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AND TEACHINGS OF

SPIRITUALISM.

[REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER FOR TRANSMISSION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD.]

No. 667.—VOL. XIV.]

LONDON, JANUARY 12, 1883.

[PRICE 1½]

TRUTH AND ITS DISGUISES.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE FREE SPIRITUAL
SOCIETY, AT RICHMOND HALL, PLYMOUTH,
ON SUNDAY, THE 10TH SEPTEMBER, 1882.

By MR. C. W. DYMOND.

"Judge not according to appearance; but judge righteous
judgment." —John, vii., 24.

What is Truth? This is, indeed, the most momentous of all questions; one easily asked; but, Oh, how difficult to answer! It has been proverbially said that "Truth lies at the bottom of a well." The ignorant and the superficial, when they think at all, think otherwise; too often regarding themselves as its sole depositories, and denouncing those of deeper insight as victims of error. But the wise and humble seeker knows with what patient energy of purpose it is necessary to strive to become possessed of the precious jewel; and counts all else but as loss, until he find it.

The age in which it is our privilege to live is distinguished from all preceding ones pre-eminently by this characteristic,—that it is an age of inquiry, of intense and incessant mental activity, directed mainly toward the observation and classification of facts, from which, in due time, it may be possible to rise to the comprehension of principles. Much of this, it is true, is prompted by a restless, and even covetous craving for mental acquisitions; and by what Milton styles "that last infirmity of noble minds"—the desire for personal renown. But mingled with these lower springs of action, there is a strong seasoning of high impulse,—a yearning, sometimes passionate in its intensity, to apprehend the truth in any and every form, both for its own sake, and for the sake of its blessed fruits.

The first great discovery incident to the development of this inquiry, in every age, has been that, for the most part, as the poet says,¹ "Things are not what they seem." Hitherto, however, this "open secret" has been truly apprehended only by the most penetrating minds; and, even by many of these, it has been too long regarded merely as a philosophical conclusion,

to be wrapped up, as it were, in a napkin, instead of being universally applied to clear, and otherwise prepare the intellectual and moral fallows for the world's harvest of social and personal blessing. But now, a conviction of the vast extent, and mighty sway of the Kingdom of Fallacy begins to spread among thinkers of every class, with whom the order and degree of its reception run *pari passu* with the subordination of their respective domains of thought. Thus, while the concrete sciences suffer comparatively little from circumscribed intellectual treatment, a most lamentable obliquity of vision continues to prevail in the regions of sociology and theology; notwithstanding that, in our own times, a great enfranchisement from error has been inaugurated; and a strong current of thought has been turned in the direction of universal truth. In the keen inquisition thus commenced, everything that can become a subject of human inquiry is summoned to stand and yield its secret. The sciences, arts, philosophies, policies, histories, creeds, and maxims handed down to us from our predecessors, are submitted to the most searching examination. Nothing—even though it were the very Ark of God itself—is deemed too sacred to be the object of human endeavour, urged by the desire to "prove all things," that it may the more firmly "hold fast that which is good."² Truth must, at all hazards, be won: and, while mountains of rubbish—the accumulated errors of the Past—are slowly cleared away, there come to light legacies of precious truths, erst overlaid and hidden, which are being carefully treasured for our use. When enough of these shall have been found and recognized; and when they shall have been co-ordinated with the solid results of advancing discovery; then—and not until then—can a firm foundation be successfully laid for a reconstruction of the sciences, of art, of philosophy, of theology, of ethics, and, through these, of society.

But the process of transition must needs be a painful one. The birth of Truth into a backward world cannot be accomplished without severe and prolonged suffering. It involves a rending of the bonds of familiar habits of thought and feeling; the uprooting of long-established and inveterate errors; the fall of ancient and decrepit faiths;—in a word, the insurrection of revolutionary principles upon the calm com-

¹ Longfellow: Psalm of Life.

² 1 Thess., v., 21.

placency of conservative content; with a result like the flashing of blinding light upon the eyes of those who, like bats, have hitherto flitted about in the dusky cellars of prescription and ignorance.

As in every other form of development, so in the unfolding of truth, the history of the world parallels the history of the individual man. In this aspect, the careers of both may be divided into two periods. The first—that of childhood and youth—is chiefly occupied in receiving impressions. During the second—that of maturity—reason subjects the impressions of youth to inquiry, and experience gauges their worth. Each period has its dangers and its impotencies. Youth is ever prone to regard all its impressions as trustworthy, and to despise the cautious corrections of wisdom; while manhood is apt to forget, and to undervalue the intuitions of youth. Happy is he who retains in his heart much of the freshness of childhood, while slowly garnering the ripened wisdom of age! "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters; and that spreadeth out her roots by the river; she shall not see when heat cometh; but her leaf shall be green; and she shall not be careful in the year of drought; neither shall cease from yielding fruit."³

With this introduction, I will now proceed to point out the principal orders of fallacy which obscure our perception of truth, that we may see, at a glance, the sources from whence they arise. For our present purpose, they may be thus classified:—

1. *Objective fallacies*, imposing upon our organs of sense, whether in a healthy, or in a morbid condition.
2. *Subjective fallacies*, inherent in our common nature, or engendered by hereditary determination, and by personal proclivity, either constant or transitory.
3. *Educational fallacies*, implanted by early training, or by the influence of our environment.
4. *Verbal fallacies*, in customary forms of expression.

It is yet impossible fully to realize the amazing extent to which mankind has unconsciously been impressed and led astray by this array of allied forces: and we must not lose sight of them for a moment when canvassing claims professing to be made in the interests of truth.

Now, what are the most general aspects of truth? As popularly apprehended, truths may be said to be divided into two classes,—those which are *real*, and those which are *apparent*.

Real truths may be subdivided into the *positive* or *absolute*, and the *relative*, or *conditional*. It is an absolute truth that every point in the circumference of a circle is equidistant from its centre: and another, that the whole is greater than its parts. That the elephant is a huge animal, and that water is a good beverage, are conditional truths: for it is quite clear that a giant race might regard the elephant as a very small animal; and that, in certain bodily states, the drinking of water might be injurious.

The title *apparent truths* is used only by way of accommodation. Those which are so called are, nearly always, not truths at all; but merely aspects of things, impressions made on our senses by facts and events, states of being or of action, perhaps justly perceived, as to their appearances; but veiling and disguising the genuine truths which are behind. As examples, may be instanced the apparent rising and setting of the sun; the apparent immobility of our globe; and the apparent imponderability of the atmosphere.

Real truths are independent of the impressions they convey to our senses. *Apparent* truths (so far as they are only apparent) appeal solely to our natural apprehensions. In a small proportion of instances, they may also be real; for, to any one not affected with *ametropia*, the equality in length of the four sides of a square is ocularly apparent, as well as intellectually certain:⁴

³ Jeremiah, xvii., 8.

⁴ This is not meant to convey the impression that there is the same degree of certainty in both cases: all that is implied is, that the appearance involves no inherent fallacy.

but generally, if assumed to be real, it will be safe to conclude that the assumption is false; so that, thus viewed, they become absolute untruths. And this, even when the impression is received directly by our healthy perceptions, either native or cultivated: much more then, when the image is distorted by an imperfect or a diseased organism.

To one unaccustomed to scientific precision of thought and language, it would be almost impossible to realize how very small, comparatively, is the number of absolute truths already known: and these are connected chiefly with the exact sciences. On every hand we are (I repeat it) beset by fallacies; and the real natures, even of the things which we deem most familiar to us, are as little understood as are those of objects of rare occurrence. For example, we think we know a great deal about matter; but it is a fact that, after thousands of years of most intimate alliance with it; and notwithstanding the expenditure of a vast amount of thought in profound speculation upon it; we still have not the least notion as to what matter is. It is true that we know a good deal about its properties: but about its essence, we know no more than we do of the most hidden mysteries. When a philosopher, then, makes a distinction between matter and spirit, he may be right, so long as he confines his view to their known characteristic properties,—to the usual modes of their manifestation: but if he proceed to assert, on the strength of appearances, that spirit and matter are essentially diverse things, having nothing in common; and that they are incapable of being mutually transmuted; he may be quite wrong: he makes a statement which he cannot prove.

But, if it be a fact that an acquaintance with absolute truths is so rare; and that, almost exclusively, those only which have been called *apparent* are the staple of our experience; you may say that, if appearances are so deceptive, man must be the prey of dangerous delusions on every hand. Nay, our lot is not quite so bad as that: and it is a matter of prime consequence to determine, if we can, under what circumstances the misapprehensions arising from this source are likely to be innocuous; and what form of development they must take, in order to make war upon the happiness of mankind. The vast importance of acquiring right views on this capital matter, must be urged in justification of the treatment in the pulpit of questions so abstract as these.

Let us now try to formulate the general conditions of the problem, before we proceed to glance at its most striking and interesting practical phases.

First, then, every *apparent truth* is compounded of fact and fallacy—generally, a very little of the former, and a great deal of the latter. Thus, that the sun revolves around the earth, is a fallacy of appearance; but that the relative positions of the sun and of the spectator continually change, is an obvious fact.

Secondly, it will be evident that the *injurious influence of fallacies on any given perception or procedure will vary in proportion to the respective rank and magnitude of the fallacies; and to the respective intimacy of their bearing upon the perception or act.* For instance, in the case of a minister addressing his congregation, it might not vitiate his teaching to hold the fallacy that the habitual use of tonic medicines is beneficial in chronic disease: but if he believe in, and preach the terrors of the orthodox hell, and the vengeance of God, he will warp and paralyze the minds of many of his flock; and may even drive some to end their stricken lives by suicide.

Thirdly, it will be equally evident that the *consequences of error in assuming the verity of any given apparent truth, will vary in proportion to the rank and magnitude of the interests at stake, and to the degree of their connexion with the fallacy.* For instance, to a cotter, cultivating his patch of garden, it makes no appreciable difference whether, with a certain enthusiast, he believes the world to be flat, and of very circumscribed area, as it appears to a superficial observer to be; or whether he knows that it is an

oblate spheroid. But a voyager, possessed by this fallacy of the senses, would, for a long time, timidly refrain from approaching the sea-ward horizon, lest he should fall over its edge: and thus geographical discovery, and international intercourse, would be postponed. Again, a belief in the fallacy that alcohol, used as a beverage, imparts strength, is innocuous, so long as the spirit is used only to feed a lamp, or to preserve a museum-specimen; but it may bear dead-sea-fruit, if it incite to reliance upon it as a re-creator of exhausted energies.

By a combination of the three preceding statements, we reach the following summary conclusion:—*Fallacies are harmful in proportion to their pregnancy, their rank, and the magnitude of the interests supposed to be affected by them.*

In accordance with these indications, we shall find,—

(1) That practical matters, pertaining to the outward life of mankind, inasmuch as they have almost exclusive reference to the facts which accompany the fallacies of the senses, are, for the most part, uninfluenced by the latter, and flourish, in proportion to the degree of their adjustment to the former. (2) Going higher, we shall find that, in scientific matters, an abiding in natural fallacies would result in stultification of mind, and stagnation of human progress, to a degree measured by the prevalence of faith in appearances. (3) But the most serious consequences result when our meditations on the highest interests of the human spirit are invaded and deflected by fallacies of theology: and as this is a subject on which we ought to be most deeply interested; and is one specially appropriate to the pulpit, I ask your attention to it for the remainder of our time. Who can measure the havoc that has been wrought among mankind through spiritual error, and moral insensibility,—those prolific parents of the most rampant evils that have desolated this fair world, and hidden the light of God from human eyes, and the warmth of His love from human hearts? Were it possible for us to realize the sum of suffering that has arisen from this hydra-headed cause, since our earth became a theatre of human life, we should indeed be appalled; and should sicken with satiety of horrors.

