



A WEEKLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE HISTORY, PHENOMENA, PHILOSOPHY, AND TEACHINGS OF
SPIRITUALISM.

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THE "TIMES" AND SPIRITUALISM.

THE *Times* having at last, and at great length, spoken out on Spiritualism, we have this week departed somewhat from our usual course in order that investigators, as well as Spiritualists, may have before them a clear *resumé* of the manner and mode of criticism adopted by the Press towards this great subject, from which it will be distinctly seen that the *Times* is neither better nor worse than many of its contemporaries; but, like them, resorts to the usual artifices of suppression, distortion, and begging-of-question, to the misguidance and insult of the general reader.

We commence by printing, without alteration or abridgment, the *Times* article, which is most famously contradictory. It first asserts the Dialectical Society's Committee's Report "to be nothing more than a farrago of impotent conclusions;" and then, on the investigations of its own reporter, adopts precisely similar conclusions, arrived at through precisely similar facts, and puts these forward as reasons to induce the scientist to take up the subject! Thus the public is asked, two years after the event, to accept as truth and wisdom from an *unknown* reporter what, in the same breath, it is urged to reject as foolishness, although endorsed by the names and exertions of thirty-two well-known gentlemen, chosen as investigators because of their intelligence, status, and educational ability to cope with such a subject, to say nothing of the fact that the *Times* reporter relies for his evidence upon the services of professional mediums, a class of persons held up by him as mercenary and to be despised; whereas the Dialectical Committee spoke to phenomena which occurred to themselves, and without any such aid—facts which the *Times* most diligently suppresses.

We will not, however, anticipate, but simply urge upon investigators a careful study of this article and of the argument we append (as a general answer to the newspapers) entitled "The Press *versus* Spiritualism," and we further urge a comparison of both articles with the Dialectical Report. For ourselves we will not, in dealing with the *Times*, go beyond a plain reassertion of the mere phenomena of Spiritualism, as we hold their recognition, whether adversely or otherwise, as a step gained—a step, indeed, too important to overlook, and necessarily preliminary to a consideration of the question in its higher phases.

SPIRITUALISM AND SCIENCE.

(Reprinted from the *TIMES* of December 26th, 1872.)

It is now nearly twenty years since the late Professor Faraday made public the result of his investigations into the then fashionable mania of table-turning. With apparent conclusiveness, he proved that the mysterious movements which were at that time the new nine-days' wonder of the world arose from unconscious muscular action; but, such is the tenacity of a belief once received into the mind, this solution of the pseudo-marvel seems to have satisfied few but those who were prepared to accept it by previous disbelief. Spiritualism and its adherents never heeded it; they went on their way rejoicing, and rose day by day on stepping-stones of their former selves to mysteries wonderful and still more wonderful. Our Australian Correspondence of this morning shows that the Spiritualist epidemic has reached the Antipodes, and that it has already attained the dignity there of having its own Press, and, still more, its own schismatics and sectarians. That in a generation which boasts itself to be one of exact science and plain matter-of-fact a belief should have been so long-lived, and should have grown even to such proportions that Mr. William Howitt, one of its chief fanatics, can number its adherents at "twenty millions," and that it should have attained to such an age and vitality without its falsity having been demonstrated to the satisfaction of all but the very ignorant, is strange indeed. It is evident either that the subject is surrounded by unusual difficulties, or that in this matter our scientific men have signally failed to do their duty by the public, which looks to them for its facts. We believe the latter to be the case. It may be said, and is said by some, that Spiritualism was long ago investigated and proved to be a mass of imposture and delusion; but, as a matter of fact, this is not so, for there has never been undertaken an inquiry of that impartial, authoritative, and thorough nature which alone can decide a prejudiced controversy. Our savans, too much preferring to

give themselves up to such matters as the descent of men from monkeys or the fertilisation of the world by means of mossy stones falling through space, have forgotten that, however absurd the phenomena and paraphernalia of Spiritualism may be, the sifting and settling of the whole matter, once and for all, would be a practical benefit, for which the age would thank them at least as much as it thanks them for recondite theories and abstract speculations, half of which are only laid up in print for the next generation to ridicule.

Some time ago there was a transient promise of better things. A society calling itself by the high-sounding name of the "London Dialectical Society" had resolved to make a thorough investigation of "the phenomena alleged to be spiritual manifestations, and to report thereon." A committee had been nominated, scientific men and all who were interested in the subject had been invited to co-operate, and many people were simple enough to hope that the nonsense and the jargon which had for the last twenty years been going about the world under the name of Spiritualism would now be stripped from whatever facts might underlie them. This hope was reasonable enough, but was utterly crushed when, in due process of time, the "Report on Spiritualism by a Committee of the Dialectical Society" made its appearance, with Messrs. Longmans' name on the title-page, and turned out to be nothing more than a farrago of impotent conclusions, garnished by a mass of the most monstrous rubbish it has ever been our misfortune to sit in judgment upon. The Report filled altogether some four hundred pages, and the sum total of eighteen months' investigation amounted to just this, that—

"Your committee, taking into consideration the high character and great intelligence of many of the witnesses to the more extraordinary facts, the extent to which their testimony is supported by the reports of the sub-committees, and the absence of any proof of imposture or delusion as regards a large portion of the phenomena; and, further, having regard to the exceptional character of the phenomena, the large

number of persons in every grade of society and over the whole civilised world who are more or less influenced by a belief in their supernatural origin, and to the fact that no philosophical explanation of them has yet been arrived at, deem it incumbent upon them to state their conviction that the subject is worthy of more serious attention and careful investigation than it has hitherto received."

Despite its portentous preamble, this judgment left the matter exactly where it was before, and surely it did not need eighteen months of consideration to convince us that Spiritualism, or any other disputed matter, was worthy of "serious attention" and "careful investigation."

Though this solemn and protracted inquiry came to nothing after all, the printed Report of the Committee contains such a curious mass of "evidence" that some extracts from its pages may serve better than anything else to give our non-spiritualistic readers some idea of the marvellous proportions to which the faith, which at first was a mere turning of tables, has swollen in these latter days.

As good a witness as any to take first in order is Mr. Jencken, barrister-at-law, M.R.I. He tells us how he has known the air of his own drawing-room heavily laden with tables "clear overhead," with a "semi-grand," and with an accordion "suspended in space for 10 or 20 minutes, and played by an invisible agency." "These I hold"—he actually adds—"may be conceded as established facts." Many are the wonderful tales of Mr. Home's "elongations," of his holding a fire in hand, possibly by thinking of the frosty Caucasus. Ladies have borne on their heads red-hot metal bells and have not been burnt, and Lord Adare, now Earl of Dunraven, has taken into his palm a burning live coal with like impunity. The Hon. Mrs. ——— testifies to having seen a deceased relative "about eight feet high" pass "right through the Master of Lindsay, causing him to shiver with cold." Mr. Simkiss, however, has not been so fortunate, for, says he,

"I have tried in a variety of ways to see, hear, or feel spirits myself, by sitting frequently in circles as passively as possible, by submitting myself to repeated mesmeric manipulations, and by sitting alone in the dead of night for many hours in a room that was used for some years exclusively for the purpose of spirits and mediums, and might be considered to be thoroughly permeated with spiritual magnetism—but all with no apparent effect."

Poor Mr. Simkiss! we pity him from the bottom of our heart. Should he be still in the flesh when we have left it, and should we find ourselves doomed to dance attendance on what the advertisements of their magazines call "spiritual circles," he may depend upon our making an attempt to take his hand under the table. What must make the armour of Mr. Simkiss's spiritual impregnability doubly a burden to him is that "for the past three years my wife has been a medium, and has been very frequently possessed by the spirit of a Scotchman, who invariably spoke broad Scotch through her." Then there is Mr. Jones, who has seen a large lute tremble like a leaf, and rise as high as the ceiling, "and that in the presence of six or seven leading individuals in London, whose names, if mentioned, would command universal respect." A little further on we stumble upon the "leading individuals" themselves, in the person of Mr. Cromwell Varley and Mrs. Milner Gibson. The latter, at a seance under the auspices of Mr. Home, wore a white stomacher, "which suddenly became inflated by," as she said, "her spirit-child," and this in the light of five gas burners. As for Mr. Varley, the spirits have been at his side in sickness and in law; they have taught him how to cure ulcers, and warned him of a Chancery suit with the Atlantic Telegraph Company. But they have been in still closer communion with Mr. Hockley for the last 45 years. Mr. Hockley "once knew a seeress who weighed 19 stone;" he knew another who was "an admirable seeress, and obtained some splendid answers by means of crystals." He himself has not been so fortunate, for, though he has had a crystal for 47 years, he has never seen anything in it. But he had no need, for the "admirable" lady had only to look into her crystal and "speak it all off like reading a book," and he keeps carefully under lock and key 300 volumes, containing upwards of 12,000 answers, and he also has "nearly 1,000 volumes on occult sciences"—we wish he would call them arts.

Mr. Home himself attended at one of the meetings, and gave evidence as to his "levitations" and "elongations," relating, among other marvels, the generally-known story of a seance at the Tuileries. He tells us of a lady who was in the habit of seeing "heads in her lap at night. They were quite luminous; there was quite a glow about them." The Master of Lindsay, now Lord Lindsay, and well known for his various scientific knowledge and researches, deposes to having seen Mr. Home, elongated 11 inches, floating round a room in an armchair, "pushing the pictures out of their places as he passed along the walls" of a room at Mr. Milner Gibson's house. Lord Lindsay also testifies to Mr. Home having floated out of a window in Victoria Street 85 feet from the ground, and in at another on the same story. He has seen Mr. Home in full light standing in the air 17 inches from the ground, and he has also seen, when suffering from over-study, the spectre of a black dog. Presently we have another "leading individual" in the person of Mr. Hain Friswell, the author of *The Gentle Life*, who, in rather dubious phrase, begins his depositions by describing himself as a "loose hanger-on of the Church of England." He is, he tells us, inclined to account for the manifestations of the Satanic theory, for he has repeatedly stopped them by an adjuration in which he always used the name of the Trinity. He believes in diabolical possession, has seen people foaming at the mouth and prophesying round Mrs. Marshall's table, and felt that it was what the Apostles might have seen and Tertullian has described. Mr. Hain Friswell is evidently a "loose hanger-on" of Spiritualism as well as of the Church of England. We may note that, according to a letter sent to a newspaper, the foaming at the mouth at Mrs. Marshall's was not that "diabolical possession" which Mr. Friswell believes in, but the diversion of a party of actors out for a practical joke.

