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The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

VOLUME EIGHT. NUMBER SIXTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, APRIL 21st, 1876.

THE INVESTIGATION OF SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA AT ST. PETERSBURG.

As yet nothing has been officially made known about the results of the inquiry into the phenomena of modern Spiritualism which is going on at St. Petersburg. If the investigators have complied with the conditions under which the phenomena have been proved by experience to be evolved, as laid down, for instance, in the "Instructions How to Form Spirit Circles," which we printed weekly for several years in the advertising columns of this journal, for the guidance of the general public, there can be no question that long before this they have evolved results. But if, on the other hand, they have taken up the position previously assumed by too many physicists both in England and America, and have attempted to impose their own conditions upon the laws of nature, and have demanded that the manifestations shall then take place as they order, they have, in all probability, involved themselves in a dismal failure. The only thing which could have prevented such failure would have been the engagement of an exceedingly powerful medium, who obtains manifestations under the most adverse conditions, but such mediums are rare. Mrs. Fay is one; the Davenport Brothers belong to the category, and there are some few others. This is why, at the outset, we advised the St. Petersburg committee to engage one such medium, no matter at what expense, because the observers would at all events be sure of results. Ordinary mediums, as a general rule, obtain manifestations with power only when they are thoroughly comfortable and happy, and when they know themselves to be surrounded by friendly influences. Some of the best manifestations occur during trance, but it cannot be expected that any sensible person can pass off gently into a state of sleep or trance when he knows he is surrounded by a dozen or two people who have prejudged him to be an impostor, who have broken through all the conditions under which the manifestations usually take place, and whom he looks upon consequently as his natural enemies. If, up to the present time, the members of the St. Petersburg committee have not been so successful as they could wish, they had better read through our "Instructions for Forming Spirit Circles," which instructions can be lent to them by M. Aksakof, and see in what point they have broken those conditions. If they still insist upon breaking conditions, they had better engage one of the few strong mediums who can obtain manifestations under the most adverse circumstances. If, on the other hand, they have complied with the instructions which we published for so long a time, they have obtained plenty of manifestations long before this.

Any decision that the St. Petersburg committee may come to, will not retard the multiplication of the facts of Spiritualism, or impede the progress of the knowledge thereof; but the committee will have placed itself in a false position before the world, if on the one hand it has broken the conditions under which incipient manifestations occur, and if on the other it has not had a single sitting with a medium possessing among Spiritualists an established reputation as a person in whose presence test phenomena take place. The Petty brothers do not answer this description; they were scarcely known at all in England until M. Aksakof drew strong attention to them by describing their manifestations, and taking them to Russia. *Psychic Studies* stated that nothing was obtained through their mediumship at St. Petersburg, but there is a discrepancy in the evidence, for Colonel Olcott, in a letter to *The Banner of Light*, of Jan. 1st, 1876, stated that Madame Blavatsky had received a letter from M. Aksakof, containing the following description of manifestations obtained in the presence of the committee:—"We placed the elder one, well secured, behind a curtain stretched across the corner of the room. Before him stood a table,

and on this we fixed a wooden cage about one cubic foot in size, which could be securely locked with a key. In the walls of the cage the apertures were not larger than would admit the insertion of a lead pencil. Inside the cage a hand-bell was placed, and the door was then locked, the key removed, and the room darkened. The bell was soon rung loudly and repeatedly. It was a splendid test." Yet *Psychic Studies* afterwards said that nothing was obtained. Have we here a repetition of the old story, exemplified at Harvard University, and elsewhere, that when physicists have been fairly beaten, they have been afraid to state the facts, and have wriggled out of them by some extravagant special pleading, in order to save themselves from the adverse public opinion of the ignorant? The motion of a table they *might* own, since they could afterwards indulge in endless learned palaver about a "new force," but the ringing of a hand-bell inside a box savours too strongly of "spirits," the existence of which must on no account be admitted. Has M. Aksakof discovered that he has erred in placing strong meat before babes and sucklings?

In the same letter M. Aksakof says:—"I am extremely well satisfied with our scientific committee. Nothing more could be desired in this respect. Without exception they are so amiable and so ready to comply with any reasonable conditions demanded, that it would be a great misfortune if Spiritualists were not to profit by the opportunity now offered for a thorough investigation." Let us hope he has not since had reason to alter his opinion. Until phenomena have been obtained, and the duty of attesting them devolves upon the observers, one cannot tell much about the real moral calibre of committees. We know several eminent men of science, who like schoolmasters do good work by old-established methods in continuation of well-beaten tracks, but who after witnessing some of the unpopular phenomena of Spiritualism, have failed to grasp the great opportunity of ceasing to become technical pedagogues, and proving themselves to be men.

M. Aksakof further says:—"They have adopted a resolution to hold forty official *séances*, beginning about May 15th next, and continuing to September 1, omitting the regular summer vacation. They allow twenty of these forty sittings to be failures from one cause or another; but if, after the course closes, they shall not have found anything worthy of scientific notice, they will consider themselves absolved from undertaking any further inquiry into the subject."

The St. Petersburg Committee is holding its sittings with closed doors, because it naturally desires to keep the publication of its results in its own hands. M. Aksakof, that most noble of European workers in the cause of Spiritualism, has the sympathy of his English brethren in the arduous work he has undertaken, for it is an anxious position to endeavour to present to critical observers, phenomena which are of an essentially fugitive nature when attempted to be obtained under adverse circumstances from third-rate mediums.

TERMINATION OF THE ST. PETERSBURG INQUIRY.

Since the foregoing article was written, we have received a letter from M. Aksakof saying that after the phenomena began to come, the bad faith of the University Committee was also manifested, and this to such an extent that after four *séances* the representatives of Spiritualism present refused to have anything more to do with them. He further says that the reasons for the rupture with the committee will be published *in extenso*. We have telegraphed to him for further particulars.

As this is the result we have prophesied all along, guided by precedents most humiliating to orthodox men of science, the soundness of the advice we gave as to the best method

of dealing with the committee in the first instance will not now be questioned. It would have been well had it been acted upon.

MATERIALISM AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

BY ST. GEORGE W. STOCK, M.A.

(Conclusion.)

MATERIALISM consists, not in confounding mind with matter, which no one in his senses ever does, but in asserting that mind does not and cannot exist apart from matter. According to the materialist, mind is a mere result of structure. It is not a substance, but an attribute—not a thing, but a quality of a thing. As an instrument constructed by human skill quivers into melody under the artist's touch, so the human organism gives forth the music—harsh or sweet—of consciousness, when played upon by the cosmic forces; and as

“When the lute is broken
Sweet tones are remembered not,”

so, when man's body can no longer perform its work, consciousness is necessarily at an end, or survives only by its echo in another's mind. A subjective immortality is all that is possible to us. Thus the materialist is landed in belief in annihilation, not directly and by choice, but indirectly, as the inevitable result of his theory. And for this view of the relation of mind to matter, the materialist thinks that he has ample ground in experience. His conviction is “that there is not a single fact on record from which we can infer that there is, or can be, anywhere such a thing as a disembodied spirit.”* To this the ready reply of the Spiritualist is that “we have changed all that.” But our object now is not to combat but to examine materialism.

Mind, as we have just said, is not identified by the materialist with matter. The lute is one thing, and its music another. What then is mind as viewed apart from the substance in which it coheres, or the instrument through which it is manifested? “Feeling,” is the obvious answer; “a series of states of consciousness.” This is the form under which our own minds are known to us. Now, to hold that the mind survives the body would, on the materialist's view, be tantamount to saying that attribute can exist apart from substance—an absurdity which condemns itself. His opponent, therefore, is driven to maintain that there is no necessary and inalienable connection between mind and the human body; that the latter is in fact a mere accidental accompaniment of the former, and not the thing on which it depends. The bodily structure is on this view a mere instrument for the use of mind; and, though the tune dies with the instrument, the performer only ceases to be heard.

Before going further it may be well to make clear the sense in which the word “feeling” is here used. It is to be understood in the wide sense impressed upon it by John Stuart Mill, as embracing all the phenomena of consciousness. There are only two ways in which we become acquainted with existence—from without and from within. Without, all is matter; within, all is feeling. It is only through the medium of matter that man's existence, known to himself from within, can become manifest to others.

But is it indeed possible to conceive of feeling, that is to say, of a series of impressions, or states of consciousness, as existing in and by themselves? The very words cry out against the notion. A feeling implies something that feels, an impression must have something to receive it, there must be something that is in a state of consciousness. These, after all, are only names of attributes—words used to denote modifications of some underlying reality. It seems, therefore, that we must so far agree with the materialist, and pronounce mind or feeling to be an attribute of some substance. Of what nature then is this substance? Either it must be like other things or not. Now, the other substances we are acquainted with are material. Just at this point, however, modern Spiritualism steps in, and points us to a new substance, not exactly matter, but analogous to matter, a something more subtle, more attenuated, but still suscep-

tible of organisation like ordinary matter. But to take up the position that the soul, being a refined organism, survives after death, and thinks, loves, worships as heretofore, is to occupy the very same ground that the materialist at present does. All the difficulties of how organisation is adequate to account for thought and so on, remain unsolved. This view, then, of the after life can scarcely be pronounced antagonistic to materialism: it is merely an extension of its doctrine. If, therefore, it should be proved that there is in man a more subtle form of matter, the recipient of impressions, which survives the decay of the body, what need for the materialist to be overwhelmed with confusion? He will merely be surprised to find that his doctrine leads to belief in a future. Nor let him be considered completely in the wrong for having imagined that it was the outer and grosser form of matter which is the true recipient of impressions, and not rather the inner and more refined. It may be that they differ only in degree, and that the one is evolved out of the other, as the kernel out of the nut. If so, there must have been some period of existence when they were one: and then the view of the materialist would have needed no correction.

The dispute between materialists and their antagonists would not be in the least decided by the triumph of modern Spiritualism. The real question at issue between the two parties, is whether organisation is or is not sufficient to account for sensation, thought, emotion, and will. Granting the complete establishment of modern Spiritualism, the old dispute would be liable to rearise. I have seen it stated somewhere that there are all sects in the spirit-world except materialists. But the exception is quite unnecessary. There is room for materialists too. For, admitting the existence of a spirit-body composed of a finer form of matter which escapes our present senses, it will still have to be settled whether this body is itself the thinking substance, or only the outward expression of some inner and hidden reality. Those who take the former view will be materialists, and those who take the latter, Spiritualists, in the strictly philosophical sense of the term. And be it observed, that if the substance in which feeling inheres is really an aggregate of particles, no matter how minute, it is a compound body, and may therefore be disintegrated, so that it can enjoy at best only a fortuitous immortality, and is not, by right of its own nature, eternal. Hence we may well conceive spirits maintaining that the disintegration of their spirit-bodies would result in annihilation.

But if materialism be untenable both in this world and the next, then we must adopt the other alternative, namely, that the thinking substance is unlike everything else with which we are acquainted, being neither matter, nor analogous to matter. We must regard the thing within us which feels, loves, thinks, and wills, the true self, as something wholly *sui generis*. This is what the common sense of mankind has done, more or less consciously, all the world over. To this substratum of consciousness, this inner, unknowable essence, it would be well to appropriate the term “spirit.” Spirit then is no rarefied or etherialised form of matter, but something totally distinct in kind. The unphilosophic mind, at all events, is never troubled with difficulties as to how spirit can think, love, worship, and will. And the reason is obvious. Finding mental phenomena to exist, we invent a name for the agent which exhibits them, and for that only. Hence we are not perplexed with instances of the same agent unpossessed of the attributes in question, which is the difficulty that meets us when we ascribe consciousness to matter. On this supposition, spirit is really the antithesis, and not merely the analogue of matter. We must place it on one side in our thoughts, and on the other the successive garments, whether material or psychical, in which it clothes itself. There will still be left an inner and an outer when the weight of flesh has been cast aside.

We are now in a position to estimate the charge brought against modern Spiritualism of being simply rank materialism. It is true that, admitting the doctrine of a spirit-body, we have something like the old state of things over again, with the mere replacement of a coarse instrument by a fine one. We are not translated into the world of spirit at death (if by spirit be meant the inner shrine of consciousness), but merely into a kind of rarefied physical world.

* The quotation is from Mr. Charles Bray, of Coventry, a writer whose views on psychology are well worth the attention of Spiritualists.

Spirits are still concealed within the mysterious recesses of their own identity. They are not known to one another in themselves, but through the medium of an external organism. Nevertheless, the charge of materialism is futile, since modern Spiritualism neither asserts nor denies anything with regard to the true nature of being, but leaves it unknowable as it found it. What it does effect is the substitution of a possible for an impossible conception of the after life. We have seen that in our present state man's existence is manifested only in two ways to himself, within, as feeling; to others, without, as matter. If, therefore, we hold that when the physical body is cast aside at death, no new organism is assumed in its place, only the interior mode of manifestation is left, and man reduced to a mere train of feelings. Each individual soul must thus exist in isolation from the rest,

"Eternal, boundless, undecayed,
A thought unseen, yet seeing all."

