

The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

The Oldest Newspaper connected with Spiritualism in Great Britain.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper.
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THE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, operating at the Athenaeum, Temple-street, Birmingham, purposes holding a small Bazaar, or Sale of Useful and Fancy Articles, at the Athenaeum, on Monday, January 24th, to open at Three o'clock p.m., and to conclude with a Concert and Miscellaneous Entertainment, commencing at Eight p.m. This Entertainment will be of a superior character, two or three professional singers having kindly promised their services.

The proceeds of the Bazaar and Entertainment are intended to form the nucleus of a fund for Building a Lecture Hall and Spiritual Lyceum; said fund to be increased by Entertainments, Seances, and otherwise, during the next two years.

Any contributions of money or goods for the Bazaar will be thankfully received by either of the following ladies:—Mrs. Groom, 166, St. Vincent-street; Mrs. Foley, 283, Icknield-street, West; Mrs. Harper, Soho-hill, Handsworth; Mrs. Sunderland, 67, Bull-street; Mrs. Hill, 224, Bristol-street; Mrs. Starling, 160, Lozells-road, Handsworth. Robert Harper (Soho-hill), Treasurer.

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The above work has just been issued in America, and copies may be had in a week or two, price 10s. 6d. each, at *The Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office*, 33, Great Russell-street, London, W.C.

ANNALI DELLO SPIRITISMO IN ITALIA.—Rivista Psicologica di Nicoford Filalete. Published on the 15th of every month, at Turin, Tip. Baglione, via Bogino, No. 23.

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THE SPIRITUAL SCIENTIST, of Boston, U.S., will, early in January, commence the publication of a translation of the works of H. Cornelius Agrippa, and it is devoting considerable space to Occult Philosophy. Subscriptions, 13s. per annum, including postage, from America. Money orders to be made payable to J. Selwood, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

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BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS,

38, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.

AGENDA FOR JANUARY.

| | | |
|------------|-------|--|
| Monday, | 3rd. | Offices and Library Committee at 6 p.m. |
| Wednesday, | 5th. | Dalston Society's <i>Soirée Danseante</i> at Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street. The <i>soirée</i> of the B. N. A. S., usually held on the first Wednesday in the month, is therefore postponed till the second Wednesday. |
| Monday, | 10th. | Lecture and Discussion Committee at 6 p.m. |
| Tuesday, | 11th. | Prize Essay Committee at 5.30. |
| " | " | Finance Committee at 6 p.m. |
| " | " | Council Meeting at 6.30 p.m. |
| Wednesday, | 12th. | <i>Soirée</i> at 6.30 p.m. Music, Conversation and Refreshments. Open to Members and Friends; admission 1s. |
| Friday, | 14th. | <i>Seance</i> for Enquirers at 7.30 p.m. Mr. C. E. Williams, Medium. |
| Monday, | 17th. | <i>Soirée</i> Committee at 6 p.m. |
| Tuesday, | 18th. | <i>Seance</i> Committee at 6 p.m. |
| " | " | Provincial Societies Committee at 7 p.m. |
| Monday, | 24th. | Discussion Meeting at 8 p.m. Free to Members and Subscribers. |

Members of Committees are requested to attend the meetings mentioned in the above list, without further notice. They will be further advised of any Special Meetings which it may be necessary to convene during the month.

BRIXTON PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

6, Loughborough Road North.
Tuesday, 4th.—Council Meeting at 8 p.m.
Wednesday, 12th.—Discussion Meeting at 8 p.m.

LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Friday, 14th.—Annual *Soirée* at the Assembly Rooms, Islington. Chair at 8 o'clock. Admission 1s.
Every Sunday.—Public Meetings at the Islington Assembly Rooms, at 3 and 7 p.m. Trance Mediums from all parts of England.

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A continuation of these meetings will be held at the Rooms of the Association for reading and discussing papers on Spiritualism and kindred topics. They will recommence on Monday, January 24th at 7.30 o'clock, and will be held fortnightly until the end of April. Friends having papers to communicate are requested to send them at an early date to the Secretary, at 23, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS

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BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF SPIRITUALISTS.

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

BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SPIRITUALISTS.THE READING ROOM & LIBRARY
38, GREAT RUSSELL-STREET, BLOOMSBURY.

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February, 1875.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper.

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

VOLUME EIGHT. NUMBER TWO.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JANUARY 14th, 1876.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

NO. XLVI.

[The subject of antagonistic influence by the adversaries was continued.]

IN what has now been said, we have but recapitulated what has been said before of the organised opposition from those who are our opponents. But one special form of attack, which will become more and more frequent, we have not yet dealt with. As objective spiritual manifestations become more and more frequent, and as the inconsiderate craving for them increases, so will it come to pass that powerful instruments will be developed through whom our adversaries may be enabled to produce their frivolous or tricky manifestations, so as to discredit the true spiritual work. This is one of the special forms of opposition, and the most dangerous: for in proportion to the undeveloped character of the spirit will be its power over gross matter, its cunning, and, in some cases, its malignity. Powerful agencies are even now at work, as we are assured, who will seize every opportunity of developing mediums through whom phenomena the most startling may be produced, so as to convince the inquirers of supernatural power so called. This done, the rest is easy. By degrees trick and fraud are allowed to creep in, the moral teachings are allowed to appear in their true light, doubt is insinuated, and the uncertainty and suspicion which have become the fixed attitude of the mind regarding phenomena which at first seemed so surely spiritual, gradually extend to all manifestations and teachings.

No more sure means of discrediting the teaching of those who are sent to instruct, and not merely to astonish or amuse, was ever devised by cunning. For men say: We have tried, we have tested for ourselves, and we have found it out. Either it is connected with fraud, or it teaches base and immoral doctrines, or it is full of falsehood; in short, it is diabolical. It is no use to appeal to such, and tell them that they must discern between the true and the false, for their shaken faith will not allow of this. They have proved what they trusted to be false, and the whole edifice of their belief lies in ruins around them. The foundation is not secure, and will not support the building.

We say again that no more diabolical device for paralysing our work was ever planned. We solemnly warn you of it. See to it that you act upon our warning. Beware of encouraging the promiscuous evolution of violent physical power. Such comes generally from the lower and more undeveloped; and its development is frequently attended by spirits for whose absence you should pray. In the encouragement, especially in newly-formed circles, of undue care for physical marvels is a great risk. Such are necessary to the work, and we do not in any degree undervalue their importance to certain minds. We desire to bring home evidence to all; but we do not desire that any should rest in that material form of belief in an external something which is of little service to any soul. We labour for something higher than to show curious minds that we can do badly under certain conditions what man can do better under other conditions. Nor do we rest content even with showing man that

beings external to himself can interfere in the order of his world. If that were all, he might be so much the worse for knowing it. We have before us one sole aim, and that alone has brought us to your earth. You know our mission. In days when faith has grown cold, and belief in God and immortality is waning to a close, we come to demonstrate to man that he is immortal, by virtue of the possession of that soul which is a spark struck off from Deity itself. We wish to teach him of the errors of the past, to show him the life that leads to progress, to point him to the future of development and growth.

It is not with such an end before us that we can tamely allow our work to be set aside for the development of any strange phenomenal power that spirits may possess over gross matter. If we use such power at all it is because we find it necessary, not because we think it desirable, save always as a means to an end. Were it harmless we should say so much. But being what it is, an engine of assault from the adversaries, the worst we have to dread, we are urgent in warning you against promiscuous seeking after these physical marvels, and against resting in them as the end and aim of intercourse with us.

Regard them only as means of conviction, as so many proofs to your minds of actual intervention from the world of spirit with the world of matter. Look upon them as such only, and use them as the material foundation on which the spiritual temple may be built. Rest assured that they of themselves can teach you no more than that; nay, if the operating spirits find in you no capacity to grasp more, they will gradually give way to those who can do such work better than they can, and so the means of further knowledge will pass away. From that basis you must go on to further steps. You must seek to know of the nature of the agency, of its source and intent. Surely you would desire to be assured that it is of God, beneficent and pure in origin and intent. Surely you would seek to know how much the visitors from beyond the grave can tell you of that universal dwelling-place of your race; how they can satisfy you of your own soul's destiny, and of the means by which you may best fit yourself for the change which you call death. For if we be not as you, how is our experience fruitful to you? If we cannot tell you of your own immortality, what profits it that we prove to you never so conclusively that we ourselves exist? Such may be a curious fact; it can never be more.

When you can reach out beyond the phenomenal to the actual investigation of Truth for its own sake—when, in short, you can believe our pretensions—then we can open out to you a realm of which you are yet ignorant, and which has been far more fully revealed to earnest seekers in other lands than yours. To few only in your land have the higher revealings of spiritual truth been vouchsafed. Even this means of communing by writing, which seems to you such an advance on the clumsy rapping out of messages and such material means of communication, is as nothing, compared with the inner communing of spirit with spirit without the intervention of material signs. In America, the land from which dates this movement in your days, there are many who have been so far developed as to lead a dual life, and to hold face to face intercourse with us. We have even now a band of workers there who are achieving results which we cannot command here through faithlessness of mind, materiality of interests, and even grossness of atmospheric surroundings. It is not with our work as with your mundane affairs. We read the heart, and it is useless to feign interest which you do not feel—that you would not do—or to proceed on our way while faith is lacking. It has been so in all ages of the world. Efforts have been made from time to time to pour in advanced knowledge; it has been found that the time was not come, and the effort has been withdrawn.

* In *The Spiritualist* of August 15th, 1873, an account was printed of some phenomena which occurred in a private circle held at the house of Dr. Stanhope Speer, 13, Alexandra-road, Finchley-road, N.W., through the mediumship of a gentleman who is known to Spiritualists under the *nom de plume* of "M.A. (Oxon)." A mass of evidence as to identity given up to that time has since been greatly increased, and in all cases where verification is possible, the statements made have been found to be literally accurate. This has been the case when extracts from rare works have been laboriously authenticated in the library of the British Museum. Evidence being so given of the independent action of spirit, and of the freedom of the messages from colour by the medium's thoughts, it has been thought well to print selections from a great mass of "Spirit Teachings" which have been from time to time written out automatically through his hand. The communications so given extend over three years, and are principally concerned with the Religious Aspects of Spiritualism. They are the work of many spirits, each of whom preserves his individuality, even to the peculiarity of the writing used. The opinions are frequently the reverse of those held by the medium, and are written (as far as can be ascertained) without aid from his mind. The hand is automatically moved, even though the brain be occupied about other work. Great care has been taken to provide conditions under which reliable messages can be obtained.—[Ed.]

But this is not what we wish to say. We desire only to warn you against a danger, and to encourage you to rise above the material to the spiritual plane. Receptivity must precede higher development: but we yearn and pray for the time when you shall have shaken yourselves free from earthly trammels, and seek only after the higher revealings of Truth. To that end you must have singleness of purpose: you must have shaken yourselves free from human opinion, and have dissociated yourselves from the material plane, so far as an occupant of earth may do so.

Eternal Father! Thou in Whose Name we work, and for the revealing of Whose Truth we are sent to earth, enable us to elevate and purify the hearts of those to whom we speak, that they may rise from earth and open their spiritual senses to discern the things which we reveal. May Faith grow in them, so that they may aspire to Truth, and, leaving earthly interests behind, press on to learn the Revelation of the Spirit.

+ IMPERATOR.

[*I remarked that I had no doubt that all that was said was true, and I added that I had difficulty in understanding why some law and order did not obtain on the spiritual side, so as to curb those unruly spirits. They seemed to do what they pleased, and to be under no governance. Also I expressed my wonder at their false statements. I could not see why a spirit should take pleasure in personation.*]

You err in supposing there is no law and order with us. It is that the neglect of conditions on your part frustrates orderly effort. You must learn to fence your circles round with proper conditions, and then you will eliminate half the trickery and contradiction. The time will not come when all that you call evil will be wiped out; for this is a matter of spiritual training, and we have no power to save you from the process, which is for your progressive development. It is necessary that you pass through it. You have much to learn, and this practical experience is one of the ways of learning.

As to personation you will learn more hereafter. For the present we tell you that there are spirits who delight in such personation, and who have the power, under certain conditions, of carrying out elaborate deception. Such take names which they see to be desired, and would reply equally to any name given them. They may usually be excluded by a careful attention to conditions, and by the efforts of a strong guardian who is able to protect the circle. Those who sit frequently and in open circles, where no care is taken of the spiritual conditions, and who have no powerful spirit friends to protect them, are in danger of incursion from these. In most circles, as far as we know, every facility is given for the intervention of tricky spirits. The phenomena are sought after in a spirit of mere curiosity. Personal friends are greedily summoned, and no pains taken to ascertain whether the spirit answering be indeed a friend or a deceiver. Foolish queries are addressed, and foolish replies eagerly swallowed. What wonder that such are the sport of the undeveloped!

