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THE SENSATIONS OF MEDIUMS DURING STRONG PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS.

A VALUABLE contribution to psychological science would be a record of the sensations experienced by all the well-known Spiritualistic mediums while strong manifestations are going on, and at times when the mediums are not entranced.

Mr. Williams has told us that at *séances*, and while he is not entranced, when the spirits touch any musical instrument or other object at any part of the room, he knows what it is, and that although the object may be yards away, the sensation is much the same as if he had touched it himself.

Miss Kate Cook has recently written to Mr. Charles Blackburn about her cabinet *séances*: "When Lillie appears, I am sure I lose weight and get thinner; I also feel as if I am a long way off. When Lillie moves farther from me, the feeling of distance increases. The voices of the sitters sound a long way off from me; I do not hear them for some time after they have spoken. Anyone touching me causes a burning sensation. I never feel any inclination to talk or move about, and at times I have quite lost my sight. I never feel any fear that I shall not get all right again; the only thing I dread is light falling on me. I am always sufficiently conscious to know that I am Kate Cook, and that Lillie or other spirits are quite separate from me. I experience no different sensations when other spirits than Lillie materialise."

Mrs. Tappan once told us that while delivering public trance addresses she is sometimes insensible; at others she feels as if listening, in a dream, to her platform utterances.

These cases are too few to generalise upon, but, as regards physical mediumship, a transference of consciousness seems to a certain extent to accompany the transference of matter from the body of the medium.

THE MATERIALISATION OF SPIRITS IN AMERICA.

BY EPES SARGENT.

I ENCLOSE herewith Mr. Luther Colby's account, from today's *Banner of Light* (Boston, U.S.), of a materialising *séance*, at the little town of Rochester, New Hampshire, at which Mrs. Pickering was the medium. I had been invited to be one of the party from Boston; but the state of my health preventing my risking the journey, I employed a friend (whose name does not appear in the list of investigators present) to go as my substitute, and give his close attention to the proceedings. This friend is not a Spiritualist, but a shrewd and careful investigator, and his private report to me fully confirms Mr. Colby's description of the phenomena. The gentlemen whose names are appended in confirmation of Mr. Colby's account are known to me as trustworthy, experienced in investigation, and highly intelligent; and I know Mrs. Rudd as a lady who would faithfully perform the duty assigned to her of examining the medium's clothing.

My friend informs me that after the phenomena were over he at once entered the cabinet to satisfy himself that there were no concealed costumes. He examined the one chair, and found it *innocent*, and saw that there was no conceivable opportunity elsewhere for fraud. The manifestations were so various and decisive, and the costumes so different, that it seemed an impossibility for the medium to produce them under the conditions. How far spirits may use her person for these shows we cannot say. Both Mr. Tice and Mr. E. Gerry Brown had, at previous sittings, tied the medium very

effectually, and were both satisfied that, by the exercise of merely human power, she could not have left her seat, and returned to it without disturbing the tyings. Of one thing all visitors, whether sceptics or believers, seem to be assured; they admit that there can be no *human* confederates in the production of the phenomena through Mrs. Pickering.

The case looks like a genuine one; but there are good Spiritualists who still say, "No; we are not satisfied yet." I approve their caution; but in spite of all the frauds and dubious phenomena that have occurred in other instances through other mediums, the most diligent and advanced investigators regard the materialisation of the full form as a fact that has been placed beyond all question. There is a prospect that Mrs. Pickering will come to Boston, and give us more convenient opportunities of investigation.

As much has been given in these columns of late regarding Mrs. Pickering's mediumship, *pro* and *con*—the evidence preponderating in favour of her reliability—and I having been assailed from several quarters by those who pronounced her a fraud, because I simply gave my opinion that she had not been proven such, I determined to visit the medium and witness the alleged materialisation of spirits for myself. Accordingly, by previous appointment, I visited Rochester on the 18th inst., in company with a party from Boston, composed of six gentlemen and two ladies, whom I invited to be present.

I arrived in the forenoon, and immediately visited Mr. Pickering's residence, being readily allowed by the lady-medium to freely examine the *séance*-room, and in fact every part of the premises. I went into the cellar, directly under the locality of the cabinet, and critically examined the under flooring of the room above, to ascertain if trap doors could be found (as several of our party were extremely sceptical), and ascertained that everything was intact, no indication existing of trap doors or machinery of any sort, but everything being as it ought—"on the square." We subsequently examined the flooring in the *séance*-room, Mr. Pickering ripping up the carpet for that purpose under where the medium was to sit. In fact the examination of the premises was conclusive, clearly proving the published statements of others in this respect to be correct.

The cabinet from which the materialised spirits were to emanate was simply formed of two curtains in a corner of the room, suspended from an iron rod a fraction over three feet in length, extending from one wall to the other. The ladies of our party were delegated, previous to the *séance*, to critically examine the medium's clothing in order to be sure that no costumes were therein hidden, after which preliminary the lady was escorted by them to the cabinet. Their report was that they had thoroughly examined Mrs. Pickering, that her clothing was of dark colour (not a particle of white cloth entering into the sum total of her apparel), and that there was not the least opportunity for the concealment of costumes.

The front line of chairs was occupied by ladies and gentlemen not of our company; the second row by our own party. At eight o'clock precisely the light was lowered, when singing and piano playing were in order. After waiting some twenty minutes, the medium in the meantime remaining seated in the cabinet, a spirit form became visible—a tall female, dressed like a sister of charity, the entire figure being draped in what appeared to be thin white muslin, of coarser texture than afterwards appeared. It was very statuesque and impressive. This form appeared twice.

The next was the figure of a man. The clothing was mostly dark coloured. This form bowed to Mr. William R.

Tice (a gentleman from Brooklyn, N.Y.), who was present, and was finally acknowledged by him as a friend, after appearing three times, Mr. Tice failing at first to recognise him.

The third spirit-form that appeared was recognised by Mrs. Jennie S. Rudd as her mother, and gave the name of "Rosina," which Mrs. R. said was correct. This figure had on a muslin dress, the material looking finer than the drapery which enveloped the first spirit who came. A lace scarf could be distinctly seen upon the shoulders, hanging down nearly to the floor. Her hair was brown; the dress trailed; a handkerchief was held in the left hand; a silver star glistened upon her forehead. She seemed anxious to approach as near as possible to Mrs. Rudd and Dr. Goodrich, in order to be recognised, bowing her head while uttering the word "Rosina." We have since learned that this spirit had promised to manifest to the daughter on the first opportunity offered, when the parties named above should both be present at a materialising *séance*.

The fourth form which appeared was that of a female clad in white, but without drapery about the waist, except a profusion of lace, taking the form of a cloud, in which the spirit seemed to be floating.

The fifth form was that of a small-sized female—"Nellie," a spirit-friend of ours, who kissed her hand to us. She had on a lace dress, and spangles were distinctly seen in her hair. She also saluted Mrs. Rudd and Dr. Goodrich.

The next spirit form which appeared was that of a female clad in a snowy-white garment of apparently the most delicate fabric—so fine, indeed, as to cause universal remark in regard to it. The drapery, which was thrown over the back of the head and shoulders and arms, resembled the most exquisite lace. She came towards us and Miss Chace, and endeavoured to get us to recognise her; but we could not distinguish the features. The spirit then retreated behind the curtain. In a few minutes, however, she reappeared, seemingly with more power, and glided nearer to us than before. We said, "Can you give us your name?" "Yes, yes," was the response in a low whisper, "Fanny." "Is it indeed you, Fanny Conant?" we asked. At that moment a satisfied expression passed over the countenance of the spirit as she came nearer, and it appeared so like our late medium that we could not gainsay the fact, especially when we examined the black hair, so smoothly combed, as was her wont in the earth-life, it being a perfect *fac-simile*. She then pointed towards us with her right hand, and speedily retreated behind the curtain. The reason given by spirit friends why the garments appeared so white and well defined, was because of her superior mediumistic development while in her own earthly form. The last time this spirit made her appearance a beautiful white turban was on her head. As she bent forward to let us recognise her, we could not but admire the exquisitely delicate fabric which covered her person.

The form of a man with dark hair and dark moustache and full face was then seen. This spirit was not recognised. He was stout and tall.

The next spirit who manifested was a curious-looking person. Her hair seemed to be of a reddish cast, wound around her head in a singular style, "something like a beehive," remarked one of the party. There was a mass of it. A slight head-dress was worn on the back of the head. The garments enveloping this individual were less airy and not so white and much more material than were those previously seen. The figure was full and well developed.

Here followed a female spirit draped in lace—a very lively character—who danced around with great freedom for a few moments. The significant motions of the arms were by some present construed to mean that she came to all present—to no one in particular. She was not recognised. The main outlines of the form could readily be traced through the drapery.

Spirit faces were visible at the aperture, sometimes two at the same time.

The tenth spirit who manifested very much interested our party. She was tastefully dressed in white. When the lady at the piano sang, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," this spirit took part, singing beautifully, and seemed to enjoy the occasion very much. She remained longer in view than any other spirit. Retreating to the enclosure to gather

strength, she again appeared and sang with the pianiste as before. This was a beautiful manifestation.

The eleventh spirit who paid us a visit had light hair, moustache and chin whiskers, a bandage appearing around the forehead. This figure, we were informed, resembled a particular friend of one of the party, although he did not come near enough to be fully recognised.

The twelfth was that of a tall, swarthy-looking Indian, who seemed to almost reach the ceiling; he had a waving plume on his head, and wore a large belt around his waist, fastened by a huge glittering breast-plate. He was a fine specimen of the red man, dressed as he was from head to foot in the characteristic costume of the North American Indian. Another Indian also presented himself for a brief period. Also a girl was seen, who appeared to be a cripple—unrecognised. But the cleverest manifestation was that of a youth, dressed in a uniform similar to that belonging to a base-ball club—greyish pants, tightly buttoned round the waist, where the loose white shirt that enveloped the upper portion of his form was gathered. His name was called by some one, but we could ascertain nothing definite in regard to this spirit more than that he was a great adept in kicking the foot-ball when in physical life.

The baby scene was quite satisfactory. The curtains opened, and there sat the medium with a tiny infant, dressed in pure white, in her arms. We could see the face and hands plainly, especially the motions of its fingers. We were told, after the *séance*, that this was a child of Mrs. Pickering's now in spirit-life, which accounted for the oft-repeated caresses she bestowed upon it.

After this manifestation, Mr. Pickering placed a slate on the floor in front of the curtain for the spirits to write upon. The movements of the pencil could be distinctly heard, and we found, after the *séance* was over, written upon it: "We will yet convince the world through this medium that Spiritualism is true."

The male figures wore white shirts, the sleeves gathered at the wrists. The female figures sometimes came out with bare arms, which were clearly visible through the gauzy drapery that covered them.

The figures many of them were larger and taller than the form of the medium, which satisfied us that the lady took no active part in the wonderful exhibition presented to us as critical a company as ever met together on such an occasion. Consequently we shall say that we have no doubt whatever of the entire reliability of the medium on the occasion thus briefly described. As Mr. Wetherbee was one of our party, and had previously sat with Mrs. Pickering when the conditions were less favourable, we asked him what he thought in regard to the manifestations on the 18th. His reply was, "I think they are what they claim to be—spirits taking on apparent human forms, or materialising over their invisible bodies; that it was an honest show from the spirit-world there is no doubt."

There was no opportunity of the medium supplementing her clothing after the examination, as one or the other of the ladies of our party never left her for a moment to herself, so as to be doubly sure on that point. We thus can state with the most positive certainty that as the curtains dropped, hiding the medium from sight, the enclosure was proof against any confederacy of whatever name or nature, and that there was not a particle of white fabric therein, and nothing of the kind could get in, as the gaze of our party was constantly centred on the curtain-cabinet, and it was light enough in the room to fully recognise each other; and that, therefore, whatever came out of the enclosure during the three hours that the *séance* continued, in the shape of apparitions, must have been produced or materialised by spirit-chemistry, which we have not the least doubt was the fact in the instance under consideration.

