

# The Spiritualist.

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## MR. HOME'S VISIT TO ST. PETERSBURGH.

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I HAVE with much pleasure received your letter of the 27th of February, and see that you fully approve the suggestion I made of the desirability of reprinting in *The Spiritualist*, the articles written by Faraday, and the pamphlet by Mr. Wallace, if not in full, at least in part. I await this reprinting with much interest.

You desire that I should send you an article on Spiritualism in Russia; I respond to the request by sending you a few particulars respecting Mr. Home's recent visit to St. Petersburg. On receiving No. 2 of *The Spiritual News*, I was much surprised to learn that Mr. Home was already here, and as I heard that he very often resided as a visitor at the house of the Baron de Mayendorf, I was impressed to go thither in search of him. As letters of introduction I presented to him a letter from one of his Moscow friends, which I had intended to deliver to him in London during a visit I expected to make last Autumn; I also presented to him my article on "Spiritualism in Russia" printed in No. 30 of *Human Nature*. Since the day of that visit I have seen Mr. Home very often, and now write to you with the full knowledge of the important results in aid of the progress of our noble cause, which his sojourn in our capital will produce.

During the first two months after his arrival he was in a good state of health, and as regards his mediumship he was in "great power" as the saying is; he therefore took advantage of these favourable conditions to give a great number of *séances*, which proved highly satisfactory to the *élite* of society here; even the most incredulous were convinced or forced to keep silence, whilst those already inclined to accept the truths of Spiritualism had the good fortune to see their faith placed upon a firm foundation.

Mr. Home gave four *séances* to the Emperor at the Winter Palace, where everything passed off very satisfactorily, and the Emperor himself makes not the slightest scruple in testifying to others that he several times saw a spirit hand; as a sign of recognition he presented Mr. Home with a magnificent sapphire ring, the sapphire being set in diamonds.

I will give you a minute description of some manifestations I have seen at good *séances*, at which, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Home, I was present. Their general character is well known to your readers, so I will now speak of two kinds of experiments, which, from their novelty and their objective value, have for you a particular interest.

It is necessary to tell you that this winter I proposed to several friends to form a little circle for the study of Spiritual manifestations, of the reality of which they wished to make sure from their own knowledge. Since the month of November last we have met regularly every week, and we had already obtained a series of very remarkable phenomena, when we had the good fortune to see the arrival of Mr. Home. I lost no time in telling him, very naturally, how happy we should be to see him in our midst; since then he had the kindness to come to nearly all our weekly meetings, and the good which resulted was great, as you will see. By a curious coincidence, at the same time that your eminent chemist, Mr. Crookes, began to inquire into the subject of Spiritualism, our eminent chemist, Mr. Boutlerow,\* began to inquire into it on our side. During the winter he attended our *séances* regularly; also those we had with Mr. Home, and the result is that he is fully convinced of the reality of the phenomena which form the base of the study of Spiritualism. Having witnessed at one of the meetings the phenomenon of the table being made heavy or light at the request of the observers, he constructed for the next *séance* a dynamometer, and attached it to the table. The normal tension, the table being raised on one side, was 100 pounds; when the manifestations began, the weight diminished to nearly thirty pounds, and increased to about 150 pounds, showing a variation of 120 pounds. If it be objected that

the hands upon the table might, even involuntarily, *augment* its weight, this explanation will not account for the *diminution* of the weight, for it is plain that in the latter case the imposition of the hands must be a hindrance, rather than an assistance. On another occasion, in order to reverse the physical conditions under which the last experiment was made, when the table was made heavy, we put the hands underneath, and the result was equally satisfactory.

The other experiment of which I wish to inform you is, that the augmentation and diminution of temperature so common at circles has been made visible in degrees by means of a thermometer. This phenomenon was also verified by Professor Boutlerow, at one of Mr. Home's *séances*; the temperature of the thermometer, while resting on the table, was 19 degrees Reaumur (77 degrees Fahrenheit); when it was placed under the table on the floor, after the lapse of several minutes, the table by tilting signalled for the alphabet, and it then spelt out "*Augmenté*;" at the same instant the thermometer was, by an invisible power, carried under the table to Mr. Home, and showed decidedly an augmentation of temperature of three degrees. The thermometer was then placed once more upon the floor, with the request that its temperature should be lowered; it then fell to nearly 18 degrees Reaumur. The experiment was repeated, the thermometer in this instance not being touched by anybody but Professor Boutlerow, and the total variation of temperature observed was 4 degrees Reaumur. It is scarcely necessary, I think, to say that during the time the changes of temperature were going on, all the persons present had their hands upon the table. It would be well if you would repeat experiments of this kind, so that the facts may be further demonstrated under the same test conditions.\*

A circumstance of another character, but of great importance as regards the progress of our cause, was the lecture which Mr. Home delivered upon Spiritualism, in the mansion of a distinguished *Spiritiste*, before an auditory of more than 200 persons of the best society in our capital. To understand the full significance of this fact, it is necessary to inform you that, thanks to Russian censorship, everything connected with Spiritualism is here severely opposed—that is to say, that all foreign literature treating on the subject, with the exception of several of Kardec's books, is prohibited, and that nobody may print anything here in defence or in free exposition of this question. It is but a year ago that M. Boltinn, a zealous *Spiritiste*, intended to deliver several lectures on Spiritualism. He presented his petition and his programme to the right authority, and received, in exchange, a formal interdiction. Thus, you see, no Russian here is able to uplift his voice to make known to the public the facts and the doctrines of Spiritualism. Therefore the lecture which Mr. Home delivered here on the 24th of February, will remain for a long time unique in the history of the progress of this movement in Russia, and it is certain that Mr. Home's lecture would never have come off, had he not had the special protection of the highest authorities in St. Petersburg, and, after all that, it was only a private lecture—no patrons, no announcement, and no programmes having been distributed except among friends; officially, it was nothing but a *réunion*. Public lecturing remains, as you see, an impossibility. Were it otherwise, an auditory of 1000 persons could be drawn together.

The lecture was an exposition of the historical and phenomenal aspects of Spiritualism, and some mention was made of the attitude of the scientific world towards the subject. The lecture, remarkable in itself, was rendered all the more remarkable by the following circumstance which took place during its delivery:—While Mr. Home was speaking of the phenomenon of the variation of weight of the table, a very common manifestation, he remarked that recently, even here, at one of his *séances*, it had been observed in the presence of a St. Petersburg *savant*, and had been verified by him by means of a dynamometer, which indicated a variation of weight in the table amounting nearly to 120 pounds. Mr. Home added that the said man of science was then among the listeners, and that probably, after the lecture, he would not refuse to give his testimony to those who desired to hear the same. At these words Professor

Boutlerow rose from his seat, and said, "Why afterwards? Here even, and at this instant, I attest it!" You may imagine the profound sensation which this made among the listeners, even among the most incredulous. It was the word of honour of a man whose scientific reputation is well known even throughout Europe, of a man of the noblest personal character. This is the first time that a man of science in Russia has had the courage to bear public testimony to the reality of a phenomenon belonging to the category of spiritual manifestations.

At the close of the lecture the listeners gathered around the Professor; each wished to hear from his own mouth further confirmation of the strange fact, and of many others stranger still; each recounted in his turn all that he had himself seen, heard, and felt. Mr. Home, withdrawing himself from the ovations which greeted him on all sides, went, in the excitement of the moment, to embrace the man who had not hesitated to tell the truth in public, to compromise his reputation, and to attach his name to a cause which the populace, in its ignorance, is delighted to cover with ridicule and misrepresentation. Thus ends the story of the lecture by Mr. Home, an event which will be ever memorable in the history of Spiritualism in Russia.

Another time I will write to you about the undignified conduct of the press towards Mr. Home about the *séance* which he gave at the University, and what followed it. But I love to speak with full knowledge of the facts. All the necessary documents will soon be in my hands, and then justice shall be done to him who is in the right.

ALEXANDRE AKSAKOF.

April 15th, 1871.

Perspective de Nevsky, 6, St. Petersburg.

## OTHER WORLD ORDER.

BY WILLIAM WHITE, AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE OF SWEDENBORG."

It is difficult to be a Scot and escape anxiety about eternity, and the momentous question, What shall I do to be saved? Heaven and Hell are among the earliest conceptions of Scottish childhood—especially Hell.

Grace was unwell, and was taken to bed with her mother. Suddenly in the night she woke with a shriek and a clutch at her mother's arm.

"What is the matter, Grace?"

"O, mither, I saw God and a big fire. We were standing in a row, as at school, and God was throwing one by one into the fire. He had got hold of Jeannie Morrison by the foot and was heaving her in: it is my turn next. O, mither! mither! dinna let him get me! dinna! O, dinna!"

Said the mother—woman gentle as ever breathed—

"Be a good girl, Grace, and God will never throw you into that fire. If you are bad, he will. Now lie still and go to sleep."

My parents were members of the Society of Friends, and though I attended meetings with unfailing regularity on Sundays, I received little dogmatic instruction there. Silence (well nigh two hours of silence in morning and again in the afternoon) was the habit of the assembly, and I, a child, was subjected to the dismal regimen as merciless matter-of-course.

At school I was exempted from the Presbyterian Catechism on the score of Quakerism, but my ears were open to its repetition, and the spirit of Scottish theology was breathed into me. How could it have been otherwise? Sin and righteousness, death and judgment, God and Satan, angels and devils, were continually in my thoughts. A volume of Quarles's *Emblems*, thick with grotesque illustrations, afforded hints and bases for many an idea of the other world, its inhabitants and scenery. Heaven was a realm of loveliness and mystery into which I never could believe I should find entrance. Of death I had an unspeakable terror, feeling sure that whenever it occurred I should open my eyes in Hell. I felt like Grace that safety from God lay in Humanity. Nevertheless there was fascination even in my terror. Visits to church yards, and descriptions of death-beds and executions had unquenchable attractions.

One puzzle exercised me greatly. I heard the good spoken of as in Heaven and the bad as in Hell, and at the same time of the resurrection of their corpses for judgment at the end of the world. I could not reconcile the statements, and could find nobody any abler than myself.

A nurse told me a story of a lady who was thought

\* Professor of Chemistry at the University, and member of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg; author of a work on chemistry which has been translated into German, under the title of *Lehrbuch der Organischen Chemie*, Leipzig, 1868.

\* This experiment has been tried in London, Mr. Home being the medium, and the result was a variation of four degrees Fahrenheit—rather less than four degrees Reaumur.—Ed.

to be dead, and was buried. The sexton knew that she had a diamond ring on her finger, and at mid-night opened her grave, raised the coffin-lid, and was cutting off the ring-finger, when she groaned. The sexton fled, the lady got out of her coffin, walked home, and knocked at the door, which was opened by her amazed and happy husband.

