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MARGARET LONSDALE'S BIOGRAPHY OF
SISTER DORA.

BY HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD, J.P.

A MOST interesting biography has just been published of “Sister Dora,” the devoted nurse, and conductress of a cottage hospital at Walsall, who spent her whole being in ministering to the ailments of all who needed her assistance, and earned the veneration of rich and poor throughout the district. One poor man who had been under her hands, in giving his account to Miss Lonsdale, her biographer, never mentioned Sister Dora's name without rising and reverently touching his forelock. It may, as Miss Lonsdale is inclined to suppose, have been owing to the veneration in which she was held that rumours arose of visions having been seen by Sister Dora, and supernatural communications having been made to her. As her biographer never heard any of these stories from her own lips, nor obtained any solid evidence of them from the mouths of others, she gives us no particulars of the marvels which she has heard. She is far, however, from expressing absolute incredulity, saying only:—

“Although the power to work miracles, once given to faithful men, seems to have been lost—perhaps because no one faithful enough to wield it is ever found—there are still more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy; and I dare not use the word ‘impossible’ with regard to the visions which some people suppose Sister Dora to have seen, and the supernatural communications which they affirm to have been made to her. But I incline rather to the belief that such ideas about her had a very simple and natural origin in the veneration in which her great powers were justly held by the ignorant and superstitious, as well as by the credulously educated, who easily persuaded themselves that what she achieved was due rather to supernatural agency than to a singular combination of genius and self-devotion.”

With so cautious a biographer we may be sure that one or two facts of an abnormal nature which are found in the narrative were told her by Sister Dora herself. The first of these is an instance of clairaudience which occurred in connection with her while she was yet a girl:—

“While she was travelling abroad a schoolboy in the village, who was especially attached to her, fell ill of rheumatic fever. The boy's one longing was to see ‘Miss Dora’ again; and as he grew worse and worse, and still she did not come home, he constantly prayed that he might live to see her. On the day on which she was expected he sat up on his pillows, intently listening, and at last, long before any one else could hear the sound of wheels, he exclaimed, ‘There she is; there is Miss Dora!’ and sank back.

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She went to him at once, and stayed with him, nursing him till he was dead" (p. 7).

"During one of her visits to her brother, she had a dream, in which her mother appeared to her, drawing back the curtains of the bed, and calling, 'Dora, Dora, Dora!' The dream was so vivid, and the impression which it left was so strong, that the next morning she told her old servant about it, but forbore to tell her brother, for fear he should say as usual, 'Oh, it is only one of your silly north-country superstitions.' No letter came that day from Hauxwell (her home). This increased Dora's anxiety, and when the same dream returned the next night, her mother calling her as before, and looking very worn and ill, Dora could no longer refrain from telling her brother that she was certain their mother was in danger and wanted her. He tried in vain to laugh her out of her intention of sending for letters to the neighbouring town; nothing else would satisfy her, and a letter which had been delayed three days was found, containing the news of Mrs. Pattison's dangerous illness. Dora went at once, and found her mother laid on her death-bed. She died soon afterwards" (p. 15).

"The conviction grew upon her that presentiments were sent to her as direct warnings from God; and is it not possible that those who call this conviction superstitious may be condemning a child-like faith, the simplicity of which they themselves are unable to appreciate? One night Sister Dora woke up suddenly, feeling convinced that something was wrong in the wards. A serious amputation had taken place in the afternoon, but she had already visited the patient in the course of the night, according to her custom in anxious cases, and had found him going on well. But now she could not sleep again; something seemed urging her to get up, and, as usual, she obeyed the warning voice within her. She went straight to the patient, and found that one of the larger arteries had broken away from its ligatures, and that he was slowly but surely bleeding to death. She secured the artery in time to save the man's life."

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THE "SHEFFIELD DAILY TELEGRAPH" ON SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of February 8th contains the following review of the new book, *Spirits before our Eyes* :—

Mr. Harrison has conferred a real boon on those who take an interest in the question of apparitions by collecting in one volume a number of fairly well authenticated stories of mysterious appearances of departed spirits and of death-bed apparitions. We ourselves, though we do not see our way to give in our adherence to the creed of the Spiritualists, have often felt that a collection of instances fairly well authenticated would be extremely valuable, and aid the public in forming an opinion as to the credibility or incredibility of what are now termed spiritual phenomena. Mr. Harrison desires to make his collection of instances complete and exhaustive, and

therefore requests all persons who have had experience of apparitions to forward full particulars of the occurrence, and he desires these records to be written or signed by one or more of the witnesses, and that full names and addresses should be given; for the object the author has in view is by proving the reality of spiritual apparitions to establish the immortality of the soul "by evidence as strong as any on which men are condemned to death by courts of law." *Apropos* of courts of law, Mr. Harrison quotes the story of Old Booty's Ghost, which was proved to the satisfaction of the Court of King's Bench in the year 1687. A Mrs. Booty sued Capt. Barnaby to recover £1,000 as damages for his assertion that he had seen her late husband driven into hell.

Friday, 15th May.—We had the observation of Mr. Booty this day. Captain Barnaby, Captain Bristow, Captain Brown, I, and Mr. Ball, merchant, went on shore in Captain Barnaby's boat, to shoot rabbits upon Stromboli; and when we had done we called all our men together by us, and about half an hour and fourteen minutes after three in the afternoon, to our great surprise, we all of us saw two men come running towards us with such swiftness that no living men could run half so fast as they did run; when all of us heard Captain Barnaby say, "Lord, bless me, the foremost is Old Booty, my next-door neighbour;" but he said he did not know the other that run behind. He was in black clothes, and the foremost in grey. Then Captain Barnaby desired all of us to take an account of the time and pen it down in our pocket-books, and when we got on board we wrote it in our journals, for we saw them into the flames of fire, and there was a great noise, which greatly affrighted us all, for we none of us ever saw or heard the like before. Captain Barnaby said he was certain it was Old Booty which he saw running over Stromboli and into the flames of hell.

Then, coming home to England, and lying at Gravesend, Captain Barnaby's wife came on board the sixth day of October, 1687, at which time Captain Barnaby and Captain Brown sent for Captain Bristow and Mr. Ball, merchant, to congratulate with them, and, after some discourse, Captain Barnaby's wife started up and said, "My dear, I will tell you some news: Old Booty is dead." He directly made answer, "We all of us saw him run into hell!"