In addition to this overwhelming mass of very overwhelming evidence, the Dialectical Committee printed in their Report many pages of correspondence and some portentous "communications" from persons not members of their body. They had several civil refusals from eminent men asked to serve on the inquiry, and some suggestions from others. Professor Huxley wrote a note, in which he declared that the only good of a demonstration of the truth of Spiritualism would be to furnish an additional argument against suicide. "Better

live a crossing-sweeper," he said, "than die and be made to talk twaddle by a medium, hired at a guinea a seance." Mr. G. H. Lewes gave golden advice when he said, "Distinguish between facts and inferences from facts." Mr. William Howitt asked whether the Dialectical Society, after having determined the truth of Spiritualism which had "now received the assent of about twenty millions of people in all countries," would proceed to investigate the correctness of the theory of the Copernican system, of gravitation, or of the circulation of the blood; for Spiritualism, he considered, "stood fairly on the same basis of fact." Lord Lytton sent an extremely judicious letter, but betrayed his sympathies by quoting Albertus Magnus. He is evidently a "loose hanger-on" of Spiritualism, but for all that wrote with shrewd and sober sense, giving good advice to the committee, warning it not to jump to conclusions, and remarking the triviality and ignity of the "messages." Mr. G. H. Lewes, in a second letter, full of sound maxims, cautioned the committee not to confound "the cause we do not know with an unknown cause;" and Professor Tyndall was willing to "pay due respect to the invitations of such men as Mr. Wallace or Mr. Crookes, and to witness whatever new phenomena they were in a position to show him." Dr. Carpenter enclosed the committee an abstract of an article on "Unconscious Cerebration," which he contributed long ago to the *Quarterly Review*. So that altogether there was no lack of good advice.

If not quite so lively as the oral evidence, the "communications from persons not members of the committee" were very remarkable. In fifty pages of close print Miss Anna Blackwell expounded her theories, which, as she informs us, "are of the school of spiritist philosophy founded by the late Allan Kardec." When we say that the Deity is called a "Casual Being" that there is a great deal about "the Primordial Fluid," that we are confidently promised a future life in the planet Jupiter, where our "putrescible flesh" will be changed into "a light and beautiful corporeal envelope," formed by a "non-sexual magnetic action," whatever that may be, we have given a very faint idea of a production from the perusal of which no one can rise without a deliberate and ineradicable conviction that either he or the author is stark and staring mad. Miss Anna Blackwell sets her Spiritualistic experience side by side with her philosophic convictions. She has received "a violent blow on the head from an unseen agent;" she tells us how the face of Charles Dickens lately smiled upon Mrs. M. G., "whose initials will be recognised by many," out of the tortoiseshell handle of her new parasol, and how she has seen in her own dressing-room,—"Standing in the air like the saints and angels in old pictures, a group of eighteen or twenty handsome young men, in white tunics, with red belts and buskins, and curious red hats, with 'cream-bowl' crowns and very broad brims, embroidered with gold and set on so slantingly that the thin line of gold on the edge of the brims produced round each head something like the effect of a nimbus. The right hand of each grasped a stout crook, taller than himself, and resting on the ground. They looked as though they had halted on a march, and the eyes of all were fixed upon me with a grave, earnest, and rather friendly gaze."

The Countess de Pomar, now Countess of Caithness, follows Miss Anna Blackwell with a lengthy letter,

"— a fine sample, on the whole,
Of rhetoric, which the learned call *épigrales*,"

and this part of the book is brought to a close by some circumstantial and wonderful accounts of seances with Mr. Home. Among these are two separate narratives of the same seance, one of them signed by Mrs. Honeywood and Lord Lindsay, the other given by the Hon. Mrs. ———. Between these two accounts there is no serious discrepancy, and they testify to the severest "fire tests" endured by Mr. Home.

Such was the *Report on Spiritualism*, and our readers will probably agree that, if it proves nothing else, it proves that it is high time competent hands undertook the unravelling of this Gordian knot. It must be fairly and patiently unravelled, and not cut through. The slash of an Alexandrian blade has been tried often enough, and has never sufficed. Scientific men forget that in the matter of Spiritualism they must make themselves fools that they may become wise. They must conform to the conditions imposed: even in conjuring one has to do as much as this. They must meet the "mediums" on their own ground, and, if possible, cut that ground from under their feet. To take an extreme case. Spiritualists assert that certain phenomena are only manifested in a half light, or in the dark; scientific men refuse to meet them under these conditions, and what is the result? Causes are not ascertained, delusions are not exposed, impositions are not detected, and the company of fools are confirmed in their belief. Surely a scientific man is a match for a medium, even in the dark; and surely the one can bring his science to bear wherever the other can bring his "mediumship," whatever that may be! We will suppose that the man of science consents to sit at a dark seance, and that something happens which he cannot explain. What then? He is not compromised or converted, and, without being in the least so, may go again and again, and it will be strange if by dint of precautions and expedites he cannot sift the whole matter in a very few sittings. It is owing to the stiffness of scientific men, and their refusal to meet the Spiritualists on their own ground, that this matter has not been settled long ago.

If anything more were needed to show the necessity for timely inquiry into this apparently ridiculous, but really very serious subject, it is the accounts given by such men as Lord Lytton and Dr. Edmunds of the lamentable consequences of following after Spiritualism. Lord Lytton tells us, and we can readily believe him, of devotees to Spiritualism duped into disgrace and ruin through acting upon a belief that they are hearing predictions and receiving counsels from beings wiser than themselves; and Dr. Edmunds quotes several cases of lunacy and paralysis occurring in his experience, within a few months, in persons in the habit of attending dark seances.

A volume now lying before us may serve to show how this folly is spread throughout society. It was lent to us by a distinguished Spiritualist, under the solemn promise that we should not divulge a single name of those concerned. It consists of about 150 pages of reports of seances, and was privately printed by a noble Earl, who has lately passed beyond the House of Lords, beyond, also, we trust, the spirit-peopled chairs and tables which in his life-time he loved, not wisely, but too well. In this book things more marvellous than any we have set down are circumstantially related, in a natural way, just as though they were

ordinary, every-day matters of fact. We shall not fatigue the reader by quoting any of the accounts given, and, no doubt, he will take our word when we say that they range through every species of "manifestation," from prophesying downwards. What we more particularly wish to observe is, that the attestation of fifty respectable witnesses is placed before the title-page. Among them are a Dowager Duchess and other ladies of rank, a Captain in the Guards, a nobleman, a Baronet, a member of Parliament, several officers of our scientific and other corps, a barrister, a merchant, and a doctor. Upper and upper-middle-class society is represented in all its grades, and by persons who, to judge by the positions they hold and the callings they follow, ought to be possessed of intelligence and ability. Certainly, it is time that a thorough and practical investigation cleared this cloud out of the intellectual sky, and the task need not be scouted by professors or other learned men, by Royal or other learned Societies.

Before writing upon this subject we thought it our duty to see with our own eyes the actual development which Spiritualism has attained here in London. We accordingly attended four seances, each different and each remarkable in its way. The first was at a private house, where machinery in the furniture or any similar deception was out of the question. The party was of eight persons, we think, but it does not matter, and Mr. Home was the medium. We sat round a table for about two hours, but nothing whatever occurred, except that a gentleman, who probably was susceptible to draughts, declared that he felt "a cold air" on his hands. The next day, at twelve o'clock, we visited, in company of a friend, the rooms of two "mediums" of considerable reputation. We were shown into a small and rather shabby drawing-room, divided in the usual way by folding doors. The curtains and blinds of the front windows, which looked on to the street, were half drawn, and the window in the back room was entirely darkened, the shutter being closed over the blind, and every ray of light jealously excluded by thick felt nailed across. Nevertheless, as it was the middle of the day, and the two rooms together were but small, the back room, so long as the folding doors remained open, was sufficiently lighted from the front windows. We inquired of the "mediums" if they could show us anything in daylight, and were told that at first such a sitting would probably be unsuccessful, but that after a few attendances the phenomena would doubtless manifest themselves to us in a full light. For the present, therefore, we had no choice but to sit in the back room in the pitch dark, with the folding doors closed. The room, we should think, measured not more than ten feet square, and was in every respect an ordinary shabby little apartment. We searched it as thoroughly as we could, but found nothing. We sounded and scrutinised the floor and walls, turned up the felt stretched over the shuttered window, suspiciously inspected the six or seven common cane-bottomed chairs and the small round table which were the furniture, but all in vain; we had only our trouble for our pains. We sat down at the small round table in the back room, our friend opposite to us, and one of the "mediums" on our left. The other medium held open the folding door till we had arranged our seats, standing at the inside with the handle in his hand; when we were ready he closed the door and took his place. We were now in total darkness, with the exception of the least chink of light which found its way under the folding door. We took hold of one hand of each medium, and at the same time pressed a foot and knee firmly against the foot and knee on each side of us. Our friend sat in precisely the same manner, and thus the "mediums" were kept in complete custody. A box of matches was on the table. We sat as still as a mouse, listening for the least sound. Presently we felt something hard pressing gently against the back of our head. Saying nothing, we leaned our head backwards, when the substance seemed to yield, and slid softly over our hair. We made a sudden grasp at it with our left hand, still holding fast the right hand of the medium, when there was a sound of something falling heavily on the table. Our friend instantly struck a match, and lo! one of the cane-bottomed chairs, which when we sat down were arranged round the room, was lying on the table. Throwing the match into the fireplace we sat some time longer, but nothing of consequence happened. Once, despite the warning of the "mediums" that whatever was in the air would instantly fall, perhaps on our heads, we struck a match suddenly, but discovered nothing. We placed the chair down again by the wall and sat on, but nothing happened, and presently, getting tired of sitting in the dark clasping clammy hands, we opened the folding doors and ended the seance. We searched and re-searched the room, but found nothing abnormal. The furniture now became quite lively—and this in broad daylight. A chair jumped three or four yards across the carpet, our hat fell at our feet, and numerous other phenomena occurred, but nothing so satisfactory as the chair in the dark, for then we had fast hold of the "mediums," whereas now they were moving about the room, and, somehow or other, everything seemed to occur just when we were not looking, and one of them was somewhere behind us. But we must confess the chair in the dark fairly puzzled us, and we came away, very far, indeed, from being Spiritualists, but wishing we could spare time and trouble to come again and again till we had sifted the whole matter to the bottom.