All, that is, which retains externality: for its own compeers, which share its nature, must be alike invisible. From this vague universality, or vague nothingness, the hypothesis of modern Spiritualism rescues us. If it had not been forced upon us, we should have had to seek it: for if we are to conceive of our own future existence at all, it must be under the limitations of an organism.

I have said advisedly, "if we are to conceive:" for there is nothing to hinder one believing in the existence of a purely mental world in which spirit may be cognisable to spirit immediately, and through no external medium whatever. Such a world, it is true, is utterly unimaginable: but we have no right to say it cannot exist. That is rash reasoning which confounds inconceivability with impossibility. What is inconceivable and absurd to us may seem natural and inevitable to a being endowed with different faculties. We cannot be sure that the constitution of our minds is a reflection of absolute truth. Indeed there is much to suggest the contrary. But though we may believe in a future state without accepting the doctrine of a spirit body, it is no slight benefit to be able to superadd conception to belief. To accept as an article of faith what our faculties do not enable us to grasp, is but to string words together with no mental picture to give them meaning.

This doctrine of a spirit-body—of a quasi-material envelope underlying the physical organism, and serving as the vehicle or garb of the spirit on decay of its old covering, is the great contribution of modern Spiritualism to philosophy. It has been taught before by individual thinkers, but has never till now been thoroughly grasped, realised, insisted upon. In particular it was inculcated by St. Paul, though not quite in the same shape in which it is propounded by modern revelation. For he imagined an interval to exist after the decay of the natural body, before the spirit donned its new garb. It was not till "the trumpet should sound" that the dead were to be raised incorruptible. As the seed had to be germinating in the ground before it could spring into the sunlight beautiful and metamorphosed, so there was to be an interval between death and resurrection, except in the case of those who were alive at Christ's coming, an event which he looked for before his own generation had passed away. But the support of reason which this doctrine enjoys is far more important than that of authority. For what could be more violently opposed to all the analogy of Nature's workings than to suppose that we shall overleap at one bound the vast chasm that separates matter from pure spirit, even supposing the latter to be capable of existing at all apart from the former?

It may well be that even the spirit-body itself may at some period be disintegrated, another death undergone, and a still more etherealised organism developed out of the old one. In our present state it is only by the intervention of a physical organism that we become aware of the existence of any spirit except our own. Spirit speaks to spirit through the medium of matter. Would we communicate our thoughts, we set the air in motion, or inscribe marks upon paper. How far the mode of communication may be altered in the next state, it would be hazardous to seek to determine. But there seems no significance in the doctrine of a spirit-body, unless it is to be used for somewhat the same purposes as the material. The interchange of ideas will no

doubt be more expeditious, but not independent of all external signs, and the knowledge by spirits of each other still only mediate, so that poor Charles Lamb's disquietude may have been in vain. "Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here, the recognisable face, the sweet assurance of a look?" We may remark in passing that Spiritualists would do well to define the word intuition, which they make use of so freely. Intuition on their premises is perception through the spiritual senses, not perception without any senses at all.

Such then is the doctrine of modern Spiritualism—a life to come, the analogue of the life that now is—a spirit-body, having substance and shape equally with the physical, but a substance so refined as to be impalpable to our present senses. It would lead us into deeper waters than we can now sail on to inquire how far these views would be modified by the adoption of Berkeley's theory of existence, to which recent psychological discoveries seem to lend such startling support. We must here, therefore, conclude by summarising the results of this paper. On the one hand it is evident that modern Spiritualism is not materialistic, since it does not attack or degrade the nature of spirit considered in itself, but leaves it precisely as it found it, having, in fact, no light to throw upon that question. On the other hand it is equally evident that materialism (or the theory that existence is the product of organisation) so far from being crushed out by the new doctrine, is only given new worlds to range in. As there will always be an outer and an inner, the one revealed and the other hidden, so it will always be possible to maintain that the outer is the only reality, and the supposed existence of the inner a mere delusion. The materialist in our present world looks without him and denies the existence of what others find within; and precisely the same dispute may arise on every successive plane of existence, since the real question at issue is not merely between matter, as we now understand that term, and spirit; but between the outer and the inner, between the mere external organism, whether physical or psychical, and a something unorganised, inaccessible, unknowable, the spark of Deity within us, the breath of the Most High God.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MANIFESTATIONS.

Now that the subject of the development of new spiritual manifestations has been raised, it may be interesting to those who intend to take action in the matter to know that a medium who does not obtain a particular kind of manifestation in its incipient stage, can usually obtain it by holding a *séance* with another medium who obtains the desired phenomenon. Many a time have we introduced physical mediums to each other, with the result that after their first *séance* together each has carried away the power of obtaining for the first time some of the manifestations of the other. When one medium thus becomes the recipient of a new kind of manifestation, it is not of course produced at the outset with the same rapidity and power as in the presence of the medium through whom the spirits had had longer practice. If two mediums have entirely different kinds of mediumship, one being, say, a strong physical medium, and the other possessing high-class trance powers, the one does not usually after a *séance* with the other carry away the power of evolving any of the manifestations. There must, in the first instance, be some similarity of power. We have known a medium who had obtained table motions for months, but not raps, to get raps on sitting at home for the first time, after having a few days previously had a *séance* with a strong rapping medium. We have known a physical medium who did not obtain spirit hands, to get them at the next sitting at home, after a *séance* with a medium in whose presence such hands were commonly produced, and instances of this kind might be multiplied. On one occasion only have we seen some of the higher manifestations thus carried away, and produced through a physical medium. One night, at the house of Mr. Luxmoore, Mrs. Tappan placed her hand upon the head of Miss Florence Cook, and in the trance uttered an inspirational poem. At the next *séance* afterwards, at the house of Miss Cook's parents, Mr. Tapp was present, and he informed us that the medium rose in a trance, and uttered an inspirational poem of considerable

force and beauty. There were long pauses between some of the lines and some of the words. The lines did not come with the same fluency with which they would have been uttered through the lips of Mrs. Tappan. Although this would at first sight appear to be an example of two dissimilar classes of mediumship having a somewhat strong influence upon each other, it should be remembered that Miss Cook had naturally considerable intellectual power, and side by side with physical manifestations exhibited the higher phenomena of trance and clairvoyance.

When one medium thus carries away some of the manifestations of the other, their guardian spirits usually profess to be the same as before; that is to say, none of the spirits of the one medium seem to gain any great control over the other sensitive. Sometimes they say that a few of the lower spirits of the band of the one medium have come to work in connection with the band of the new one, but not in any authoritative position. On one occasion, when two noted physical mediums met for the first time, and manifestations had been obtained through the mediumship of one of them, the controlling spirit of the other said to us afterwards in effect:—"I was watching how his spirits did the manifestations, and picked up a great deal of information; but I took very good care not to let them know how we did ours." This will be seen to be an exceedingly mean and selfish remark; whether the spirit message could be relied upon or not, it accurately represented the feeling which existed between the two mediums in question.

A medium who can get good manifestations in daylight is much wanted in the movement, and the spirits instead of doing many manifestations badly, should do one well. If the spirits would manage at every *séance* to raise any object a foot off the table, and hold it there for a minute before putting it down again, that one thing would establish the fame of the medium, and be better than dozens of inconclusive manifestations. It would be a good thing also to develop the power which spirits have sometimes exhibited, of carrying small objects between two circles meeting in far distant places. In the American Spiritualist press it has been said that the spirits have tightly tied up mediums inside a cabinet, while the two ends of the rope have been held outside the cabinet, yet the knots have been secure and intricate. This might be tried here. An attempt might also be made to get direct spirit writing on a piece of paper inside a carefully sealed and secured envelope, a manifestation which is said to have been obtained in Australia.

INFORMATION FOR AMERICAN MEDIUMS.

AMERICAN mediums who come to England are frequently disappointed upon their arrival, in consequence of their having selected the months of July or August to cross the Atlantic; when they reach London they find limited demand for their services, because most of the Spiritualists who can best afford to engage them are then out of town, and do not return till November or later. The best time for mediums to take up temporary residence in London is from the beginning of February until the middle of June. Second-rate mediumship, either trance or physical, is not much in demand, and as a general rule does not pay. Mediums who obtain a few inexplicable manifestations with certainty, in the face of the most adverse influences, get on best, and they ought to have gained an established reputation for such manifestations before coming here. Letters of introduction from such men as Mr. Epes Sargent, Dr. Crowell, or Mr. Dale Owen are useful. American mediums who come to London will find among Spiritualists parties and sections, which are not necessarily unfriendly to each other, but from which mediums do well to keep clear by setting up independently for themselves, without seeking patronage; they should leave their manifestations to force their own way. English society differs somewhat from American society; there is seldom any sudden rush after a new medium, and it takes time to get a good connection among Spiritualists in London.

M. AKSAKOF, of St. Petersburg, subscribed £15 to the Harrison Testimonial Fund last week.

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

MR. WASHINGTON A. DANSKIN, of Baltimore, has fixed a lettered dial with movable hand, to a table, so that the height of the rise of one edge of the table will cause the hand to point to any particular letter desired. With this apparatus messages are spelt out through the mediumship of his wife. He writes to *The Banner of Light*:—

While I was leaning over the table one afternoon, completely absorbed in watching the movement of the index and transmitting to paper the letters as they were pointed out, I was suddenly seized, as it were, by an irresistible power that braced up my shoulders and held me straight, as if I had been in the hands of the drill sergeant. So rigid was I that I could scarcely command voice enough to call the letters as they were indicated. Recovering somewhat from my surprise, and catching breath enough for the purpose, I asked—"What does this mean? Who is it that holds me thus?"

The answer was spelt slowly on the dial, "Flower of the Field." I replied, "I am no wiser now than before. Who is 'Flower of the Field?'" Then came, "The Indian boy who lived with you and loved you when in Florida." As a test this was perfect on all points. When in my sixteenth year I was pronounced very far gone in consumption; and having a decided objection to both physic and physicians, I declined the course of medical treatment proposed in my case, and started off for the wilds of Florida. There I made friends of the Seminole Indians, and lived, for nearly a twelvemonth, as they lived, frequently without shelter, and generally dependent for our food upon the woods and the streams. During this term a strong attachment was formed between an Indian boy of about my own age and myself. To him was I indebted for a knowledge of the Indian language, for many a useful lesson in woodcraft, and he helped me to pass many a pleasant hour while thus an exile from my home and friends. But twenty-five years or more had intervened; the incidents of home-life and the associations of civilized society had, in a great degree, obliterated the recollection of these earlier days. The Indian boy had been forgotten until he thus suddenly and forcibly placed himself before me. No one present but myself knew that this boy had ever lived, and to my memory he had long been lost. To me, therefore, this was a test about which there could be no misunderstanding.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—At a special meeting of the Council, held at 38, Great Russell-street, on Tuesday afternoon, April 11th, the following members were present: Mr. A. Calder, Mr. M. Theobald, Mr. W. D. Meers, Mr. T. Everitt, Mr. J. Freeman, Mrs. FitzGerald, Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, Mr. Desmond FitzGerald, Mrs. D. FitzGerald, Mr. George King, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. E. D. Rogers, Mrs. Everitt, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Mr. R. Pearce, Mr. H. Wedgwood, Mr. Martin R. Smith, Mr. A. Joy, Mr. H. D. Jencken and Mrs. Wood.

The meeting was convened in accordance with a requisition signed by Mr. Desmond FitzGerald and other members of the Council, 1st, "To reconsider the resolution carried at the last ordinary meeting of the Council on March 14th, adopting the recommendations of the Offices Committee in relation to the room on the premises of the Association which, in accordance with a previous resolution of the Council, is occupied by Mr. Harrison, part of such recommendation being that Mr. Harrison shall not, after a certain date, to be mutually determined on, use the address 38, Great Russell-street, as a publishing address; 2nd, To approve the agreement as settled by the Finance Committee for renting a room at 38, Great Russell-street, to Mr. Harrison."

Mr. Rogers moved that as the readiest mode of arriving at an amicable settlement of the question of Mr. Harrison's tenancy of his room, two members from the Finance and Offices Committees retire to consider the agreement drawn up by the first-named committee. This course was thereupon adopted, and on their return the agreement was read by the chairman and unanimously approved. It was then recommended that the said agreement be referred to the ordinary meeting of Council for adoption. The first motion on the requisition was therefore dropped.

Mr. Everitt said that he was extremely sorry for any personal annoyance that had been caused to Mr. Harrison in this matter; he had acted from a sense of duty, but he would hereby withdraw any expressions of his that might have given pain.

Mr. Morell Theobald then moved the following resolution:—"That all *ex parte* statements addressed to members of the Council, except at meetings in Council assembled, have the disapproval of this meeting." This was carried, there being but three dissentient votes.

The meeting then adjourned.

At the ordinary meeting, held at 6.30 the same evening, twelve new members were elected, amongst whom were Mr. T. P. Barkas and Mr. J. Mould, of Newcastle, and Mr. Theophilus Taunton and Mr. W. G. Taunton, of Anerley.

It was resolved to invite Dr. Puel, of Paris, to become an honorary member of the Association.

There was one resignation.

Mr. Morell Theobald read the report of the Finance Committee, showing a balance in hand of £129 0s. 10d.; bills passed for payment, £84; liabilities, £5. It recommended that Mr. Bennett be requested to call in the second year's contributions to the Guarantee Fund.