Afterwards Captain Barnaby's wife told a gentleman of his acquaintance in London what her husband had said, and he went and acquainted Mrs. Booty of the whole affair; upon that Mrs. Booty arrested Captain Barnaby in a thousand pounds' action, for what he had said of her husband. Captain Barnaby gave bail to it, and it came to a trial in the Court of King's Bench, and they had Mr. Booty's wearing apparel brought into court, and the sexton of the parish, and the people that were with him when he died, and they swore to the time he died, and when he died, and we swore to our journals, and it came to the same time within two minutes; ten of our men swore to the buttons on his coat, and that they were covered with the same sort of cloth his coat was made, and so it proved.

The jury asked Mr. Spinks (whose handwriting in the journal that happened to be read appeared) if he knew Mr. Booty? He answered, "I never saw him till he ran by me on the Burning Mountains." Then the judge said, "Lord, have mercy upon me, and grant I may never see what you have seen; one, two, or three may be mistaken, but thirty never can be mistaken." So the widow lost her cause.

All lovers of the mysterious must be familiar with stories of the death of persons at a distance being made known to their friends at home by the apparition of the dying or dead person just at the hour of death, and we recently quoted in our columns the well-known story of the appearance of such an apparition to the late Lord Brougham. Of such stories Mr. Harrison has collected a number in the pages of the work before us, but in chapter eight there are instances of spiritual phenomena more marvellous than any we have ever before met with in print; for

not content with accounts of apparitions of dead persons, who may be regarded as belonging to the world of spirits, Mr. Harrison gives us well-authenticated accounts of the appearance at distant places of spirits of the living, and are told how persons endowed with this peculiar gift of parting from their bodies for a time, appear to friends many hundred miles distant and return to their usual bodily habitation, and all in the course of an hour or two. If there be any truth in these stories the being in two places at once can no longer be regarded as the height of impossibility. We quote some of the table of contents of this wonderful chapter in order that our readers may see we do not exaggerate concerning the wonderful character of the "well-authenticated stories" which Mr. Harrison has collected. Here are a few of them—"Apparitions of living mortals," "The spirit leaving the body during sleep and trance," "The spirits of living mortals seen at distant places," "Verification of spiritual travels at both ends of the line," "The materialised spirit of a living Methodist minister seen, recognised, touched, and heard by two witnesses." This story, which is too long to quote, is in substance as follows:—A certain Mr. Benning, living in New York, had engaged to lecture on the following Sunday at Troy—not Homer's and Gladstone's Troy, but Troy, U.S.—but on Saturday being attacked by a very severe sore throat, it became impossible for him to keep his engagement. This breach of faith annoyed the good man exceedingly, for though he at once wrote off to inform them of his illness, he felt very doubtful of the arrival of the letter in time to prevent the crowd assembling to hear him. Perplexed and vexed, he allowed his thoughts to become concentrated on a gathering of Spiritualist friends at which he was to have been present that evening at Troy. He felt rather pre-occupied, and more than usually stupid, throughout the evening—a condition not uncommon to persons suffering from bad colds and sore throats. But, strange to say, he actually appeared among his friends at Troy, knocked at the door, walked up the stairs, entered the room, muttered, in a husky voice, something about not being able to lecture next day, and vanished—vanished in spite of the fact that the front door was locked and the key in the doorkeeper's pocket. In disappearing he knocked down two of the gentlemen who endeavoured to prevent his departure. The friends were astonished at this rude conduct of the usually mild minister, but when, next day, the letter arrived announcing that he was at home ill, they very naturally felt that they had seen something uncanny. We have no space for further quotation, but commend all our readers who take an interest in this subject to buy Mr. Harrison's book and read for themselves, and we can assure them that, if they delight in strange narratives of marvelous mysteries which make the flesh creep, they will find in the work before us far better material than the ghost stories which the Christmas annuals provide, for every one of Mr. Harrison's narratives has the additional virtue of being declared to be strictly true, and the names and addresses of the witnesses are attached in evidence thereof. In

criticising such a work we are in a dilemma. Are we to treat the whole thing as a joke, as a hoax, a sort of modern Baron Munchausen, or are we to regard the matter seriously and discuss the future possibilities which these stories of the deeds of spirits open up, and, with the author, enter into a discussion of the question as to whether communication by spirit media will in the future supersede telegraphic communication? Are we to laugh and ridicule, or are we, with the author, to believe and wonder? Are we to look on these stories as proofs of human gullibility and credulity, or to regard them as evidence of the reality of the unseen world?

Eminent scientific men, like Mr. Crookes and Lord Rayleigh, the newly-appointed professor of physics at the University of Cambridge, are believers in the reality of these phenomena which Mr. Harrison narrates in the work before us. Others equally competent and the greater number of people declare they are no better than old wives' fables. We will not take upon ourselves to pronounce a judgment; but will close our review of this interesting collection of spiritual phenomena with the old warning to those who refuse to go beyond the limits of their own experience, that there may be things undreamt of in their philosophy.

Correspondence.

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

DR. MONCK.

SIR,—The committee formed to promote a testimonial for Dr. Monck have determined, at the urgent request of many friends who are collecting sums in the provinces and abroad, to keep the list of subscriptions open a short time longer.

Should his health return, and if he can succeed in securing a livelihood by means of spiritually-suggested inventions already patented under the advice of eminent manufacturers, it is his intention to devote himself as an unpaid medium to the investigation of spiritual phenomena in the light, from which results of the highest value may be expected.

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"Chip,"	0	2	0
H. A. Beckett	0	2	6

NEXT Saturday evening, at eight o'clock, Mr. B. Howard will read a paper on Spiritualism, before the Holborn Literary Society, 36, Great Queen-street, London.

The Talmud abounds with numerous spiritual legends. One Rabbi says, "If you want to see spirits, sprinkle your beds de with fine ashes, and if in the morning you see marks like cocks' claws, it is a sign spirits have been there."

A VOICE FROM OUTSIDE THE FOLD.

BY FRANK PODMORE.

I HAVE to acknowledge a triple debt of gratitude. Mr. F. F. Cook, of Chicago, has done me the kindness to write a pamphlet called the *Rationale of Spiritualism*.* An anonymous friend has done me the kindness to send me this pamphlet. And Mr. Stainton Moses, by means of his paper read before the British National Association of Spiritualists on the 26th January, has fulfilled the benefit by inducing me to read the pamphlet. And I know not how I can make better acknowledgment for all these unmerited favours than by doing what in me lies to persuade others to read an essay from which I have myself derived so much profit.