This anecdote introduced to my mind the horrible possibility of being buried alive, and in dreams by night and day, I fancied myself waking underground, touching the side of my coffin, kicking the lid, and crying vainly for release whilst slowly suffocating. In the silence of a Quaker meeting I used to rehearse the horror, going through imaginary funerals, and pinching my fingers to assure myself that fantasy was not reality. Such was my silent worship!

Exercised myself on such themes I was not unwilling to exercise others. Sitting in the hay-loft with a girl, my junior, I took occasion to inform her that she would die some day, that she would then be put in a box and the lid nailed down, and buried in a deep hole. To my delight, she began to cry, and I re-asserted the assurance of her certain fate, whereon she roared. Over-hearing the outcry, her mother ascended the stair, exclaiming, "What's the matter, Maggie? what's the matter?"

"O, mither, Willie White says I'll dee, and they'll put me in a box and bury me in a hole!"

Forthwith the judicious parent boxed my ears, and comforted Maggie with—

"Ye'll never dee, dearie, ye'll never dee, and they'll no put ye in a box and bury ye, that they winna."

I endured my chastisement with the sense of a martyr, for had I not been preaching the very truth to Maggie?

As I advanced in boyhood I was sent to a Quaker boarding-school in Cumberland, where I was brought under pious influences. I tried to qualify for Heaven by doing my duties faithfully, but I never felt that I had the requisite righteousness.

The master by whose spirit I was moved to these righteous endeavours left the school, and was succeeded by what is known as an Evangelical. From his lips I first heard, or rather first apprehended, the doctrine of salvation by faith in the vicarious atonement. With astonishment I heard him ascribe deliverance from sin and hell to belief that Christ by crucifixion had acquitted us of our obligations to God, and that any merit in us was valueless for redemption, and only to be regarded as an evidence of gratitude.

I had tried to be good to get to Heaven: I now discovered that my pains were superfluous. A sense of emptiness and listlessness came over me. What was the use of living? I listened to the easy way of salvation, as prescribed, without resistance, for it was delivered with an authority which it never entered my young head to question; but I had no power nor inclination to realise its benefits personally.

One of the effects of the doctrine was to set me wondering whether all theology might not be fabulous? whether the Bible might not be on a par with Homer? whether Christ was what Christians thought Him to be? and whether God, if indeed there was a God, answered to our notions of Him? This scepticism I did not cherish. On the contrary it was hateful to me, and by every means I tried to make an end of it. Into peaceful and pious moods doubts would intrude, and turn them to misery. I read Paley and other apologists of the faith, but they raised more questions than they settled. Sometimes, in despair, I was tempted to curse the Holy Ghost; for I reasoned, I shall then never be forgiven, and that will make an end of the business—if any such business there be to make an end of.

Youth is full of energy and hope. I did not overcome my doubts, but neither did my doubts overcome me. My passion for moral perfection was discouraged; my theological opinions were chaotic; and under all was a horrible sense of uncertainty: but I delighted in religious emotions, in religious society, and in religious literature.

Shortly after leaving school and returning to Scotland, I read George Combe's *Constitution of Man*, and it was to me as the opening of a new world. Surely never book and reader, teacher and scholar, so perfectly matched. I was distressed for a day or two with what I considered the identification of brain and mind. It seemed to me that if Combe was right, the death of the one must be the death of the other. Suddenly I found relief in the conception of the existence of an imponderable spiritual body within the material body, of which the material body with all its organs was the expression and counterpart. Subsequently I had my conception verified and extended in the most charming manner by Swedenborg.

But though George Combe introduced me to a larger and more liberal life, he did not mitigate my apprehensions about futurity, as the following experience will show.

Bella had a kind heart, but she was neither maid nor wife. She had entered our household as wet-nurse, and remained as general servant. Fond of children, our hearts grew to her insensibly and firmly. She had

many faults, and among them a liking for whisky, occasionally returning from Kirk on Sunday nights affected with over indulgence. Discharged repeatedly, and retained on promise of amendment, she was at last finally dismissed. Poor Bella failed to obtain another situation, and left our house for miserable lodgings. Pitying her sad case, and meditating how to help her, the news arrived that Bella was dead.

Bella dead! Bella gone to Hell! So the tidings took shape in my mind.

I was consumed with inward agony—with grief poignant and hopeless. I knew Bella, knew the conditions of salvation, and knew that eternal damnation was her inevitable doom. Round and round I turned the case—but hope was nowhere.

By-and-by time exercised its invincible power of healing, and the certainty of Bella's misery, unforgettably, ceased to afflict. Merciful is the action of time, but occasionally we are tempted to exclaim, "Cruel time to heal such wounds—to deaden such divine sorrows!"

I got acquainted with Unitarians—who disbelieved in the eternity of Hell, and maintained that the whole human race would ultimately be saved. It was a very comfortable opinion, and one I should have been glad to share, but I never could see that it had any credible basis. The Scriptures lent it little support, and still less experience, for evil men do not grow better, but worse, with increase of years. As Bishop Thirlwall acutely observes—

"Some, who choose to be good, come out with the happy experience that life has worked well with them, that they have been growing better and better, riper in judgment, purer in heart, as long as they lived. But with how many is the case quite the reverse! How many are growing worse and worse, more and more hardened, blinded, and depraved, the longer they live! With these (no doubt through their own fault) God's schooling has hitherto failed. But then what prospect is there for such as these in a future progress toward universal restoration? *God cannot make them good.* All He can do is to remove them into another school, which may fit them better. But must He not know which fits everyone best? And is their education to begin entirely *de novo*, and not to bring into the second school the habits and character which they have formed in the first? And if so, with what hope of a better result?"

I could see no reason why the formation of character, presumed to be the purpose of life on earth, should begin anew hereafter. The Universalist's creed appeared to me then, as it appears to me now, an amiable wish transformed to a dogma.

Sometimes accommodating spirits would suggest that only after ages of suffering would redemption be achieved.

Ages of suffering! I often hear the expression and marvel at the lack of sympathetic imagination it reveals. Ages of suffering! Who that has known even a week of toothache can speak of an age of suffering? No: if my creed is to be dictated by fancy, commend me to Thomas Paine's—

"My own opinion is, that those whose lives have been spent in doing good and endeavouring to make their fellow mortals happy—for this is the only way in which we can serve God—*will be happy hereafter*; and that the very wicked will meet with some punishment. But those who are neither good nor bad, or are too insignificant for notice, will be dropt entirely. This is my opinion. It is consistent with my idea of God's justice, and with the reason that God has given me, and I gratefully know He has given me a large share of that divine gift."

Afflicted by Calvinism, yet refusing relief by mere good nature, I found an anodyne in Swedenborgianism.

In June, 1848, I chanced to pick up a copy of *The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine* on a second-hand bookstall, and putting it in my desk, read it at odd moments. Its statements, doctrinal and supernatural, interested me so much that I procured *Heaven and Hell*, and began to frequent the New Jerusalem Temple, as the Swedenborgian meeting-house was called. By my friend Isaac Pitman of Bath, I was introduced to the preacher, O. Prescott Hiller, an American, and in his ministry and in acquaintance with the congregation, I felt as one translated to a new and happier world. From my hereditary Quakerism, I broke openly in 1851, and in youthful enthusiasm committed sundry extravagances, which are not pleasant to think of. Yet, on the whole, these years were nobly spent; for in them I received an education peculiar and precious, for which I shall remain perpetually grateful.

In Swedenborgianism I did not get rid of the notion of eternal damnation, but was taught to refer the existence of Hell entirely to human perversity. God desired to take all to Heaven, but all would not go, as I find I wrote at the time—

"True doctrine declares that the Lord never turns away his face from man, never rejects him, never casts anyone into Hell, and is never angry. The Lord is continually withdrawing man from evil and leading him to good, but man's freedom the Lord never constrains. If men *will love evil*, and *will do perversely*, the Lord does not prevent. That man should go to Hell is at variance with the Divine design, but to infringe men's freedom would be to destroy his life and withdraw from him all that is human, reducing him to the level of a machine or a brute. Those who are in Hell, cast themselves thither, and keep themselves there."

I do not pretend to say that by such sooth-saying my mind was satisfied. I *tried* to make it satisfy me.

I remember Mr. Hiller comparing God to the sun which shone always, and as clouds and fogs obscured the solar radiance, so did our evil passions and mental illusions veil the Lord. I enjoyed the simile intensely, until it was destroyed by the reflection, that the sun himself raises the clouds and fogs whereby his radiance is obscured.

By what process I arrived at my present opinions concerning life after death, or, as I have styled it, Other World Order, it would be as difficult for me to recite as it would be tedious to read. The conclusions attained were the fruit of prolonged, arduous, and irregular meditations. What was thus painfully won I shall try plainly and pleasantly to set forth.

#### MRS. GUPPY'S SEANCES.

MR. BENJAMIN COLEMAN, the president of the winter *soirées* in connection with Spiritualism, held at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley-street, Cavendish-square, recently attended some of Mrs. Guppy's *seances*, and as he is well known to be a reliable and accurate observer, we asked him to favour us with the three following letters for publication. These letters were written in a colloquial tone, to private friends, without any intention at the time of printing them. We were present at the *seance* described in the first letter. The room was too full for the manifestations to occur under test conditions, but on other occasions we have seen similar manifestations thoroughly tested. One of the best *seances* that ever took place under Mrs. Guppy's mediumship is published in No. 1 of *The Spiritual News* (London, E. W. Allen), and the astounding manifestations then witnessed were recorded and attested by the signatures of the following witnesses:—N. F. Daw, Portman Chambers, Portman-square, W.; Georgiana Houghton, 20, Dclamere-crescent, W.; Helen Louisa Chevalier, 21, St. Ann's Villa's, Notting-hill, W.; Heloise C. C. Scott, 76, Tavistock-road, Westbourne-park, W.; Amelia C. Williamson, 76, Tavistock-road, W.; Emma Shorter, 23, Russell-road, Holloway, N.; Thomas Shorter, 23, Russell-road, Holloway, N.; Sarah Pearson, 7, Guildford-place, Russell-square, W.C.; Mary Pearson, 15, Harper-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.; Grace Emily Combes, 15, Harper-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.; William H. Combes, 15, Harper-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.; Samuel Guppy, 1, Morland-villas, Highbury-hill-park, N.; Alice Ellis, 29, Devonshire-street, Queen's-square, W.C.; Edwin Ellis, 29, Devonshire-street, Queen's-square, W.C.; Lizzie Neyland, 1, Morland-villas, Highbury-hill-park, N.; Elizabeth Guppy, 1, Morland-villas, Highbury-hill-park, N.; William H. Harrison, Wilmin-villa, Chancer-road, S.E.

Upper Norwood, Thursday morning, April 20, 1871.