We the undersigned, members of the party of investigators above-mentioned, take pleasure in giving our personal endorsement to the statements made in the report to which this certificate is subjoined. The account narrates in brief the salient points in our experience while at the *séance* held with Mrs. John R. Pickering in Rochester, N.H., on Thursday evening, April 18th, and we feel confident that what there transpired was genuine in character, and owed its

origin entirely to the source claimed for it, viz., the power of spirit over matter.

JOHN WETHERBEE,
PHINEAS E. GAY,
ISAAC B. RICH,
E. P. GOODRICH, M.D.,
GEORGE A. BACON,
MRS. JENNIE S. RUDD,
MISS EMILY CHACE.

Boston, April 23rd, 1878.

[By invitation, Mr. William R. Tice, of Brooklyn, N.Y., joined our party at Rochester, witnessed the manifestations, and pronounced them genuine without the least reservation.—ED. B. OF L.]

THE FUNERAL OF MARY LAVALLETTE.

(From "The Banner of Light," April 27.)

IN the city of Philadelphia and its neighbourhood, and wherever, as here, the Quakers have been long and well-known, the ideas and practices of Spiritualists give less cause for comment or curious notice. Especially is this true in regard to the informal manner of celebrating funeral rites which has been made familiar by Quaker custom. That any mortal should have the impiety to coolly reject the offices of churches and priests, should presume to bury without the fixed ceremonies of some sect, seems to some a sort of sacrilege.

There is much that is beautiful and fitting in the funeral ceremonies of the Church. The various "forms of sound words" embody some sublime and helpful teaching; still, in the spontaneous observances of the Quaker there is much that is profitable or profoundly touching; while the manners and expressions of Spiritualists upon such occasions, modified by our own tenets and character, are unique, educational, consolatory, and interesting.

This was most apparent at the recent obsequies of Miss Mary Lavallette, of this city, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Lavallette, and the grand-daughter of the distinguished American Rear-Admiral of that name. Miss Lavallette has been a sufferer for the last nine months from rapid pulmonary consumption, and died quietly on the 23rd of February last. The funeral was held at the residence of her parents, corner of Camac and Berks streets, on Wednesday, the 27th of that month. Several causes drew together a numerous and varied company. The young lady who had passed on was but about twenty years of age, and is said to have been a person of singular goodness of character, tenderness of heart, and great intellectual promise. The social position of the family, their historic name, and, besides, their well-known Spiritualism, added to the influences which crowded the house with condoling friends. Among the family mourners, more than four times as old as the darling she had lost, was the venerable widow of the late Rear-Admiral Lavallette.

The body was laid in a pure white casket, with a rich and redundant robe trailing over the bier, elegantly trimmed with dainty white flowers and superb calla lilies. There were also many and beautiful flowers in expressive emblematic designs, with appropriate mottoes upon some of them. One in particular attracted attention by its artistic arrangement of the suggestive words "At Rest" in blue violets, on a cushion of white rosebuds and other snowy flowers. The parlour where the casket was placed was lighted by gas, which enhanced the remarkable loveliness of the arrangements, and the whole that love, taste, and care could do was done to make pleasant the last view of the mortal. But neither drapery, accessories, nor flowers could hide the fact of mortality, or shed any light which did not reveal the record of intense and long-continued suffering upon the face of the youthful dead. It is only "that light which was never on land or sea" which can illuminate the portals of the tomb, and they whose affections cling to the body in death must prepare for breaking hearts in this dying world.

Not so Spiritualists. Our great point of faith is the dogma of a demonstrated immortality; we acknowledge no death, not even by use of the word. The change from the mortal, Spiritualists regard but as an incident in an immortal existence; and hence our philosophy. Moreover, the

grave is not a complete separation of those united in love and sympathy. "Messages," "communications," a hundred methods of correspondence unite the seen and unseen worlds.

It is not an idle or improper curiosity that inquires how people having such ideas conduct themselves in view of the stupendous and solemn affair of death among them; and it seems fitting to state in all candour the things which present themselves to an unprejudiced observer at a Spiritualist funeral. The first and most noticeable feature of the occasion of which we write was the profoundly quiet bearing of all concerned. The evidence of grief was plain enough, but there was none of that overpowering external manifestation of heart-rending woe often painfully noticed even among nominal Christians. The sentiment of cheering hope and unflinching trust was remarkable in the manner of those who so sincerely mourned, as in all that was said or done at the time.

Aside from the excellent arrangements of the undertakers, there seemed to be but little that was fixed or formal in the funeral proceedings. Upon the request of a friend of the family, Professor E. S. Wheeler, a well-known Spiritualist lecturer of great ability, officiated.

Prefacing with a few words of condolence, the speaker declared death a common thing in human history and the order of nature. Referring to the number and variety of persons who had gathered there, he said love and sympathy held them in the ties of human feeling, in view of a fact common to all—the fate of death. A recognition of the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and, as deducible therefrom, belief in the fact of immortal life, were announced as the triune basis of the universal religion; and to that, without disrespect to any sect or dogma, appeal was made to sanction the emotions of the time, and make impressive the lesson of the event. As expressive of a faith he said Spiritualism had demonstrated, Mr. Wheeler read an extract of considerable length, asserting and explaining the nature and immortal destiny of the human soul in strong but unusual terms; his quotation, he informed his hearers, was from the dialogue of *Krishna and Arjoun*, as related in the *Bhagavad Gita* of the Hindoos—one of the oldest of books. It seemed strange to listen to the words of a "heathen" writer, falling after all these ages from the lips of a man who had evidently received more than the usual Christian education and training, in such an assembly, upon such an occasion! Yet there was no shock, no seeming sense of impropriety; the manner was reverential and sincere, and the expressions those of deepest religious conviction, such as are accepted by all who acknowledge any form of faith of which God and immortality are a part. After a few really eloquent and affecting paragraphs from the quotation as a text, in its applications to present circumstances, the speaker closed by reading the following poem from Mrs. H. Beecher Stowe, of the New England Congregational Church, on the "Spirit World":—

It lies around us like a cloud,
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.
Its gentle breezes fan our cheek,
Amid our worldly care;
Its gentle voices whisper love,
And mingle with our prayer.
Sweet hearts around us throb and beat,
Sweet helping hands are stirred,
And palpitate the veil between,
With breathings almost heard!
And in the hush of rest they bring,
'Tis easy, now, to see
How lovely and how sweet a pass
The hour of death must be!
To close the eye and close the ear,
Wrapt in a trance of bliss,
And gently drawn by loving arms,
To swoon to that—from this.

At the conclusion of the first address Mrs. Martin, in trance, offered an invocation in verse, in the Scotch dialect. The rapt and sibyl-like manner of the poetess gave great impressiveness to the exquisite natural sentiment of the composition and the deep pathos of devotion which intensely characterised the whole. At the close many a tear-filled

eye, unused to weep, attested the softening power of a tender woman's voice in blended poesy and prayer.

Dr. H. T. Child and Mrs. Katie B. Robinson expressed sentiments fitting the occasion. Mrs. Mary Holeian sang in a beautiful and touching manner, between each address, appropriate selections from the *Spiritual Harp*. The services closed at the house by the singing of the hymn, "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

The burial was in the famous Laurel Hill Cemetery, in a most lovely spot, just to the west of the Lavallette monument. The afternoon sun of earliest spring shone upon the friends assembled and filled all the open grave with a flood of golden light. A large number had followed the procession, and as they gathered around the bier Mr. Wheeler again spoke. He said they came to bury the body only, there and then; the spirit was resurrected already. Dearly as they loved the casket which had held the jewel of the soul, no breaking hearts went down into the sepulchre. Referring to the youth of the deceased, Mr. Wheeler remarked she had at least lived long enough to learn to know God, to love the truth, and practice goodness to her kind—the three essential things, said the orator. The speaker gave to all assembled the last words of her who had left them for a time: "Give my love to all," and claimed universal love to be the lesson of life, the test of a divine state. To God, the angels, and immortal progress he commended the spirit gone out from the body, but present then and there, as God was omnipresent and manifest in all His Providence.

Mrs. Katie Robinson then spoke again, sympathetically and in appropriate terms, offering the consolations of her faith to those who wept aloud, after all, at the final separation from the body of their child, sister, or friend; she repeated the promise she had made in her first address, of a speedy communication with her who had only gone before, and of a final happy reunion in the land eternal, beyond all death. Then Mr. Wheeler thanked the attendants for their sympathy and kind offices. A few flowers were selected from those crowning the casket, and as the low descending sun sank toward the horizon beyond the lovely Schuylkill valley, the long *cortège* withdrew from the monumental acres of populous Laurel Hill. The evening came on apace, and the Spiritualist funeral was over. To many it gave consolation, to all instruction; offence was possible only to the narrow bigot or the sectarian, who worship tradition and form more than the living truth.

J. H. RHODES, M.D.

Philadelphia.

DR. JOHNSON AND SPIRITUALISM.

BY D. H. WILSON, M.A., LL.M. (CANTAB).

It is pleasing to believe that had the movement of modern Spiritualism been established in the days of Samuel Johnson it would have had the sympathies of that remarkable man. He was ever ready to attack with pen and voice the enemies of Spiritual belief—materialism, and infidelity. So repugnant to him were those negative systems, as undervaluing the nature and dignity of our higher parts, that he made no allowance even for those who arrived at their materialistic notions at the end of a journey taken seriously in search of truth. He believed in an invisible world about us into which man passes through the gate of death. Few men, from *a priori* reasoning, have had this belief more vividly and constantly. Yet the question whether or not man survives death he perceived to be of such profound importance that he held that search should be made in every field of inquiry for evidence to settle it beyond dispute or doubt. He had by heart all that the Bible says on the subject: he knew all that the inner voice has to say; but whether for himself or for others less impressed by such testimony, he felt that further evidence of the existence of spirits and of a life to come would be very acceptable.

When staying with the Rev. Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, in 1784, mention was made of Lord Lyttelton's vision. Said Johnson—"It is the most extraordinary thing that has happened in my day; I heard it with my own ears from his uncle, Lord Westcote. I am so glad to have every evidence of the spiritual world that I

am willing to believe it." Dr. Adams—"You have evidence enough; good evidence, which needs not such support." Johnson—"I like to have more."—(*Boswell*.) On Spiritualistic subjects Johnson has, of course, been charged with credulity. "He would believe anything, for he believed in the Cock-lane ghost." But it is not true that he believed in the Cock-lane ghost. He went to the house where the raps and other noises were said to occur, in company with some other gentlemen, and afterwards published an account of this visit in the *Gentleman's Magazine* and elsewhere, wherein he stated his opinion that the ghost story was an imposture. That the public were as ready then as they are now to condemn not only believers of occult phenomena, but inquirers thereinto, is shown by Churchill's poem of "The Ghost," wherein Johnson is caricatured in the person of *Pomposo*.

Speaking of John Wesley's account of a ghost, Johnson said: "He believes it, but not on sufficient authority. He did not take time to examine the girl. It was at Newcastle where the ghost was said to have appeared to a young woman several times, mentioning something about the right to an old house, advising application to be made to an attorney, which was done, and at the same time saying the attorney would do nothing, which proved to be the fact. 'This,' says John (Wesley), 'is a proof that a ghost knows our thoughts.' Now (laughing) it is not necessary to know our thoughts to tell that an attorney will sometimes do nothing. Charles Wesley, who is a more stationary man, does not believe the story. I am sorry that John did not take more pains to inquire into the evidence for it.' Miss Seward (the poetess of Lichfield), with an incredulous smile, 'What, sir, about a ghost?' 'Yes, madam,' replied Johnson, with solemn vehemence, 'this is a question which, after five thousand years, is yet undecided—a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding.' (*Boswell*.)

From these words alone no one can misunderstand Johnson's mind on the subject. A well-authenticated ghost story is a contribution to religion and science—to the science of religion and to the knowledge of man's nature.

Ghost stories are as old as tradition; but we must not believe in them upon insufficient evidence. Johnson said—"A man who thinks he has seen an apparition can only be convinced himself; his authority will not convince another; and his conviction, if rational, must be founded on being told something which cannot be known but by supernatural means."—(*Boswell*.)