[*How is one to know that this personation does not extend to all? and that what in Spiritualism appears good and coherent will not in the end prove to be only a cleverer trick? If such powers are behind who is safe?*]

We can but give you the answer you have had before. We have proved to you our good faith, our truth, our external individuality. We have given you proof upon proof. We have shown our moral consciousness by consistent truthfulness in all things, by the presence of a tone in our teachings to you which you must estimate for yourself. When complete they shall stand forth to all as pure and good. Even now you admit them to be elevated and good in tendency. Your knowledge of us, of our work, and of our aims, must lead you to a judgment such as you would frame of a fellow-man, under similar circumstances.

[*Yes. This personating spirit by speaking of whom I commenced would upset one's faith very soon, if it had got access.*]

It might have been so; we cannot tell how far we could have counteracted the effort; but we do not wish to run the risk. For contradicting statements would surely have been made, personation carried on, and in the end the scanty faith you have would have sustained a rude shock. This is a real danger to you; for the introduction of false and contra-

dictory statements would do more to foster a suspicious feeling in your mind than anything. In the end it would undermine us and drive us away.

[*Really the subject seems to be a most dangerous one to meddle with.*]

The abuse of everything is bad; the use, good and commendable. To those who in frivolous frame of mind place themselves in communion with the spheres; to those who force themselves from low motives into that which is to them only a curious thing; to the vain in their own conceit, the triflers, the untruthful, the worldly, the sensual, the base, the flippant, there is doubtless danger. We never advise any of unbalanced mind to meddle with the mysteries of mediumship. It is direful risk to them. Those only who are protected and guarded round, who act from no inner motive, but in obedience to the impulses of the guardians, who are wise and powerful to protect, should meddle, and they carefully, and with earnest prayer. We deprecate always any unlicensed meddling. Nor can any safely mingle with the spirit-world, and so introduce one more disturbing element into his earth-life, except he be of even mind and steady temper. Any unhinged mind, spasmodic temperament, fitful, purposeless character, becomes the ready prey of the undeveloped. Doubtless it is perilous for such to meddle, more especially if their interest be only in the marvellous, to gratify an idle curiosity, or to solace their own vanity. The higher messages of the Supreme are not audible to such. Would that they who can hear them would forsake the trifling of the lower spirits, and, leaving the inferior planes, press on to the purer atmosphere of the higher spheres of knowledge.

[*But all this is caviare to the world. They think far more of a good thump on the head, or of a floating chair, than of all your information, which, by-the-by, is hard enough to get.*]

True, we know it only too well. The present phase of our work is one that must be passed through. The physical accompanies but is no real part of our work. It must, as we say, precede the real development for which we wait. It will go on all around you with increasing development; and, while we warn you against the dangers which accompany it, we do not disguise the necessity for it in the present material state of your knowledge. While we deplore we acknowledge the necessity. We have more to add to what has been said, but not now. For the present, cease.

+ IMPERATOR.

THE SPIRITUALISM OF HIRAM POWERS.

DR. EUGENE CROWELL has favoured us with advance sheets of the second volume of his valuable book, *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*, and in it is the following paragraph relating to a man of great genius, the late Mr. Hiram Powers, the American sculptor, who spent a considerable portion of his life in Rome, and while there, gave attention to Spiritualism among other subjects. Dr. Crowell quotes the following from a letter written by Mr. Powers to his cousin, the Hon. Thos. E. Powers, dated Dec. 31st, 1849:—

"Little did I then dream that the day would come when I should be here in Italy, a sculptor; but I used then to dream of a white figure standing upon a pillar over the river near your father's house, which I longed to get near to, but could not for the water—it was too deep to wade through. This dream haunted me for years afterwards in Ohio, and it ceased when I first began to model in clay. It was a female figure and naked, but it did not seem alive. At that time I had never seen nor heard of anything in the way of sculpture."

From letter of Jan. 8th, 1851.

"I had not heard until Mr. Reed told me that my 'Slave' had been in Woodstock. This almost verifies an often repeated dream of mine in all respects but one. It was this: I used to see in my sleep, when a child, a white female figure across the river, just below your father's house; it stood upon a pillar or pedestal, was naked, and to my eyes very beautiful; but the water was between me and it, too deep to ford. I had a strong desire to see it nearer, but was always prevented by the river, which was always high. This dream ceased years after when I began to model.

Altogether, one may conclude that this—the dream—was not entirely a phantom. At that time I had no wakeful thoughts of sculpture, nor had I ever seen anything likely to excite such a dream."

The *Spiritual Magazine* gives in its fifth volume, on the authority of Dr. Bellows, the following statement by Mr. Hiram Powers in relation to his experiences in Spiritualism:—

"These Spiritualistic phenomena have always interested me, although I have never been in the least carried away by them. I recollect we had many *séances* at my house and others, when Home was there. I certainly saw, under circumstance where fraud, or collusion, or pre-arrangement of machinery, was impossible, in my own house, and among friends incapable of lending themselves to imposture, very curious things. That hand floating in the air, of which all the world has heard, I have seen. There was nothing but moonlight in the room, it is true, and there is every presumption against such phenomena under such circumstances. But what you see, you see, and must believe, however difficult to account for it. I recollect that Mr. Home sat on my right hand, and beside him there were six others round one-half of a circular table, the empty half towards the window and the moonlight.

"All our fourteen hands were on the table, when a hand, delicate and shadowy, yet defined, appeared, dancing slowly just the other side of the table, and gradually creeping up higher, until, above the elbow, it terminated in a mist. This hand slowly came nearer to Mrs. —, at the right side of the table, and seemed to pat her face. 'Could it take a fan?' cried her husband. Three raps responded: 'Yes,' and the lady put her fan near it, which it seemed trying to take. 'Give it the handle,' said the husband. The wife obeyed, and it commenced fanning her with much grace. 'Could it fan the rest of the company?' some one exclaimed, when three raps signified assent, and the hand, passing round, fanned each of the company, and then slowly was lost to view.

"I felt on another occasion a little hand—it was pronounced that of a lost child—patting my cheek and arm. I took hold of it; it was warm, and evidently a child's hand. I did not loosen my hold, but it seemed to melt out of my clutch. Many other similar experiences I have had. It is interesting to know that the effect is not to create supernatural terrors and morbid feelings. My children, who knew all about it, and were present, never showed any signs of trepidation, such as ghost stories excite in sensitive and young people.

"I have always thought that there was something yet inexplicable about the nervous organisation which might eventually show us to be living much nearer to spiritual forms than most believe, and that not an impossible opening of our inner senses might even here enable us to perceive these forms. When we see a man in his flesh and blood, we see his outward robes. If his nervous system alone were delicately separated out from his body, it would have the precise form of his body, but extend even to the enamel of the teeth, and the fibres of his hair. There is no part of the human frame that is not full of these invisible ramifications. Show us a man's nervous system, and filmy as it might be in parts, his form would be perfectly retained even to his eyes. Now this is one great step towards his spiritual body. A little further refinement might bring us to what is beneath the nervous system, the spiritual body, and it might still have the precise form of the man. I believe it possible for this body to appear, and under certain states to be seen. I do not often mention a waking vision which I enjoyed more than twenty years ago, but I will tell it to you. It happened five-and-twenty years ago.

"I had retired at the usual hour and as I blew out the candle and got into bed I looked upon our infant child, sleeping calmly on the other side of its mother, who also was sound asleep. As I lay broad awake, thinking on many things, I became suddenly conscious of a strong light in the room, and thought I must have forgotten to blow out the candle. I looked at the stand but the candle was out. Still the light increased, and I began to fear something was on fire in the room, and I looked over towards my wife's side

to see if it were so. There was no sign of fire, but as I cast my eye upward, and as it were to the back of my bed, I saw a green hillside, on which two bright figures, a young man and a young woman, their arms across each other's shoulders, were standing and looking down, with countenances full of love and grace upon our sleeping infant.

"A glorious brightness seemed to clothe them, and to shine in upon the room. Thinking it possible that I was dreaming, and merely fancying myself awake (for the vision vanished in about the time I have been telling you the story and left me wondering), I felt my pulse to see whether I had any fever. My pulse was as calm as a clock. I never was broader awake in my life, and said to myself, 'Thank God, what I have been looking for years to enjoy has at length been granted me—a direct look into the spiritual world!' I was so moved by the reflections excited by this experience that I could not restrain myself from awaking my wife and telling her what happened. She instantly folded her child to her bosom, weeping, and said, 'And is our darling, then, to be so soon taken from us?' I pacified her by telling her there was no evil omen in the vision I had seen; that the countenances of the heavenly visitants expressed only peace and joy, and that there was nothing to dread of harm to our child. And so I found it. I have much longed since to have any similar experience, but I never had it."

Mr. Powers being asked whether he really believed in the assertions of modern Spiritualists, said:

"I am not a believer in the revelations of modern Spiritualists, as made known through mediums or otherwise, for most corrupt and unworthy communications are often made, and with many mediums there is a great deal of trickery, while there are some so-called mediums who are nothing else but charlatans. But I do believe in the fact of spiritual manifestations, animal magnetism, and the moving of solid bodies, by means as yet unexplained by purely scientific men. I believe we are now at the threshold of a new era of discoveries, very unlike the past."

SPIRITUALISM IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

BY EMILY KISLINGBURY.

THE increased spirit of energy apparent in the numerous foreign Spiritualistic journals speaks well for the progress of Spiritualism in their respective countries. The persecutions in France seem to have strengthened the faith and ardour of all true believers in that country, and the publicity which the recent trials have given to the subject of Spiritualism generally has brought it before the notice of many who would not otherwise have heard of it. The *Revue Spirite* for January, which opens with a review of the events of the past year, congratulates the cause that the publication of the works of Allan Kardec in the English language, and the consequent discussion of the Spiritist doctrines in England and America, were coincident with the above apparently sad events, and that sympathy has thus been made the handmaid of enlightenment.

The formation of a confederation among the Belgian Spiritual societies, as the result of the late Congress at Brussels, will probably have the effect of bringing about a similar union among the Spiritualists in the French provinces, in connection with the chief society in Paris. The Belgians have taken as their model the British National Association of Spiritualists; full reports of the meetings of the Brussels Congress are still appearing in the *Messenger de Liège*, and the presence of M. Leymarie, who attended the Congress as the representative of the French Spiritists, seems not only to have strengthened the bonds of amity between the friends of the cause in each nation, but to have awakened in each and all the desire for a closer union among themselves, such as only a well-devised scheme of organisation has power to effect. In addition to the *Messenger*, Belgium has this year started another journal, partly in French, partly in Flemish—*De Rots*, which is published at Ostend.

Spiritualism in Spain is still flourishing, having also had its share of persecution. One journal—*el Spiritismo*—has been suppressed by the authorities, but there still remain

four journals in Spain itself, besides those published in the Spanish language in Mexico and Montevideo.

In Italy, Spiritualism seems to be progressing quietly, but, from the scarcity of physical phenomena, it makes less noise in the world. The *Annali*, published at Turin, continues to be edited in an able and scholarly manner, but treats the subject from the moral and philosophic, rather than the phenomenal and historical standpoint. The Baroness Guldenstucke, however, who is now travelling in Italy, speaks of having met with Spiritualist societies in all the chief towns, and makes further mention of a school which exists at Venice for the children of Spiritualists.

Considerable knowledge of the subject has been gained in Germany by the increased circulation of the *Psychic Studies*, its high literary character commanding the notice and respect of the press; also by the publication in the German language during the past year of the works of Crookes and Wallace, of Robert Dale Owen, and the report of the Dialectical Society, which have been criticised by various literary journals. In Russia the article published by Professor Wagner in the *Revue de l'Europe* was the signal for a spirit of inquiry which has never been allowed to die out, and which has penetrated to the heart of the National University itself. May all success attend the laudable efforts of those who are spending time and money in bringing it to a practical issue. Austrian Spiritualism centres itself round the well organised Society of Spiritual Inquirers at Buda Pest, of which the Baron von Vay is the Honorary President. It has been registered by the government, has a hall of its own, and publishes *Transactions*. In its way it seems to be the most complete Spiritual Society in existence.

American Spiritualism is too broad a field to be entered upon in the limits of this article. The *Banner of Light*, *The Spiritual Scientist*, *The Religio-Philosophical* and the *Spiritualist at Work* are representative journals; in Memphis, Tennessee, an excellent monthly, *The Spiritual Magazine*, is doing good work, and has lately been writing strongly in favour of organisation; further, a new weekly is now announced under the title of the *Western Spiritualist*. Its programme is to provide a cheap paper for the Spiritualists of the West, and to foster and develop Western mediums.