The report was adopted.

The Finance Committee then presented the agreement drawn up by

them with Mr. Harrison, which provides that Mr. Harrison shall rent the small room now in his possession at 38, Great Russell-street for one year only, under certain specified conditions, and that "the said tenant agrees to insert his own name in all his advertisements in which the address of 38, Great Russell-street appears, and to conduct all his business transactions, as editor or bookseller, on the said premises, in such a manner that neither *The Spiritualist*, nor any other newspaper or publication of any kind, shall appear to be connected in any way with the British National Association of Spiritualists, and the said tenant will act in good faith, so that the public may understand there is no connection between them."

The agreement was carried unanimously.

The Provincial Committee reported that Dr. Sexton was engaged on a course of lectures in the North of England, under the auspices of the Association, and that the same lecturer would deliver a second course during the month of May in the Lancashire or Yorkshire districts. A circular of appeal for further aid in this matter, prepared by the Committee, will shortly be issued.

The arrangements for the annual meeting of the members of the Association were discussed, and the date fixed for the 23rd May. The names of the twenty-six members to retire from the Council this year were decided by lot, and registered for insertion in the circular and voting papers to be sent to each member of the Association previous to the elections at the annual meeting.

Mr. George King gave notice that he should move for the appointment of an Experimental Research Committee, with the use of apparatus on the premises of the National Association, and mentioned that the subject would receive some attention at the next discussion meeting, Monday, April 24th, when it was expected that Mr. Cromwell Varley would take the chair and open the discussion.

Mr. Bennett's motion for holding a conference in the provinces during the summer was deferred to the annual meeting.

E. KISLINGBURY, *Secretary to the B. N. A. S.*

Provincial News.

MALTON.

IS SPIRITUALISM A DELUSION, AN IMPOSITION, OR A TRUTH?

SPIRITUALISM is a subject which finds many supporters in Malton, and these must have been highly pleased with the able lecture delivered in the Institute on Wednesday night (last week), under the auspices of the National Association of Spiritualism, by Dr. Geo. Sexton, M.A., F.Z.S., who is well-known to many here. There was a very large and intelligent audience present, and they frequently testified their appreciation of the manner in which the lecturer dealt with his subject.

The Rev. J. Sutcliffe, the newly-appointed Unitarian minister in Malton, took the chair, and in announcing the subject of the lecture to be delivered as that of "The Claims of Modern Spiritualism upon Public Attention," he expressed the pleasure he had in presiding over the meeting, and in having the opportunity of hearing so able a man as Dr. Sexton. He knew that whatever subject the Doctor took up would be handled with ability, and those who listened would not fail to be impressed therewith. The speaker went on to state that he looked upon Spiritualism as one of the dispensations of Divine providence. He did not think there was ever a period in the history of mankind when the Great Father in heaven did not in some way and in some degree make known to the mind of man such revelations as He knew would be best suited to the moral and spiritual condition of His rational offspring, and to adapt them in the way constituted to minister to their best interests. Whatever the moral stage arrived at, or whatever the stage of civilisation, those dispensations were so arranged as to minister to the welfare of God's creatures; but we were by no ways justified in supposing any principle, form, or expression of the religious sentiment in man is permanent. They would change as we changed. Modern Spiritualism, the speaker believed, was one of those things God was now making use of for the good of a great number of His children; and he proceeded to show how it had affected the minds and changed the opinions of those previously unimpressed by all other evidences of the truth of the existence of a God and of the immortality of the soul. This he adduced as a proof of the truth of Spiritualism, an evidence that it contained something worthy of our time and attention; and he concluded his remarks by urging us to cherish a mind that should be open to conviction and willing to investigate into the subject to be brought before us.

Dr. Sexton then commenced his lecture, remarking that the subject of Spiritualism was one that had of late been considerably advanced and largely discussed by thinking people. A few years ago it was looked upon as being too contemptible to need notice, but it had spread, and intelligent people connected with science had embraced its principles, and had thus given it a position and a claim on public attention—a claim which he held had been fully substantiated to the present time. After proving this assertion by referring to the number and character of those who had of late years embraced the doctrines of Spiritualism, the doctor proceeded to put forth three assumptions with regard to it:—Either that it was a great imposition, a gigantic delusion, or a great and mighty truth. We could invent no other supposition with regard to it, and it must, therefore, come under one of these heads. The supposition that it was an entire imposition was very rarely entertained in the present day, and he would not therefore take up much of our time in endeavouring to refute it. Supposing it were true, we should have the fact that all Spiritualists were divided into two classes—knaves and fools. There, then, we should have an ordinary

law which obtained with regard to impositions generally—one half, who were the impostors, were knaves, or clever people, whilst those imposed upon were the fools. Now in Spiritualism, we had the reverse of this; it was the clever people who were imposed upon and the impostors were generally ignorant men and women, and sometimes even children. In illustration of this the lecturer proceeded to quote many eminent men who have embraced Spiritualism, naming amongst others Mr. Robert Owen, his son Mr. Dale Owen, Dr. Chalmers, Mr. Wallace, the naturalist, Mr. Varley, the eminent electrician, &c.; whilst on the other hand he showed that the spirit mediums were often children of seven or eight years of age. To say that those could perform conjuring tricks more wonderful than all other conjurers, presented a problem more difficult to solve than Spiritualism itself. The doctor next dealt with the second assumption—that Spiritualism is a gigantic delusion, and in passing ridiculed Dr. Carpenter's notion that it was a "mental epidemic," and as such spread from one person to another like epidemics of a bodily character. This, he held, was not explaining the matter at all, and was treating it in an unscientific and non-practical manner. That Spiritualism is a great and mighty truth was the point next dealt with by the lecturer. He did not say that it was all this, but it might be; and if that were true we ought to investigate the subject thoroughly before passing an opinion upon it, because he strongly objected to persons giving an opinion when they knew nothing whatever of the question. He would accept no one's theory in explanation who had not thoroughly considered the subject—who had not seen the facts; because otherwise they were not in a position to pass an opinion upon the question. Spiritualists had seen those facts, and were therefore best able to judge of them. Having dealt with the three assumptions he first put forth, the lecturer then proceeded to speak upon what is claimed for Spiritualism. It put forth tremendous claims, and it was therefore necessary that they should be closely examined by those who professed to be searchers after the truth. Spiritualism claimed to have solved the greatest problem of the age—the question whether man lives again or not. Spiritualism claimed to have solved that by the very evidence which scientific men were looking for; and if it was true, that man was immortal, was it not of the utmost importance that he should know it? In the course of his remarks under this head, secularism came in for its share of admirable comment, which was entirely antagonistic to its principles and the lecturer's former convictions thereupon, he stating that for twenty years he was doubting the existence of a God. He showed that secularism was the direct negation of sound philosophy and reason, and he spoke emphatically of the atheistic spirit that pervaded modern philosophy, and said that scepticism and doubt were more than ever the spirit of the present age. We could not, he said, if we would, shut our eyes to the importance of the question of the immortality of the soul. At times in the crush of business and the hurry of life we might forget it, but there were moments of quietude and stillness in our homes, or when the soul was sad and sorrow crushed us down, and then would arise in our minds the important questions "What am I? Whence came I? And Whither am I going?" Spiritualism claimed to be able to solve all this; it had come to restore the faith that would elevate men's minds, to teach the existence of an hereafter and of a God presiding over it. It would bring the scientific world back to the course from which it had departed; would show us what was our position in this and other respects, and he thought it ought not to be said to be in opposition to religion, but rather the greatest handmaid religion ever had in the world.

Mr. R. H. Bartliff said "that they had heard about the theory, but what about the practice?" and desired to know if in America and England there had not been many exposures with regard to "those affairs?" Had not Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke and others done things that the Spiritualists did? and were not Spiritualists sometimes misled by their own mediums? Mr. Bartliff went on to refer to the sensational *expose* in the Katie King affair, in America.

Dr. Sexton said, that so far as he understood Mr. Bartliff, he had put two questions—Had there not been impostors? and, had not conjurers done the same things as Spiritualists had done? He (the speaker) very much regretted to say that there had been impostors, but whenever they found anything of the kind they exposed the imposition as fast as they could. That, however, did not prove that Spiritualism was false, no more than the fact that the existence of counterfeit sovereigns proved that none were good. We should always find impostors in everything, and doubtless there was a great deal passing under the name of Spiritualism which was nothing of the kind; but he was doing his best to expose it, and whenever he found out any case he would publish it throughout the length and breadth of the land. With regard to the second question—Had not conjurers done things Spiritualists had done?—he said, No, nor nothing like them! He then proceeded to refer to the tricks practised by Maskelyne and Cooke, and said that Mr. Bartliff could not be aware of the manner in which he (the doctor) had exposed them three years ago, or he would not have asked the question. He did that at great expense to himself, and showed how every trick was done by the conjurers named; and expressed his conviction that he could do every trick practised by any conjurer of the day. The doctor also stated that a Mr. Joy had offered £1,000 to any conjurer who would do, under the same conditions, the things a spirit medium would do, and he gave an account of an application made by a foreigner, who was soon settled when the conditions were told him.

After this a vote of thanks was passed to the lecturer and another to the chairman, and after each gentleman had briefly replied, the proceedings terminated.—*The Malton Gazette.*

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

MRS. PETTY'S services are in great demand. She is giving special *séances* every day to different investigators.

Miss Fairlamb's mediumship still gives satisfactory results. On

Thursday evening last week, while she was sitting in a subdued light *outside* the cabinet, instruments were played *inside* and various things passed out into the circle. Other phenomena occurred. The medium was in her normal state, talking with the sitters, and visible to all as she sat in front of the cabinet.

Mr. MORSE gave two addresses in the Freemasons' Old Hall, on Easter Sunday, to good audiences, Mr. Armstrong taking the chair in the afternoon, and Mr. T. P. Barkas in the evening. The subject in the evening was "Matter and Spirit."

In a recent discourse in Newcastle Mr. Morse defined "elementary spirits" as "a class of beings who may fitly be described as wearing the livery of heaven to serve the Devil with."

B L Y T H.

SPIRITUALISM has not long been planted in this town, but is quietly making headway. It is quite a centre for Methodism, and at Dr. Sexton's lecture there on Thursday evening last week, several of the leading preachers of the town were among the audience with their open bibles, following the lecturer, text for text. His subject was "Spiritualism in harmony with the Bible." The audience numbered about a hundred persons, and the meeting was presided over by Mr. T. Foster, of Seghill. The Central Hall, which is rather a fine building, capable of seating several hundred persons, was the place provided for the lecture, and the attendance might have been larger if it had not been the eve of Good Friday. No questions were asked at the close of the address.

SEGHILL.

At this place, which is a mining district a few miles from Blyth, Spiritualism is rather at a standstill, but circles are held regularly at one or two places, one being at the house of Mr. Nicholson, who is himself a medium. On Wednesday evening, the 12th, Dr. Sexton lectured at Seghill, in the Boys' School-room, under the auspices of the British National Association of Spiritualists. The subject was "The alleged Phenomena of Spiritualism, are they true, and if so do they prove the continued Existence of Man after Death?" The lecture was moderately well attended. Mr. T. Foster, who is a very earnest Spiritualist, and was some time ago excluded from the Methodists for his connection with Spiritualism, was very energetic in his endeavour to render Dr. Sexton every assistance in his power.

SOUTH SHIELDS.

SPIRITUALISM here, as well as in North Shields, is making some progress, though great opposition is offered to it. Mr. Lambelle, of 43, Palmerston-street, holds circles regularly; his mediumship is improving, and he is earnest in the matter; he is writing as well as a trance medium, and is now the instrument in writing some historical essays by one of his controls, who gives the name of "Francis Bacon." On the evening of the 9th inst., in addition to the usual members of the circle there were present, Mr. Robson, of North Shields; Mr. and Miss Raper, of Jarrow; Mr. and Mrs. Petty and Mr. Joseph Petty, jun., also Mr. and Mrs. Rhodes, of Newcastle; altogether about twenty assembled. Mr. Robertson acted as chairman, and when the medium was controlled read out the various questions that different members of the circle wished answered in regard to former utterances of the medium. These were readily replied to, and in some cases minutely. There were various controlling spirits purporting to be Francis Bacon, William Prynne, Oliver Cromwell, Mrs. Robertson (the late wife of the chairman), and the medium's grandfather.

CHESTER-LE-STREET.