Mr. Cook takes up a position almost unique amongst Spiritualists. He recognises to the full all the unpromising appearances that the movement presents to outsiders. He does not attempt to deny that "its potency lies as yet chiefly with a class untrammelled by precise definitions or exact thought." In effect, he asserts roundly that Spiritualism is disreputable, and Spiritualists a crew of crotchety, illogical ragamuffins.† But in the same breath he hastens to add that he would not for the world have things otherwise. In the fact that the movement is a byword, and its adherents outcasts from society, lies its salvation; for he urges with considerable force and ingenuity that the solution of the whole matter is to be found in the fact that the progress of Spiritualism is under the guidance of spirits, who see "with larger, other eyes than ours;" and it is from their standpoint only that it must be judged. They are able to discern that if the new truth were presented to the world in all its nakedness, that world would be blinded with excess of light. All traditional fabrics would crash into ruins before there were yet built those which should replace them, and the end would be chaos come again. If the new is to be grafted on to what was before, and all that is worthy to live in the later is to be preserved, the regeneration must be slow. Old beliefs have to be remodelled and enlarged, old forms of thought reconstructed, to admit the newer wisdom; and if you hasten too much while you destroy the one, you will fail to set up the other. The perception of a new truth requires the growth of a new sense; and that growth can only come with length of days. In Mr. Cook's words: "Had this truth come first to the savants as a discovery, and subject to no conditions except such as are commonly recognised with regard to scientific experiments, directly it would have permeated the entire social economy, producing untold misery. . . . There are millions in whose minds the unwelcome truth, thus ruthlessly forced, would have called into action all the baser passions in defence of their cherished dogmas. What cry more pathetic than that of the old heathen, who, bereft of his idol by the missionaries of a strange religion, wailed out piteously, 'You have robbed me of my God'?"

It is not without set purpose, then, and under the guidance of a higher power, that Spiritualism is made to present such an unattractive front to the outer

world; that it is disgraced by repeated frauds; that it is rendered ludicrous by the many-sided extravagance of its supporters; that its converts are so seldom from among the Scribes and Pharisees. All these things are the tempering of the wind; the merciful haze through which we see the sun. They are expressly initiated by the spirit directors, whose only care at present is, not to advance, but to retard. Mr. Cook well compares the uncouth infancy of Spiritualism to that of Christianity with its ascetic excesses, its frenzied enthusiasm, its often unbridled license, and its "all things in common." To this last stage—to socialism—he predicts that Spiritualism also will shortly come. It is probable that the illustrations he adduces are truer of American than of English Spiritualism; but the theory by which he accounts for them is true of both, or of neither. To me, who occupy a most uncomfortable position on the fence, it appears a most entirely rational and plausible explanation of many things that most assuredly need explaining; and it is a perfectly legitimate extension of the spiritualistic theory. If we are to have spirits at all, what is to hinder them from being as big as we please.

But whilst I cordially agree with Mr. Cook's comparison of the nineteenth century—the first of the advent of Spiritualism—with that of the advent of Christianity, when the "weak things of the world are chosen to confound the mighty, and the things that are not to bring to nought the things that are;" and whilst I admire the strong simplicity of his theory, and his ingenious defence of it, I am yet constrained to ask one question, How does Mr. Cook obtain his knowledge on these dark matters? For he puts it forward not as hypothesis, but as assured knowledge. We can imagine throughout that we hear him speaking of "I and the spirit-guides of the movement." In this he but resembles too closely teleologists in general. He speaks with authority, and that not the authority of fact. He may be right; but we are not yet ready to assist at the resurrection of the doctrine of Final Causes: we cannot yet forget that the *Bridgewater Treatises* have been superseded by the *Origin of Species*. We may think it probable that there is a higher truth, in whose broad light the theory of Evolution shall be shown to be one with the argument of Design, by whose atonement Darwin shall be reconciled with Paley, the seeming victor with the vanquished. But Mr. Cook would, meanwhile, make his position infinitely stronger, if he would but scan with the same clear vision the obverse of the shield. These things may be under the guidance of angels, but they are also, if we may judge from all analogy, the product of natural forces. It is not enough for Mr. Cook to maintain that this frequent trickery, these spirit-and-watery trance addresses, and all these aimless freaks of vagabond furniture, are preordained of deliberate forethought. It is not enough for him even to show that they admirably subserve the purpose for which they are so ordained. The same has been shown long ago of every social institution, and of every exquisite adjustment—the seeming adaptation of means to end—the wide realm of nature—before the days of Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy. If

* *The Rationale of Spiritualism* is the title of a paper read before the Chicago Philosophical Society, by Mr. Frederick F. Cook.

† Mr. Cook must be speaking of Spiritualism in America, without knowing anything about Spiritualism in England.—Ed.

he would have us, who are without the fold, to believe, he must prove that these things are also the natural and inevitable accompaniments of spirit communion; he must trace the conditions to their source, and affiliate them to what we already know of the laws of phenomena. Of course it is open to Mr. Cook to retort that he does not wish us to believe, that we are not yet of the chosen. But the very existence of this pamphlet is sufficient to prove that he is of the true missionary spirit, of which all reformers are made.

And yet, when all is said, be it confessed that I closed the book with the words on my lips, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Spiritualist."

28th January, 1880.

THE POLICE BAFFLED BY SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

MR. J. N. T. MARTHEZE, who in his travels round the world has reached New Orleans, sends us the following account, from the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, of some disturbances taking place in a house in Chicago, on the 9th of January, 1880:—

Chicago, Jan. 9.—"The place is haunted! The place is haunted!" shout a chorus of shrieking children around a brown frame two-story cottage, No. 176, Bulton-street, in this city, all the afternoon. The place in question has been an object of deep curiosity to a gazing and constantly increasing crowd, and the reports that have been made regarding the very serious sounds heard therein have attracted sufficient attention to prompt a careful investigation. "Sperrits" is the prevailing opinion as to the cause of the internal disturbances, combated by eager adherents of the theory that the personage at the bottom of the difficulty is the devil. Two police officers were called in about one o'clock this morning. Moans and shrieks, followed by rappings, had been heard in different parts of the house. The officers ransacked the premises, hearing the noises, now in one room and then in another, and left thoroughly discouraged by their unavailing search. Your correspondent called this afternoon. The noises had been heard at intervals all through the day. In a chamber on the first floor a young woman was seen, apparently asleep, or in a trance, upon a bed. A number of ladies were gathered in the room. Your correspondent had been there only a few minutes when raps were distinctly heard, now upon the door, now at the head of the bed, on the ceiling, and the wall.

"It is on her," said one of the ladies.

The pronoun referred to the young woman upon the bed. Her body and limbs straightened out with a convulsive movement, she gave a gasp as if taking in a long breath with great difficulty, and a white foam appeared at her rosy mouth.

"Now she will speak," said one.

"Is that you, aunt Ellen?" asked the female on the bed. (Three raps.)

"That means yes," said an old lady.

"Have you come for me?" (Yes.)

"Will it be a year, a month, or a week?" No answer.

"A year?" (Three raps.)

Further conversation was carried on, but this was regarded as particularly significant, because they said it was a warning of death.