Save in the earliest ages, religious notions have not been much formed upon, and mis-led by, *objective fallacies*. The primitive man, whose knowledge was limited to what he observed of superficial natural appearances, doubtless acquired his first notions of worship by imagining that those bright celestial objects, the cause of whose movements he could not understand; and those invisible forces by which he was directly and indirectly affected; were endowed with intelligence, and could be propitiated in his favour. But, whatever may have been his mistakes, he probably did not indulge in abstract reasoning upon these matters; and his simple faiths were but reflexions from his own mind of the impressions made thereon by natural phenomena. Hence, in their present connexion, we may dismiss the consideration of objective fallacies, as having only a distant, traditional bearing upon our own theologies; and may confine our attention to those of the remaining three categories.

Under the head of *subjective fallacies*, will most properly come original, personal or national modifications of the God-idea. It has been said that, as is the god of a people, so is the popular character. It would be more correct to reverse the order of these terms, and to say, with Scripture, that the character of a people determines the character of its deity. "They that make them are like unto them."⁵ The fact is, (though few apprehend it clearly), that the Supreme Being, whom we individually worship, is by each of us conceived in a merely subjective form: and all such creations are necessarily incomplete and distorted. Thus the God of the high Calvinist is a lean and partial pedant, whose government is a stern and narrow travesty of Divine justice. The abstract impersonal theism of

the East is the product of the contemplative and subtle habit of the Asiatic mind; as the concrete and personal theism of the West is of the practical genius, and executive faculty of Europe. The Jehovah of the Hebrews—that intense and persistent, but narrow, exclusive, and self-conscious race (an anomaly among eastern peoples)—was deeply tinged with the national failings. Though recognized as the Creator of the world; and as ruling "over all the kingdoms of the Heathen;"⁶ yet He was most habitually regarded as "a jealous God,"⁷ the national deity of the "chosen" people; and pitted against "the gods of the Heathen," in the character of a rival, or indignant avenger, rather than in that of the Universal Father.⁸ It is abundantly evident that, though the Hebrew writers, in their better moods, were according to their measure, able to rise toward the true idea of God, the common conception of Him, grounded only in appearances, was cramped and perverted.

Intimately interwoven with the idea of God, is the theory of man; of his nature, his relations with the Deity, his condition, and his prospects. Both theories are subjective, though in different degrees; and the latter is often as false as the former. Let us take a typical example, to illustrate this point. The nature of sin, for instance. What a gulf there is between certain legal, intangible, metaphysical notions of "original" and personal sin, and the broad view which regards as sinful all human acts, whether outward or inward, which, to our apprehensions, disturb the Divinely-ordained harmony of the universe! All such speculative doctrines, however interesting to the philosopher, are of no practical use: they rather "darken counsel by words without knowledge."⁹ All that we can be said to know of this matter; and all that we need to know, is, that acts called sinful sooner or later beget results which are felt to be painful; and that, if we wish to avoid these, we must eschew those. Nor have we to regard this matter alone, or chiefly, as it may bear upon our narrow personal interests: for only when our sympathies are enlarged to embrace the interests of all; and our views to discern the infinite consequences of every individual act; shall we truly become children of God in obeying His commandments.

So much for the general theory of sin. In relation to individuals, we often find it involved in bewildering complications. To every right-minded person, the alternative is incessantly presented,—Shall I do, or shall I abstain from doing certain acts? The answer of the soul to this question is ever liable to be dictated by influences creative of fallacy. Personal bias; chronic or transitory morbid states; modes of intellectual operation; and—perhaps more than these—the force of training and associations:—all have a voice in directing the decision. What is sinful for one, may sometimes be lawful for another; and, for the same person, an act may, at one time, be wrong, which, at another time, may be right. Who is there that has reached maturity without finding reason to revise some of the teachings referring to right and wrong inculcated on him in childhood?

We may thus see how impossible it must be to frame any definition of sin less general than the one given above; one which leaves us to judge of the rectitude of any act solely by its known or apprehended consequences. You may say that this is nothing but a revival of the doctrine of Utility: and so it is: but utility, understood in its widest sense,—the sense in which God understands it.

By this review, we should be taught to be full of charity one toward another; and to blame no one who may square his life on maxims other than our own, unless it is clear that, in so doing, he rejects the light, and is convicted by the "still small voice" of God in his own soul.

Intimately connected with this subject, is the all-

⁶ 2. Chron., xx., 6.

⁷ Exod., xx., 5.

⁸ Jer., x., 22.

⁹ Job, xxxviii., 2.

⁵ Ps., cxv., 8.

important question, What are the relations of God to man, and of man to God with regard to "acceptance?" It truly depends upon degree of approximation. The theologic doctrine, that it is impossible for any soul, tinged with unworthiness, to appear in the immediate presence of God, is founded upon just apprehensions. Equally true is the conviction that the best soul on earth falls infinitely short of the super-angelic purity necessary to admit of that most intimate Divine communion. To believe otherwise, is to be a victim of serious fallacy. An earthly saint who, in the midst of a company of abandoned wretches, might seem to be a radiant angel, would, if introduced, unprepared, into the supernal Heaven, be smitten, by its blinding splendors, into a state of darkness and misery. Hence, we cannot but conclude, that the steps of ascent to the throne of "the excellent glory" are infinitely graduated; and that, in the Spiritual World, there is room for all on their multitudinous stages. The popular notion, that Heaven is an undivided place, or state, in which all saved souls are ushered into the immediate presence of God, has been the parent of a brood of errors. So has that other popular notion, as to the attitude of God toward man in this world. This is wholly grounded in appearances; and is a fallacy of the most serious kind. As man makes his own ideal of God, so does he commonly picture the character of the Divine emotions which he supposes to be called forth by human sin. Men have supposed that the effect of sin is to stimulate the Divine wrath. But what is the wrath of God? This, and nothing more. *It is the impression received by the human soul on feeling the inward or outward consequences of real or apprehended sin.* It is purely subjective; and to make it objective, is to commit the same kind of error as that of the ignorant savage who when the sun is eclipsed, or is obscured by a cloud, or has set below the horizon, thinks that he has withdrawn in anger, or that he is dead. The fallacy is, that he appears to have removed from sympathy with the world; while the truth is, that he is shining with the most faithful constancy, and sustained splendor. The change is not in the sun, but in the revolving earth; in the interposition of the cloud; or in the transit of the moon. We have but to wait until, in the course of terrestrial rotation, the sun re-appears in the orient; or until the clouds are blown away, or dissipated by his warmth; or until the transient obscuration has passed;—when, lo! our great luminary (fittest representative to us of "the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings")¹⁰ re-appears, as it were, with an unchanging love. The prophet well says,—¹¹ "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God; and your sins have hid [not your face from Him, but] His face from you." A man with strong and healthy vision may look at the sun, and only be dazzled; while, to diseased and inflamed eyes, the exposure would be productive of torture. The difference is again subjective: in the eye; not in the light.

Educational fallacies, being much less deeply seated, and, therefore, more easily extirpated, need not detain us long. Still, we all know their force, and have found how hard it is to burst the chains of error, and evil habits, that may have been drawn around us by early training and associations. The broad distinction between those fallacies on which I have just been speaking, and these is, that, while the characteristics of the former are, for the most part, either constant, or have been developed into natural varieties which are persistent during the life of the race or the individual; those of the latter are artificially diversified; and, hence, are susceptible of unlimited modifications in the same subjects. For this reason, and that they are continually changing front, they cannot well be classified. While comparatively long periods of time are necessary to effect modifications of those subjective fallacies whose spheres are localized; we are daily witnesses to the

mutations of thought which mark the stages of individual emancipation from mental thralldom. Reformation must begin here, before it can successfully assail those warring forces, of greater vitality, which are constitutional.

The last, but not least important section of this Discourse, will deal with those fallacies which I have denominated *verbal*;—those, in fact, which are connected with the use of language—especially in the Bible.

If the difficulty of finding absolute truths, by direct study of the various attributes and modes of existence, is so great; how much must it be increased and complicated when impressions of them are transmitted through the medium of words! How imperfectly do the most skilfully chosen expressions mirror forth the living thought! What accommodations of phrase are needed to convey to others an image of our own ideas! If you will seek for it in books, or in conversation, you will find that the use of language is subject to restrictions similar, in their way, to those imposed by the Creator on the manifestations of His own thought. There is not now time to illustrate this in detail; and it must suffice to enforce the truth of the assertion by pointing to the endless and irreconcilable variety of interpretations of every part of the Bible which have been, still are, and ever will be held by those of its devoted students who seek for a precision of wisdom in words which words can never embody; and who neglect to test the impressions thence derived by an unbiassed, and equally diligent study of the facts and phenomena of the great world without, and the little world within themselves. These are the inevitable drawbacks of an exclusive attention to writings, even if originals, fresh from the hands of inspired penmen. Must not they be increased by knowing that the originals are now represented only by imperfect and discrepant copies, the respective authorities of which are disputed: and that these imperfect copies are, for the mass of readers, represented by still more imperfect translations, not only subject to the diminutions of force and accuracy which are incident to successive transmissions of thought, but still more weakened by acknowledged uncertainties peculiar to themselves?

Precious, indeed, as is this literary legacy from the ancients,—it is really amazing to think how a number of detached treatises, composed by, or written through the instrumentality of various individuals, at intervals during nearly two thousand years; and, by successive accretions, grouped together in divers forms, under very diverse auspices,—sometimes by Councils marred by ungodly strife;—and the canon of which still lacks the *imprimatur* of the whole Christian Church; could ever have been worshipped as the very Word of God, and regarded as the supreme and only authority in matters of faith and life. An article so constituted, which may either be treasured for generations on the family altar, or may remain utterly unknown, as it still is, by the majority of mankind; which, according to your whim, you may carry next to your heart, or chuck into the nearest fire; certainly has not the attributes of the Abiding Spirit which is able to lead us into all truth. Nevertheless, we may draw deep draughts of wisdom therefrom, if we will but use it rationally; not putting artificial meanings into it; but only extracting from it those which are really there. To do this, requires an unbiassed mind, and sound scholarship: and, in the present state of religious belief, it needs some courage to teach, that every truth essential to the well-being of man is revealed more clearly in the ways of Providence, and through the higher intuitions of the human soul, than it can possibly be in any book.

And now, in conclusion, if we, who are but worms of the dust, and children of frailty, can yet rise to a measure of true mutual charity, shall not we much rather trust in the infinite tenderness of the All-wise and All-loving One, "who giveth us richly all things [necessary] to enjoy?"¹² "Man needs but little here below;" though he reveals his high destiny by aspiring to unbounded knowledge. Like Moses, of old, he, in effect, says to God, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory."¹³ The answer ever is, "No man can

¹⁰ Malachi, iv., 2.

¹¹ Isaiah, lix., 2.

¹² 1 Tim., vi., 17.

see my face, and live: but thou shalt stand upon a rock hard by me; and I will put thee in a rift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand, while I pass by: then I will take away my hand; and thou shalt see my back."¹⁴ How beautifully is the Divine condescension to the weakness of the creature taught by this dramatic scene! With feet established on the living rock; sheltered in an appointed niche, with room enough to stand, but not to wander; and protected by the Divine power from the overwhelming glory of the Divine effulgence; while all that it is possible for us to see is disclosed:—Is not this descriptive of our condition here? Truth, to the extent of our comprehension, is, as each moment ripens, revealed to us: and, in the eternal progress, as we go on from strength to strength, its infinitudes will be given to our enraptured gaze. As among those, then, who long for the opening of the beatific vision, let our watch-word ever be, Forward! Forward!