When he said, "All argument is against it" (the reality of apparitions), he expressed his own scepticism upon phenomenal Spiritualism; and when, at the same time, he said, "But all belief is for it," he showed no credulity, but merely indicated a tendency very prevalent to ignorantly believe in occult things.

Credulity is not properly referable to innate feelings or to conditional prepossessions, but to readiness of belief upon insufficient evidence. And to this readiness Johnson—at any rate upon the matter of ghosts or phenomenal Spiritualism—has been unfairly accused. Of course prepossessions endanger the prospect of forming logical judgments. They tend to make us credulous in those directions towards which they lean; but it does not follow that they must blind us. In a mind of strong reasoning and analytical powers like Johnson's, an inclination to believe before examination has no more influence upon the judgment than an hypothesis. We form hypotheses to serve as tests in an inquiry, and to guide us in selecting methods; and when we find ourselves compelled to reject one hypothesis, we frame another. That hypotheses have given the mind a twist is true only when they have been held in spite of facts which show them to be false or inadequate. Perhaps no inquiry affords more striking examples of the submission of prepossessions to facts than that in the Spiritualistic phenomena. There are a few persons, it is true, who are obstinately tenacious of hypotheses which have been long riddled and undermined by facts in their own experience. But the majority of those who declare that our phenomena have not shaken their belief in the theories of imposture and delusion have never inquired properly into them. We hear from our opponents a great deal too much of the prepossessions of Spiritualists. It

is alleged that investigators of our phenomena "give in" to the spiritual hypothesis because they commence their inquiries with a leaning to our theory; and it is said that no real materialist was ever converted to Spiritualism. But unless we take into consideration the force of the reason, and of discrimination, it is merely asserting a truism to say that only those inclined to the spiritual theory are convinced of its truth by the phenomena; and that no materialist can be convinced. Prepossessions, through leading in opposite directions, would go the same lengths if uninfluenced by observation and reflection. If it be true that previous inclination merely turns inquirers into full-blown Spiritualists, it is equally true that previous disinclination merely disqualifies them as impartial or scientific investigators.

It is true that no one has embraced Spiritualism who was not previously inclined to it, but only in the sense that no one has become a musician, poet, writer, or chemist without innate tastes or aptitudes for music, poetry, literature or chemistry. Dr. Johnson has been ridiculed for his love of the mysterious, as though a great man should turn his back on mysteries! Mysterious is as relative a term as knowledge. We only know a thing as it appears to us individually; and that only is mysterious to us of which we are ignorant. To the young child there is so much mystery in all things that he is not astonished by a conjuring trick; and adult brains of small calibre, from a long and certain kind of familiarity with subjects beyond their grasp, believe that those subjects are mere shadows. The perception is reserved for individuals of better parts that all shadow implies substance, and that there is only a line between the shade and the light. If there be beauty in common places, it is not the little mind who will discover it, nor is it the little mind who can rejuvenate stale facts.

It is not surprising to us, who know that the phenomena of Spiritualism are true, that the great mind of Johnson should have interested itself in occult subjects—mysterious because occult, and occult because only partially apprehended—in the desire to find, Alexander-like, a world to conquer, a new field of thought wherein to employ its gigantic powers.

But that he was not credulous may be perceived by the unprejudiced from the following extracts:—

"He censured Lord Kaimes' *Sketches of the History of Man* for misrepresenting Clarendon's account of the appearance of Sir George Villiers' ghost, as if Clarendon were *weakly credulous*, when the truth is that Clarendon only says that the story was upon a better foundation of credit than usually such discourses are founded upon; nay, speaks thus of the person who was reported to have seen the vision, '*The poor man if he had been at all waking,*' which Lord Kaimes has omitted."—(Boswell.)

That Dr. Johnson held many Spiritualistic notions with regard to the world of spirits, and to the influence of spirits upon men, may be seen from much of his conversation and from his writings—notably the *Prayers and Meditations*. Speaking of a deceased lady, he says in a letter to Mr. James Elphinstone:—

"Neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts, and that she may in her present state look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is, indeed, of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God: yet surely there is something pleasing in the belief that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship if it can be made probable that that union which has received the divine approbation shall continue to eternity." Again, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he speaks of his deceased friend "Lawrence," "who," he says, "now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted."

Those who pray for the living but not for the dead must have a low conception of prayer. Indeed, where people repeat the same prayer half a dozen times in an hour, and beg to be spared every ill, and to be endowed with every blessing under the sun, without regard to either laws or

justice, it is not surprising that there should be little thought of the spiritual requirements of departed souls; for by those who thus pray, physical evils are so greatly feared, and the value of worldly success is so magnified, that they may suppose that our prayers cannot benefit the condition of disembodied spirits, who are removed from the misfortunes of the one and the advantages of the other. Upon the loss of his wife Johnson prayed—

"O Lord, so far as it may be lawful in me, I commend to thy Fatherly goodness the soul of my departed wife, beseeching Thee to grant her whatever is best in her present state, and finally to receive her to eternal happiness."—(*Prayers and Meditations*.)

Speaking of *purgatory* as believed by Roman Catholics, Johnson said:—

"Why, sir, it is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits, and therefore that God is graciously pleased to allow of a middle state where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see, sir, there is nothing unreasonable in this." Boswell: "But then, sir, their masses for the dead?" Johnson: "Why sir, if it be once established that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life."—(Boswell.)

The following beautiful prayer shows that Dr. Johnson was at heart a thorough Spiritualist.

"O Lord! Governor of heaven and earth, in whose hands are embodied and departed spirits, if thou hast ordained the souls of the dead to minister to the living, and appointed my departed wife to have care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attention and ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses, dreams, or any other manner agreeable to thy government."—(*Prayers and Meditations*.)

The absurd objection to the spiritual theory, namely, that it would be punishment to a happy spirit to return to earth, and a respite to a spirit in a state of misery, Johnson disposes of thus:—

"Why, sir, as the happiness or misery of disembodied spirits does not depend upon place, but is intellectual, we cannot say that they are less happy or less miserable by appearing upon earth."—(Boswell.)

"The happiness of a disembodied spirit will consist in a consciousness of the favour of God, in the contemplation of truth, and in the possession of felicitating ideas." "I do not imagine that all things will be made clear to us immediately after death, but that the ways of Providence will be explained to us very gradually."—(Boswell.)

Johnson had such a horror of the doctrine of annihilation, that he said it was preferable to exist even in pain than not exist. Eternal punishment then, even if true, was not in his opinion the worst thing that could happen to a man. The doctrine of eternal punishment as taught by the Churches is so revolting to the enlightened conception of Divine Love, that one is apt, in turning as far as possible from it, to drift into a loose way of regarding the condition of disembodied spirits, and to lose sight of a grand principle. It is so true that people adapt themselves to the worst circumstances: that the most unfortunate beings are not so miserable as they appear to those who do not know them; so true that we have in us an irresistible force which "makes for" happiness—that, by frequent intercourse and much familiarity with what we call low spirits (what the Church calls devils), we are apt to regard their condition too favourably; we are apt to believe that the causes of their unhappiness are rather sentimental than real. "So-and-so is an undeveloped spirit," we may think. "He has attacks of spiritual rheumatics, but between whiles he is full of fun, and is very good company. His rheumatics are probably due to a vivid imagination inflamed by the terrifying dogmas of theological alarmists; and much of his complaint may be attributed to a constitutional tendency to grumble." It is too much to hope that amongst Spiritualists there are no bad people, and yet, perhaps, few amongst the worst of us fear death at all. That this careless neglect of regarding the painful conse-

quences in the future, of irregular living in the present, must enervate the higher faculties, and give license to the play of the lower nature, is a moral axiom. But there is a preventive of this indifference. It is the perception of the principle which the doctrine of eternal punishment in a refined sense teaches, namely, that there will always be punishment for those who break laws, or who violate principles. If a man cut off his hand, or poison his body, or if he stand still in one position too long he will suffer. So if he part with his honour, or bring himself to associate with his inferiors, or if he content himself with stationariness in knowledge and wisdom, he will suffer. The purest and most exalted finite beings are yet learners—liable to stumble and fall, and therefore, also, to be bruised and wounded. They cannot escape the baneful consequences of their acts, if those acts are out of the upward straight line. As there is no royal road to learning, there is no royal protection from the penalties of ignorance. Those, however, who err from lack of judgment only, have the consolation of knowing that for them there is a short cut back to the straight line. Dr. Johnson said—"We do not know that even the angels are quite in a state of security; nay, we know that some of them have fallen. It may, therefore, perhaps be necessary, in order to preserve both men and angels in rectitude, that they should have continually before them the punishment of those who have deviated from it;" and, he adds, in reference to the common doctrine of eternal punishment, "but we may hope that by some *other* means a fall from rectitude may be prevented. Some of the texts of Scripture upon this subject are indeed strong; but they may admit of a mitigated interpretation."—(Boswell.) Thus spake, to his honour, the great representative of Orthodoxy and Toryism.

The following admonition of Johnson to his friend Boswell may, perhaps, be words in season to some of the inexperienced amongst us, who are apt to trust too much to the counsel of "Spirit guides" and familiar spirits, and thus to place too little reliance upon individual judgment and personal effort.

"Do not, sir, *accustom* yourself to trust to impressions. By trusting to impressions a man may gradually come to yield to them, and at length be subject to them so as not to be a free agent. A man who is in that state should not be suffered to live; if he declares he cannot help acting in a particular way and is irresistibly impelled, there can be no confidence in him, no more than in a tiger."

Let those who regard Spiritualists as only half-honest or half-witted be informed that the great Johnson was a Spiritualist. It is true that in sects of the most opposite tenets great men may be found. There are great men Trinitarians, and great men Unitarians; great Protestants and great Catholics; I say that, therefore, the fact merely of a particular doctrine being embraced by remarkable intellects is not proof of its truth. But when a great man goes out of his early grooves of thought to embrace unpopular doctrines, in spite of the ridicule and obloquy cast at him for so doing, it is also true that such doctrines, so courted and won, become consecrated with a claim to the respect and serious consideration of every grade of mind.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

LAST Tuesday night, at the usual monthly meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists, at 38, Great Russell-street, London, Mr. Alexander Calder, president, occupied the chair. The other members present were Mr. Morell Theobald, Dr. George Wyld, Mrs. FitzGerald, Mr. and Mrs. Desmond FitzGerald, Mrs. Louisa Lowe, the Rev. W. W. Newbould, M.A., Mrs. Maltby, the Rev. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A., Mr. R. Pearce, Mr. T. H. Edmands, Miss Withall, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Mr. Glendinning, Mr. C. Pearson, Miss Houghton, Mr. A. Joy, M.Inst.C.E.

The minutes of the last meeting were read, also the following "rider" added to the end of them: "Mr. Dawson Rogers asked whether the name of the new publication was definitely fixed as 'Paper of Proceedings, &c.,' and it was decided by general consent to leave this in the hands of the revising committee, who had been appointed to assist the secretary."

The minutes and rider to them were unanimously confirmed.

Mr. Morell Theobald read the report of the Finance Committee, which set forth that the Association had a balance in hand of £129 10s. 11d.; it recommended payments to the extent of £55, and estimated that the outstanding liabilities of the Association amounted to £5.

The suggested Annual Report of the Association was then circulated in type, and taken as read.

Mrs. Lowe moved that a few words be inserted expressing the opinion that Spiritualists in private life were liable to a certain amount of persecution under the lunacy laws.

Mr. Stainton-Moses seconded this, and after a few brief speeches about Mrs. Weldon's case, in which it was remarked that the matter was external to the Association, and that no official information about it was before the Council, the insertion of the words was agreed to.

Mr. Stainton-Moses made a brief report on the part of the General Purposes Committee.

Mr. Glendinning moved that the Council highly approved the printed *Proceedings* in the new form in which the committee had issued the monthly agenda. This was seconded by Mr. Edmands, and carried unanimously.