Mrs. Cardenill, the lady of the house, said that they first heard the raps about eight o'clock last evening.

Pretty soon the young lady in question, Miss Catherine Gale, entered the room, and everywhere she went the knocking seemed to take place. When she went to raise the baby from the cradle the tapplings were quite gentle, but as she moved about the room they grew louder.

Shortly afterwards the family sent to the gospel meeting, at 48, Randolph-street, and requested somebody to come to the house and pray. A divine, whose name is not known, and a Miss Mansfield answered the invitation, and visited the house. The more they prayed the louder the rappings continued, and whenever Miss Gale heard them she was taken with a fainting fit that lasted some moments. She insisted upon sending for the priest, and a neighbour called upon one living near St. Patrick's Church. After hearing the case he refused to go, but sent word that it was a warning, and the devil was after them.

Among other questions put to the spirit, aunt Ellen, Mrs. Cardenill asked after her brother, James Brown, who sailed on the *Lady Elgin* twenty years ago, and who was never heard of afterwards. The spirit replied that he was dead, having been drowned nearly twenty years ago, when the noble ship went down with all on board. Every effort has been made on the part of the police, one or two newspaper reporters, and your correspondent, to discover the cause of the rappings, but in vain. The theory has been advanced that a loosened lath, or a piece of wire, or some such disarrangement of the material of the walls or flooring, vibrating through the action of the wind, is the cause of the rappings, but nothing has been found to establish the correctness of this or any other theory. The fact that the rappings are sometimes heard on the wall, then on the door, then at the foot of the bed, on the ceiling, on the windows, and everywhere throughout the house imaginable, makes it all the more strange. The woman of the house is a practical lady of good sense, and not at all given to Spiritualism. She stoutly maintains that some natural cause will be discovered for the strange noises, and she has no belief in the supernatural. It is different from the usual run of haunted houses in that there are no ghosts, or spooks, or personal manifestations of any kind.

No chains are rattled over the floors or on the stairs, and, in short, the goblin, or whatever it is, does not make its presence felt in the orthodox fashion. The police are satisfied that the house is haunted, and they are not at all anxious to pursue the investigation.

The Victorian Association of Spiritualists (Melbourne) consults its members about disputed points, leaving the decisions entirely in their hands; consequently it called no less than three special general meetings in 1870. Its income is more than £800 a year.

ALLEGED APPARITIONS IN COUNTY MAYO.

THE Dublin *Nation* newspaper having sent a reporter to Knock, county of Mayo, where apparitions of the Virgin Mary are said to have appeared, and where pilgrims are now in large numbers congregating, gives an account of his inquiry and its results. The witness on whose testimony he relies said:—

"He and the other persons who were with him saw a large space of soft white light on the gable of the Knock Chapel, the rest of the gable being quite dark at the time. In the midst of this light, which was not exactly in the centre, but towards the left-hand side of the gable as he stood facing it, he saw three figures: to his left, in a bending attitude, with hands clasped, was a figure of St. Joseph; in the middle a figure of the Virgin, her eyes raised, her hands raised to about the level of her shoulders, and their palms turned outwards to his (the witness's) right, a figure of a bishop, which the people said was St. John, holding in his left hand an open book, which he appeared to be reading, his right hand elevated, the thumb placed on the third and fourth fingers, the first and second standing erect. Farther on to his (the witness's) right appeared an altar with a lamb on it as represented in Catholic pictures, and a cross standing on the altar. All about the group were twinkling or flashing lights, like stars; they were not steady; they seemed as if they used to come nearer and then retire again, or to go in and out through the gable."

The *Nation* supplies a woodcut of the chapel to show where the vision became apparent, and adds:—

"At present the wall, as high as the hand can reach, is denuded of its coating of cement, and even the mortar from between the stones has been scraped out by visitors to the scene who wish to carry away with them some relics of that portion of the building. A number of sharp stones which had been used by the people in hammering off the mortar and cement were lying about the ground at the time of our visit. Against that part of the wall on which the vision of the Virgin was seen a little wooden tablet has been set up, and a small shelf, on which are placed two candles in candlesticks and two small statuettes; under these is a box with a slit for offerings, and around it a rough wooden paling, within which are placed the crutches and sticks of persons who have there been cured of their ailments. A number of sticks and one pair of crutches were within this enclosure at the time of our visit. On the tablet which I have just mentioned the following inscription is painted:—'It is important that any miraculous cures wrought here should be made known to the parish priest.' When I visited the place ten or twelve, including some well-dressed women, were outside praying before the scene of the apparition; two or three, bareheaded in the cold winter wind, were walking round the church, praying as they went, some having told them that three 'rounds' of this sort ought to be performed; and one poor cripple performing those penitential circuits toiled his way painfully along on hands and knees."

Cannot one of the Irish readers of *The Spiritualist* investigate this case?

CURIOUS MESMERIC PHENOMENA.

(From our Nova Scotian Correspondent.)

THE thoughtful and philosophical tone of your editorial articles, and the lofty character of the writings of your correspondents, not only in intelligence, but also their evident desire to attain the truth, their painstaking search after it, notwithstanding all obstacles and discouragements, and the consequent knowledge which they have achieved concerning the life beyond and the mysteries of the human mind; these considerations move me to inquire whether you, sir, or any of your correspondents or subscribers, have ever had a similar experience to the one which I will now proceed to detail. If so, or if not, what is the correct explanation of my experience?

I have practised mesmerism occasionally since about my nineteenth year, and during the last few months to a greater extent than ever before, not professionally, but once in a while, in private houses, generally when urged to do so by friends and acquaintances.

On Saturday evening, the 17th January, 1880, I called at the house of one of the oldest and best-known citizens of this town. There were present in the parlour two of his daughters and a young brother, a young lady, a visitor whom I will denominate Miss "A.," a young married lady, a temporary visitor like myself, a young gentleman who is attending the Academy connected with the King's College in this place, and another boy, who, when I entered the apartment, was playing cards with the young brother. A few minutes after my entrance, another young gentleman, the husband of the married lady above mentioned, came into the room—eight persons in all, exclusive of myself. I had a few evenings before, at her request, and that of other persons in the room, mesmerised the eldest daughter. She seemed so dull and heavy, and so inclined to fall asleep, that I brought her out of the state in a few minutes. This evening I was requested to take away a headache, which was troubling her. I rather declined at first, saying that I could not go near her without mesmerising her, but presently I made a few passes, and she said her headache was better. The brother, whom I shall call "M.," urged me to mesmerise him, and after a little hesitation I consented. He passed readily under control, but seemed heavy, and did not seem to know where he was. He could not get off his chair, or get his two forefingers apart, or take two cards apart when I told him he could not. I had the usual mesmeric complete control of his muscles. I then got his boy companion, whom I shall call "D.," on the floor beside him, and told the subject to put his nose against "D.'s" nose; he did: then I told him that they could not separate their noses, and they could not. Just previous to this I had tried the experiment of placing "M." and "D." back to back, and told "M." that "D." could not get away from him, and he could not. I then asked the student, whom I shall call "S.," to see if he could separate them. He declined to try. One of the ladies then requested Miss "A." to try. She did so, but could not effect their separation. I saw nothing abnormal in the physical or mental condition of the boy "D.," or Miss "A.," at this time. I had