THE SPIRIT-MESSENGER.

MESMER'S MEDIUMSHIP — SPIRIT GREETINGS.

A CONTROL BY "JOSEPH STURGE."

Recorded by A. T. T. P., December 20, 1882.

The Sensitive went at once under control, and spoke as follows:—

Yes. Well, and I consider it is a gathering, that should have been formed long ago. I am pleased to see the names of many of the leaders of thought associated with this great and important association. I am referring to those gentlemen, who have been long hovering on the borderland of enquiry; but who have now stepped to the front to take notice of these spiritual claims, that are now being made broad-cast. You may, perhaps, have noticed their claim to the attention of the public, when they said, that they were surprised at the immense number of well-written letters that have appeared in our public prints on the subject of "ghosts," or spirits, and that they were much surprised, that taking into consideration the number of correspondents on this subject, so few should have considered it necessary to answer their enquiries.

Their examination is to embrace all psychical facts, and also to enquire into alleged spiritual phenomena. They say that they had written to these correspondents, asking "whether their contributions were bona fide, and that these letters reached them through the names of the several Editors, who knew the right names, and the correct addresses of their correspondents, but who peremptorily refused to give them unless their contributors were consenting parties; that out of the many, but a very small percentage have, up to the present time, been willing to give their evidence to the society." To me, this should be no matter of surprise. Many of them are holding high positions, requiring intellectual ability to maintain their position, and should their names and addresses be published, their intellectual ability would be questioned, entailing loss of position. It is not by these means that universality would be obtained. The impulse is due from us to earth, not from earth to us. It is we that impart: it is those of earth that receive. It is for us to tell all about ghosts or spirits: it is for those of earth to hear, listen, and heed.

Their investigation will embrace first: Animal Magnetism, as a common-sense reason for alleged spiritual healing. The claims made, over a hundred years ago, by Mesmer; although first discovered by a monk of the Roman Catholic faith, by the name of Father Hehl. Mesmer realized earthly treasure by his discovery of mediumistic qualifications, for it was nothing else; he being physically formed of easily disintegrating particles. He was the D. D. Home of mediums for healing. Before him, disease seemed to lose its malignant hold; before him, the two worlds seemed to meet, and thousands looked on and wondered. I know, spiritually, those who have been with him in his labours for the reception of those, whom the then learned called fanatics and credulous fools. Modern tests of physical manifestations are cried down in these modern days; but the demanded tests of to-day are as nothing in comparison to the tests that were demanded from Mesmer.

The sick were healed in his presence, and with his touch; and the powers that worked through him were mystified by hypothesis and pedantry. The power which he uses, cried out one, is an universal fluid, forming a medium of mutual influence between one planet and another, between human and animal bodies; subtle and fluid in its natural parts, capable of flux and reflux, of receiving, of propagating, and containing all kinds of motion. Its operations are directly on the nerves, and distance makes no manner of difference. It cures nervous

disorders, and is, when scientifically explained, a cure and preservative of the bodies of mankind. It was a very learned dissertation on the claims of Mesmer in the latter end of the eighteenth century; but, unfortunately, there was only one thing wanting to make this explanation complete, and that was truth. Mesmer, when he listened to this wonderful scientific explanation, said: "It may be so; I do not understand one half of what you have said; I make no pretensions to philosophical knowledge, I only know that I wish your explanation was the true one,—that this fluid was universal in its action, for then disease would cease, and its attendant poverty would also cease to be. I am realizing wealth, but it is not making me happier. I do not crave for what I demand, and I now demand that I may be safe. Rumour makes you crowd my saloon now, although my charges are virtually prohibitive to five-eighths of the population. That all should know I wish, and could I be safe I would let them. I heal with a touch, but not of myself, but of Him from whom all power proceeds; I can know of no hereafter nor of God but through man—through man only can God be conceived. It is man, then, that helps me; but you cry out—'What man is doing the things that you are doing?' The same cry was raised in the days of old, and the answer that was then given I can only now give: 'It is not me, but the Father that worketh through me.'"

Can this man be seen? was the eager question that was raised around universally; the savant's pedantry was forgotten, and eagerness took its place. "Yes: but at fearful consequences to myself," was my answer. "Yes: but at fearful consequences, also, to my brother man, for they will take my life to make themselves known to you;—I mean my earth-life, and they will take that life which I can make of benefit to my brother man by curing diseases. I shall be weaker and poorer in health, and more unfit to cope with, and successfully battle with those causes that produce affluence. Hence I will be paid for this experiment. I know what is passing in your minds: 'Charlatan, cheat, impostor, and rogue,' but I do not care. If you would that this experiment should be made, I am willing to submit. I am clad like you. There are sixty of you present. Guard the windows; watch the doors; form a committee. Strip me, until I stand before you nude; then let the experiment take place. If there is another power than mine, whatever I suffer I will be satisfied with five hundred louis d'or. If there is no proof of a power outside myself, I will be satisfied of having done my best. It is but little amongst you; it is my right to claim it. It is within the limits of your power to grant me this; I do not beg for it, I do not court the experiment. I have laughed often at the opprobrious terms used by you against myself. Think you I have lost every particle of dignity, of manhood, that such ill-toned terms do not wound me? Whatever the experiment may be, whatever its conclusion, I will reap the fruits; that is, if it is made."

Can I blame him? No, I cannot, Sir. Can I blame those that submit so to be bound and tortured to-day? No, I will not. But when the experiment was made, away flew all the hypothesis of an universal fluid; away flew the supposition of the universality of animal magnetism, unless acted on spiritually. They bound Mesmer with chains. Why even the sceptical minds of to-day are more merciful, and, God knows, their mercy is capable of improvement; they bound him with chains (whilst he was nearly nude) to his chair, and then they sat in darkness. The universal electricity failed. It was changed into hands, which touched every sitter; changed into lights, which showed the startled faces of every human being there; changed into forms of human mould, who handled the heavy chains, and in their hands the heavy iron seemed like gossamer webs; and then lights were called for, and the money parted with. The fainting condition of Mesmer increased afterwards day by day, until they laid his wasted form at rest. Other charlatans and impostors have died in these more modern days; for these baseless allegations, which pervert truth and hold it back: truth which, if permitted, would enfranchise thought and rule supreme.

This is the approaching season of relaxation from worldly care, this the season of festivities. It is the holy memorable advent of that day, which heralded the birth of a saviour, or reformer amongst men. Therefore, it is necessary that I should take on myself the task, dear Recorder, of sending friendly greeting, and also apologising where needed. I say, apologise, and I mean on behalf of him whose body we use, and whose spirit, for the time, we banish. There are qualities which some people possess in excess, and which others do not possess at all. One lives under a rigid sense of punctuality, whilst another, all through his life, ignores it; one is jealous of his honour in respect of courtesy, whilst another is inexcusably discourteous, not through a perverse or bearish disposition, but through that want of tact, which should guide and govern every relation in life. But if there is one soul that we can excuse more than another, it is the soul of the body which I am now using; for it is thrust out of doors so often, that it is a stranger to its own home, its body; and although the courtesies of earth are disregarded, alone through the want of practising them. The first, to whom I will take on myself to apologise, is one who, like yourself, has lived as of us and with us. He has a spiritual name given to him* by angels on

¹³ Exodus, xxxiii., 18.

¹⁴ Ibid, xxxiii., 20—23.

* Wm. Ozley

high. He lives where that old man's feet will wander; I mean the one to whom you so kindly sent relief. You will do this for us; you will do this for me, who is but a representative delegate of your surroundings.

In November, two years back, a kindly letter was written by our dear brother "Faithful," to his poorer brother, L—, a letter which greeted him in the name of the ascended and glorified ancient spirit, was sent with greeting by him whose portrait adorns your wall there, the Great Ancient of Days, "Busiris," whose spirit penetrates even through heaven in name. This greeting continued: "Hail to 'Steadfast,' who has for his surroundings these angels of light." He recollects, also, that he is embodied and still of earth, and that, further, he realizes that God, through him, will represent the truth unfolded for these many years. He recognises this in the name of "The Ancient of Days," the embodiment of humanity. That all men are but parts, atoms in one grand and mighty whole. With this letter he also sent him the first part of the "Angelic Revelations," received by him in the days gone by. To him these "Revelations" form to-day a fountain of light and knowledge from which he lives day by day, drawing spiritual lifehood. He hoped in that Letter of two years back, that the Sensitive's heart would respond to these "Angelic Revelations." But the cry of the soul belonging to this body was then and is now: "I dare say that it is, also, a fountain from which I might drink, if I could only understand it." He professed a hope, in that time of two years ago, that God would raise up friends on every side, if needed, and that for him there was to be no more earthly imprisonment; that that stage was passed; that the cup of sorrow was drained to the dregs then, and that when he stood alone, despised and rejected of all, he stood as a type of what he would be, if faithful—a wearer of the crown of life, that awaits all men; a crown that shall put aside all memory of the sufferings and trials of the past,—of the grinding poverty which seems to be man's fiercest trial. Riches, in their spiritual meaning, is knowledge. There is no other wealth in the heaven of heavens; and poverty, spiritually, is the absence of knowledge, and, before God, "dear one," the earthly type of poverty is but poor in comparison in its degradation, to that of the spiritual poverty of the future life. There is want on earth of true knowledge. There may be earthly riches, but with the possessor abides spiritual poverty. He that has spiritual knowledge possesses riches that will never fail him. May spirit, angels, and God bless and protect him, for he has given, and his left hand has been guiltless of the knowledge of what his right hand has bestowed.

To this letter there has been a silence of two years. Dear Recorder, he will remember this letter, for he has often dwelt on it, and wondered why there has been a request made for the other matters of spiritual revelation. You will tell him from me, on the Sensitive's behalf, that your surroundings thought it was necessary that a higher state of preparation should be given to the Sensitive, before he made the request for this other further and extended knowledge of spiritual matters, and tell him that others or myself will come to answer him, acknowledging the receipt of the other two volumes now in his possession, as a present for New Year's day. You will also transmit to him the long-delayed thanks for the volume received about the same time. There was also a volume received from the editor of a spiritual paper, called the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, and prior to that, again a volume of reports of healing cures, through the blessed power bestowed on that wonderfully constituted man, in the possession of the soul of him known as Dr. Mack. Will you, by request of your surroundings and myself, also acknowledge this? I am sure you will forgive this application to you.

During this blessed Christmas time all men should be united, as the angels are united in the higher heavens. Happiness should be universal; for happiness is not given to the wealthy ones alone. A knowledge of the after-life shall make a poor man happy; a knowledge that, when he is called away, a brighter world awaits him, where welcoming hands and welcoming hearts are continually there, when he shall behold the glory that belongs to the everlasting. A glory not for any particular one, not for a certain set, but a glory provided from the beginning for all, during this happy Christmas time.

Recorder, look back on the now nearly ended year with satisfaction. Apart from many years, this one stands out bright and clear; inasmuch as you have been sowing good seed, and the reaper in your fields shall harvest future blessings. Now your seeds are germs of truth, of knowledge; you are teaching that the present is the teaching of the future, for man's weal or his woe. You have preached the doctrine of action. It has been a noble deed in time, and good labour to our Cause. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. Be of good heart, dear Recorder, its promise is for you, and has been for all that have passed through the valley and shadow of earthly dissolution, and may the quickly budding year be one of more extended usefulness, with an ever-increasing love of your surroundings to you; nay, more than this, the love of your Father God in heaven will increase in fervour. I am but the forerunner of those who will bid you greeting this closing year, but although amongst the least of your surroundings, not less a well-wisher to you than the highest, your angel, your guide.—Finis.