THE earnestness of the Spiritualists in this district has for some time past induced the preachers in the various chapels to denounce the subject of Spiritualism as satanic; to counteract this they took advantage of Dr. Sexton's presence in the north, and under the auspices of the British National Association of Spiritualists, a lecture was given by him in the Co-operative Hall, subject, "Spiritualism in Harmony with the Bible." There was an audience consisting chiefly of non-Spiritualists, numbering between two and three hundred persons, all very attentive. They frequently applauded the lecturer, who endeavoured to show the similarity between modern spiritual manifestations and those in the Bible, setting forth also that there was no statement whatever in the New Testament that spiritual manifestations were to cease with the Apostles. The contrary was the case, and to prove that they did not cease, he quoted many instances among the fathers of the Christian Church during the first five centuries. He then passed through the time of the Reformation, instancing Martin Luther, Baxter, Bunyan, Wesley and others, all of whom were Spiritualists; he said that if the Church had departed from the faith, and had merged into rationalism, and had lost its spiritual gifts, God had done what has been done before—sent these spiritual manifestations outside the Church. At the close of the address permission was given to ask questions, but none being forthcoming Mr. Rhodes, who occupied the chair, called for a show of hands from those who were satisfied with the address, and there was a unanimous response. As Dr. Sexton was leaving, many crowded round him with their congratulations. Mr. W. H. Robinson, Mr. Batey, jun., and Mr. F. Wilson were energetic in rendering the meeting a success, and these gentlemen were aided by their friends, Mr. Pigford, the trance medium, and Mr. Wilson, sen., of Fatfield, who is a preacher, and has been expelled from his church for his Spiritualistic convictions.

ANOTHER SAD CASE IN LIVERPOOL.

THE following sad case of stabbing while under the influence of drink is quoted from last Monday's *Liverpool Courier*. The Mr. Coates mentioned is the same who has spoken frequently at Spiritualistic meetings in London and elsewhere; he is an intelligent, delicate, handsome young man, holding a situation in the Customs, and is one of the last who would be expected to be seen in his present position:—

An occurrence of a somewhat tragic nature took place in Liverpool yesterday, and the affair has a peculiar aspect, from the fact that both the actors are of considerable celebrity in Spiritualistic circles. The details, so far as we have been able to ascertain, are as follows:—About five o'clock yesterday afternoon the attention of passers-by in West Derby-road, opposite the Necropolis, was attracted by the appearance of a man running out of Walker-street minus his hat, and apparently having been in a struggle. The man, who was carrying the remains of a broken walking-stick, reeled as he reached the end of the street, and ejaculated, "I'm stabbed!" He was taken hold of by some persons who were near, and a police-officer appearing on the scene, and having spoken to the injured man, turned up Walker-street, and there arrested another man who was alleged to be the assailant. Both men were taken to the Prescott-street Bridewell, when it there transpired that the one first referred to was suffering from wounds inflicted by some sharp instrument, and was very faint from loss of blood. A car was at once procured, and he was taken to the Royal Infirmary, where, upon examination of his injuries, it was discovered that he had sustained a severe and dangerous wound in the lower part of the back, narrowly missing the spine. Another wound of a less serious character was found on his thigh. The wounds were of such a nature that he was advised to remain in the institution, but he insisted on being taken home, and, after having his injuries temporarily attended to, he was removed home. The man who was charged with having inflicted the injuries was detained at the Bridewell, and on further inquiries it was elicited that his name is James Coates, a customs officer, residing at 74, Queen's-road. The wounded man is named Walter Isaacs, who gave his address as 71, Rishton-street, Breckfield-road, the place to which he was removed. It would appear that the parties were on very intimate terms, and that Isaacs really resided with Coates, the address he gave, and to which he was taken, being that of his mother. For some time past the two men have been prominent members of the Spiritualistic body in Liverpool. About twelve months ago Coates set up what is termed a "Psychopathic Institute" in West Derby-road, the process of healing certain ailments being performed, as was pretended, through spirit agency. For this purpose mediums were required, and one of these was Isaacs, and another the wife of Coates. Matters prospered so well in the healing business that the "institute" was removed to the house in Queen's-road mentioned. Here Isaacs continued to live for a time as one of the resident mediæ, Coates following his avocation of customs officer, and filling up his leisure time as a lecturing medium. All went well, apparently, until yesterday afternoon, when Mrs. Coates and Isaacs attended the usual meeting of the Psychological Society, at the Islington Assembly Rooms, to hear an address on "The Resurrection." Coates, who had been on duty during the day, arrived at the rooms towards the close of the meeting; and it was then noticed that he was under the influence of drink. Accompanied by a number of friends the three proceeded up towards West Derby-road; and on getting near the Necropolis, Coates, who seemed to be in a sullen and quarrelsome mood, sat down on the cattle watering-trough, the rest of the party, with the exception of Isaacs, walking up West Derby-road. He (Isaacs) took hold of Coates, with the apparent object of inducing him to go home; but Coates, for some reason or other, obstinately refused, and crossed over into Walker-street, whither he was followed by Isaacs. They went some distance up the street, and what transpired thereafter is not distinctly stated. There would appear, however, to have been an angry altercation, followed by a rather desperate struggle between the two men. A heavy oak walking-stick which Isaacs carried was broken, and the clothes of both were covered with dirt, as if they had been rolling on the ground. Coates seems to have taken out a common large-bladed pocket-knife, which he was known to have been in possession of, and with this, it is said, he inflicted the wounds found upon Isaacs. Coates, himself, in the course of the struggle received a cut on the hand which bled freely, but otherwise was uninjured. When taken to the Bridewell he was still under the influence of liquor; and from statements he made it would appear that his enmity against Isaacs arose from a jealous feeling regarding Mrs. Coates and the man Isaacs.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—On Thursday evening last week the usual monthly session of the council of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism was held at 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, Mr. John Rouse in the chair. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. Letters of general interest, received since, were read from Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten; Miss Anna Blackwell; Mr. J. N. T. Martheze; Mr. Edwin Dottridge (who sent a musical box for the temporary use of the association); and Messrs. G. F. Tilby and W. C. Drake, secretaries to the Marylebone Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, soliciting aid in furnishing their hall. The following presents, received since the last meeting, were laid upon the table, and accepted with a cordial vote of thanks to the several donors, viz:—*Vital Magnetic Cure*, and *A Guide to Spiritualism*, from Mr. J. N. T. Martheze; *The Spirits' Book*, forwarded at the request of the association by the translator, Miss Anna Blackwell; *Old Truths in a New Light*, and *Through the Ages* (3 vols.), from the Countess of Caithness. Messrs. John Plassford, F.C.S., and Arthur Vaughan, were elected ordinary members. It was unanimously agreed to engage the services of Mr. J. J. Morse for a trance address on the last Thursday evening in May next. Arrangements were reported and approved for a *séance* on Friday evening, the 21st inst., for which a limited number of tickets will be issued. A proposal to engage the services of Mr. W. Eglinton for a special *séance* was deferred. Attention having been directed to the question of conditions at *séances*, it was unanimously resolved, on the motion of Mr. Thos. Blyton, seconded by Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen: "That at all dark or cabinet *séances* of the association, such conditions be observed as, in the opinion of the members assembled thereat, shall be deemed proper and sufficient to guarantee the genuineness of any manifestations which may be obtained; and that only such *séances* be recorded at which such conditions are enforced."

THE FORTNIGHTLY MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

At the usual fortnightly meeting of the members of the National Association of Spiritualists, to be held at 38, Great Russell-street, at 7.30 p.m. on Monday next, Mr. Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., will preside, and will open the discussion on Mr. Harrison's recent paper on "Original Research in Spiritualism." As the debate may lead to practical results, and as the closed experiments at St. Petersburg, as well as the relation of Spiritualism to the scientific world in general, may come under consideration, a full meeting is expected.

JOCULAR AND RELIGIOUS SEANCES.

BY J. M. GULLY, M.D.

I CANNOT refrain from offering a few remarks on the discussion which took place at the ordinary fortnightly meeting of the National Association of Spiritualists on the 10th April, initiated by certain remarks of Mr. Dawson Rogers on the unsatisfactory character of most of the circles made for the investigation of Spiritualism. His animadversion was especially directed to the frivolous and silly interlocutory exhibition made by the embodied and disembodied spirits present at such circles, and to the desirability of giving a more religious tone to the whole proceedings. Putting aside for the nonce the question of the religious character of the circles as put forward there and then (a process that would at once engender wrangling, from diversity of opinion and sensation, as it does all over the world), I strongly join with him as to the necessity for infusing more of the serious and thoughtful into the inquiry, and less of the buffoonery and wretched attempts at small wit which I have so often with loathing remarked at the circles in question. You may remember that in some papers which were printed in *The Spiritualist* three years ago I spoke warmly on this same vice of *séances*, and I have reason to know that greater imbecility prevailed at other circles which I had not the opportunity of joining.

What made me marvel in the course of the discussion raised by Mr. Rogers, was to find my friend Mr. Varley standing forward as a defender of the joking character of Spiritualistic *séances*. He made a distinction between frivolity and joking which it is hard to see, especially when applied to the subject of the thinking life of an immortal being. It may be well to learn that disembodied spirits are capable of joking, but half a dozen instances would suffice to prove that, and would not the time left after proving that, be more profitably spent in the endeavour to show that they can do wiser things, and teach us wiser things about their own powers, their relations to us, and the conditions on which those relations are possible. Thus far we already know about those relations, namely, that where two or three silly embodied spirits are gathered together, there will be silly disembodied spirits also in the midst of them. We yearn to know to the uttermost all that is to be known concerning the wondrous secret of thinking life, and we stop short at the joking point by drawing to us viewless beings who are as sympathetically dull and joking as ourselves, for "gentle dulness ever loves a joke." And I ask any one who has attended joking *séances* to say whether, when the ball was set going, each siter does not strive to cap the last joker, and so two hours are wasted in listening to rubbish, both from this and the other world, not a word of which is worth the remembering? We need more bread and less monstrosity of such sour sack as this. Distinguished electrician as Mr. Varley is, what would he think if a company of inquirers into his subject were to amuse themselves sitting after sitting with some of the toys of electricity, the doll with stiffened hair for instance? If Spiritualism is to remain a joke (and a laughing stock as a consequence), then Mr. Varley is right and Mr. Rogers is wrong; and really of the two "grooves" to which the former gentleman refers, superstition (though there is no necessity that religion should be superstitious) and miserable jokes, I would rather plunge ears over into the former than have to listen for ever to the dreary alternative of jokes.

What, no doubt, Mr. Rogers wished to convey was, that the more serious and judicial the state of the mind during investigation, the more likely was it to obtain pro-

fitable knowledge, and to draw profitable conclusions. To make a *séance* a religious meeting would be the most disastrous of steps if *harmony* be essential to powerful and trustworthy communications; for theology holds more *casus belli* within its many-chequered field than ever cropped up in our disputes between the Roses, or during the Thirty Years' War, or the modern Eastern question: no hatred comes near in bitterness to that of theologians. Here Mr. Varley steps in with words of wisdom; our modes of thinking, he says, are as diverse as our physical bodies; so that some will take hold of Spiritualism as a religion, others as an exhibition of natural phenomena. Seeing that such is the case, would it not be better to exclude theology—and jokes also, for Heaven's sake!—from the inquiry, and leave each man to digest the religious food he finds in it *at home*—that is, in his "interior man," and not trouble other people with stories of his eupepsia or dyspepsia? and to crack all his jokes in the home of his interior consciousness, and laugh at them in the most private and distant room he can find?

Mr. Harrison hit the right nail on the head when he said the subject should be investigated scientifically, *including the element of affection, of human feeling, of all moral sensations that make or mar the harmony of human thought*. Given circles with this condition of harmony, the life beyond would indeed open itself to our closer inspection, and more near and precious ken. But no jokers should be in the circle: oh! no, certainly not: let the dead bury their dead; let the jokers, in and out of the body, sit alone.

MR. GEO. BROWNE has been appointed Secretary of the Liverpool Psychological Society. All communications may be addressed to him at No. 10, Dunkeld-street, Liverpool.

THE TRAVELS OF MR. PEEBLES.—Mr. J. M. Peebles, who recently went round the world to see the position of Spiritualism in nearly every country in which it has taken root, is now travelling in the Southern States of America, on his way to inspect some of the prehistoric remains in Mexico. He lectured on Spiritualism recently in New Orleans.

MRS. JACKSON IN NAPLES.—Signor Damiani writes from Naples, April 11th:—"It may interest the friends of Mrs. Jackson, widow of the late Mr. J. W. Jackson, mesmerist, of Glasgow, to know that she arrived in Naples on Thursday, 30th March. The place which had been promised to her, through her delay after the loss of her luggage in England, had been filled up, but she has two others in view, either of which is better than the one she has missed. She has had another misfortune with her personal effects, her boxes having been mislaid between Modena and Turin; although great activity has been displayed in order to obtain tidings of the lost luggage, nothing has as yet been heard of it."

