
 Therefore of all the pictures  
 That hang on Memory's wall,  
 The one of the dim old forest  
 Seemeth the best of all.

In conclusion, we quote one more specimen of the genius of the youthful poetess, who wishes to be known only by her initials, C. A. B.:—

## DEATH.

Why should we call Death cruel? rather say  
 Good Death and kind, who comes to take away  
 The load we cannot bear,  
 Who leads the wounded from the battle fray  
 With tender, loving care.  
 Magical Death, who calms the wildest heart,  
 Who calls the mourner from his bitter part,  
 And gives the toiler rest;  
 We must await his hand in patience, and not start  
 When it invades our breast.  
 Wonderful Death; strong arm to bear us on,  
 Far beyond planet and glad shining sun,  
 Where soft white clouds are riven,  
 Whither our loved ones are already gone  
 To the fair Courts of Heaven.  
 Pitiful Death; more pitiful than Life,  
 Who leads us into paths where thorns are rife  
 To tear all tender feet;  
 Thou guid'st us from the tumult and the strife  
 To peace and rest complete.  
 And if we rise not—to a solemn sleep,  
 Unutterably motionless and deep,  
 Which nought can ever break,  
 From which if wild storms rave, or soft winds sweep,  
 We shall no more awake.  
 Full many pass, in all their early prime,  
 In youth's glad spring to that fair clime,  
 Released from earthly woes,  
 Whilst others must grow grey and sere with time,  
 Ere they may find repose.  
 Strange mystery; yet still the round world rolls,  
 Guarded and guided, it is God controls,  
 Who gives us life and breath;  
 May we so live that we may yield pure souls  
 To the strong arms of Death.  
 Parted asunder, we shall meet again  
 Suffering, yet shall we live untouched by pain  
 On yonder love-lit shore,  
 Where Death comes not, but perfect Life will reign  
 For aye and evermore.

BARON VON DIRCKINCK-HOLMFELD attended the ordinary weekly *séance* of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism on Thursday evening last week, when he presented some copies of his pamphlet, *Spiritualism; its Causes and Effects*, for distribution, and also a copy of his photograph for the album of the Association.

REMARKABLE TEST *SEANCES* IN MANCHESTER.

A PENCIL, MOVED BY INVISIBLE AGENCY, WRITING BEFORE THE EYES OF OBSERVERS.

BY WILLIAM OXLEY.

As "tests" seem to be vested with peculiar charms in the minds of "critical observers" of Spiritualistic phenomena, I give the particulars under which the three following *séances* occurred; but I wish to observe, the "tests" were proposed by the invisible operating agency. The result of my observations is to show that, as a rule, the same power which causes the manifestations can and *does* (except in especial instances) neutralise the value of many tests proposed and applied by the sceptical mind. All investigators will, I am sure, endorse the truth of this by their own experience, in the feeling of doubt still existing even after the application of the most severe tests, that there was some point overlooked, or some loophole left unguarded, or *something* still unsatisfactory.

Now, what is the reason for all this uncertainty, unless itself is a standing testimony to the worthlessness of mere tests of the natural mind, when applied to the discovery of spiritual action and spiritual laws? For it must end as the vain effort to discover the soul in the material body. The soul or spirit has given abundant proof that it can act independently of all known natural (so-called) laws; to arrive at anything like a correct knowledge of spiritual laws and operation, there must be the cultivation of *spiritual states* within the minds of investigators; at least, such is the result of my experience, and careful and thoughtful observations. I have invariably found that by following the instructions, and not dictating to the controlling forces or spirits, the most satisfactory tests or proofs of intelligent outside operators have been given. Now for the particulars:—

On Wednesday evening, June 7th, I called on Dr. Monck at his lodgings, 81, Bury New-road, Manchester, with no intention of having "a sitting." After conversing together for some time, I proposed that we two should have a sitting alone, to which he consented at once. After turning down the gas-light a little, but leaving sufficient to see clearly every object in the room, his controlling spirit, "Samuel," soon made his presence known, and congratulated me on the fact of my being alone with him, saying also that he would give me proof of spiritual power. Dr. Monck, in a semi-trance state, then took a white lawn handkerchief out of his pocket, and folding a sheet of note-paper, new and quite clean, and free from any marks, placed it on the table between us (he sitting on one side, and I on the other opposite), with my Mordan's ivory pencil on the paper. Then he put the kerchief over both, and in a few seconds I saw the pencil project itself outside the kerchief, about two inches of the end being visible; it then commenced to write, and moved three times across the surface of the paper, evidently in the act of writing (our four hands being thirty inches away from the pencil); the pencil then dropped, and, taking up the kerchief, the paper was found with three lines of good writing, containing a message of congratulation for myself. "Samuel" then said, "Take hold of my medium's hands, and don't leave go till I tell you, but first shut off the light." He then said, "A strange spirit wants to come, who says his name is 'Joey,' and he wants me to come and help his medium, as he is in trouble, some evil spirits having obtained power to gain possession. But mind what I say. They are evil—or *unprogressed*—spirits, and I wish you to testify to this." I immediately recognised Joey as the controlling spirit of a gifted medium, and replied, "Let him come, for he has come for a special purpose." Joey then (drawing power from the medium—as Samuel said) commenced operations by taking the small musical box, which was on another table about eight feet from that at which we were sitting, and floating it about the room, winding it up as it was being floated. It played for a few minutes, and finally came down on the table between us. The large musical box was then forcibly thrust against my left arm, and pushed between our hands; then a chair was put on the top of the table, and before saying "Good night," Joey ransacked the papers and letters of Dr. Monck, and spread them in different parts of the room. Finally, he said that he would smash the

small musical box case, but would not injure the musical part; the case was afterwards found in five parts, in as many different places. I then lighted the gas, when a scene of disorder presented itself; the coats, rugs, chairs and papers, &c., were found in a state of utter confusion.

All the above, and more besides, occurred while I had firm hold of both Dr. Monck's hands, and if this is not sufficient test, then I know not what would be clearer evidence.

Last evening, June 8th, we had a *séance* at which there were seven present, exclusive of the medium; one gentleman had not been at a *séance* before. We had a repetition of the writing phenomenon precisely the same as narrated before, which all distinctly saw and testified to. A small slate was then given to me to clean. Dr. Monck then took it, and holding it with one finger and thumb under the table, a message was written out in three seconds in a beautifully clear hand, totally unlike the medium's hand-writing. Mr. Reimers was then told to sit on the table (which was a four-legged one), when it was lifted about four inches from the floor, and put down again, all the legs being raised. This experiment was afterwards repeated with me. (Mr. Reimers weighs sixteen stone, and I weigh ten and a half.) All this occurred in good light. Then an astounding phenomenon occurred in the same light. The medium asked me for my pencil, and taking it in his right hand he put it on the top of the large musical box, which was lying on the table, and said, "Look at your pencil. Is it all right?" I then found the catch of the slide was wanting, to which he replied, "It is perhaps inside." On opening the lid of the box, on the top of the glass cover of the musical parts, there lay the screw-catch and a small piece of the lead. Here was a clear case, *in a good light*, of solid matter passing through solid matter before our very eyes.

The medium then told the sitters on his right and left hand to put their hands on his, leaving the circle intact by the touch of their other hands, thus having four hands on each of his, when the large musical box was wound up and floated round the heads of the sitters (this box weighs 16 lbs.). Then placing itself on the table in obedience to my request, it played quarter, half-three-quarter, full and double full time, stopping between each at my request. Three hand-bells were then taken up and rung all together, also the two tambourines; and finally, in answer to a request of one of the sitters, a luminous hand appeared, and, taking hold of the large musical box, started it, and then floated it in the air, the hand being distinctly seen grasping the box. A stranger then announced his presence, and addressing one of the sitters by name, said he was "Charles Drawbridge," who in earth life was a somewhat eccentric man and Baptist preacher at Wellingboro', in Northamptonshire. He gave many proofs of his identity by reminding the gentleman to whom he addressed himself of several of his sayings and eccentricities, some of which the sitter had quite forgotten, but remembered them when reminded by the spirit; he also gave two tests in reference to which the gentleman was to make inquiries, and he would thus prove the genuineness of the appearance. He lastly gave us an address, and told us he was *still human*, and had all to unlearn of what he in earth life had believed and preached as truth. He had, he said, to come back again to the earth, and by so doing he would be able the sooner to ascend to higher spheres.

Thus ended this remarkable *séance*. Many other things occurred which your space forbids me to enumerate, but I have stated sufficient to prove, I think, that the absence of tests on our part is the surest way to obtain the most satisfactory results.

Another phase of Dr. Monck's mediumship is the gift of healing with which he is invested. I can testify to at least two coming under my own personal knowledge. Both patients were my own workmen, good steady men. One was off his work two or three weeks, suffering from neuralgia of the brain nerves, and in addition had been blind three days from the effect of a stroke on the eye by a piece of iron; the other was suffering from bronchitis, which had troubled him all the winter, and which threatened to become fatal. His brother died from same complaint three weeks ago. Both these men went to Dr. Monck, who described their symptoms as soon as he saw them, they not having spoken

to him concerning their ailments. In about three days both these men were perfectly restored, and are quite willing to testify to the reality of their diseases and their cures.

On Saturday evening, June 10th, I and Mr. Marsh called on Dr. Monck, and had a short sitting. On turning off the gas I took the left hand of the medium between both mine, Mr. Marsh doing the same with the medium's right hand, my left foot and Mr. Marsh's right foot being placed on the medium's feet; we were both then touched by the spirit hands on the face and head, and lightly pinched about our legs. The large musical box was then floated off the table and carried about six feet away, and the lever which winds up the barrel was taken off and came down on the table, when Samuel said to me, "We have taken the lever off, and you will not be able to fix it after, and start the box." This was true, as I found the ratchet and other parts had been so altered that I could not properly replace them. Three tunes were then played, which were not in the box at all, but which the operator improvised; in other words, they were tunes which formed no part of the six tunes which the box is made to play; the music also stopped and played at different speeds at my request.

The spirit Bertie, who materialises through another medium (who was not present with us) then made her presence known by a peculiar ehink of her silver gilt cross. This small cross was presented to Bertie by Mr. Reimers some months ago, and she declares he is not to have it returned to him, but that she intends to keep it, and will never part with it. Being desirous of testing the reality of this I requested that Bertie would touch me with it, when actually she laid it on my hand and drew it across my face three times, doing the same to Mr. Marsh. All this was done while the medium was held by us in the manner above described, so that here was a most complete test; none but our three selves were in the room, and the door was locked with the key inside the lock. We had then seven distinct spirit voices speaking through a roll of paper, which appeared to be six feet away from where we were sitting; all these voices were well known to us.

"Truth is stranger than fiction."

Higher Broughton, Manchester, June 9th, 1876.

#### A LOVE BEYOND THAT OF EARTH.

THE following spirit message was given through the writing mediumship of a lady:—

"In heaven love joins all in softest bonds; no element of discord is known or could be endured for an instant; it would send a jar painful in the extreme through the whole of heaven. As, when a single nerve of the body is subjected to violence, the whole system responds with an exquisitely painful sympathy, so in heaven a single thought or emotion discordant to the general harmony of love, would send a thrill of agony through every breast. Souls then must be trained to that state of harmonious response which will enable them to belong to the company of the brighter beings who form heaven, and this is brought about by degrees through states of trial, whereby all the old earthly inharmonious conditions are put off, and the soul gradually grows into the harmony of love, and by self-exertion constantly preserves that harmony in perfection, as man instinctively strives for health on earth. This effected, a soul is fitted to enter heaven, being no longer repugnant to its life; and it enters, giving forth, as flowers their perfume, those exquisite auras, those soul-fragrances which are the outbreathings of a purified nature, which clothe it around with celestial glory, and with god-like comeliness. Sending itself out before itself, the approach of such a being would be felt as surpassing rapture. The higher the state, the nearer to god-like perfection, the more overpowering is the entrancing sweetness, inducing worship upon inferior souls, who prostrate themselves in delighted adoration, drinking in the new revelations of divinity possessed and given forth by the glorious one, and raised by the very presence into a higher state for all eternity. No man lost in a transport of admiration of the beauty and sweetness of a perfect woman given for the first time to his gaze, but feels that he has been lifted into a higher state by the new revelation made to his mind and senses. His spirit bends in

blissful worship, and never, to all eternity, is the uplifting effect of the few short moments of ecstasy lost to him. Such is the effect of visits from the higher angels to their brethren occupying lower grades of existence; but how much greater is the worshipping rapture of souls so transparent in their purity that they may gaze upon the effulgence of divinity. This is indeed to see God; thus doth He give Himself to His beloved.