#### TO THE FAMILY AT V—

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—Before I commence my daily occupations I feel that I *must* fulfil my promise by giving you an account of last evening's *seance*. The arrangements were not what I expected. *Twenty or thirty* persons were crowded into a room not suited for more than half the number. Sixteen or eighteen of these sat round a large dinner table, and the rest outside the circle in the best way they could. Mrs. Guppy asked me to sit next to her, and on the other side of her Mrs. Berry and the Rev. Mr. D. sat. They are both mediums. Before the company had assembled I said to Mrs. Guppy, "It has been a long promise that I am to have one of those peculiar drawings which you sometimes get," and at her request I took two sheets of letter paper—one blue, and the other white—upon which I put my initials, written with a blue lead pencil, thus: *B. C.*, and I kept them in my possession until the lights were extinguished, when I put them down before me. In an instant the sheets were taken, and, judging by the rustling sound of the paper, they were apparently floating during the *two or three minutes* of total darkness, and then returned to me. Upon the blue sheet there was a beautifully drawn full-length figure of an angel ascending, surrounded by rays of glory! On the other an equally well-drawn bust portrait, purporting to be a likeness of my wife. It is, however, *not* a likeness, though the general contour of the figure is very much like, and a few touches by an artist to refine the expression of the features would really make it a very passable resemblance. Both are *most artistically* drawn, and the curious fact remains to be stated, that we cannot decide by what means the drawings are done; they are not done in oil or water colours; one of them, the portrait, seems like delicate chalk of two or three colours, the other as if no drawing materials were used at all, but as if the colour of the blue paper had been discharged by some chemical action. But, by whatever means these drawings are done, the materials are furnished by the spirits, as there were no drawing materials of any kind in the room. It is altogether a most puzzling and extraordinary exhibition of spirit-power, and very difficult to realise by any one who was not present. I have, however, given you a faithful account of thus much of the *seance*, and as I have the drawings, and intend to frame them, I shall be able to show them to you at some future time. I was requested by the party assembled round the table to conduct the further proceedings, and in answer to my question put to the invisibles—"What will you now do for us?" They replied through the alphabet—"Ask for what you want. Anything?" I said—"Yes;" then I said, "You gave me once French plums; give me the same fruit now." In an instant I had eight French plums put into my hand, and they are now lying on the table before me, so that, like the drawings, they are not an *illusion*. It is not a question of biogoligising—*i.e.*, the power of deceiving the senses and causing you to believe in the presence of something which does not exist. The next person asked for a bunch of tulips, and about twenty fresh tulips were placed before him; others asked for heartsease, cowslips, wallflowers, which were brought; a portion of these I also brought away, and have them in water before me. Then a lady at the other end of the table—the opposite end to which I was sitting at—said, "Bring me a live eel;" this was not literally complied with; it was not brought to her, but to my intense horror I felt something was wriggling on my knee. "Feel," I said to Mrs. Guppy, "what it is." She put her hand down and screamed out, "Oh, gracious me!

strike a light! strike a light! a snake! a snake!" Then commenced a general concert of screams from the ladies, and upon striking a light there was indeed a VERITABLE LIVE EEL about a foot and a-half long upon my knee. I could not touch it; I have an instinctive aversion to living, creeping things; but it was taken by another, and put into a tub where I left it "alive and kicking." At this time it was suggested that we should adjourn for refreshment; and having had more than my share of attention from the invisibles I left for home, and do not know what further manifestations took place when the party resumed the sitting, which they intended to do. It is certainly all very wonderful; the occurrences of last evening establishing the conviction in my mind that practically there is no limit to spirit-power.

Excuse a hurried letter. I am invited to Mrs. Berry's on Saturday evening to another *séance*, limited to eight persons, and shall no doubt have something curious to tell you next week. With very kind regards to your family circle, I am, very truly yours,  
B. COLEMAN.

Upper Norwood, April 22, 1871.

#### TO THE FAMILY AT V—.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I have your welcome letters, and as I find that you are all so much interested in the account of my last experiences, you shall certainly have a narrative of all that may occur this evening at Mrs. Berry's, when I should not wonder if the incidents surpass those of Wednesday. One small matter very interesting to me, which then occurred, I think I omitted to mention.

The two sheets of paper upon which the drawings were done were kept in my possession until we took our seats, when I placed them upon the table before me and called the attention of a gentleman who sat next to me to my having put my initials on each page—that is, I had marked each side of the two sheets. I had been told by Mrs. Guppy not to let anyone touch them, but not recollecting this injunction, I complied with the request of this gentleman, a stranger to me, to allow him to put his initials upon the sheets, and for this purpose he took them for a moment, and put G. W. P. over B. C. When the sheets were returned to me with the drawings in the way I described, G. W. P. was not upon them. "How is this?" I said, and the invisible operators answered—"We rubbed it out." There was not a trace, however, of "rubbing;" the surface of the paper, looked at with a magnifying glass, is quite smooth, and no clue left as to how the letters were erased. So we have, in this simple fact, another proof of the superiority of spirit-power.

With the exception of Mr. Livermore's extraordinary experiences (part only of which you will find in my *American Spiritualism*) and the spirit photographs, we have obtained quite as curious manifestations in this country, and feeling sure that we can get the photographs, I am urging upon Mr. Guppy to let us have a series of trials, which he consents to do. I need not say with what a thrill of pleasure I should receive such an evidence of spirit-presence, and if it be true that spirits can become so tangible as to imprint themselves upon a sensitive plate, of which I have no earthly doubt, why should I not receive the proof? On this subject I have just seen an account, written by Mr. M. A. Dow, corroborating the fact, which, as I am sure it will interest you all, I will endeavour to relate as briefly and as clearly as I can.

Mr. Dow is the proprietor and editor of a literary journal in Boston, and though he has heard much from the very commencement of the movement in America, he, from want of time and inclination, had not sought for evidence until last year, when he obtained it in the most satisfactory and conclusive way.

Mr. Dow had befriended a young woman of great literary talents, named Mabel Warren, who died, to his great sorrow, last July. He was spending a few weeks with his wife at Saratoga Springs (one of the principal watering places), in September, and there he met Mr. Baker, a confirmed Spiritualist, who induced him to accompany him to see Dr. Slade, a well-known medium. He is what is called a *writing and trance* medium. Among other messages to the different persons present, it was written—"I am always with you."—MABEL. Several messages of a similar kind from Mabel were given through two other mediums, and on his return to Boston Mr. Dow visited Mrs. Hardy, a medium, who, going into the trance state, at once extended her hands to Mr. Dow, and by her manner and her words satisfied him that the spirit of Mabel was present. At a subsequent visit to Mrs. Hardy, Mabel said—"I will give you my spirit-likeness some day." He thought she meant that it would be given by one of those mediums who *paint* spirit portraits; but at another meeting she explained that it was a photograph, and that a *spirit* friend had told her that Mr. Mumler, of 170, West Springfield-street, could take it. The spirit, speaking through the medium, Mrs. Hardy, then said—"I went there to see if that was the right number, and I got so near the instrument that I was taken on the glass. They did not know who I was, and so they rubbed it out. Now, when you leave here, go and make arrangements for us to go there at one o'clock a week from to-day; call here at twelve o'clock, then we will go there at once." Mr. Dow says he went to Mumler's at once and made the arrangement, but when asked for his name, he gave the name *Mr. Johnson*. On the day fixed, Mr. Dow went to Mrs. Hardy's, who became entranced, and the first thing she (Mabel) said was—"How do you do, Mr. Johnson? I did not know that you were ashamed of your name. I shall give you my picture. What dress shall I wear? Shall it be my white robe, or my light-striped dress?" Mr. Dow selected the striped dress, as that would distinguish her from other spirit pictures. She said—"Well, I will wear my striped dress and a wreath of flowers, and I shall put my hand upon your shoulder." Mr. Dow went to Mr. Mumler's studio and got the picture, and this is what he writes:—

"The picture was small, but by the aid of a microscope it was magnified to the natural size of the human face, and in that face I saw a *perfect* likeness of my friend. I was both surprised and delighted, and I wrote to Mr. Mumler and told him I was *perfectly satisfied*, and I gave him my true name." The figure had a wreath of flowers round her head, and was standing so as to overshadow his shoulder, but the dress was white.

I have no doubt you will agree with me that this is an interesting corroboration of a most important phase of a most important subject, and with evidence cropping up in all directions, the sceptical world cannot, as the Rev. Dr. Maitland said of it, put their foot upon it as if it were a spider to crush it out of existence.

I enclose with this some of the original cards written by Mr. Livermore's wife, whose name was *Belle*, and by the spirit purporting to be Dr. Franklin. Please take care of them, and return them to me at your convenience.—With very kind regards to you all, I am, yours very truly,

B. COLEMAN.

Upper Norwood, Sunday, April 23, 1871.

#### TO THE FAMILY AT V—.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—The *séance* last evening at Mrs. Berry's, though full of incident, was not to me so interesting as that of Wednesday; but to the Rev. Mr. D— it was, as he said, by far the best he had ever attended. He, with his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Guppy, our hostess, and myself, composed the party. The room, a small one, had in it, a substantially made dinner table, a dozen chairs, and a harmonium, like a small square piano, which was closed, and I sat with my back close to it.

Mrs. Berry brought into the room a small camel-hair paint-brush, a *palette* with various colours mixed, a sheet of card-board, a paper tube, and a cup of water, all of which she placed upon the table. It is certain that *nothing else*—save a wax candle and chamber candlestick was in the room. As soon as we were seated Mrs. Berry asked Mr. D. to lock the door, which he rose to do, and found it already locked, and the key gone. We searched for it in vain, but as soon as the light was extinguished the key was placed upon the table. Then commenced a series of manifestations—nothing of the serious or sentimental, but of a light humorous character, such as you might expect from a lot of romping girls and boys.

The communications were made by the spirit speaking in a perfectly audible and natural tone, and I was very much interested to recognise in *this* voice (which is that of Katie, the Guppys' attendant spirit, whom they consult on all matters of everyday life), the *same* who used to talk to me at the Marshalls with John King. She (Katie) speaks in a distinct feminine *whisper*, using the tube to concentrate the power to articulate, and has a decided LISP, which individualises her as unmistakably as we distinguish the peculiarities of voice and speech of our most intimate acquaintances. John King, too—who was not present last evening—has, as I described in some of my accounts in the *Spiritual Magazine* two or three years ago, a very decided individuality of tone of voice and accent, and, unlike Katie, speaks in a rough masculine and sometimes even stentorian voice.

Katie's attentions were mainly directed last evening to Mrs. D., who had not sat at a *dark séance* before. Speaking close to my ear Katie said, "She is a very interesting young lady, isn't she, Mr. Coleman?" I said, "You had better talk to her." Turning immediately to the opposite side of the table, where Mrs. D. sat, Katie said, "Well, my dear, what can we do for you?" "Oh, thank you, anything you please; perhaps you will give me a bunch of flowers."