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PROVINCES.—The following circular has been issued to the members of the British National Association of Spiritualists:—"I have the pleasure of informing you, on behalf of the Provincial Societies' Committee, that having received some response to the circulars which were issued a short time ago, they have thought it well to commence operations in the provinces without delay. To this end satisfactory arrangements have been entered into with Dr. Sexton for a series of lectures to be given under the auspices of this Association in the North of England. It is confidently anticipated that this work will be attended by very beneficial results; but, as it is obviously necessary that, to reap the fullest possible advantage, the effort should be continuous, and therefore a somewhat costly one, I am requested to invite your attention to the facts and to solicit your kind assistance towards defraying the expenses. The committee think that in no way could you render greater aid to the cause of Spiritualism, or more surely promote the growth and prosperity of this Association.—E. KISLINGBURY, Sec.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OFFICES.—When the National Association of Spiritualists first took offices of its own, the expense had to be met by large private subscriptions, and further funds had to be raised in the same way to engage an efficient secretary. More subscriptions still would have been necessary to engage a second officer to release the secretary from attendance at certain times during the day, and Mr. Harrison offered to give a portion of the time of his assistant for this purpose, if the Association would grant him one of their two spare rooms as an office. This was unanimously agreed to. He further, last year, unasked, gave the Association much more than £50 worth of free and under-priced advertising. Mr. Everitt recently said that dissatisfaction existed among some of the members of the National Association in the provinces at the above arrangement; other provincial members wrote expressing contrary opinions. Mr. Harrison then resigned his office, and a Council meeting asked him by a majority of nineteen to two to withdraw the resignation; he left the withdrawal or upholding of the resignation in the hands of Mr. Martin Smith, Mr. A. Calder, and Dr. Gully, to do as they thought fit, and said that any arrangement of any kind they might make in his name he would agree to. The result has been a unanimous agreement that the temporary tenancy arranged for purposes of mutual convenience shall last till March, 1877, at a fixed rent, and then cease, and that meanwhile certain steps shall be taken to keep the public more constantly informed that *The Spiritualist* newspaper and the National Association are not in any way connected with each other.

THE MOULDING OF SPIRIT HANDS AND FEET IN MANCHESTER—EXTRAORDINARY MATERIALISATION MANIFESTATIONS.

BY WILLIAM OXLEY.

I SENT YOU an account of the production of wax moulds of spirit hands, obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. —, which was inserted in *The Spiritualist* of Feb. 11th, 1876, but as we have had others produced through the mediumship of Dr. Monck, under extraordinary circumstances, they are worthy of a permanent record in your columns.

Dr. Monck, who has been my guest for a few days, came to Manchester on Sunday last (April 6th), and in the evening we had a sitting at the house of Mr. Reimers, Oxford-road. After a lively conversation, by means of raps, with our invisible friends, we were told that both mediums, Mrs. — and Dr. Monck, were to go into the cabinet, and that the paraffin wax was to be prepared. This being done, Mrs. — was soon off in the trance state, and Samuel, through Dr. Monck, took charge of the proceedings. He described and conversed with the spirit forms, Bertie, Lillie, and Mike, who materialised themselves and showed their faces several times. Samuel then told Mr. Reimers to come up to the cabinet, as Bertie had taken a mould of her foot. On going up to the cabinet (the same simple contrivance as used before), Bertie put out her foot, with the mould still on it. Mr. Reimers took hold of the foot with his right hand; there was a sudden jerk; the foot was withdrawn, and the mould left in Mr. Reimers' hand. I then asked if the spirit would do the same for me, when we heard a splash, and in a few seconds Dr. Monck came out of the cabinet and brought a similar one to me. The casts being taken, they were found to be the same as those which we had given us before through the mediumship of Mrs. —.

The second sitting was held with strangers, at Higher Broughton. Dr. Monck was not entranced at all, but sat at the table with the company assembled, each hand locked during the *séance* (which was a dark one). The piano and harmonium, which were quite away from the sitters, were played, and on one occasion a tune was played on both instruments at the same time, *the instruments being closed*.

The third sitting was at another house in Higher Broughton, at which we heard the *direct voices* of Mike and Bertie, the presiding spirits in Mrs. —'s *séances*.

The fourth and crowning *séance* was held at Mrs. —'s lodgings, off Oxford-road, on Wednesday evening last, when we had all the varieties of phenomena, from the table lifting to the making of hand and foot moulds, and materialisation of the spirit forms. The cabinet was formed by closing the shutters of the bow window which looked out into the street, and drawing the curtains across the opening. First came the dark *séance*, during which a large musical box was wound up and started by direct spirit agency; and, in addition to this, music was heard from a *second instrument*, something like a musical box, but different from any we had ever heard before, and which is simply indescribable. On our asking Samuel what instrument was used to produce the sounds, he replied: "*We have materialised one from the musical box.*"

All at the table were touched from time to time by spirit hands, and an illuminated hand was seen to lift the *small* musical box from the table and carry it over our heads and round the room; a large bowl containing some unmelted paraffin wax, was turned upside down, and the wax left on the top; my glasses suspended from my neck, were taken off by spirit hands which I felt, and placed on my next neighbour; the necktie of my left hand neighbour was also untied and retied, but not secured. Samuel then said he would make a speech (as follows):—"It has always been the custom in the past at assemblies to elect a chairman, and in such a case it would be the correct thing to move that Mr. Reimers take the chair. In the present instance I move that the chair take Mr. Reimers;" and immediately Mr. Reimers said, "There is a chair resting over my head on my shoulders," a position which the chair, with the man beneath, occupied during the rest of the sitting. Near the close of the *séance* Samuel wished us to note that everything which had occurred was symbolic or representative. It would be well if all who attended spiritualistic *séances* would study this law, as there is a hidden or inner meaning in all. It was a practical lesson intended to show that all the old ideas concerning matter and spirit were to be *reversed*, and that life and activity were spiritual, not material.

After a short interval, during which the wax was prepared, Dr. Monck was controlled by Samuel again, who told us to search the medium and each of us go into the cabinet (if such it could be termed) with a light, to satisfy ourselves that nothing was there; everything was taken out of the medium's pockets, and all were quite satisfied that he had nothing on but his ordinary dress; he then went behind the curtains. The lamp was placed in a corner of the room, shedding a light which enabled us all clearly to see every object in the room; the table was placed close up to the curtains, and we all sat round it, Mrs. — amongst the number. In a little while an indistinct white form appeared at the opening near the ceiling where the curtains formed a V. After three or four attempts it gradually became more distinct, when the head of the spirit Bertie was recognised; afterwards came Lily, Mike, and Richard, Mike having a fine black beard and moustache with a turban on his head. Lily had a fine white crown, and Bertie a graceful fall. That which followed was the crowning test. Dr. Monck, still in the trance, put out his head and shoulders from between the lower part of the curtains, and looking upward he said—"Now, come forward!" when instantly *two forms*, Lily and Bertie, appeared at the top opening and kissed each other, and at the same time Mike drew aside the side curtain and showed his head, a test far more convincing than any tying, for the bodily form of the medium was right out before us, and three materialised spirit forms at the same time. Samuel then said that Bertie would make a mould of her hand, and

that Mr. Reimers was to take hold of her hand. The hand with the wax mould on it *was projected*, when Mr. Reimers took hold of it, and the hand being withdrawn in an instant it was left in his hands. The spirit Lily then said she would give me a mould of her hand in the same way, which was done. Afterwards Bertie said she would give me a mould from her foot, which I was to take from her foot; this also was accomplished, and I had the two moulds before me on the table. On comparing these casts, taken from these moulds we found the hands and feet to correspond with the ones previously given through Mrs. — alone, the hand of Lily being totally different from Bertie's hand, and more extraordinary still, the thumb was straight, and the fingers so curved that the first finger almost touched the thumb, the width across the centre of the hand is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches and only $2\frac{1}{8}$ across the wrist.

With a potent fact like this, the feet and hands being perfect, any modeller, artist, or even ordinary people, may see that no human being could possibly make such a mould in one piece, and draw out the hands or feet without rupturing or destroying the moulds.

In conclusion, came words formed by letters of light, "John," and "S. W.;" then stars, hands, and feet, all of light, a brilliant transparent yellow; then a symbolic figure, the value of which was known to some of those present; and finally a miniature sun, with a projecting corona. All these remained visible for a few seconds, and moved about within twelve inches from our eyes, so there could be no possible illusion or delusion.

Many other striking and interesting phenomena took place, but I forbear to trespass upon your space. The importance and value of these spirit-moulds cannot be over-estimated, for while the relation of Spiritual phenomena to others of doubtful and sceptical turn is valuable only on the ground of credibility, the casts of these hands and feet are permanent and patent facts, and now demand from men of science, artists, and scoffers, a solution of the mystery of their production.

A singular fact I had almost overlooked—the wax mould of Lily's hand was scented with a beautiful odour, which still clings to the wax melted from the cast, while the two other moulds from the *same wax* are scentless. I presented Lily with my gold pencil, asking her if she would write a note with it, which was not done. I asked her on Thursday evening if she had the pencil, to which she replied she had, and would keep it for the present, but it should be returned to me. Thereby hangs a tale, which I will unfold on another occasion.

Higher Broughton, Manchester, April 14th, 1876.

Correspondence.

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

THE STORY OF THE CONVERSION TO SPIRITUALISM OF A SCIENTIFIC INQUIRER—EXCITING MANIFESTATIONS AT HOME.

SIR,—I am say nearly forty years of age, and have studied classics and mathematics in the schools in earlier times; also chemistry and physics in the Royal College of Chemistry and elsewhere at a later period; I have attended countless lectures on scientific subjects in all branches; have read enough "hand-books," "text books," "manuals," and "first principles" of all the "ologies" and "isms" to form a small library; have kept up in the latest discoveries by a diligent perusal of the scientific periodicals and magazines and "proceedings" of learned societies; have conversed with every first-class *savant* I have met with on his own particular subject; and am a M.R.I. Therefore I fancied I knew a thing or two, and had a firm and sure basis wherewith to pile up future knowledge; was enfolded in threefold brass against Spiritualism especially, which, indeed, appeared demonstrably absurd, judged from the scientific side on the correlation of forces, and by the latest discoveries and experiments on brain and nervous function; and nearly all the great leaders in modern metaphysics and philosophy arrived at a similar result by pure reason and the inductive method. Protestant religious conviction or "bigotry," and my surroundings generally, lent their aid in making the subject a disagreeable one in every way.

Some years ago I accidentally received a copy of the *Report of the Dialectical Society on Spiritualism*, and glanced over it; could not believe much more than "self-deception," "Some jugglery, no doubt," and soon forgot all about it; this was my first "spiritual" reading.

In *The Quarterly Journal of Science* for August 1st, 1871, I met with a paper on "Psychic Force," by Mr. Crookes, very interesting; in the October 1st, 1871, a second paper, also by Mr. Crookes, on the same subject, still more surprising.

Now, Mr. Crookes being a first-rate man and a tried observer, one felt disturbed, unless, indeed, Mr. Crookes was for once in his life mistaken or "cracked." However, the impression again died away, until some two years after I saw Mr. Crookes's book *Facts in Spiritualism*. I now resolved to read up somewhat about this disturber of peace, and settle him one way or the other. After reading some ten volumes of a very (to me) novel and astounding character, I resolved to try an experiment with two or three intimate friends in whom I had perfect confidence. We were soon racing round with a loo-table, which went this way and that, tilted, and so on, as requested, and answered questions by tilting. Our first word spelled out in reply to a request for the name of the intelligence was "Nemo," and on request for some better cognomen, "Legion" was given. On our grumbling at this name—"Ask more serious questions," which hint we took, and got intelligent replies to all our queries. Next day (Wednesday) a planchette was procured, and several curious results followed on the first trial, in which the close imitation of the handwriting of a deceased person was quite as remarkable as the words and sentences written out. Soon afterwards a second name was written out, and very clearly, that of a Mrs. —, an

old and much esteemed friend recently deceased; then followed several long sentences appointing either of two mentioned days for "becoming visible," this to take place "in that room (our drawing-room), and nowhere else," and "through the help of a Mr. Williams a medium," and "no other person to be present but four members of our own family." I procured Mr. Williams' address on the following day (Thursday), and arranged for a *séance*, to take place on the latter of the two days mentioned (*viz.*, Saturday) at one p.m. Mr. Williams, three members of our own family, and myself, only to be present.

We now put away the planchette for a little, and formed the same party, with one fresh hand, round the same loo-table, and after the usual racing and tilting, as requested, answers to various trivial questions were obtained with much vigour; then one of our party placed his hand for a few seconds on the planchette again, when an intricate figure was produced very rapidly. This proved to be a monogram, N. L.; now came a scarcely legible word like "darken." No one of us could understand this; then came, very quickly and clearly written, "We will try to appear in the dark." The room was made dark, when the table became very lively indeed, seemed to lose its weight, and began soon to rise, or float as it were. It went up until beyond the reach of all save the two tallest of party, and they had only the tips of their fingers on the upper surface of the top of the table. On its coming down after first elevation, some one said, "Can you make it heavier?" *Yes.* "Pray do so." The weight now became so great that to move it without fracture seemed impossible. This alternate floating and "fixing" was repeated two or three times by request. Some one now said, "Can you rap answers? one for 'yes,' two for 'no'?" In a second I heard my first rap, and a very peculiar and inimitable sound it is. Several questions were asked now, and answered by raps instead of by tilts as previously, such as, "Are you still trying to appear?" *Yes.* "Do you think you can do so to-night?" *Yes.* "In half-an-hour?" *Yes.* "Twenty minutes?" *Doubtful* (by three raps). Some one fancied a hand was now placed on him; others fancied that curious firefly-like lights, or sparks, began flitting about the room. A wooden music-stand, some eighteen feet distant from the table, was moved about and slightly broken; the table became again convulsed; the leg and cross-bar were broken off with loud splitting sounds. Some one now suggested that it was "*getting very late*," and as this sentiment appeared to be very generally held by all those present, we brought experiment two to a termination.