"This is a strange control." I wonder whether there is to be found, anywhere, any record of the strange phenomena spoken of concerning Mesmer; because, if there be any such, Mesmer takes the lead of the Fox family by fully half a century. I daresay some day or another it will be discovered that spiritual materializations have, throughout the past, often manifested themselves, but fear of consequences has alone prevented their publication. I believe this story told by Mesmer, for the reason that the so-called Mesmeric state is the stepping stone to the clairvoyant and clairaudient one. On that subject I could say much, and so could many more besides me.

The reader will notice a message which I am to deliver to Mr. Wm. Oxley, which should have been given by the Sensitive more than two years ago. Without some explanation all will pass without understanding its meaning. About the time referred to, I was having a seance with the Sensitive, and in full daylight down came a packet containing a large cabinet-size photograph, and one or two photos, carte de visite size, and a long letter from Mr. Oxley to the Sensitive. The packet fell right in front, a few inches from my pen. I opened it, examined the photos, read a portion of the letter referred to in the latter part of this control, and put them again into the envelope, and put it under my writing pad.

When the seance was over, and the Sensitive had been restored to his normal state, he told me of the letter and the photographs which he had received from Mr. Oxley, and said he had intended to bring them to show to me, but had forgotten them. I said nothing about their being under my pad; but I asked him to bring them when next he came. After he had gone I showed them to one or two callers, who came in shortly after, to whom I told the story, and only got laughed at. I showed the pictures and the letter, and put them down before me. As soon as my visitors had gone, I commenced writing to Mr. Oxley, telling him what had happened; I had been writing for about twenty minutes, when I had to go into the adjoining room for a few minutes. When I returned the photos, the letters, and the envelope were gone. No one could have entered my room. My outer door was fastened, and the only key besides my own, was that of the landress, who never comes except at stated times. I searched my chambers thoroughly, that day and the next; but no packet was to be found. Four days after this, I saw a packet in one of the nest of pigeon holes, which I had previously searched unsuccessfully, and cleared out every hole. I took the packet down, and found the missing photos and letter. I put it before me, and had just commenced writing to Mr. Oxley in continuation of the letter commenced previously, when I had to get up to answer a knock at my door, which I answered and returned to my writing; but photos, letter, and envelope had again disappeared, and nothing more did I hear of them for eight months, when the Sensitive told me that they had lately been found in the glass case, from which he intended to have brought them to me.

I tell this for the benefit of the Psychical Research Committee. Possibly some day they may be permitted to have an examination of the Sensitive and get something that will astonish them, but unless they are permitted, and not otherwise, would they get anything that would repay the trouble, as the conditions they would impose are not such as our unseen friends would accept. I believe, if the so-called investigators, after seeing several well-developed mediums at a meeting, examined, stripped, and put in other clothes; every door, window, and plank of the floor examined in full light, were then ironed themselves, and placed at some short distance from the medium and sitters with faith, they would, as soon as the lights were subdued, receive a lesson they would not forget. This might not happen on the first, second, or third sitting, but half a dozen sittings would not take place before something would happen that would astonish them. The story of Mesmer, in the body of the control, with a slight change, might well be applied; only change the chains from the sensitives to the investigators. Were I to narrate my own experiences alone, believers in spiritual communion would simply say, they are no more than what hundreds of others have had, there is nothing to us, wonderful in them; whilst the outsider would, in all probability, say: "We do not believe you." Let them go their course, and let us take no trouble to convince them. They will some day find out who are the fools in the matter.

SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

THE AMERICAN SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A prospectus has been received replying to a circular of the American Institute of Christian Philosophy, which is headed by a formidable array of D.D.s and LL.D.s as vice-presidents. This "response" on the part of the Spiritualists, and which was "adopted by the American Spiritualist Alliance, at a meeting held on Dec. 11, 1882," is subscribed to by Henry Kiddle, President; Henry J. Newton, 1st Vice-President; Charles Partridge, 2nd Vice-President; Nelson Cross, Treasurer; S. B. Brittan, M.D., who constitute the Committee. Some of these are the oldest and most honoured names in American Spiritualism.

The "response" quotes the opinions of popular divines on the religious situation, and thus proceeds:—

"Thus all these representative Christian thinkers and expositors of Christian thought, seem to realize the great need of special effort at this time to counteract the tendency of this age toward what is called infidelity or rationalism, and to restrain the worldliness of the people, caused by their indifference to spiritual things. The American Spiritualist Alliance, an organization recently formed and incorporated, for the purpose of 'promoting the diffusion of spiritual religion,' is also awake to the need of ameliorating the condition of society, and ennobling the principles and incentives that characterize human conduct, by diffusing a knowledge of spiritual truth among all classes of people. They, too, are shocked at the 'worldliness' that prevails so widely—both among Christians and anti-Christians—and they feel impelled to ask, who is responsible for this?"

Then follows a catalogue of popular enormities going on full swing in American Society, notwithstanding that all sorts of Churches, Chapels, and Synagogues, are going on full blast. But it is found that many of the evil doers have been educated in the Christian faith or are actually fashionable Church members. These flaunt their wealth in the face of the world, but, with their preachers combined, seem to be unable to "cope with the giants of negation or materialism," or restrain the tide of vice. "Truly," says the "response," "it is desirable to utilize the play-time of the ministers of the gospel; for vast is the harvest to be gathered, while the labourers, if not few, are confessedly unequal to the task of gathering it."

Then it is asked—"Where is the Master's Spirit to-day?" How can its force be regained? "Will the delivery of a few learned essays by the intellectual 'giants of Christian philosophy,' or their publication in the 'Christian Philosophy Quarterly,' serve to infuse into Christendom new light and new life? Will this reach the millions to whom the very word 'Christian' has become an abomination—who are filled with disgust at the inharmonious and inconsistency, the selfishness and the hypocrisy, that now characterize professional Christianity? It is not 'theistic philosophy' that is required in these days; it is spiritual truth built on demonstrable facts—facts strong enough to overwhelm scientific scepticism, materialistic negation, and agnostic indifference; facts proving to mankind that their lives do not end at the grave, but that the so-called dead still live in spirit, and are able, under certain conditions, to manifest their existence and their presence with us; that the earth sphere is now, as formerly, open to the visits of angels, who bring to us a knowledge of the future life, its conditions and responsibilities, as well as its awful retributions, and are ever pouring out on all mankind who will receive it a blessed influx of spiritual light and strength. There is, indeed, now the very pentecostal outpouring of spirit power which, the ministers say, the churches need, while they are willfully closing their eyes to it."

In addition to this phenomenal spirituality, the "response" adds:—"There must come a mighty impulse to the minds and hearts of men, which will sweep away passion, pomp, pride, and every kind of selfishness, with the force of the torrent that rushes down the mountain side. A new spiritual power must come from heaven, whence all previous outpourings have come." But what do the "Christian philosophers of this time"?—"Scorning the 'spiritual gifts' which St. Paul cherished and commended; spurning all additional evidence of man's immortality, though the welkin is ringing with the glad voices of angels, that are now bringing that blessed assurance to humanity; trying to explain away the very foundation of men's faith in the facts of Christianity, while disowning or discrediting those facts as supernatural, they yet talk of 're-adjusting religious methods to modern conditions,' thus pandering to the materialistic spirit of the times, while they admit that 'what is needed most of all is a bringing back of the spirit of the pentecostal period.'"

Thus having presented the condition of affairs, the "response" of the Alliance presents the peculiar remedy of Spiritualism:—"Scientists have investigated and accepted it; lawyers and jurists have analyzed the evidence upon which it rests, and have pronounced it genuine; and clergymen, who have tried it impartially and in the spirit of humility and prayer, have recognized it as not only real, but ethically and spiritually Christian. Through this now despised source of spiritual

enlightenment is presented the demonstrated truth required to overcome the materialism and agnosticism now so prevalent, and to show to all mankind the true relations between this world and the next—the world of matter and the world of spirit. This, and this alone, can check—has, indeed, already checked—the efforts of those who 'are endeavouring to array the laws, facts, and recent discoveries of science into godless systems;' for it affords the basis of a counter science—the science of spirit—against which the waves of materialism and infidelity to spiritual truth will dash themselves in vain. This, and this only, offers to the churches that vitalizing element which those who issue this circular say they need, in order that they may be saved from the 'dry rot' which is now, confessedly, bringing about their decline; for this revelation gives demonstration instead of mere faith, and substitutes fact for sentiment. Religious truth, like all other truth, must be reasonable, or it will not be accepted; and no invectives against rationalism will avail to compel the reasoning, thinking minds of this age to accept as true what shocks their understanding. There is profound wisdom in what the Rev. J. K. Funk, D.D., has recently said: 'The developed spirit is its own spiritual touchstone for spirit truths.' In the enunciation of this, perhaps the grandest truth of the present age, is sounded the knell of ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism, for it makes every man his own church and his own priest. It proclaims the death of authority, and makes the individual mind and conscience its own supreme judge, responsible to God alone.

"That those who profess to be the ministers of God should permit the 'supernatural' to eclipse the spiritual, is truly amazing; and also that one of the 'giants' of Christian intellectualism should be able to 'conceive that Christianity as a supernatural [spiritual] force might die out' without impairing 'the strength and beauty of modern life.' But against this remarkable statement it is proper to cite that of another exponent of progressive and aggressive Christianity (Rev. J. K. Funk, D.D.):—'During the past thirty years, not any one cause has contributed more to the stupendous impulse which materialism has manifested, than the recoil of the church from the supernatural, through its abhorrence of Spiritualistic phenomena. As has been strongly said, we have well-nigh cut the throat of Christianity to get rid of Spiritualism.' The spiritual, as well as the physical universe of God must be recognized by those who would be truly his ministers and servants; and they must see in the phenomena of the former as in the latter, the operation of eternal, unchangeable law; not special, makeshift interpositions of supernatural power, designed to supplement or correct the imperfections of infinitely perfect Wisdom and limitless Beneficence."

Such is an abridgement of this voice from experienced spiritualists to the leaders of Christian Churches in America.

MR. PLACE IS A SPIRITUALIST, NOT A PRIMITIVE.

Mr. Burns.—Dear Sir,—I have come to the conclusion that it is best to write to you concerning my so-called "conversion." I must say that never being a Primitive Methodist, I thought that their religion must be something better than any other; so, foolishly, I joined their society, got, as they say, "converted," and have found since that I have been only a tool in their hands, for, as I understand, a purpose of their own. The reason I write is, because I believe that Spiritualism is the only Ism that has any common sense about it.

No sooner had I gone among the Primitives than they said: We must have your conversion as a testimony to the world, to show people the sin of spirit-communion. I stated that I did not want it put in print, and I did tell them so. But they said: Oh, we must have it printed by all means; and I said, I would rather not.

I do not mean to say anything disrespectful of them publicly, but I mean to say this: that I have been the means of a scandal to that religion which, to me, has been a light in the darkness, and has brought to me the knowledge that angels are ever hovering near to protect and guide those who will be led.