Almost immediately we heard and felt a shower of flowers falling upon the table, and Mrs. D. said she was being covered with them. When we restored the light, which I did by a wax-light taken from a metal fusee box I kept in my pocket, we found that she was literally covered with a great variety of fresh flowers, and a heap lay upon the table, more than I had ever seen before, and probably enough to fill a good sized basket. When the light was extinguished, I said, "You have neglected me. I *should* like one of those wreaths you sometimes make," and presently I felt one of the chairs, taken from a corner of the room, was being placed very gently and accurately without touching anyone else, over my head, the legs coming down over my shoulders, and in my hand was placed a leaf and stem of rhubarb 17½ inches long, a full-sized hand patted me on the back, and the voice said, "There, we have crowned you." A light was struck, and in this position I was presented, much to the amusement of the company. When the light was again extinguished I took from my pocket a blank card and a photographic likeness of my late wife, and laying them on the table without saying anything, I *mentally* requested that a drawing should be made. Presently I felt the camel-hair brush passing over my forehead, and head, and down my nose. "What are you doing?" I asked. "Well, you wanted a drawing, and we are painting the *other* half," meaning, I suppose, that my wife was one half and I the *other*. The light being restored I was greeted with loud laughter at my grotesque appearance. My nose and forehead were lined all over with dark paint, and the *palette*, which is made of metal to fold up like a book, was upon my head. In the next dark interval Mrs. D. said, "They have taken my earrings out;" and Mrs. Berry said, "They are taking down my back-hair;" and we heard the sounds of sundry hair-pins falling on the table. In two or three minutes we lighted the candle, and saw that one of Mrs. D.'s earrings was stuck on to her husband's ear, and the other was hooked into a button-hole of his coat and hung like "an order" on his breast. Mrs. Berry's hair, which is very luxuriant, was brought down in long tresses over each shoulder, and her head was tastefully dressed with a variety of fresh flowers.

These were the chief incidents, but there were many more. We were also profusely sprinkled with lavender water. The harmonium was opened by the invisibles, and the scales run up and down; no tune was played. I asked for the hand which had been patting me on the head to be placed in mine, and this was done. It felt like a human hand, the fingers and thumb being apparently perfect, then this hand became rather rough. I was pulled strongly by the sleeve, then caught fast hold by the collar, as if by a policeman's grip, and as they would not yield to my remonstrances, I said I would strike a light; but feeling for my match-box I found it had gone (it was not be found afterwards), and whilst Mrs. Berry was lighting a match from her box, the spirits seemed to revel in their horse-play, and slapped me several times with the flat of their hands upon my unprotected head, making a noise heard by all. From what I have said you will see that there is really no limit to the power exercised by the invisibles, accompanied by quick intelligence and perfect accuracy of sight, as exemplified in the incidents of this evening, and it is difficult to imagine how any honest-minded person present at such a *séance* could doubt the reality of the manifestations. But there are, nevertheless, many who do, and several who were present on Wednesday thought, I am told, that it was all confederacy and imposture. Mrs. Guppy, like most mediums, is quick to discover the scepticism which surrounds her, and refused to resume the sitting on Wednesday evening after I left. But Mr. Guppy told me last evening that whilst he was lying awake on the following morning *two more live eels were thrown upon his pillow*. It is difficult to imagine what was the object of this, except that the spirits may have been so considerate as to add these to *make a pie*, which the Guppys did make of the three eels.

After supper last evening, Mr. and Mrs. D. having left, I went into the dark room with the Guppys, and had a long *discussion* with Katie upon the spirit photograph question. It appears that she had been consulted and advised that a society composed of thirteen persons, whom she named, including myself, should be formed, each to wear a dove composed of some metal, and the president's to be of diamonds. I said I thought all formality was objectionable. I, for one, would not wear an insignia of office; the outside world would look

upon us as a body of fanatics. There could be no necessity for parading such movements. There were none required in America, why should we want more here? &c., &c. Katie combated my remarks, and at length, finding I would not yield, she said—"Well, then, I will have nothing more to do with it," and flinging down the tube through which she was speaking, seemed to have bounced out of the room in a passion.

I should have told you that, before commencing this conversation, I said—"Katie, did you bring that eel?" "Yeth, I did, Mr. Coleman." "What a nasty thing to bring." "Well," she said, "why did you ask for it?" "I did not," I said. "Yeth, you did; you asked for a fish from the sea, and that came from the sea." And so far I was bound to admit she was right, though it was not on that evening; and when I did make the request, I never thought of anything, so nasty as an eel. The fact of their ability to bring such a thing through barred doors and brick walls establishes an astounding power, and teaches an important lesson, which I will not disregard. I really would not dare to ask for a wild animal, lest the spirits should catch one up from the Zoological Gardens and present it to us in a closed room. Why should they *not* be able to do so? If such things as I have spoken of be true, who can prescribe the limit of spiritual forces?

I don't think I shall attend any more of these sittings until I hear of some new phase being presented.—With kind regards to you all, I am, yours very truly,  
B. COLEMAN.

#### MATTER AND SPIRIT.

THE following answers to questions, put to Mrs. Hardinge at one of the Harley-street meetings, have been in type for many months, but were crowded out:—

Mr. Pritchard—"What is the peculiar connection between spirit and matter which enables the spirit to act upon the body?"

Mrs. Hardinge—Your speaker has passed twenty-two years in a close, earnest, and unceasing march through Spiritual phenomena in the endeavour to ascertain Spiritual laws. If you expect her to detail the results of those twenty-two years' observation and experiments in one hour, you expect a greater marvel than Spiritualism itself. We have spoken of certain phases of phenomena, only premising that it was our purpose to do so. The subject upon which you question is, as we understand, what medium exists between matter and spirit that enables spirit, as an essence, to act upon or through matter. We answer you only through what may be derived by observation; we do not make assertions, we do not speak of theology, but of facts, and what we deduce from the facts. We are led to believe, by a close observation of the facts of existence, both in the natural and spiritual world, that man upon this planet is a triune being, consisting first of an organism composed of matter, next of an inner man, an imponderable man which permeates every part of his being, which is something analogous to electricity, galvanism, attraction, repulsion, and all those various forces which we vaguely call electrical, or galvanic, but which I prefer to call by the synonym adopted by spirits, "the life-principle." This life-principle inheres in the form and by the constant dual action of attraction and repulsion maintains its integrity, and preserves the atoms together, now in repulsion throwing off waste matter, and now by attraction building up the organism. So long as attraction prevails over repulsion, life exists; when repulsion prevails over attraction, life ceases, and then this invisible, imponderable man withdraws and it becomes the Spiritual body, or clothing of the third innermost man, the spirit. What the spirit is as an element, we can no more answer you than we can answer what matter is, but that spirit requires this second element to act upon matter through the body we know, because the phenomena of Spiritualism prove it. Thus: The spirit returns, and now it requires some medium by which it shall act again upon matter. This chamber to the eye of the clairvoyant is full of spirit, full of Spiritual existences, for we have reason to believe, as we pursue our observations, that the spirit-world permeates this natural world, as the soul permeates the body. Why, then, have we no manifestation of the presence of spirit? First, because we have not in full exercise the mediumistic aura. That mediumistic aura is resident in the organisms of all beings, but it is special, and energetic, and peculiar in the organisms of some. We realise now, without observation by the ordinary sense of sight, that there are mediumistic organisms present, but the aura they give off is held in abeyance by the will of the spirit so as not to interrupt the proceedings, but when the will of the spirit perceiving this mediumistic aura is enabled by favourable conditions to use it, it becomes a medium through which the spirit acts again upon matter. The spirit measurably possesses the organism of the medium in trance, and uses this aura outside of the medium in physical manifestations. But mark, the condition of the spirit is this, the Spiritual body, as we have said, or the mediumistic aura, departs with the spirit in the decomposition of death. Now, the spirit is clothed with this mediumistic aura, but according to all known electrical laws no form of electrical element, if there be such, can act alone; it requires another development of electricity in order to manifest itself in matter. And as, unless there are two forms of electricity, there is no manifestation, so we find the electrical body of the spirit, and the electrical body of the medium form parts of a battery which, when combined with favourable conditions in the atmosphere, operate to produce phenomena. The spirit acting through the human body uses, then, this medium upon matter; the spirit acting, when it is separated from the human body, uses the same force through the organism of a medium; and the whole spirit-world acts in its totality through the same law. The invisible Spiritual world permeates this natural world, uses the medium of the *vast realm of imponderable forces* which we call "the life-principle." The life-principle as much inheres in this substance, and in this, as in your body, and the difference between the fabric which you behold in its integrity, and the dust and atoms into which it shall be resolved, is simply that the atoms are now permeated by the life-principle, and that that principle shall eventually pass out of them. It is the existence of this life principle permeating every atom of matter, and surging through the atmosphere, and given off in the eternal unrest of bodies in space encompassing and embracing this planet, and acting as a medium between the Spiritual and natural worlds, that enables the entire realm of Spiritual existences to exert a continuous influence, psychologically and magnetically, upon this material world. We shall be happy still further to elaborate this idea if our questioner will make further suggestions.

Mr. Pritchard—"May there not be a something between spirit and body partaking partly of the one and partly of the other?"

Mrs. Hardinge—We would rather have the definition afforded to your ignorant medium by the spirits. The spirits do not teach your speaker that the medium of which we speak partakes either of the nature of matter or of spirit, but insist that it is a second and distinct element. They use many illustrations to show that this element is both universal in its operation and distinct. Let us offer one illustration. The magnetiser\* projects by will an invisible force, as you may call it, from himself; we call it an invisible element. When that element has passed from him it reaches his subject and produces certain effects. Now, there must be a moment of time when the magnetic fluid traversed the space between the two bodies, and did not exist in either. During that period, however short, it exists independent of the body. Again, the spirit causes sounds or detonations—by what? It projects from itself by will a something which operates like a substance; that is not will, that is not spirit. Spirit, if you can define its essence, is will. All that we know of being is only known through its manifestation, and the manifestation of spirit is will. The manifestation of this medium force or life-principle is motion; and the manifestation of matter is the three conditions of liquid, solid, and fluid. These three elements do exist apart and distinct from each other. We prefer instead of adopting our questioner's suggestion, and assuming that the life-principle might be born of matter, or partake of the nature of spirit, rather to assume that it is, as the spirits themselves constantly insist, a second element, that it is one and the same in quality, although varying in its manifestation by passing through different atoms as the life-principle by which bodies in space are upheld, by which all the magnificent machinery of creation is conducted, by which the same machinery of motion in our bodies is evolved.