On the following Saturday at one p.m., as arranged, Mr. Williams and three members of our own family and myself were present. Mr. Williams and the others sat down at once to a little round work-table, which I had chosen especially, because made of a plain solid slab of wood on a plain solid pillar of wood; no drawer. I had sent for two hand-bells at Mr. Williams' request, and, until they came, had placed a larger (dinner) bell underneath an Erard piano, about fifteen feet away from where the party were seated. I was anxious to have all quite conclusive. Mr. Williams was put in his chair the instant he came in, and to my positive knowledge remained there throughout, his feet in contact with the other sitters on each side, and his fingers firmly held in contact with theirs. For my own part I remained purposely roving around the table generally, to prevent even the possibility of error, or losing sight of any phenomena which might occur. Well, in a few minutes the small work-table moved up freely, and, with delicate raps, stated that the appointment had been kept: "Mrs. M— was there;" whilst one or two questions for identity were put, and being answered, several vivid and beautiful lights flitted about the room. These were very like fireflies, but were larger and more beautiful in the colour of light. I now heard the large bell ringing gently, and approaching the table through the air. I also heard and felt it when placed on the centre of the table. At this moment the two hand-bells were brought by a servant to the door, tied up in paper and string, as just come from the shop. I placed them on the top of the piano, some twelve feet from the party at the table, and had scarcely done so, and retired a step or two, when I heard the tongue of the smaller of the two bells striking inside the paper covering. I returned instantly, and removed the paper and string from both bells; whilst doing so I felt a hand grasp my foot, and the next moment the smaller of the two bells, which I had just freed from its covering, and laid down again on the top of the piano, was seized before my eyes by a small luminous spot, or, more correctly, two patches of light, with the knob of the handle of the bell between them. On looking more closely one could see that one spot was the middle knuckle of a fore-finger, and the other a thumb as far as end of first joint; the bell, ringing in a peculiarly joyous way, advanced through the air into the middle of the large room—then came to the table and went clear round the head of each of the party. I now closely watched the bell, by the light from before-mentioned spots, and marked that the ringing was caused by the tongue vibrating of its own proper motion, within the bell: which latter was sailing or floating in the air in an upright position, and quite free of all motion save this floating, gliding, onward motion; the bell made a wide circuit in the room again, then was drawn caressingly over the hands of several of the party, and lastly, was very gently laid down upon my hand. As it did so I felt the caress alluded to by the others, and saw the light vanish.

Some one now said, "I feel delicate hands touching me." Every one soon felt these in rapid succession—on the arms, on the hands, but chiefly on the head. It is impossible to give one who has not felt them any idea of the sensation of these spirit touches: firm, warm as the hand of a living person, withal an ethereal softness and delicacy not of earth; the caressing of head in my case lasted about a minute, and in that of my mother rather longer, being also in her case accompanied by an arranging and smoothing of the hair, at once recognised by her as the well remembered caress of Mrs. M—, when they were school companions. All these touches conveyed the idea of love and tenderness in its essence, so to speak.

The piano, which had been closed, but not locked, was next opened by these spirit hands, and notes were sounded (especially near the treble end) accompanying a perfect rain, or flutter of little raps going on at the same time on the table. These notes and raps kept measure or time to each other. A heavy square piano stool was drawn along the floor for several feet towards the table; rustling sounds as of a dress were heard; some leaves of music were moved about, just as if some person were there. The perfume, which Mrs. M— had used during the latter part of her life, was now perceived by every one (almost simultaneously) and added to this, a feeling of "a presence" other than ourselves. A luminous hand (up to the wrist) next appeared in the air; this was just over my mother's head (about six inches above); it flashed into light from the wrist part towards the fingers, when it appeared; it then remained quite steady for some seconds, and then the light died out from the wrist part towards the fingers. The light was so vivid that I could see the hair plaits on my mother's head distinctly. Several minor phenomena occurred, but as this paper is of undue length already, they cannot be mentioned in detail.

A young lady present now suddenly recollected that she had an engagement at that hour, and our *séance* was, rather against my wish, brought to an end.

Subsequently to the above I have had a few other experiences as remarkable in every way and as utterly subversive of a hard and fast lined materialistic science and philosophy as their greatest foe could wish. For myself, I have seen, heard, felt the much vaunted structure of self-sufficiency and pride, so laboriously put together and confidently trusted in, crumble wholly into nothing. J. R.

HAFED, PRINCE OF PERSIA.

SIR,—Allow me to point out to "J. B. W." that in his letter, appearing in your issue of the 31st ult., he has made one error which detracts from the whole of his conclusions.

He says that "If the reputed spirits of Ruysdael and Jan Stein will condescend to such petty deception, can any one have confidence that there is even a shade of truth in the events they profess to narrate?"

Ruysdael and Stein do not profess to be the narrators of the "tale." It professed to emanate from the spirits of the Persian, Hafed, and the Egyptian, Hermes, and a marked difference will be found between the *style* of the narration itself, and the style of such of the fragmentary pieces in the appendix to the work as do profess to emanate from Ruysdael and Stein.

The point of "J. B. W.'s" communication is thus partly lost, because he cannot be so unreasonable as to hold the real exponents of the "high moral theme" (Hafed and Hermes) responsible for any errors of judgment of either of the artists, or any vagaries which the latter might have indulged in while prosecuting *their* part of the undertaking.

The literary (and most important) part of the work is one thing, the artistical another; and to me it seems that each should be treated on its own ground. Any mistakes which may have been made by one set of workers cannot possibly affect the integrity of the other set, or throw discredit upon the work of the latter; and such mistakes do not necessarily affect the integrity even of those by whom they were made.

A. J. S.

Cardiff, April 4th, 1876.

THE SCATTERGOOD TESTIMONIAL.

SIR,—The treasurer desires respectfully to acknowledge donations from Martin R. Smith, Esq., Alexander Calder, Esq., Thomas Everitt, Esq., and other friends. Further donations to the fund should be sent forthwith, as the presentation will be made on Tuesday, the 2nd of May.

Tea will be provided in the Old Court House, Union-street, Halifax, at 5.30 p.m.; business to commence at 7 o'clock. Admission to tea, 1s.; after tea, 6d.

Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jackson, Mrs. Butterfield, Miss Longbottom, and other mediums and normal speakers, are kindly giving addresses for the benefit of the fund. Readers of *The Spiritualist* are respectfully solicited to send special donations and post-office orders to the undersigned, by whom they will be duly acknowledged.

"The liberal deviseth liberal things."

Signed on behalf of the Committee, JOHN LAMONT.

199, London-road, Liverpool.

MYSTERIOUS HOUSEHOLD DISTURBANCES.

SIR,—Happening this week to have paid a visit to a friend living in the south of London, an interesting case was related to me, which I think merits publication, as I believe the narrator to be a thoroughly trustworthy person, and quite unacquainted with Spiritualism. It appears that on several occasions recently mysterious knockings have been heard in one of the bedrooms, by more than one member of the family, also by a visitor staying in the house; in addition, what appeared to sound like footsteps on the stairs during the night have been heard by others in the family. These mysterious sounds have caused great alarm, and no definite clue has yet been found to the cause; but the climax appeared to have arrived last week, when one day the maidservant went upstairs to the said room, and found the door locked. After trying to open it, and not succeeding, she called her mistress, who also tried, but failed. The servant, thinking that one of the children had fastened it inside in fun, said: "If any one is in the room, open the door." Almost immediately the door flew open, as if by magic, and directly three distinct knocks, like to those before heard, sounded upon the door, and it was found on examination that the bolt of the lock was out, the key having to be obtained in order to close the door.

On hearing this story I said that no doubt a former inhabitant of the

house could not rest, and wished to reveal some information, perhaps, connected with a hidden treasure; which suggestion, of course, produced some laughter. In order, however, to test the matter, I proposed a *séance*, which was strongly objected to by the lady of the house, but acquiesced in by her husband, and we two sat down to a small table. After sitting for about a quarter of an hour the table moved, which movement we ascertained, after I had put one or two questions, was caused by the same invisible power which had produced the knocks on the door. The invisible stated in reply to my questions that he had lived in the house about seventy years before, and that a large sum of money was deposited under the boards of the said room. Of course, I advised my friend to test the truth of this, but whether his better half will acquiesce in having the boards taken up I have not yet heard, although, strange to relate, in addition to this she herself had a dream with reference to an aged individual supposed to be in the house at the commencement of their tenancy.

I doubt not this will ultimately be found to be one of those cases which cannot be attributed to anything short of supernatural agency; and this view is strengthened by the fact that no one in the house would be likely simply for amusement to produce the mysterious sounds, as all the occupants would rather not have heard them.

E. PARKINSON ASHTON.

Hope Villa, 205, Brixton-road, S.W.
April 12th, 1876.

ORGANIC CHANGES IN THE SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT.

SIR,—In your number of March 3rd appear some fine thoughts on the above subject. You say your Spiritualists are commencing to divide into groups, those of like education going by themselves in societies. Your explanation shows that the movement in Great Britain is only in advance of a similar one in the United States. With you it is already being realised in practice; with us it scarcely yet amounts to a theory or an idea. With you, organisation, order, and system, are settled convictions; with us, order is coming out of chaos, and the progress is not rapid. We have noticed the opposition you have met with to organisation, but we have to contend with greater opposition. Some years ago the movement here was better organised than now, and failure resulted from too great a degree of liberality. We were too liberal towards the anti-Spiritualists, and invited and courted them to such an extent as to make them the stronger element in most of our meetings. This was the cause of much of our disintegration. Reconstruction has commenced, and as it proceeds our efficiency and strength increase. Some of the special issues that also had a temporarily destructive influence are being modified, blended and harmonised, so that this latter influence will be only temporary.

History chronicles the fact that great reforms do not originate with the educated classes, and modern Spiritualism is no exception to this rule. Its birth was among the solid and natural, but not in so-called fashionable circles. In its transmission to other countries it was received by the educated classes; thus in England the movement was started on a plane of intelligence already orderly, and with this advantage you will have less difficulty in popularising it. In America the struggle will be long and hard, and Spiritualism will at last have to be forced upon the educated classes. You will now see why, here in America, we are not yet ready to make much of a movement towards including the educated. The national organisation of the United States has at times demonstrated power and influence, but at present it is sleeping. There are indications that it will not sleep always. It has got a little off the track; when it revives you may expect to see it accomplish some more good work. Possibly its present suspension is the result of having undertaken to reform the world somewhat too fast. We watch with great interest all the Spiritualistic movements of our English cousins; we watch too with profit and pride. The American national organisation of Spiritualists will be a permanent success, when it shall be composed of a sufficient sprinkling of members that are in themselves orderly. Order, intelligence, wisdom, and profound principles must be the basis. Where many different classes of mental development are labouring to keep together in one society, and find the work difficult, they will facilitate progress by natural and judicious separations.

E. W. BALDWIN.

Milwaukee, Wis., U.S., March 31st, 1876.

PERPETUATED INDIVIDUALITY.

SIR,—If I may judge from the number of letters I get on the subject, the question of immortality or perpetuated individuality is one that interests and exercises many. I cannot find the time necessary to reply to all my correspondents, nor am I able to answer several of the queries put to me. Since, however, the same questions are asked over and over again, I venture to ask you to print for me the following letter which I wrote a short time ago in reply to a correspondent who inquired of me as to the perpetuation of conscious individuality after physical death.

In doing this I have no other object in view than to say, once and for all, in such a way as one can deal with these matters in a letter, what lies on the surface of a great question. I am conscious enough of the crudities that the letter contains. It is needless to say that it was not written for publication. But I believe that profound thought on these abstruse points would defeat my object, which is simply to say, in plain and intelligible language, what may be a partial answer to questions that rise in many minds.

M.A., OXON.

[Copy.]

Madam,—Your favour of the 8th has been forwarded to me by the Editor of *The Spiritualist*, and I trust you will excuse me if I return what you may consider a brief reply to the very important questions which it opens out. In the midst of a pressing and increasing mass of work I have hardly time to systematise my ideas, and I shrink from putting forward crude notions on a very important matter.

One or two things are clear. Of immortality, other than *perpetuated existence*, we can know nothing. I venture to think in this connection that the title of my friend Mr. Epes Sargent's excellent little book, *The Proof Palpable of Immortality*, is a misnomer. Exactness, however, is not required in the title of a popular work.

Moreover, the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, however strong a presumption they set up, seem to me to fall short of positive demonstration of our own perpetuated existence. Those who have gone deepest seem to feel most uncertain as to the nature and character of many of the operating intelligences whose existence is adduced as evidence for our own immortality.

Again, individuality is most probably greatly concerned with the outward manifestation in the human form, and would accordingly be (to a great extent) merged, impaired, or changed at physical death.

The higher individuality, or selfhood—the selecting power of which you speak—is something (as you well point out) which is inherent in the interior principle, and is the conscious Ego which through endless cycles of progress is developed upwards to perfection.

I cannot conceive this principle as other than immortal, though I can perfectly well fancy myself passing through numberless changes of being in each of which (save in the innermost) I am utterly unlike what I was in a previous state.