In Australia, where the movement is by no means wanting in activity, the cause is represented by the *Harbinger of Light* and *The Spiritual Inquirer*. An important change has lately taken place in Melbourne; the Victorian Association, which has been five years in existence, and has been languishing since the departure of Mr. Tyerman for Sydney, has been formally dissolved, and in its place a new society formed, composed of a combination of Spiritualists and Free-thinkers, under the name of the Spiritualist and Freethought Association. One of its objects is the delivery of a series of essays and lectures, to be followed by "limited debates." In Brisbane, Queensland, a society has been formed by the union of similar elements, and appears to be working well. One mistake was made in the beginning, by organising a spirit-circle of between thirty and forty members, but this has since been broken up into smaller ones, "which are now sitting with fair results."

The President of the Melbourne Association is Mr. John Ross, and Mr. W. H. Terry is one of the Vice-Presidents.

There is some possibility that Dr. Slade, the American test medium, may sit for the St. Petersburg Committee. The matter is under consideration.

MR. ROBERT DALE OWEN.—Miss Emily Kislingbury, Secretary of the British National Association of Spiritualists, writes to the *Daily News*:—"As considerable publicity was given by a portion of the Press to the fact of Mr. Robert Dale Owen's late attack of insanity, it is no more than justice to that gentleman to give equal publicity to the news of his complete recovery, and I shall esteem it a favour if you will kindly insert either this letter or a brief notice of it in your widely-read journal. In a long and interesting letter which I have received from Mr. Owen to day, he says, after explaining that his illness was due to overwork:—'For two years and a half previous to my illness in May last I had been a sufferer from dyspepsia, causing weakness and depression. These, by rest, water-cure, and milk diet, have been entirely removed, and I am now in excellent health, better than I have been for five years past.' The letter was accompanied by an extract from an American journal, containing Mr. Owen's letter to Dr. Everts (the physician under whose care he had been placed), written after his restoration to health, which I enclose for your perusal."

TRANSACTIONS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

LAST Tuesday night a Council meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held at its rooms, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C., under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder. The other members of the council present were Mr. Algernon Joy, Mr. Martin R. Smith, Mr. George Robert Tapp, Mr. Edward T. Bennett, Mrs. Maltby, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mr. Thomas Everitt, Mrs. Everitt, Mr. Morell Theobald, Mr. Keningale Cook, and Mr. George King.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

NEW MEMBERS.

Twelve new ordinary members were elected, and there was one resignation.

Signor Damiani and Dr. and Mrs. Hallock were elected honorary members.

The Duke of Leuchtenberg, nephew of the Emperor of Russia, was invited to become an honorary member.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Mr. Morell Theobald read the report of the Finance Committee, which set forth that the balance in hand at the close of last month was £63 13s. 11d., since which upwards of £60 had been received. The Committee recommended payments to the amount of £75 11s. 6d., including rent, and estimated the outstanding liabilities of the Association at £5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Secretary read a letter from Dr. Eugene Crowell, of New York, accompanied by a presentation copy of the second volume of his book, *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*.

Letters were read from the honorary secretaries to the Liverpool and Brixton Psychological Societies, returning thanks to the Council for the present of musical boxes made to them at its last meeting.

A letter from Mr. Harper was read, thanking the Association for its donation of goods to the Spiritualists' Bazaar in Birmingham.

Mr. Dale Owen's letter to the secretary, as already published in *The Spiritualist*, was taken as read, and Miss Kislingbury announced that a paragraph from her about his recovery from his recent illness, had been published in the *Daily News*.

Mrs. Bullock wrote thanking the Council for the donation of two guineas towards the Sunday services at Islington.

Madlle. Huet, of Paris, wrote presenting a book to the library, and stating that she expected soon to be in England.

A letter from Mr. T. Herbert Noyes, dated from the Lunatic Ward of St. Pancras Workhouse, was produced. The secretary stated that she had given his case into the hands of Mrs. Lowe, who had communicated with his friends, and Sir Hugh Owen was inquiring into the matter.

The Secretary announced that Mr. Edmands had presented a large looking-glass to the Association.

Mr. Rogers produced an agenda of the monthly proceedings of the Council, which, he thought, would be useful; as he had prepared the first one without authority from the Council, he had printed it at his own expense.

Letters from the Baroness Guldenstucke and Mr. Harrison were read.

Mr. Everitt read a letter from Mr. Harper, recommending that the National Association should facilitate the circulation of lecturers, and print a monthly paper of its own, to be afterwards changed into a weekly, and that it should reduce the annual subscriptions of members to one shilling.

Mr. Everitt next read a letter from himself to Mr. Rogers.

Mr. Rogers said that *The Spiritualist* had misreported what he had stated at the preceding meeting, and that when it printed his letter of explanation the footnote made him appear to say what he had not intended. At the preceding meeting he had spoken highly of *The Spiritualist* reports. The public should understand that the Association was not responsible for anything which appeared in that journal.

Mr. Martin Smith remarked that the public should clearly understand that Mr. Harrison and the National Association were not one and the same.

Mr. Keningale Cook said that Mr. Harrison had told a public meeting in Birmingham that he was only a private member of the Association, and he had printed the same statement.

MESMERIC EXPERIMENTS.

Mr. George King reported that the Winter Meetings Committee recommended that a professor of mesmerism should be invited to give an experimental lecture on the 24th of this month.

Mr. Rogers said that from what he knew of mesmerism, he would not let anybody mesmerise any of his friends, unless he was sure that the operator was of high character.

Mr. George King thought that it might be arranged that the mesmerist should bring his own sensitives with him.

Mr. Martin R. Smith said that nothing could be more interesting than the proposed experiments, but he thought that those who attended should be asked to contribute a small sum for admission, to clear the expenses.

Mr. Rogers suggested that a preliminary meeting should be held to discuss the subject of mesmerism before experiments were commenced.

The committee was then authorised to engage a mesmerist for one of the winter meetings.

REPORT OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

Mr. Rogers gave in the report of the Library Committee, which recommended that Spanish and Mexican Spiritual periodicals should be

taken in regularly. It also recommended that £10 should be spent in books, to form the nucleus of a lending library.

A discussion took place as to whether some of the present books should not be lent out, and it was stated that the committee were unanimously of opinion that this should not be done, because some of the books could not be replaced if lost; because others had been given by friends, and had their names inside; and because it would be disappointing for members to call at the rooms to see a particular book and to find it not in.

The recommendation of the committee was adopted.

PRIZE ESSAYS.

Mr. Martin Smith reported that the first prize for an essay on Spiritualism had been awarded to Miss Blackwell, and the second one to Mr. Green. An estimate had been presented by Mr. Rogers for the printing of the same.

Mr. Cook suggested that a guarantee fund should be formed to protect the Association against loss on sales, if the pamphlets were printed. He remarked that the expense would be about half if they were issued in cardboard instead of cloth covers.

It was then resolved that the Secretary should invite subscriptions in aid of the printing of the prize essays.

It was announced that the memorial to Marshal MacMahon about M. Leymarie was being extensively signed, and that several sheets had been returned to the office properly filled in.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

Mr. Everitt gave notice that at the next meeting he should move for the appointment of a committee in connection with the above subject.

Mr. Joy asked why the committee already appointed for the purpose would not do.

The Chairman asked for what purpose the committee was to be appointed, as one could not be nominated without stating its object.

Mr. Everitt said that the object would be to inquire into the relationship of the National Association to Mr. Harrison.

Mr. Cook remarked that Mr. Harrison had no relation to the National Association more than any other person connected with any newspaper.

The resolution was passed.

Mr. Martin R. Smith, on behalf of the Harrison Testimonial Committee, asked that the said testimonial might be presented at the next National Association *soirée*, to be held on the 3rd of February, at the Cavendish Rooms.

On the motion of Mr. Everitt, seconded by Mr. Rogers, this was agreed to.

The proceedings then closed.

Literary Notice.

Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, Barrister-at-Law, F.S.A. 2 Vols. Third Edition. MACMILLAN & Co.

THIS work will amply repay perusal, leading the reader, as it does, into almost every imaginable subject, and into close contact with many English persons of notoriety, including actors, authors, preachers, soldiers, and poets, from the year 1790 down almost to the present time. Theologians and the students of psychological science will find in it matter of interest. For instance, the author writes that on Dec. 20th, 1810, he "met Coleridge by accident with Charles and Mary Lamb. As I entered he was apparently speaking of Christianity. He went on to say that miracles were not an essential in the Christian system. He insisted they were not brought forward as proofs, that they were acknowledged to have been performed by others as well as the true believers. Pharaoh's magician wrought miracles, though those of Moses were more powerful. . . . On my making a remark that in a certain sense every one who utters a truth may be said to be inspired, Coleridge assented, and afterwards named Fox among the Quakers, Madame Guyon, and St. Theresa, as being also inspired."

On December 3rd, 1823, he "dined in Castle-street, and then took tea at Flaxman's. A serious conversation on Jung's *Theorie der Geisterkunde* (Theory of the Science of Spirits). Flaxman is prepared to go a great way with Jung, and, though he does not believe in witchcraft, yet he believes in ghosts, and he related the following anecdotes as confirming the belief:—Mr. E—— ordered of Flaxman a monument for his wife, and directed that a dove should be introduced. Flaxman supposed it was an armorial crest, but on making inquiry was informed that it was not, and was told this anecdote as explanatory of the required ornament. When Mrs. E—— was on her death-bed, her husband, being in the room with her, perceived she was apparently conversing with some one. On asking her what she was saying, Mrs. E—— replied: 'Do you not see Miss —— at the window?' 'Miss —— is not here,' said the husband.

'But she is,' said Mrs. E——; she is at the window, with a dove in her hand, and she says she will come to me on Wednesday.' Now this Miss —— resided at a distance, and had then been dead three months; whether her death was then known to Mrs. E—— I cannot say. On the Wednesday Mrs. E—— died. Flaxman also related that he had a cousin, a Dr. Flaxman, a dissenting minister, who died many years ago. Flaxman when a young man was a believer in ghosts, the doctor an unbeliever. A warm dispute on the subject having taken place, Mr. Flaxman said to the doctor: 'I now put it to you whether, though you are thus incredulous, you have never experienced anything which tends to prove that appearances of departed spirits are permitted by Divine Providence?' Being thus pressed, the doctor confessed that the following circumstance had taken place. There came to him once a very ignorant and low fellow who lived in his neighbourhood, to ask him what he thought of an occurrence that had taken place the preceding night. As he lay in bed, on a sudden, a very heavy and alarming noise had taken place in the room above him, and where no one was, and which he could not account for. He thought it must come from a cousin of his at sea, who had promised to come to him whenever he died. The doctor scolded the man and sent him off. Some weeks afterwards the man came again to tell him that his cousin, as he had learned, was drowned that very night."

Dec. 31st.—"A year to me of great enjoyment, but not of prosperity. My fees amounted to 445 guineas. As to myself, I have become more and more desirous to be religious, but seem to be further off than ever. Whenever I draw near, the negative side of the magnet works, and I am pushed back by an invisible power."

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We announced about three weeks ago that Mrs. E. E. Corner (Florence Cook), the well-known medium, had left England for Shanghai, China. She sailed in the barque *M. A. Dixon*, of which her husband, Captain Corner, is commander.

The memorial to the French President on behalf of M. Leymarie, and sheets for signature, are now in circulation in various parts of the country. Several filled sheets have been already sent in to Miss Kinsbury, secretary to the National Association of Spiritualists, who will be happy to supply fresh ones to any friend kindly undertaking to collect signatures, either in London or the provinces. A copy of the memorial can be procured either at 38, Great Russell-street, or at 15, Southampton-row, Holborn.