It is folly to suppose a soul recently risen from earth-life can attain to this state of super-excellence instantaneously. Even in souls of the highest training on earth, there exist certain peculiarities of discord which have to be discovered and eliminated. As an experienced tuner will strike a note again and again, subjecting it to repeated modifications until it rises to the proper pitch of harmony with other notes, so even the most elevated soul from the earth, feeling its discordance painful, puts off from itself with continued efforts all inharmonious elements, until it rises into the heaven of perfect love, when, bathed in its own aromas of celestial sweetness, it soon finds its allotted place amongst souls affinitised to itself, and becomes conjoined with them by indissoluble links of harmony.

Heaven is one in the perfection of harmony—love makes that oneness, that harmony. Counterparts of souls are blended in complete oneness, and brother and sister souls in fraternal interchange of interior excellences. No soul thinks itself complete without the perfect correspondence of other souls, hence no soul can possess anything for itself alone; receiving, it longs to give. No beauty, no excellence, no divine outbreathing is received by a soul which is not immediately imparted, going forth as an effluence throughout the whole of heaven; and as these effluences proceed from myriads of souls, constantly receiving, according to their capacities, from the Fountain Source of excellence, so there is an infinite variety in the beauty, excellence, and consequent delight of heaven.

Elevated thus into the very bosom of God, filled by the divine inflowing—pure, unobstructing, transparent—an angel becomes the embodiment of the Spirit of God, and is to lower ones a divine presence, wearing the likeness of God; a being of love, beneficence, and almost omnipotence, and God-like action, and existence. As all heaven is one, all angels are one, by the very perfection of harmony, correspondence, love; and as one angel, so myriads of angels, moved on by the Divine Will—obedient as a body to a mind, or spirit—may proceed through the universe, forming new worlds for human residence, governing them, and eventually raising the inhabitants, incarnated souls, to angelic glory.”

#### SOLID OBJECTS FLOATING AND MOVING IN THE LIGHT.

BY HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD.

I ATTENDED a *séance* of Mr. Clarence at 15, Southampton-row, on Friday, and the attendance was so meagre that I think it cannot be generally known how striking are the phenomena exhibited under his mediumship. The other sitters were only Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Williams, and another gentleman, a stranger to me, I holding Mr. Clarence's hand firmly the whole time. The phenomena of the dark *séance* began immediately and went on without interruption, arguing the simultaneous action of several operators. Both Mr. Clarence and Mr. Williams were floated in the air, which seemed to make Mr. Clarence very nervous, and on his calling for a light the matchbox was found to have been spirited away, but the gentleman opposite me mentioning that he had one in his pocket I requested the spirits to bring it me. I immediately felt a small matchbox put into the hand by which I was holding Mr. Clarence; Mr. Williams was lying entranced on the table supported on a large mattress, which had been brought from the sofa. As soon as he came to himself we sat in the light, the gas only a little turned down, and all the furniture in the room seemed alive. A chair flew over the table from one side to the other, striking the gentleman opposite me in its fall. Then the table floated, waving to and fro, next began to move, pushing Mr. Williams backwards till he was jammed up against the wall, we all standing up following, and one of the chairs also following, no one touching it. Different things were thrown about. Mr. Swinburne put a book down on the

table in the middle of us, requesting them to move it so that we might all see the commencement of motion. It was left for some time, but when we were not observing it was whisked away and thrown into the fender. It was brought back again to the same place, and lay there till the *séance* broke up, but just as we were standing up and going away it came again flying through the air and struck me on the arm. Mr. Clarence pressed us to go, and led the way, but while we were looking up our things in the front room, and even in the shop downstairs, things kept being thrown down. I was the last to leave, and was just beginning to descend the stairs when I heard a slight noise behind me, and looking back I saw that the shutter used to darken the window, which might be about five feet high by nearly three feet wide, had been brought after me, and was standing on the landing place against the bannister, blocking up the way between me and the door through which I had just come out.

31, Queen Anne-street, Cavendish-square, June 10th, 1876.

#### A TEST *SEANCE* AT THE STOCKPORT MECHANICS' INSTITUTION.

From "The Stockport Advertiser."

WHEN Mr. Bamford, of Macclesfield, gave the *séance* at the Stockport Mechanics' Institution three weeks ago, and of which we published a detailed account, from personal observation, only a limited number of persons was permitted to be present, but an undertaking was given that another *séance* should follow before a larger audience as soon as convenient. Since then, the committee of non-believers in Spiritualism have been in communication with Mr. Bamford and other Spiritualists, and another *séance* was arranged for Tuesday night, at the Mechanics' Institution. Invitations were issued to about a couple of dozen non-Spiritualists, and some half-dozen Spiritualists were present, in addition to Mr. Bamford and his two sons. As on the last occasion, a committee of four—in fact, the same individuals, with one exception—undertook to test the "manifestations" through Mr. Bamford's two little boys, and, if possible, fathom the mystery which hung over the last *séance*.

One of Mr. Bamford's sons, having been bound by the legs to a chair, first tried to obtain music from an accordion (which had been previously examined to see that there was no secret mechanism about it) by holding it with one hand under the table; but the spirits did not appear to be in a musical mood. His arms and legs were then more firmly secured, his hands being strongly fastened behind him by means of tapes securely and tightly stitched, and every precaution having been used by the committee which ingenuity could suggest to prevent trickery, the lights were turned low, and the company, seated round the room, waited in breathless expectation for a "manifestation;" but there came none, and, in answer to inquiries, the spirits intimated by knocks that the conditions were not suitable. A different process of pinioning was therefore adopted, and the boy was enveloped up to the neck in a black calico bag, the same precautions being used by the committee as before. Still, with no better success. Two or three of the company being inclined to turn the affair to ridicule, the spirits, by tapping, spelt out the words: "Let the man go out." Several efforts were made to ascertain who was the objectionable person, and, the proceedings becoming rather tedious, and a number of the audience, believing there would be no "manifestation," then left the room. No sooner had they gone, however, than the spirits began in earnest, and a mouth-organ, which had been placed on the boy's knee (he being behind the screen), was dashed with considerable force to the floor. This was followed by the ringing of a bell such as milkmen use: yet, when the curtain was raised quickly, the boy was found seated as left, securely stitched and tied: a precaution which was taken by the committee after each "manifestation." A gentleman's ring was placed on the boy's knee, and in three-quarters of a minute it was "spirited" through the bag on to his finger; and a watch disappeared in the same way into his waistcoat pocket. A hat and a zinc bucket, placed on his knees, found their way on to his head; and a mouth-organ, placed in the same position, was heard giving forth musical sounds, such as would be produced by the instrument being moved quickly backwards and forwards before his mouth, and, on the curtain being raised, was found in the boy's mouth. In the same mysterious manner writing was executed, both in a book and on a slate; yet, when the boy was taken out of the bag and subjected to close scrutiny, his fetters did not appear to have been disturbed in the least. As a final "manifestation," it was decided again to try the accordion under the table, and, although the boy kept one hand in view of the company, and held the instrument at the wind end, it began to play in good time the tune usually associated with the hymn, "Shall we gather at the river?" and concluded with "God save the Queen." The party had every opportunity afforded them for satisfying themselves that the boy was securely tied, and had no apparent means of using either his arms, hands, or legs; and, sceptical as most were about the spirit-power, they could offer no solution of the mystery.

Two gentlemen holding public offices in the town expressed their inability to account for the phenomena, and one moved a resolution to the effect that what they had witnessed was totally inexplicable to their comprehension. The motion, having been seconded, was unanimously agreed to.

Mr. REMERS suggests that Mr. Binney should send the paraffin moulds of different colour, which he obtained in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, to the National Association of Spiritualists.

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA OF THE SHAKERS CRITICALLY EXAMINED.

(From the *Isle of Wight "Earwig."*)

THAT mesmerism does not furnish an elucidation of the Shaker mystery has been, we consider, conclusively established by a well-known clergyman in a neighbouring town, who visited the Shaker party privately during their stay at Portsmouth. From the published account of his visit we extract the following:—

"During the early part of the singing, one of the sisters was noticed to be under influence. With eyes closed, and a quiet, rapt, and beautiful expression of face, she began to speak—*mirabile dictu*—in Hebrew. She then made signals to another sister, who came over to her, and, standing embraced at one time, and kneeling at another, this sister soon came under influence, and began to interpret what the other uttered. Then, after a time, the order was reversed, and the second sister began to speak in Italian, while the first translated for her; and one was voluble in French, who, as I afterwards ascertained, knew no French in her normal state, and who, while speaking, was characteristically French all over. And so prayers, quotations of Scripture, and sweet sisterly, tender, and playful conversations on spiritual things took place between them in various tongues, together with a little singing of exquisite sweetness—weird and spiritual on the part of one—in what to me appeared like Hindostanee.

"After a time Mrs. Girling herself came under influence, and began to talk in verse or rhyme, for her speech ran in couplets, and there was much ingenuity in making the words jingle. I also found that in her ecstasy she had the power of mind-reading, since she somewhat, and rhythmically, set forth various matters that were uppermost in my thoughts. Much that she said was utter nonsense, of course, but all that was said was said in rhyme, rapidly and with considerable action, which, after a little space, culminated in a positive dance, or easy round-about jump—arms waving, and lips prodigal of verse at the same time."

The Rev. Thomas Colley has done good and important service to the Shakers, though we suspect the publication of his letter has led them to look upon him somewhat as one who entered their society as a spy. His scholarly training has qualified him to explode the mesmeric theory that the whole community are poor biologised subjects of the "designing and wicked mother." His visit to the Shakers has scarcely, however, as we think, established a close similitude between their trance phenomena and those obtained through the acknowledged spirit medium. There is, so to speak, a uniqueness about the former—certain constant distinctive features differing from the ordinary spiritual phenomena; such, for instance, as the beyond measure strange phrase called "passing from life to death, and from death to life," during which, we are assured, the vital functions are often to all appearance completely suspended, and a horrible odour of death emanates from the body, though consciousness is in a measure retained. Again, the spirit mediums, nearly one and all, declare that the exercise of their medial powers has a very exhausting tendency. The Shakers, on the contrary, constantly assure us that the influence of the spirit which controls them is in the highest degree conducive to bodily health, and that they feel strengthened and refreshed even after one or two hours of continuous dancing; this statement is certainly substantiated by the healthful condition of the family under conditions which would have killed or invalidated for life, at least, one half of one hundred and twenty persons taken at haphazard from amongst us. But there are further differences to perplex and mystify us. We have often heard of the controlling intelligence at spirit circles personating Christ, and even the "Holy Spirit," but we do not remember to have ever heard of the case of a medium who was obsessed by but one spirit only; other spirits invariably intrude, and say their say. On the contrary the Shakers present the astonishing fact of a hundred or more mediums drawn together by some occult influence, all acted upon, as they distinctly assert, solely by an intelligent power that sinks all other individuality in the "Holy Spirit." The singularity of the Shaker phenomena does not, however, end even here. The ordinary spiritual medium is a very different person in physical, mental, and moral tendencies to the New Forest Shaker; at least, as far as we can discover. There is the authority of the editor of the Spiritual newspaper for the statement, that a proportion of physical mediums are, either from natural predisposition, or made so by the tyrannical action of the degraded spirits who sometimes surround them, most unlimited liars—the cunning fabricators of complete dramas of malicious fictions, and are the slaves of an abnormal jealousy of each other, so strangely fierce as to have no parallel in anything ever witnessed among average mortals. This statement is made to apply to mediums who obtain strong physical manifestations, but we have grounds for the opinion that among mediums for the higher intellectual phenomena, there exists a prevalence of moral idiosyncrasies that are often not of an elevating or unselfish character. Now, we have certainly not been able to detect the least evidence of this shocking deceitfulness and intense selfishness, or other minor moral weaknesses, among these Hordle mediums. It is true that some points of resemblance may be discovered between the Shaker phenomena and those witnessed in ecstasies and convulsionaries, vast waves of which strange influence swept over Morzine, on the borders of France, and over Madagascar a few years since, violently affecting immense numbers of their populations; and some still closer points of resemblance can be traced in the revivals and "Twirling Glory's" of our own country.