After the passing of the report of the *Séance* Committee, and of the House and Offices Committee,

The report of the Library Committee was read by the secretary as follows:—"Mr. La Roy Sunderland, of Quincy, Mass., had offered to present the Association with some files of early Spiritual periodicals, the *Spirit World* and the *Spirit Messenger*. The offer had been accepted with thanks, and Mr. Sunderland was requested to send the parcel to Messrs. Colby and Rich, of Boston, for transmission with their next box of books to London. The following additions had been made to the Lending Library, viz.:—Two copies of 'M.A. (Oxon's)' *Psychography*, a copy of Denton's *Soul of Things* (three vols.), and M. P.'s *Evidences*, presented by Mr. F. W. Percival. A copy of Esdaile's *Mesmerism in India* had been added to the General Library, and three numbers of the *Biological Review* had been presented by Mr. F. W. Percival. The photographs of the moulds and casts taken in Paris, and presented to the Association by the Comte de Bullet and M. Levof, had been substantially mounted and framed, and were now hanging in the reading room. Two volumes of pamphlets had been bound under the title of *Tracts*, and the remainder had been classified, numbered, and arranged in six octavo-sized pamphlet cases. The five volumes of Allan Kardec's works had been bound, and it had been resolved to subscribe for M. Pierart's new journal *Le Benedictin de St. Maur*. It had also been resolved to purchase an album for preserving various photographs in possession of the Association."

A cordial vote of thanks was passed by the Council for the gifts.

The report of the *Soiree* Committee was adopted.

Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald announced that the Research Committee had made important progress, as reported in *The Spiritualist*, and would give in a report when its experiments were concluded. Mr. Charles Blackburn had generously agreed to present the committee with new and improved self-recording apparatus for the weighing experiments.

The Chairman moved that the thanks of the Council be given to Mr. Blackburn for his generosity. This was seconded, and passed unanimously.

It was unanimously resolved to invite Mr. Thomas Blyton to become an honorary member of the National Association of Spiritualists, because, as the mover set forth, of the unselfish hard work he had done for years in the interests of Spiritualism.

After the performance of some business connected with the interior working of the Association, the meeting broke up.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

INQUIRERS' SEANCE.

At the Inquirers' *Séance* held on the premises of the National Association of Spiritualists on Wednesday, April 10th, Mr. W. Eglinton being the medium, "Gray's gauntlets" were used with great success. Nine persons were present. Mr. Eglinton's coat was first sewn together in front; the gauntlets (a new pair, made of stiff leather) were laced on his wrists, the ends of the laces tied, sewn together, and then stitched to the cuff of the medium's coat, his hands being placed behind his back. A piece of tape was next passed through the ring of each handcuff, knotted, and the ends (about a foot long) were stitched up the centre of Mr. Eglinton's coat. He then sat as usual in the cabinet, with his legs and feet in full view, in a fair light. Under these circumstances, a bell which was placed on the chimes (the latter resting on the medium's knees) was taken up and rung; the chimes themselves were struck, then removed bodily and played in the cabinet, held out from the cabinet, a gentleman sitting nearest having them placed against his head, and finally thrown on to the floor.

"Joey," who kept talking during the whole of the *séance*, requested that the chimes should be replaced on the medium's knees, and a book placed upon them. This was done, the back of the book being to the medium; the book was then several times opened and shut. "Joey," on wishing us "Good night," said, "I am going to strike the chimes, and directly you hear them let one of the gentlemen go into the cabinet, and see whether the medium is still fast." This was done, and the medium found secure. When the gas was turned up, a card, which had been initiated by two of the gentlemen present and placed with a pencil on the chimes, was found to have the word "Joey" written on one side and an illegible scrawl on the other. On the knots and stitches being examined, they were pronounced by those who had tied and sewn them to be intact.

GEORGE C. JOAD,

Member of Research Committee, in charge.

A CONSIDERABLE number of copies of *The Spiritualist*, containing the recent discoveries in relation to mediumship, has been sent by the Orient line to Mr. Terry, of Melbourne; Spiritualists in New Zealand, who require extra copies, may obtain them from him, instead of losing much time by sending to London.

VARIATIONS IN THE WEIGHT OF A MEDIUM DURING MANIFESTATIONS.

BY WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

It having been suggested that I should briefly state the main points of the experiments given by me in great detail, with diagrams, in *The Spiritualist* of May 3, 1878, I have much pleasure in so doing.

The British National Association of Spiritualists some time since appointed a committee to prosecute original research in relation to spiritual phenomena, and allotted it a room on its premises at 38, Great Russell-street, London, in which to conduct its operations. The Association at the same time gave the Research Committee the use of all the appliances it possessed upon the establishment, and a few months ago the committee began its work in connection with research by attempting to ascertain continuously the variations, if any, in the weight of a medium during the occurrence of powerful physical manifestations. The Research Committee consists of Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Member of the Society of Telegraphic Engineers, Chairman; Mr. C. F. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; Mr. D. H. Wilson, M.A., LL.M. (Cantab); Mr. W. H. Coffin; Mr. C. C. Massey, Barrister-at-Law; the Rev. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A. (Oxon); Mr. Dawson Rogers; Mr. J. W. Gray, C.E.; Mr. E. T. Bennett; Mr. F. Barrett; Mr. T. H. Edmands; the Rev. W. W. Newbould, M.A. (Cantab); Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Didsbury; Mr. George C. Joad; Captain John James; Mr. F. W. Percival, M.A. (Oxon); Mr. H. Withall; Mr. George King; Mr. G. F. Green; Dr. Carter-Blake, Lecturer on Comparative Anatomy at Westminster Hospital; and myself. The medium through whom the valuable results hereinafter recorded have been obtained is Mr. C. E. Williams.

A cabinet was mounted on a weighing machine, in order that, as the weight of the medium in the cabinet varied during manifestations, those variations might be recorded. The record was made automatically upon a band of paper round a vertical drum (Fig. 1), revolving by clockwork in the direction denoted by the arrow. The pencil W moves up and down in accordance with the variations in the

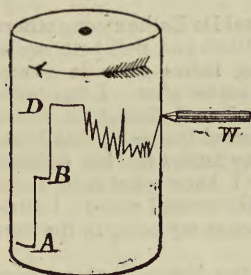


FIG. 1.

weight upon the machine, and as the cylinder is also in motion, zigzag lines upon the paper are the result. The line A B represents the weight of the cabinet, the line B D that of the medium, or an indicated weight of 153 lbs.; his actual weight may be a few pounds more or less, but such variation being a constant does not affect the scientific value of the results. As the *séance* goes on, the weight of the medium falls, and is subject to considerable fluctuations.

The following diagram (Fig. 2) shows broadly the general results deducible from the few *séances* already held under the conditions just stated. In this cut the line N N represents sixty minutes of time, and the line

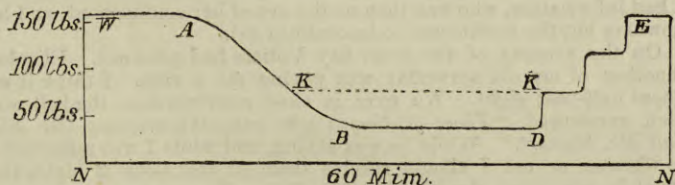


FIG. 2.

W N the 153 lbs. weight of the medium. During a materialisation *séance* his weight gradually falls to between 30 lbs. and 35 lbs. between B and D, and towards the close of the *séance* his weight is recovered in three sudden instalments, represented between D and E.

During the common manifestations of a dark *séance*, such as the floating and playing of musical instruments, the weight of the medium does not sink so much as during a materialisation *séance*; it sinks only to K K (Fig. 2), instead of to B D.

The lines K K and the lines B D are not of the same nature. K K (Fig. 2) is of the nature represented by A B (Fig. 3), and B B (Fig. 2) of the nature represented by

D E (Fig. 3). During a strong dark *séance* the body of a powerful physical medium is of but about half its normal

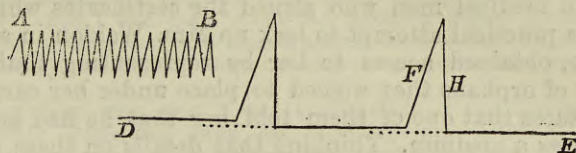


FIG. 3.

weight, and subject to momentary fluctuations of several pounds each.

During the only strong materialisation *séance* held with Mr. Williams while he was on the weighing apparatus, his body gradually sank to less than one-fourth its normal weight, and lay as a motionless mass in the cabinet. When the spirits returned to this mass to "take on more of the mortal," it slowly increased in weight, as represented at F (Fig. 3), but fell suddenly when they left it again, as represented at H. Each time they left it, it was a pound or two less in weight than before, as indicated by the dotted lines (Fig. 3).

The study of the original diagrams suggests that a medium and two spirits, by equally sharing the matter of the medium's body, can produce lively physical effects at a dark *séance*, almost the same as if each spirit were clothed with the normal complement of matter of the body of a human being. I have seen something analogous to this in chemical actions, when for experimental purposes covering glass with a film of pure bright silver, by precipitating the metal from one of its ammoniacal solutions. The results were apparently nearly the same, whether the same quantity of solution contained two, four, six, or eight parts of silver. The film of silver on the glass was marvellously thin.

The recorded results are far more important than any scientific discovery which has been recorded in *The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* during the present generation, and the reason why the results are not in the pages of that publication are, that when Mr. Crookes first brought some of the phenomenal facts of Spiritualism before the Royal Society, the Council treated him and the facts just as it treated Benjamin Franklin when he announced to the Society his discovery of lightning conductors.

New and improved self-recording apparatus, to be presented to the Research Committee by Mr. Charles Blackburn, is in course of construction, and some interesting additional results are expected before long.

38, Great Russell-street, London.

INTUITION is the power to recognise and comprehend a truth without deduction or reasoning. To it belongs the higher and finer perceptions of the soul, by which it not only perceives truth through the avenues of the senses, but is susceptible to certain interior influences belonging exclusively to its nature.—*Leander*.

PROFESSOR MAX MÜLLER'S LECTURES.—Professor Max Müller is now delivering a course of lectures on Thursdays, in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey, on "The Origin of Religions." The attendance hitherto has been very large, and has included a moderate proportion of Spiritualists. Reports are printed at some length in *The Times*, every Friday or Saturday. As yet he has not dealt with phenomenal psychology, but may possibly be doing so at the time these lines are being printed. If he criticises any of our recently proved facts, a report will appear in these pages next week. No doubt it is owing to the honest and liberal spirit of Dean Stanley that the public are able to listen to trustworthy information on the ancient religion of India beneath the shadow of Westminster Abbey.

USEFUL LIVES.—Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life purpose; he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a free flowing channel, dug and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever deepening river there, it runs and flows; draining off the sour, festering water gradually from the root of the remotest grass-blade; making, instead of the pestilential swamp, a great fruitful meadow with its clear flowing stream. How blessed for the meadow itself, let the stream and its value be great or small! Labour is life; from the inmost heart of the worker rises the God-given force, the sacred celestial life-essence; from the inmost heart awakens him to all nobleness, to all knowledge, self-knowledge, and much else, so soon as work fitly begins. Knowledge! the knowledge that will hold good in working, cleave thou unto that; Nature accredits that, says yea to that. Properly thou hast no other knowledge but what thou hast got by working; the rest is yet all an hypothesis of knowledge; a thing to be argued of in schools, a thing floating in the clouds, in endless logic vortices, till we try it and fix it. Doubt, of whatever kind, can be ended by action alone.—*Carlyle*.

SOME MEDICAL MEN AT THEIR WORK.

THE ATTEMPT TO LOCK UP MRS. WELDON IN A MADHOUSE.