I have been too hasty, and have let my body run into circumstances that my common sense told me was wrong. I am a medium, and, being so, I always shall allow that I can never be doing right till I have shown to the world that I am no impostor; though there are some who would like me to say I imposed, but I never did, nor never shall. God knows I want to do right. May He help me to speak His word, by His agents, the spirits of truth. I know that I cannot take away the sting, but I can honestly say that I will try to live, and, during the years that roll along, try to make reparation for the wrong that I may have done you as a body of Spiritualists.

There are a few things that I have said in my remarks that you are at liberty to extract, if you think they are worthy of public notice. With these few remarks I conclude to remain, yours sincerely,

SAMUEL PLACE.

190, Crompton Road, Macclesfield, January 6, 1883.

[We remember Mr. Place's name in the announcements formerly as a speaker, and now suspect it was him, who was discussed in the MEDIUM a few weeks ago, as having been converted to Primitive Methodism from mediumship, it being insinuated that his pretence of spirit-control had but little foundation. Mr. Place is quite a stranger to us.—Ed. M.]

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All orders for copies, and communications for the Editor, should be addressed to Mr. JAMES BURNS, Office of the MEDIUM, 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, London, W.C.

The MEDIUM is sold by all news-vendors, and supplied by the wholesale trade generally.

Advertisements inserted in the MEDIUM at 6d. per line. A series by contract.

Legacies on behalf of the Cause should be left in the name of "James Burns."

SEANCES AND MEETINGS DURING THE WEEK AT THE SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW.

THURSDAY.—School of Spiritual Teachers at 8 o'clock.

Tuesday.—Mr. Towns, Clairvoyance, at 8 o'clock.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 1883.

INSTITUTION WEEK RESPONSES.

A reader who obtains his MEDIUM weekly from a local newsagent, sends a sovereign to the Spiritual Institution as a new year's gift. He adds:—

"Like yourself I have for the last few years been fighting a hard uphill fight and could not respond as my heart prompted, when I read your call for help in the MEDIUM. Oft have I felt that if I had half of the wealth that some Spiritualists possess, I would have swept off with a few strokes of the pen across a cheque the whole of the Liabilities."

There is no use in trying to answer all the kind letters that have come to hand and come flowing in daily. To give an autograph reply would take all our time. There is not on that account any disregard on our part of the goodwill and kind acts of those who write to us.

We are grateful for the help which comes in the form of £1, or 10s. for the MEDIUM for 1883, the excess being towards the Liabilities or support of the Spiritual Institution. As in the case of the letter quoted above, there are many who would help if they could. To all such we would say, that we make no difference in act or sentiment between rich and poor, generous or parsimonious. Our duty is done to all alike. The poor man who barely can pay for his paper, frequently does more in proportion to his means, than he who gives much. We judge the means of no one, but leave it to be guided by the genuine impulses of their own better nature.

A lady in remitting her annual subscription to MEDIUM and Spiritual Institution, thus writes:—"I send you all good wishes for the new year. I hope you will meet with more success than you have received. Why, I wonder, are those who are so willing, able to do so little? I have a very good will but little means. Perhaps I can do a little by my personal influence. I do not hold my tongue about Spiritualism. People listen and are impressed, and then begin to try for themselves; and then we know that the first step is taken which may lead to a full knowledge." The "will" is all important; the "means" come in as secondary. After all, this question of "personal influence" overtops all others. A hundred Spiritualists speaking the right word in season is better than if they each subscribed a shilling a week to pay rent, fees and other expenses for some one to talk for them. The chief blessing of Spiritualism is that it permits us the great delight of teaching others; and only as we supply light to our neighbour, does our own spiritual torch burn brighter.

Mr. George B. Baxtre, South Bank, in remitting the contribution of his family circle, writes:—"I wish you every success in this work. Since July last I have been sitting with my family, and really we are getting on well for the short

time in seeing and talking. I thank you for the papers you sent me on Jan. 28, 1882, from which I have gained a deal of information." An important use of the Spiritual Institution is to supply printed, written, and verbal information to inquirers. It is a public Institution, and it must derive public support to defray the expenses. We rejoice at Mr. Baxtre's success, and thank him and his family for their grateful remembrance of our slight service.

THIRD LIST.

Mrs. A.	...	...	...	...	0 1 4
B. C.	...	...	...	...	0 4 0
Mrs. J. Simpson	...	...	...	...	2 1 4
Mr. John Ashby	...	...	...	...	0 0 4
Mrs. Raeburn	...	...	...	...	0 11 4
Mr. O. L. Carlisle	...	...	...	...	0 2 6
Mr. Wortley	...	...	...	...	1 0 0
Mr. Wm. Harrison	...	...	...	...	0 5 0
Miss S. Hughes	...	...	...	...	0 10 0
Mr. John Hall	...	...	...	...	0 5 10 1
Mr. A. Kyd	...	...	...	...	1 0 0
Violet	...	...	...	...	0 5 0
S. M.	...	...	...	...	2 0 0
E. M.	...	...	...	...	0 10 6
Mr. James Howard	...	...	...	...	0 2 6
Mrs. Mason	...	...	...	...	0 1 0
J. R. W.	...	...	...	...	0 1 4
Mrs. Pearson	...	...	...	...	0 2 6
Mr. Wm. Ames	...	...	...	...	0 2 6
Mrs. L. Burnham	...	...	...	...	0 0 6
Mrs. Popham	...	...	...	...	0 11 4
Mr. Wm. Whitley	...	...	...	...	0 12 4
Mr. C. Davieson	...	...	...	...	1 1 0
Mr. Thomas Farrall	...	...	...	...	0 11 4
Mr. W. Wilks	...	...	...	...	0 5 0
Mr. S. Jagger	...	...	...	...	0 1 4
Mr. Wm. Metherell	...	...	...	...	0 4 0

Mr. G. E. Baxtre and family:—G. B. Baxtre, 2s.; Hannah Baxtre, 1s.; John Baxtre, 2s.; George, 2s.; William, 2s.; Alfred, 6d.; Rose, 6d.; Caroline, 3d.

Collected by Mr. R. Wightman:—Mr. Bent, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Mancel, 1s.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Mr. J. Eales, Auckland Park, in remitting the contribution of his family circle, describes himself as "a Non-smoker, a Good Templar, and best of all, a Spiritualist." These three things ought to hang together. Narcotics too often absorb means that would be of immense benefit to the world, if spent in the proper direction.

Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten met with a most cordial reception at St. Andrew's Hall, Newman Street, Oxford Street, on Sunday evening, and spoke in her accustomed eloquent manner. She will deliver another oration on Sunday evening, at the same place, at 7 o'clock.

Mrs. Ashman intends carrying on the work so well established by her late husband. She has had great experience, and has at her command former assistants who are well acquainted with Mr. Ashman's method. The Embrocation which he compounded would make any one a healer by using it properly. Everybody should be a healer, and the shortest road to it is to rub in this excellent embrocation.

DOMESTIC MEDIUMSHIP.—One of our readers writes:—"My little daughter sings Italian beautifully when under control, though she does not know one word of the language. But I should never think of allowing her to sit with any one but those of my own family circle. A medium ought to be protected, as you have often said." There are thousands of such mediums in modern civilization, and they give a spiritual ground-work to the present age. Drag them forth and make them professionals, and you pollute the spiritual stream. Spiritualism never made such grand progress as at present.

A gentleman writing from New York, who knows much about OAH-PE, says:—"I am aware that out of this book will spring the fundamental principles for a universal religion for all people. But it will take a long time: people so incline to run after ancient inspirations, instead of the Ever-Present. OAH-PE, also, must not become a standard; it is but a sample. Man must learn to live in such a way that inspiration is with him, and within him, without any book." Our correspondent underlines the last sentence. It is the only true gospel, and it is borne out in OAH-PE.

ANTI-VACCINATION.

THE VACCINATION LAWS.

A public meeting was held last evening at the St. Pancras Vestry Hall, under the auspices of the St. Pancras Anti-Compulsory Vaccination Society, for the purpose of considering the prevailing system of compulsory vaccination. The attendance was large, and many ladies were present. Mr. Daniel Grant, M.P., occupied the chair, whilst upon the platform were several medical men, members of boards of guardians, and others. Mr. Grant, in opening the proceedings, said it was only right he should state the exact position he assumed in acting as chairman; he was not there either as an advocate of vaccination or anti-vaccination, but was there to assist, as far as he could, the discussion of what he believed to be a very great and important question. The points upon which vaccination turned were three in number—the first was whether vaccination had power to prevent the spread of Small-pox; secondly, if it had that power, whether there were greater evils incidental to its use which would annul its value; and thirdly, whether sanitation in its fullest aspect was a power which would possess greater force than vaccination itself. The Chairman next alluded to the statements made by Drs. Edmunds, Buchanan, and Guy in support of vaccination, and quoted figures showing the great increase of deaths from Small-pox since the year 1851.—Mr. Tebb then moved, "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the enforcement by Act of Parliament of any medical operation is an outrage on personal freedom and a violation of constitutional law, whilst the infliction of penalties under the Vaccination Acts greatly harasses and oppresses many of the most upright and law-abiding of her Majesty's subjects. This meeting, therefore, pledges itself to use all lawful means to accomplish the repeal of the Vaccination Acts."—Mr. Levy, in seconding the motion, said the only people who had taken the trouble to inquire into the subject of vaccination were those who appealed against it. Dr. Bell, amid great disturbance and laughter, spoke in favour of vaccination. The resolution was then put to the meeting, and carried, with only two dissentients. Other resolutions in favour of anti-vaccination were also carried, and the meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

A letter circulated among the public vaccinators, leading physicians and surgeons, various authorities, and others taking an interest in the subject of vaccination throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland, has been issued by Dr. Montague D. Mackuna, late medical superintendent of Fulham Small-pox Hospital, with the object of ascertaining the opinions held as to the protective powers of vaccination against small-pox as to what diseases have been occasioned or intensified by vaccination, as to the quantity and quality of vaccination as determined by the cicatrices; as to the relative values of humanised and animal lymph, both as regards efficacy and safety; as to the relations subsisting between variola and vaccinia and the theory of vaccination; and as to how far unsanitary conditions are responsible for small-pox epidemics, and how far can small-pox be controlled by improved sanitation.

A man named Burman, who recently underwent seven days imprisonment at Derby for refusing to have his child vaccinated is to receive £20 damages and all costs from the prison governor, who put his prisoner to hard labour contrary to the terms of the commitment. This will settle an action brought by Burman against the governor.—"Daily Chronicle," January 10.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE SALVATION ARMY.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—We have carried our public meetings on here for the last twelve months, every Sunday night, with success; and, at the present time, we are having a grand harvest. The Salvation Army having found its way here, they are holding their meetings in the hall, after we are done on Sunday nights, and people flock to the hall before we start, to get good seats. So, therefore, we are lecturing to a great number of people. A better opportunity has never been given to Spiritualists than is given to us, to spread the grand Truths of Spiritualism. And let us hope that each one connected with this society will endeavour to play their parts, and strive to give food unto those that are needy.—Yours,

JOHN PRINGLE, Sec.

Downs Square, Hetton, January 10, 1883.

LIABILITIES FUND.

Blank paper (Southport), 2s. 6d., (received a few weeks ago). Mr. Turner 2s. and 3s.

Some contributions have been placed in Institution Week Lists.

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER.

THE GREAT WORK OF SPIRITUALISM.

ABSTRACT OF A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT THE SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION, ON SUNDAY EVENING, JANUARY 7.

By J. BURNS, O.S.T.

Reading from OAHSP, Book of Es xiii.; Establishment of the United States Republic, and Doctrines of Thomas Paine.