declined previously to mesmerise Miss "A." "M.," upon my asking him how he felt, described his feelings by saying his "head was full up." I did not like the dull, log-like way in which the mesmeric influence affected him, and shortly brought him out of the mesmeric state. I do not think he was in it more than a quarter of an hour. My attention was immediately called by one of the company to Miss "A.," who had returned to her chair, about ten feet away from me, and, with closed eyes, seemed to be falling asleep. I recognised an influence similar to the mesmeric in her case, and tried by a few passes to take the influence off her. She roused up for a moment, but so soon as my back was turned the sleepy symptoms returned. Then my attention was directed to "D.," who was near tumbling off his chair. I went up to him, speaking sharply, and making a pass or two he appeared to come out of the state pretty well. Warned by a previous experience which had occurred about two years before, I determined to leave the house as soon as possible. I went into the hall and commenced putting on my overcoat and overshoes. Immediately "M." and Miss "A.," both with eyes closed and apparently in a profound mesmeric state, followed me into the hall and came close to me. I commanded them to return to the parlour. I heard a lady in the room telling them to go out into the hall. I, speaking in the hall, rebuked her. The two came out again, and again I ordered them back, and they obeyed as before, but each time moving slowly and with apparent reluctance. I left the house, and at once proceeded home, about half a mile distant. When thirty yards or so from the house, I heard the voice of Miss "A.," proceeding from the porch or front steps, calling out my name loudly. I felt that they would follow me, if possible. I went immediately to bed upon my arrival home, and read a book for a time to get my mind as much as possible off the scene in which I had participated that evening. Upon putting out the lamp and trying to sleep, the face of Miss "A.," continually presented itself to my mental vision: the effect was distressing and the influence evil. I did not see the boy "M.," and at the time I reflected upon the fact that he did not come up before my mind's eye, so to speak. Finally, after an hour or two, I got to sleep. The next morning I went to see the young married gentleman, whom I shall call "P.," to know from him what transpired after I left the house. He stated that the youngest daughter shut the parlour door and placed herself against it to prevent Miss "A." and "M." going after me; that "M." pushed her aside, opened the door, and made his way into the hall; that about the same time Miss "A." rushed to the folding doors separating the parlour from the drawing-room, pushed the doors open, ran through the drawing-room, opened the door opening out of the drawing-room into the hall, ran into the front hall, and out to the front door. After a short delay they then both ran out of doors, going down the street I did. Miss "A." ran with uncovered head and slipped feet over the ground covered with snow (which, however, had been well trodden) about fifty yards. "M." went perhaps fifty yards farther on my track. The student followed them and induced

them, still in a stupid sort of condition, to return to the house. Mr. "P." also started after them, but later than "S.," and met Miss "A." near the house returning. Mr. P. informs me that Miss "A." could not get to sleep for some time that night, and was troubled with bad dreams. The eldest daughter, I am told, while this scene was transpiring in the house, did not seem to notice what was going on. I did not notice her. What is the meaning of this? I had made no attempt in any way to mesmerise Miss "A." or the boy "D.," neither did I *desire* to do so. I did not seem to be able to take the influence off Miss "A.," as I have always been able to with my subjects. After taking the influence off "M." he relapsed into as deep or a deeper mesmeric sleep as ever, contrary to my experience with other subjects. My will was strong that they should remain in the parlour, yet they returned there with reluctance, and immediately followed me. I cannot believe that the influence of the mesmeric fluid emanating from me was hurtful and evil. I have had my influence described by subjects as soothing and pleasant; it has removed headaches and broken up severe cases of neuralgia. What, then, was the influence affecting these persons? That it was evil, my previous experience, my feelings at the time, and my experience after I had retired, all conspired to show. My opinion is that "M." is what I should call a low-class medium; that as Miss "A." and "D." were in contact with him, an evil spirit or spirits took power out of "M." to muddle and control them, with a view of thwarting and worrying me. I have several standard works on mesmerism, prominent among which I rank the admirable work of the late Professor Gregory, also Dr. Edwin Lee's and Deleuze's books; but in no work that I possess on the subject, nor in the columns of *The Spiritualist*, the *Medium*, or the *Banner of Light*, have I ever seen any account of an experience like mine. Is it dangerous to mesmerise for amusement? Ought the practice to be abandoned? I shall be pleased to have light thrown on the subject.

Windsor, Nova Scotia, Dominion of Canada, January, 1880.

ORGANISATION AMONG SPIRITUALISTS IN AUSTRALIA.

WE have received the annual report of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, and make the following extracts therefrom, to show the flourishing condition of organisation among Spiritualists in Australia:—

One of the most notable events in connection with Spiritualism during your committee's term of office was the arrival amongst us of Dr. Henry Slade, the world-renowned slate-writing medium. His visit caused great sensation among the outside public, and your committee have reason to think that his labours have carried conviction of the facts of Spiritualism to many who were previously sceptical. A special *séance* was given to a sub-committee specially appointed by us, which fully convinced them of the genuineness of his mediumistic powers. It is expected that he will pay another visit to these colonies next year.

On Friday, 18th October, the first public *séance* took place at the Masonic Hall, Mrs. Fielden, the

well-known Melbourne trance medium, having generously placed her services at the disposal of your committee for ten *séances*, the net proceeds to be given towards the building fund of the association. These *séances* were divided into two parts. The first portion of the evening was devoted to the exercise of the medium's clairvoyant powers in announcing the names of spirits present and describing them; during the second part addresses were given by the medium's controls, and not unfrequently spirit friends of people in the room spoke through the medium. During Mrs. Britten's lectures in March and April, Mrs. Fielden, yielding to the wishes of your committee and several members, consented to give another course to accommodate members of the association and others who, under the circumstances already referred to, objected to attend the lectures by Mrs. Britten. This second course proved even more successful than the first, the hall being most inconveniently crowded every night, and numbers of people unable to obtain admission.

The first debate meeting in connection with the association was held at the Masonic Hall, Tuesday, January 14th, opened by Mr. Thomas Walker, on "What are the Evidences in Favour of the Phenomena of Spiritualism?" and the first experience meeting on Tuesday, January 28th. Several such meetings were periodically held and always with marked success. The experience meetings have been the means of causing a great many persons to investigate the subject of Spiritualism.