Mr. Pearson—*Is there not a vital as well as a chemical force in the building up of animal life?*

Mrs. Hardinge—What is chemical force? To our thinking, chemical force is not. It is all vital force; and the motions evolved by vital forces are called chemistry. Thus do we find in the deposition of metallic veins, in the formation of the old rocks, in the invariable, unresting changes proceeding even in that which we call the solid crystal of the hard iron, changes are eternally progressing. This is not chemical force, it is that which we vaguely call galvanic force, but which we prefer to term the life-principle, which, manifested throughout the silent but inevitable motions, produces those changes that we call chemistry. So at last we shall resolve ourselves back to this one universal force, vitality, life, as the tool of the Creator. Whether we speculate upon the grand machinery by which the rushing wheels of creation move on, freighted with worlds, and carrying with them a mighty squadron of ever-marching armies of suns, satellites, and systems, all moving to the heart-beat of the Infinite mind, whose own pulse throbs through them all. Whether we contemplate creation on this grand and magnificent scale, or descend to the microcosmic atoms—if there be such a thing as an atom, the least devisable point to which we can limit our observation—it is still in motion, and still throbbing, to the tune of the same eternal march, under the influence of the galvanic action of life—life everywhere. We are deeply thankful to science, very grateful to scientists; we should be still more grateful if they had done anything for Spiritualism—anything but abuse it, anything but ignore it. We owe more to the spirit medium, who has endured scorn, and contempt, and slander, the blackening of a ribald press and an insolent ignorant world, than we do to all the world of science, for the certainty that we live for ever.

#### THE SEANCE AT ST. PETERSBURGH UNIVERSITY.

M. AKSAKOF, of St. Petersburg, has favoured us with copies of original documents relating to the *séance* of some scientific men with Mr. Home at the University of St. Petersburg. The *séance* was a failure. M. Aksakof says:—

“At a lecture given by Mr. Home at St. Petersburg on the 24th April, 1871, he spoke among other things of the constant attempts made by Spiritualists to induce the scientific world to observe and study spiritual phenomena, and he volunteered, as he had done on many previous occasions, to place himself in the hands of a scientific committee formed for the purpose. In consequence of this, a committee, in the formation of which Professor Boutlerow took the initiative, met for a preliminary conference at the house of the director of the Medical Department, Dr. Pelikau. The persons composing the conference were Dr. Pelikau, and some professors in the University of St. Petersburg, namely Professor Boutlerow (chemistry), Professor Ovsianikow (physiology); these two gentlemen are also members of the Academy of Sciences. The other gentlemen present were Professor Petrouchewsky (physics); Professor Zion (physiology); and a witness on the side of Mr. Home, M. Aksakof, who gave a written specification of the conditions under which Mr. Home placed himself at the disposal of the committee. These conditions were accepted without any change by all the members of the committee, with the exception of M. Petrouchewsky, who refused to accede to them, saying that Mr. Home ought to place himself unconditionally at the disposal of the committee; that the manifestations should be produced under conditions to be decided on not by him, but by them; and he considered the presence of witnesses on the part of Mr. Home entirely out of place.† This gentleman withdrew, and his place was taken by M. Tchebischow, member of the Academy of Sciences, and professor of mathematics at the University.

#### THE CONDITIONS ON WHICH THE SEANCE WAS GIVEN.

“Conditions presented on the part of Mr. Home to the Scientific Committee for the investigation of the phenomena which occur in his presence.

“Mr. Home affirms on his word of honour that the phenomena present themselves without any conscious and visible co-operation on his part and that he serves merely as the passive instrument for the manifestation of powers till now unknown. He willingly places himself at the disposal of the scientific committee for the investigation of these manifestations on the following conditions:—

“1. That the committee shall undertake to be present at three sittings at least, for, as follows from what has been said above, Mr. Home can give no guarantee as to what may be at a given moment the success or the nature of the manifestations, which are not subject to his will, but depend principally, as he has learned by experience, on psychical conditions.

“2. That after every *séance* a protocol shall be signed by all present describing any manifestations which may appear.

“3. That not more than eight persons shall be present, including Mr. Home himself and two witnesses on his side, Baron Meyendorff and M. Aksakof.

\* Mesmeriser.—Ed.

† By the contents of the documents which follow, it will be seen why a witness was necessary.—A. AKSAKOF.

“4. That Mr. Home's indisposition shall be accepted as a sufficient reason for postponing the *séance*.

“5. The external conditions are the following. All persons present shall quietly sit at the table, and for mutual control hold their hands upon it, but it is understood that this does not exclude any movement necessary for observation; the doors of the room chosen for the *séance* shall be shut; the attention of those present shall not be distracted by any disturbance from without, by being called out of the room, by noises in the neighbourhood, &c., and the air in the room shall be fresh and pure, at a temperature of about 14 degrees Réaumur, without any smoke or powerful perfume.\*

“The above-named witnesses, on submitting this proposal of Mr. Home, together with his conditions to the scientific committee about to be formed, consider it their duty to testify to the honesty and sincerity of Mr. Home's declarations, as well as to the authenticity of the facts to which he calls attention.

(Signed) “BARON NICOLAS DE MEYENDORFF.

“ALEXANDRE AKSAKOF.

“St. Petersburg, 13th March, 1871.”

#### THE OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE SEANCE.

“Protocol of the first meeting of the Scientific Committee for the Investigation of the Manifestations produced by Mr. Home.

“Present: the Director of the Medical Department, E. W. Pelikau. The Members of the Academy of Sciences, P. L. Tchebischow, F. W. Ovsianikow, and A. M. Boutlerow. Professor of the University of St. Petersburg, J. T. Zion. Mr. Home and his witnesses, M. Aksakof and the Baron de Meyendorff.

“The *séance* was opened at half-past nine in the evening of the 22nd of March, 1871, in one of the rooms of the Physical Cabinet of the University of St. Petersburg. The temperature of the room, in the middle of which stood a table covered with a green cloth, was 14 degrees to 15 degrees Réaumur. In answer to a question from Professor Zion as to whether the construction of the table had any influence on the success of the manifestations, Mr. Home said it was indifferent to him of what material it was made. The cloth was removed, and they all sat down. The table was made of plate-glass, it stood on four feet, and was 15 feet 10 inches long by 3 feet 6 inches broad. A white sheet was spread on the floor, so that the light from two candles placed on the glass surface brilliantly illuminated all the space beneath, and the feet of those who were seated could be seen by all present. They sat in the following order: Mr. Home on one side, between M. Tchebischow and M. Zion; opposite him M. Ovsianikow; on the right of the latter was Dr. Pelikau; and on his left M. Boutlerow. M. Aksakof was seated at one end and Baron Meyendorff at the other.

“At the request of Mr. Home all the gentlemen placed their hands upon the table, and during the whole time they all paid strict attention to his remarks with reference to placing their hands, to not having their attention diverted from the object of the meeting by private conversation, &c.

“Fifteen or twenty minutes after the beginning of the *séance* Mr. Home remarked a visible oscillation of the table, which affected the flame of the candles standing on it. M. Zion explained this by the trembling of the hands upon the table; he himself felt a slight contraction in the muscles of the middle and little finger. Mr. Home did not accept this explanation, but took the motion for a precursor of the coming phenomena. The oscillation of the table soon left off (this was first pointed out by Mr. Home), and shortly afterwards he drew attention to the increased rapidity of his pulse. Dr. Pelikau calculated that the number of Mr. Home's pulsations was (nearly) 100 a minute. It appeared, however, that this was experienced by others present, and arose from a comprehensible cause (the heightened temperature of the room). [The words between brackets are struck out in the original document in pencil.] Dr. Pelikau showed that M. Zion's pulse was also 100, and M. Ovsianikow's 95. Thirty or forty minutes afterwards, Mr. Home declared that he felt a peculiar current in the air, having in his opinion a similar signification to that of the oscillation of the table. Attributing this current to an open pipe, M. Zion closed it. Mr. Home next declared that he heard some slight raps on the table, but they were not heard by anybody else. An hour had elapsed since the beginning of the *séance*, and there had been no manifestations either in the table or in the room. Mr. Home then proposed that they should try to change the weight of the table by the influence of the will of those present. On weighing the table by means of a dynamometer taken from the physical cabinet, M. Zion found that, together with the hands upon it, it weighed about 75 pounds; but in spite of the will of Mr. Home and the other persons present, this weight was not at all increased. M. Boutlerow was equally unsuccessful when he tried the experiment. They all remained sitting round the table till twenty minutes past eleven without one of those manifestations appearing which, it is said, are usually produced at sittings of this kind, and the meeting consequently separated, agreeing that the committee should again assemble on the 23rd of March, at eight p.m.

“All the preparations for the *séance*, at the request of the committee, had been undertaken by M. Zion. The choice of the place, the preparation of the table, of the instruments, &c., had been left to him, and neither Mr. Home nor his witnesses had any knowledge of them. All the rooms surrounding the one in which the committee met were at ten o'clock in the morning locked and sealed by M. Zion, who kept the keys himself.

“PELIKAU, Doctor; OVSIANIKOW, Professor; TCHEBISCHOW, Professor; ZION, Professor.

“To complete the above, I think it right to add that M. Home, as was well known to most of the members of the committee, was unwell on the day of the *séance*, and had been so for some days previously.

“The preceding documents were published in the *St. Petersburg Gazette*, but that journal refused to publish also the following document:—

#### M. AKSAKOF'S PROTEST.

“As a witness on the side of Mr. Home, I consider myself bound to complete the protocol of the *séance* by the addition of some details, to withhold which would, without perverting the truth, give an incomplete idea of the whole proceeding. At the preliminary meeting of the committee, which took place on the 18th of March in one of the rooms of the medical department, I had the honour to request the committee to name as early a day as possible for the sittings, as Mr. Home was anxious to leave St. Petersburg, and, with the breaking up of the weather his health was deteriorating, though it was not bad enough for him to decline the proposed trial. Consequently,

\* To this paragraph, on the proposal of Dr. Pelikau, it was added that one member of the committee had the right to take his hands off the table, and to go a little distance from it for the convenience of observation.