Our third seance was held in the evening at the house of a famous professional medium. We and our friend were admitted by special favour, for the lady in question has been left money, has retired from public practice, and lives in a handsome way somewhere towards Hampstead. We sat in the drawing-room, in a good light of gas, and scarcely had the medium touched the small round table than "John King," her well-known familiar, took possession of it, and caused it to play all manner of antics. It jumped into our lap and into the air, and conducted itself in the wildest way. But the lady's fingers, and they were strong, were upon it all the time, and there was also a difficulty and a delicacy in clearing her dress quite away from the claws of the pedestal. We do not for a moment accuse the medium of cheating, but these are facts. What we wanted were decided raps and motion absolutely without contact, and this we were unable to obtain, though we made several attempts. An alphabet of printed letters was now laid on the table, and we were desired to think of a name and to pass a pencil along the lines of letters. We thought of one, and moved the pencil over the paper. Knowing the eye of the medium was upon us, we tried our best to move it with the regularity of machinery, but "John King" was too clever to be eluded; he rapped at the right letters, and spelt out the name. In this

way we obtained several remarkable answers, but in each case the answer was known to ourself, and fixed in our mind, and, until some other solution is demonstrated, we must think that the sagacity of the lady had more to do with it than "John King." One crucial test was proposed by the medium herself. We were asked to think of a name, to fix it firmly in our mind, to place a pencil and paper under the table, and to see whether "John King" would write it for us. We thought of a name the medium could not possibly know, and waited in all anxiety, for this was a test indeed—a test that, had it been successfully withstood, would have proved conclusively the existence of something in Spiritualism beyond the ledgerdomain of the medium. We heard the pencil scratching, we cast what downward eye we could towards the lady's feet; they seemed perfectly still. The scratching ceased, and we picked up the paper. There was some writing on it, of about the length of the name we thought of, and the first and last letters were correct. But the rest of the word was utterly illegible, and two letters were not enough to get the idea of chances out of our mind. We now adjourned to the dining-room, to see what "John King" could do in the dark. A paper tube was laid on the table, which, we were assured, was his common habit to speak through. We asked the medium if she would consent to lay her hands on the table and allow us to place ours upon them. She readily consented. In a few moments there came five or six raps, the spiritual signal for the alphabet. The letters were quickly run over, and it was soon spelt out that we were taking all the magnetism, and that "John King" could do no more that evening. He said "Good-night" to us in a succession of raps, beginning loudly and gradually dying away into an apparent distance. We also then said "Good-night" to the medium, and came away, having detected no imposture, having seen and heard much that was curious, but certainly having neither seen nor heard anything to convince us even of the existence of a "new force," much less of the "supernature" of "John King."

Our fourth and last seance occurred at a private house. There were nine persons present, including Mr. D. Home and Miss Fox, the well-known American medium. We formally searched the room and examined the furniture before we sat down at the table, which measured 4ft. 5in. by 6ft. 4in. The room was at first well lighted from a gas-burner overhead. On the table was an accordion, which we took to pieces and tried, and found to be in every respect an ordinary instrument; a light lath about two feet long, a small brass hand-bell, matches, paper (which we marked), pencils, and two spirit-lamps. We sat down, and almost immediately loud raps appeared to come from the table and floor. Miss Fox then got up and went to the door of the room, inviting us to stand by her and to hold her hands, which we did, when loud thumps seemed to come from the panels as if done with the fist. These were repeated at our request a desired number of times. To give a detailed account of everything which occurred would need more space than we can now spare. Suffice it to say that the table was made light and heavy at our wish, that it moved in every direction, that there were vibrations of the floor and of our chairs, that on Mr. Home holding the accordion under the table in his right hand and by the end furthest from the keys, it played a distinct tune, Mr. Home's left hand being on the table, and his feet so raised as to be visible. All other hands were on the table. At the same time, and under the same conditions, a small hand-bell was rung in different parts of the space beneath the table. The gas was now turned out, and the two spirit-lamps lit; these gave a fair light. The raps became louder, and, in the usual method, directed us to take a leaf out of the table. This was done, when the table appeared to float up about eight inches off the floor, settling down again in a gentle swaying manner. The thin wooden lath lying on the cloth was seen by the whole party to be in motion. It tilted up sideways and endways, and then seemed to float backwards and forwards. Holding our hand three inches, as near as we could guess, above the cloth, the lath rose three times; the last time it touched our hand, and directly afterwards the table jumped and shook violently, and loud raps seemed to come from all parts of it and of the floor. The spirit-lamps were now put out, and what light there was from a low fire only just enabled us to see white paper on the table, and each other's positions. Presently, Mr. Home's and Miss Fox's hands and feet being in strict custody, we felt the accordion pressing against our knees. We put our hand under the table, when the instrument appeared to be moving round, till its wooden base was placed between our fingers. In that position we held it with its keys downwards; it seemed to be, pushed up towards our hand and played a few bars. It then stopped, and presently we felt the bell thrust between the fingers of the same hand. Almost immediately a flower or sprig was put into our fingers, but as we were already holding in one hand the accordion and the bell, the sprig was dropped. It was picked up again, put into our fingers, and as we received it we felt distinctly the touch of a large thumb and finger. We did not let it drop this time, and there was immediately a succession of raps of a loud and jubilant nature. They seemed to come from the table in our immediate vicinity. A match was now struck and we drew our tired hand from under the table, displaying the accordion, the bell, and the sprig. This was the end of the seance, for the "spirit" would do no more. In the account of it we have omitted several experiments about which we cannot speak decidedly. We tried every test we could think of. A subdued light, darkened as the evening went on, was one of the conditions we were obliged to comply with, and while the accordion was in our hand we were desired to sit passive, though, as we stated, the hands and feet of the "mediums" were in strict custody. Mr. Home seemed to wish to conceal nothing, and gave us every opportunity, consistent with the above conditions, for satisfying our scepticism. Yet we need hardly say that we were unable to satisfy it. By his request we got under the table with a lamp a great many times, insisted always on seeing his hands and feet, or on having them, as well as those of Miss Fox, held firmly. As to the hand with which Mr. Home held the accordion under the table, all we know is that on one of our sub-mahogany expeditions with the spirit-lamp, we saw that hand quite still, and saw the accordion moving up and down, and playing music. We heard the key-notes, but the position of the instrument prevented our seeing the keys moving, if they did move. There was nothing during the whole evening except the phenomena themselves to suggest imposture. We tried our best to

detect it, but could find no trace of it. We searched Mr. Home, and found nothing whatever upon him but his clothes.

Yet, even with all this, we are not a Spiritualist, and do not even believe in a "Psychic Force." We remember and lay to heart Mr. G. H. Lewis's admirable maxim, "Distinguish between facts and inferences from facts." We are certain that the table rose from the ground, that

our hand received a sprig under the table from what felt like another hand, but how these things happened we do not know. The nature of the phenomena and of human nature are such as to force us to suspect imposture and legerdemain until we can satisfy ourselves of the true causes, whatever these may be.

Impressed by the labours of its reporter, the *Times*, then, it appears, is seriously anxious that Spiritualism should be scientifically investigated. This being the case, it is somewhat a pity that it did not express itself earlier, and without troubling itself to undervalue and misrepresent the labours of others who have arrived at similar convictions. When its reviewer asserts that the protracted inquiry of the Dialectical Society's Committee "came to nothing after all," and that its "judgment left the matter exactly where it was before," he shows himself either as remarkably ignorant or deliberately untruthful. Is it "nothing" that a subject so recently disallowed is now discussable throughout the length and breadth of the land? Is it "nothing" that the ridicule argument (!) is now being received in connection with Spiritualism as a proof only of stupidity? and is it "nothing" that even the *Times*—poor old gentleman!—should be able at last to take up the subject, although only with the tongue?

The Dialectical Society's Committee was simply required to "report on the phenomena alleged to be spiritual" manifestations, and it met that requisition not only by the laborious taking of evidence from *all* quarters, but by the still more onerous process of their actual and long-continued *experiment*, by which it conclusively proved the existence of many of the alleged phenomena and their alliance in some mysterious but undetermined manner with intelligence; and all this it accomplished without the aid of professed mediums. Although the *Times* and its reviewer diligently suppress these most important experiments, are they, for all that, to be accounted "nothing"? Again, the *Times* requires an "impartial" investigation. Is it "nothing," we ask, that already and so far we have got this?—yea, more; for the investigators in question were "avowedly sceptical," and in giving proofs of phenomena, which as objective facts they formerly denied, proved themselves also to be gentlemen by the best of all criteria—their "love of truth," despite the consequences. And is it "nothing" that critics hostile to Spiritualism dared not to face even a sceptical committee in support of the illusion and delusion theories, notwithstanding a most pressing invitation?

All this, and much more ignored by the *Times*, is the outcome of this well-abused Report, which, if it has not made converts by the score, has at least started hundreds upon the road of personal investigation. Why, then, should the committee add to its involuntary *pioneer* labours the further task of encouraging laziness in a region where so many may work? It did all it was asked to do, and did it well; too well, indeed, either for penny-a-liners or for scientists, who, even as to facts, are again found to be far in the rear, much more as to their explanation.

But does the *Times* seriously imagine that scientists will obey the summons of an unknown reviewer, whose principal recommendation to notice is an officious affectation of judgeship over an investigation, the gist of which he has either carelessly overlooked or designedly obscured? Might not the scientist reply, Your treatment of the labours of others is apparently so unfair, so ungentlemanly, that we care not to sail in your company; and, further, your ability to appreciate facts is proved by your reviewing to be so childish inferior, that we may reasonably infer your own pretended investigation to be either a hoax or a delusion?

But why this whining for scientific help? If the phenomena are worth notice, they require no patronage from any quarter, but, sooner or later, must compel attention, and the scientist will have to acknowledge them cap in hand. The fact is, that the manifestations are amenable to investigation by every one of average intelligence; and observers, both within and without the pale of Spiritualism, have been and are engaged upon them, applying every conceivable test, and are rapidly coming to the conclusion that there is little left for the scientist but to satisfy himself individually. While testimony is not allowed to be evidence, the scientist has no better chances than his neighbours, and he will receive on this subject the same treatment as the most commonplace of mortals. Witness the ridicule and incredulity with which Quarterly Reviewers and others have visited Cromwell Varley, the well-known electrician; Alfred R. Wallace, the naturalist, and anticipator of Darwin; William Crookes, the spectroscopist; all of whom have, at least, borne testimony to the veritability of the disputed phenomena.

The *Times* reviewer is much exercised by the mercenary considerations attaching to professional mediumship. We should like to know whether the *Times* paid him for the article by which he is misleading the public. But even here his ignorance is apparent. Had his knowledge of the subject been equal to his effrontery, he would have known that all the phenomena of Spiritualism can be witnessed in private circles, under the most satisfactory test conditions, and through introductions easily obtainable by the courteous and gentlemanly inquirer. Perhaps he has not sought, or been able to obtain, these introductions, or he might have saved the "half-crown medium fees" he so much grudges. But why should the mere pittance which professional mediums can earn be denied to them, the while reviewers, honest and dishonest, obtain their pay? The poor medium is not only expected to enlighten the ignorant, but to bear with patience every form of insult, ridicule, and mendacity. Is a medium more or less mercenary than (say) a bishop who takes £10,000 a year for the promulgation of dogmas he dares not practise, even if he affects a belief in them?

More at leisure we may return to the *Times*, but for the present we dismiss it with the remark that its *critique* seems but another proof of that sneaking belief in Spiritualism, or at any rate its phenomena, which is afraid boldly to avow itself, but seeks to approach the subject, as it were, by ambush, and screened by so much of unwise and unworthy artifice. The recoil of all this will sooner or later come, and the "tables will then be turned" with a vengeance upon arrogant conceit and shameless ignorance. Spiritualism, like every science in its youth, may, in some of its phases, savour of "gush" and misapprehension; but it will scarcely learn better from reviewers and reviewing.