After all, however, there is about the Hordle revival outbreak a constant, lofty, practical purpose cropping out of its seemingly ridiculous and weird mysteries, which, together with the abnormal power of endurance it confers, has puzzled men of deep thought and wide experience. The Rev. A. Clissold, an ordained clergyman, and, moreover, a Swedenborgian, and therefore more familiar with ecstatic spiritual phenomena, after watching them with almost persecuting

tenacity, acknowledges himself beaten. Mr. Auberger Herbert, another neighbour (a man of wide reputation as a powerful and unconventional thinker), cannot believe in the imposture theory, seeing that he is willing to give them anything they may require if they will but ask him for it—a severe test to people very often with empty bellies and an empty purse. Mr. Cowper Temple, "the son of Earl Cowper, nephew of Lord Melbourne, brother-in-law to the Earl of Shaftesbury, step-son of Lord Palmerston, and inheritor of his name and estates," can scarcely be a man likely to lend his interest to a set of "disgusting and blaspheming impostors." They must have fully secured his respect and his confidence in their moral qualities, if nothing more, before he would have permitted one of them to escort Mrs. Cowper Temple into dinner. And it was such as these whom the intelligent Christian people of the Island sought to wipe their feet upon.

Supreme as is the contempt in which the Shakers are held alike by the "Liberal" and the Conservative working-classes, and hated and scorned as they are by nearly all professing Christians, they present to us the much-needed, highly instructive example of a community of all ages and of both sexes holding their property in common; living together amicably, without jars or wrangling, under the noble principle embodied in their motto—"each for all and all for each;" bound together by bonds of attachment, seemingly of almost superhuman strength, supporting them under privations, which, to recount, would read more like extravagant fiction than actual human experiences.

In short, Shakerism seems veiled in deeper mystery than either mesmerism or Spiritualism. Its religious aspect is wholly beyond our apprehension, but the outcome which it presents—a party of industrious communists, cruelly deprived of their means of support, who avow their determination to starve, if need be, rather than become chained slaves to fill the coffers of the Mammonites—challenges our respect and admiration.

## DEATH-BED VISIONS OF CHRISTIANS.

(Abridged from "*The Christian Herald.*")

A MINISTER'S wife, upon whose brow there was already the cold perspiration of death, exclaimed, in a clear but unearthly tone of voice, "Oh, how dazzling! oh, how dazzling! oh, how dazzling! There are angels, angels, angels! Oh, the multitudes, the multitudes! And there is Jesus, whom I now see for the first time. Who are those arrayed in white? Oh, how dazzling! how dazzling! And there is a crown of glory for me, and a palm of victory! All for the sake of Jesus! All through the merits of my dear Redeemer! Oh, the angels! the angels! How dazzling! how dazzling! But it is dark; it is more than my eyes can bear." After a little time her beautiful spirit entered heaven.

A clergyman, dying in the south of England, said to those around him, "Oh, had I strength to speak, I could tell you such news as would rejoice your very soul. I have had such views of heaven." Here his efforts to say more were drowned in death.

"I see things unutterable," said another dying servant of God, Elizabeth Drinker, a Quakeress, when dying, seemed much supported above the last conflict, and with an animated countenance said—"Oh, the beauty! the excellent beauty! What a beautiful view I have of the hosts of heaven!"

Near Whitby, in Yorkshire, there lived a pious man, named Sinclair. He had a family of children, and it was his great concern, and unceasing prayer, that they might be saved. Christopher, his son, when but twelve years old, felt a strong inclination for a seafaring life. Accordingly, he served an apprenticeship under the master of a ship; but soon afterwards had some of his ribs dislocated, a misfortune from which he never recovered.

His father told him that there was no expectation of his being restored, yet they wished to ease him of his pain. "Pain!" said the young Christian, "I have no pain; I am all in a flame of love."

Early in the morning of the day on which he died, he said to his father, "This has been the happiest night I have ever had; and now the blessed morning has come in which I shall go to Jesus." When his speech failed he smiled, and looked up to heaven. He then took hold of his father's hand, looked upwards, and seemed as though he would point to some object. He tried to speak, but could only say, "Oh, see! see!" Suddenly his face shone, as if a divine ray of heavenly light rested upon him. This continued for more than five minutes, after which he exclaimed, "*I have seen Jesus and angels.*"

His uncle, who had been sent for, came in at the time, and to him the dying young saint said, "I have seen heaven—the angels—I can speak no more." The uncle felt that there was a presence in that chamber beyond mortal creatures. He knelt down, and whilst praying that a convoy of angels might carry the disembodied spirit to Paradise, the happy soul passed through death triumphant home. For some days afterwards his friends talked to each other of the sudden appearance of the heavenly beam of light which they recognised just before the young man died, and of the awe, yet peaceful feeling, they had of a gracious spiritual presence.

Not far from Wellingborough, the amiable daughter of a Christian woman was laid on her death-bed. Not long before her departure her mother was much distressed in mind, owing to the sufferings of her daughter. In a few moments she exclaimed, with an ecstasy of joy, "Mother, pray for my release. They are coming! they are coming! I shall soon be in heaven!" Her eyes caught a glimpse of the heavenly squadrons that welcome and guard the disembodied spirit to Paradise; and then, after one tender look at an affectionate mother, this youthful follower of Christ passed through death triumphant home.

"There is one come now," said a departing saint, near York, in 1852, alluding, it was supposed, to a guardian angel who was commissioned to escort his disembodied spirit to the better land. And in a few moments he exclaimed, in a holy ecstasy, "They are all here now! I am going now!" and then his spirit fled.

## MR. BLACKBURN'S SEANCES.

REMARKABLE PRODUCTION OF MATERIALISED SPIRIT HANDS UNDER TEST CONDITIONS.

BY EMILY KISLINGBURY.

ONE of the most satisfactory test *séances* it has ever been my good fortune to witness took place on Friday evening last, at 38, Great Russell-street, through the mediumship of Mr. W. Eglinton.

An inquirer who was present on the previous Friday had suggested that the medium's hands should be placed outside the curtain, in the light, and in full view of all present. This was done, as related by Mrs. Wiseman in your last number, the sleeves of Mr. Eglinton's coat being sewn at the wrists to the knees of his trousers. No hands were projected on that occasion, and the presiding intelligence explained that the test was an unusually severe one, as the substance with which the spirit hand is clothed in order to render it visible to ordinary mortal vision has to be abstracted from the hand of the medium, and that this exceedingly subtle chemical process is carried on with far more difficulty in the light, and under the eye of man, than in the still darkness of the closed cabinet.

This time, however, the spirit himself proposed that the same test should be tried again, as he was ambitious of accomplishing the feat; he further remarked that he and his medium were much indebted to the managers of these *séances* for allowing and encouraging new manifestations under strict test conditions; they were somewhat tedious to develop, but were of the greatest benefit to the cause.

The efforts were attended with success. Hands came out freely at the height of a foot or more above the medium's hands; also several times at the side of the curtain, to which facts Dr. Carter Blake, who sat nearest the corner of the cabinet, gives the following testimony:—

I certify that when Mr. Eglinton's hands were sewn to his knees, and in view of the circle, a naked right hand and arm, to above the elbow-joint, was seen by me through the crevice of the curtains; and that this hand, after ringing the "toy-gong," placed it in my own hand. The arm seemed to proceed from a body behind Mr. Eglinton, and his right hand sewn to his knee was seen by me and others at the same time.

C. CARTER BLAKE.

The toy-gong is a little instrument with a whistle at one end and something resembling a gong at the other, which a friend brought in just before the *séance* began. Mr. Eglinton was seen to make convulsive movements with his arms and legs during these proceedings, and was heard to breathe deeply, but his hands were never out of sight of the sitters; and the sewing, which had been done by Mr. Collingwood, and which must have been effectual, was found intact when the spirits ordered an interval for refreshment.

The second test was quite as satisfactory as the first, and altogether novel. Mr. Eglinton's coat-sleeves were sewn together, and to his coat behind his back; the coat was also sewn together in front near the throat, this time by Miss Collingwood, who was the greatest stranger present. The following attestation explains what took place, at the proposal of the spirit:—

We, the undersigned, entered the cabinet during the *séance* with Mr. Eglinton, and stood behind him during several minutes. In this period of time, according to the statement of the sitters outside, hands were seen, and several objects were moved about by these hands, which we certify were not those of the medium, since we satisfied ourselves on this point by keeping our hands on his shoulders during the occurrence of the phenomena.

C. FITZ-GERALD, 19, Cambridge-street, Hyde-park, W.

JOHN JAMES, Tottenham.

MARION COLLINGWOOD.

Miss Collingwood also placed her hands, by request, on Mr. Eglinton's head while the above was taking place.

The objects which were moved by the hand, or hands, were placed on the little stringed instrument known as the Oxford Chimes, which was laid inverted on Mr. Eglinton's knees. The strings of this were struck at times, and a book which was placed upon it was opened and shut repeatedly. Sometimes a hand was seen to touch the book; sometimes it appeared to open and shut alone. In any case, the hands were not Mr. Eglinton's hands, as is proved below:—

We, the undersigned, entered the cabinet in which Mr. Eglinton was seated, examined the sewing which secured the medium's hands behind his back, and found it intact. *Immediately before and after this exami-*

nation various phenomena occurred, and hands were exhibited at the aperture of the cabinet.

MARION COLLINGWOOD.

EMMELINE COLLINGWOOD.

The friends present at the *séance* were Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, Captain James, Mr. R. Pearee, Signor P. Pizzi, Mr. J. Sparrow, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. J. F. Collingwood, Miss E. Collingwood, Miss A. M. Collingwood, Dr. C. Carter Blake, Mr. D. Fitz-Gerald, on behalf of the *séance* committee of the National Association of Spiritualists, and myself. All concurred in the verdict of "quite satisfactory."

38, Great Russell-street, London, W.C.

## MR. BLACKBURN'S SEANCES.

MISS FOWLER UNDER STRICT TEST CONDITIONS.

BY C. CARTER BLAKE, D.D. SC.

ON Monday, the 12th June, the first *séance* held by Miss Lottie Fowler, at the rooms of the National Association of Spiritualists, took place. The circle consisted of Mr. C. C. Massey, Mr. A. J. Duffield, Mr. W. H. Coffin, Mr. J. F. Collingwood, F.G.S., Captain Rolleston, Mrs. D. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. H. J. Hood, Mrs. Lewis, Miss Kislingbury, Mr. Desmond G. Fitz-Gerald (representing the *séance* committee), and myself.