A MISANTHROPICAL MEDIUM.—A medium in private life, who has been much plagued by bad spirits, and who for many years has favoured us with his opinions with persevering persistency, writes from Scotland: "This second Liverpool spiritualistic comedy shows clearly that anti-Spiritualists are indirectly as much under the 'influence' as public mediums are. It will be seen at a glance that the 'spirits' wish to throw cold water upon manifestations which are becoming somewhat notorious. Anti-Spiritualists must be kept out in the cold when they materialise themselves. Why exclude an intelligent sceptic? Why should the 'phenomena' be confined to the privacy of a selected few? Because the 'spirits' wish to extend the doctrine of a purely physical discovery in the few to ensnare the many. What difference—good or evil—would there be in a *séance* in the presence of the Lord Chief Justice and a common jury from the more ordinary ones? One would think that spirits would not care a tinker's kettle whether they performed in the presence of the Queen or the Lord Chief Justice. If human bodies and articles of *vertu* are levitated contrary to known laws, I don't see the use of mediums, and much less the cabinets. Yet 'there must be a medium in everything.' The fact is, the spirits humbug alike Spiritualist and anti-Spiritualist, and by so doing they shroud their abominable practices in doubt, credulity, and its long train of superstitions. The Spiritualist seeks a solution of the 'phenomena' beyond that of which he is a portion. He would refer his more sceptical friend to some imaginary 'tenth state,' wherever that undesirable position may be, and when a description of it is given through Cora Tappan, or any other somnolent medium, it just amounts to a fairy scene in a pantomime. The fact is, the Spiritualist will believe in any theory for cause of 'phenomena' other than a mundane one. Why this infatuation? Because he knows little or nothing of what the 'phenomena' mean. There is not a single person in the whole circle beyond the influence; all are moved there, and all say what is set down for them—yet every individual thinks himself master of his ideas and language. I care not how noble in self-dignity or integrity the man may be, he would succumb—some of the most noble minds have been degraded by this miscreant King. Spiritualists say that the materialised forms are drawn from the mediums; never was there greater mistake. I have seen hundreds of such manifestations in my bedroom, and none there but myself to witness them. If the miscreants are to be relied on, we are to witness—they don't say where—something 'that will startle the wide, wide world' in April next. I am called by them the 'Emperor of this movement.' They might as well call me Emperor of Morocco. I don't care a pinch of snuff what they call me, if they would be a little more decent in their ideas and language."



## A SEANCE WITH MRS. KATE FOX-JENCKEN.

LAST Sunday night a *seance* was held at the house of Mr. H. D. Jencken, M.R.I., Barrister-at-Law, honorary secretary to the Association for the Codification of the Law of Nations. The medium was Mrs. Jencken, better known as Kate Fox, through whose medial powers the first manifestations in connection with modern Spiritualism began in America. Four friends were present and among them were Mr. Phillips, of the *New York Herald*, and Mr. W. H. Harrison. The latter says:—

"Throughout the evening raps were plentiful in a strong light. The raps come with such power in Mrs. Jencken's presence, that they may readily be heard with comfort in the passage outside the room, with the door closed between. When, later in the evening, we seated ourselves round the table for the special purpose of obtaining manifestations, the spirits wrote a message through Mrs. Jencken's hand telling us to lower the lights; this message was written backwards, so that it had to be read by holding it before a looking-glass in order to bring the letters into such a position that the words could be deciphered. The gaslights were turned out, and feeble illumination from the fire was all that was left. The sitters held each other's hands round the table, yet other hands went about both below and over the table, sometimes grasping the knees of the sitters, or touching us on our hands. I felt one hand holding a sheet of paper upon my knee under the table, whilst another hand was writing a message upon the paper with a pencil.

"Afterwards the spirits told Mrs. Jencken, Mr. Phillips and myself, to go and stand in one corner of the room by the door. In the deep darkness of the lower part of the corner of the room, caused by our bodies intercepting the light from the fire, the spirits formed materialised hands, which several times grasped my ankles. Then one of them came up, while we were all holding each other's hands, and passed between my eyes and the fire. I saw the hand clearly, but not the part where it ended, for near the wrist it passed into shadow, the light from the fire being there cut off. It took a pencil from one of our hands, and tapped Mr. Phillips with it on the head. I then requested it to grasp my forehead, and raps asked for a pocket-handkerchief. These raps came strongly from the floor all the time that the hand was near our heads, showing that the power existed to produce manifestations in two places at once. The handkerchief was then laid over the surface of our hands, which were all interlocked. The materialised spirit hand came down from above, picked up the handkerchief, and through the handkerchief, grasped my forehead as I requested; I felt the thumb and fingers distinctly; they moved about and were evidently living. The raps then asked those sitters who were still at the table to count five slowly; as each numeral was repeated each of the fingers of the hand was brought down in succession on my forehead, ending at five when the thumb was reached. In the course of the evening a message was given, professedly from the late J. W. Edmonds, judge of the Supreme Court, New York."

MESSRS. BASTIAN and TAYLOR are now in Chicago.

Dr. MONCK informs us that he will go to Spain in a week or two.

The *Banner of Light* has reprinted from *The Spiritualist* the whole of the report of the public welcome at the Cavendish Rooms to Mr. Morse on his return from America.

MR. ALEXANDER CALDER's address on the "Aims and Influence of Spiritualism," delivered at one of Mr. J. J. Morse's Sunday meetings in the Cleveland Hall, has been republished in the *Spiritual Scientist* (Boston, U.S.) of December 9th last.

"I AM prepared for a great deal of ridicule; but I say that during the last twenty-five years there have been indications of the existence of certain unknown forces, which it is of the highest importance to investigate. At present the Spiritualist, the juggler, and a few severe men of science, are the only persons who have given real attention to these subjects." *Social Pressure*, chap. xvi. p. 225.—SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

*The Spiritualist* is regularly on sale at the following places:—LONDON—3S, Great Russell-street, W.C. (opposite the British Museum), and 11, Ave Maria-lane, St. Paul's-churchyard, E.C. PARIS—246, Boulevard des Capucines, and 7, Rue de Lille. LIEGE—37, Rue Florimont. BUDA-PESTU—Josefstadt Erzherzog, 23, Alexander Gasse. LEIPZIG—2, Lindenstrasse. MELBOURNE—96, Russell-street. NEW YORK—24, East Fourth-street. BOSTON, U.S.—9, Montgomery-place, and 18, Exchange-street. CHICAGO—*Religio-Philosophical Journal* Office. MEMPHIS, U.S.—225, Union street. PHILADELPHIA—2,210, Mount Vernon-street, SAN FRANCISCO—605, Montgomery-street.

## Poetry.

## ODE.

Peace! thou art come at last, and thou art fair;  
Fairer than beauty's smile,  
Calmer than moonlight sea,  
Sweeter than breath of spring,  
Balmier than summer winds,  
Happier than childhood's glee,  
Purer than lover's bliss,  
Higher than ecstasy of saint,  
Deeper than joy of penitent,  
Holier than rapture of religious seer;  
Peace! be thou mine for aye, thou art than love more dear.

Yet even while I sang thou fleddest me;  
The morn awoke to life so drear and grey,  
That I was fain to meditate awhile  
On that sweet, peaceful sunset, all aglow  
With mingled, richest, yet deep-chastened joys;  
But thou I told my heart it would have paled  
And palled upon me even as I gazed,  
And that 'twas healthier for my spirit's life  
To start anew upon some barren track,  
Leading to yet more toilsome, lonely heights,  
Whence I could gain fresh glimpses of my heaven,  
And open up a path for travelling souls,  
Whose goal was one with mine. So I sped on—  
First girding up my mind, lest it should reach  
Out after sweets of luscious memories:  
And bidding it look upwards for support,  
And all around to shed its sympathies,  
And then below to beckon others on,  
I walked with caution and due heedfulness—  
And lo! I found that Peace was with me still.

ADAMANTA (1872).

## Correspondence.

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

## THE PROBLEM OF THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF THE SPIRIT.

SIR,—There exists among English Spiritualists a very strong prejudice against the doctrine of Reincarnation, which probably derives its principal force from the disturbance of parental and filial relationship entailed by Allan Kardec's hypothesis.

It would appear, from the unqualified disapproval so often elicited by the bare mention of the word "Reincarnation" that it is not likely, in this generation at least, to enlist any large number of adherents in England; nevertheless there is a "reasonableness" therein, which surely merits consideration.

Its chief claim to our attention is that it provides us with a solution of one of the most tremendous difficulties with which we have to deal, viz., the inequalities of moral and intellectual endowment observable among men.

It would certainly appear necessary, in order to fulfil the requirements of perfect justice, that each individual born into the world should start upon something like equal terms with his fellows as regards his intellectual capacity and moral perception. But we know that the direct converse is the case, and that many unfortunates are born greatly if not wholly deficient in these respects. They are thus created, so far as we know, through no fault of their own, and with no power to make good their deficiencies; for no culture can transmute imbecility into intellectual brilliancy, or change a radically bad and vicious disposition.

There are many, no doubt, who are satisfied to say, "Such things are—because such is the will of God." This, however, is clearly but a mere shelving of the question, and can be satisfying to none who have the courage to think at all upon the subject.

We stand face to face, then, with the fact that perfect justice has apparently called upon all men to run the same race—to fight the same fight—but has allotted to them most varied and unequal chances of success! To say that these chances will certainly be equalised in the next world is but to perpetuate the apparent injustice which perplexes us now, by suggesting that the progress of an advanced spirit will, in the life to come, be suspended until his less fortunate brethren shall have overtaken him, and further involves the absurdity that to lack moral and intellectual capacity in this world is to ensure an abnormally rapid development of these qualities in the next.

Surely Allan Kardec's hypothesis is more reasonable than this!

It assumes the pre-existence of the spirit before the life that is, and the gradual acquisition of knowledge and moral excellence in successive states of existence on this earth, each allotted to the individual by Divine wisdom as a means of correction and education.

Our antipathies are roused by the words "on this earth," and certainly in accepting Allan Kardec's views we must relinquish much that in our present state of knowledge we hold most dear.

Let us take heed, however, how we set too much store upon human affections and relationships; for all we know, there may be nearer and dearer ties in the world to come than even those of mother and child. It is true that at present we can conceive nothing holier or sweeter, but these ties are among the "things of this world," and we see them rudely enough set aside in our daily experience here.

If Reincarnation is repulsive to us, by all means let us reject it; but need we cast aside with it the "pre-existence of the spirit" before its experience of earth-life?

Surely there is nothing unreasonable or revolting in the suggestion that the human spirit may have commenced its existence in other spheres; that it may there have used its opportunities more or less wisely;



that its appearance in this world is made at a time allotted to it by the Divine wisdom, and in a position for which it is fitted by its attained development. Is it necessary to insist upon successive "Reincarnations" in this world? for of a truth there are "more worlds than one!"

I venture to maintain, therefore—

1st—That to believe that man commences his existence at the moment of his birth into earth life, is by implication to charge the Father of all spirits with injustice, inasmuch as some men are endowed with capacities superior to those allotted to others.

2ndly—That to look to the future life for any equalisation of these chances, and a correspondingly rapid progress of backward spirits, can present to us no satisfactory explanation of the difficulty.

3rdly—That the "pre-existence of the spirit," and its development to a greater or less extent before its entry upon earth life, is a reasonable and satisfying hypothesis, and one with which we may well rest content, until a higher knowledge shall have confirmed its truth or demonstrated its falsity.

MARTIN R. SMITH.

#### INCARNATION AND REINCARNATION.

SIR,—I send you a communication on the above subject, just received through the mediumship of an English lady, to whose mind that subject is one of but little speculative interest. The communications, I find, come in her case the clearest when the topic of which they treat is one in regard to which the medium's mind has no especial acquaintance, sympathy, or bias.

The communicator has been known to the circle for two years; his spiritual partner has during that time been one of the dearest friends of its members.

Before proceeding to quote his letter I may say a few words. I have myself read a number of letters and articles in *The Spiritualist* on the topic of which he speaks. I could at once have contradicted that one of them which states that no message had been received by any English medium supporting the doctrine of reincarnation, or, as I would prefer to term it, of pre-existence to incarnation. But to controvert or correct is not the best work one can do; one might occupy oneself in it for ever, and, with eyes that restlessly peer through magnifying spectacles, end in the unhappy state of being "nothing if not critical."

Truth will right her own position in due time, and even facts on this particular topic may come to light sooner than many expect; though, as is obvious, the difficulty of identifying a being in one earth life and in another is extreme.

I entirely agree with those who say, "Suspend your opinion on this subject until you know more of it;" but would respectfully remind the writer of a recent epistle who refuses to discuss it, on the ground that those who hold that belief "have no true philosophy, because they have no facts on which to build," that he is altogether begging the question. It is no paradox that an absolute negative is as positive an assertion, and may be as pure a dogma, as an absolute affirmative.