In conclusion, we would simply refer our readers generally, and investigators in particular, to the following article, written some time ago by an investigator in answer to some of the earlier Press critiques. It proves so *appropos*, that its present reproduction will not only be in place, but will be the more appropriate, from the fact that it is so anticipatory of the performance and line of treatment adopted by the *Times*, showing that, on Spiritualism, the leading journal can make no higher claims than its contemporaries.

THE PRESS *versus* SPIRITUALISM.

A PLEA FOR INVESTIGATION.

NEWSPAPER CRITICISM.

The report of the London Dialectical Society's Committee on the "Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations," has met with a reception remarkable as showing the variety and changes of attitude assumed by the Press in relation to subjects of proscribed or unpopular character. On the one hand, straitened by mercenary considerations and actuated by motives of superficial expediency, the Press, in some of its phases, is too venal for the duties devolving upon it. To be on the popular, or rather the paying side, is the main consideration; hence upon tabooed subjects are brought into play all the artifices of obscuration, ridicule, innuendo, suppression, and mis-statement, but so cleverly woven into a general appearance of candour, that the community is misled rather than informed, or at any rate that large portion of the public mind sufficiently gullible to believe in immaculate editors and reviewers, or sufficiently enervated to substitute for its own thought-effort mere passing commentaries, indifferent as to their trustworthiness or origin.

Spiritualism, so called, is a case in point. It is a subject in bad odour—a subject to be avoided—a subject on which feeling, especially religious feeling, runs high—a subject "uncanny"—a subject held meet for derision, but never deemed worthy of painstaking investigation. No surprise need therefore be occasioned by the fact that the late report has met with the usual treatment of the unpopular, and that conscientious reviewing has given place to misquotation and garbling, and the endeavour to misrepresent its character and incidence.

But, on the other hand, a more worthy section of the Press has at heart the interests of truth, and, regardless of merely popular impulses, seeks to present controverted subjects in a tentative, if not a judicial spirit. In this direction the criticism on the inquiry in question has

been tempered, and seems to invite a rejoinder in like courteous manner. Having regard to the amount of attention now bestowed upon Spiritualism, such rejoinder cannot be out of place, and may help to modify the disappointment arising in many cases from well-intentioned strictures, which, through their irrelevance to the actual issues-raised, and through their oversight of the moral conveyed by the investigation reported, are inconclusive.

NATURE OF THE INQUIRY.

First, then, it may be urged that although the report incidentally covers the whole question of Spiritualism, yet practically it is concerned with the phenomenal aspect of the subject only; for the Dialectical Society appointed its committee to report specifically on the phenomena alleged to be spiritual manifestations, and not upon Spiritualism as a creed or a philosophy. Thus it will be found that to whatever extent the investigators may have testified to the occurrence of certain phenomena, they have not ventured to determine their source.

PUBLIC OPINION BEFORE THE INQUIRY.

Fairly, however, to review the investigation, a comparison must be made. First should be noted the general and public condition of the subject immediately prior to the inquiry; and next, to what extent that condition has been affected by the results attained.

On the one hand were the Spiritualists, considerable in numbers and pretensions, avowing the frequent occurrence of certain phenomena, asserting for them a highly beneficial character, and attributing such occurrences to the agency of departed human beings.

On the other hand were a vast public and the Press, for the most part wholly indifferent to the subject; but where concerned, entertaining to-

wards it opinions of marked scepticism and hostility. These opinions may be thus briefly enumerated:—

- 1.—That no such phenomena as alleged occurred at all.
- 2.—That the alleged phenomena were the result of imposture or delusion, or of both, in varying degrees.
- 3.—That the alleged phenomena had a basis of reality, but were intensified in effect by delusion or imposture.
- 4.—That such phenomena occurred, but were explainable by known natural causes.
- 5.—That such phenomena occurred, and were attributable to natural causes not yet ascertained.
- 6.—That in any case the phenomena were utterly frivolous, and unworthy of investigation.
- 7.—That the manifestations only occurred in the presence of believers in the same.
- 8.—That mediumship, so called, was in all cases professed and practised for the mere sake of money-getting.
- 9.—That the partisans of Spiritualism were for the most part uncultured, illiterate, and credulous.
- 10.—That Spiritualists, as a body, shrank from any examination of their claims, and placed every obstacle in the way of fair investigation.

This, roughly, was the popular view of the subject at the commencement of the inquiry; and the first fact to be noticed at its close is, that whatever may be the *rationale* of the report it satisfies neither of the opposing parties. To the sceptic it goes too far, to the Spiritualist it is much too tentative; thus do both sides indirectly bear testimony to a faithful discharge of the investigator's office.

THE ORAL AND WRITTEN EVIDENCE.

The committee, immediately upon its appointment, urgently invited oral and written evidence from every quarter. The Spiritualists alone responded, being represented by witnesses of well-ascertained respectability from every grade of society; while the upholders of the impostor and delusion theories were conspicuous only by their absence, at any rate from the ordeal of the witness-box and of cross-examination.

Had the inquiry gone no further, the evidence thus collected would have been answer sufficient to much of hostile criticism. To characterise such evidence as "hearsay" is to misrepresent it, for it is as direct as that received in our law courts, each and every witness having been requested to speak only to facts within his or her personal knowledge—a restriction with which most complied. The value of this evidence is enhanced by the declaration from many of the witnesses that their original attitude towards Spiritualism was one of scepticism; while some again had made acquaintance with the manifestations years ago, and had not ceased to continue observers, or wavered in their belief as to the existence and origin of the phenomena.

That the "greater marvels" belong to the oral evidence and to the correspondence is probably true; but is this the precise question to raise? To what extent is there agreement or disagreement amongst the witnesses themselves? Has the committee been enabled practically to prove or disprove any of the facts alleged in the evidence? These are questions perhaps more pertinent; and is it of no significance that men and women of acknowledged trustworthiness, professional status, culture, and refinement, should be found willing to give their personal testimony upon matters exposing themselves to almost certain contempt and ridicule, the while not a single champion volunteered to testify to the more popular beliefs in tricks and hallucination?

EXPERIMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE WITHOUT MEDIUMS.

But the investigators (thirty-six in number) determined to experiment, and for this purpose divided themselves into six sub-committees. In this circumstance may the true value of the report be found, or rather in the corroboration thus obtained of much in the oral and written evidence. This corroboration, so far as it took place, may indeed be considered by the spiritualistic party as but "ordinary" or elemental, and as "outdone" at many a private seance. But by the public or by sceptics no such considerations can be advanced. For them the inquiry must be, Has there been corroboration at all? and next, What is the nature, extent, and authority of such corroboration? For were not the Spiritualists challenged on the very grounds that the phenomena alleged never occurred, or were but the product of fraud or imposture? And did not the Spiritualists, taking up the gauntlet, reply that whatever might be made of the origin of the phenomena, their occurrence could be established by experiment without aid from them or from any of their mediums (so called)?

Proceeding, then, to private experiment, "without the aid or presence of any professional medium," the more diligent and persevering of the sub-committees were enabled to report the occurrence of certain of the disputed phenomena which need not here be explained, but which are popularly known as "table moving" and "rappings," the said manifestations being commonly accompanied in greater or less degree by marked indications of intelligence. A large majority of the investigators thus became actual witnesses to the phenomena under conditions far removed from the possibility of fraud or delusion, and their testimony is the more valuable seeing that the report records that "the greater part of them commenced their investigation in an avowedly sceptical spirit." Such evidence indeed can hardly be over-rated, especially in view of the status and trustworthiness of the investigators, and of their carefulness not to overstate their conclusions, but rather to leave moot points for further research.

RESULTS OF THE INQUIRY.

We have presented the case as it stood at the commencement of the inquiry; let us now state how it stands at the close:—

- 1st. That some of the phenomena in dispute are proved to occur, and that upon independent, it might almost be said hostile, testimony.
- 2nd. That the charges of imposture and delusion are negatived to the extent of the ground traversed by the experimental committees.
- 3rd. That the phenomena proven are of a character so curious and so opposed to the usual developments of force, that they cannot primarily be regarded as unimportant, pending a fuller knowledge in regard to their nature and origin.

4th. That although no explanation of the phenomena sufficient to cover the case has been arrived at through the experiments instituted, so, on the other hand, there has been no sufficient negation of spiritualistic theories.

5th. That the occurrence of the phenomena does not depend upon any belief or disbelief concerning them.

6th. That there are but very few professional mediums, and that mediumship, so called, appears to be a somewhat widespread gift or condition claimed and practised, quite irrespective of pecuniary considerations, by numbers of persons in every rank of life.

7th. That no backwardness has been found upon the part of the Spiritualists in submitting their claims to investigation.

8th. That although urgently invited, none of the supporters of the imposture and delusion theories submitted themselves as witnesses.

9th. That, as a party, the ranks of Spiritualists are found to be by no means wanting in education, talent, accomplishments, and general credibility.

INVESTIGATION RECOMMENDED.

If these propositions but approximately reflect the truth, it is clear that the public now stands in an entirely new relation to the subject. It may be urged that in the matters of causation, philosophy, theory, &c., but little ground has been gained, and that many of the phenomena have yet to be endorsed. But, on the other hand, it must be conceded that these latter have not been negatived; and that, as a necessary sequence, the theoretic department naturally falls into a subsequent stage of investigation.

The way, however, is paved by the great fact ascertained that phenomena really exist for elucidation, and a more respectful attention is fairly earned for whatever may yet require examination.

For the sceptic, then, this subject has taken an enormous stride. Phenomenally it is now removed from a condition of suspicious partisanship, and is elevated by an unsectarian inquiry into a region of fact meet for the further research of the scientist, psychologist, religionist, or philosopher. Indeed, the worth of this famous investigation can hardly be over-estimated as a starting-point for renewed inquiry, and its moral can scarcely be better conveyed than in the concluding words of the report itself:—"Your committee, taking into consideration the high character and great intelligence of many of the witnesses to the more extraordinary facts, the extent to which their testimony is supported by the reports of the sub-committees, and the absence of any proof of imposture or delusion as regards a large portion of the phenomena; and, further, having regard to the exceptional character of the phenomena, the large number of persons in every grade of society and over the whole civilised world who are more or less influenced by a belief in their supernatural origin, and to the fact that no philosophical explanation of them has yet been arrived at, deem it incumbent upon them to state their conviction that the subject is worthy of more serious attention and careful investigation than it has hitherto received."

THE ADVERSE CRITQUES.