The medium was securely sewn both by her cuffs and sleeves, her hands being placed behind her back, and very elaborately tied by Mr. Coffin, with her head to the back of the chair, and separate knots at recorded distances marking intervals in the tapes which secured the limbs. She was then placed in the cabinet, so as to expose her knees and feet to view, and the curtains drawn over her face and thorax. In two minutes a strong convulsion of the knees took place, after which the conditions of light not being satisfactory to the medium, the shutters were closed. Raps were then heard, and the medium, who had complained that the knot round the neck was disagreeable to her, had the tape, though firmly tied, lengthened, and attached to a longer piece of tape passing from her neck through the window of the cabinet (where it was pinned), and the end of which was held by Mr. C. C. Massey. The medium then signified that there was some unpleasant influence in the circle, and after interrogation of each individual, it was agreed that a small feather pillow which was behind her back, and which caused her to exhibit great irritation, should be removed. One minute after this took place, the voice termed that of Pinkey was heard, the toy whistle blown, the bells rung at a higher level than that of the medium's head or hands, and the table, on which had been placed the tambourine and other objects, forcibly thrown to the middle of the room. Two gentlemen at once entered the cabinet, and satisfied themselves that the knots were intact, and that Miss Fowler was asleep. A pasteboard tube was then handed out from between the curtains, and taken by one of the circle, from whom it was snatched at the edge of the curtains by a force which pulled from above, *i.e.*, about a foot above the medium's head. An attempt was then made to produce some manifestation with the trumpet at the desire of Pinkey. Mr. W. H. Coffin, and Mr. Duffield, who was a stranger to these *séances*, then entered the cabinet with Miss Fowler. I received after the *séance* the following statement by Mr. Duffield:—

While outside the cabinet, I saw the curtain drawn aside and the medium sitting as she was placed, away from all contact with the curtain. Inside the cabinet I had one hand on the medium's knees, and my other, the left, on the arm of the medium's chair. My left hand, in response to a call from the medium, was touched, apparently, with a human finger. A second time I received two or three smart raps with the whole of a hand, and this was marked by a friendly touch. A third was a formal touch, as if in mere obedience to a call. I may say, that the second rap was distinctly heard, not only by myself, but by the medium and a gentleman who was also with me in the cabinet.

" (Signed)

A. J. DUFFIELD.

Mr. Coffin corroborates this verbally by adding that neither could the medium, nor did he, produce these touches.

It then being very late, and the atmosphere in the *séance* room being insupportable, it was suggested to Miss Fowler that the *séance* be terminated. To this she demurred with considerable vivacity. The book experiment was then made on her lap, and some of the company (including myself) were permitted one at a time, to be within six inches of the



medium, and to inspect the free motion of the cover and leaves of the book. Pinkey then expressed her willingness to show hands. A right hand, of a darker complexion, and much larger than Miss Fowler's, was projected apparently out of the right side of the medium, and in full sight for two minutes. Others saw more, and others less, but I restrict myself to my own personal observation.

On examination of the sewing and tying afterwards, all the knots and thread were found to be intact.

Although the atmospheric conditions were unfavourable to careful experiment, and the medium exhibited much irritation at the novelty of the surroundings, the *séance* held by Miss Fowler may be considered as a good commencement.

#### THE TESTIMONIAL TO MR. COLEMAN.

THE subscription list of the testimonial to Mr. Coleman is about to be closed, consequently those who wish to contribute towards this object are requested to send word at once to Mr. Alexander Calder, 1, Hereford-square, West Brompton, London. Attention has already been called in these pages to the unflinching way in which Mr. Coleman has publicly advocated the truths of Spiritualism in times of difficulty and of danger, when to do so involved more unpopularity and more abuse than is the case at present, for the movement is gradually gaining ground, and becoming even popular and fashionable, more especially in London. In these days of comparative prosperity, the advocacy of Mr. Coleman and others in times of difficulty should not be forgotten, consequently all who intend to recognise the work which he has done, should enrol their names at once amongst the contributors to the present testimonial.

#### A FIVE-MINUTES' RESOLUTION.

MR. ALGERNON JOY, late honorary secretary to the National Association of Spiritualists, has left London for Switzerland, and will return in a fortnight. The words "late honorary secretary" will take every reader of these pages by surprise. They will remember how, when the Association was first formed, when all kinds of difficulties were in its path, the honorary secretaryship was accepted by Mr. Joy, a gentleman of ability and experience, one who has travelled much, an accomplished linguist, and a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. At times he did all the heavy work of secretary without assistance, and afterwards he took control of a clerk paid by the Association; he also permitted the Association to have its letters addressed to his rooms, before it had offices of its own; he has further continuously watched over the interests of the Association at home and abroad. More recently, when the paid secretary has needed advice, the honorary secretary has been consulted, as usual under similar circumstances in all the numerous organisations possessing both a paid and an honorary secretary. At the Council meeting of the Association last Tuesday, when the election of officers for the year was taking place, a member rose and moved—to quote the exact words—"that the luxury of an honorary secretary be dispensed with;" this was seconded, and one of the arguments was that it was altogether without precedent that an organisation should have both an honorary and a paid secretary. This bold assertion was not denied, and seemed to be generally accepted. The facts are just the reverse. Nearly all efficient organisations for analogous purposes have both honorary and paid secretaries; such is the case with the British Association, with the Royal Institution, and with nearly, if not quite, every learned society in London. Somebody at the Council meeting next pointed out that there would be no necessity to abolish the office by resolution, if nobody proposed the election of an honorary secretary for the year; and on this understanding the motion was withdrawn. Thus the faithful and tried worker, Mr. Joy, has ceased to be one of the working officers of the British National Association of Spiritualists. All this was done without any previous notice, in less than five minutes, and a vote of thanks for past services was awarded to him, couched in about the same phraseology as would have been a vote of thanks to a person who had merely given the Association a five-shilling book. In this sudden action we believe the public interests of the National Association to have suffered. The post of honorary secretary having been once, rightly or wrongly, recognised by the Council, it was certainly contrary to the spirit, and perhaps, also, to the letter of the rules, to make such a great change in the constitution of the Association without the members of the Council and the public receiving the usual one month's notice of the important coming business. In the second place, the services of Mr. Joy have been so great that, had the Council not been taken by surprise, it would not only not have acted with a precipitancy unintentionally savouring of want of courtesy, but would probably have done something to specially denote the indebtedness it feels to Mr. Joy for what he has done. Indeed, if good reasons had been given why the post should be abolished, the last *soirée* of the Association might have been held in honour of Mr. Joy, to allow an opportunity for the expression of that gratitude to him which is so widely felt. Few gentlemen of his standing would have worked and committed their names to Spiritualism as he has done. During the coming autumnal vacation of the secretary, Mr. Joy, who lives in Great Russell-street, and helps her very much when required, would probably, as honorary secretary, have

been asked to perform her duties a few hours per day. Under present conditions we do not see who can and will then supply his place, without the public drawing invidious comparisons. Visitors from the Continent call with great frequency at the Rooms, and in place of Mr. Joy, who would receive them with his accustomed grace, and converse with them in their own languages, they may meet a well-meaning substitute who can respond to their queries only by shrug and grimace, and they will be obliged to leave the premises no wiser than when they entered. The question of the abolition of the honorary secretaryship ought not to have been sprung suddenly upon the Council, and carried in five minutes; the usual one month's notice should have been given, and if substantial reasons for the abolition were then brought forward, Mr. Joy should have been made to know the deep debt of gratitude to him felt both by the National Association and the Spiritualist movement at large. The Council might inquire whether the promoters of this line of action informed Mr. Joy of the steps they intended to take, or whether his office was also suddenly abolished without any previous consultation with him. Another effect of last Tuesday's action will be that if in the future the Association should desire, like other organisations of the kind, to appoint an honorary secretary, no gentleman of Mr. Joy's *calibre* will accept the office, but will point to the "five-minutes' resolution" of the past. A year ago, Mr. Joy several times resigned office, but the Council knew his assistance to be of such value that they would not hear of his leaving. If the sudden action of last Tuesday was legal, the whole of the Vice-Presidents may next year be struck off at five minutes' notice, without themselves or the 75 per cent. of absent members of the Council, being aware of the manoeuvre.

MR. BARKAS will lecture on Sunday next before the Newcastle Spiritual Society, subject: "The Mysterious in Nature."

MR. EGLINTON will leave London in a day or two for Somersetshire, and says he is prepared to enter into engagements to give *séances* in the West of England and South Wales.

DR. MONCK AT LEIGH.—"On Sunday last a *séance* was given by Dr. Monck at Leigh, Lancashire; there were present, besides some of the local Spiritualists, several gentlemen of high standing and repute in the town. The *séance* was in every way highly successful, and, I believe, will be the means of gaining some powerful friends and sympathisers for the cause in this district.—GEORGE F. FURNER, Brown-street, Leigh, Lancashire."

MRS. BURKE'S SPIRITUALISTIC ESTABLISHMENT.—Mrs. Burke has started a metropolitan boarding-house for Spiritualists at 8, Upper Bedford-place, Russell-square, and last Monday she gave a public reception to Spiritualists at that address, in order that they might see the establishment, and receive information as to its objects. In the course of the evening a short discussion about the use and prospects of the undertaking took place, under the presidency of Mr. Linton. The general expression of opinion was to the effect that the undertaking was calculated to meet a public want, and that not a few Spiritualists came to London who would rather go to a boarding-house frequented by Spiritualists only, than to a public or private hotel. It was further agreed that Mrs. Burke was well qualified in all respects to manage such an establishment as that which she had started. The friends separated at a late hour.

SPIRITUALISTIC SOIRÉE.—On Wednesday, last week, the closing monthly *soirée* for the session of the British National Association of Spiritualists took place at 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, London. There was a good attendance, and among the friends present were Baron Holmfeld, Mrs. George Neville, Mr. N. Fabyan Dawe, Mrs. St. Claire, and many others, too numerous to mention. In the course of the evening Mr. Algernon Joy and others made a few remarks about the boarding-house for Spiritualists which had just been established at 8, Upper Bedford-place, Russell-square, by Mrs. Burke. The speakers recommended it as a sensible undertaking, calculated to benefit Spiritualism, and worthy of all support. As usual at these *soirées*, there was not much public speaking, most of the time being devoted to friendly conversation and music, in which the Misses Withall, Miss Gillies, and Miss Sexton, were the chief performers.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.—On Thursday evening, last week, the monthly session of the Council of this Association was held at its Rooms, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, London, under the presidency of Mr. John Rouse. The other members present were:—Mrs. Corner, Mr. Jonathan Tozeland, and Mr. Thos. Blyton. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. Letters of general interest were read from Mr. Alex. Calder, Mr. S. C. Hall, F.S.A., Mr. Wm. Tebb, Mr. Wm. Oxley, Mr. F. Wayland-Smith, and Mr. James Burn; also some correspondence with Mr. John Nevil Maskelyne. Presentation books were laid upon the table, and accepted with a vote of thanks to the respective donors, viz., Mrs. Catherine Berry, Mr. M. Pardo, Mr. John Nevil Maskelyne, and Mr. F. Wayland-Smith. A letter was read from Mrs. Berry, enclosing a donation; Mrs. Berry was then unanimously elected a life member. Letters from Miss Anna Blackwell, and Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Everitt were read, accepting the invitations for honorary membership, and they were accordingly elected. A letter from Mr. Richard Pearce was read, offering to contribute a paper in July next on "Local Spiritualist Societies; What should be their objects, and how can they be best carried out?" It was resolved that Mr. Pearce be requested to submit the paper for acceptance to the next session of the Council. The hon. secretary reported arrangements for a "Narration of Experiences of Members and other Investigators," for Thursday evening, the 29th instant, on which occasion papers will be read by Mr. W. E. Bassett, Mr. R. Cocker, and others, to be followed by discussion thereon. The arrangements were approved. Instructions were given for drafting the half-yearly report, and Mr. John Rouse was appointed to act in conjunction with another member of the Association, to audit the accounts for the half-year ending the 30th instant.

## Correspondence.

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

## THE REINCARNATION DOCTRINE.

SIR,—In *The Spiritualist* of the 2nd of June, M. Damiani, of Naples, reproves my having compared (in *The Spiritualist* of the 12th of May) the faith of the Zulus in the transmigration of souls to the theory of the reincarnationists, and my having called both of these creeds "crude," but the latter more "absurd" than the other.