With regard to Sakya Muni, for instance, the Buddha or Messiah of the Hindoos, who founded his still existing religion more than half a millennium before our era, and who asserts that he had clear facts in mind on which to base his creed, let this modern "scientific" denier prove that such facts existed not. Let it be proved, moreover, that Pythagoras, the Greek sage, of about the same epoch as the Buddha, with many calm and wise Pythagoreans and Platonists, who sprinkle the ages from that day to this with many excellent writings, had no facts as ground for their lifelong adherence to this belief. Egypt, India in a period more ancient even than that of Buddha, Persia, Tibet, all held or hold this doctrine, which is one of the oldest and longest lived in the world. For later times the author of the Book of Wisdom, which is bound up with our English Bible as an apocryphal or esoteric work, may be referred to as an instance of a believer in this so-called groundless theory. So may Philo; so may the Pharisees and Essenes of the time of Jesus, and before and after that time; nay, even Jesus Himself has left on record several mystic utterances (such, for instance, as John viii. 58; xvii. 5, &c.), that, if correctly handed down to us, are only explicable on the theory that He believed in His own pre-existence. But however clearly He may have seen through the vista of His former life (and some are less thickly veiled than others in the wrappings of matter), that memory of His, forsooth, must not, we are told, be pronounced a fact.

A good plan for such as assume a hyper-scientific method of procedure, would be to learn and define—what is a fact? Upon the evidence of what perceptions may it safely rest?

Suspending all opinion, let us adopt for a moment the wild dream that any vehement anti-reincarnationist now in our midst has, once upon a time, in a state of lower development, been a schoolboy well whipped in Mars or Mercury, or both. He was perhaps called Ares or Hermes, but when he died and went to the confines of the spirit world, he left his Martial or Mercurial name behind him, and his planetary memories grew dim. Well, he is on earth now, we will say, and he has his spiritual memory; but the spiritual memory is clear or dull according to the spiritual state of the individual. It is quite possible that the spiritual memory of our friend, opened in the partial disembodiment of sleep, or unfolded even more fully when he quits this globe through the door of death, is still unable to retrace more than a few poor years of life. No immature soul, no half-spiritual spirit, is wholly freed from the cobwebs of the emanation worlds; none below the eternal standard of full angelic being can or dare look down from his heavenly height, backwards through his own dark ages of slow development. Which of us, knowing how many dark spots in his brief existence here he would rather overshroud than unveil, would dare to crave the terrible boon of the absolute opening of his spiritual memory, the entire story of his own inner self, the very judgment of his life? Let us not wonder that many a spirit should deny that he has existed longer than for a brief life on earth: let us realise how difficult it must be for others to mar-

shal facts for our investigation that may have to come from another planet, or from some dim sphere of which we have at present no knowledge at all.

We must look at reincarnation in a broader aspect than we have been wont to regard it: birth into certain spheres that are not wholly material like ours, must yet be akin to incarnation. We hear of spirits passing from one sphere to another; we know not how like this may not be to dying in one world and being reborn in another, or in a different state of life in the same.

I have brought forward no direct argument for reincarnation, but I may suggest that many of the conventional objections reiterated against it are fairly met in works that some of our friends perhaps have never taken the trouble to read. I may instance for one the *Lux Orientalis* of Joseph Glanvil, F.R.S., of the 17th century.

The so-called unscientific view of our subject we may find in Wordsworth's grandest poem:—

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind;  
And even with something of a mother's mind,  
And no unworthy aim,  
The homely nurse doth all she can,  
To make her foster-child, her inmate Man,  
Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither;  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

As a further inducement to our friends not to be dogmatic, either on the positive or negative side, I would remind them of the long list of illustrious believers in pre-existence who may be found by any one who will peer down the long roll of centuries, and, in reference thereto, would quote the following from La Place, *On Probabilities*:—"Any case, however incredible [and may we not add, any belief?], if it be a recurrent case, is as much entitled to a fair valuation under the laws of induction as if it had been more probable beforehand."

I have pleasure now in turning to a more interesting communication than my own, to that letter which has led me insensibly into these remarks, prefacing it further by this statement only, that by the numerous friends of the author, whose acquaintance it has been a high pleasure of mine to make, Reincarnation has no more been taught as a dogma than has Incarnation, or life itself, or any of the ten thousand times ten thousand processes that eternity holds for the growth of man. Pre-existence, as a fact, has ever and anon crept into the messages that have been given, but only as a necessary element of explication of what were otherwise obscure.

I will conclude by asking this question:—If a spirit should remember any former lives, may he not say so without imputation of untruth being cast upon him by ignorant denizens of earth: on the other hand, if his spiritual memory is unopened or clouded to his backward gaze, must he needs deny the possibility that the eyes of others may pierce further or more deeply than his own?

I now introduce my dear spiritual friend, whose communication came unexpectedly and unasked. LL.D.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—I have been reading, through eyes which, though not my own, are now and then allowed me for use, some letters in your journal which bear upon a subject of great interest to me. If you will allow a little space in your columns for the speech of a disembodied spirit, I will tell you what I can on the subject. For myself, I have but once left the shore of eternity to pass through a section of time, but I have stood on that shore for what, I suppose, I must call, in your language, many ages, and have watched the earthly pilgrimage of one whom, when in time, I was compelled to regard as another person, although, out of time, she becomes myself. I do not profess to have even yet travelled far beyond what I call the shores of eternity, although I now hope that we have together entered upon the eternal life of the spirit. Therefore I do not profess any great wisdom. But every plain man in your world is allowed to speak of his own experiences, therefore I tell you that it has, as I have said before, been a frequent experience of mine to see this spirit whom I most love pass from me into what has seemed a cold and cruel atmosphere. I have shuddered for the tender spirit surface pressed in the cruel bondage of a mortal body, and for the tender spirit life subjected to the bitter tests and exigencies of a mortal career. I have watched fearfully over this beloved life, and I have seen it triumphantly consummated. The spirit has rejoined me in what to it seemed, after its experiences, as perfect heaven as could exist, or be imagined. And for a time all has been peace. Yet in that nature of which I speak, a kind of repressing guidance was to so large an extent needed, that several times had it to pass the waters, and enter again on that fettered life of earth. Once we entered together upon it, but I suppose my nature, instead of needing repression to grow strong, has rather a tendency to be slow and quiet in its upward movements. Therefore, I thank God for His mercy in surrounding me, at all my stages save that one, with encouragements to grow rapidly and spring up the ladder with eager steps. And I believe that the greatest purpose in the one passage I passed in your life, was that mutual experience should aid in perfecting the mutual sympathy of the two beings whom



God was educating to become one. Perhaps I had better say no more, for, probably, speech so practical as this coming from a life whose very boundaries seem to belong to the poetical and misty, may rather excite a smile in your readers than any other feeling. I sign myself, with all hopes that the highest purposes of the Association of which you are a member may be fulfilled.—Your friend in the region of love,  
(I use as signature the name I bore on earth) OLIVER LATOUR.

#### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK.

SIR,—Without at all pretending to answer the question, "What is magic?" which is the title of your article on the Theosophical Society of New York, I venture to suggest that the subject is not one which Spiritualists, of all people in the world, should treat with levity, or in a disparaging and derisive tone. Nor can it be considered to have been adequately investigated and disposed of by a cursory examination of ancient books in the British Museum. We have to deal with a mass of testimony in every age, down to and including the present, which we shall find it equally difficult to reject as the records of charlatanry, or to explain upon any theory of "misunderstood mediumship."

The two main propositions of occultism seem to be:—1. The existence in the universe of spirits other than those of human origin. 2. The power of the human will, aided by knowledge and strengthened by discipline, to control and direct certain classes of these spirits. At first sight it seems not a little surprising that the first of these propositions should excite the almost passionate repugnance that has been displayed in America. All probability is in its favour. It has been said truly that every birth is a materialisation. Is incarnation, then, a condition precedent of every spiritual body? Are we—our spiritual bodies—like spirits of wine, the result of a fermentation of grosser substances? Obviously the genesis of spirit must be sought in some process analogous to this, if its previous embryonic existence (another proposition of occultism) is to be absolutely rejected. But, without insisting on this, why, when we find matter differentiated into an almost infinite variety of animal structures, should we deny a corresponding variety of types in the spiritual world? Every element of the human character, every trait of human intellect, is represented and symbolised by instincts and aptitudes in the lower orders of animals. Why may there not be spiritual organisms, similarly related to our own, as friendly or malicious, innocuous or dangerous, simple or subtle? In the conflict of these heterogeneous elements, in the struggle between these opposing tendencies, brought together in a single organism, consists the dramatic interest of man's moral life; and again, as one or other of them predominates in the individual, the strife, the progress, and development of societies. We speak, too, of sanguine and lymphatic, gross and ethereal temperaments, and I almost hear in these expressions an unconscious acknowledgment of the much derided elementary spirits. Herein, indeed, may even possibly be found the explanation of mediumship. I have by me an old book, printed for the first time the other day, but written in the 17th century, of and concerning certain of these very elementary spirits, in which the author adduces experimental proof that the persons liable to the visitation of these beings, are those in whose physical constitution one or other of the (so-called) four elements is so predominant as to attract and assimilate with the spirits of that particular element; so that this is no new device. Spiritualists are ready enough now to vindicate the discernment of the men of old in recognising spiritual agency. How will they get rid of the express testimony of St. Augustine, and other fathers of the church, to the existence of the elementary spirits? How account for the elaborate treatises which it was thought worth while to write about their nature and relations to mankind? In Spiritualism itself have we not cause enough to suspect the origin of many of the messages we receive, and of the phenomena we witness? I know not if the doubt has occurred to others, but I find an entry in my diary of a date long before I had thought about the elementary spirits, which shows a misgiving arising spontaneously upon the evidence. It concerns the utterances of a well-known "direct voice," and is as follows:—"In fact, should I come to the conclusion that this voice is not that of the medium or of an accomplice, I should find myself somewhat in the position of Edgar Poe's amateur detective in the murders of the Rue Morgue, when the suspicion darted upon him that that which had been attributed to human agency, was, in fact, the work of an irresponsible and irrational monster. Surely, surely we ought to get something definite, something intelligible from a human spirit, however low." Mere lying messages, and the vain-glorious assumption of distinguished names, may reasonably be attributed to low human spirits; but communications grotesquely inconsequent or self-contradictory, or evidently reflecting merely the intelligence and information of the medium, must be suspected of another origin. And perhaps it is not very strange that Spiritualists, whose faith is rather emotional than logical, should have taken the alarm. Those, and they are many, who can derive daily consolation from such affectionate platitudes as "God bless you, Mary," "John, I am always with you," &c., are likely to be disturbed by every suggestion that tends to throw doubt upon the "Message Department."

But the coldness of the welcome accorded to the poor "elementaries," is as nothing compared with the wrath excited by the suggestion that they can be controlled, and that this power is possessed by certain living individuals. What! Is Spiritualism to be no longer a democracy? Is it to have an aristocracy of power, a priesthood of esoteric knowledge? And are we, forsooth! to be the vulgar and profane, standing without the temple, while you, within it, are being initiated into mysteries and invested with powers? Truly, I fear it must be so. Any one, say the Occultists, may become an adept; but when one asks the conditions, the offer seems about as substantial as the golden possibilities of Chancellorships and Archbishoprics held out to stimulate the energies and industry of village school children.

Whether Mr. Felt will succeed in giving to the Theosophical Society ocular demonstration of the elementary spirits remains to be seen; but the language of the highest authorities on this mysterious subject would certainly not lead one to suppose that practical magic is as capable of verification by anybody who chooses to take a little trouble, as the phenomena of mediumship. The *raison d'être* of the Theosophical Society is independent of the success of any particular experiment. It is, as I understand it, an association of educated students, whose minds have been emancipated from materialism, and who propose to seek truth, knowledge, and perhaps power, in ancient sources, to which modern research has traced the germs of every religion and every spiritual philosophy. The name at first suggested for it was the Cabalistic Society. It may be that undue stress is laid in the preamble on the practical experiments in contemplation. Even if the latter are successful, it does not follow that the report of them will be believed. Experience shows that Spiritualists can be just as incredulous of facts which do not suit them, as are the world at large about the spiritual phenomena themselves. But, even in the event of failure, I cannot at all assent to your contemptuous suggestion that the society should stultify itself by an attempt to reduce every success recorded in the past to cases of "misunderstood mediumship." In like manner a scientific man, who has been present at a test *séance* which has proved a failure, may be supposed to recommend the British National Association of Spiritualists to apply itself in the future to the explanation of mediumship on the theory of undetected trickery.

AN ENGLISH MEMBER OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

#### MESMERISING MEDIUMS.

SIR,—For the last twelve months I have been experimenting with a private friend—a young man of nineteen—who proves to be one of the best mediums I ever met with. We sit four or five only, and at no sitting have we failed to obtain the usual physical manifestations of the playing of musical instruments and the moving of various articles.