Turn we again to those other reviewers who have failed to note, or endeavoured to hide, the enormous ground gained in this subject, that we may ascertain their treatment of the report, and their claim for the position of censorship they have assumed. With but very few exceptions, the investigation has been treated with a dishonesty, a flippancy, and an inconsequence well nigh beneath contempt. One fact, however, is prominent, viz., that the subject for the moment so thoroughly interests the public that it has been impossible to pursue towards it the ordinary tactics of total suppression. Failing this, derisive, unphilosophic, and garbled reviews have served to obscure the questions raised, to ignore the facts revealed, and to misdirect the public mind, so to prevent that further investigation which, if pursued, will unfailingly expose the small qualification possessed by their authors for the affected leadership of thought and opinion on this debatable subject. Unable to cope with the circumstance that some of the phenomena persistently denied have been actually endorsed by unpledged, indeed by sceptical, investigators after painstaking and repeated experiment, the reviewers have fallen back upon the old assertions of "fraud," "hallucination," "worthlessness of the manifestations," &c., &c.

With an assumption almost astounding, they have not scrupled to call in question the intelligence and observant powers of a number of gentlemen to whom they for the most part must have been utter strangers, but whose high character and social standing is better ascertained than their own, and whose status as clergymen, lawyers, physicians, and scientists would imply more than average qualifications. Has it never struck these leaders of opinion (!) that such investigators must necessarily have been forewarned and forearmed in regard to the possibilities of fraud and delusion, and that the very labour upon which they entered was, in intent, the detection of imposture? So marked, indeed, is the hostility to the results recorded (elemental though they be), and to the recorders thereof, that one is driven to the conclusion that no compliment could have been too high, no pan of praise too intense, for the self-same investigators, had they but been careful to have taken the side of unexamining incredulity rather than that of truth and conscientiousness.

Again changing their ground, the inquiry has been voted worthless, because experimental seances of but twelve months' standing have not testified to the greater marvels which years of record have accumulated for the Spiritualist. Thus there is an admission of the very phenomena primarily denied and urged impossible of demonstration,—an admission, however, only made for the purpose of asserting their inherent triviality.

Putting aside the inconsequence of this position, what possible warrant can there be for thus anticipating an answer to one of the questions propounded for solution? The actual investigators, with all the collected data before them, have not thus prejudged the case, for they at any rate felt that, apart from a full knowledge of the source, nature, and incidence of the manifestations, to have asserted their unimportance would have been absurd, and a begging of the whole question. It would, however, be very easy to show the hollowness of this assumed appraisal. The very phenomena now decried were, some twenty years ago, the talk and derision of the world, when as the "Rochester rappings" they appeared among a small and obscure community. Notwithstanding,

Continued on page 20.

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

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, Private Social Meeting of Mediums, at 7.30
 SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, Service at Cavendish Rooms, at 7 o'clock. Address by J. Burns, on "Spiritualism and Public Opinion."
 MONDAY, JANUARY 13, Quarterly Meeting of the Marylebone Association, at 8.
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 THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, Seance by Mrs. Olive, Trance-Medium, at 8 o'clock. Admission, 2s. 6d.

* * * Other Seances in London and the Provinces may be found on page 24.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1873.

THE "TIMES" AND SPIRITUALISM.

Contemporary with the celebrated hairdresser who gave it as his opinion that the function of the brain was to "percolate through the skull and nourish the hair," there appeared an allusion to Spiritualism in the *Times*, in which the sapient writer stated that if the spirits could grind his coffee, blacken his boots, and put his hat on the peg as he entered the house, he could see some utility in Spiritualism. Thanks to the onward unfoldment of spiritual light and truth, more particularly to the efforts of the Dialectical Society's Committee, the mirror of public prejudice and conceit has discovered that he has an intellect to cognise facts as well as palate to appreciate the flavour of coffee; that his "understanding" can be improved by other means besides those furnished by Day and Martin; and that the head is probably a receptacle for brains as well as a block on which to expose Lincoln and Bennett's choice goods.

However much gratification the dawn of intelligence thus apparent must give to the philanthropist and patriot, it would have been much more satisfactory if the writer had given some of his personal home experiences in respect to this subject, seeing that he so virtuously detests the professional practices of public mediums. It would have been an extra inducement to men of science to investigate if he had associated with his labours the orthodox example of the Rev. Dr. Cumming, and adduced cases from the mediumship of a lady of title. But we beg the *Times* reporter's pardon for alluding thus to his work as a performance for which he is personally responsible, as it has stood so long on the galleys and experienced the familiar operations of the "bodkin" and "stick" so often, that the original first proof would not be able to recognise itself as transformed to meet the requirements of Boxing-day. To those who are acquainted with the true merits of Spiritualism, and have likewise a knowledge of the men and their motives who figure in the production of this *Times* advertisement, the whole proceeding wears the appearance of a Christmas pantomime with a genuine historical plot. We do not refer merely to the opening act, which is disposed of in another place, but the amusement created becomes more intense as the performance extends itself into the issues of the *Times*, which succeeded the appearance of the opening article. A Christmas piece, however funny the playwright might affect to be, would be but a tame affair without the necessary adjuncts of comic representation. This desideratum the *Times* correspondence happily furnishes; Mr. Dircks (happy name) plays the clown to perfection. His folly is so transparent and unconsciously expressed that even children see through it, and clap their hands in exultant glee in being wiser than the cause of their merriment. Nor is he unsustained by the

equally requisite presence of the senile pantaloons, on whose side he is supposed to be, but with whom he cannot on any one point agree. The foster-parent of the nondescript founding "Psychic Force" portrays this character to absolute perfection, while the invisible harlequin may, by a slight stretch of the imagination, be supposed to be the real author of much of this lively acting—the original parent of "Psychic Force," but who is so systematically ignored by the more prominent *dramatis personæ*.

Commenting on Mr. Serjeant Cox's letter, which we may again refer to, "F. G. S.," a member of the Dialectical Committee of Investigation, after giving reasons for adopting the Spiritual theory, thus concludes:—

Such are some of the statements, clear and distinct, by thoughtful, competent observers and witnesses. Upon what grounds does Mr. Serjeant Cox ignore their evidence? Knowing as I do the kindly, honest nature of the learned Serjeant, and his thorough love of scientific truths, I can account for this circumstance only by an exaggerated parental instinct for his bantling "Psychism," his admiration for which he fondly fancies is shared by all Europe and America. We may safely conclude that the hippopotamus firmly believes her baby to be the loveliest little darling that ever was born.

After the contemplation of so much of the recreative, the mind turns with renewed zest to the consideration of the following admirable letter from the pen of Mr. A. R. Wallace:—

To the Editor of the "Times."

SIR,—Having been named by several of your correspondents as one of the scientific men who believe in Spiritualism, you will perhaps allow me to state briefly what amount of evidence has forced the belief upon me. I began the investigation about eight years ago, and I esteem it a fortunate thing that at that time the more marvellous phenomena were far less common and less accessible than they are now, because I was led to experiment largely at my own house, and among friends whom I could trust, and was able to establish to my own satisfaction, by means of a great variety of tests, the occurrence of sounds and movements not traceable to any known or conceivable physical cause. Having thus become thoroughly familiar with these undoubtedly genuine phenomena, I was able to compare them with the more powerful manifestations of several public mediums, and to recognise an identity of cause in both by means of a number of minute but highly characteristic resemblances. I was also able, by patient observation, to obtain tests of the reality of some of the more curious phenomena which appeared at the time, and still appear to me, to be conclusive. To go into details as to those experiences would require a volume, but I may, perhaps, be permitted briefly to describe one, from notes kept at the time, because it serves as an example of the complete security against deception which often occurs to the patient observer without seeking for it.

A lady who had seen nothing of the phenomena asked me and my sister to accompany her to a well-known public medium. We went, and had a sitting alone in the bright light of a summer's day. After a number of the usual raps and movements, our lady friend asked if the name of the deceased person she was desirous of communicating with could be spelt out. On receiving an answer in the affirmative, the lady pointed successively to the letters of a printed alphabet while I wrote down those at which three affirmative raps occurred. Neither I nor my sister knew the name the lady wished for, nor even the names of any of her deceased relatives; her own name had not been mentioned, and she had never been near the medium before. The following is exactly what happened, except that I alter the surname, which was a very unusual one, having no authority to publish it. The letters I wrote down were of the following kind:—y n r e h n o s p m o h t. After the first three—y n r—had been taken down, my friend said, "This is nonsense; we had better begin again." Just then her pencil was at e, and raps came, when a thought struck me (having read of, but never witnessed a similar occurrence), and I said "Please go on; I think I see what is meant." When the spelling was finished I handed the paper to her, but she could see no meaning in it till I divided it at the first h, and asked her to read each portion backwards, when to her intense astonishment the name "Henry Thompson" came out, that of a deceased son of whom she had wished to hear, correct in every letter. Just about that time I had been hearing *ad nauseam* of the superhuman acuteness of mediums who detect the letters of the name the deluded visitors expect, notwithstanding all their care to pass the pencil over the letters with perfect regularity. This experience, however (for the substantial accuracy of which as above narrated I vouch), was and is, to my mind, a complete disproof of every explanation yet given of the means by which the names of deceased persons are rapped out. Of course, I do not expect any sceptic, whether scientific or unscientific, to accept such facts, of which I could give many, on my testimony, but neither must they expect me, nor the thousands of intelligent men to whom equally conclusive tests have occurred, to accept their short and easy methods of explaining them.

If I am not occupying too much of your valuable space, I should like to make a few remarks on the misconceptions of many scientific men as to the nature of this inquiry, taking the letters of your correspondent Mr. Dircks as an example. In the first place, he seems to think that it is an argument against the facts being genuine that they cannot all be produced and exhibited at will; and another argument against them, that they cannot be explained by any known laws. But neither can catalepsy, the fall of meteoric stones, nor hydrophobia be produced at will; yet these are all facts, and none the less so that the first is sometimes imitated, the second was once denied, and the symptoms of the third are often greatly exaggerated, while none of them are yet brought under the domain of strict science; yet no one would make this an argument for refusing to investigate these subjects. Again, I should not have expected a scientific man to state, as a reason for not examining it, that Spiritualism "is opposed to every known natural law, especially the law of gravity," and that it "sets chemistry, human physiology, and mechanics at open defiance;" when the facts simply are that the phenomena, if true, depend upon a cause or causes which can overcome or counteract the action of these several forces, just as some of these forces often counteract or overcome others; and this should surely be a strong inducement to a man of science to investigate the subject.

While not laying any claim myself to the title of "a really scientific man," there are some who deserve that epithet who have not yet been mentioned by your correspondents as at the same time Spiritualists. Such I consider the late Dr. Robert Chambers, as well as Dr. Elliotson, Professor William Gregory, of Edinburgh; and Professor Hare, of Philadelphia—all, unfortunately, deceased; while Dr. Gully, of Malvern, as a scientific physician, and Judge Edmonds, one of the best American lawyers, have had the most ample means of investigation; yet all these not only were convinced of the reality of the most marvellous facts, but also accepted the theory of modern Spiritualism as the only one which would embrace and account for the facts. I am also acquainted with a living physiologist of high rank as an original investigator, who is an equally firm believer.