Since the last annual general meeting, three special general meetings have been held. The first of these was held on 5th December, 1878, at the Masonic Hall, to confirm the rules framed by your committee, and further to discuss the best method for attaining the objects of the association. Several new members joined on that evening, and many valuable suggestions were made, which have since received the attention of your committee. The second special general meeting was held at the Masonic Hall, on 7th February, 1879, to consider the correspondence which had passed between Mrs. Britten and the association in reference to that lady's revisiting Melbourne. This meeting fully endorsed the action of your committee, and with an expression of confidence left the entire matter in their hands. The third special general meeting was held in the Masonic Hall, April 18th, 1879.

On the 5th February your committee, on behalf of the association, tendered a ball to Mr. Thomas Walker, at the Manchester Unity Hall, to celebrate the attainment of his majority, and presented him with a handsome writing desk. The entertainment passed off with great *éclat*, and the net proceeds were handed over as a gift to Mr. Walker. On 29th May, 1879, a social meeting was held at Lowe's Room. Tea was served at seven o'clock, followed by a concert and some speeches, and altogether a most agreeable evening was spent. The refreshments were provided by lady members of the association, and a large surplus of the provisions was sent to the Immigrants' Home. On the 9th July Mr. Thomas Walker's farewell *soirée* took place at the Temperance Hall; nearly four hundred persons were present. After some speeches and music the evening was

concluded with dancing. On that evening your committee presented Mr. Thomas Walker, on behalf of the association, with an illuminated address in the following words:—

Melbourne, Victoria, July 9th, 1879.

To Mr. THOMAS WALKER.

DEAR SIR,—We, the undersigned officers of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, in view of your early departure for England, desire to place on record our appreciation of your valuable labours in the cause of Spiritualism and free religious thought in Victoria.

The large and intellectual audiences who have assembled for a long period to hear the inspired utterances which have fallen from your lips, prove that you have made a distinguished reputation as a public speaker and teacher; whilst the cordial feeling existing between not only the members of our association, but freethinkers generally, and yourself, testify their appreciation of you personally.

Cordially wishing you God-speed, and looking for your early return amongst us, we are, dear sir, yours fraternally,

A. DEAKIN, *President*;

T. W. STANFORD,

W. B. BOWLEY,

G. A. STOW,

W. H. TERRY, *Treasurer*;

A. VAN RYN VAN ALKEMADE, *Secretary*.

Realising the important influence on religious thought exercised by the popular lectures at the Opera House and other theatres, your committee have taken steps to obtain the services of competent speakers to fill their platform, and in response to letters despatched to popular speakers in America, Professor William Denton and Mrs. Addie L. Ballow have expressed their willingness to visit us if suitable arrangements could be made. An offer for a three months' course of lectures has been sent to Professor Denton, and a reply is expected next month. Professor Denton, an Englishman by birth, and one of the ablest speakers on the American spiritualistic and freethought platform, lectures from a scientific standpoint, and builds upon that basis the spiritual edifice. On account of the dearth of lay lecturers, your committee have deemed it advisable, until the arrival of a paid speaker, to hold the meetings in the smaller Temperance Hall, and to limit them to members and their immediate friends.

Some four years since a building fund was initiated by a former association, and a sum deposited in trust for that purpose. Your committee made application to the trustees for the amount, with accrued interest, to be handed over to them, and their request being acceded to, the profits of Mrs. Fielden's first series of *séances* were added to it, and the total amount deposited at interest as the basis of a building fund.

Your committee would respectfully urge upon you the advisability of augmenting this fund either by donations or a fixed annual subscription, as the action of the Government in suppressing our right to charge for seats in licensed buildings make it more imperative that we should possess a building of our own.

Speaking generally, the status of Spiritualism in Victoria may be said to be higher, and its prospects brighter than heretofore. The tone adopted by the press and the pulpit towards the movement is at least more tolerant. Adherents are more open in the expression of their views, and what may be termed a spiritualistic vein of thought is found more and more prominent in the utterances of Churchmen.

The late lectures of the Bishop of Melbourne are notable instances of this change. The orthodox views of inspiration and other dogmas, under the conjoint influences of modern science and spiritualistic philosophy have been gradually transmuted into what is almost a new and certainly a more rational faith. The investigation of spiritualistic phenomena steadily attracts large classes to the principles which underlie them, and the formation of private circles has in many directions been attended with satisfactory results. As the facts of spirit communion obtain stronger foothold, the materialists, as well as idealists, find themselves placed face to face with problems which the present theories of things are unable to solve. The attitude of the public therefore at present is one more of sceptical curiosity and less of bigoted contempt. They begin to appreciate the significance of the movement and the breadth of its teachings, and thus the opportunities of usefulness which lie before the Victorian Association of Spiritualists are more plentiful, and promise to be more fruitful, than those of the past.

A. VAN RYN VAN ALKEMADE, *Hon. Sec.*

The Victorian Association of Spiritualists has published the following statement of receipts and expenditure for the year ending the 31st of August, 1879:—

Dr.—Cash in hand 12th September, 1878, £6 12s. 10d.; subscriptions and donations, £126 15s. 4d.; proceeds of lectures, £578 6s. 6d.; proceeds of debate meetings, £10 2s. 3d.; proceeds of experience meetings, £7 7s. 2d.; proceeds of social meetings, £19 8s. 5d.; proceeds of *séances*, £89 15s. 9d.; total, £838 8s. 3d.

Cr.—Remuneration to lecturers, £145 7s.; rent, theatres, and halls, £313 10s. 6d.; advertising, £86 4s. 6d.; printing, posting, &c., £71 15s.; Glen and Co., for use of harmonium, £25 19s. 9d.; office rent, £25 6s. 8d.; trustees of Victorian Association of Spiritualists' Building Fund, £28 4s.; presentation to Mrs. Fielden, £25; books, papers, &c., for library, £14 9s. 3d.; piano hire, £6 5s.; fees—*theatre employés*, £3; salary, organist, £10 19s.; tracts, £5; fees, ticket sellers, £4 11s.; music for choir, £2; reporters, £1 10s.; postages, £5 16s. 6d.; petty expenses, cabs for mediums, boards, telegrams, &c., £8 14s. 9d.; balance, 31st August, 1879, £54 15s. 4d.; total, £838 8s. 3d.

The above was audited and found correct by George A. Stow and Joh. B. Cohen, auditors.

AN ANGLO-INDIAN'S SPIRITUALISTIC EXPERIENCES IN LONDON.

To the Editor of "The Pioneer" (Allahabad).