The distinction I made in the application of these terms may easily be justified. When a rude herdsman, in contemplating the fixed stars, declares them to be little lamps fixed in the lofty expanse, or, perhaps, little holes through which luminous beings shine forth, his belief certainly is both crude and absurd. But when a scientific contemplator of the starry heavens adheres to such views, we are justified in calling his views quite as crude, but more absurd than those of the simple herdsman. I think it a pity that men of so much natural refinement as are often met with among reincarnationists should adhere to opinions which are only corruptions of old and true religious doctrines, according to which those who leave this terrestrial abode either descend into an animal nature or ascend in the scale of spiritual progression, and that my opponents should substitute for the law of never-ceasing development one of physical remoulding into another individual. Spiritualism teaches the immortality of the internal spiritual man, who is and remains conscious of his personal individuality; the reincarnation doctrine destroys this faith in conscious immortality, and is worse than the wanton theory of successive evolution through sexual selection.

DIRCKINCK-HOLMFELD.

London, June 6th, 1876.

## THE GREAT NAMES ASSUMED BY CERTAIN SPIRITS.

SIR,—Permit me briefly to suggest a probable solution of the difficulty of your correspondent "D" on this important point, important because a right understanding of the matter would prevent many discouragements to those engaged in the study of spiritual phenomena on the intellectual plane.

I cannot do better than quote the following from the work of Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter on Spiritualism (p. 369), it being a portion of a spirit communication received through the mediumship of the latter gentleman.

After stating that various classes of spirits, impelled by varying motives, are able to commune through the channel now opened, the message goes on to say:—

"But many found this difficulty. Mankind had so long been in the habit of bowing to the authority of names, that neither mediums nor persons in the flesh communicating through them, were willing to receive communications unless they bore the sanction of some great or distinguished name, or some name which would of itself have influence upon medium or interrogator.

"How often have you yourselves seen, when a spirit has attempted to communicate, that the first question was, 'Who are you?' not 'What do you teach?' but, who are you? And how often have you seen when an unknown name has been given, that the spirit has been repelled, and not permitted to commune at all! Now, this has been observed in the spirit-world over and over again, and the knowledge of it extends all through and among those who have attempted to have communion. And those who have had either a name that was odious among men, or one obscure and unknown, have found that by this deep-seated propensity of man to worship the authority of name, they were to be entirely excluded from the privilege of intercourse if they attempted to do so in their own name. And this privilege, so much more highly prized by them than by you, they were to be deprived of by your perverseness, if they truly told you who they were. It is not strange, therefore, that very many, either from an over anxiety to commune, or from a careless disregard of what they deem a trivial falsehood, assume false names.

"Let it not be supposed, however, that all those who thus falsely assume great names intend to teach falsehood, or to make a statement in any other respect untrue. They perceive that the price they must pay for communing is this false personation, apparently harmless to them, for they cannot help asking themselves, why do men care so much more for name than for substance? But they intend in all things else to teach truthfully so far as they know.

"But there are some who, for mischievous purposes, assume a false character and teach false doctrine to deceive and mislead."

The above I believe to contain a complete key to the mystery your correspondent complains of. It is but too true that numbers of those who attend circles are constantly on the look-out for great personages, and in a feverish state of anxiety to hear from Plato or Socrates, or from "Adam" himself, or from some other individual celebrated in the annals of fame. The consequence is that the very atmosphere of the circle where such unreasonable people are, of itself invites deception, and even exerts so powerful an influence as almost to compel those spirits who come there to announce themselves as individuals famous when on earth for something or other.

But if John Jones, or William Smith, or some spirit who in earth-life bore an equally ordinary appellation, announced himself as desirous of communicating, he is too frequently given the cold shoulder, although he may have gems of wisdom to impart.

This is a great vice, which those who enter upon spiritual research should rid themselves of at the threshold. It exerts an influence so low as actually to repel from the circle those in the other world who are truly great, not by reason of their earth-names, but because of the wisdom they have attained, and which they would willingly impart if

welcomed in a right spirit. It was the kind of influence, I should say, which procured the absurd array of names that appeared in a communication from Italy, printed in the columns of a contemporary a few weeks ago (not vouched for, I was glad to see, by the editor), and which included a perfect string of Old and New Testament worthies, including Christ himself.

Our only safeguard is to cultivate a contrary spirit to that condemned. To be anxious, not for great names, but for great truths, without minding the source. And, to quote again from Judge Edmonds, "we have but one guide, but one protector against the errors which may mislead us. That guide is the free, unbiassed, candid exercise of our reason; that protector is purity of intention, holiness of thought, and a firm reliance upon the providence of God."

A. J. S.

Cardiff, South Wales, June 9th, 1876.

## THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN OF SPIRITUALISTS.

SIR,—Though I think the time is not yet ripe for putting into execution any plan for the education of the children of Spiritualists, I agree with you that it may be useful to discuss the various aspects of the question, and to elicit the opinions of those who have given time and thought to the subject, or who have had practical experience in the work, with a view to seeing how far an attempt to establish schools for Spiritualists may be practicable or desirable at some future time.

It is doubtless of great importance that Spiritualists should endeavour to save their children from spending the best years of life in learning lessons which it may take the remaining portion of that life to unlearn. It is also natural that they, having on the whole arrived at a belief in the falseness of existing religious systems and schools of thought, should make strenuous efforts to prevent their children from acquiring the habit of assenting with their lips to that which heart and reason alike reject, or from having their minds warped by the theological views of any particular teacher.

But there is less danger of this taking place in our best educational establishments, since the public debates on the enacting of the School Board Acts have paved the way for the separation of secular from religious instruction; and unless Spiritualists were to determine that the school teaching of their children shall be confined to secular subjects, they would have to encounter the far greater dangers of denominationalism and sectarianism, found to be always in greater force where those holding peculiar religious views are educated apart from the rest of the world.

But supposing all religious teaching to be set on one side, the chief object in establishing schools for Spiritualists would be to introduce an improved curriculum of studies, in which, as you rightly say, natural philosophy should take the first, instead of, as at present in our public schools, the last place, and to insist on a system of objective teaching, the aim of which is to train the observing powers and to exercise the mind, to excite thought rather than to encumber the memory, and to send children from school with "a wish for knowledge and the power of acquiring it," instead of with a dislike for study, and a lack of any method of self-instruction.

Those, however, who have watched the progress of reform in education during the last ten years, will know that a great improvement has been effected in this respect, and of late more particularly in the high schools for girls, now being opened in various parts of the United Kingdom under the auspices of the Women's Education Union, and the able advocacy of Mrs. William Grey, the late Professor Payne, Sir James Kay Shuttleworth, and others. Two principles in particular are recognised in these schools—thoroughness in work, and the necessity for home influence. That is to say, the subjects of study are few, the teachers must be duly certificated and approved by the Council of the Union, and the schools are *day schools only*. There is a class for religious instruction, but a conscience clause is admitted. I quote those schools in particular, because they have come under my own personal knowledge; but we know that the reform movement in education has worked in other directions, especially since the impetus given to it by the revelations of the Endowed Schools Commissioners. Enormous sums of money are already being expended in providing cheap and improved methods of education, and in placing them within the reach of the less wealthy portion of the community. The simplest elements of science or art, and even the most elementary subjects of study, can only be properly taught by highly-educated professors and well-trained teachers, and such teaching is, as it ought to be, excessively costly. The question with Spiritualists is, therefore, whether they will avail themselves of the great educational advantages already existing, with some attendant evils, or whether they are able to create a radically improved system of their own, without the assistance of endowments.

If the latter plan should appear to be practicable, I shall have a great deal more to say on the subject, but for the present I will only add a few remarks on what I think should be the principal and immediate aim in view.

All Spiritualists are, I believe, agreed that they hold one fundamental truth, that a large proportion, and that the most thinking portion, of the world is fast losing from its grasp. But they should be determined so to train their children that this truth be not represented in an age of culture by a race of men and women who are in any respect below the highest standard of their age. Spiritualism presents problems with which only the keenest, most unprejudiced, and best trained intellects are fit to deal; minds trained to accurate observation, to careful comparison, to strict reasoning, possessed of a knowledge of words and things, able to distinguish between the domain of the senses and that of the imagination. The education that is the best means to this end is that which Spiritualists should desire to procure for their children. I should say that the movement is not yet sufficiently strong in numbers and in material resources for the successful accomplishment of such a task, and that any attempt in that direction at present would suffer from

too great an admixture of denominational mediocrity. But I may be mistaken, and I should be glad to hear the opinions of others on the subject.

E. KISLINGBURY.

FURTHER REMARKABLE SEANCES IN MANCHESTER.

SIR,—The recording of new facts begins to be painful to me, as I find that many important or at least interesting items have to be ignored for want of space, in the face of increasing contributions from other quarters; but this is highly salutary and gratifying to the cause at large, it being due to the swelling accumulation of valuable facts at the doors of *The Spiritualist*. Being thus compelled to pick out of my rich basket of facts, I may be permitted to place before the readers some incidents which demonstrate the coming to close quarters of modern Spiritualism with its antagonist, modern Materialism, the ugly paws of the latter occasionally cutting through their glacé gloves, and presenting long nails invitingly to our scissors.

The most startling manifestation I have to relate requires a little introduction by way of explanation. When I contemplated inducing our gifted medium to come here, a gentleman of great medial power, but one rather afraid of public opinion, encouraged me by his expressed intention to aid me in carrying out the plan in a manner which would reduce the material sacrifice considerably. I formed a circle, and the decided signs of power apparent soon after the arrival of our sadly-troubled medium, left nothing but fair hopes. As the first sitting with the new circle was very poor, and some weak trifles occurred only near the medium, the easily-excited suspicion of my friend was set in full blaze, and the other members caught sparks of it. The same gentleman long ago creditably apologised in my presence to this medium, after his accusation was proved a freak of the imagination; and it may be noted here, as an important psychological observation, that true Spiritualists rest their assertions on crucially tested evidence, whilst sceptics impose upon us by sheer imagination. Of course the circle was broken up, but one young gentleman followed my advice, and sat alone with his brother; he obtained some manifestations, but did not come again. Several weeks ago, I heard from another gentleman of the first circle that there had been a suspicious discovery, and that the young man just mentioned intended to call upon me to explain. I lost no time, and soon met my sceptic, who agreed to a rendezvous at the medium's house to bring matters to a point. Accordingly he came, and scarcely had we begun to converse before knocks at the door were heard, and, without waiting for "Come in," were followed by Dr. Monck's agitated entrance. "What do you want me for?" he said, excitedly. "Bertie [our controlling spirit] told me to come. Here's something wrong!" No clue whatever could have reached him from us in this matter; he lived at the other end of the town, and no time had elapsed to give him any possible chance of hearing of the rendezvous; he was, further, altogether disconnected from this party. I confessed my astonishment, and said that it was true there was something amiss. He sat down somewhat perplexed, and was told of the suspicious circumstance of a small bundle of working material, pieces of linen, &c., having dropped from his pocket, and showed at the bottom of the curtain. In the end, ample fair apology was offered by the troubled sceptic; and Dr. Monck, or his controlling spirit, or both, concluded with a remark which ought to be, in golden letters, put constantly before investigators: "*If there is cause for suspicion, sift and settle it on the spot, or not at all! don't carry it about.*"

The next grand fact in my list is the sudden appearance of a white form from under the table between Dr. Monck and my medium, whilst we had dinner in my room; both their eyes were fixed in surprise on the same form, which I saw with unmistakable distinctness, though but for a moment. There had previously been violent rockings of the table, on which all our hands were visible.