In conclusion I may say that, although I have heard a great many accusations of imposture, I have never detected it myself; and, although a large proportion of the more extraordinary phenomena are such, that, if impostures, they could only be performed by means of ingenious apparatus or machinery, none has ever been discovered. I consider it no exaggeration to say, that the main facts are now as well established and as easily verifiable as any of the more exceptional phenomena of nature which are not yet reduced to law. They have a most important bearing on the interpretation of history, which is full of narratives of similar facts, and on the nature of life and intellect, on which physical science throws a very feeble and uncertain light; and it is my firm and deliberate belief that every branch of philosophy must suffer till they are honestly and seriously investigated, and dealt with as constituting an essential portion of the phenomena of human nature.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,
ALFRED R. WALLACE.

In conclusion, we take the opportunity of noticing a letter from the secretary of the Dialectical Society, in which he officially disavows any connection between that society and the Report on Spiritualism. The facts are these:—The Committee of Investigation presented their Report to the society, which declined the risk or responsibility of publishing it. More courageous and earnest than the parent body, this committee undertook the work themselves, with the reward, seemingly, of being ignored by those who ought to have been proud of their faithful conduct. This investigation is the only thing which the society has ever done worthy of nine days' remembrance, and yet, officially, it has the ungentlemanliness to affect to repudiate that which it will yet be heartily ashamed at not having accepted and promoted. By the side of the important issues and universal attention which this report has raised, the other acts of the Dialectical Society sink into utter insignificance, more particularly the carping minority who, determined to balance their ignorance against the laudable industry of the genuine investigators, throw into prominent relief the leading actors in this famous inquiry. The *Times* closes the discussion with a leading article, which we shall refer to next week.

As we leave the theatre let us not forget to thank those who have granted the Spiritualists such an acceptable Christmas entertainment, for at the bottom of it all is vividly apparent this significant moral—Spiritualism is now a recognised fact, and its phenomena are true.

AN INVESTIGATOR wants to hear of Spiritualists in Leicester.

The Day of Rest is the title of a new penny weekly illustrated paper of "Sunday reading."

Mrs. POWELL has arrived safely in America after a rough voyage. We shall publish a letter from her soon.

The *Jersey Observer* gives an article on "Spiritualism," recommending the *MEDIUM* and Mr. Massey's "Concerning Spiritualism."

MADAME LOUISE will hold a developing circle and seance on Wednesday evening, at seven o'clock, at 33, Percy Street, Bedford Square.

MESSRS. HERNE AND WILLIAMS are absent from London, giving seances in the provinces.

MR. PRENTICE MULFORD is open to receive invitations to lecture on Progressive subjects, including Spiritualism; also on Emigration, California, and American life.—Address, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

MR. AND Mrs. HOLMES, 16, Old Quebec Street, are having successful manifestations of materialised spirit-faces. At every sitting for that purpose several visitors discern the well-known likenesses of deceased friends.

Mrs. BUTTERFIELD, the well-known trance-speaker, of Morley, near Leeds, will visit London during the last week in this month, and deliver addresses to such societies as may require her services. Applications should be forwarded at once to 15, Southampton Row, W.C.

A NEW WEEKLY seance was commenced on Tuesday evening at the Spiritual Institution under the direction of Mrs. Berry; Madame Louise, clairvoyante-medium. As no notice had been given, the circle was small, but the results in the highest degree satisfactory. A lady had her ailments accurately described, although no person in the circle had seen her before. Another lady had her family history intimately described, with many details of a highly-improbable character,—such as alluding to her grandchildren—for the lady had a very youthful appearance. We congratulate Mrs. Berry, on her return to public action in behalf of Spiritualism, on the success of this her first seance. The seances will be continued on Tuesday evenings. For conditions see the calendar of weekly meetings and seances.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—The secretary of the Spiritual Association, Mr. Thomas Wood, Freemasons' Old Hall, Newgate Street, asks the aid and co-operation of the many wealthy Spiritualists who reside in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, to enable the association to engage the services of first-rate mediums and lecturers. Gerald Massey is about to deliver two lectures for the association, and if sufficient help is obtained Dr. Sexton will be engaged, who is a great favourite in the town. The meetings are held on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday nights, at the above address.

NEXT SUNDAY IN LONDON.

Sunday Services for Spiritualists, at Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street, Wells Street, Oxford Street, at 7. J. Burns, on "Spiritualism and Public Opinion."

Charles Voysey, at St. George's Hall, Langham Place, in the morning. Sunday Lecture Society, St. George's Hall, at 4. F. J. Mouat, Esq., M.D. (late Secretary to the Council of Education, and Inspector-General of state prisons, Bengal), on "The Mussulmans of India and Central Asia."

Sunday Evenings for the People, St. George's Hall, at 7. H. Sandwith, Esq., C.B., D.C.L., on "Eastern Experiences; or, Strange Things I Have Seen and Heard," followed by Rossini's "Stabat Mater."

"An Unfettered Pulpit," South Place Chapel, Finsbury, at 11.15. M. D. Conway, on "Pre-Darwinism and Post-Darwinism."

DR. SEXTON'S APPOINTMENTS.

Darlington, Sunday, January 26th, as follow:—

Afternoon.—"The Philosophy of Trance—Natural, Mesmeric, and Spiritual."

Evening.—"Theories Invented to Account for and Explain Spiritual Phenomena."

Tuesday, 28.—"Vaccination Useless and Injurious."

Wednesday, 29.—"The Physiology of Digestion."

Thursday, 30.—"The Vital Stream; a Sketch of the Circulation of the Blood."

Arrangements are in progress for Dr. Sexton to lecture at Batley, Leeds, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Huddersfield, and other places.

All communications to be addressed to Dr. Sexton, 17, Trafalgar Road, Old Kent Road, London, S.E.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION.—The fifth half-yearly meeting will be held at 74, Navarino Road, on Monday evening, the 13th instant, at eight o'clock.

LIVERPOOL.—Mr. Kitson, of Gawthorpe, near Wakefield, will give two inspirational addresses at the Assembly Rooms, Islington, Liverpool, on Sunday, at half-past two and seven p.m.

Huddersfield.—Dr. Sexton will lecture in the Gymnasium Hall on the first Sunday in February, Mr. Councillor Houghton in the chair. Subjects—Afternoon, "Personal Experience;" evening, "Spiritualism in all Ages and in all Countries."

OUR FRIEND Mr. Russell of Kingston-on-Thames holds a responsible position in the post-office there, and recently by a robbery of the till he lost £70. We are glad to observe from the *Surrey Comet* that his friends have contributed upwards of the half of it, and it is to be hoped that the remainder will soon be sent in.

BIRMINGHAM.—A lady writes respecting the low state of the cause in Birmingham, and warmly recommends to the notice of investigators Mr. and Mrs. Downes, 42, Aston Road, as mediums. We hope our friends will call on Mr. Downes, whom we used to know when he lived at Enfield, and endeavour to utilise his gifts.

"HISTORICUS" sustained the part of Spiritualism most creditably in his discussion with Mr. Magee Pratt, on Sunday last. His opponent's powers, like those of Mr. Bradlaugh, consisted chiefly in wry faces and wry expressions, or attempts to ignore and lead away from the subject. Wonderful indeed are the devious ways pursued by some "truth-seekers" (?).

THE quarterly meeting of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists will take place on Monday, the 13th inst., at the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, commencing precisely at eight o'clock; when the election of the officers for the ensuing year will take place, together with other important business. Any friends wishing to join the association are invited to attend.—C. WHITE, Hon. Sec.

AN INQUIRER (Margate) would be glad to join a seance, if one were instituted at Margate. In reply to his question, we have to state that it is well ascertained that spirits who have departed this life for centuries communicate as well as personal friends recently deceased. All depends on the conditions and the motives of the inquirer. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." A chapter from Peebles's biography, "The Spiritual Pilgrim," was lately quoted in *Human Nature*, which very well illustrates this matter.

THE St. John's Association of Spiritualists beg to announce the following arrangements for January, 1873:—Thursday, the 16th, lecture by Mr. Joseph Ashman, on "Healing Mediumship." Thursday, the 23rd, a seance; Miss Kæves, medium. Thursday, the 30th, a lecture by C. W. Pearce, Esq.; subject—"Spiritual Manifestations, Ancient and Modern." The meetings to be held at the St. John's Temperance Hall, 7, Corporation Row, Clerkenwell. Admission free. Doors will be opened each evening at 8 o'clock, and the meetings commence at 8.30.—R. PEARCE, Hon. Sec.

THE Ball's Pond Association of Spiritualists beg to announce the following arrangements:—Monday, the 13th, a lecture by Mr. S. Goss. Subject—"A Scientific Exposition of Spiritualism, and the Origin and Character of Evil." Monday, the 20th, Mr. J. Burns will answer questions and objections from the audience, written or oral. Monday, the 27th, a seance by Miss Kæves, when that medium will speak under spirit-control. Monday, February 3, a lecture by T. Shorter, Esq. Subject—"Spiritualism and the Press." The meetings to be held at 102, Ball's Pond Road, Islington, corner of King Henry's Walk. Doors open at eight o'clock each evening. Admission free.—J. WEBSTER, Hon. Sec.

HALIFAX.—Dr. Sexton gave three excellent lectures on Sunday on subjects which have been announced in the *MEDIUM*. I am sorry to say the audiences were very scanty on each occasion, owing in a great measure to the wild state of the weather. His treatment of the subject of Trance demolished the material philosophy of the mind. On the theories invented to account for the phenomena the action of Spiritual agency was clearly demonstrated. We are sorry that space prevents our doing justice to the very interesting and intelligent digest furnished by Mr. Wilson. We earnestly recommend our readers to invite Dr. Sexton to visit their localities, and hear him for themselves.

the said manifestations have since become of almost universal occurrence, and they now, as then, defy any elucidation of general acceptability. Meanwhile, however, a numerous party has grown up who assert for them a relationship to a large family of phenomena of the most varied pretensions, and who claim for them a source of unparalleled significance. Curiously enough, this party has no special bond of union, but has been gathered from every section of the civilised world, irrespective of diverse impulses or beliefs; while in this country it exists as units scattered broadcast, rather than as focussed into a society or organisation, and numbers many secret sympathisers. Surely, then, does an immeasurable importance attach to phenomena so potent in effect, and surely this is hardly the time to dismiss as mere trivialities facts to which so many persons of education and ability are pledged.

In recognising the proven existence of phenomena, a step is gained towards any estimate of their value; and if such commonplace incidents as the fall of an apple or the vaporising of boiling water have led to whole revolutions in science, who can say that the automatic movement of a table may not imply a mode of force capable and worthy of utilitarianism?