His development has been very rapid; the same guides always present themselves, and profess to be his grandmother, his two cousins—young girls—and a gentleman who was a Fellow of the Astronomical Society, all of whom died within the last five years. Variations of the original phenomena have recently occurred; the medium has been raised in the air, while still sitting in his chair, to a height of four feet from the ground, and small lights have made their appearance, issuing from him, which, on one occasion, took the form of a female profile. From the commencement of his mediumship he has always been influenced to write, and of late some really beautiful essays have been given through his hand, purporting to come, through his guides, from a spirit in a higher sphere than they. We have also, four or five times, obtained direct writing.

I have thus had singularly favourable opportunities of testing the reality of these phenomena, and have frequently employed very strict conditions, such as connecting together the whole of the sitters by a continuous string knotted round the wrists of each.

My immediate object, however, in addressing you to-day is to detail the occurrences at a sitting we held recently in my chambers. Besides the medium and myself, there was but one present, an honour-man in science of the University of London, who had never witnessed anything of the kind, but who came to the inquiry with a truly scientific aspect of mind, negative and critical, but receptive and interested. Obtaining complete darkness we two sat opposite the medium, and were soon gratified by the usual quartette performance; a violin being played, a bell rung, the table tilted and ourselves touched, simultaneously, while we all three were engaged in a lively conversation. Suddenly, something was thrown with considerable force, hitting my friend beside me on the arm and falling between us to the floor. On picking it up it proved to be his pocket-book, which he perfectly well remembered leaving on the piano in the next room: the spirits confirmed the suggestion that they had brought it through the wall, and, indeed, it is certain that, whereas a quarter of an hour before it was known to be in the next room, it was now here, no means of communication being available except through the wall or closed doors: the distance would have been eleven feet from the medium and six from where it fell.

I had lately entertained the idea of mesmerising mediums, with the view of placing them in a more passive condition, and so of possibly obtaining higher manifestations; but I had been hitherto dissuaded from doing so by the consideration that it might be fraught with danger to the medium, from the cross action of the human and spiritual influences. At the *séance* of which I now write, however, I determined to make the experiment, with the hearty consent of the medium, and the distinctly-expressed co-operation of his guides, who affirmed with decisive knocks that no harm would ensue, that they would keep control, and probably be able to use his vocal organs, and speak to us through him. I accordingly placed him in a low easy chair, and he was soon in a profound sleep, reclining easily, with his hands on his knees. We then extinguished the light, and took up our places opposite to him. The movements soon recommenced, but they were very slight, and, the medium not being in direct contact with the table, I judged it best to place his hands on it, making the arms rigid with a few passes. The movements were then somewhat stronger, though not nearly comparable with those at the outset: they were sufficient, however, to make my scientific friend repeatedly admit that none of them either were, or could have been, caused by the medium, even if in his normal state. The raps on the table were very loud and vigorous, keeping time to various melodies, and we were struck heavily upon the hands with hard knuckles; but, as we were remarking that everything took place in a comparatively narrow area, we heard a sheet of paper pulled from under various things on the table, and then the noise of a pencil writing: the paper was turned over, the writing continued, and the paper placed in our hands with a signal to light. We read the following message,



written in a large bold hand, not in very straight lines, but perfectly legible, and all the t's crossed:—"Although the manifestations are not so strong with our H—in this state, he is not near so weak and so much influenced. It is much better for his good," and then, over the last three words, "Are not selfish." It continued, "Sit again soon; we like your new friend; let our H—be mesmerised again. Did you feel my knuckles? It is a good circle. Oh, yes. S. M." We were doubtful as to the import of the words, "Are not selfish," and requested further information, which was given in the following, written for the most part over and across the former:—"What I mean to say—what we mean to say, rather—is, that you would rather have the manifestations weaker, and your and our H—not so much influenced, and much weaker than have strong power and him affected: in other words, you would consult the interests of our H—rather than your own."

I should state that upon lighting up the first time we found the medium in precisely the same posture, breathing regularly, but his handkerchief had been placed over his face, and the corners tucked in under the chin. We now heard the handkerchief flapping in the air; they appeared to be de-mesmerising the medium, who gave signs of movement and two or three deep inspirations. I was asked to complete the restoration. We were still in the dark, and his hands were in the same position, resting on the table. After a few passes he observed, "Oh, I've been mesmerised, haven't I? I feel so jolly." On lighting up and exhibiting the messages, it was his turn to be astonished.

Having stated the facts, I should be glad to hear the results of any similar experiments, which must have an important bearing upon the opinion—held, I think, by Mr. Atkinson and others—that the "necessary delusion" of attributing to the spirit "the sense or feeling or voice of the inner power," is a consequence of the free course which, in a medium "wanting the control and tie of a mesmeriser," the "loosened power has in influencing matters without." W. NEWTON.

Mitre-court, Temple.

#### "MESMERISM EXTRAORDINARY."

SIR,—It was with much sorrow and some indignation that I read in *The Spiritualist* and other periodicals, an account of the sad results of a psychological promise obtained by a mesmerist from a sensitive at Govan, a week or two since. I felt indignation because the mesmerist failed to fulfil his part of the promise, for had he, at the appointed time, been at the appointed place, all would have been well. He, perhaps, thoughtlessly obtained the promise from his sensitive, without the slightest intention of fulfilling it. If such was the case his conduct was most heartless and inhuman. I feel sorrow, because I heartily sympathise with the poor young man, because he was helpless to shake off the influence when the time arrived for him to be controlled by the mysterious power which set his will at defiance, ruled him with despotic sway, and compelled him to perform actions against which his utmost powers of resistance were as naught. He was thus left unaided and alone; helpless in himself to shake off the influence which he felt to be overpowering him; he went forth in his helplessness to gain freedom from the mesmeric influence with which the mesmerist on the previous night, by means of a psychological promise, had bound him. He afterwards became aware, in a confused manner, that the mesmerist was not there, and that those who surrounded him were incapable of recalling him to his normal state by removing the fascinating power which so thoroughly controlled him.

Such things as these bring mesmerism into disrepute with the general public, but at the same time they set forth its mysterious, marvellous powers, and its truthfulness. In the mysterious marvels of mesmerism we have one of the broadest fields of psychological science for examination that has ever been laid open for man's investigation. Of this my mesmeric experience has most thoroughly convinced me, and that experience is by no means a short one, for I commenced the study while yet in my "teens," and twenty-five years' acquaintance with mesmeric phenomena has revealed to me more wonderful things in connection with our (present) spiritual existence than I care to enumerate; it would be well if a few of these remarkable mesmeric, or rather, psychological manifestations, were investigated by some of my brother Spiritualists.

To illustrate this, I will not recount some of my own experiences, but will take the case of the mesmeric promise made by the young man at Govan, which must have been as follows:—

The mesmerist having subdued the young man's brain, must have placed him in what may be called (for want of a better word) a "psychological" state, in which, while in full possession of all his faculties, he is yet unable to act or to exercise his will-power, except it be in conformity with the will of the operator. While in this curious psychological state, swayed by a power which compelled him to act in direct opposition to his wishes and his will, and to reason in a manner which he inwardly feels is contrary to his desires, the mesmerist obtains from him a promise, and then brings him back to his normal state.

Now for another curious feature of the case. The sensitive had no recollection of having given a promise, nor does he know, unless told, that he has done so. He is in every respect in his usual normal state, and so the time passes away, until the period arrives when he must perform his promise; then a "something"—a power, a force, a mysterious influence, a controlling spiritual energy, call it by what name you will, you must still fall back upon the original, and call it "a something"—steals over him; his normal state leaves him, and he passes again under the mesmeric, or, as I would say, psychological influence. He is now governed by but one idea, and for him life has but one object—to fulfil his promise; and controlled by that mysterious, subtle power, whose sway he is unable to resist, he takes "his little jug full of broth" and goes to the place appointed. Had the mesmerist been there to have recalled him to his normal state, all would have been well; but no, the

mesmerist is absent, and so the influence deepens, and the sensitive struggles within himself to shake off the mysterious shackles which bind him. But the influence deepens and deepens, and, did space permit, I could give a description of the mental anguish and distress experienced by a sensitive while in this state, with the mesmerist *absent*. The sensations were once detailed to me by one of my own sensitives, who had been in a similar condition. At last he is in a state of deep mesmeric trance, and animation is suspended.

The mesmeric promise is but one of the numerous manifestations of the mysterious powers of mesmerism. What profitable subjects are these for full scientific investigation? It must be remembered that they are *facts*, and one fact is worth more than a thousand theories.

Such being the case, does not a perusal of this curious illustration of mesmeric susceptibility tempt one to inquire more fully into the cause of the young man's unknowingly passing into the psychological state, in order that he might fulfil the promise? Was it the result of a mesmeric influence slumbering in him, and of which he was in ignorance? If so, by what means was it capable of intensifying itself, and becoming so powerful as to rule him with such despotic sway? Or was it that a psychological power was emanating from the mesmerist, of which he (the mesmerist) was unconscious? Of this I have had some curious proofs, and awkward experiences. And was this psychological influence brought by some means into contact with the spiritual vitality of the young man in such a manner as to control him and cause him to pass into the mesmeric state? I know not! But this I know, that over and over again, while giving public mesmeric entertainments, has the influence departed from me, unknown to myself, and fixed itself upon certain individuals among the audience, non-sensitives as well as sensitives, causing them to pass into the mesmeric state; yet I never on any occasion knew the *demesmerising* influence to pass from me to a non-sensitive, or even a sensitive, without I expressly willed that it should do so.

S. R. REDMAN, *Professor of Animal Magnetism.*

Brixton-hill, Jan. 3rd, 1876.

#### ANGELS, SPIRITS, AND MEN.

SIR,—Can either you or any of your correspondents, or readers, inform the writer whether any spirit has ever communicated, through any known medium, who has not been born a man or woman: that is, who has professed to be a being who never was so born, upon *any* earth.

It must be remembered, that the Faith of Christendom has been for ages past, [that] angels proper are a distinct race from men; who were created in and for the shining realms of being which they are supposed, at least, never to have left, excepting only the Archangel who fell, and drew down with him a number of subordinate ones, who constituted the first inhabitants of the infernal regions. Now, as some of those who communicate are set forth as "angels," I wish to know, and I doubt not but others would be glad to be informed, whether any of this pure race of angels, who never were men and women, have communicated, in their undisguised character, to mankind through these modern "open mediums?"

Since it appears to be becoming the fashion to seek reliable information this way, rather than from the teaching of that Book which has hitherto been confessed to have been of Divine origin, there are several fundamental questions which it is important should be indisputably settled in this way, if this be the way in which fundamental knowledge can be obtained. But one question at a time is, perhaps, enough, and so, awaiting an answer, I am, yours truly,

T. ROBINSON.

Newtonheath, Jan. 6th, 1876.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—I am constrained to relate some experiences in the development of my medial powers in writing, under Mrs. Woodforde's direction. At my first sitting Dr. Rush, Mrs. Woodforde's chief medial control, put her in a trance, and gave me advice and great encouragement, speaking highly of my undeveloped powers. He said that a minor control of hers would attend me and superintend my development at private sittings at home. After the second sitting with Mrs. Woodforde, when at my own house, I certainly felt spirit influence, but it was not until after the next sitting with her that I had distinct evidences of spirit power. After one or two more sittings I was able to read what I had written, and to receive answers to questions, and it was at this stage that the spirit of a young doctor attached himself to me, expressing his wish to accompany me abroad—as a temporary arrangement, however. After three or four additional sittings in the presence of the medium, a permanent medical control was announced as Dr. Esdaile, who expressed his willingness to accompany me to India, to advise me upon all professional matters I undertake there—duties upon ground so well known to him when on earth. I must say I have felt his control stronger than any I have yet had, and have every confidence in the *rapport* being well established. For all this I have to thank Mrs. Woodforde's guides, who appear to make it their study to provide suitable controls for those developing under her care. That spirits should take this trouble to attend us in our daily walks and vocation here below, may to many appear burdensome and even painful, but it may, I presume, be accounted for from the fact that in rising above earthly conditions, and in becoming purified, they ascend into a state where pure brotherly love rules. Hence their willingness to undertake any work which may assist in alleviating the sufferings and wants of humanity. In support of this I had a beautiful message, given through Mrs. Woodforde's hand, by a visiting spirit, the control of a young private medium, which I append:—

"My brother! We rejoice in bearing you company in the walks of life, to assist, support, console, advise. We have thrown off the burthens of the flesh, but none of those feelings which filled us during the life of the body. The same tastes, the same likes and dislikes, the same peculiarities of temperament, constitution of mind and talents, so to



Speak, fill us, actuate us, and form our very being, influencing our mode of life here as upon the earth. Therefore we take a pleasure in joining ourselves to you, to bear you company in your path or usefulness, and to aid in relieving the wants and necessities of humanity: to uplift them also, and ameliorate their condition. We find our highest pleasure and our greatest good in working for that humanity struggling through the mists and darkness of ignorance on the earth, and for that reason we spirits crowd your world to operate here as upon a field of the grandest usefulness, for what is so grand and great as humanity? What so forcibly and piteously appeals to our hearts? We, uplifted into the light of this spirit world, see the causes of error, suffering, and pain; and we yearn over you with a brotherly love, of which your poets may write, and your orators eloquently depict, but of which you can form but a poor conception in reality. It is that love which brings us down to your sides to pick up anew, as it were, the burthens of life, to plod its by-ways with you, and to aid, direct, and teach you how to soften the trials of others, how to relieve suffering, and, in other words, to work for the elevation of humanity. As a physician a wide field is open to you. A life of rich usefulness may be yours. Your desires are those of an enlightened spirit, and we love to come to the help of those actuated by such feelings as you possess, to do all the good you can in your time and day for your fellow beings.—JOHN SCOTT." M. D.