SIR,—I am rather an inquirer than a propagandist in reference to Spiritualism, so I offer my experiences to others in the same frame of mind, on the Christian principle of doing as I would be done by; not in the expectation of making converts. I like to hear what other people have seen when, I am sure, they are giving me truthful accounts, so others may be glad of my report.

I was at home for some months a few years ago, and had previously had little to do with this subject. The first person I saw at Charing-cross Station was an old friend who had come to meet me, and almost the first thing he told me was that he had, to his own amazement, become a partial believer in Spiritualism. In his own drawing-room, with none but members of his family about, except a medium whom he had held

the whole time, chairs and other things had been moved about the room in an unnatural manner, &c. He formed no theories, but felt convinced there was "something in it." I may add that my friend is a man of culture and some literary reputation—a *Saturday Reviewer*, and so forth. I was soon drawn into the vortex, and became deeply interested. My friend's family and my own form a large connected group. We held repeated *séances* amongst ourselves. Many of these failed absolutely; at some we received faint raps and movements of tables, which we believed ourselves not to have produced in any ordinary way. Some of the communications spelled out by raps or tilts were coherent, though none were of a nature to be worth recording as evidence. Some other phenomena were once observed which I will speak of directly. My acquaintance rapidly spread through Spiritualistic society. I went to many public and semi-public *séances* of professed mediums. Not to speak of raps and movements of objects in the dark, which are not in the least impressive at the houses of professional mediums, I saw on two or three occasions some partial "materialisations" which were very extraordinary. They happened in this way. Four or five of us, *i.e.*, of the family group above referred to, were sitting in the dark on one occasion at the rooms of the well-known medium Williams, no other stranger being present. We saw what are called "spirit lights" flitting about. These lights appeared like little sparks which travelled through a short course, and then disappeared as a rule. Suddenly one of them, instead of disappearing, paused in mid air above the table and our heads, and expanded into a little luminous cloud, which at once assumed the appearance of a face. Expanding downwards, there came shoulders, covered with some sort of white garment. The head was covered with a white turban. The face became perfectly distinct and self-luminous. When I saw it nothing was visible below the shoulders, but the head and shoulders moved about without any reference to what was underneath; that is to say, being at one moment at the further side of the room, at the next it would advance to within a foot or so of me, and remain suspended above the table. At another *séance* of a similar kind, which my wife and other members of our family attended, but at which, I regret to say, I was not present, the same face appeared in the same way, and the materialisation went a step further. Arms and hands developed. The "spirit," said to be "John King," shook hands with my wife, and spoke to her and others. Of course, if this had taken place at our own house, the phenomenon would have presented itself to our minds, irresistible as to what it professed to be; but occurring at a professional medium's house, one's suspicions go hunting round and round the circumstances in search of some possible explanation on the assumption of imposture. However, I have never been able to work out any theory of that kind. The effect could not have been produced by any magic lantern apparatus, nor by the simple machinery of "Pepper's Ghost," which has impressed your not very scientific, though ever-delightful London correspondent. For myself, I may remark that natural science has always been my hobby from a boy, and

its ordinary resources, as applied to conjuring, are very familiar to me. No optical effects of the conjuror's kind will bear looking at *all round*—as we looked at what was said to be "John King" while he remained over the table, descending low down on to it, too, so that the head was no more than two feet above the surface of the table. And a collateral fact that has impressed me is this: once at one of our quite private *séances*, with no medium or stranger present, we saw little sparks in the air just like the more vivid spirit lights of Williams's *séance*, though in our private case, for want, as a Spiritualist would say, of sufficient mediumship, they did not develop into visible faces.

Again, on one occasion when Williams was present at a private house where I attended a *séance*, the "John King" face appeared just as I saw it at Williams's lodgings. That is a striking fact to me, because at the house in question Williams could have had no apparatus.

In the midst of my researches I was introduced to a lady, whose name I think I may mention here, because she has become so very celebrated in connection with this subject—I mean Mrs. Guppy. Mrs. Guppy, since remarried, was at that time a widow of ample private means, living at Kensington, and *suivie* by hunters after Spiritualism to that degree that though she used to hold *séances* about three evenings a week, one had to get permission to attend these some time in advance. People had no conscience about begging to be allowed to come. However, during my stay in London, Mrs. Guppy kindly invited me on three occasions. It would take columns to describe all that occurred. Mrs. Guppy has been described as the "Empress of Physical Mediums," and all the physical phenomena so often referred to in writings on this subject occur in her presence in myriads. Such a Castle of Enchantment as I found that comfortable house in Kensington to be, I can hardly expect your readers to realise. Mrs. Guppy's guests would assemble in the drawing-room about 8 or 9 o'clock, and when all were there we used to go up to an almost empty room on the upper floor, where the *séances* were held. The phenomena in the habit of occurring would have been ruination in a drawing-room with much furniture and ornaments about. Two or three gentlemen would sometimes go up first to look about the room, and Mrs. Guppy, I remember, sent me up in this way in advance of the rest on the first evening I was present. The room was of moderate size, with one window and one door. A jet of gas turned over the mantelpiece, a bare round table with a hole in the middle, and a dozen or so of common cane chairs, constituted all the furniture. The window shutter was in one large solid piece of wood, going over the whole window, and fastened into its place with long iron screws. I assisted to put it up on the evening of which I speak. Then the party all came up, about fifteen in number; some sat round the table, some stood about. While these arrangements were being made loud raps, as loud as might have been made with a small hammer, were clattering all round the room, on walls, floor, and ceiling. Trifles of that sort were not much noticed at Mrs. Guppy's. Then the gas was turned out, and the door shut. I may mention