"Behold, I make all things New."—Rev. xxi., 5.

It is a fatal error to suppose that it is the work of Spiritualism alone to bring man into communion with the spirits of the departed. To do so would be a very questionable proceeding, unless qualified and directed by other considerations. For, what kind of spirits do you intend to introduce man to? Unless we have some control in the selection of our communicants, we had better be cautious. To sit down passively, and invite any sort, or all sorts, of spirits to control you, is surely not a wise act.

That man may be thus controlled, Modern Spiritualism affords abundant evidence, and that he may be controlled by spirits of all grades, except those most desirable, is equally clear. The principle of subjection being involved in this control business, it is not to be wondered at if all kinds of airs and pretensions be assumed not quite compatible with the results.

That spirit-control is normal to some organizations it would be folly to deny; but it is not so to all who attempt it. That good and elevated spirits control mediums without enslaving them, is a truth, but not in all cases. It may be presumed that, as all sublimary things give evidence of imperfection, the greater amount of controls are of such a class that leaves room for desirable improvement.

Is this not, then, an argument against Spiritualism? Not at all. But it is an argument against the view of Spiritualism held by certain parties. Many erroneously think that Spiritualism consists in "abnormal states," and a complete possession of the individual by spirits. This is not so, though it may be quite the thing in exceptional cases. Spiritualism makes a man more himself than it found him. It puts him under the control of his own spirit, and evokes the divine powers thereof, so that it is an infallible guide, or there is no spiritual light in the Universe at all. It is only the pure in heart that see God: the light is in ourselves.

Now, it is necessary to point out that the law of spiritual control, or co-operation, is a universal law, and not limited simply to such as are distinctively called mediums. To be a medium is, to some extent, one thing, and to have a conscious spiritual faculty, and thereby co-operate with the spirit-world, is another thing. The methods adapted to the one class, do not avail in the other cases; so that not only waste of time, but injury is done in futile attempts at development by those who are not adapted to be phenomenal mediums. All cannot be such; but all may co-operate with the spirit-world, and intellectually apprehend spiritual principles, or even succeed to the spiritual consciousness in some degree.

Mediumship of itself is a weak and deceptive reed to lean upon. There are mediums through whom spirits have come and eased the pains of many a mourner, but who when bereaved, are inconsolable. They are simply a machine for spirits, but without a spiritual faculty for their own use. There are those who are excellent mediums for various purposes, except to take care of themselves and put their gift to high and holy uses, so that not infrequently they revert into sheer apostasy and materialism. More satisfactory, then, is it to have a light and strength within one's own spirit than to have to depend on the ministrations of spirits, or the services of other mediums. And this is also the best guarantee that mediums can have for their safety, and the beneficent use of their powers.

Let it be said that personal spiritual culture is the true office of Modern Spiritualism; not that such a process may supersede mediumship, but that it may be the best means for its development and utilization. Can I be a medium of any kind? is frequently asked. Can I be of some little use in the spiritual work? The idea is entertained that by "sitting," the ability to do spiritual work may be induced; whereas, there are two forms of usefulness; the medium, and the normal worker. A person may have mediumistic development without spiritual development, and a person may have spiritual development without being a medium; and yet it is possible to have both, which is the highest of all.

It is not known generally, that for non-mediums to become mediums it is best to be active in moral, intellectual, and progressive work, and sit only sparingly in circles. It is not when such persons are sitting in circles that they gain power, but, on the contrary, when they are actively engaged in some good work. Go to the circle and you get the power drained out of you: go to work for God and the spirit world, and you gain power.

Sit down for spirit control without attending to your own spiritual advancement, and you lay yourself open to low influences who have as little aspiration in their lives as you have yourself. But, on the other hand, engage actively in some purpose to serve the interests of mankind, and you place yourself in rapport with progressive spirits, the doers of the Father's will. The basis of a true and beneficent spiritual movement must be the individual spiritual activity of every man and woman, all doing their little share in promoting the world's advancement, and in sympathy, aiding one another to seek power from on high to enable them to do so.

In this light the work of Spiritualism assumes extended proportions. It makes "all things new;" not only for once, but it is renewing them continually. It is a basic life flowing into all forms of human effort and making them glorious and beneficent. The man who takes up any good cause is the means of making it a channel for spiritual action, as far as his individual development will permit.

We will glance at a few of the "things" that the work of the Spirit will make "new."

A New Religion as a basis is an essential. A new religion means new gods: new objects and methods of divine service. The Supreme Being of the Universe, the Creator, must be reinstated in men's affections as the Highest. The worship accorded to a (said to be) crucified Jew, as God, or a part of God, is a crime of stupendous enormity: it is a crime against the Ever Present, God; a crime against the Nazarene, or whoever he may have been; and it is a crime against humanity. And it is a fruitful source of crime universal. The whole of Society from top to bottom is full of rottenness, which cannot be cleaned out while this degrading system of anthropolatry exists. For man to worship one of his kind as God, is a proceeding so inconsistent with spiritual health, that it must needs inundate the world with devilry.

A New Government comes next in order. Misdirection of the government of the universe opens the door for misdirection in human governments. The arrogance that can prompt man to make a God of one who is said to have said: "There is none good but one, that is, God," is ready to go to painful extremes in the "divine right" of ruling and plundering his fellows.

New Legislation is a crying want. It will come. At present the aim of Christian legislature seems to be to make every man a criminal. You dare not do anything till you find out whether a law has been made to permit you. A parent is a criminal if he persists in keeping the blood of his child pure, and will not have it contaminated with the matter from a sore, of a beast, or human being. This is only a sample of the laws that require to be made "new."

A New Social System, with new arrangements respecting property and industry, will come without doubt. At present, man's efforts are largely occupied with poisoning, plundering and degrading his fellows. Everywhere impediments are placed in the way of that basic form of industry which leads to the production of food, and the proper use of God's land. Any nefarious trade may be embarked in with small capital and light license, but the tax on food producers in the shape of rent is just upon the point of being prohibitory.

New Habits and Testes would next follow. Many destructive habits are now indulged in because Christian legislation has made it easier for a panderer to vice to get a living, than an honest and legitimate producer.

A New Medical System has been formulating itself these last two generations. It seems absurd to poison a man because he is sick, and to keep the people in such a state of darkness and evil habits, that the employment of an army of druggers may be necessary. At present so-called medical men oppose every hygienic art that is calculated to render mankind independent of their services.

A New System of Education is loudly called for. The wretched system of school cramming is bringing up a generation of helpless things, fit for nothing but to be waited on. They are the proper kind of urchins to provide recruits for the vicious systems that are in vogue, and which must be supplanted by the truth.

A New form of Art will manifest itself, in which the spiritually beautiful and true will be represented in such a way as to educate and stimulate man's spiritual intuitions.

A New Poetry will didactically express spiritual truths that range higher than the art at present developed powers of the reasoning faculties.

A New Music will give voice to the exalted sentiments of the soul, and raise mankind to a plane in advance of the foul swamp in which they now wallow morally.

A New Science will explain the true nature of phenomena, and their relation to the human spirit.

A New Philosophy seeks to take within its comprehensive grasp, the scope and purpose of, not only the external phase of human life, but the states of being that extend throughout all time and space.

A New Literature will amuse, interest, elevate, instruct. Surely our spiritual literature has run to seed. The rehash of newspaper paragraphs and ghost stories, in five-shilling volumes, indicates the nefarious poverty of our denominational book makers.

But why enumerate? "All things" are to be made "New!"

When some little progress has been made in this reformation, then we may hope something for spirit-communion. Most minds are in a state of such chaotic darkness on all of these important points, that it is impossible for the spirit-world to get a scintillation of truth through them.

Do not ask: "What sort of a medium am I?" "How shall I sit for development?" Be a medium for Almighty God. Begin by acknowledging Him as Supreme over All. Set to work to effect His purposes in yourself and in others. Do not "sit" for development: get up and work for development. See what you can do to make "new" the many effete and rotten conditions that fester in Modern Society. Then you will be a medium indeed. The inspiration of the All Light will be your chief control, and the angels of the higher heavens will be your work-mates. When you speak, it will not be simply the dictum of any one spirit, but the sharp edge of Divine Truth will be felt in your utterance, and the influence of the angelic heavens will ornament and beautify the most lowly sentences.

On this broad basis and deep foundation let Spiritualists all work, and they will commence a work of true spiritual development, which will not only yield the most astonishing examples of phenomenal mediumship, but will adorn the soul of non-mediums and mediums alike with spiritual gifts, which will sparkle for ever in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

SPIRITUAL POLITY.

THE EVIL OF OVERHEALING AND CIRCLE SITTING.

The announcement of Mr. Ashman's passing away has called forth universal regret. No one could form any idea of how much he was valued and respected. From distant parts of the country grateful tokens come of benefits conferred by the unselfish healer in past years. It is astonishing to observe what a mountain of good a man can quietly affect in a dozen years of unselfish toil; thus writes a lady:—"I was concerned to read that we have lost kind and genial Mr. Ashman. He did me great service nearly nine years ago, in curing a rheumatic affection in my ankle, that had been pronounced well-nigh incurable. I have never had a pain since. I am so grieved that he should have suffered so much at the last."

The question of human destiny is beyond man's conception;—Who shall say that Mr. Ashman did wrong in his devotion to his work? But what is right for one, in that respect, is not for another. He lived in acts not years alone, and left all things in a smooth condition for those who have to follow him. Life is for use, but the question is—How to use it for the best purpose. A gentleman in a distant part of the country writes:—"I have read, with much regret and interest, to-day, of Mr. Ashman's death. Your description of his symptoms called back all the horrors that I have passed through. The circle sitting and healing made me quite unfit for work; in fact, I was fast killing myself. I altogether desisted, except in cases in my own family. The reason of my being affected too much is, that I am too intense over everything I take in hand. I had to work hard; I was healing, mesmerizing, sitting in circle every day, until my physical part gave way, and nearly my mental. I still occasionally feel a terrible desire to heal." This information we think it wise to publish. There is nothing but can be overdone, and then the Cause itself gets the blame. Circles, and all sorts of circles, are not fit for everyone. The more spiritual the temperament the less can a circle be endured. This matter we have discussed in the past, and must return to it again.

Those of a volatile temperament, in whom nerve-fluid occupies much of the bulk of the body, have to be sparing in the excitement of the fluid and the giving of it off. Such persons become deeply confirmed in any habit, especially when it is associated with excitement and emission of force. Such require to lead uniform lives, and isolate themselves from exciting surroundings. Of late we understand that Mr. Ashman attended Blue Ribbon Army meetings a good deal; and as all kinds of platform proceedings excited him greatly and drew from him, we would attribute the final crisis very much to these circumstances. The Salvation Army nuisance, and all sorts of mountebank goody-goodyism, are the death of all but those of the lowest organic characteristics.

Another quotation:—"I often think you must have a marvellous constitution to go through the work, and mental strain and worry of business that you have these last sixteen years. A meat-eater or alcohol-imbiber could not have done it." Our dietetic habits are a great assistance. We have, as a basis, a sound constitution, inured from youth to hard work in the open air. Another thing is, we keep out of public meetings and promiscuous circles, and, above all, seek to be guided by the Light within: we are our own medium! There are two forces: an external force, proceeding from others, which draws from us and pulls us down; then there is an internal force, proceeding from Almighty God, which holds us together and builds us up. This is true of every human being, and the highest Spiritualism is to learn to know it and live by it.

HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.

THE COMPLIMENTARY PRESENTATION TO MISS LOTTIE FOWLER.