## PRIVATE SEANCES IN MANCHESTER.

SIR,—There are strong indications of great future results in materialisations if I take several isolated attempts into account. In one sitting, when Mr. Oxley was present, not only did the form come distinctly, but hands appeared over the top of the cabinet. When conditions are exceptionally good, the spirit looks beautiful and ethereal, and quite in harmony with her pure and elevating trance addresses through the medium, with which Mr. Oxley seemed much pleased.

A few days ago a male head, with beard, appeared and spoke with a manly voice, although the *timbre* of it had some slight resemblance to that of the medium in the normal state.

After these sittings, our conversations at the table are generally spiced with raps; on the last occasion I indulged in a little philosophical discourse, and made the remark: "Science has been hammering away at the crust of the earth to discover the secret of all being, and raised a terribly thick cloud of dust, so we are left groping our way in the dark, losing all trace of heaven. Now you spirits send some threads from the other side, but we, instead of delicately handling them, pull rudely and hard, sometimes thinking of raising only ourselves, and we make a mess of it." Quite a shower of loud raps responded as in applause. I felt, however, my pride somewhat broken by the reflection: these things are done by lower spirits, or even by the devil, but still I feel shaky whether to go to the church, or to the other party.

C. REIMERS.

Manchester.

## SPIRITUALISM IN FRANCE.

SIR,—I believe that hitherto, one reason why *The Spiritualist* has circulated, with enviable distinction, among the more thoughtful and influential investigators in England and on the Continent is, that until recently, its mission has been to scientifically examine and chronicle the facts, and not the dreamy, ever-varying speculations which eminent "trance-speakers" utter with all the faith and emotional fervour of a new gospel. If you begin to canvas for public belief in the compiled "theories," of the otherwise excellent Allan Kardec, hundreds of your educated readers will throw Spiritualistic inquiry overboard. Give us facts: the inferences must come to us as an after-glow, and according to our own individual intelligence and philosophy. Advanced thinkers—and especially those who are trying to "broaden" the higher genius of a national Christianity—can no more subscribe to the ordinary modern trance-speech revelations of "mediums" than they can fall down before the doctrinal speculations of Wesley or Calvin.

We are told that the reincarnation theory is an outcome of the "inspired" sayings of French mediums. Most of us know the type of information "mediums" give. With the rare exceptions of Cora Tappan, Emma Hardinge, and Mr. Morse, the "trance" utterances of hundreds of mediums in England and America scarcely equal the regular impromptu "holdings-forth" of the clever Methodist local preachers; and however much we may admire the beauties of thought and expression in such "sensitives," we prefer the oratory, and its charms, to the "philosophy" and its revelations. A bouquet of flowers flung at a hungry man will not appease the appetite that craves substantial food, not to be found in the tints and in the original perfume; nor will transcendental "trance orations" satisfy the understanding of bold, masculine thinkers who are deeply concerned about the awful problems of life and destiny. They must have a firm foothold, and a tangible object in view, or they will not affect to travel. Hence the unpopularity of Allan Kardec's "trance-spoken" theory in England. Spiritualism—be it fact or fancy—is at least picturesque, entertaining, and congenial; but French "Spiritism" is repulsive and improbable, in so far as it offers a vulgar flesh and blood immortality of hot and cold existences, unrelieved by the continuity of family temperaments and affections, and rendered melancholy in its successive contemplations by the enforced absence of ever-green memories and those eternal accumulations of past experience which will be the glory of personal identity. Small wonder, then, that this Spiritism should be so repugnant to the Catholic mind of France. The Latin Church, in its worst moments of dogma-making, never conceived anything so absurd as this reincarnation whim of the French mediums; and if Jesuitry is not to be congratulated upon its subtle exposure of such a foolish doctrine, it may partly be excused in its timely dread of a heresy that has no ennobling or encouraging feature to recommend it. I am not trying to justify the actions of the Papal Church in the recent Paris persecutions; and I yield to

none in my intelligent contempt for Jesuitical priestcraft. But, in conclusion, I venture the opinion that if there be any truth, beauty, and goodness in Spiritualism—as it is observed and reported in England—such a system of all important phenomenal philosophy would sooner fascinate the influential Fathers of the French pulpit, and command the respect of Parisian savants, than the barbarous "Spiritism" of Allan Kardec. JOHN T. MARKLEY.

Albert Place, Peterboro'.

## PROFESSOR TYNDALL ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLAIRVOYANCE IN THE HUMAN SPECIES.

SIR,—It is encouraging to find that the redoubtable champion of materialism has yet some nebulous apprehension of the possibilities in store for man, in a direction, if not spiritual, at least of such a rarefied and attenuated material, that the terms are not worth quarrelling about. I have been reading his interesting work called *Fragments of Science*, and see that not only is he an advocate for the existence of the subtle agent that pervades everything and is everywhere, and is called ether (and which in my boyhood I fancied might be, and am now inclined to think is, the connecting link between matter and spirit, the most volatile element to us, and the most gross to the intelligences of a higher sphere, and the vehicle in which they immerse themselves, to manifest their presence, and work their will, and show their power)—but that he also prophesies that the time may come when the requisite organ shall exist, whereby we may scan the wonders that surround us, which we, yet undeveloped, fail to ken.

This is the scientific mode, I suppose, of saying that seers will arise, and another sense be one day added to our senses, five or six. Swedenborg would call it the opening of the spiritual sight. Spiritualists would call it clairvoyance. The Bible speaks of it as a fact that is to be, in the words "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

It is a matter, therefore, of interest, to note that the leader of the materialist school of thought should in one case rarely matter to the degree of spirit, and in the other anticipate the growth of a junction, whereby, we may, in the coming ages, be able to introspect the workings of life and nature in a higher scale, if not another sphere.

Touching the element called ether, Professor Tyndall calls it "an all-pervading substance, more solid than gas, yet infinitely more attenuated," and this supports our philosophy regarding the solidity of spirit, and yet its power of permeating things solid to us.

With reference to his views of development in man of a higher visual sense, he says we are not entitled "to assume that man's present faculties end the series. Two-thirds of the rays emitted by the sun fail to arouse in the eye the sense of vision. The rays exist, but the visual organ requisite for their translation into light does not exist. And so from this region of darkness and mystery which surrounds us, rays may now be darting, which require but the development of the proper intellectual organs to translate them into knowledge, as far surpassing ours as ours surpasses the Ignorodon and his contemporaries." There is hope for Professor Tyndall even yet. THOS. COLLEY.

Portsmouth.

## SOCIAL REFORMS.

SIR,—I am pleased to see in *The Spiritualist* of last issue a short report of a meeting held at the rooms in Great Russell-street, which report is headed, "*A Social Idea*." Perhaps it might interest your readers, and call attention to so desirable an object as the one therein stated, if you allowed a little correspondence on the subject to appear in your columns. We are often asked, What good has Spiritualism done? and what benefit is humanity to derive from it?

One answer to this question certainly is, that it will of necessity lead the minds of many men in different paths to those which the mass of mankind formerly trod. Will those paths be better than the old? Some will answer, "No," but others, seeing from another standpoint, will reply, "Yes, and it comes with the expressed intention of benefiting humanity."

One among the many subjects discussed by the adherents of Spiritualism is the social life of humanity, and the knowledge we are continually gaining from the spirit-world brings to the surface new thoughts, and new forms of thought, scattering them abroad through the world in order that mankind may lay hold upon them, and, as they advance, act accordingly. We know that some wild schemes have been broached in the name of Spiritualism—schemes which may not be considered wild in future ages; but having the present to deal with, we can only take one step, and wait to see it completed ere another is taken.

There are many people, communist in theory, who see that it is impossible, in the present state of humanity, to carry it into practice, yet gladly, though silently, look upon every attempt made in that direction. There should be a community of interest between every person in society, although many people act as if there ought not; yet there is, and must be, however individuals or different states of society may act, for no person does wrong without society suffering, and no person does good without society benefiting by it. I am fully persuaded that the system of housebuilding now in vogue is wasteful to a great degree, at the same time fosters a spirit of exclusiveness and indifference as to the welfare of neighbours or any one else.

We have only to consider the number of extra fires needed under the present system, the waste in the consumption of fuel, the extra amount of work required to be done, and many other things connected with household arrangements which might be improved upon, if set about in a proper spirit and manner, and not with the intention of taking exorbitant interest for outlay. I might indicate two or three things which I think society in part is ripe enough to adopt, of course, if suitable buildings are constructed. One would be a "common table" for the inhabitants of the block; the reason of this, I think I can make plain.



To prepare meals for many persons is wasteful in cooking; where two or three only compose a family they cannot cook a quantity of many things without some becoming too old ere they can be eaten, and if they confine themselves to smaller quantities much of the goodness is lost to them.

Heating.—If all the cooking were done in one part, the remainder of the buildings might be heated with hot water, or in some other economical manner, away from the cookery department.

Dormitories might be made for all young persons and children over a certain age, always reserving a private room of good dimensions for married persons. Places for recreation could easily be made, and would increase the general happiness.

There are many more reasons to urge on behalf of such a step being taken, and I know there are weighty reasons to be urged against it; but we must go forward until society sees, and practically acts upon, the principle that every individual's best interest is the abolition of all that fosters self. If you can find space for the foregoing, and think it contains anything suitable for your pages, I shall esteem its insertion a favour.

THOS. HICKLING.

12, Butter Market, Bury St. Edmunds,  
10th January, 1876.

#### THE ALLEGED INFLUENCE OF WILL-POWER AT SEANCES.

SIR,—Allow me a few words in reply to the letter of "Common Sense" in your last issue, together with your own editorial note thereto appended, under the heading of "Alleged Influence of Will-power at Séances."

Now, your correspondent does not assert that by the exercise of his will he at all influenced the physical manifestations which occurred, and which he described as consisting of the floating and manipulation of a musical box, together with his being touched by what appeared to be a finger.

The sole result of his "willing" appears to have been the (no doubt) mesmeric "twitching" of a lady present.

Now from that it would seem he has simply proved nothing new by the experiment, since mesmeric action is undisputed. Had he commenced "willing" during the occurrence of the physical manifestations, and had the effect been the production of a positive influence thereon, according to will, then methinks it might have opened a much newer field.

On this point—and also referring to the editorial note, in which the fact of your always having failed to influence the manifestations by will, is stated—I wish to assert that I can generally cause, by the action of my will, a table already in motion, to move in almost any manner I choose. I have tried the experiment repeatedly.

This seems to me most important, and I should be pleased to learn the experience of others in this matter, since it is most desirable to know the limits and conditions of the action of mind upon external material. I am aware all this may, and has been, attributed to mental action upon the operating spirit, but this at least seems rather unsatisfactory.

It requires a mighty stretch of imagination on my part, to suppose the "departed" perform all the vagaries I have witnessed at spirit circles, though facts have convinced me of their action in certain cases.

Any way, I think, sir, a discussion of the question of the action of the will upon physical manifestations, could not be unprofitable.

EDWIN HALL.

19, Elsworth-street, Cheetham, Manchester, Jan. 10, 1876.

#### PROOF OF A FUTURE LIFE NEEDED.\*

BY EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.

THERE are multitudes, members of churches and others, who are in a state of bewilderment as to our spiritual manifestations, and who in vain look to the clergy for an explanation. They can sadly and truly say:

"I grope in the dark, and seek blindly  
The hand that shall lead to the light;  
There is no one to answer me kindly—  
There is no one to teach me the right."

How many in the churches to-day are yearning for spiritual nourishment while receiving only husks, peering wistfully into the realm of shadows for some gleam of light, for some confirmation of their hopes of a future life, who finding all the faintly uttered assurances of their religious teachers unsatisfactory, at last, with the fading of their hopes, sink to the condition of the writer in Ecclesiastes, and in their despair of soul exclaim with him:

"Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his portion; for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?"