THE medical men who signed the certificates which led to the practical attempt to lock up Mrs. Weldon in a madhouse, obtained access to her by representing that they knew of orphans they wished to place under her care, and she states that one of them told her that he had an aunt who was a medium. Thinking that details on these points might throw light upon little-known duties performed by a very respectable section of the medical profession, we requested Mrs. Weldon to favour us with full particulars for publication. She has given us a clear, coherent account of the whole case, with permission to abridge the same. We have accordingly struck out particulars relating to various individuals, including M^énier, whose case is *sub judice*, under which circumstances the law very justly permits no colouring by statements in newspapers. Here is Mrs. Weldon's interesting account of her interviews with the doctors, whose names and certificates are not accessible by legal right to Mrs. Weldon or to the general public, so an alleged lunatic is much worse off than an alleged criminal. The latter knows what he is charged with, and who charges him.

On Sunday morning, the 14th April, I was arrayed in a flannel dressing-gown well tucked up; a large dirty apron covered all. I had a pair of most inelegant slippers. The bell rang about ten a.m.; my maid Villiers came to say that two gentlemen (Messrs. Shell and Stewart) wished to see me for a few moments. I took it for granted that it was a Mr. Stewart, a tradesman. I did not mind him; I could go on dusting and arranging my books whilst they were present, so I said I would see them—my dressing-gown and apron would be excused. To my astonishment, Messrs. Shell and Stewart were not the persons I believed them to be. They set me at my ease by saying, "You do not know us well, but we have often seen you; we have read your works on the education of children in *The Spiritualist*, and are very desirous of placing some children with you." In answer to questions they continuously put to me, I replied that I was sorry I could not take any more at present; that I had made up my mind that nothing was worse for children than to bring them up to be clever, accurate, superior, obedient, and well-behaved; that my clever, obedient children were a living reproach to any mother, or father, or relation of any kind who had any child in the family; that people hated me as well as them for their superiority; that people tried to make out I starved, whipped, and ill-treated them: that wherever the children went they took up a position for leading the others, and independence of character, which made them at once stand out from among the rest; that they were well-mannered, without being forward; that they were stuffed with buns, cakes, oranges, &c., wherever they went—spoilt and flattered; and that it was no wonder infant prodigies turned out good-for-nothing. I therefore had made up my mind that I would put them to ordinary schools and bring them up in the ordinary way; that if I ever could get the women and the money to help me carry out my original scheme of keeping fifty children, I would receive any orphan (quite an orphan) they wished; but that I absolutely declined to take any more at present. I recommended them to the convent at Gisors, and told them of the Orphanage there.

They asked me if I expected to succeed in my scheme. "Perhaps not, in this world," I answered. I had written a book called *Musical Reform*, which had made everybody in the newspapers and among publishers my bitter enemy. I believed I had implanted the seed in the children I have, that at least one would grow up to teach as well as I did. "At all events," I said, "if I do not succeed in this world, I shall in the next. I have been through too much sorrow, and have had too much trouble not to know that I have a mission, and that I am an instrument of Providence for some particular purpose. Now my tastes are all quiet tastes; my life in a convent is perfect bliss. Not long after I had settled in one a voice brought me home, and I was just in time to catch this M^énier and prosecute him. 'In the wars again, Mrs. Weldon,' I know every one will say. But I am no more to be blamed for this row than for any of the others I am always getting into. It seems as if I could not be left quiet. I believe some success is in store for me, for I received a letter from Mr. Jules Rey. As I read it I said to my maid (for I saw them gently pouring on my head and the bed on which I was sitting), 'Oh, Villiers! Do you see the beautiful showers of stars falling on me!' The stars appeared to fall in answer to the following observation I had made her about the letter. 'Villiers, I do think this M^énier bother is sent me for my good, and that the truth will at last come out about all I have said and all I have done. It is to be a moment of triumph!' I had been very much agitated by the letters I had received, but after I had seen the stars I grew quite calm." I said all this in answer to questions they asked me as Spiritualists. They asked me if I was a medium. I said, "Oh! dear no." The old gentleman, who sat on a chair with his back to the light in a most extraordinary position—viz., on the middle of his spine, and with his hands clasped on his stomach—said "he was not a medium, but that he had an aunt in Cornwall, a Miss Gay, who was a very good one. Had I ever heard of her?" I said, "No." Mr. Stewart, who was a round-faced young man, rather like a washed Christy Minstrel, said he was a medium, and that he could write on slates like Dr. Slade. I began to think they had stayed long enough, so I got silent; they went off, saying they were much pleased with what they had heard—that they

thought my advice about the orphans excellent, and should speak to the relations. "Relations," I said; "pray understand me that I will never have anything to do with any child who has any relation; they would be taken away from me the moment they could earn their living by being turned into infant prodigies." They said they could come again, that they would report what I said, and that I was sure through them of substantial help for myself and my Orphanage.

Messrs. Shell and Stewart asked me if I was very much injured in point of money by this M^énier. Was I in want of money? I replied that I supposed I should have lost over £1,000 worth; but that I was very prudent with my income, and was always more than half a year's income in hand. I said I never risked anything; but that I had often been woefully swindled. "How do you explain your guardian spirits not putting you on your guard against these cheats?" they asked. I replied—"The Lord loveth whom he chasteneth; I believe that I am destined to accomplish some purpose of the Almighty; I am, moreover, certain that were I in a very grave danger, or that I was threatened by some dreadful sorrow, I should be distinctly warned. I had three visions, or warnings, the week before Gounod left; but I was not a Spiritualist then, and did not regard them. I have no fear. I know my motives are good. I quite believe God gives his angels charge concerning us, so I am quite happy." . . .

I must not omit to say that they asked me if the children would be obliged to wear no shoes and socks. I answered that my children, when at Tavistock House, went without shoes and socks because they preferred to go without; that being at home, and hardly ever going out except in the garden, it did not signify; but that as soon as they went away from home they were obliged to do as everybody else did; that I had to agonise the poor little things by putting them into these very unnecessary coverings; that one little girl who was very lame when she came to me had nearly got well by leaving off shoes and stockings, but that since she had been abroad her leg had withered very much, and she was much lamer: They had worn shoes and stockings nearly six months. They certainly had not been so well in health.

They asked me some technical questions on the subject of Spiritualism and manifestations. I said I had no time to read works on Spiritualism, that the children and their concerns entirely absorbed me, that I had been to very few *séances*, that I did not care for them, and that I knew so little about it that I should not be up to a book on Spiritualism. All this I answered to corresponding questions as they pressed me on the subject. I was not communicative, as they told me they read *The Medium* and the *The Spiritualist*, "and so," said I, "you know all I think without my telling." I thought them both common and uninteresting, and took them for fifth-rate attorneys.

When they were gone I told Villiers and Mr. Bell, the man in charge, not to let any one else in to me unless they wrote their names, their addresses, and then I should know by the handwriting if any one who came was a person I knew. I made up my mind to see no one else about orphans; they had been more than half-hour, and I did not like having been disturbed so long.

Several friends called during the day, General De Bathe among others. He was barely ten minutes in the house; Villiers and Bell both say he certainly was not ten minutes. Two young ladies came in almost immediately after he called, and he left five minutes after. I was full of my M^énier case, full of spirits, and I remember I thought it rather queer his saying that I should not have prosecuted the man; that I had trusted him, and that he was relying upon my letters for his defence. "What care I about my letters?" said I. "I know what is in them. They cannot compromise me in any way!" He seemed vexed; I attributed his saying this to his feeling of annoyance at my being in the wars again.

I remember telling General De Bathe the two houses next me were unlet, and the lovely house also opposite mine at the bottom of our gardens. I said I did not despair of mollifying the Duke of Bedford, whose freehold property they were. I said the house Charles Dickens had lived in should be dedicated to the poor; that I am sure, could I but make my wish known, the country would pour subscriptions in upon me, and that I should have the house (separate from Tavistock, Bedford, and Russell houses) at the bottom of the gardens kept as a lying-in house for poor girls with poor, respectable parents (such as one of whom I had information, who was then on the eve of her confinement, and had nowhere but the workhouse to be confined in).

On the evening of the same day Villiers had gone out. Elisabeth (another of my old servants) was paying me a visit. I think it was about half-past eight. We were in close conversation; the bell rang. Bell announced, "Those gentlemen who came this morning, Mr. Shell and Mr. Stewart." While he was asking, and while I was reflecting as to whether or not I should receive them at that hour of night, they stood in my room, close behind Mr. Bell. To my utter astonishment these men were not Mr. Shell and Mr. Stewart. I looked surprised, and said, "You are not Messrs. Shell and Stewart!" "No!" answered the older of the two, a "tubby" little man about sixty-five years old, with plenty of "cheek." "We come from them, so we gave their names as we have come about the Orphanage. They were very much pleased with all they heard; they can be of material service to you, but they entirely forgot to ask you anything about this wonderful method of yours." This I thought all right, for it was quite true that in the morning my method of teaching had in no way been mooted. I do not consider that I introduced a single topic. Everything I said was in answer to positive and direct questions. I did not think it strange; I suspected that it was all about some rich and mysterious orphans, that these four business men were lawyers or lawyers' clerks, that it was quite natural they should feel anxious in confiding them to me at present or ultimately, that their money should not be ill-spent, and that the children would be brought up to earn a living. These two men gave me to understand they were Spiritualists, but that they

had not read my letters on education. That was in answer to my saying that as they (Messrs. Shell and Stewart) were Spiritualists, they could, in *The Spiritualist*, learn very nearly exactly all I thought, preached, and practised about singing and general training of children. Subsequently they said something which made me feel certain they were Atheists, and therefore could not be Spiritualists. The old gentleman asked me if it was my opinion that everybody would sing equally well if I taught them? "If I took them from babies." "I understand you," said he, "that you say they would all have equally fine voices?" "No," I replied, "I most decidedly do not say that. I said they would sing equally well." "Then your theory is, all people would sing equally well were they born with or without a voice!" "No one is born without a voice," said I. "A deaf and dumb person has plenty of voice, so has an animal, but their voices cannot be trained, because one lacks ear, the other lacks intelligence. An accident may happen to your vocal chords, and they may be strained or injured by illness, just as accident may deprive you of a limb, in which case you would no longer be able to walk, or to run, or to work." "And you say you can make them sing when they are three months old?" "Heavens, no!" I said, "I never thought of such a thing. Three years old!" "But when do you begin to teach them; you begin to teach them at three months old? What sort of a voice have they?" I began to think the "Tubby One" very stupid and very deaf, so I began to talk louder. "I do not consider I begin to teach children at all, at any age. It all depends upon how forward they are naturally. As soon as they can sit up in their chairs they play at being big children; they are seated at a table with little bits of coloured rags in front of them, which they pick, tear, and pull to pieces, obeying their natural love of destruction. I bring up children to obey their natural instincts, only they are trained by me to use them to good instead of useless effect. I let them destroy. The rags can be used to stuff pillows for them, and they have great pride when a pillow is filled. I let them tear up paper and strew it all over the floor. I let them make as much mess as they please, because it delights them, and that they understand it is quite fair they should clear up and sweep away their own litter. I thus teach them early to be neat and tidy, and not to give servants unnecessary work." The Tubby One seemed much interested in all I told him; he had got a little bit of paper and a pencil, and noted down the information I gave him. He had sometimes to efface what he wrote, for, upon several occasions, I corrected what he read out. One thing I remember was about the children singing at three months old. I thought, at the time, that he was deaf; but I now plainly see what he was driving at. He was trying to entangle me to talk rubbish.

The younger man of the two was very taciturn; the "cut of his jib" was that of a seedy dentist's assistant—a bad-looking young man. The old man seemed to wish me to have a high opinion of him, for he told me about the grandeur of his relations. One of his daughters, I recollect his saying, was married to a judge in Australia.