that the door was fastened in a more effectual manner than by bolts or bars. If it was opened an inch, light streamed in from the hall below. There could never be any doubt as to whether it was shut or open. Well; closed in as we were by four bare walls and that huge shutter, darkness was no sooner established than we heard a swishing through the room. I felt drops of water on my face, and felt myself brushed about in an unintelligible way, and people began calling out for a light. One of the gentlemen appointed to the charge of the candle and match box struck a light, and we found the room strewn all over with the branches of trees—large branches several feet long, wet with rain, and freshly torn from wherever they had been growing. There were not two or three, you will understand, but more than one person could have carried on his arms, all over the floor and table. Darkness was re-established, and other things came; quantities of flowers; and on one occasion, with a tremendous smash on the table, a big block of ice weighing many pounds. I cannot now relate all that occurred in the order of its occurrence, but as I go on I record my recollections of the whole series of three evenings when I was present. "Spirit hands" came touching us once, and then to see something that had been brought a light was called for. While the candle was still burning spirit hands showed themselves at the hole in the middle of the table. Many of us, as I myself, rested our hands on the table at the edge of this hole, and the spirit hands would flutter up and touch them, thus coming plainly into sight. Much time would be spent in conversation by raps between various persons present and spirits with whom they found themselves, or thought themselves in communication. One evening we had a professional medium present—a Mrs. Hardy—who went into a trance, and spoke in strange voices, but I was not interested much in this. Quantities of little objects would be brought to some of the sitters from their own houses at a distance, but this did not happen to me. Then people would suddenly feel their rings taken off, and these would be as suddenly slipped on to the fingers of people in a different part of the room. All this sort of childishness is very irritating to a person seriously trying to make out the truth about great marvels, apparently hinging on to mysteries of the supremest importance. But unfortunately Spiritualism has a great attraction for foolish as well as for intelligent persons, and large *séances* will generally be leavened with a painful element of silliness. When the *séances* used to be over, and we went downstairs, raps and other phenomena would follow us. It used to be Mrs. Guppy's hospitable practice to have supper laid out in the dining-room on *séance* evenings. Once I remember about fourteen people had gathered sitting round this supper table, and a few others, of whom I was one, were standing about the room, when the table began to jerk and jump. Our hostess was more anxious for the safety of her glass and china than for further manifestations just then, and we all, as far as appearance went, tried to hold down the table. I know that one intimate friend of my own, sitting at the end of the table, tried to do this, all he knew; and that I, standing behind and leaning over his shoulder with both hands on the table, pressed down on it with my whole

weight, and felt it nevertheless rise up against me with a force far beyond my control. Certainly none of Mrs. Guppy's guests were underneath the table trying to smash her things; some held on, and some helped to remove the breakables.

My return to India put an end to my spiritualistic researches, I am sorry to say, and out here it is next to impossible to carry on the subject, in the midst of pressing occupations and social engagements, and, above all, in view of the way one moves about from place to place in India, and the blank ignorance of the whole subject which, for the most part, characterises Indian society. I was very much pleased, however, to read Mrs. Gordon's letter; and though I did not keep notes of what I saw when spirit-hunting myself, I have thought it likely that some of your readers would be interested in my evidence, such as it is. The instinct of a lifetime, meanwhile—perhaps the stupid instinct at war with the plainest facts, bewildered and at bay, but still doggedly asserting itself—leads me to sign myself

STILL IN THE DARK.

TREATMENT OF SPIRITUALISM A TEST OF CHARACTER.

BY THE REV. W. MIALL.

(Continued.)

ANOTHER class consists largely of young men— young men athirst for knowledge, and who would deem a reflection on their independence of thought both unjust and unendurable. They intermeddle with all knowledge. Nothing is too sacred, nothing too profound, nothing too old, nothing too new, for their peering eyes to endeavour to discover and understand. With their "open sesame," they attack all the storehouses of the past, all the well-nigh inexhaustible depositories of the present, and even the proverbially undiscoverable future. All honour to them! The conservators they are of what is known to be, and the heralds and the sure prophecy of knowledge which as yet is not. If chargeable with a little arrogance, and a little rashness, we may well forgive them, out of regard for the important part they play in the work of the world's progress. But what is it then with which I tax them? Simply this—that there is our subject, tabooed by a large proportion of respectable and reputedly orthodox thinkers, which they without due examination allow themselves also to taboo. Let but an observation be made in favour of Spiritualism, and they lift their brows, whistle, and turn on their heels with, "What next?" "After this the deluge." And are these fine fellows, then, quite so manly, and independent, and candid, and are they animated by so pure and ardent a love of truth, of all truth, as they profess, and as we would fain believe? And are they so well instructed as it becomes them when the fact that the worst lie is often that which most resembles truth, and that the most precious truth is often to casual observers the likeliest to a lie? I venture to assure these young men of my sympathy and admiration, and regret that my grey hairs disqualify me from standing shoulder to shoulder with them, and at the same time I so far avail

myself of the privilege of age as to offer them this word of counsel—Take you this subject of Spiritualism in hand. Do yourselves the honour, and the age the service, of discovering and expounding its just claims. It may need patience—a capacity of distinguishing between the obscure genuine and the spurious false; it may need such habits of observation as persons accustomed to the study of science may be expected best to exemplify; and it certainly will need either the courage which for truth's sake does not shrink from popular odium, or the rare ability to account for and explain a widespread and intelligently maintained but unwarranted and mischievous conviction—a delusion, Protean in form, bringing hope and joy to multitudes, but which, being a delusion, requires to be exposed ruthlessly, and demolished at all costs. In qualification for this task, I surely cannot be wrong in concluding that our young men may be expected most to abound.

But I turn to a third class and a large one, consisting of men and women to be found in all Christian sects and churches, and in some instances repudiating all denominational distinction or church connection; but all possessors of unaffected, and deep, and carefully-cultivated religious feeling. Among the chief constituents of the base on which it rests is belief in posthumous life. This foundation destroyed, what should these righteous do? The mere suggestion is to them as a Dead Sea breeze—pestiferous and life-destroying. But ever exposed to, and suffering attack, its enemies during the last one hundred years have become much more numerous and formidable than previously. Now, representations of Spiritualists being well founded, they prove not only that the foundation is solid, but that it is indestructible. To all the pious Spiritualists in effect say, "You have not followed a cunningly devised fable; your faith is invulnerable. Whatever may be the case with regard to other of its details, and with respect to these we, regarded as Spiritualists, have nothing to say, your belief in the undying nature of the individual human spirit is demonstrably true." Of course I do not say that these representations, because so adapted to meet the present requirements of the religious, are, therefore, to be accepted, but I do insist on it, that indifference respecting them, dislike patiently to examine them, is illustrative of the power of prejudice to deprive its possessor of the possible acquisition of wealth more precious than rubies. "Only"—I would say to these persons—"only realise the possibility of your being presented in Spiritualism with facts which would change your dearest hopes into absolute certainty, and which in so doing would meet the world's most pressing need—availing to secure the prevalence of religious faith beyond all precedent—and say, are you not bound in conscience, by fealty to the principles which you deem most sacred, to subject this matter to the most patient and painstaking examination? I submit that whilst blindly to embrace it were the height of folly, you cannot treat it with neglect and be free from the charge of unfaithfulness to the claims of the religion which you regard, and, as I think, rightly regard, of peerless value.

(To be continued.)

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One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household, and about one new circle in three, formed according to the following instructions, obtains the phenomena:—

1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is of little importance. Any table will do.

3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is weakening.

4. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature.

5. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first indications will probably be table-tilting or raps.

6. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three raps be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class of messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits, usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of credulity, but should believe no more about them or the contents of messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.

8. Should no results be obtained at the first two *séances* because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.

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