the day for the first meeting was fixed for the 19th of March. When on the morning of that day I went to inform him of this decision, he told me that his state of fever and debility had so much increased that he could not appear at the appointed time; and he earnestly begged that one of the members of the committee would take the trouble to come and see him that he might satisfy himself of his indisposition. In accordance with this request, on the same evening, he was visited, at the house of Baron Meyendorff, by the following members of the committee:—Messrs. Tchebischow, Boutlerow, and Ovsianikow, the latter of whom, as a medical man, was competent to decide that Mr. Home was really unwell. When he was a little better he begged me to transmit to the committee his desire that the *séance* should take place on the 22nd. As soon as he came he was asked by Dr. Pelikau how he felt, and in reply he said that his fever, though diminished, had not left him, and Dr. Pelikau authorises me to state that on feeling his pulse before the beginning of the *séance* he found it beating rapidly. Referring to the protocol which was drawn up by Professor Zion, I may observe that although Mr. Home said it was indifferent to him of what material the table was made, on my asking him whether it had ever happened to him at any *séance*, to sit at a glass table, he answered ‘Never;’ and he afterwards said that at all events the experiment was a new one, as up to the present time it had never been tried by any one. In making this remark he was warmly supported by Professor Tchebischow, who said that the experiment ought to be tried under the same conditions as those during which the expected manifestations usually appear; and it was proposed that an ordinary table should be substituted for the glass one, but this change was postponed till the next sitting. As to the ‘visible oscillation of the table which affected the flame of the candle,’ on the remark of M. Zion that it proceeded from the trembling of the hands on the table, Mr. Home asked, ‘Why, then, is the flame of one candle unsteady and the other not?’ And, indeed, no one noticed any motion in the flame of the second candle. As the protocol contains not merely a simple description of the fact, but an explanation of it proceeding from M. Zion personally, I may be allowed to remark that, although, according to M. Zion, the oscillation of the table was caused by the trembling of the hands, it may with equal justice be assumed that the trembling of the hands was caused by the oscillation of the table. At all events, no one present except M. Zion affirmed that he felt a trembling of the hands or a contraction of the fingers. If M. Zion felt the contraction, it may be explained by the fact that, according to his own words, he pressed his fingers on the table, while the others held theirs on lightly, and occasionally changed their position; the explanation of M. Zion therefore leads to the unreasonable supposition that the weak contraction in the muscles of two of his fingers produced a visible oscillation of the table, which weighed about 160 pounds, and stood, we may believe, firmly enough to oppose any motion caused by Mr. Home and his witnesses. Passing on to the examination of Mr. Home's pulse, I may observe that in this place the wording of the protocol is not correct. Mr. Home drew attention to his pulse, not to show that it beat more rapidly, but that it was feverish. Dr. Pelikau, as I stated above, testified, before the beginning of the *séance*, to the rapidity of Mr. Home's pulse, but now, on examination, he declared it to be 100; upon which M. Zion remarked that that was no proof of illness, as his own was always 120, and stretched out his hand to Dr. Pelikau, who declared that it was also 100, and called it abnormal, on which Mr. Home remarked, ‘How rapidly it has declined.’ From this it may be seen that during the *séance* M. Zion attributed the rapidity of Mr. Home's pulse not to an increase in the number of pulsations, but to the normal rapidity of some pulses, otherwise his remark would have no meaning; further, the following words of the protocol—‘There was an increase in the number of pulsations of several other gentlemen present,—have no foundation, for no one had his pulse felt before the beginning of the *séance*; and finally, as regards M. Zion personally, his pulse did not go up to, but fell to 100. From the last circumstance the explanation of the extreme rapidity of the pulses of those present as caused by the heightened temperature of the room is out of place, for it is difficult to allow that the same reason caused in some an increased and in others a diminished pulsation. If we allow that the temperature of the room was heightened so much as to show a visible action on the pulses of those present, we must suppose that it was increased by more than one deg. beyond 15 deg., at which, according to the protocol, the *séance* was begun; and in that case such a remarkable increase of temperature was, like the glass table, a departure from the conditions agreed to for the *séance*, which implied an ordinary table, and a temperature of about 14 deg. Réaumur. In general I may remark that the oscillations of the table and the flame of the candle, the fanning on the hands, which, in the protocol, is called a *courant d'air*, and the raps on the table were so weak and insignificant that Mr. Home did not consider them worth mentioning in the protocol. In conclusion, I feel bound to add that in the heading, ‘Protocol of the First Meeting of the Scientific Committee for the Investigation of the Manifestations Produced by Mr. Home,’ the words ‘produced by Mr. Home’ should be altered to ‘said to occur in the presence of Mr. Home,’ for to affirm that these phenomena are produced by Mr. Home would be to prejudge the question.

“ALEXANDER AKSAKOF.

“I confirm the remarks, and agree with the opinion of M. Aksakof.

“BARON FEODOR E. MEYENDORFF.”

Such are the official documents relating to this case. No further *séances* were held owing to Mr. Home's illness, and some very warm correspondence on the subject of this *séance* has been published in the *St. Petersburg Gazette*, and the *London Standard*. The editor of *The St. Petersburg Gazette*, the correspondent of *The Standard*, and Professor Zion, have all taken part in attacking Mr. Home, and on the other side Mr. Home has been defended by himself, Baron Meyendorff, M. Aksakof, and Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S. Considering how Mr. Crookes has been abused in some of the spiritual periodicals, it is very good of him to stand forth thus publicly to ward off from Mr. Home some of the effects of popular ignorance.

We have some information to give to men of science, about the bad psychological conditions at work at this *séance*, but must defer an article on the subject, for want of space.

There is a discrepancy in the preceding documents as to the weight of the table; perhaps when it was raised on one side by a dynamometer, seventy five pounds was indicated.

Mrs. EMMA HARDINGE.—Mrs. Hardinge, after doing the good work of sustaining by her oratory the Sunday evening meetings at the Cleveland Hall, Fitzroy-square, during the winter, is now lecturing in the provinces. Mr. J. W. Jackson now lectures in her place on Sunday evenings at the Cleveland Hall.

# The Spiritualist.

MONDAY, MAY 15, 1871.

## THE ACTION OF LIGHT UPON SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

MANY varieties of Spiritual manifestations, such as raps and movements of solid objects, are produced with ease in bright daylight, but the direct spirit-voices can only be produced with ease in the dark. Within the past few weeks direct spirit voices have now and then, in the presence of reliable witnesses, made themselves audible in the light, also in the open air, through the mediumship of Messrs. Herne and Williams, but the utterances were not powerful. As regards nearly all manifestations, observation tends to prove that as the intensity of the light diminishes, so do the precision and power of the manifestations increase. Subdued light is favourable even for trance manifestations.

The very valuable paper on Spiritualism read a few weeks ago to the Wood Green Literary Society by Mr. John Traill Taylor, editor of *The British Journal of Photography*, not only awakened an intense interest in the subject in the locality wherein it was read, but is much valued by all the most philosophical people connected with the movement itself. Mr. Taylor said, as reported in our last number:—

“Much has been said concerning the suspicion that must necessarily attach to dark *séances*, and some have unthinkingly averred that what has been alleged to have been effected or performed in the dark, could, if it were true, also be done in the light. Those, however, who make such a statement have but a very superficial acquaintance with the nature and power of light. In the meantime and pending the efforts now being made to discover the law under which spirits can, with the majority of physical mediums, manifest better in darkness than in light, let me observe that in such a matter-of-fact science as chemistry, light is recognised as a powerful agent in inducing change. For example, if I form iodide of silver in a room from which light is excluded, it will differ in a most important degree from that formed in even a feebly-lighted room; if I mix together chlorine and olefiant gas in a glass globe or bottle, they will remain together so long as they are kept in the dark; but the instant that light is allowed to fall upon the mixture, the gases combine chemically with a loud explosion like the report of a pistol. If pure chloride of silver be sealed in a glass tube, and then be exposed to light, it will acquire a violet colour; but if it be taken in a dark room, it will regain its white colour; even the influence of a beam of sunlight in putting out a fire is recognised by many. Now seeing that these things are so, how absurd it is for people to prate, with a volubility in the inverse ratio of their knowledge, about the conditions under which spiritual force should be exerted. The superficial wits of fifty years ago indulged in unrestrained merriment, accepted by some as reason, at the bare idea of the light radiated from a human figure ever being able to record the appearance of that figure, and yet photography is now a recognised and widely practised branch of science. Some experiments of a scientific nature made by me, warrant me in asserting that it is by no means impossible that the presence of a spirit form, either in a dark or a light room, may yet be rendered visible to the ordinary eye of sense. The reason for this will be discovered in the following, to which I invite special attention. Light, as many of you are aware, possesses a threefold property: that of rendering material bodies luminous, that of heating, and that of inducing chemical change. Now it is possible to so separate these properties as to fill a room with one to the exclusion of the others. For example, I could flood a chamber with light taken directly from the sun, which would be quite luminous, permitting us to see every object as we could outside of the house, and yet which should have all the chemical power entirely abstracted. No chemical phenomenon depending upon the agency of light, such as the taking of a photograph, could possibly take place in such a light. Then, conversely, I can flood a chamber with light which to our eyes shall be total darkness. The room may be so dark as to render it utterly impossible to distinguish any object whatever, even a white object on a black ground, and yet that room shall be so luminous in a chemical or actinic sense as to permit the persons sitting there to be photographed. To the eye of the camera the room shall be full of light. I think it very probable that the room in which a dark *séance* is held may be lighted by light which to the officiating spirits may be darkness, but which shall permit us to see all that transpires, and when I next have leisure to resume my investigations into the physics of Spiritualism, I purpose trying some experiments which I expect will prove exhaustive.”

We have practically tried several of the experiments suggested by Mr. Taylor, so we here give the details, as they may be useful to others who intend to work in the same direction.

About two years ago, the genuine character of the

audible spirit voices produced through the mediumship of Mrs. Mary Marshall, the younger, having been thoroughly tested, the spirits were asked why they could not speak in the light. The reply was—“There is too much motion in light, it burns up the atmospheres with which we work.” From a material and mechanical point of view, most of the motion in light belongs to the red, yellow and green rays, hence it seemed a reasonable thing to filter these away, and to give them a faint and pure blue light to work with. Such light has much less motion in it than white light.

The experiment was tried in the presence of a large private party, consisting of a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, two government officials now connected with the Postal Telegraph service, a lady of considerable eminence well-known among Spiritualists, and several other friends. The pure blue rays were produced by means of an oxy-hydrogen dark lantern, fitted however with a paraffin lamp for this experiment. All but the blue rays were filtered away, by passing the light through a solution of ammonia-sulphate of copper, so that nothing but the very faintest blue light escaped into the room. This blue light was thrown upon one of the walls of the room, leaving the other part of the room in darkness.

The result was that the voices could not be produced. The solitary point gained by the experiment was that those who sat at the dark end of the room, looking towards the illuminated wall, now and then saw the guitar flying about, playing tunes, with nothing visible holding it. Those who sat with their backs to the light, looking into the darkness, did not see this, but all heard the instruments flying about like bats, and playing, as common at that time through Mrs. Marshall's mediumship.

Another experiment was tried about a month ago, at one of Messrs. Herne and Williams's *séances*. The voices, spirit hands, and spirit lights had been especially active all over the room as usual. One gas jet was then lighted, and turned down till only a speck of blue flame was visible, faintly illuminating the glass globe around it. So low was the light that nothing else was visible, and the sitters below could not see each other, or the table they were touching. This stopped the voices, and seemed to drive all the power to manifest to the region below the table. The hands, which previously had been very busy between the heads of the sitters and the ceiling, and all over the room, could then be felt grasping the legs of many of the sitters.