He asked me if any of my children were mediums, and I said I did not know; then I recollected myself, and said, "Oh, yes! one of my boys, Alfred Rawlings, must be a medium. He and one of my nurses were going to walk round the garden about half-past seven one evening, and they both distinctly saw Dan, my dear old pug, walking towards his grave. This was about three weeks after I had buried him under the mulberry tree." "Did you see him?" asked the Tubby One. "No! I do not suppose I ever should see a vision of that kind." "Do you believe that was your dog's spirit?" "Yes, I do!" said I, "and I always felt sure that dear dog had a soul. Mr. Weldon and I doated on him, and we called him *our angel*." "Do you believe he is an angel?" "He ought to be." The old man pressed the point, and I stuck to it that if "Dan was not an angel that he ought to be one!" "Can you tell me anything more about any other animal?" I said, "No!" and laughed. I looked at my servant, and asked her if she remembered about any other animal. She did not remember about anything. All of a sudden I recollected a curious little white rabbit with black ears, black scut, and black paws, which had been spirited to a *séance* by Mrs. Guppy, which had been given to me, which I had kept four or five months, and which disappeared as mysteriously as it had appeared. He was a very extraordinary animal. Instead of being timid, like most rabbits are; instead of being frightened at the dogs, and of a most ferocious cat we have, which kills every cat, rat, or mouse that comes near the place, the rabbit frightened the cat and played with the dogs from the very first moment it came into the house. "Ah, I dare say," said the Tubby One, "you thought he had a devil!" and before the answer was out of my mouth, he began to write down something. "Nothing of the kind," said I, "I never gave it a thought!" The Tubby One then went out, and I heard him, as I imagined, looking for something. So I told Elisabeth to go and ask him what he wanted. Directly she had left the room the Taciturn One got livelier. He began by telling me he had heard me sing at Gounod's concerts; how beautifully I sang. Did not I sing a great deal? Was not I singing all day? To which I answered that when I was not with the children I hardly ever went near the piano, and did not care for singing at all. He then told me I was very beautiful, and how young I looked; to which I replied nothing, for I did not see what that had to do with him. The Tubby One, followed and watched by Elisabeth, then returned; the Taciturn One then retired, Elisabeth watching him. They neither of them did anything in the corridor, and only appeared to wait one for the other. The Tubby One returning, said, "What a nice, fine garden you have for the children!" He went to the bow-window, got under the blind, and tried to open the window and could not; so thinking he wanted to see the garden, which he kept on talking about, asking me if I walked about in it a good deal?—at any particular times?—I went to open the window, looked out and admired the fine trees, turned round, and beheld the Tubby One's eyes fixed upon me with a sort of glittering stare or leer which terrified me. I quickly came out from under the blind. I called Elisabeth. She returned

with the Taciturn One, and then they both said they would go. I felt as if they were both bad men, wishing to do me harm, and I said, "Before you go, let me show you that I am under the special care of Providence!" and I told them about the infamous letters I had found, proving a conspiracy had existed against me since last December; at which they certainly did hurry out of the room, saying they would come again.

After they were gone I said to Elisabeth, "Oh, Tibby, I feel dreadful! Something awful has come over me. I feel as if black clouds were floating down over me one by one, and I see all black! I feel as if I were in the most dreadful danger! What can those men be? I am in some horrible trap." "They seemed very pleasant gentlemen," said Elisabeth. "Too pleasant, Tibby," said I, quite inconsolable. I could talk and think about nothing more. I am sure they must have stayed about an hour. "They want to get me away from here, I am certain!" It came to my memory that Mènier had written to his wife and told her — was trying to put me into a lunatic asylum. Tibby, who had never seen me at all discomposed, tried to allay my alarms; but I said, "It is no use, Tibby, I cannot talk, I feel I only get worse, I feel that I am lost!" So she went away. I longed for Villiers to lock and bolt up the house. I went and put the chain on the front door; I went down to the pantry to Mr. Bell. "Oh, Mr. Bell!" I moaned, "I am all in a shake and a shiver. I wish Villiers would come in, we would lock up the house and go to bed. The policemen are on the beat, so we are safe for to-night, but to-morrow we must look sharp." I kept downstairs with him, not daring, for the first time in my life, to go to bed alone; and it must have been a quarter-past ten, we heard the gate (which, on account of its being out of repair, was shut to with an immense flagstone) open, and a carriage drive in. "Oh!" cried I, starting up, "Mr. Bell, that carriage is for me?" "Oh, nonsense, ma'am," said Mr. Bell, "a carriage won't come at this time of night for you." I was shaking and shivering worse than ever. "Don't go to the front door!" "It is not for this house at all," said Mr. Bell. "The people have made some mistake; they are talking to the policeman!" The words were hardly out of his mouth, the bell rang. So Bell called out from the kitchen door, "Who's there?" "A gentleman and two ladies to see Mrs. Weldon!" Bell came in again. "I dare not stand there," he said; "the area gate is not locked, they might come down that way." Bell himself seemed to get frightened now. The bell rang again. "Go upstairs, open the door on the chain, and ask their names, addresses, and business—but whatever you do, do not let them in to the passage!" Up went Mr. Bell. The man alone spoke, and we, as well as the policeman, suspected the women might be men dressed as females. After several questions, Mr. Bell said, "You cannot see Mrs. Weldon, she is gone to bed." "All the better," said the man, "you are here for Mr. Weldon." . . . "No matter who I am here for!" and Mr. Bell shut the door in their faces. They knocked and they rang three times, but we turned out the gas; they got tired of waiting, and at last we heard the carriage drive off. It was a large carriage with two horses, and a coachman with a cockade. When they were gone we went up to the front door (after Bell had locked the area gate); we peeped cautiously out, and called the policeman. I told the policeman to ask the Inspector at Hunter-street to send or come round in the morning; that I was sure I was in some dreadful danger, and that I *must* have some police in the house. Villiers came in at that moment (it must have been ten minutes to eleven); she had seen the smart carriage driving down the square coming out of our gates. Seeing me so pale and trembling, so very much unlike my usually composed self, she got as frightened as I did, and neither of us hardly closed our eyes that night. I got up early; I posted letters to several friends to warn them of my danger; also to Mr. Burns, editor of the *Medium*, and Mr. W. H. Harrison, editor of *The Spiritualist*. I was very much struck by a passage in the Bow-street report of Mènier's case, which had not appeared in the Sunday papers, but which I read in Monday's 15th April *Standard*. Prisoner's counsel had never said anything about my having delusions, or that I might be labouring under delusions as regards his client; neither did he say "that the fact of my carrying on an Orphanage in a house which had been Charles Dickens', without the sympathy or even co-operation of my husband, tended to prove I laboured under delusions." I wrote to the *Standard*, as I firmly believe that portion of the report was not sent by the reporter of the Court.

All the morning I was thinking, "Oh that I dared go out to Mrs. Lowe!" I had seen the police; I had asked them to be in the dining-room at a quarter-past six that afternoon. I agreed to receive no one I did not know well till half-past six, so that I should be quite safe till then. No one came all the morning. Villiers and Bell both felt certain no one would come again, but I felt sure of the contrary, and longed for Mrs. Lowe. In the morning Mr. Lowther, Mr. Neal (Mr. Jevons', my husband's solicitors' agent), had been; to both of these I had told all my fears. At about half-past two, Mr. Bell asked me if I would see a Mrs. Thompson. Bell said he thought it was one of "last night's females," so I told him to say I was particularly engaged, and that I could not see any one till half-past six. She said—"Very well," and left. I wished I dared go off to Mrs. Lowe! The bell rang again. A note from Mr. Harrison introducing—who?—but—Mrs. Lowe!!! The very woman I was longing and praying for. I was only too delighted to let her come in. I welcomed her with joy and thankfulness. I had begun to tell her all my story—she had not been ten minutes with me—when the bell rang again, and Bell came to the door of my room, and appeared much agitated. He was trembling all over, and said, "Those three have come, have pushed their way in, and say they will wait till they can see you." I felt quite brave now. Villiers was out, so I asked Mrs. Lowe to go for the police. She went unfortunately to Tottenham-court-road station, so the police did not come immediately. Villiers came in at the same moment, so I sent her off to Hunter-street police station, where they had received my instructions. The others all soon arrived. Armed with two stalwart policemen and Mrs. Lowe, I

went to the front door, and asked "those three" what they wanted me for. One of the females said, or rather mumbled, something about an orphanage. "What about an orphanage?" said I. "Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Stewart said you would know!" "I don't know!" "Come with us." "Where to?" said I. Of course I had no intention of going, but I should like to have drawn them out, pretended to go to dress, gone to fetch the poker and broken their three heads, which I am told I had the legal right to do. Unfortunately Mrs. Lowe cut my little plot short by saying, "Indeed, you must not go!" whereupon the man said, "Take her." The women darted upon me and seized me. "Give them in charge for assaulting you," said Mrs. Lowe. "Police-man," said I, "take them in charge, they are assaulting me." I might have spoken Hebrew or Chinese; they never moved, and I feel convinced they would have let me be carried off bodily. I shook off the women, laughing. "I knew what you had come for," and I then stood at a little distance shouting to the police, "I give them in charge. Take them up." No doubt had they been my own forewarned policemen from Hunter-street they would have taken them up fast enough and walked them off, but the Hunter-street force had not yet arrived on the scene of action. Mrs. Lowe told me to run back and lock myself in my room. I did so; I sat down and wrote to Mr. Gladstone, *Truth*, my mother, and several friends, as well as to several newspapers. At last, when my policemen came, "the trio" were forced to say what they had come for, and though they would not show Mrs. Lowe, Miss Gray, Villiers, or Mr. Bell, they were forced by the police to show the order of lunacy they said they possessed. They then left. I telegraphed to my husband to come and save me. Villiers went down on her knees to me to fly; Miss Gray, Bell, and the police all agreed I had better not risk anything—that it would soon be cleared up the next day, so I went. Mrs. Lowe and I stampeded down the square, got into a hansom. She took me to her house, where she left me, and then returned to Tavistock House for some of my things. I was terrified the next day by hearing that a man had been with the three keepers to Tavistock House, in the hope of dragging me out of my bed at past 11 p.m., and to 64, Berners-street, the office of the Lunacy Law Reform Association. I hid most carefully for seven days, till the doctors' certificates lapsed; got plenty of publicity, saw heaps of friends, had long conversations with Dr. George Wyld and Dr. James Edmunds, who pronounced me and gave me certificates as *perfectly sane*. Although afraid of appearing in court on Saturday, 20th April, I went to see Mr. St. John Wontner, the Solicitor to the Treasury, on the 25th. He seemed at first inclined to treat me rather rudely, as if I were a mad person or an imbecile, and told me Dr. Winslow had just been to show him the order in lunacy against me.

Mrs. Weldon justly remarks that had she been shut up in an asylum her state of mind would have been fearful, because in addition to the invariable horrors of the position, she would have thought of her ten forsaken children, of the nuns and the schoolmistresses who had believed in her as an honest woman, and had in France agreed to keep the children, counting upon her honour to pay their schooling. She adds that supposing they never heard from her, the poor little things themselves might have grown up to believe that she had forsaken them.

PSYCHOLOGY IN HACKNEY.—Mr. Charles R. Williams, of 6, Field View-terrace, London-fields, Hackney, E., is secretary *pro tem.* of a psychological society in course of formation in Hackney; several members of the East End Spiritual Institution, and others interested in the subject, constitute the nucleus of the society. Mr. Williams states that it is proposed to hold healing *séances* on Sunday and Tuesday evenings, and that experimental *séances* are to be held after the healing *séance* on Tuesday evenings. Mr. Williams invites the attendance and co-operation of those who may possess developed psychical powers, as well as others who are anxious for an opportunity of systematically observing psychological phenomena. Mr. Blyton, the hon. secretary of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, called upon Mr. Williams on Monday evening last, and writes that Mr. Williams is well versed in matters appertaining to psychology, and, moreover, is successful as a mesmerist. Should the proposed society be successfully established, a friendly interchange of members' privileges may probably be arranged between it and the Dalston Association.

WARNING DREAMS.—The Yorkshire papers contain accounts of a fatal accident which happened last week to a boy named Walker, employed at a mill in Skipton, who came to a frightful death by falling among the machinery. The *Craven Pioneer* says, "It is singular but true, that the poor mother of the unfortunate lad dreamt on Monday night that he was killed, that on the Tuesday evening his elder brother had a similar dream, and that on the Wednesday evening the deceased himself (from whom the other dreams had been kept back) dreamt that he had fallen among the knives in the hopper at which he works. While under this hallucination he sprang up in bed, and had to be aroused by his brother, to whom he told his dream. And during the same night the poor lad sprang up in bed again, and when gently remonstrated with by his brother, with whom he slept, he said that he was dreaming he had again been caught by the machine. The following night he was brought home a corpse. So strong an impression had these premonitions made upon Mrs. Walker's mind that, when a good-intentioned woman went to the house and told her she had received a message that her son-in-law was hurt, the poor woman threw her arms up with a shriek, and said it was her own son that had been killed. 'Not killed,' gently admitted the woman, 'only injured a little.' 'Killed,' gasped the distressed mother; 'I dreamt he was.'"