A SUCCESSFUL SITTING WITH MISS FOWLER.

To the Editor of the MEDIUM.—Lottie Fowler is a medium, whose public life in the service of Spiritualism, I believe has been free from taint. Seeing that some kind friend is proposing to give her some assistance, I thought a short account of a long and remarkable seance I had with her some time ago, may not be uninteresting. The following account is extracted from notes made at the time:—

A few years ago, a nephew of mine, of whom I was very fond, got accidentally drowned while bathing in the sea. He was a bright, intelligent boy, and had occasionally had sittings with me. I felt his loss acutely, and was very anxious to get a communication from him, through a medium not knowing the circumstances. I forthwith went to London and called upon Miss Fowler, without giving my name or address or object of my visit. I told her I wished to have a sitting. Her first words on passing into the trance were:—"You come on a mission, not for pleasure." She then told me many of the leading incidents of my life, described minutely my wife and other members of the household, my surroundings, business, etc. She accurately told me how many brothers and sisters I had living, how many I had dead. She said: "Your mother is dead; she died some years ago," and described her. "You have a brother in America," all of which was correct. She then gave an elaborate description of two recent funerals in my family, with incidents in connection with them. She also described and gave the name of a spirit guide, which was a corroboration of previous communications through other mediums. My past, present, and future business then came in for a share of description, with useful advice as to the future.

After sitting about half an hour, and just as I was beginning to fear that I should not get what I most ardently desired, she said to me: "I see behind you a little boy;" described his appearance and disposition exactly, and even gave the name he was generally called by, which is an abbreviation of his real name; the whole of the circumstances in connection with the accident, finding of the body, etc., and imitated in her person the act of drowning. To prove it was not thought-reading, there were some incidents in connection with this sad case, that I did not know, described, but which were corroborated on my return home.

From beginning to the end of the seance it was one marvellous unravelling of my interior life and its associations. As a great deal of it related to family matters, I cannot give them here. Suffice it to say, that the seance was a great consolation and benefit to me, and is one of the most extraordinary events of my life. Let any one go to Miss Fowler, and request a sitting as I did without bias, and I feel sure they they will not come away disappointed.

It must not be supposed that these communications were given to me from leading questions put, as nothing of the kind was done. The spirit "Annie," talked so fast and said so much that I had no chance given me of even making a passing remark. Among other things she said: "I see Carmarthen-shire, Wales, and a lot of tin works. I see a thin young man who is often in your shop; he works among the tin." The allusion to this gentleman is quite correct; he is one of my oldest and most constant friends, and I need scarcely add that Lottie was correct with regard to tin works, as the neighbourhood is chiefly dependent on these works.

Hoping I have not occupied too much space with this rambling description. I am, yours truly, J. F. YOUNG.
Trafalgar House, Llanelly, South Wales, January 7, 1883.

A LETTER FROM "LILY."

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—Feeling it incumbent on me not to take up your valuable time and space with one unnecessary word, I write as shortly as possible to say, that I see so clearly the sympathising work of our Spirit Friends in J. A.'s letter regarding my "Spiritual Carol," that I most earnestly wish it success, and feel it will prove a most valuable aid to the object I had in view, in sending you the lines: viz., that of helping (in ever so small a degree), to make our Heavenly Father's love more widely felt and appreciated; which seems to me, to be the great want of the age in which we live.

May God bless and prosper J. A.'s and my united efforts, in so enhancing the words through the music, that they may go straight home to the hearts of all who hear or sing them.

January 6, 1883. Sincerely yours, "LILY."

P.S.—I am so glad J. A. suggests a Chorus to the refrain, as it entirely carries out my ideas.

THE MUSIC FOR "LILY'S" "SPIRITUAL CAROL."

Dear Mr. Editor,—I wrote so hurriedly last week, on the spur of our little conversation, that I did not, perhaps, do justice to the claims of the eminent composers, whose genius I hope I have evoked. I am aware that a guinea is but a small consideration for a musical work of any importance. I therefore desire to add, that should the expected composition be of great merit, as I hope it will be, it may remain the property of the composer, notwithstanding the bestowal of the

prize named. My thought at the time was that the successful pieces should become the property of the Editor of the MEDIUM, and thus become the property of the whole of the readers through being published in its pages. To prevent any eminent composer from withholding his powers, I therefore state, that I do not make the parting with the copyright an imperative consideration, my chief object being to evoke a grand composition worthy of the verses, and as an aid to the work of Spiritualism in its higher range.

I will just recount the particulars given last week. I offer a prize of one guinea for the best musical composition suitable for the "Spiritual Carol" in the Christmas Number of the MEDIUM, and half-a-guinea for the second best. The compositions to be sent to the Editor of the MEDIUM, on or before January 25. My object is that the successful pieces be performed at Miss Lottie Fowler's benefit entertainment, for which I will purchase afterwards a pound's worth of tickets.

Hoping this offer will meet with a gratifying response, and that Miss Fowler's benefit will be all that could be desired, I am, very sincerely, yours,

London, January 9, 1883.

I. A.

N.B.—The prizes are deposited with the Editor of the MEDIUM.

MISS FOWLER'S BENEFIT ENTERTAINMENT.

Though much interest is being excited in this matter, yet time is slipping on without any definite steps being taken. A lady and gentleman—volunteers—are required to act as Honorary Secretaries, and a gentleman as Treasurer. Then a subscription list could be issued and arrangements made for the celebration, if it is to come off on St. Valentine's Day, as has been suggested. We will gladly give the matter any aid in our power, but have not leisure for official duties.

MR. TOWNS.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—Having seen Mr. Wootton's letter, in which he lays before the readers of the MEDIUM the financial position of Mr. Towns, I can affirm from personal knowledge that what he states is only too true, and I am sure that there are many who have benefited by his mediumship, who would only be too glad to come forward to help him, who has always been one of the first to help anyone who has stood in need of help. It is well known that he has gone long journeys and borne his own expenses to help others.

Might I be allowed to suggest that a committee be formed, to raise a testimonial to him in recognition of his great services to Spiritualism; so that we, who have received so much benefit from his ministrations, might have the opportunity of showing our sympathy with him? A good meeting might be held, say, on our Anniversary, or other steps may be taken in furtherance of this object.

I now leave the matter in, I am sure, good hands to initiate something, and remain, dear sir, yours fraternally,
3, Canal Bank, Albany Road, S. E. T. GATTY.

January 6, 1883.

[Mr. J. Wootton, 33, Little Earl Street, Soho, W., has received 6s. from a friend, towards this object, and will be glad to receive further contributions.—Ed. M.]

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RULES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.—The phenomena cannot be successfully elicited in very warm, sultry weather, in extreme cold, when thunder and lightning and magnetic disturbances prevail, when the atmosphere is very moist, or when there is much rain, or storms of wind. A warm, dry atmosphere is best, as it presents the mean between all extremes, and agrees with the harmonious state of man's organism which is proper for the manifestation of spiritual phenomena. A subdued light or darkness increases the power and facilitates control.

LOCAL CONDITIONS.—The room in which a circle is held for development or investigation should be set apart for that purpose. It should be comfortably warmed and ventilated, but draughts or currents of air should be avoided. Those persons composing the circle should meet in the room about an hour before the experiments commence; the same sitters should attend each time, and occupy the same places. This maintains the peculiar magnetic conditions necessary to the production of the phenomena. A developing circle exhausts power, or uses it up.

PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS.—The phenomena are produced by a vital force emanating from the sitters, which the spirits use as a connecting link between themselves and objects. Certain temperaments give off this power; others emit an opposite influence. If the circle is composed of persons with suitable temperaments, manifestations will take place readily; if the contrary be the case, much perseverance will be necessary to produce results. If both kinds of temperament are present, they require to be arranged so as to produce harmony in the psychical atmosphere evolved from them. The physical manifestations especially depend upon temperament. If a circle does not succeed, changes should be made in the sitters till the proper conditions are supplied.

MORAL CONDITIONS.—All forms of mental excitement are detrimental to success. Those with strong and opposite opinions should not sit together; opinionated, dogmatic, and positive people are better out of the circle and room. Parties between whom there are feelings of envy, hate, contempt, or other unharmonious sentiment should not sit at the same circle. The vicious and crude should be excluded from all such experiments. The minds of the sitters should be in a passive rather than an active state, possessed by the love of truth and of mankind. One harmonious and fully-developed individual is invaluable in the formation of a circle.

THE CIRCLE should consist of from three to ten persons of both sexes, and sit round an oval, oblong, or square table. Cane-bottomed chairs or those with wooden seats are preferable to stuffed chairs. Mediums and sensitives should never sit on stuffed chairs, cushions, or sofa used by other persons, as the influences which accumulate in the cushions often affect the mediums unpleasantly. The active and quiet, the fair and dark, the ruddy and pale, male and female, should be seated alternately. If there is a medium present, he or she should occupy the end of the table with the back to the north. A medium of mediumistic person should be placed on each side of the medium, and those most positive should be at the opposite corners. No person should be placed behind the medium. A circle may represent a horseshoe magnet, with the medium placed between the poles.

CONDUCT AT THE CIRCLE.—The sitters should place their hands on the table, and endeavour to make each other feel easy and comfortable. Agreeable conversation, singing, reading, or invocation may be engaged in—anything that will tend to harmonise the minds of those present, and unite them in one purpose, is in order. By engaging in such exercises the circle may be made very profitable apart from the manifestations. Sitters should not desire anything in particular, but unite in being pleased to receive that which is best for all. The director of the circle should sit opposite the medium, and put all questions to the spirit, and keep order. A recorder should take notes of the conditions and proceedings. Manifestations may take place in a few minutes, or the circle may sit many times before any result occurs. Under these circumstances it is well to change the positions of the sitters, or introduce new elements, till success is achieved. When the table begins to tilt, or when raps occur, do not be too impatient to get answers to questions. When the table can answer questions by giving three raps for "Yes," and one for "No," it may assist in placing the sitters properly. The spirits or intelligences which produce the phenomena should be treated with the same courtesy and consideration as you would desire for yourselves if you were introduced into the company of strangers for their personal benefit. At the same time, the sitters should not on any account allow their judgment to be warped or their good sense imposed upon by spirits, whatever their professions may be. Reason with them kindly, firmly, and consistently.

INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRITS is carried on by various means. The simplest is three raps of the table or raps for "Yes," and one for "No." By this means the spirits can answer in the affirmative or negative. By calling out the alphabet the spirits will rap at the proper letters to constitute a message. Sometimes the hand of a sitter is shaken, then a pencil should be placed in the hand, when the spirits may write by it automatically. Other sitters may become clairvoyant, and the spirits use the vocal organs of such mediums to speak. The spirits sometimes impress mediums, while others are clairvoyant, and see the spirits, and messages from them written in luminous letters in the atmosphere. Sometimes the table and other objects are lifted, moved from place to place, and even through closed doors. Patiently and kindly seek for tests of identity from loved ones in the spirit-world, and exercise caution respecting spirits who make extravagant pretensions of any kind.

Before proceeding with their investigations, inquirers into Spiritualism should correspond with Mr. Burns, Proprietor of the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C., who will gladly forward a packet of publications and useful information gratis. Stamps should in all cases be enclosed for return postage. Deputations of mediums or lecturers may be arranged for to give public readings or lectures on the subject.

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PROGRESS OF SPIRITUAL WORK.

EXETER—ODDFELLOW'S HALL, BAMPFYLDE STREET.