Much has been made of alleged errors of theory, philosophy, and belief said to accrete around an acceptance of the phenomena. But again, it must be urged that such considerations should be postponed, and can really exist as assumption only until more is known of the phenomena under investigation. And if surrounding error is to be pleaded as a bar to investigation, then it may be asserted that none of the phenomena known to science could ever have been accepted at all. Chemistry is a case in point, a department of science daily reaching to a higher phase of precision, but none the less the result of centuries of error. If we oftentimes arrive at good through our experiences of evil, so no less to reach truth do we press through and clear away the encumbering error. Error, whatever its nature, is an argument for, and not against, inquiry, and imposes upon the investigator an additional responsibility, its subsidence becoming but a matter of time and experience when once a point of contact is established between the mind and truth.

The animus of the reviewers is further manifested in the prominence they have given to the adverse reports, which, by the suppression of all the explanatory notes, they have endeavoured to nurse into an importance by no means their due. But what of these reports, or of the failure of the least persevering of the sub-committees? Their undetermined character is sufficiently exposed by their mere juxtaposition to the other reports, while the impartiality of the inquiry is placed beyond all dispute by their inclusion in the volume. The very failure of some of the sub-committees to obtain manifestations has a corroborative value, for no facts have been better ascertained than that the phenomena cannot be commanded at pleasure, and appear to depend upon most subtle conditions. Each of the successful committees had occasional seances without result, but total failure was the lot only of the unpersevering. Of the two individual reports denying the phenomena, it is notorious that the authors had, or took, but few opportunities of the experimental investigation accomplished by others, as the book itself discloses. The attempt, therefore, to make the tale of inadequate investigation do duty for the story of hard work and perseverance by the more diligent members, is after all but a sorry expedient, which only need be noticed as a means of estimating the general worthlessness of the critiques—a worthlessness the more apparent now that day by day the facts ascertained by the successful sub-committees are being verified by totally independent investigators.

THE ADVERSE CRITICS CRITICISED.

Were this an article on the nature of evidence and the credibility to be attached to phenomena of unusual character, it would be easy to show

(upon the trumpety arguments and promises set forth to discredit so-called spiritual manifestations) that not a murderer could ever be convicted upon such testimony as over and over again has consigned the criminal to the gallows. Millions of the community have never seen a murder committed, nor do they know anyone who has. May not therefore the excitement, the flight, and the blood-stained appearances alleged of the prisoner by an eye-witness be but an imagination, a case of unconscious cerebration, a something wholly subjective? A shot, perhaps, was fired—but what of that? This but makes the evidence still more unreliable. The nerves would be shocked, and the mind would become excited to an abnormal expectancy, and would be the more ready to conjure up images of blood and horror. Gentlemen of the jury, while we admit the high character, honour, and trustworthiness of the witness, we are sure you will not, upon such evidence, consign the prisoner at the bar to a felon's doom, but will send him out of the dock without a stain upon his character.

This is a specimen of the reasoning too frequently applied to the phenomena of Spiritualism; for, amongst other theories, we are gravely asked to accept "expectant attention" or "unconscious cerebration" as solutions sufficient for the multifarious manifestations occurring not only to Spiritualists, but also to investigators after investigators who have approached the inquiry, anxious to expose the alleged wonders, and determined to apply with rigour the above and all such theories. Boldness is not only excusable, it is even desirable in the formation of theoretic solutions; but progress towards proof cannot be expected while the fashion is maintained of speculating upon the explanation before the thing to be explained is sufficiently examined. There is a distinct difference between the fitting of theories to phenomena, and of phenomena to theories; and this has yet to be recognised both by the public and Spiritualists. The subject, however, will not yield to reviewing or to newspaper theorising. Eminent it is one for the investigator, and no better plea for investigation exists than the lamentable ignorance so lately displayed by the Press.

In conclusion, it is hardly probable that any one solution will meet the case of phenomena alleged to be so varied. Should even the Spiritualist be right, his triumph will be one only of degree; for, should an agency of disembodied spirits be ever proven, it seems difficult to escape from the conclusion that there may be also latent possibilities of the embodied mind, only now in process of development. Nor should the investigator by any means put fraud and delusion out of the account. Their occasional admixture is not only possible, but likely, while quacks remain among doctors, hypocrites among religionists, perverters among critics, and society teems in every department with parvenus and pretenders. Spiritualists, however, need no apology at the hand of a mere investigator, for they are better able to answer for themselves. Their issue with the sceptic is a simple one, notwithstanding its importance. They but argue, that as in the material universe an all-permeating union is found, so in the world of mind, from its lowest to its highest developments, is there a like universal connection, of which physical death is no real severance. To them spiritual communion thus presents no inherent improbability, and proofs of its existence they affect to find running through all history, as well as in the every-day manifestations now so controverted. They further argue that this communion is so influential for good or for evil, its action and reaction so determinate and so governed by the progress of humanity or of the individual on either side of the grave, that it is a factor too important to overlook in the problem of human existence. In any case they feel that they dare not withhold facts; and while they are willing to submit them to rigid scrutiny, they neither fear nor expect to escape misrepresentation and criticism.

INVESTIGATOR.

HOW TO INVESTIGATE THE PHENOMENA.

It is calculated that one person in every seven might become a medium by observing the proper conditions. The thousands of Spiritualists have, in most cases, arrived at their conclusions by agencies established by themselves, and independently of each other, and of the services of professional mediums. Every Spiritualist is indeed an "investigator"—it may be at an advanced stage; and that Mr. Dircks' charge of "darkness and secrecy" may be for ever repelled, the following series of conditions are presented as those under which the phenomena may at all times be evolved.

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 perichal 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.

MENTAL 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 inharmonious 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 sofas 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 mellow 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 over 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 entranced, 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.

Persons 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 visit any locality where public meetings or seances can be instituted.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

E. S. attended Mr. Morse's seance at the Spiritual Institution, on the 3rd instant. It was the first meeting of the kind she had attended, and she asks the following questions:—

"Is trance inducible at any time by a pure act of the will on the part of the medium, or is the assistance of extraneous magnetic power necessary?" In a trance manifestation there are three factors—the suitable condition of the medium, surrounding circumstances, and the desire and efficiency of the operating spirit. As to the medium, he must be of a receptive constitution, and his will should be in a negative state—in other words, he should be capable of being controlled, and willing to have the operation performed. As to the surroundings or "extraneous magnetic power," some mediums are so constituted that the spirits find sufficient of the necessary elements associated with the medium to connect the operations of the spirit with the organism of the medium. In other cases the presence of other parties in a "circle" is necessary to evolve elements which are required to enable the spirit to project its will-power into the nervous system of the medium. At all times both mediums and normal speakers are influenced favourably or unfavourably by these surroundings. As to the spirit, no control can be effected unless some spirit is able and willing to operate, nor can that operation take place unless the medium is suitable and the conditions favourable.

"Is it physical pain that produces that convulsive action in the medium while falling into or recovering from the trance?" No. The change of the controlling agency convulses the muscles, but after the process commences the medium is generally unconscious. In some cases there is considerable suffering—more especially under development, or in the early stages of mediumship.

"Is not the exhaustion that follows injurious to health, hence exercising a baneful rather than beneficial influence?" Mr. Morse's health has improved during the last year, and yet trance-speaking is exhausting the same as other forms of mental action are. Do we not continually hear of ministers, writers, and lawyers being done to death by over work? Much depends on the conditions. We have seen Mr. Morse ill for two days after a control, because of the inharmonious influences in which he was for the time placed. We have, on the contrary, seen him much benefited by a control.

"My own sensation during the seance was that of being in contact with strong magnetic power, and for some hours after, the muscles of the right hand and arm were swollen and fatigued, much as I once had them after a strong application of a galvanic battery, applied under medical supervision. Is it customary for persons to be affected by the magnetic current (if I may so express it) in this way? Perhaps I am over susceptible, as I believe I possess a fair share of magnetic power—at least, if success in table-turning is any test, or that peculiar sense of sympathetic influence which the presence of persons, sometimes total strangers, occasionally elicits?" You are mediumistic, and freely give off the elements necessary to effect the control; all the organic action performed by the medium while under influence is physical, and has to be derived from physical sources. At the same seance another sitter experienced great exhaustion of the brain. Sensitives who attend lectures often experience similar sensations.

"One of the spirits controlling Mr. Morse the other evening, speaking of souls arriving in the spirit-land after quitting this life, made a remark (I forget the exact words) implying that souls that had not fulfilled the end of their creation in this life would be sent back again. Did he mean to be reincarnated? or to wander, according to the popular idea of ghosts, until its term of penance be expired?" All development comes by action, and if the spirit (while in the body) neglects those duties necessary to call out its innate powers, it must become associated with mediumistic persons, and by the experience thus gained evolve its personal attributes. The French Spiritists believe that spirits are reincarnated. For information respecting which, see *Human Nature* for the last three years, and a special article by Miss Blackwell in the forthcoming number (February). See also an article, "A Wife Poisoner in the Spirit-World," by Leon Favre, brother to Jules Favre, the eminent French statesman, which appeared in *Human Nature* for December last.

THERAPEUTIC MEDIUMSHIP.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—It is with sincere and unfeigned pleasure that I ask you to allow me space in the earliest impression of the *MEDIUM* to bear testimony to the remarkable gifts of Mrs. Julia B. Dickinson, as a clairvoyant of high order, as well as a powerful magnetic healer. I was, I believe, her first real patient in London, and consequently had the gratification of giving her the first fee; and I think it but fair to that lady to complete a threefold chord of harmony by offering her—in acknowledgment of the benefit received—the first public testimonial. It may be asked by some, Of what nature was the disorder? I answer, the same that half the world is groaning under, viz., general weakness, and lack of vitality, causing not only depression and listlessness, but often, too often, great physical suffering, in spite of the constant supervision, and as constantly the successful treatment and quick removal of the same by our faithful and beloved doctor in spirit-life.

I had just recovered from two very severe attacks—the first caused by torpidity of the liver, the second from intensified spasmodic neuralgia in the nerves and muscles of the left side, which were quickly removed by the good spirit-doctor; but the reaction caused great debility of the system. I was therefore thoroughly out of condition. I no sooner saw Mrs. Dickinson than I resolved to put myself under her treatment, when the first visit convinced me of her powers. She was soon under the control of one of her medical guides, who told me what I knew to be faithfully true, and cheered me by the assurance that I would not only be cured, but grow strong, and that three treatments would make me feel a new being, which it has done.

Mrs. Dickinson has not only good healthy magnetic power, but a fine spiritual nature and development also, which soothes and elevates all who can enter her spiritual plane. It has been my privilege to listen to many soul-inspiring sentiments from this American sister; her mission, and that of her spirit-guides, is a noble one, and goes out alike to suffering humanity. God bless her labours amongst us, and may every

true English Spiritualist give her the hand of fellowship and sympathy!—I am, yours in the cause of truth,

EUPHEMIA DICKSON.

19, Leamington Road Villas, Westbourne Park, W.,
January 6, 1873.