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.]

SPIRITUALISM IN LIVERPOOL.

SIR,—Within a fortnight we have had two lectures from Dr. Peebles, five from the youthful orator, Mr. W. J. Colville, one from Mr. J. J. Morse, and a conference of Lancashire Spiritualists.

On Sunday, May 5th, Mr. Colville delivered two addresses in the Psychological Society's Room, Camden Hotel, Camden-street; the lectures were well received, and a great many people were turned away in the evening, the society's rooms not being large enough to accommodate all the visitors. In the afternoon of the same day Mr. Colville gave a successful parlour *séance* at Mr. J. Lamont's, at Fairfield. The answering of questions while the medium was entranced gave much satisfaction.

On Saturday and Monday evenings, the 11th and 13th inst., Mr. Colville delivered two lectures in the Large Concert Hall, Lord Nelson-street, on "Woman's True Position and Divine Mission." The lectures were well received, and frequently interrupted by bursts of applause; but the audiences were not so large as could be wished. As these lectures were given by Mr. Colville in his individual capacity, the pecuniary loss, if any, will fall upon him. When Mr. Colville is better known as a trance speaker in Liverpool he will secure larger audiences.

The number of private *séances* held in Liverpool is on the increase. Quiet investigation is going on, but the public movement is far from what it should be.

The twelfth quarterly conference of the Lancashire Committee of Spiritualists was held on Sunday, the 12th inst., at the Concert Hall, Lord Nelson-street. The morning sitting commenced at 10.30 a.m. The quarterly report was read by Mr. Johnston, of Hyde, vice-president of the committee. It was considered satisfactory, and was passed in due form.

An animated discussion took place as to whether the committee should increase the area of its operations. Messrs. Lamont, Parsons, Sutcliffe, Shepherd, and J. J. Morse took part therein. It was finally agreed not to increase the boundary of its present sphere of action.

The society, or committee, with an income of £10 per quarter from members, and about £30 from donations and gifts, has done a great deal of work with a very little money; 127 lectures were delivered during the last quarter, at an expense of 5s. 1½d. per lecture. The society finds its usefulness much cramped for want of a larger number of earnest workers, and from shortness of funds. An appeal was made for more labourers and more material.

The afternoon sitting commenced at 2.30, with Mr. Lamont in the chair. The quarterly report was again read, and ratified by the conference. The appeal for funds was well responded to. The delegates and representatives from the various districts presented, upon the whole, favourable reports of the spread and reception of Spiritualism in Lancashire. To give an idea of the work carried on by this Association, there were delegates at the afternoon meeting present from Manchester, Bolton, Oldham, Rochdale, Macclesfield, Bury, Leigh, Millom, Barrow, Ulverston, Hyde, Burnley, Ashton, and Liverpool. Mr. J. J. Morse lectures twelve times during each month, Mr. Bates six times, Mr. Colville about eight times, Mr. Lamont (of Liverpool) about twelve times; whilst Mr. Johnston, of Hyde; Mr. Holt, of Bury; Mr. Brown, of Rhodes; and Messrs. Jackson, Dawson, and Brown, of Manchester, have several appointments each to lecture under the auspices of the committee. With the exception of the public media, the labourers work without fee or reward, and not unfrequently pay their own expenses. A vote of thanks was passed to the outgoing committee, and a special vote to Mr. Hartley, the hon. secretary. The entire committee were re-elected. If I cannot speak so highly of the public effort in Liverpool, it is gratifying to know so much is being done in the immediate vicinity. Mr. Joseph Shepherd said, during the morning conference, that it was time the Liverpool Spiritualists did a little more for themselves, and depended less upon the exertions of a few earnest and hardworking persons like Mr. J. Lamont.

A good number sat down to tea, which was served in the lower hall, for strangers from a distance. It was, in fact, a friendly reunion. Many of the local Spiritualists remained to tea to keep their visitors company. The appeal for funds met with a response of £9 18s. 2d. at the afternoon collection.

Mr. J. J. Morse occupied the platform at the evening meeting, and lectured on "Spiritualists: their Privileges and Duties." He delivered a most telling oration, to the effect that it is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when the principles of Spiritualism and the practice thereof may be more in harmony the one with the other; when the right hand of fellowship will be held out to the struggling ones to aid them upward and onward, and when the feeble efforts of those who would do right will not be crushed in the budding by the strong.

J. COATES.

Liverpool.

MATERIALIZATION AND OTHER SEANCES.

SIR,—I have much pleasure in recording a case of materialisation through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship, in which the identity of the spirit was very clearly proved. While holding a private *séance* with Mr. Eglinton on the 2nd, I had been told by one of his spirit-guides, "Daisy," that if I came to his *séance* on Sunday evening, my friends would try to give me a test that would convince me; and I therefore, by his kind invitation, attended the *séance*, which took place on Sunday, the 5th inst. I must add that I was a perfect stranger to Mr. Eglinton, and that he was wholly unacquainted with even the names of my relations who have passed from earth-life.

Very shortly after the circle was formed, and manifestations had begun, Mr. Eglinton, who was at that time in his normal condition, said—"Miss G., I see a gentleman standing behind your chair with dark whiskers and moustache, and a handsome face. He is an officer, for he is dressed in regimentals, and I see a number on his cap. It is 9, and either 2 or 3. I see a name." Here Mr. Eglinton spelt the Christian name of a relation of mine, backwards. "He is sending a message to you. He says, 'Tell F—that her wishes with regard to India will be fulfilled.' Now he is touching your head." At the same moment I felt a hand stroke my hair, and touch me several times on the head and forehead. In a tone so low as to be unheard by those around me, I asked my cousin, for I felt convinced it was he, if he or my sister would try to materialise, and was answered by some taps on the head.

The description was an accurate one of a cousin who died last year; he was for many years attached to the 29th regiment, and on looking at a photograph of one of his brother officers a few days afterwards, I saw that the number, 29, is on the cap. The message referred to a family matter, and his and one of my sisters' names were given in full.

After the first materialisation (in subdued light) my cousin, I was told, appeared—the second materialised spirit—and I saw his moustache and whiskers, but his head was so enveloped in white drapery that I did not feel so absolutely sure that it was himself as I should have liked, though I could see there was a resemblance to him. He nodded to me, and two or three other materialisations followed. As if my cousin had read my thoughts, I was much surprised to see him again, this time with the face fully exposed, showing his curly hair, face, and dark moustache and whiskers so completely that I at once recognised him. His height was precisely the same as in earth-life. He again nodded to me, and kissed his hand several times.

I must leave to others a description of the wonderful materialisations in this very interesting *séance*, but I wish to point out the following facts:—

1st. Mr. Eglinton's description of my cousin, name given, &c., were accurate. I was not thinking of him, and did not know that the number of the regiment was on the caps.

2nd. His message was a further proof of his identity, as it indicated an intimate acquaintance with my family and affairs. The matter referred to had never once crossed my mind during the *séance*.

3rd. His materialisation was so distinct as to be instantly recognised by me. I may add that on my return home my hand was moved to write as follows, "Are you satisfied now? W."

I was. And it may not be amiss to remark in the present era of theory-building, that if we reject evidence of this kind, or admit any doubt as to the power of our spirit-friends to materialise for a certain length of time after death, no evidence in Spiritualism is of any value whatever. My name and address, withheld only for private reasons, are given to the editor, and I shall have pleasure in satisfying any one personally of the truth of the foregoing account.

It may interest others to hear of the following incident in Mr. Fletcher's mediumship. Before I came to London I wrote to him and requested that an answer from my friends might be given to me. I received in a few days a letter purporting to be from my father, in which a certain phrase used by me mentally when troubled, and which was unknown to any human being but myself, and had certainly never crossed my mind when writing my brief note to Mr. Fletcher, was mentioned as having been heard by my father. It was such as could not be explained by any theory of coincidence or guess work. Mr. Fletcher told me in a note from himself that while writing he heard a name being repeated by some one, but could not catch the message. It was the name of my sister's stepson, of whom she was very fond in earth-life, and was a most uncommon one. Mr. Fletcher never saw me till I came up to town, and there were 300 miles between us. Have letters "spheres" with all one's life and private thoughts and the correct names of one's friends recorded in them? Or does one's own sphere, with a similar amount of information in it, extend 300 miles?

S. E. G.

London, May 9th.

[In this instance we break through our general rule of not printing anonymous letters about manifestations with professional mediums. Writers are requested to put their names and addresses for publication to such communications.—Ed.]

LUNACY LAW REFORM.

SIR,—I trust the recent attack on Mrs. Weldon will at length convince Spiritualists that they are all in special danger from the lunacy laws, and arouse them at last to exertion for the amelioration of those laws.

I am often asked, "If the Commissioners in Lunacy have decided that Spiritualism is *per se* insanity, how is it that so many Spiritualists are unmolested?" To this I can only answer that the Commissioners in Lunacy do not take the initiative in these matters, and that therefore there neither is, nor will be, any active persecution on their part; but they will never interfere on behalf of a Spiritualist, and the incarceration of a Spiritualist can always be effected and indefinitely prolonged, as far as the authorities are concerned, on the ground of insane religious belief. For I reassert that in the month of June, 1871, the Lunacy Commissioners formally *adjudged* that "all Spiritualists are mad"—that those were the words used without any qualification whatever, and that to the best of my belief they have acted on the same ever since.

It is therefore clearly the public duty, and also the interest of all, to combine in order to get the laws altered. As to the remedy needed, I must, sir, respectfully differ from you. I do not think that any possible manipulation of incarceration by medical certificates could render them safe. Public servants, highly salaried by Government as certifiers of lunacy, would of course be less open to corrupt motives

than are such men as are now sometimes called in; but what is to preserve them from the special vice of all professional experts, that of seeing their own *specialité* everywhere—of keeping, as it were, a mental Procrustean couch which he who cannot fit is mad?

The only possible security, in my opinion, lies in making action, not opinion, the test of sanity, and in calling in trained legal judicial skill to decide whether the action has been committed or not, and if so, whether the actor was, or was not, responsible. This would effectually do away with the rubbish of requiring the certifiers "personally to observe facts indicating insanity," and all the treachery, lying, and deception which such assumed necessity entails. An alleged lunatic would then no longer be subject to such tricks; he would be told that he was accused of lunacy on account of such and such noxious acts, and if he had really committed, and could not rationally account for them, no amount of cunning or reserve could save him from conviction as a lunatic.

The first step towards this healthy state of things is for the public to give up their hankering after secrecy, which is incompatible with public safety. Let them be assured that Lord Shaftesbury's words are perfectly true now, as when he uttered them before the Select Committee in 1859, "If there is any insane relative of a family it is invariably known," and all that can possibly be done is to conceal the place of his detention. Is it worth perpetuating the present iniquities for so little?

In conclusion, I earnestly urge all who can to strengthen our hands by joining this society, which as yet is small as compared to what it should be.

LOUISA LOWE,

Hon. Sec. to the Lunacy Law Reform Association.

64, Berners-street, Oxford-street, London.

PSYCHOLOGY AND PHYSIOLOGY.

MR. JOHN W. DRAPER, M.D., Professor of Chemistry and Physiology in the University of New York, in his *Human Physiology, Statical and Dynamical*, after speaking of the mechanism of the human body, says:—

In this regard the human body may be spoken of as a mere instrument or engine, which acts in accordance with the principles of mechanical and chemical philosophy, the bones being levers, the blood-vessels hydraulic tubes, the soft part generally the seats of oxidation. But if we limit our view to such a description, it presents to us man in a most incomplete and unworthy aspect. There animates this machine a self-conscious and immortal principle—the soul.