The New Year commenced well for our beloved Cause in this city. On New Year's day, Mr. H. was controlled for some two hours in the forenoon, to write a communication for Mr. Norman, entitled "Your Mission." It was a review of Mr. Norman's life, which could only have been given by his own unseen guardians; culminating in the object of his visit to Exeter, to which he claims to have been solely prompted by his spirit friends. The communication, which was carefully revised by the controls, is extremely interesting and pathetic. I would like much to give it here, but am afraid to occupy space. Mr. N., in a letter to me says, that he is proud of it, and that it alone repays him for his visit. I think it due to the medium, who is unconscious when writing, that this should be mentioned.

On the evening of the same day, Mr. H., again met the Christmas party referred to last week, this time by appointment. The party consisted of relatives of the medium's friend, near and distant, and all I believe connected with the same denomination. Here Mr. H. was under control for some five hours, and on returning to consciousness about two o'clock on Tuesday morning, he informs me that he was much surprised to find them nearly all, strong men and females bathed in tears.

Their loved ones had come one after another giving absolute proof of identity, and many acquaintances, including their deceased pastor. Whilst under control, also, Mr. H. had placed his hand in the full flame of the gas, keeping it there several moments without hurt, thus working a "miracle" in their presence. I am informed that these good friends are so profoundly impressed respecting these strange things, that they intend holding a meeting for special prayer in relation to the subject, and by this means testing whether it be from God or the Devil.

We would encourage this kind of testing, remembering another prayer meeting where the response came in the form of a marvellous manifestation of spirit power, the liberation of Peter from the Roman prison and guard; but we would warn them to avoid the error, those praying ones then fell into, saying, when "Rhoda" reported that "Peter stood at the door, 'Thou art mad!'" We would also remind those friends that at another prayer meeting, "the place was shaken where they were assembled;" and again, when Paul and Silas were praying and praising in their gloomy incarceration, "the foundations of the prison were shaken and every one's bonds were loosed." May the spiritual aspirations and pleadings of these seekers after truth result in their complete deliverance from the errors of false teachings, and the perfect illumination of their minds with light from the spirit world.

On Thursday evening we found our medium and his friend somewhat agitated in mind, and filled with misgivings through the proceedings of Monday evening having become known outside, even reaching the ears of their minister, with the usual result of discussion, opposition, and condemnation.

The ordeal is painful, but all sincere investigators have had to pass through it. And none are the worse but the better for the conflict, for thereby, our strength, courage, and sincerity are tested.

The question is, shall we cease our inquiries after truth, and our testimony thereto, because of the opposition of the ignorant and the bigoted; or the difficulties arising from our religious training? No one who will be true to his own mind and conscience, will hesitate about the answer. I mention all these particulars because they relate to a certain stage in the development of this local movement, and will be read with interest hereafter.

On Sunday evening, following the public meeting, a large number remained to the "circle," and Mr. H. being absent the guides of Mr. P. spoke in an interesting manner. The meeting was very spiritual. OMEGA.

PLYMOUTH, RICHMOND HALL, RICHMOND STREET.

On Wednesday evening the 3rd inst. a number of friends held a social tea and meeting at the Hall, the proceedings being of a very enjoyable nature. Mrs. Stephens and Miss Tyrer sang several songs, and Mr. Dymond read a most interesting and amusing account of a "Terrible thunderstorm and its origin," which event occurred in the parish of Widecombe-in-the-Moor in the 17th. century. In this as in cases before and since, his satanic majesty was regarded as the author of the evil. Readings were also given by Mr. Spence and the writer, whose guides together with those of Mr. P. and Mr. W. made some appropriate remarks. A short discussion as to the best means of extending the Society's operations was indulged in with great profit.

On Sunday evening Mr. Pine delivered an earnest address based on the words, "In my Father's house are many mansions." It was much appreciated.

Next Sunday Mr. C. W. Dymond; subject, "Swedenborg, and his mission." 6.30. ROBERT S. CLARKE Hon. Sec.

4, Athenaeum Terrace, Plymouth.

LEICESTER—SILVER STREET LECTURE HALL.

On Sunday evening last Mr. Bent delivered a trance address to a large congregation. The spirit-guides took for their discourse: "What evidence have the churches to offer in proof of Immortality." It was much appreciated.

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All information may be obtained of

W. LANG, SEC. West London Spiritual Evidence Society.

A correspondent in Ireland writes to say that a certain "Professor" has been "starring all over the north of Ireland exposing Spiritualism. Some of his tricks are clever but not Spiritualism in my opinion. He professes belief publicly in clairvoyance. He and such as he, or rather Spiritualism they profess to deal with, seem to me to bear the relation to real Spiritualism that the Salvation Army does to the respectable sects of Protestantism."

A Lancashire correspondent writes for advice on the circle, of eight who were led into the matter thus: "Two of our number heard a few persons speaking about Spiritualism one night, and they resolved to try and see if they could not do the same, merely for curiosity. They had not sat at the table long before it began to move, and from that time they have progressed a good deal." A great want is a band of enlightened Spiritualists to correspond with such investigators, or visit them personally. We do a deal of such work; frequently half of our time is thus occupied.

MANCHESTER.—The last Sunday in the year closed with a Watch-night service, at which Spiritualists recited their experiences. On New Year's day came the Annual Tea Meeting. The President reviewed the operations of the year, and stated that they held a balance of £7 8s. 4d. The remainder of the evening was spent in an agreeable manner.

On Sunday last, Mrs. Dobson, of Batley Carr, occupied our platform. In the morning we had an address from her spirit guides on the subject of "Spiritualism, and the Redemption of the World"; and in the evening on "The Mission of Spiritualism." Both discourses had special reference to the opening of the New Year, and the control desired to impress upon each the great responsibility which rested upon them, as to the use that was made of the time placed at their disposal. Spiritualism above everything else, taught a man to be dependent upon no one but himself, and the clearer each one could recognize this truth the greater would be the benefit to be derived from habits of self-reliance and independence, which would follow the practical application of this idea. Also, to "do unto others as you would be done by" was one of the grandest secrets of happiness, and, as the special mission of Spiritualism, would bring about the redemption of the world if only applied universally.—J. E. LIGHTBOWN, Sec. M.S.S.S.

TORQUAY.—Ghosts are uncanny things at best. Torquay would not seem to be over-stocked with these unsubstantial, but unwelcome visitants—probably because, being what has been termed "a mushroom place," its buildings and associations are not sufficiently antiquated to encourage the growth and congregation of spirits—though on the other hand we believe that Torquay is not altogether without its ghosts. Leaving aside, however, all joking upon this subject, we would call attention to the fact that in Torquay Spiritualism in its various phases has for some time past been making slow and quiet, but steady progress. There are, we believe, many earnest and even enthusiastic Spiritualists in this town, who frequently hold sésances at which remarkable results are said to be obtained, and from which inquirers often come away with a conviction that Spiritualism, properly so called, is far from being a myth and a sham. When associations composed of unprejudiced and learned men are formed in the country for the purpose of investigating Spiritualism, and when such associations admit that there are matters connected with Spiritualism which are not to be explained away by the attributing them to trickery and "hanky-panky," it certainly looks as though Spiritualism were not altogether a gigantic humbug. In Exeter Spiritualism is being carefully and thoughtfully investigated by a great many intellectual people. Plymouth also has its numerous believers in Spiritualistic manifestations; Dartmouth is the home of more than one Spiritualist; and Torquay, as we have said, possesses a "medium" or two. We do not know whether any of our readers would care to investigate for themselves these alleged means of communication between the present and the unseen world, but should they feel inclined to do so we might be able to indicate the course to be adopted by them in order to attain this object.—Devon County Standard.

THE FINE ARTS.

"INK PHOTO"

With "The Architect," January 6th, is given as supplements three "Ink Photo" subjects, by Messrs. Sprague and Co. The first is an art subject, being a "design for a portion of a proposed decoration in St. Paul's Cathedral," by Sir Frederick Leighton, P.R.A.: "And the Sea gave up the dead which were in it." It is a fine piece of work, the effect of the rising of the bodies from the billows being faithfully rendered in the artist's touches. The other two subjects are architectural, being views of the new Leadenhall Market. The nature of the subjects allows these to set off the new process in a striking manner. "The Architect" makes the following observations:—

The three plates in the present number have been reproduced from the original drawings by the new process in photolithography recently introduced by Messrs. Sprague and Co., 22, Martin's Lane, Cannon Street. It may now be said to have fairly shown its great merits and advantages, and to have conclusively disproved the hitherto universally received opinion that photolithography could not be produced from water colours.

The first example of this process that was published was issued by us early in 1881, since which date we have given numerous plates taken from water colours exhibited at the Royal Academy, etc., oil paintings exhibited at the Salon, drawings in crayons, and photographs.

The process has excited much interest among practical photographers and scientists. One of the photographic journals says:—"The 'Ink Photo' process of Messrs. Sprague and Co. has much to recommend it. In the first place, it is far cheaper than any other mechanical process which will reproduce a photograph from nature, and secondly it admits of the most rapid printing."

In preparing drawings for reproduction, it should be borne in mind that blues do not photograph. All blues used for shadows and skies should have lamp black or indian ink mixed in with them. Bright reds and chromes come out very dark. Ink outline can be used with washed shadows, etc. The two plates by Mr. Ernest George which we published lately are good examples of this style. Drawings made in sepia or black can be relied upon to give a true result. Several plates taken from water-colour drawings and photographs have been completed for us by Messrs. Sprague, and will be published from time to time.

CASES OF HEALING.

DELIRIUM WITH VIOLENCE—MR. VANGO.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—I thank you for introducing to me Mr. R. Johnstone, the healer, of Old Ford. Through his kindness and great power I am again on my feet, and hope soon to be at work. As has been stated in your columns, I got a severe shock to the nervous system, when the train left with the Band of Hope children and no one to take care of them, which made me delirious frequently, and I had to be held by several people during the attacks of violence. I was in this state for six weeks, the most careful medical treatment being of no avail. In this condition, through your introduction Mr. Johnstone came to me, and after three week's treatment I was able to get up and go out of the house. As I am a working man and have others depending on me, I gratefully thank Mr. and Mrs. Herne, who gave a seance for my benefit, as announced in the MEDIUM; and also Mr. J. Webster, who gave a seance in a similar kind manner. I may state that under influence he told me that the crisis would be past by Christmas; and, true enough, I got up three days before Christmas, and have been gradually getting stronger ever since.—I am, truly yours, J. VANGO.

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To complete sets, the following Numbers of the "Spiritualist" are wanted immediately:—The whole of the Numbers for 1874. For 1875, Nos. 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 139, 140, 147. For 1878, No. 329. For 1879, No. 332. For 1880, Nos. 389, 390, 404. Send to J. Burns, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C., with a note of cost.

E. W. WALLIS'S APPOINTMENTS—Walsall: January, 14th—morning subject: "The Educational influence of Spiritualism." Evening: "The Future Life as revealed by Spiritualism." Stamford—January 21st; Leicester—January, 28th; Belper—February 4th; Falmouth—11th, to 18th, inclusive. For dates and other particulars, address—82, Radford Road, Hyson Green, Nottingham.

QUEBEC HALL, 25, Great Quebec Street, Marylebone Road.—Sunday, January 14th, at 7 p.m. prompt, Mr. MacDonnell: Sixty Doctrines for Faith of the various Sects.

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PLAN OF SPEAKERS FOR JANUARY.

January 14—Mr. J. O. Wright, of Liverpool.

" 21—, W. Johnson, of Hyde.

" 28—Mrs. Groom, of Birmingham, (morning).

" 28—Mr. R. A. Brown, (evening).

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