The next experiment was tried at the same circle about three weeks ago. One of Browning's large induction coils was placed in the *séance* room, and it was worked with a battery of six cells placed outside the drawing-room window. By this apparatus flashes of light could be produced at will, the object being to give an instantaneous flash of light now and then, in order to see solid objects or anything else which might be moving in the air. When strangers break faith and strike matches at dark *séances*, as they sometimes do, the musical instruments or whatever may be flying in the air, always fall down, and sometimes strike people in the fall, the control over them being lost. Bruises and cuts have often been inflicted in this way, the striker of the light sees the instrument falling to the ground and finds out nothing, and the spirits usually refuse to do anything more during the evening. The object of the flashing light was to see the instruments in flight, by a light so instantaneous that the spirits should not have time to lose control over whatever they might be carrying.

The result was that nine or ten flashes stopped the manifestations for a quarter of an hour afterwards, and a message was given next day, to the effect that the light was worse for the manifestations than daylight, or any ordinary mode of illumination.

This raises the question whether the blue and chemical rays may not, from a spiritual point of view, though not from ours, contain more motion than red and orange light. If a man were made of ammonia-sulphate of copper, he would say that orange rays were warm, and blue ones were cool, because the latter would pass through him without warming him much. If, on the other hand, a man were made of bichromate of potash, he would say that the blue rays were warm, and the

orange rays cool. Everything then, depends upon the point of view. Therefore, almost the only experiment left untried which may possibly realise Mr. Taylor's hopes, is to give a flashing red or orange light. The light from the flame of a candle, filtered through a solution of bichromate of potash, might answer the purpose.

But as the voices did not come with these subdued lights, how is it that in rare instances they are produced in daylight? Perhaps because of variations in the health of the medium. Perhaps because of extra preparations on the part of the spirits. One of the spirits was asked last Saturday whether they had to make many preparations for a physical *séance*. The reply was “Yes, and sometimes we begin to be busy as much as four hours before it begins.”

As to taking photographs in a pitch dark room, full of invisible photographic rays, the expense would be enormous. About the only rich sources of such rays are the electric and magnesium lights, and if all the visible rays, blue and violet included, be abstracted from such lights, the photographic power of the the invisible rays left is very small. From the many experiments we have made with such rays, we think that to get a portrait in this way in absolute darkness, and supposing the sitter to remain motionless before the camera for a full quarter of an hour, the likeness could only be obtained at an expense of some hundreds of pounds. If a trace of blue or violet light might be admitted, the expense of the experiment would be greatly reduced. By this plan it is utterly hopeless to attempt to photograph anything in motion.

## SPIRITUALISM AND EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH.

READERS of *The Spiritualist* must have perused with lively interest the report in its last number of a paper by the editor of *The British Journal of Photography*, on “the positive side of Spiritualism.” Philosophy in these days demanding some further proofs, more in harmony with her own spirit, of the existence of a life beyond the grave, than those afforded by revelation, something also more substantial than that speculation ancient, or modern, on the wing of which it has been sought to soar to knowledge of the invisible and spiritual, an attempt to reach those heights by patient footsteps in the path of experimental research, cannot but be hailed with joy. Even where no doubt exists as to a future state, elimination of the supernatural from modern teaching, causes a feeling of dreariness and desolation at times to overcome those minds by nature sensitive to the spiritual, but schooled to disbelief in its signs and tokens. Passionate utterance has been given to this feeling by poets of the present age; it is expressed in the sighs of Schiller over the extinct beliefs of an earlier world, over the crumbled altars of the gods of Greece; it has burst from the lips of Wordsworth in the exclamation

“Great God, I'd rather be  
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn,  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.”

As is well known to the initiated, Mr. Taylor is not the only man of science now intent on the application of those delicate processes rendered possible by the latest discoveries in nature's laws, to the investigation of Spiritual phenomena. At a recent dinner at the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in one of those speeches which breathe all the spirit of a more advanced period, dwelt on the great things to be achieved through mastery of the occult influences which surround us. He spoke of the occult influences of matter, but within the profession he addressed are those, of whom some were probably among his audience, who are aware of influences still more occult, and of another order, now about to come within the domain of science, influences which, when generally recognised and brought to bear upon human life, will doubtless effect moral changes as great and as beneficial as the material changes effected, and to be effected, by steam and electricity, or by other forces yet unknown.

J. H. D.

LAST Wednesday at one of Mr. Home's *séances* some good ponderosity experiments were made with a spring balance, and the Russian results, printed on another page, were confirmed.

SPIRIT DRAWINGS.—On Monday next a public exhibition of Miss Houghton's spirit drawings will be opened at the New British Gallery, 39, Old Bond-street. Without her own volition her hand is moved to make drawings and paintings, consisting of lines very curiously interwoven with each other. Mrs. Guppy has of late had some very elegant and artistic drawings executed directly by spirits, without the intervention of human hands. We have had one complaint that the remarks made in the last *Spiritualist* about the unwisdom of mediums giving their time to the execution of useless drawings, were too hard, and that the use of some of the drawings produced through the agency of the mighty spirit power now acting upon man, may be discovered hereafter. The argument is a fair one, and carries its due amount of weight. All spirit drawings are very curious, and not a little perplexing; they should all be carefully preserved, dated, and tabulated.

## Poetry.

## ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

THE following verses are extracted from *The Illustrated Book of Sacred Poems*, published by Messrs. Cassell, Petter, & Galpin, and edited by the Rev. R. H. Baynes, M.A. The verses which we now quote are part of a poem written by the Very Rev. William Alexander, M.A., Dean of Emly, on the subject of the death of Archbishop Whately. Archbishop Whately was a Spiritualist; he also investigated mesmerism and found it to be true, so the last of these verses is remarkably appropriate:—

Oh, wondrous lights of Death, the great unvelier,  
Lights that come out above the shadowy place,  
Just as the night that makes our small world paler,  
Shows us the star-sown amplitudes of space.

Oh, strange discovery, land that knows no bounding,  
Isles far off hailed, bright seas without a breath,  
What time the white sail of the soul is rounding  
The misty cape—the promontory Death!

Rest then, oh martyr, passed through anguish mortal,  
Rest then, oh Saint, sublimely free from doubt,  
Rest then, oh patient thinker, o'er the portal,  
Where there is peace for brave hearts wearied out.

Oh, long unrecognised thy love too loving,  
Too wise thy wisdom, and thy truth too free!  
As on the teachers after truth are moving,  
They may look backward with deep thanks to thee.

## Correspondence.

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

## THE AUTHOR OF "ALPHA'S" MESSAGE.

SIR,—Regarding the alleged message of Edward N. Denny, through the mediumship of Miss F. J. Theobald, which I—viewing it literally—denounced as spurious and pernicious in the *Spiritualist* on the 15th of March last, I now find (partly by his letter on the subject in your issue of last month, and partly by verbal information from him this day), that my rationalistic friend, Mr. C. W. Pearce, believes the message to be genuine, though somewhat defectively rendered; and that, being symbolic in its character, its meaning is very different from what I supposed it to be, and not in conflict with the "Alpha" philosophy.

Under these circumstances, I hopefully defer further comment till Mr. Pearce has favoured us with an interpretation of the message, and trust that it may ere long appear in your columns. A. C. SWINTON.

5, Cambridge-road, Kilburn.

[Quite as much having been published about this message as its public interest demands, we do not desire to insert further letters on the subject.—ED.]

## ELECTRICITY, MAGNETISM, AND THE HUMAN BODY.

SIR,—I see that Mr. Henry Collen, of St. Albans, has commented upon an article of mine which appeared in *The Spiritualist*, of March 15th.

It may be interesting to your readers to know that my experiments upon muscular electricity were repeated at intervals during four or five years, and it was in consequence of their number that I observed the diminished effects when westerly winds were prevalent, and the increased effects when the wind was from the east. The conclusion, therefore, can scarcely be termed hasty. On the contrary, I make it a rule never to speak positively until I see no room for acting otherwise.

Mr. Collen describes electric sparks produced by brushing the human hair with a hair-brush, and he therefore infers that there was no friction between dissimilar imperfect conductors. It may be interesting to him to know that when a piece of rough glass is rubbed against a piece of polished glass, the one is found to be electrified negatively and the other positively. If he will submit the bristles of the brush and the hair of the head to microscopic examination, he will probably find considerable differences of structure. In addition to this he will probably find that the bristles have been stiffened by artificial heat, making a difference quite sufficient to account for the results.

Mr. Collen is quite right in attributing the effects produced by drawing off the silken shirt from the body, to the insulating property of the silk. When I used the term "dissimilar imperfect conductors," I did so for the sake of accuracy, as it is doubtful if there be any solid substance which is in strict language "an insulator."

To come to the sensitive lady mounted on india-rubber.—Your correspondent infers from her uncomfortable sensations that there was an interruption of the "natural discharge of accumulated electricity from the human body," but he gives no experimental proof whatever to show that there was any electricity there at all. I myself am very sensitive to thunderstorms, and am sometimes for hours together scarcely able to keep my mind on anything while a storm is brewing, and not unfrequently I find this disturbance followed by illness. I know several who suffer in a like manner. These phenomena are produced indoors, where one is insulated from the inductive action of the thunder-cloud, by the walls, roof, and ceiling between the cloud and the person indoors. Therefore this action cannot be attributed to electric induction nor to conduction. It is therefore probably due to some other force, or to some atmospheric condition brought about by the impending storm. It is well known that beer turns sour under similar conditions, milk curdles, and veal often turns green in a remarkably short period of time, although placed in a safe, or otherwise protected from electric induction between the earth and the thunder-cloud.

Mr. Collen assumes that no chemical action can take place without the development of electricity. When he mixes a Seidlitz powder, does he see the sparks flying about, or in what way has he proved that chemical action has produced electrical disturbance sufficient to account for the phenomena he mentions?

Your correspondent calls attention to Du Bois Raymond's beautiful experiments on the so-called muscular electricity. The galvanometer he used was one whose rate of oscillation was very slow, compared with the one I used, and with which I discovered the curious fact that at the moment of relaxing the muscles and opening the hand, there was a sudden but almost momentary increase of current.

The water which I used was common spring water. The chemicals were applied to the hand, and the hand then washed in water to remove the chemicals from the surface of the skin. But most of my experiments were made without any chemicals at all, excepting such as are naturally to be found in the pores of the skin.

Mr. Collen says that a nerve must be a very bad conductor of electricity as compared with a copper wire. The difference in conducting power between the two is as many millions

to one; therefore he will at once perceive how impossible it is to force any considerable current through these nerves without destroying them.

Mr. Collen asks—"Is there not an electrical condition set up in a diamagnetic body while in its equatorial position between the poles of a magnet?" No such electrical condition is found to exist in sufficient power to be rendered visible. Let the body, however, be moved transversely to the magnetic rays, there will be an electrical disturbance while it is so moving.

Had Mr. Collen consulted any practical electrician, I am certain he would never have written the letter he has penned. CROMWELL F. VARLEY.