So far as I can put in words what is in my mind I should say that your statement is accurate. But probably there is a laxness in the use of terms all through this argument. The word immortality should be carefully defined in its use. Individuality, personality, selfhood, and the like should be equally, clearly, and specially limited in use. And when all is done we shall find, I think, that our present powers do not enable us to grasp the full meaning of or the niceties of distinction between the terms we use.

Not venturing here and now to attempt precise definition, I say, roughly, that it seems to me:—

1. That we have grounds, more or less sure, for the belief that human existence does not end with physical death. (*In some cases certainly not.*)

2. That we have grounds for belief that the future of the human spirit is one of development in progress where progress has been begun in the earth-life; and of purgatorial cleansing away of the dross of sin and corruption where the opportunities of earth-life have been wasted.

3. That personality has been fairly proven to be perpetuated over a very long course of years by the fact that departed spirits have returned and have given trustworthy evidence of their perpetuated personality.

4. That, having in view the infinitude of eternity, we have no sure ground for saying that this individuality is *indefinitely* perpetuated.

5. But, rather, that there is within what we now understand as individuality a germ of spiritual life, which is destined, probably, to be gradually eliminated from all exterior manifestations, and is the death-surviving, immortal principle in the soul of man—that by virtue of the possession of which he is a "son of God."

6. That this inherent principle we never can estimate in our present state of knowledge: but that we seem to come nearest when we say that it is "life essence," implanted by the Great Creator for development and final perfection through cycles of varying purgation.

This, I take it, is the selecting principle of yourself and G. T. C. M.

If this seems to you vague, I pray you to consider the low state of progression in which we now are, and that these are mysteries enveloped in the clouds and darkness that enshroud the throne of the Eternal. Vagueness and tentative handling seem best suited to such abstruse subjects.

M.A., OXON.

THE "DOUBLE" WHO ARE THE PRODUCERS THEREOF?

SIR,—The Baroness Adelpa Von Vay says:—"Persons of strong mesmeric power, who understand the art of magic, can draw numbers of doubles around them, and can send them out on various missions; but a deep knowledge of magical power is necessary for this." As yet I am unable to obtain the evidence that a "double" is any other than what is termed a "materialisation." I do not pretend to understand how, or by what law these forms are produced; but the most prevalent idea seems to be that the materials for manufacturing these forms are drawn from the body of a medium, from persons sitting in circle, and from surrounding elements; that these materials are so drawn and put in form by disembodied spirits, and it is quite a natural conclusion on the part of investigators that these "materialised" forms, so-called, are a covering, or are pervaded by a spiritual form which is the producer of the materialised form of such materialising spirit. Now, there is ample evidence to show that these materialised forms are produced by some intelligence which has the power to change the outline and general appearance of a materialised form, so as to represent different persons, or a person or spirit, with or without the deformities of earth life; this destroys the evidence of identity, and throws the scale of evidence of identification in favour of the producers of materialised forms being competent to produce as many imitations or representations of a single person in earth life as they choose to manufacture. The author of the above quotation further says:—"Some mediums, and even those without any special medial gifts, have been seen to appear in distant places, while they were quietly at home; this happens by the attraction of certain spirits who are able to take on the form of the person in question." Now, this is admitting that spirits can manufacture as many *fac-similes*, imitations, or representations of the same individuals as they choose. The only difference, then, between a form called a "double," and a form called a materialised spirit is, that the one is an imitation of an embodied form, and the other is an imitation of the earthly form of a disembodied spirit. If spirits have the ability to manufacture fabrics for wearing apparel, I see no reason why they may not have the power to produce an imitation of a human form. Furthermore, there is ample

evidence that spirits can sometimes make material objects invisible to mortals at will, which being the case, spirits are enabled to carry on a materialising *séance*, with the aid of permanent material masks and attire, and to multiply imitations to any extent, whether such spirits are tricksters, or qualified angel missionaries. If the latter, they are governed by the laws of development; if the former, they are under no restraint, and have no high authority, therefore will act in accordance with their own natural inclinations, and produce such phenomena as they have the ability to exhibit, and which best subserves the purposes of their own gratification, so that doubles, or materialised forms, so called, of any description, may be produced in either case.

The Baroness further says:—"When a spirit becomes incarnated, and lives on earth as man, a so-called guardian spirit accompanies him, who becomes likewise, to a certain extent, incarnated with him. The child is born into the flesh, the guardian spirit dwells in the *perisprit*, or nerve aura, and takes a form exactly similar to that of its medium or foster child. This guardian is the double or twin spirit of the incarnated spirit of the man. In this way every man has with him a living ever-abiding *facsimile*, a protecting spirit who is inseparable from him." If I understand the Baroness, this guardian, or double, has the ability to do the manual labour of his ward, separate and apart from him, but I suppose he must first materialise a physical body and clothe it. So it is plain that if a double cannot be produced in one way it can in another, and that "persons of strong mesmeric power who have a deep knowledge of magic," can, when they have more business than they can attend to alone, summon as many doubles as they require to perform the required labour, on a very economical scale. I do not intend to ridicule this idea, but it seems to me this is a plain matter of fact, provided the Baroness is correct in her statements.

It seems to me that Spiritualism is becoming lumbered with much that is valueless in the unfolding of truth; yet, I think it quite important that the advocates of new ideas should have a hearing, if such ideas bear any semblance of truth, whether such advocates be of high or low repute, as regards their literary standing or ancestral celebrity. It matters but little through whom the communications come—whether the author be a spirit embodied or a spirit disembodied, the truth or falsity of all sayings must be determined by logical tests. What are called logical tests are not unfrequently mere decisions in accordance with a certain standpoint, which standpoint is but a descendant of an ancestral dogma, for error produces only error.

The doctrine of reincarnation, I am fully persuaded, is a doctrine that has been handed down from on high, either as a stepping stone to a real truth or principle, or as an antagonism necessary to the development of truth. The doctrine of a devil, of evil spirits, with a lake of fire and brimstone in which to put them, it seems to me, was a necessity in a developing process, antagonistically considered. Different doctrines are given through different media, and each doctrine thus given, whether true or untrue, is made a standpoint to prove other doctrines which are man-made. The doctrine or theory of a "double" is, in my humble opinion, proved only by a false standpoint.

For more than fifteen years I have been a full believer in the doctrine that "none but qualified angel missionaries are the producers of the spiritual phenomena," and with a full understanding of this doctrine we have a key to unlock very many mysteries that are otherwise unsolvable. By this key it is determined that the double is produced by qualified, disembodied spirits, though the person of whom the double is a *facsimile*, may apparently will the production of the double; the volition may be and is a spiritual impression, in my humble opinion. Now, Mr. Editor, as I have broached a doctrine perchance antagonistic to long established views of your own, I desire to call your attention to an article in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of March 11th, 1876, on the first page, over the signature of E. D. Warren, and also the article of mine to which he refers in said journal of February 12th, 1876, headed *Supernal Laws Governing Spiritual Phenomena*.

D. G. MOSHER.

Mosherville, Hillsdale County, Michigan, U.S.A.

SPIRITUALISM IN ISLINGTON.

SIR,—At a physical *séance* held at Mrs. Bradley's, 77, Oakley-road, Islington, Edward Bullock, medium, the manifestations were of an exceedingly successful character. Lillie controlled the medium. Large and small hands were felt in the dark. A fan was taken from another part of the room, and the members of the circle fanned with it. Scent was sprinkled over the circle, and one gentleman having had some put in his eye (by accident) a handkerchief was taken from a lady's pocket, and used to wipe the injured organ. The spirit of Daniel Watts then appeared, and spoke through a mouth organ which floated in the air. Each member of the circle was touched by a paper tube, almost simultaneously at different parts of the table. Just before leaving, the spirit shook hands with all present, and thus terminated a remarkably successful *séance*. Miss Florence Partington, who shows promise of becoming a first-class clairvoyant, was present. One gentleman present (who till then had been a sceptic) informed us, that what he had then seen was so convincing that he should never again disbelieve in Spiritualism.

OXONIAN.

77, Oakley-road, Islington, N., April 3.

THE PRESENT OPINIONS OF THE LATE MR. GUPPY.

SIR,—Being in a position to communicate with my old friend Samuel Guppy, I send you some of his remarks from the other side. They are, for the most part, answers to questions of a nature likely to be interesting to all, and of especial interest to the numerous friends he has left behind him, who cannot but be glad to learn from so acute an observer his impressions of the spirit world. Madame de Veh is the medium, and the communications are made by means of a common saucer, with a black line marked on it. This saucer, being inverted, is moved quickly, when her hand is placed upon it, over a large piece of

cardboard, with a printed alphabet, stopping for a second at each of the required letters.

QUES. *You had a fluent tongue when on earth, and could well explain any matter that you were conversant with; please give me an account of your present state.*

ANS. Then I could find the words; now I am in the clouds of uncertainty: there I lived for myself; here I am nothing to those about me, and still less to myself. I do not suffer, but I am not happy, as I am nothing. On earth I was comfortably housed, clothed, and fed; a solid well-being surrounded me, and my habits and whims were the laws which ruled my private existence. Leaving all this, I find myself on the borders of a cold and indifferent life. Let me explain. Instead of being "Mr. Guppy," I am the last comer. I do not imply that I was badly received, for there are always good and elevated spirits ready to receive and encourage those who have just passed into the new existence; but still the earthy affections, habits, wants, and attentions remain, and seem to clog the spiritual understanding, and the new affections are not appreciated at their just value. Once having turned one's eyes from earth one feels how small an atom one is, and how monstrous have been one's faults, vanities, and ignorance. You then gladly hide yourself behind those who surround you, and oh, how thankfully you accept the outstretched hands of your new guides. When I tell you that every day, every hour, seems to take us farther and farther from the earth and its puny interests, you will understand the difference between the one existence and the other, and it must be a sympathy and a desire to be useful that can draw an answer from us to you, for it is my wish to advance and soar above the cloudy, dingy earth interest. Had I not some family interest or chain, I should never make myself known but to those who, like you, old friend, call upon me, with Madame's help, to get an answer tending to unravel riddles complicated to you, but which are as clear as day to those who, like myself, see from above.

QUES. *But how are you occupied? What are you doing?*

ANS. Repenting at leisure for opportunities misused and neglected.

QUES. *It seems to me that the best kind of repentance is to be up and doing. Regretting the past is of no use; the right thing to do is to retrieve that, by doing better in the future.*

ANS. Well, you are astonishing! Do you suppose that I sit still with my hands in my lap, and pipe my eye. No, I learn to measure my ignorance by the wonders I see, and by more I shall see when, like a schoolboy, I shall advance to a higher class. Is it not work to try to get out of the narrow, tight-fitting garment of ignorance?

QUES. *Have you discovered anything about reincarnation?*

ANS. Dear me, I know no more about it than you. I am not yet beyond the antechamber, and, believe me, the curtain of the chamber of knowledge is too thick and heavy for me to lift.

QUES. *But there are people here, still in the flesh, who seem to know all about it.*

ANS. They have heard of it from spirits who have been longer in this world, and have crossed the threshold of a higher knowledge than I possess; nevertheless, there is more sense in the reincarnation theory than the old world credulity which speaks of the beginning and end of man, and thinks it can judge of what will take place after that end,—all wrong, for they stick to antiquated traditions, whose only claim to respect is their great age. As with many such antiquities, when you remove the dust of ages, you find nothing but bare walls, bereft of all poetry and beauty. I knew nothing positive when I was with you, but was avoided by many as a free rough thinker, who did not accept the antiquities; and I do not like to speak too positively now, as I feel so ignorant, but I think you do not understand reincarnation. It ought to be called progression. You will find it difficult to make the doctrine acceptable, if you talk about there being people now on earth who were Joan of Arc, &c., &c.

One evening the following communication was given without any question having been asked. I had been saying that I had sent some of Mr. Guppy's remarks to a friend, and that he had replied that they were vague, and had not the Guppy ring about them. I had also said that some people did not consider Guppy's spirit portrait like him.

GUPPY. What does he mean by the Guppy ring? Does he suppose that on our arrival here we do not see and feel what monstrous donkeys we were, although we previously considered ourselves most intelligent. When I say this I do not wish you to infer that we become wise or clever all at once, but at least we are convinced of our utter ignorance; and with regard to my face not being like what it was, I come with a spiritualised mask, trying to keep the features, but spiritualising the expression; and if you mark well, I am even younger looking, having thrown off a little of the grosser expression.

QUES. *Have you anything to say to S— M—?*

ANS. Tell him that our translation does not make *Imperators* of us. He has passed through centuries of progress; I am Samuel (sic) Guppy still. The old man clings to me. When I can cast him off I shall be more worthy of being listened to. Now my conversation, arriving from so far (however rapid the mode of transmission), appears twaddle to Mr. M—, M.A.

QUES. *Have you communicated in London?*

ANS. Shewn my beautiful phiz through Bastian and Taylor. Well, dear friends, here I am, proud to meet you all. Good company is, and always was, a pleasure to me, although I also enjoyed the rough and ready sort. Now, Mr. Veh, let's have a jaw—I mean talk. You remember me, I remember you; so that's settled. You remember me as a rough sort of individual, and I remember you as a plain spoken one. You did right to defend the absent, and I was glad that some one should hear the truth. Now I make my bow, and leave the scene of my triumph.