Shortly after this Alfred Firman arrived from Paris, and spent a few days with me; but although he had been advised not to sit as medium himself for *séances*, his presence as one of the circle added greatly to the power. On Saturday, May 27th, we enjoyed a Turkish bath, and, whilst resting on our cooling coach, the chatty "raps" seemed to symbolise the invigorating effect of the operations. We went home to tea, but it was not ready, and the time for *séance* was close at hand. This was the first harsh crossing of our hopes; and, on arriving at the medium's house, another impediment taxed our patience. A visitor waited to see Mr. Firman, and some time elapsed before we sat down. After a few manifestations of the ordinary kind, there were loud knocks at the door, followed by the hasty entrance and entrancement of Dr. Monck, who, after declaring that he had been "forced" to attend against his inclination, at once sat down, controlled by "Sam," who greeted us in his rough voice, this time a herald of rough manifestations. In the dark I felt my left hand drawn up by a large hand, so that I had to stand on tip-toe, then, high in the air, it drew mine over a face with hair, and down along a bare arm, then gently returned my hand to its former place. The sensation of feeling the face and arm high above me when on tip-toe was new and impressive. Now began a noise as of the shuffling of furniture, the table bent into my lap and back again, something hard touched my face, it remained there, and I asked for light. A sight now presented itself which I never shall forget. The heavy, clumsy, long sofa was on the table, Alfred Firman lying in full length on it, my friend to the left on the floor in a trance, *all the things* in the room shifted or heaped about—a strange sight—and done, I guess, in about half a minute! I did not half like the task of rearranging the furniture, so we put the light out almost mechanically, leaving matters to take their own course. In a "wink" of time "light" was signalled, and everything was arranged pretty much as before the *séance*. The effect was like magic. Sam shouted out, "Here are demoniacal spirits. Mrs. —, and I have to leave the room for a time to harmonise." Later on I blew up Sam, as the controlling spirit calls himself, for making such a havoc. "Well, my boy," he replied, "we want to show

how we can upset the proud pretensions of materialism by displays of our power. There's a meaning in all we do, however silly it may seem." I replied that I knew the facts sufficiently, and enjoyed them only when I had a couple of conceited professors by my side, to have some fun out of them afterwards by asking them for explanations, and their explanations were the only miracles left for me in the business. "You shall have more yet," he laughingly concluded.

After striking a match, Sam invited me to come to him in the corner of the room: then, flinging the arms of his medium round me, and asking me to likewise take hold of him, he said: "Now we will have a ride through space, my friend. Put out the light!" he shouted, quickly. "This is rather new work," I thought: and I was overtaken by a sensation which robbed me instantly of my consciousness, just as *I felt myself leaving the ground without the slightest effort on the part of the medium*, for the moving by him of my heavy weight (above sixteen stone) would certainly have required perceptible pressure. There was nothing of the kind; and, after I felt myself again returning to consciousness, I tried to touch the ceiling, but without result, and I stood on my legs again. A light was then struck, and I felt perfectly flabbergasted at finding myself at the *opposite* end of the room. I have no clear recollection of the mysterious transport, further than leaving the ground and finding myself above six yards from the starting point.

At the next *séance*, after some ordinary cabinet manifestations, we were ordered to lower the light a little for a new exhibition of power. The table stood close in front of the curtain, and the three spectators seated opposite—Mrs. — on my left, a gentleman friend on my right. Dr. Monck and Mr. Firman were in the cabinet. The table had a stout pillar branching out widely, and our knees under the table, thus leaving very little free space under it, as I found afterwards, on careful examination. This is important in relation to what I have to state now. "Sam" particularly asked us to keep up lively singing to set a-going the waves of power. Bertie's head appeared at the aperture of the cabinet, and—I hardly dare to task the credulity even of the experienced—shot up from under the table close to me, between me and the gentleman! Then it appeared at the cabinet aperture again, then at the side of the curtains, so that we did not know where to look; and about four times it shot up near me. The last time I saw the crown and cross plainly, and the latter clicked on touching the edge of the table when sliding back. Remembering the sudden appearance of the form in a similar manner at dinner, as already mentioned, both facts kill all chance of explaining the phenomena away. Nevertheless, I went afterwards (next day) to measure out a possible free passage under the table, but was profoundly beaten in my attempt to leave a little morsel for the greedy sceptic, whom I always fondly remember in my spiritual meals. He must snuffle in other directions.

This was followed by what I may not improperly call a *fête* of the spirits present. The light was put out, and Sam's rough voice changed from his usual humorous tone to one of sincere, profound solemnity, addressing us in phrases which commanded our concentrated attention. He alluded to the great struggle of the new truth, in so simple and manly a manner, that his sermon seemed indeed to come from his innermost soul. He then turned his words to me, and entreated me, as a faithful worker (I blush to repeat the exact expression), to hold out in my task, for victory must come. "Will you do this?" he concluded, with apparent emotion. "Then come, ye angels, touch his brow, rejoice with us." I felt hands patting my brow, saw lights dancing in numbers before me; and, without attempting to describe the impression produced on us by this strange scene, I only mention that I keep, as a rule, myself and my reflections pretty cool amid any phenomena, and particularly when advice is given from the other side which seems to cross my path of practical life here. I try also to set myself up, and openly protest, if there's a conflict with reason. But now I found myself completely given over to the force of affection—the children of my own thoughts were hushed to approach a host of angels greeting me in irresistible sympathy. It was only a moment that I thus felt lifted out of earthly thought, and I afterwards thought myself a brute to have slipped back so quickly to the normal state of practical philosophy. But still I know we live in an exceptionally materialistic age, and feel happy and satisfied to be on the way to get out of it *anyhow*. The "Amens" responded from many voices after the spirit's final blessing died away, when the mediums were heard waking from the trance. Whether we turned on the gas too quickly, or an exceptional state of stupor of the mediums had been produced, I do not know, but both of them, after some fumbling steps with staring eyes, dropped down like dead instruments and fainted away, but soon recovered.

CHRISTIAN REIMERS.

2, Ducie Avenue, Manchester.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES, INCLUDING ONE FROM THE SPIRIT OF A KING.

SIR,—Your readers have already had six communications in perfectly classic Latin from Publius Syrus, received by me through Mme. R—, a lady who knows no other language than her own. I have received a *seventh*, commencing, "*Meliores lacrymas,*" and ending with "*Omni homini tollit mors suas.*" But there was in this one something so personal that I do not publish it. Only one point may be worth mentioning, which is of some interest as evidence how erroneous is the notion of some critics, that the origin of these remarkable communications is to be sought for in some Carpenterian "unconscious cerebration"—that they are, in some incomprehensible fashion, emanations, reflections, from my own brain—that I have either remembered them (though never having before read a page of Publius Syrus); or composed them, in perfect Latinity and in the peculiar condensed style of that author (without the slightest idea of what something inside of me was doing); or, when they had been first given in French, followed by

a paraphrastic version in Latin, by way of translation—which was no translation—that that was an unconscious intellectual operation of mine, sent first from my brain to the communicating “intelligence,” and then by it retransmitted to me through the intervening agency of the medium, ignorant as the babe unborn of any other Latin but perhaps the “*Pater noster*,” “*Ave Maria*,” “*Dominus vobiscum*,” and “*In Saecula Saeculorum*” of her missal. Now, in this seventh communication from Publius Syrus there arose a positive antagonism between his intelligence and mine. I could not make out his meaning. The obscurity grew mainly out of one word, the *meliores*. I supposed it to be a mistake, and, returning again and again to it, I asked him to change it. He persisted that it was right, in spite of my inability to make intelligible sense out of it. I thought of more than one word (such as *amaras*) which, substituted for the objectionable word, will make it intelligible; and I made the medium strike it out, and begged the spirit to give again some other in its place. But again he repeated the word I had struck out; so that I was forced to submit, while still protesting that it remained very obscure to me. I had supposed that to be the whole of the intended communication, but the spirit went on to a second half to the sentence, which made the meaning less incomprehensible, and then proceeded to give in French an exposition of the meaning he attached to the word which had been my stumbling-block; making the whole clear, though having a personal bearing I had not suspected. And he wound up by telling me to search well, and that I would find he had before employed the word in a similar way. This may seem a small point—that of a word—but it has its importance, as being conclusive that these communications are in no sense subjective in their origin, in no respect thought readings, or unconscious reflections from my mind.

The complete list of these communications of Publius Syrus, thus far, stands as follows:—

1. *Pecunia est ancilla, si scis uti; si nescis domina est.* (See his *Trochaics*.)
2. *Quos vult perdere Jupiter dementat.*
3. *Lux, lux veritatis! Quid semper fugis? Sequimur, invocamus, sed semper passus nostri voluntarii torquent viam.*
4. *Veritas recta brevis Deus.*
5. *Veritas ensis.*
6. *Oportat quod omni magne nationi prepositus sit magnanimus. Turba, que rupem petere debet, rupem diripit.*
7. *Meliores lachrymas, &c.* (Suppressed on account of personality of application.)

I have no doubt I could have had many more, if circumstances had allowed me to intrude oftener upon Mme. R—: I hope and expect hereafter to have many more. He seems always ready to come to my request. But it is slow and mechanical work for Mme. R— to spell out unknown words by means of a table tilting to the letters of the alphabet.

Only one possible ground for cavil against the genuineness of these Publius Syrus communications now remained, to that obstinate incredulity which will suppose anything, however unreasonable and however false, rather than “give in to spirits,” namely, the supposition that Mme. R— might possibly be a concealed consummate Latinist, familiar with the writings and style of thought and expression of Publius Syrus (who was a fragmentary author, now very little known, though highly esteemed for his wisdom, wit, and austere morality). She might possibly be an ingenious impostor, mischievously humbugging me and the public, through Latin sentences of her own composition doled out to me letter by letter; Absurd as would be that presumption to those who have the honour of knowing this lady, wishing to make the case of demonstration complete, I called on her husband and herself (a gentleman occupying a high position at the head of an important railway administration), and frankly, while politely, stated the point. Without taking offence, but on the contrary taking it reasonably and in good part, they told me that she had given communications in most of the modern languages, and in some oriental ones, Hebrew, and the language in which the ancient Cabalistic book, the *Zoar*, was written (which I did not know, though some of your readers may). I wanted names and addresses for verification, to satisfy outside incredulity. This could not be granted without permission from the parties, who might not choose to be publicly referred to or known, though they did confide to me the name of a lady of high rank, whose son I know, who had received a long communication in Danish. “But,” he added, “you can satisfy yourself, by coming and trying through such other languages as you may know, to receive communications from spirits cognisant of those languages.” “If I bring a Chinese, or a Japanese, or a Hebrew?” “You will probably receive communications in those languages, but I cannot vouch for it; it depends on the conditions and persons, but if you get the alphabet even of any language unknown to you, you can try for yourself, by calling over the letters, and you will see what will come of it. If any spirits knowing those languages are willing to come, in response to your wish, they will probably give you what you want.”