Fleetwood House, Beckenham, Kent.  
May 10th, 1871.

## MESSRS. HERNE AND WILLIAMS'S MEDIUMSHIP.

THE physical manifestations which take place in the presence of Messrs. Herne and Williams, the two well-known physical mediums of 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, Holborn, are so remarkable, that it is thought that the following depositions as to the development of their mediumship, with which, at our request, they have kindly furnished us, will be of public interest:—

## MR. WILLIAMS'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Mr. Charles Edward L. Williams states:—"I am twenty-one and a half years of age, and first heard of Spiritualism about four years ago, when I resided in Greenwich. In May, 1870, some of us formed an experimental circle, and we obtained raps and table motions; I could not account for them, but did not believe that they were produced by spirits. An intimate acquaintance of mine, Joseph Adcock, was a member of the circle; he, at that time, was very doubtful whether the manifestations were produced by spirits. At this circle the movements of the table were so violent and boisterous that the members did not like it, and discontinued the sittings. Joseph Adcock and myself were, however, so greatly interested in what we had seen, that we began to sit for manifestations by ourselves, once and sometimes twice a week. We obtained table motions, raps, and messages, and at times I was entranced, or became insensible, and saw spirits; I described to those present what I saw, but on awakening had no recollection of what I had said. Before going into a trance the sensations are very pleasant; they are not quite like those felt before going into a natural sleep; there is nothing very peculiar about the feeling, although on some few occasions I have felt very cold at the time. This cold feeling, I think, depends upon the nature of the spirit influencing me. As the power increased, the raps began to be heard by me at times in my bed-room.

"About the end of May, 1870, Joseph Adcock and myself sat for manifestations one evening; I was entranced, and the following message was spelt out by raps—'My name is James Achanna; I was born in the reign of James the Second of Scotland; I became master of the King's household; my title was Lord of Glamis.' He afterwards said that two of the most prominent men in his time were Crichton and Douglas. I have never verified these statements, but as I knew that no such names or thoughts were in my own mind, both my friend Joseph and myself were then for the first time convinced that the message came from spirits.

"In the month of September, 1870, Joseph Adcock introduced me to Mr. Alsop, of 2, Great Turnstile, Holborn, at whose house we had some sittings, at first in the light, and afterwards in the dark, in order to obtain the voices. The short paper tubes provided for the spirits, as usual at voice circles, were carried about by them during the first three weeks of the dark sittings, to all parts of the room, and we heard murmurings through them, or attempts to speak. Shortly afterwards we had the distinct voices of Nicholas J. Bonnick, James Achanna, and other spirits. Later still John King came. The voices and all the best manifestations came at first, while I was entranced and insensible, then gradually the entrancements almost entirely ceased. I felt no pain when I awoke from the entrancements, and sitting in circle was not injurious to me in any way. I think it depends very much upon the circle a medium sits with, whether the process of development is injurious to him or otherwise. From the very beginning of our dark circles we had the spirit hands and touches. A slight dizziness comes over me while the spirit lights are produced. While the spirit voices are going on I often involuntarily sigh or draw long breaths. Sometimes I am entranced now, but with the slight exceptions just mentioned, feel in my normal state while sitting in the circle, but much depends upon the sitters. When the circle is composed of inharmonious influences, I am very much weakened by the manifestations.

"My mother is a medium, as she has several times seen some of our departed relatives, but she does not like Spiritualism. One day, in her bedroom, she saw the spirit of her brother, Captain G. C. Marsh, of the 28th Regiment Madras Infantry, who had died out in India, though we then did not know it, nor had we any reason to suppose he was even unwell. After seeing the apparition she ran out of the room in terror, and came downstairs and told us. A week later, quite by accident, some of us read of the death by cholera of my uncle, Captain Marsh. We kept the news from my mother, but shortly afterwards she had a letter, telling how he died at Kurnool. This was about six or seven years ago. Once my mother sat in circle with Joseph Adcock and me; we had not sat above five minutes, before she said that the 'table was sinking from her,' and she fainted away. She has never sat at a spirit-circle since.

"At times, during my whole life, I have seen spirits, but believed it to be all imagination."

## MR. HERNE'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Mr. Frank Herne states:—"I am 21 years of age. From my earliest childhood I could see spirits, and my parents accounted for it by saying I was too nervous. They tried to force me out of the belief that I saw them. Yet I saw them constantly, heard their voices, and answered them, even while walking in the street, and it was generally thought that I was a youth of eccentric habits, much addicted to talking to myself. When I was about seven years old raps began to come in my bedroom, and three raps always came when I finished saying my prayers; my parents heard these sometimes, and ascribed them to rats or the cat.

"Soon after the death of my sister Jane, I was doing something to her grave in the churchyard, when I saw her, as well as two other spirits who were almost constantly with me. They shewed me three *Ugmon vitæ* trees; one of them was green at the bottom, and dry all the way up; the second green at the top and dry at the bottom; the third healthy in all its parts. A voice said to me—'You can be which you please,' and I chose the healthy tree. They told me that one tree symbolised a man who served God in his childhood only; the second tree symbolised a man who served Him only in his old age; the

third represented a man who served God all the days of his life. They added that 'all three would reach heaven in time.' They told me 'not to be afraid to work for the truth, as I possessed some power, and would be called upon to do a work.' During all this earlier part of my life, I believed what my friends told me, that I was subject to hallucinations, and I did not think that the visions and voices came from spirits. The voices were not heard by others. I was, and am, clairaudient.

"Shortly after my vision in the churchyard, I came to London to complete an engagement with my master, a chemist I had served for three years previously. He was much interested in Spiritualism, and before he came to London I took up a number of *Human Nature* belonging to him, and first read about the alleged power of communicating with spirits. I asked my master what it all meant, and he told me to call over the alphabet when I heard the raps which usually followed my prayers, to see if the said raps would spell me out a message. I did so, and the name of my grandfather was spelt out. This made me very unhappy, for I was afraid to tell my parents, or anyone else, for whenever I told anybody of my experiences, I always gained the character of being anything but truthful. When wandering about in the woods, I found that by touching the trunks of the trees, sometimes raps would come, giving messages about family and other matters.

"Soon after coming to London about three years ago I went with my master to Mr. Cogman's circle: I went under the impression that it was all trickery, for I did not believe much that I had read about Spiritual manifestations, despite my own experiences. The medium who was expected did not come. It was suggested that we should have a dark sitting. We did so, and after a few raps and the table movements I was entranced for the first time. When I woke they told me what I had been saying in the trance; it was so opposed to my own religious feelings that it made me very unhappy, as I thought I was under some evil influence.

A few days later I was told by the voice of my spirit guide to sit for manifestations with my master and his wife, in the light, and to put some water on the table. We did so, and the water was changed into something like wine; the spirits also brought us some hot bread; previously, there was no such bread in the house. Rumours about my mediumship then began to spread among Spiritualists. I was often invited out, but received no fee, and had to pay cab, railway, or other expenses. Mediumship not only proved costly in this way, but it interfered with my work in the shop, for the rapping noises often began upon the counter and elsewhere, things would sometimes move when nobody was touching them, and these things caused me to be much laughed at and annoyed by others on the premises. My friends recommended me to become a paid medium, so a notice that I would sit for the public was printed in *Human Nature*, and directly after that number of the periodical came out Mr. Harrison was the first to come over to Shacklewell and have a *séance* in the light with me, when he critically examined the manifestations which took place.

After this I became medium for the public circles which were held regularly at 2, Great Coram-street, Bloomsbury, and which were the means of making many converts to Spiritualism. But I could not clear my expenses. Spiritualists did not come forward to help me, in fact some of them scandalised me, and a friend, Mr. John Ham, whose name I do not know whether I am at liberty to give, came forward and helped me out of my difficulties. I then gave up Spiritualism for about twelve months, and would sit for manifestations for nobody but my new friend.

About the time the twelve months just mentioned came to a close, I went out yachting with Mr. John Ham, and on our return up the Thames the yacht was anchored at Charlton. We returned to town by steamboat, and when we reached the Tunnel pier, I suggested that we should get out there and go to Mr. Cogman's circle, which I knew would meet that evening, it being Sunday. When we reached there we found the circle waiting for us, for the spirits had told them that others were coming. Mrs. Berry was among those present. Paper tubes were on the table, and there for the first time I heard an audible spirit voice speaking through the tubes. After that Mrs. Berry gave me an invitation to go to her Wednesday evening *séances*, and when I went there John King first spoke through my mediumship. The voice seemed to me to be close to my breast, and it was so loud and startling that I was thoroughly unnerved. Afterwards I called on Mr. Burns, of 15, Southampton-row, Holborn, and he suggested that circles for physical manifestations for the public should be held in his rooms. Four light *séances* were afterwards held in consequence, and they were failures. Mrs. Berry hearing of this, came one evening when only two persons were present, and she suggested a sitting in the dark; the results were very wonderful. From that time dark *séances* for the public were held regularly, and now more persons apply for entrance than can be admitted, although there is a circle there twice a week.

"One night I was at a spirit circle at the house of Mr. Guppy, 1, Morland-villas, Highbury-hill-park, N. Miss Houghton was there; a part of her head-dress was taken away by the spirits; we could not find it, and I afterwards heard that the article had been given to Mr. Williams, a new medium whom I had never seen. Shortly afterwards I met Mr. Williams for the first time at the house of Mr. Emerson, at Beckenham. Later still the spirit John King told me one Thursday to go to the house of Mr. Alsop, 2, Great Turnstile, Holborn; Mr. Williams was there; the manifestations were very powerful, and we finally agreed to live together as professional mediums.

"While the manifestations are taking place I do not, for the most part, feel any peculiar sensations, but sometimes while the spirits are speaking with audible voices I feel as if I cannot breathe, and there is then a soreness about my chest. When the spirits are about to float me bodily in the air, I first feel something like a tight band round my head, and a cool atmosphere down my body, all in less than a second of time. If the chair floats with me, I seem to be glued to the seat, and cannot shift my position on it, but can move my shoulders, head, and arms freely. When the floating begins I feel as if thrown from the floor, without knowing what does it, and while moving in the air I feel just as if floating in water, or some fluid which resists the motion of my body. When my body is elongated, as it has been in the presence of Mr. C. W. Pearce, of 6, Cambridge-road, Kilburn, and many others, including one member of the Dialectical Society, it makes me feel sick for a short time afterwards, and I have a pain in my back, but nothing worth complaining about. Sometimes they elongate one side of me more than the other, then I feel ill and sick all the rest of the day and next morning. I have a very bad temper, but when the fit of passion is over I can be just and reasonable. My memory is good for everything but what is connected with Spiritualism; I do not think I have read a single book on the subject all through, and what I do read seems to fade from my memory. When the spirits are about to bring flowers to a circle I cannot bear to be touched except on the hands; if anybody at such times passes a hand or a