Though in the most enlarged acceptation it would fall under the province of physiology to treat of this immortal principle, and to consider its powers and responsibilities, these constitute a subject at once so boundless and so important that the physiologist is constrained to surrender to the psychologist and theologian, and the more so since the proper and profitable treatment of it becomes inseparably involved with things that lie outside of his domain.

Yet under these circumstances, considering the ever-increasing control which scientific truth exerts over the masses of men, considering too how much the welfare of the human family depends on the precision and soundness of its religious views, it is the duty of the physiologist, if for the reasons that have been specified he yields this great subject to others, to leave no ambiguity in the expression of the conclusion to which his own science brings him. Especially is it for him, whenever the opportunity offers, to assert and to uphold the doctrine of the oneness, the immortality, the accountability of the soul, and to enforce those paramount truths with whatever evidence the structure of the body can furnish. For this reason, he cannot recall but with regret the existing use of many terms, such as mind, intellect, vital principle, spirit, which, though they were at first doubtless employed as expressions of the functions or qualities of the soul, have in the course of time gathered other meanings, and confused the popular ideas. They have brought about a condition of things in science not unlike that which prevailed in theology during the reign of polytheism. Constrained, perhaps, himself by the necessities of language to use such phraseology, it is for him at the outset to leave no doubt of the views he entertains, and, as far as he can, prevent such expressions from frittering away the great truth that, as there is but one God in the universe, so there is but one spirit in man.

On one of these terms, the vital principle, I may make a few remarks, since, from being a mere expression of convenience, it has by degrees risen among physicians and physiologists to the rank of designating an existing agent, by some regarded as of the same kind as light, heat, electricity, or gravitation; nay, even superior to them, since it is its peculiar attribute to hold them all in check. Animated by this very extraordinary power, organic substances are supposed to withstand every external influence, and to submit to physical agents only after this principle has left them. Such a preposterous doctrine will not bear the touch of exact science for a moment. It is only a relic of the old metaphysical system of philosophising, which accepted a name in lieu of an explanation, which preferred the dogma of the horror of a vacuum to the more simple but material view of the pressure of the air. By the aid of this imaginary principle complete physiological systems have been woven, in which every act and every condition of the animal economy is spontaneously explained, and nothing remains for solution. But by the student of nature, whose mind has been trained in positive science, the imposture is detected. He sees at a glance that this is not the style of the Great Artist. The problems of organisation are not to be solved by empirical schemes; they require the patient application of all the aids that can be furnished by all other branches of human knowledge, and even then the solution comes tardily. Yet there is no cause for us to adopt those quick but visionary speculations, or to despair of giving the true explanation of all physiological facts. Since it is given

us to know our own existence and be conscious of our own individuality, we may rest assured that we have what is in reality a far less wonderful power, the capacity of comprehending all the conditions of our life. God has framed our understanding to grasp all these things. For my own part, I have no sympathy with those who say of this or that physiological problem, it is above our reason. My faith in the power of the intellect of man is profound. Far from supposing that there are many things in the structure and functions of the body which we can never comprehend, I believe there is nothing in them that we shall not at last explain. Then, and not till then, will man be a perfect monument of the wisdom and power of his Maker, a created being knowing his own existence, and capable of explaining it. In the application of exact science to physiology I look for the rise of that great and noble practice of medicine which in a future age will rival in precision the mechanical engineering of my time. In it, too, are my hopes of the final extinction of empiricism. Even now this method is attended with results which must commend it to every thoughtful mind, since it is connecting itself with those great truths which concern the human family most closely, and is bringing into the region of physical demonstration the existence and immortality of the soul of man, and furnishing conspicuous illustrations of the attributes of God.

FAITH VERSUS SCIENCE.

When modern thoughts and subtle systems new
And old, built up of vain Philosophy,
Hold thee within a speculative maze
(The haunt of spectres of insanity
Who peep above the hedge and through the chinks);
Or Science, with its measuring-rod severe,
Pursues thee from the holy heights of Faith,
And bids thee sit and reason on the ground—
Then fly within the sanctum of thy soul,
And meet thy Lord. Shut out the world,
Books and their teachers, teachers and their books;
Abjure them all, and hold communion pure
With Whom shall teach thee all 'tis good to know.
Nor fear to dwell in adoration there,
A convent life befits us all at times.
Too little, not too much, of grace we have,
Now that this world's gone mad with pride and lust.
But only for a time—when thou hast drunk
Thy fill, thy Lord will send thee forth again
Into his vineyard, there His grace to shed
Upon thy fellow-workers, not so blest as thou,
In what thou knowest, seeing what thou hast seen.
Let thou thy light so shine, that they shall ask
And seek, and seeking find the way to Him.
And so His love shall spread from one to all,
And this high, holy Truth be vindicate,
That Prayer and Adoration are as real
And practical as Science, who puffs up
Her usefulness as sole and highest good.
So shalt thou humble to the dust her pride,
And bid her own her place at her Lord's feet.

ADAMANTA.

MR. J. J. MORSE IN MANCHESTER.—On Sunday next, May 9th, Mr. Morse will deliver two trance addresses in the Temperance Hall, Grosvenor-street, Manchester, as above. Afternoon service at 2.30; evening at 6.30.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—The Council of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism held their usual monthly session at the Association's Rooms, 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E., on Thursday evening last week, 9th instant, under the presidency of Mrs. Corner. There were present Messrs. John Rouse, Jonathan Tozeland, and Thomas Blyton. The minutes of the last meeting of the Council were read and confirmed. Letters of general interest were read from Mrs. Weldon and Miss Young. Presentations were laid upon the table and accepted with a vote of thanks to the respective donors, viz., Miss Ella Dietz, Mr. Thomas Weeks, Mr. G. R. Tapp, and Mr. T. Blyton. Dr. J. M. Peebles and Mr. W. Eglinton were proposed and elected to honorary membership; the Rev. W. W. Newbould, Messrs. Edwin J. Davey, J. Bruce Gillon, and Thomas J. Diss were elected ordinary members. The hon. treasurer submitted the cash accounts, which were passed. A contribution towards obtaining a supply of the printed "Proceedings" of the British National Association of Spiritualists, for distribution, was ordered; and a balance on *Isis Unveiled* directed to stand over. The hon. secretary reported on proceedings of the *conversazione* of 29th ultimo, and submitted statement of receipts and expenses connected therewith. Several very welcome donations were also reported, and a special vote of thanks to the several contributors to the evening's entertainment was unanimously passed. A letter was read from Mrs. Everitt offering her services for a *séance* on Wednesday evening, the 15th instant, which was accepted with thanks.

THE Annual General Meeting of the members of the British National Association of Spiritualists will be held next Tuesday week, at 38, Great Russell-street, London.

MISREPRESENTATIONS OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Mr. Alexander Calder, in his presidential remarks at the last *soirée* of the National Association of Spiritualists, said:—"I am happy in attending here this evening to listen to our able and respected friend on 'Some of the Difficulties of Inquirers.' I can have no manner of doubt that we shall be abundantly edified, as well as pleased, with his treatment of this subject. It is, indeed, a subject which bristles with difficulties. There is, however, one very unnecessary impediment, which the inquirer sometimes unfortunately meets at the threshold, creating most gratuitous repulsion and disgust. I hope I shall be excused if I briefly refer to it on the present occasion. The position which I have the honour of occupying has its duties; and one of them is to signalise anything of an outrageous character—label, and place it among our curiosities. If I now venture upon the performance of an unwelcome task, it will, I trust, be undertaken without passion. When the conduct of the earliest Christians was canvassed by the Pagan world, it was a common observation 'See how these Christians love one another.' Throughout all time this beautiful quality maintains its force. The power of love, gentleness, and goodness has made, and will continue to make, myriads of converts. Well, a distinguished American Spiritualist, now travelling homewards, will have been able to contrast this notable sign of the earliest age of Christendom, with his most recent personal experience, and will be able to remark, 'See how these moderns hate each other.' Two striking opportunities for the dissemination of Spiritualistic truth have been marked with an outburst of ill-will and hatred which demand attention. No sooner had Spiritualism obtained a hearing, in one of the largest of the London weeklies, than a rough voice from Rome, adverse to us, was thrust into its pages. Was it friendly to Spiritualism? Was it not a wholly unprovoked assault? Intemperate and egotistical, its chief peculiarity was to sow dissension, by the circulation of certain statements regarding our Association. That most harmless word association seems particularly offensive to some people, and, like a red rag to the ox, is a perpetual terror. It has an infuriating effect on their weak nerves, making their feeble knees shake and shiver; singular enough all from some grim phantom of their imagination. How else can we account for that imitation of the Roman voice in this charming bit, benevolently added to our knowledge, announcing 'that persons with the most infamous characters and reprehensible principles have been elevated by a few into false positions to the disgrace and misrepresentation of all.' When such language is employed by one Spiritualist concerning others, whose fault is a partiality to organisation, surely they, who are capable of such grave misrepresentation, deserve our deep compassion. We grieve for the injury to the common cause, and we hang down our heads in sorrowful silence. But it is time even these most immaculate Spiritualists perceived that the field is wide enough for them and for us; and that no class of workers in it should be reviled or contemned. It is time these aggressors abandoned their taste for intellectual dissipation, and entered upon something more wholesome. It is time they ceased all unscientific levity and wrangling, and took to that more profitable, though most homely work, a candid and searching examination into the tenor of their own steps."

MRS. LORD'S MEDIUMSHIP.—Mr. Luther Colby, of Boston, Mass., has favoured us with a report of a *séance* with Mrs. Lord of that city. After describing some ordinary phenomena, he says:—"The medium saw two spirit-children near a lady and gentleman in the circle, and gave their names correctly, the lady saying the little ones were their children. Then the medium said quickly, 'Oh, I see another little one, smaller than the others. Why, she must have been killed, or at least wounded, by being run over by a horse!' 'Yes,' said the mother, 'we have lost our three children.' 'Why,' again remarked the medium, 'this child has just put her hand to her head to show me where she was hit.' 'Yes,' responded the lady, 'she was hurt in the head.' 'That is a good test, isn't it,' said Mrs. Lord, 'you being entire strangers to me?' 'Oh, yes,' was the response. Directly we heard a sonorous voice in the air exclaiming, 'And thus the noble work goes on!' A German gentleman present (a sceptic) received some remarkable tests. A spirit said to him, 'You have something of mine.' 'What is it?' asked the stranger. But before any reply could be made, Mrs. Lord remarked, 'Oh, I see her. She has curious-looking hair; I cannot describe it; and what lustrous eyes!' 'Yes,' hastily responded the sceptic. 'Oh!' exclaimed Mrs. L., 'she says she gave you a gold locket with the imprint upon it of a foreign coin.' 'Yes,' responded the listener. 'And she also gave you a seal with a head cut on it,' added the medium. 'Yes,' responded the gentleman, 'I have them upon my watchguard at this very moment.' As an instance of the striking character of the phenomena to be witnessed at times in her public sittings, on Sunday evening, April 14th, the floating and migratory lights which so often appear in her presence took on larger dimensions than usual, expanding to such a degree as to enable the sitters to see (and in several instances recognise as those of friends) the faces of spirit-visitants, surrounded by the phosphorescent glow of the shining spherical envelope which had been parted to bring them to the plane of apprehension by the human eye. At the same *séance* a young French lady present was frequently addressed in her native tongue, and when she replied in English the spirit-voice refused to answer in any other than the French language. A Norwegian present was also accosted in that tongue by one of the independent voices; indeed, at one time in *séance* three languages were being spoken at one and the same instant, viz.: Mrs. Lord was in English describing spirits seen by her near various persons before her, while behind and at one side of her the independent voices were conversing with friends in French and Norwegian. The sceptic must bear in mind that this statement is not one of irresponsible hearsay, but based upon the evidence of witnesses residing in Boston, and who represent themselves as pleased beyond measure with the tests thus received. Mrs. Lord has no knowledge whatever of either the French or the Norwegian dialects."

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