Out of this grew that I went to Mme. R— to make the trial in two languages with which I was familiar, Portuguese and Spanish (I had not yet caught a “heathen Chinese,” but thought I could get a Japanese, and also projected a trial in Greek, Dutch, and Magyar). Spanish she might possibly be supposed to know; Portuguese she could not, for who, outside of Portugal and Brazil, knows Portuguese, though it is the language of Camoens? Well, my mother first responds to my inquiry whether there is any spirit present who will communicate with me. I say, “There is no time now to communicate with you, but can you bring here two spirits now in my thought and desire?” In a few moments it is announced that they are there. I ask the first, “Are you really the spirit of the friend I wish to communicate with—in his own language—of the earth life?”—“Yes.” “Then please give your name?”—“Pedro V.” This was indeed the friend I meant,—the late King of Portugal, brother of the present reigning King,

and son of the late King Regent, his Majesty Don Fernando. Very friendly relations, personal and official, had existed between us during several years of a residence at his court as Minister of the United States. He was a sweet and noble character; simple, modest, and personally humble; of high culture, almost super-educated; enthusiastic for the discharge of the duties of his position; an indefatigable student and worker, who worked hard in person (too hard it used to be said) on every law his government had to propose or sanction; of nature truly lovely, and truly beloved by all about him. I witnessed nearly the whole population of Lisbon literally weeping as it crowded the streets along which passed his funeral procession—he still a mere youth of 22 or 23. He was an object of great personal interest to all the diplomatic corps. I could relate a fine incident of his brief life, if there were space and time, and if it were pertinent to the occasion. “Well, dear spirit, dear sire, to use again the title by which you were addressed on earth, it gives me great pleasure thus to communicate with you once more. You know the special purpose for which I have asked you to come. I beg you to give me something, however short, in Portuguese.” Then came, through the alphabet, the following:—“*A lei minha oportuna sobre os trabalhos publicos ficará o meu monumento.*” (My opportune law on public works will remain my monument). That was enough in regard to the language; and I suggested that if he desired to say more he could now do it quicker in French, a language which he spoke as well as his own. Mme. R— then wrote with her usual rapidity:—“*Lorsqu'un roi est appelé par Dieu à gouverner un peuple, il doit s'appliquer à le rendre heureux; sinon, la couronne pèsera sur sa tête dans la vie terrestre, et son souvenir sur sa conscience durant la vie éternelle. Puissent les rois de la terre ne jamais malmenner les troupeaux que Dieu leur a confiés. Puissent les peuples les aimer et les vénérer comme des pères indulgents et bons. Mais malheureusement la tyrannie a trop souvent envahi le trône et la puissance. Aussi les rois tendent-ils à disparaître; et les peuples plus avancés trouveront-ils en eux la force et la sagesse de se gouverner? Mais ne la force ni la sagesse ne seront avec eux s'ils n'ont la foi et la religion de cœur, sans laquelle l'homme ne peut faire son salut ici-bas, son bonheur là-haut.*”

“Un bon souvenir je vous donne, pour vous qui êtes un fidèle ami, et dans mes prières votre nom désormais sera mêlé aux noms si chers des bien-aimés qui me pleurent encore.” (When a king is called by God to the government of a people, he should apply himself to make that people happy; otherwise the crown will weigh heavy on his head during his earth life, and its memory on his conscience through the life eternal. May the kings of the earth never misguide (or maltreat) the flocks which God has confided to them. May the peoples love and venerate them as indulgent and good fathers. But unhappily tyranny has too often invaded the throne and power, and kings are tending to disappear. Will the more advanced peoples find in themselves the force and the wisdom to govern themselves? For neither force nor wisdom will be with them if they have not faith and the religion of the heart, without which man can neither work out his salvation here below nor his happiness there on high. A kind remembrance I give you, for you who are a faithful friend; and in my prayers henceforth your name will be mingled with the names which are so dear, of the beloved ones who mourn me still).

I have thought it proper to present this in the original French as well as in translation, for probably not a few besides your regular English-speaking public will read this remarkable communication from the spirit of a king.\* Those who knew him well, or much about him, will be struck with it as curiously characteristic. There is something of the king about it still, and this will not surprise the experienced Spiritualist. But at the same time it is the king—liberal, enlightened, and philosophical, while prudent and conservative. Note, too, how plain he makes his meaning, that the “faith” and “religion” he speaks of are not dogmatic, theological “faith” and “religion,” they are those of “the heart” (and the words “*de cœur*” were an interlineation added after he had proceeded a little further, as though for the purpose of guarding against misconception). And “salvation” is not used as the technical term of theology; it is salvation (*salut*) “here below;” for the hereafter he says “happiness.” Theology would be apt to reverse those terms. He evidently means that esoteric religion which is independent of forms and formulas, and which has sustained many a martyr at the stake kindled by ecclesiastical intolerance. A few more phrases were interchanged of a personal nature, in part referring to his wife (a sister of Prince Leopold, of Hohenzollern), who wore her earthly crown for only a single bright year, and who was one of the very loveliest young creatures that were ever nearly as angelic in the flesh as they could afterwards become in the spirit. I asked if he wished to send any messages to his family; he answered, “Not now, that it was not *d'occasion*.” I told him I would seek to communicate with him again before quitting Paris, to which he assented.

The other friend in the spirit world, who was waiting through all this, was General Lopez, who was executed in Havana in 1850 or 1851, for the crime of failure in the attempt to do for the Cubans what they have now been fighting to do for themselves for the past seven years, of a struggle almost miraculous, against the utmost power of Spain, localised in a narrow island. An attached intimacy had existed between us. I began by asking for his name. “NARCISO LOPEZ.” I said some things to which “yes,” by the three tilts of the table, was the sufficient answer; and then begged him to say something to me in Spanish, after explaining to him the purpose for which I wished it. “*Para que yo responda preciso es que tu me hagas cuestiones*” (That I may answer, it,

\* I declare on my own honour that my mind was a perfect blank as to what he might say. It anticipated nothing, thought nothing, being fixed only on the experiment of getting something, a few words, in Portuguese, as a language test for the purpose above explained. Nor had I, nor have I, any recollection of any particular law of which the merit was specially associated with his name.

is necessary that you should put questions to me). My object was now sufficiently attained. Several other visitors in the next room were waiting their turns. So I told him I would come another day, but before going, asked him whether, after his sad end on earth, he was now happy. "Yes," was the reply, but without much strength of emphasis. "Happy, yes," remarked Mme. R—, "but not so much so as the former spirit." The Cuban patriot rebel general was a good and kind man, as well as desperately brave, but not one whom I should expect to be so highly advanced in the spirit life as the young king, who, wholly apart from his rank, was really extraordinary.

I will only add that Mme. R— had no knowledge beforehand as to who were the friends I wished to converse with, nor as to the languages. I told her I hoped soon to bring to her gentlemen from Japan, Hungary, and Holland, and that she would indeed be a wonderful polyglot if she knew those languages as well as Portuguese and Spanish, besides that of Publius Syrus. She was quite willing, and thought it probable they would succeed, provided they came in a good and candid spirit.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

Paris, June 7th.

#### A SPIRITUALISTIC SERMON.

THE following extracts from a sermon recently delivered by the Rev. Thomas Colley, at St. Mary's, Portsmouth, deal with the subjects of the education of children and the inspiration of true religious teachers. The speaker took for his text—"Then said I, Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee shalt thou speak."

In the course of his remarks, Mr. Colley said:—"It is comforting to know that God can make straight strokes with crooked sticks; for there are so many of the latter, that fair dealing, and level conduct, and straightforwardness had else been vastly more exceptional than is the case. The skill of a workman is best seen when great results are hewn from hopeless circumstances by indifferent tools. And when the means to the end are inadequate, and the cause of the effect to all appearances insignificant and mean, we may know that there is an inspiring element unseen, that works the one and shapes the other; 'for there's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will.' And it is this divinity that glorifies the common things of life; it is this divinity that strengthens the weak things of earth; it is this divinity that quickens dying hopes, and endues finite efforts with infinite importance, and makes the contemptible and little esteemed potent for very much that we reckon not of. Let us, therefore, have a care that we despise not the day of small things, 'for God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.' Who would have thought that the coral insect was the founder of continents; that the wing of a gnat contributes to purify the air; that a dew-drop, trembling on the petal of a daisy, kissed by the sun to vapour, swells the storm-clouds and adds to their power?"

"The child is father of the man, and, in patience, we should study life in the bud, that we may have prophetic discernment of the flower, and encourage it in its development. The pulse of the ages throbs in the young, and the vital force of the centuries is stored in the heart-beat of our children, and God and good angels mark them special favourites. 'Their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven.' But one, forgetful of these things, in the plenitude of adult folly, once made that universal abstract substantive conspicuous in himself, by hypercritically asking the question and saying, with sublime cynicism, 'What's the use of a baby?' Now, we may not be such profound catechists as to expose ourselves in like manner, but I fear that too many of us act the question, though we don't ask it. Who has not seen the supercilious look that some are gifted with when meritorious youth shows itself, and crabbed age thinks its province for wisdom and experience is invaded, and that its special function for the oracular is endangered by some old head on young shoulders? In knowledge, the youngest of us ought to be the oldest; for it is the heritage of the latest generation to profit by the blunders of the preceding. The experience of the past becomes the wealth of the present; the theory of yesterday is the practice of to-day; and our children with these advantages, younger in years, should be older than their parents in the sense indicated, and, therefore, are not to be sneered down on the score of their youth. But do not mistake me, I am no advocate for pert ways and small conceits on the part of beardless youth against ancient, grave, and reverend signiors. And greatly do I reprehend the undutiful conduct of boarding-school misses who vote their mothers slow in language or dress, and think a butterfly life of rinking, and pet-dog-nursing, croquet and novel-reading more becoming and lady-like than the smallest acquaintance with the household duties of English homes. The young gentleman whose great ambition is to colour his meerschaum and smoke cigarettes, and the young lady whose devotion is to mere outward adornment, 'the plaiting of the hair, and putting on of apparel,' not 'clothed with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price,' is defective in head, and unsound in heart, and behind the true age, and simply a re-issue in both cases of the Red Indian, and a bad edition of him, and his squaw, and pipe, and feathers, and paint. Sound training, and real education, worthy of the name, should be to draw out the good, and make youth modest and truly wise.

"The inspiration of loftier powers reaches the pulpit, *via* the pews, for the secret of moving and successful oratory consists in getting from your audience in vapour what you give back in a shower. That is, you get their prayers, and their interest and their kindly influence, and

personal friendly wishes, and so you mould their best thoughts to utterance, and speak their unspoken words. This is oftener the case than we think, and bad sermons are frequently more the fault of the pews than of the pulpit. A church congregation is a battery of spiritual forces, each human soul a magnet, and the power given off by you that touches us and quickens us as we speak is tremendous—for we, the occupants of this which some of you think the coign of vantage (too often to your disadvantage) feel the exhaustive effort as we speak, which seems to you no effort, for it appears so easy to preach; and so, perhaps it is to preach, but to teach!

"It is no easy matter to prepare thoughtfully and carefully portions of spiritual food for a mixed congregation, diverse in taste, and modes of thought, and capacity for reception. Then there are shifty opinions current in the world, and new thoughts on old subjects, and old thoughts in conflict with new facts; the removal of ancient landmarks, and the extension of common rights upon the domain of what was considered sacred and select; the unmooring of vast interests from relative events, and the general change of circumstances, and transition of things, and development of the venerable, antiquated, and time-worn to new and larger issues—all these necessitate very imperatively the utmost prudence, patience, investigation, prescience, and forecast on part of a public teacher. For if the pulpit thinks to repose on the old laurels of past usefulness and the good-natured respect and indulgence given it now on score of custom; if it rest content to give but echoes of the past, and willet not to probe the future and grapple with the burning questions of the present; if satisfied with sacerdotal folly, or pharasaic maudlin twaddle, it will not pioneer the way for the people to a higher, holier, better plan of life, and thought, and action; if it will not advance with the times and cease to oppose the movements that it ought to guide, then its influence will rightly and speedily end, and its power vanish and fail. This is the pulpit's work and mine, if I am its rightful occupant. 'Thou shalt go to all that I send thee,' saith the Lord. Not that I would by any means claim an especial share in the applicability of these words above the least among you. Strongly as I repudiate priestly assumption, I do as strongly, in my sense, lay claim to the heritage each man possesses, latent or developed, of prophetic power—not the forecasting of events to come by any means, or authoritatively declaring what shall be; but in the free denunciation of what is wrong, and intuition of what is right, and stern inflexibility to bend to no man's humour, or mince matters, or bleat a cowering truth with craven heart in a minor key, I do say that if not a prophet, it has been, and as God gives me power, will still be mine to speak as one. The priest is out of date, but the prophet, long and urgently needed, has yet a part to play in the councils of humanity. His words of truest inspiration have yet to roll in thunder-tones through the nations and wake the echoes of the golden past, and set the iron present, and the silver and the golden ages yet to come reverberating with the harmony of angels (once more in companionship with man), borrowed from the melody of heaven. It is the prophet's work and the teacher's, for the two are one, to listen for the voice of God in the perfume of flowers, and the hum of bees; in the rush of the cataract and the impact of war; in the clang of the foundry, and the noise of the streets, and the roar of vast cities. It is the prophet's work to read God's commands in the stones, and the brooks, and the trees, and scan His high will in the stars; and what he learns 'tis his to speak. So may it ever be the preacher's, worthy of the high work, first to know and then teach; see and then set forth; investigate and then declare; pick up and polish as best he may, and so present; sift and prepare; listen and ponder, hear and then speak; and may God inspire the aim, and suggest the process, and still bless the result."