How many Sadducees, who believe neither in a resurrection, nor in angel or spirit, are there in our churches to-day, ignoring except in outward form and profession even the very principles of Christianity? "My brethren, these things ought not so to be," neither could they so be if the clergy fully believed these things themselves, and could furnish the proofs necessary to convince matter-of-fact minds of their truth. If one-half of the Protestant clergymen of this

country were as conversant with the manifestations and teachings of biblical and modern Spiritualism as thousands of laymen are in the cities of New York and Boston, and should to-day boldly commence preaching these truths, within twelve months the remaining churches with their pastors would be deserted, and if any single denomination were thus to preach Spiritualism, it would attract and gather within its churches from the other denominations so many of their adherents, that the latter would fall into decay from lack of support.

There is no less need of demonstrative proof of a future life to-day than there was nineteen centuries ago—there is, in fact, far more need of it, as unbelief is more prevalent than then. It is useless to ask thoughtful, self-relying men to believe, when the proofs are not presented, and it is only just and reasonable that those who attempt to convince them shall furnish evidence of their faith being founded upon demonstrated truth. This is requiring no more than Thomas demanded, and which demand Jesus evidently did not regard as sinful or unreasonable, and it is no more than Jesus conceded to the others to whom He appeared after His resurrection.

For upwards of eighteen centuries the Christian world has rested in the revelation given through Jesus Christ and His Apostles. That the knowledge derived through that revelation was the highest which up to that time had been given to men, there should be no question; but as Jesus Himself said, they were not then prepared to receive all the truth. Men can appropriate only those forms and degrees of knowledge which are adapted to their comprehension, and it is evident from the different ways in which that knowledge was, and even now is received, that they were presented with all they were capable of comprehending.

The various and diverse opinions now prevalent regarding the phenomena and teachings of the Bible, mostly originated during those ages when ignorance prevailed, and when even the best informed drew their knowledge from extremely limited sources, by limited means. It could not be otherwise than that circumstances other than those favourable to fair investigation, calm reasoning, and strict adherence to facts, should often determine views and opinions which sometimes through fair, and at other times unfair influences, became the established articles of belief in the Church. These articles, either in their original meaning and force, or changed by succeeding ecclesiastical authorities, with perhaps no better claim to infallibility of judgment, have descended to our times, and demand the recognition of the Christian world; but it would be difficult to show that any additional evidence in proof of our continued existence, or of the nature of that existence, has been furnished by the Church since the time of the Apostles.

YESTERDAY Mr. J. J. Morse gave a trance lecture at the Athenæum, Queen-street, Wolverhampton. The public were admitted free of charge.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—On Tuesday evening, at the ordinary monthly meeting of the Council of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, the members present were:—Mr. J. Tozeland in the chair, Mr. Thomas Blyton, Mrs. Amelia Corner, Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen, Mr. Thomas Wilks, and Mrs. Wood. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. Letters of general interest were read from Mr. Henry D. Jencken, Dr. Francis W. Monck, Mr. Algernon Joy, Mr. Hay Nisbet, and Miss Lottie Fowler. The auditors' report by Messrs. J. Tozeland and G. R. Tapp was submitted and approved. The draft report of the Council, with statement of accounts, as certified by the auditors, was framed for submission to the members at the half-yearly general meeting to be held on Thursday, the 27th inst. A notice of resignation from Mr. A. Ferguson Black was "accepted with regret." The honorary secretary read a letter from Mr. Martheze, who was unanimously elected a life member. Presentations to the library were reported of copies of *Hafed, Prince of Persia* from Mr. Martheze and Mr. Hay Nisbet, and *Angelic Revelations* from Mrs. Wood. A vote of thanks was passed to the donors. There was a good muster of members at the rooms on Tuesday evening last, after the Council meeting, and Dr. Sexton, honorary member, read a paper upon "Occult Psychological Phenomena occurring outside what is called Spiritualism." Mr. Thomas Blyton was voted into the chair, in the absence of the president elect, and introduced Dr. Sexton to the meeting. The paper narrated a large number of authenticated cases of trance, clairvoyance, and psychometry. The paper was listened to with interest, and at the close a cordial vote of thanks to Dr. Sexton was moved by Mr. Thomas Wilks, seconded by Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen, and carried unanimously. The paper will be published in full in the forthcoming issues of the *Spiritual Magazine*.

\* From Dr. Crowell's *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*, Vol. II.



# WINTER MEETINGS OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

By GEORGE KING.

THE three meetings already held by the British National Association for reading papers and discussion have been, as all who have been present are agreed, eminently successful; and the reports which have appeared in your columns have, I believe, given satisfaction to the general body of Spiritualists. The Council therefore has resolved to continue the course fortnightly till the end of April, the first meeting of the present year to be held on the 24th inst.

The Committee has had under consideration two subjects for future discussion, Mesmerism and Physical Mediumship, which will probably be brought forward successively as the necessary arrangements are completed. It is intended that, if possible, mesmerism shall be practically illustrated as well as discussed, so all those who have had personal experience should render assistance, at any rate by attending. The secretary will always be glad to receive communications on behalf of the Committee.

Letters have been addressed to friends who are known to have witnessed, through members of their own families, striking manifestations of physical mediumship, and the questions have been put to them which were published in *The Spiritualist* of Dec. 3rd, under the heading, "Experiments in Mesmerism." It depends on the answers received what form the discussion will take, but on a matter so important interesting results cannot fail to be recorded.

The experience of the past meetings will assist those who intend to respond to the queries of the Committee. In the discussion, for instance, on Spirit Photography, two broad classes of facts came into prominence. In the first place, cases showing the authenticity of spirit photography were adduced, and several gentlemen of unquestioned honour and intelligence came forward to state that, not only in their opinion, but to their personal knowledge, it is a grand reality. For the outside public and for the numerous sceptics among Spiritualists such utterances are invaluable, and they must give an impetus to research and discovery. But in the second place, facts of scarcely less moment were brought to light, which, if followed up and compared with observations in other departments, would greatly increase man's knowledge, both spiritual and physical. It was clearly proved by the concurrent testimony of independent operators that ordinary light has but little to do with the process, and that the lenses of the camera may be discarded, as they are apparently without effect, the spirit not even being inverted by them as would be the case with a mortal. This accords with what is known of mesmerism, for the vision of a mesmerised patient is not assisted by either microscope or telescope; hence we have unexpected internal evidence of the genuineness, on the one hand, of spirit photography, and, on the other, of the intimate relation which subsists between apparently unconnected subjects. This latter class of facts can, however, be received only by the initiated.

Following the example as above sketched out, let those who intend to contribute papers on mesmerism, physical mediumship, or any other subject, keep these two objects in view—to provide positive testimony to the reality of the phenomena, and to record their observations on any remarkable characteristics that may come under their notice, even though seemingly insignificant. If this course be pursued, there will be abundant material about which usefully to write, and persons of every mental constitution will find matter to interest them in the discussions.

Strenuous support should be given to the committee, who can only organise and not originate. It would greatly assist them if friends would send in suggestions, both as to what questions to bring forward, and how best to provide for their being efficiently discussed; and every one who has a paper ready, long or short, on any suitable subject, or who intends to write one, should communicate with the secretary without delay.

PRINCE WITTGENSTEIN will leave Vevey for St. Petersburg towards the middle of this month; he is giving all the aid he can to the scientific committee there appointed for the investigation of spiritual phenomena.

## Provincial News.

### NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

THE Misses Wood and Fairlamb are in London for a few weeks, fulfilling a private engagement connected with the scientific investigation of Spiritualism.

THE *Newcastle Express* of Wednesday, January 5th, contained an article having reference to the *fiasco* at Liverpool, and not at all complimentary to Mr. Herne, or Spiritualists in general.

THE *séances* held at the Freemasons' Hall, Weirs-court, during the absence of Misses Wood and Fairlamb, will be such as will tend to help on the development of other mediums in the Spiritualist Society. Among these mediums are Messrs. High and Greenwell, both of whom are developing as trance speakers, and a *séance* which was held on Wednesday, the 5th inst., with them, passed off satisfactorily. Mr. Greenwell, while under control, spoke in a foreign language for a little time, then in broken English.

A LECTURE was given by Mr. T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., in the Lecture-hall, Nelson-street, on Thursday, the 6th inst., on Frictional Electricity, and he stated in his opening remarks that it was thirty-five years ago since he gave his first lecture on the same subject, and in the same hall; he hoped and believed that in the next world we should be able to continue our investigations, and on looking back to compare notes then as now. Several other lectures are to be delivered; the later ones will be of a psychological nature.

A PENNY weekly journal has been started in Newcastle, entitled, *The North of England Review*; it gives attention to temperance, dietetic and social subjects. Among the contributors to its pages are Dr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., and Mr. E. T. Bennett.

### THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS AND THE SPIRITUALIST PRESS.

WE have much pleasure in publishing the following letter:—

To the Editor of "*The Spiritualist*."

SIR,—I am instructed by the Council to make a correction of certain misconceptions which have lately been circulated in some parts of the country, affecting the British National Association of Spiritualists and its relation to the Spiritualist press, and to beg that you will kindly give it as much publicity as possible.

It is supposed by some that *The Spiritualist* newspaper is the "organ" of the Association, and that each is responsible for the acts and opinions of the other; also, that the Association is more or less under the influence of Mr. Harrison, and was started to promote his interests.

These are errors, as the following explanation will show.

When the Council first resolved to give publicity to its meetings, the invitation to report its proceedings was extended to all the Spiritualist newspapers without distinction; its advertisements were tendered to all alike, and free tickets to *soirées* and other meetings were regularly sent out.

*The Spiritualist* having fully responded to every invitation, the Association stands so far indebted to it, that as much publicity as that journal is able to give has been on all occasions ungrudgingly afforded; but for editorial remarks, for the form and manner of the reports, or for the opinions of *The Spiritualist* on organisation and other matters, the Council is in no way responsible. Indeed, it is thought by some members of the Association to be an advantage over editing "Transactions" of its own, that its proceedings are published to the world at large, and are open to the wind of criticism from every quarter.

With regard to the second misconception, I have simply to state that Mr. Harrison has only the same connection with the Association as any other private member. It is true that he has from time to time addressed letters of suggestion to the Council—but this is the privilege of every member; such letters are at all times received with pleasure by the Council, though the suggestions put forward may not be always adopted.

A copy of this letter has been sent, by order of the Council, to the editor of every Spiritualist paper and periodical in this country.

EMILY KISLINGBURY,

Secretary Brit. Nat. Association of Spiritualists.

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

### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE second volume of *The Spiritualist Library* series is in the press, and is written by Dr. Gully, the high quality of whose literary labours is fully recognised by Spiritualists. The book deals both with the religious and phenomenal aspects of Spiritualism.

The large penny pamphlet for sale at public meetings, of which many thousands will be printed, will go to press in a few days, so advertisers should send in their announcements at once to *The Spiritualist* Newspaper Office, 38, Great Russell-street, London.

THE *Birmingham Daily Mail* of last Tuesday contains a report a column and a half long, of the recent meeting in connection with Spiritualism, held at the Athenæum Rooms in that town.

### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ERRATA.—Cornelius Agrippa lived in the 15th and not in the 19th century, as stated in the article quoted in this journal from the *Spiritual Scientist* last week. In the *Spirit Teachings* of last week the word "larceny" should have been "luxury."



# BOOKS ON SPIRITUALISM, PSYCHOLOGY, MESMERISM, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND BIOLOGY,

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.

**FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD**, by Robert Dale Owen. An excellent book of absorbing interest, replete with well-authenticated narratives, describing manifestations produced by spirits. 7s. 6d.

**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, 16s.; 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 Russell 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.

**PLANCHETTE; OR, THE DESPAIR OF SCIENCE**, by Epes Sargent. A book rich in descriptions of well-authenticated spiritual phenomena. Information about the relationship of Spiritualism to Religion is also given. 6s.

**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 Physiology, is out of print.

**GLIMPSES OF THE SUPERNATURAL**, by the Rev. F. G. Lee, D.C.L. 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.

**REAL LIFE IN SPIRIT LAND**. Given through the mediumship of Mrs. Maria M. King. This book professes to give life experiences, scenes, incidents, and conditions illustrative of spirit life. The preface says:—"Experienced spirits state propositions to man in the flesh as they would state them to each other, expecting or hoping that they will not be taken for granted because uttered by a spirit, but will be fully weighed in the light of all the reason and experience possessed by those who receive their instructions." 1s. 6d.

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