[Allusion here is made to what M. de Veh once said in Mr. Guppy's presence to his wife, in deprecation of her harsh judgment of another medium.]

QUES.—As this process of communicating with the saucer is rather tedious, do you think you can use Madame de Veli's hand to write?

ANS. (written through the hand).—I wish I could get at you as a medium, wouldn't I then pump my ideas into your brain; a system of suction not to be had, so I must make use of another's hand, but not her brain, as I wish her to be my secretary, and not to dictate to me. I always liked to hear myself talk, and so now I like to dictate and guide another's pen.

QUES.—Very well; we should like to know, then, about the actual state of spirits in the spirit world. Here is your telegraph, pray use it, and let us learn from you something that will be profitable to us, and help us to prepare for that state.

ANS.—Dear old friend and companion of many a happy hour, I hear what you say, and wish I were worthy of being your guide; you desire to penetrate the unknown ways; you wish to know the work that is before you, and how to prepare to shorten or diminish the trials you may have to undergo. But instead of being a master—a teacher—I feel like a little boy just going to school, and, ridiculous as it may appear to you, if you could see me, I am often with open eyes and gaping mouth trying to understand and learn the new truths; I feel so small and such a nonentity before the immense map of knowledge spread out before me. I had seen much water and much land when in your sphere, but compared to all I have to see and visit here, it is like a voyage from London to Greenwich. You call the manifestations wonders, but compared to what you could have, were you better prepared, the present are mere child's play. Ask me anything you want to know, but remember it is as difficult for us to explain as for you to understand.

QUES.—How are you dressed?

ANS.—Fluidical garments are all we require, for heat and cold do not exist for us. When you hear of spirits being cold and shivering, it means they are tied to the earth's influences. It is only those who have a work allotted to them who materialise their garments sufficiently for you to feel and touch them.

QUES.—Where do you get your dress from upon your arrival in spirit land?

ANS.—Why, you old goose! When I say fluid, we are all fluid. As soon as one wakes and is a spirit one is fluidically dressed; but do not suppose that it is directly after departure from your side of the river that a new comer is a spirit. How many lie torpid and still, unmoved by the gloriously busy throng around them! They neither sleep nor do they wake; their state is that of the *pupa*, neither caterpillar nor butterfly. And even when they do wake to their new life they refuse to accept their position; not being prepared for it, their spiritual sight cannot support the light of the new day. They refuse to see and understand. They would prefer total darkness, as their souls would not then feel in a strange land. Oh, dear friends, how blessed are those who come into the new existence prepared to encounter all its brightness and busy life! As each one profits or neglects the opportunities given him while on earth, so will the time of his probation be lengthened or shortened. Kibosh was innocent of all advancement in the world he lived in; he was so from having no opportunity for moral education, consequently, those years spent idly upon the earth will not be counted against him; whereas Henry Morgan had a position where he could have exercised his good opportunities. His years of neglect will count double. God bless him; for he is working with a truly repentant spirit. Be genial with him when you have an opportunity, for his state is indeed a painful one. His eyes, his memories are all open to the sad past, and he would often have asked as a charity to drink the waters of Lethe.

QUES. Do you think it would be unkind of me to call attention to an account of him and his depredations that has appeared in the recent number of a periodical?

ANS. Nothing you can say or write about John King can touch him compared to the tortures of his memory; truly memory is a real purgatory, where you might wish the Catholic Masses were really profitable; for if the retrospect of one's past life is a torture to the best of men, think what criminals must feel and suffer, and how gladly they would keep in the dark, or seek the earth's neighbourhood, hoping to hide their heads and thus forget and be forgotten. And when they are called forth by the kind guardians, and encouraged to try the light, can you fancy anything more awful or more natural? You good people often in discussing the future state, object or approve of theories about this life as being unnatural or too natural to be accepted, for you all start (as I did in my proud, inflated ignorance, called "intelligence") with the erroneous notion that once in another existence all and everything must be changed, we are all to be either angels with white drapery, wings and harps, or devils with horns and long tails, all very black. What an atrocious libel on Divine justice. Where would the poor savages be? or the tolerably virtuous man? There is one thing certain, that the legions of perfect angels would be very much in the minority. No, no, dear old friend, go your way quietly, trying to do all the good you can in a small way, quite prepared to pass the river of life with a tranquil reliance on the love—the great love—which administers justice tempered with mercy, and not one even of the smallest shall be met otherwise than with pity and Divine charity.

J. N. GLEDSTANES.

Paris.

A GOOD TEST SEANCE RELATING TO MATERIALISED SPIRIT DRAPERY.

SIR.—In your issue for April 7, page 168, reference is made to an experiment conducted by me; the following are the facts of the case as described in a lecture delivered a few months ago, they being of interest to your scientific readers:—

"The fourth and last objection which was replied to at considerable length, was: The phenomena are produced by trick and legerdemain,

and ordinary conjurers produce phenomena that are equally incomprehensible; indeed, they produce the same phenomena under equally difficult conditions. The whole controversy, the lecturer pointed out, with the conjurers and their supporters was a question of conditions. But he defied any conjurer, by any of the sleight-of-hand resources of his profession, to produce the phenomena he was about to describe, and under similar conditions to those in which they took place. And to silence conjurers, and to brand them as mere pretenders to a power they did not possess, he therefore offered 100 guineas to any man who, in his presence and under the conditions he was about to describe, could produce similar phenomena by trick or deception. On Saturday, May 1, he prepared a cabinet, and carefully excluded everything that had the appearance of whiteness, and everything that could by any possibility be used for clothing. Having arranged the cabinet, he locked the doors of the rooms, and carried with him three different keys that required to be used before the *séance* room could be entered. At 6.15 p.m. he unlocked the doors, and with his friend Mr. Adshead, of Derby, entered the *séance* rooms. With Mr. Adshead, he carefully examined the rooms and cabinet, and he found everything as left the day before. He then shut and fastened the door of the cabinet, so that the space was entirely enclosed. At 6.30 the medium arrived and entered the room adjoining the *séance* room. When in the room, he (the lecturer) requested Mr. Adshead to join him, and observe the medium to undress and redress in dark clothes, which he had provided. The medium stripped himself absolutely naked, and all his clothing was removed. He furnished him with a dark striped shirt, a pair of dark brown stockings, a pair of black trousers, and his own topcoat, which was blue and lined with black silk. He had not a light or white article of any kind on his person. He led the medium, thus dressed, to the cabinet, and placed him upon a black sofa cushion, with his head upon a black sofa pillow. Those present sat in a good light for about thirty minutes, after which the light was reduced to dimness, and a figure, fully draped in white, about four feet high, came from the cabinet and moved about the room. It took up a pair of scissors he had placed on the floor at his feet, and cut from its garment a piece about five inches by one and a-half inches, which it gave to Mr. M.—who sat next him. This piece they afterwards examined, and found it to be very fine lawn. The figure then retired into the cabinet, and reappeared, walking or rather gliding around the entire circle of sitters, touching their hands with cool, small fingers. It also placed its garment on the hands of the sitters, and rubbed it across them. It had the feeling of soft, fine cambric. After that, the figure retired. This form was succeeded by two forms at the same time, one being a tall female figure, about five feet four inches high, and the other a smaller and more slender figure, about four feet four inches high. They followed each other out of the cabinet, the smaller figure leading, and they stood one foot apart from each other. The latter figure placed its arm on the smaller figure, stooping towards it, and audibly kissed it. These two figures frequently retired and reappeared, and finally they came out into the centre of the room within four feet of the sitters, and stood apart from each other. They gradually approached each other and apparently coalesced, and again separated and retired, like the *Scin Laeca*, partially vanishing as they retired. After these figures had entered the cabinet, the chair, which stood within three feet of the entrance, was drawn partially within the door of the recess. On the chair had been placed paper and pencil. A lady who was present rested her right hand on the top rail of the chair, and immediately the pencil, apparently without being held by any possible hand, wrote a letter to a gentleman in London, which letter he (Mr. Barkas) had that day forwarded to the gentleman for whom it was written. Shortly after this writing phenomenon the light of the room was turned fully on, and the medium emerged from the cabinet dressed exactly as he was dressed at the time of his entrance. There were present two ladies and seven gentlemen. All would, if required, authenticate the statement he had made."

T. P. BARKAS, F.G.S.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

MR. BARKAS has contributed an excellent letter to the *West Cumberland Times* about Miss Wood's mediumship.

SIR HENRY MORGAN.—In *All the Year Round*, March 4th, 1876, in an article headed "Remarkable Adventures," there is a short biography of Sir Henry Morgan, whose portrait the author had before him, and which he thus describes:—"It is the image of a bluff cavalier, a square head with hair parted in the midst, falling in long love curls over the shoulders, a long straight nose, large eyes set wide apart, a well-cut upper, and a thick, heavy, sensual under lip. A moustache curled upwards gives a jaunty expression to an otherwise heavy-looking countenance, resting on a square-cut jowl and double chin. Altogether it is a face of power: not delicate, not sympathetic, not intellectual, but simply strong, resolute, and steadfast. The background is appropriately filled in with a sketch of a burning town and a sinking fleet." This account of the great pirate informs us that he was left, in 1680, in Jamaica as deputy-governor, by Lord Carlisle, when he signalled his reign by hanging every buccaneer he could catch. It would be interesting to see this picture, in order to judge whether there is any resemblance between John King and the man he says he was.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. ROBINSON.—You have not added your address to your letter, and it is necessary that you should do so to authenticate the case to the public.

E. W. B., Milwaukee, U.S.A.—We have sent your letter about the money order to Mr. Allen. Call the attention of Mr. John Warr, of Milwaukee, to your communication.

D.—Portions of the other doggerel were bad enough, but when, in addition to faulty metre, there are such would-be rhymes, as "subject" and "about it," also "questions" and "incorporations," nobody has much to gain by publication.

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ON SALE AT THE BRANCH OFFICE OF "THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER, 38, GREAT RUSSELL-STREET, BLOOMSBURY, LONDON, W.C. (Entrance in Woburn-street). ALL LETTERS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE MANAGER.

THE DEBATABLE LAND, by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, formerly American Minister at the Court of Naples. A standard work containing interesting and well-authenticated facts, proving the reality of spirit communion. It also contains an elaborate essay defining the author's views of the relationship of Spiritualism to the Christian Church. 7s. 6d.

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REPORT ON SPIRITUALISM, by the Committee of the Dialectical Society. This committee consisted of literary, scientific, and other professional men who investigated Spiritualism for two years without engaging the services of any professional medium, after which they published the report. Original edition, 15s.; moderately abridged edition, 6s.

RESEARCHES IN THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM, by William Crookes, F.R.S. The best work ever published to scientifically demonstrate the reality of some of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. 5s.

MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.G.S. This book contains a masterly argument in reply to Hume's "Essay on Miracles." It also records a large number of interesting spiritual manifestations, and contains some of the personal experiences of Mr. Wallace. 6s.

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CONCERNING SPIRITUALISM, by Gerald Massey. A brilliant well written little essay on Spiritualism. Neatly bound, with gilt edges. 2s.

LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM, by the late J. W. Edmonds, Judge of the Supreme Court, New York, U.S. This book consists of essays on the Social, Moral, and Scientific aspects of Spiritualism. 3s. 6d.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD? OR, SPIRITUALISM EXPLAINED, by Fred. A. Binney. A practically useful work for inquirers, giving general information about English professional and non-professional mediums, also about the periodical and other literature of Spiritualism. 3s.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND, by Benjamin Coleman. Contains important facts connected with the early movement in this country with which the author was identified, and an account of some of the most remarkable of his personal experiences. 1s.

WHAT AM I? Vol. II., by E. W. Cox, Sergeant-at-Law. An Introduction to Psychology. This book admits the reality of some of the Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism, but argues that they are produced by an alleged Psychic Force, unconsciously governed in its action by the thoughts of the medium or the spectators. 8s. The first volume of this book, which deals chiefly with the Psychology of the spirit, is now published.

GLIMPSES OF THE SUPERNATURAL, by the Rev. F. G. Lee, D.D. This newly-published book contains Facts and Traditions relating to Dreams, Omens, Apparitions, Wraiths, Warnings, and Witchcraft. The author admits the reality of Spiritual visitations, but considers modern Spiritualism to be diabolical. He, however, gives valuable facts, previously unpublished, and prints the only authorised and complete account of the Apparition seen by one of the ancestors of Lord Lyttelton. 2 Vols., crown 8vo., 15s.

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PROOF PALPABLE OF IMMORTALITY, by Epes Sargent. This work, by an American author of acknowledged ability, gives an account of the materialisation of Spirits in England and America during the past few years in the presence of famous mediums, and, as a rule, before educated witnesses of more or less literary and scientific ability. The work also contains remarks on the relations of the facts to theology, morals, and religion; and it is prefaced with a portrait of the materialised spirit Katie King, copied from a photograph of her taken by Mr. Harrison by the aid of the magnesium light. 5s.

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