DISCUSSIONS have sometimes taken place in these pages, on the influence of an exclusively vegetable diet upon mediums and other persons. The publications of the Vegetarian Society give information upon one side of this question; they are published at 91, Oxford-street, Manchester. We know many persons who have tasted no animal food for years, yet are in excellent health, so vegetarianism agrees with some constitutions.

SEANCE AT DALSTON.—Baron Dirckinck Holmfeld writes:—"I was at a *séance* in the rooms of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism on Thursday, June 7th. During the first part of the sitting Mr. Rouse, the medium, evidently controlled by a spirit, was much agitated; he appeared to be in a violent mesmeric trance, until the controlling spirit succeeded in reducing the number of those who were sitting at the table, and in giving the proper place to each of them. The spirit (an old British sailor) then spoke in his own words to those present, the medium being in an unconscious state. He complained repeatedly of the difficulty of communicating, from the crowded state of the room, and strenuously advised the members to make a harmonious selection of sitters not exceeding six. He then specially addressed Mrs. Corner, who before the *séance* had had a lively discussion with myself, and the spirit told her that in the spiritual sphere in which he lived no vestiges were found of reincarnation. He was sure that whenever she met a reliable spirit, in whom she could place confidence, she herself would detect that he was the same person who had left the natural world, and who consequently would not admit reincarnation. Mrs. Corner then remarked that there nevertheless had been spirits who admitted reincarnation. The spirit replied that sundry spirits had the tendency to speak in accordance with the ideas of the inquirers. She ought to be satisfied, whenever she met a spirit like himself, that she had to do with a being not reincarnated. Lastly, the spirit complained of mediums who were unmanageable, and would not receive the good advice of their guardians, and thus frustrated the intentions of a beneficial control. I believe many more good things were said, but being a foreigner I could not catch all of them."

## A CONFERENCE AT NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

ON Sunday morning last, about seventy Spiritualists from various parts of Northumberland and Durham met at Weir's-court, in the Freemasons' Old Hall, Newcastle, in response to the invitation issued by the Newcastle Society of Spiritualists, and Mr. J. J. Morse was unanimously voted to the chair.

Mr. Morse said that he appreciated the position he was then placed in, and that the object they had in view that morning was to give an account of the condition of Spiritualism in each of their respective localities, then to decide upon some plan of action for the diffusion of Spiritualism in a systematic manner, and to form a committee to carry out their intentions. Commenting on mediumship in general, he would advise them to be always sure that mediums placed before the public would stand their ground.

Mr. Armstrong, sen., the president of the Newcastle Society of Spiritualists, said, as far as that society was concerned, its chief occupation had been obtaining evidence, by physical manifestations chiefly, of the reality of spirit power, in which work it had been successful.

Mr. Rhodes, on being called upon to state the result of his labours in the present instance, said that he had received a number of communications from various societies, and most of them showed a great interest in the work about to be undertaken. He read letters from Oldham, Lancashire, and other places, also a letter from Mr. Hare, expressing sorrow at not being able to be present, but his willingness to assist in a pecuniary way.

Mr. Mould said that he was delighted to see such a gathering. He had been brought up a Methodist, and he had had great experience of the heartiness and goodwill of country friends. Although he had been brought up a Methodist, he must confess that, until he became convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, he had no evidence of a future state of existence; his life had been darkened by the thoughts of a terrible hell, and he knew that the experience of others was very generally the same. The evidence he now had did not leave any shadow of a doubt upon his mind. Speaking of the progress of the Newcastle Society, he said that the books showed that some hundreds of members had belonged to it at different times, and for some reasons had retired, but an effort had been made to revive Sunday meetings. Such meetings brought Spiritualism before those who lived outside the pale of the churches. He liked the scientific spirit of Spiritualism, but he thought it was possible to be too scientific, which was only another phase of refined materialism.

Mr. W. H. Robinson, of Chester-le-street, county Durham, then read a paper giving an account of the progress of Spiritualism in that locality, in which he stated that Spiritualists there were somewhat scattered, being in some cases two or three miles apart; but making a rough calculation, there were eleven or twelve circles in operation, the members of which were willing to meet in harmony with those who were moving the present undertaking. He desired to thank Mr. T. Brown, of Howden-le-Wear, Mr. Rhodes, and the Newcastle Society, for the aid they had afforded in bringing Spiritualism before residents in his locality.

Mr. J. Smith, of New Deval, Northumberland, said that it was the first time he had been on a platform. He had always been of an inquiring mind, but the fire and brimstone doctrines never had any effect on him, and had it not been for the facts of Spiritualism he should now have nothing on which to rest his belief in a future state of existence. He had received many tests, and he was much indebted to the labours of Mr. T. Brown. From what he had seen of Spiritualism, he considered that many of the smaller things were great truths, and his knowledge of the same made him that bold, that he was ready to defend Spiritualism against all comers to the best of his ability.

Mr. G. Smith supported the previous speaker, and made reference to Mr. James, of Beaside, as one to whom he was indebted for much information about Spiritualism.

Mr. T. Brown, of Howden-le-Wear, gave, as far as time would allow, some information about his labours as a travelling medium; he had observed that in most circles there were two many mediums, and that it would be better if only one medial person were allowed in each; all the attention of the circle should be devoted to the development of that one. They should not try to force the spirits to produce a certain class of manifestation, which they might not wish to give, but whatever symptom of mediumship naturally presented itself, should be developed.

Mr. Wilson, senior, of Ugham, near Morpeth, said that Spiritualists were generally supposed to be recognisable by their looks, and judging by those of the company assembled, it gave him a very favourable impression. He had been for a long time diffusing orthodox doctrines as a local preacher, which work he certainly did not regret; but Spiritualism had supplemented his former knowledge, and when compelled to resign his orthodox position, he felt that the God who had always provided for his necessities would continue to do so. He was now willing to work for Spiritualism the same as others whom he knew, and to whom he was indebted, who thought it no trouble to go miles to a spirit circle. John Wesley was a Spiritualist, and he wished for more spirituality.

Mr. Martin Hexham, late of Newcastle; Mr. Batey, jun., of Ouston; and Mr. Wilson, sen., of Washington, addressed the meeting, which then adjourned till the afternoon.

At the afternoon meeting the proceedings were opened with prayer by Mr. Wilson, sen., of Ugham. Mr. Morse again presided.

Mr. Kersey, in an excellent address, moved the following resolution:—"That, as a more efficient means of spreading Spiritualism in the North of England, a district be marked out within a certain radius of Newcastle, to assist in a systematic and united effort for its promotion in the several towns and villages included therein, by the holding of meetings, &c., and by securing the co-operation of all interested in the progress of Spiritualism."

This was seconded by Mr. J. Robson, and carried unanimously.

The next resolution was proposed by Mr. Robertson, of Dunstan:—

"That this organisation be called the North of England Spiritualists' Central Committee, and that it be composed of two or more representatives from all towns within a radius of fifty miles of Newcastle, the said representatives to act as the general body determine."

This was seconded by Mr. Lambelle, of South Shields, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Robinson, of Chester-le-Street, moved, "That all the services of the officials be honorary."

Some discussion followed, and Mr. G. Smith, of New Deval, moved, as an amendment, "That their travelling expenses should be paid."

This was seconded by Mr. Wilson, and carried.

Mr. Martin moved, "That Mr. Rhodes be appointed secretary, and Mr. Kersey treasurer."

Both these gentlemen declined the honour, Mr. Rhodes alleging that his present duties in connection with Spiritualism rendered it impossible for him to act as secretary, and to do the work in the manner the requirements of the committee and locality rendered necessary; but upon Mr. Batey stating that a conference had been arranged for Chester-le-Street in a few weeks' time, it was ultimately agreed that the conference stand adjourned for three weeks, till Mr. Morse's next visit, during which time Messrs. Rhodes and Kersey would act, and would attend to all correspondence and financial matters.

The following Council was then elected:—

Newcastle: Messrs. Mould, Miller, Hunter, Nicholson, Kay, Armstrong, Haydock, W. C. Robson. Gateshead: Westgarth, Wild, Hunter, Hall, and Felton. Darlington: Hinde and Richmond. Bishop Auckland: N. Kilburn, Faucett, Everitt, Brown, Gibson. Sunderland: Pinckeney. Rutherford: Airey and Vincent. Walker: Mr. Elliott. Coxhoe: Mr. and Mrs. Lawson. Bewick Main: Mr. Stevenson. Wardley Colliery: Mr. Daniel Reid. Dipton: Mr. Batey. Ashington: Mr. Skipsey. Morpeth: Mr. Wilson, sen., T. Brown. Washington: Mr. Wilson, jun., Mr. Charles Thornton. Chester-le-Street: Messrs. Ramsey, Gautrey, Lones, Robinson, Graham, Stewart, Dodds. Seghill: Foster, Nicholson. Hexham: Martin. South Shields: Robertson, Lambelle. North Shields: Robson.

At five p.m. a good tea was provided; more than 70 sat down, and the tables were presided over by Misses Fairlamb, Coltman, Martin, and others. In the evening Mr. J. J. Morse gave a trance address to a crowded audience, to which some were not able to obtain admission.

DEMENTIA.—During the early stages of *dementia* induced by mental anxiety, Dr. Richardson tells us in his *Diseases of Modern Life*, there is nothing more than an increased tension of the minute vessels which supply the brain. In later stages the substance of the nervous tissue itself undergoes a modification by which its activity is permanently lost. These are the physiological consequences, most briefly summed up. The first symptom is a want of full bodily vigour; then follows craving for more work, disturbed sleep, acute sensitiveness to external impressions, and, finally, strange figures and sounds are seen and heard. This condition may continue for years, and the sufferer in time may begin to accept abnormal creations as natural. Dr. Richardson cites a case of a merchant, who for weeks retained in his vision the spectra of three lights, oval in shape, of the size of an egg, and so clearly defined to the observer that he would watch them half-consciously as they floated before him on the wall, the ceiling, or in space. In this stage of the disease lies the foundation of all the hypotheses of ghost-seeing, of ecstatic visions, and even of poetic frenzy. A curious instance directly in point, which came to our notice very recently, is that of a well-known writer on the press, who for some time past has devoted attention to the subject of morbid mental conditions. This gentleman, in a letter to a daily journal, states himself to be the victim of the horrible spectacle of two men hanging from a gallows, a sight which he once beheld while acting as a city reporter. The suspended corpses are clearly brought before him by the sound of rain (the execution occurred during a rain-storm), and also by the sound of laughter, since, through some uncontrollable impulse during the hanging, he was induced to utter an untimely peal of merriment.—*Scientific American*.

A CONJUROR REBUKED.—*The Nottingham Journal* of June 6th says of Mr. Maskelyne's book on Spiritualism:—"The style is so flippant, and the explanations so vague, save when dealing with well-known cheats, that it is calculated to strengthen rather than weaken the minds of those who regard Spiritualism from a serious point of view, and who, while unwilling to admit the science, will not be contented until it is cleared away by argument and not satire. In this respect Mr. Maskelyne makes a serious mistake. He begins with satire and condemnation, is ready to catch at any joke to hold Spiritualism up to ridicule, and appears to think that all who are not anti-Spiritualists are weak-minded, and certainly within very easy reach of Bedlam. This it must be evident is quite a mistake, because, though as a rule mediums are lacking in physique, it must be expressed that the votaries of Spiritualism number in their list men of broad liberal minds, of more than the average intelligence, and who have been made disciples after having been the most deadly opponents and the most avowed infidels. We do not express any opinion on the subject, but we do state that the light, flippant way in which Mr. Maskelyne treats the subject, dresses up his tricks, exposes the swindles of Spiritualistic cheats, while at the same time he conceals its excellences as to existence in a future state, takes off the force of his otherwise well-written little book—a book which, in very many respects, he will some day, when in a serious reflective vein, very much regret having produced."

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