[The stranger to Spiritualism will find some difficulty in appreciating the above reliable testimony. It gives a case of what, on purely physiological grounds, may be denominated the scientific mode of treating disease. It is admitted that disease arises from inharmonious or defective action of the vital forces. Any treatment, then, which can operate directly on the *vis medicatrix nature* must remedy such inharmonies in the most prompt and happy manner. Mrs. Dickinson, from her high state of health and peculiar magnetism, is well adapted for this important work, and when entranced or controlled by her directing influences she is impelled to make the proper passes, and with an intensity far greater than if she were in her normal state. Her diagnosis and prescriptions are also valuable. This unusual form of treatment answers in a significant manner the *cui bono* of Spiritualism. It is also an exemplification of the scriptural practice of healing by the laying on of hands.—Ed. M.]

A NEW FORM OF CO-OPERATION.

Mr. J. Burns.—Dear Friend,—It is with much pleasure I write to inform you of the sympathy of our kind and true friends of Bishop Auckland, Howdon, and surrounding district for the welfare of the Spiritual Institution. We have held two seances, and realised £1 1s., for which I enclose an order, and thank our friends for their voluntary act, as we made no charge. I think if this plan were carried out where seances were held, and good mediums, there might be something more done for the Institution. I fear it would intrude too much on your time and space to give a full detail of our seances. I may just state that our trance-speaking and physical manifestations are both good; the table, tambourine, and bells being used freely. We have not got the direct spirit-voice to speak yet, but have the whistle very loud to accompany us while singing. We have the promise of great things, which I doubt not, if we do our part, our spirit-friends will do theirs to accomplish. We have great opposition. Our Christian friends are kicking very hard, but they are kicking the right way—they are making the people think for themselves, and seek for the truth, which, I am glad to say, many are doing. Myself and family tender our sincere thanks to our worthy friend John Scott, Esq., of Belfast, for his handsome new year's present—a large quantity of books, of great value to the inquiring mind. They are for our own perusal and to distribute. I hope they will be the means of helping to lift many out of the mire of ignorance, and set their feet on a sure foundation of the truth.—Yours in earnest for the progress of Spiritualism,

ROBERT FAWCITT.

Bishop Auckland, January 2, 1873.

[We thank our Bishop Auckland friends for this the last evidence of their kind and hearty co-operation. It shows that the means of carrying on our work depends entirely on the earnestness with which all who desire to promote Spiritualism concentrate their efforts.—Ed. M.]

A LADY'S THOUGHTS ON THE *TIMES* ARTICLE.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—I extract the following little review of the *Times* article from a letter written to my mother by a lady who has comparatively recently investigated and accepted the great facts of Spiritualism.—Yours,

DESMOND G. FITZ-GERALD.

"Have you read in the *Times* of the 26th (Boxing-day) an article on Spiritualism? It is long, and its object is to urge scientific men to meet Spiritualists on their own ground, and either detect their 'impostures' or explain the causes of the phenomena. The article is written by a sceptic; but he, having read a host of literature and 'reports' and accounts of seances, and having himself attended four of these—with Mr. Home, Miss Fox, and other known mediums—professes himself unable to account for the phenomena, even with all the tests and examinations which he was allowed, and indeed pressed, to make. One of his seances was evidently with Messrs. Herne and Williams, at their own rooms, but with only a friend of the writer's present besides himself and the mediums. He did not see any forms or hands, nor anything but the effects of invisible agency; but he is evidently getting rather wonder-struck. He persists that though the subject appears to be a very ridiculous one, it is nevertheless a very serious one, and decidedly demands prompt investigation by scientific men, 'who have clearly not done their duty.' This will doubtless call forth something more, and, I trust, open at least some eyes to matters which ought to reach the very utilitarian, intensely practical, and worldly philosophy of this densely stupid age. One would think, to hear the widespread egotism and self-glorification of the present day, that there is nothing in God's universe but this earth and the exceedingly clever people on it, who are so busy regenerating themselves, and bringing on a glorious millennium by their own material efforts. But 'the things that are despised' are, by the hand of God, worked for their confusion. We have seen and heard more than this writer dreams of!

"Yours, ———."

SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHY.

One of the most imposing objects in the collection at the Spiritual Institution is the series of spirit or psychical photographs taken by Mr. Beattie, of Clifton, and presented by Mr. Tommy, Bristol. They occupy a large mount, tastefully framed, with a full description underneath cut from the newspapers. We hope visitors will not forget to ask to see this interesting object, in the examination of which an hour may be spent very agreeably.—Photo of "John King." Mr. Russell, of Kingston, has handed us specimens of a photograph recently taken by him, Mr. Williams, medium, being the sitter. To the left of the picture stands a figure attired after the fashion seen in the cooling-room, of a Turkish bath, said to represent the spirit "John King." As the brow and eyes are covered by the turban, the identity cannot be readily determined, yet what appears is characteristic of other portraits of that spirit. It is a genuine spirit-photograph.

NOTTINGHAM.

CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.—To the Editor.—Sir,—If you can conveniently find a small space in your columns for the following notes of to-day's proceedings I shall feel obliged. The term of office of the various officers and leaders expired this day, and it was the duty of the members to elect or re-elect those whom they thought best able to fill the vacant positions. After the Lyceum had been opened by singing and a "Silver Chain" recitation, and the attendance of members had been marked, Mr. Moreton was most unanimously elected chairman to conduct the afternoon's proceedings. He then suggested that those officers or leaders who wished to make any remarks had better take the opportunity, whereupon all the retiring officers and leaders said a few words, and expressed their willingness to take any position that might be allotted them. The result of the election of officers and leaders for the next six months was as follows:—Conductor, Mr. Hopewell; guardian and secretary, Mr. Hitchcock; musical director, Mrs. Redgate; watchman, Mr. Moreton; the guard, Miss Gamble. The leaders are:—Excelsior and Liberty groups, Mrs. Hitchcock; Star and Banner groups, Mr. Redgate; Shore and Beacon groups, Mr. Herod; Sea and Ocean groups, Mr. Mitchell; and Fountain and Stream, and River and Lake groups, Mr. Ashworth.

A vote of thanks to the chairman brought the session to a close. Hoping these noble institutions will shortly be more numerous,—I remain, fraternally yours, JAS. ASHWORTH, I.O.G.T.

BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—Spiritualism has fallen into good hands here, and seems to be pursued with deep earnestness. In the list of provincial seances appear announcements indicating that Dr. Dobson takes a leading part in the movement. The local Daily Times thus reports:—"For some considerable time no little curiosity has been excited in this town to witness certain manifestations which have been attributed to the spirits of persons who have 'gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns.' Indeed, seances have been held almost nightly in the private houses of those who have a desire to investigate the subject of Spiritualism, and, as the results have been freely discussed, large numbers of persons have been seeking admission to the circles in order that they might have the opportunity of applying some test or other, with a view to elicit the truth or falsehood of the wonderful and extraordinary statements they had heard. On Sunday evening last a party of fourteen persons—three ladies and eleven gentlemen—were assembled in the sitting-room of a gentleman in Cavendish Street, nine of whom took their places at a four-legged mahogany table, about three feet six inches square, and covered with oil-cloth, like an office table. The gas was turned down until the room had the appearance of being lighted by a rushlight; then the hands of the nine sitters were placed on the top of the table so as to be visible to all the persons in the room. A hymn was then sung by the assembled company. Silence reigned for some minutes, which was broken by one of the sitters asking whether, if a spirit were present, it would be willing to manifest itself by rapping upon or tilting the table. There were no signs manifested in response to this appeal. After sitting about twenty-five minutes, the table suddenly rose from one side about four inches from the ground." After some communications received by tilting, spirit-lights and luminous hands were seen; after which the report continues:—"Before the party separated, one gentleman, more curious than the rest, endeavoured to lift the table, and acknowledged that its weight would not be much less than one hundredweight. The same gentleman solicited the aid of two others to bear on the edge of the table, with a view to overturn it, but without result." It was thus proved that the table could not have been moved by mechanical means.

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Professor Huxley and Mr. George Henry Lewis, Esq., to be invited to co-operate.

Minute Reports are given of the experiences of sub-committees, derived from the general Committee, who were for many months engaged in the investigation "of the phenomena without the aid or presence of any professional medium;" and the greater part of these members of Committees "commenced their investigations in an avowedly sceptical spirit." These reports corroborate each other, and embody the following synopsis of phenomena obtained:—

I. Sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.

II. Movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by the persons present; and frequently without contact or connection with any person.

III. These sounds and movements often occur at the times and in the manner asked for by persons present, and by means of a simple code of signals answer questions and spell-out coherent communications.

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The statements of these witnesses are given at length, embracing an accurate description, amplified by cross-examination, of some of the most remarkable phenomena which have been witnessed. This important evidence may be thus summarised:—

1. Thirteen witnesses state that they have seen heavy bodies—in some instances men—rise slowly in the air, and remain there for some time without visible or tangible support.

2. Fourteen witnesses testify to having seen hands or fingers, not appertaining to any human being, but life-like in appearance and mobility, which they have sometimes touched, or even grasped, and which they are therefore convinced were not the result of imposture or illusion.

3. Five witnesses state that they have been touched by some invisible agency on various parts of the body, and often, when requested, when the hands of all present were visible.

4. Thirteen witnesses declare that they have heard musical pieces well played upon instruments not manipulated by any visible agency.

5. Five witnesses state that they have seen red-hot coal applied to the hands or heads of several persons without producing pain or scorching.

6. Eight witnesses state that they have received precise information through rappings, writings, and in other ways, the accuracy of which was unknown at the time to themselves or to any persons present, and which, on subsequent inquiry, was found to be correct.

7. Three witnesses state that they have been present when drawings, both in pencil and colours, were produced in so short a time, and under such conditions as to render human agency impossible.

8. Six witnesses declare that they have received information of future events, and that in some cases the hour and minute of their occurrence have been accurately foretold days, and even weeks before.

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, at Mr. Cogman's, 15, St. Peter's Road, Mile End Road, at 7 o'clock.

MONDAY, JANUARY 13, Developing Circle, at Mr. Cogman's, 15, St. Peter's Road, Mile End Road, at 8 o'clock.
Ball's Pond Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, 102, Ball's Pond Road, Islington. Admission Free. Commence at 8 o'clock.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, Seance at Mrs. MAIN'S, 321, Bethnal Green Road, at 9. Admission Free.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, Seance at Mr. Wallace's, 105, Islip Street, Kentish Town.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. Seance at their rooms, 74, Navarino Road, Dalston, E., at 8 p.m. Particulars as to admission of visitors on application to the Secretary.

St. John's Association of Spiritualists, 7, Corporation Row, Clerkenwell. Lecture by Mr. Cotter on "Matter and Spirit: their relations to Human Existence." To commence at 8.30 p.m. Free.

SEANCES IN THE PROVINCES DURING THE WEEK.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, KEIGHLEY, 10.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. Messrs. Shackleton and Wright, Trance-Mediums. Children's Progressive Lyceum at 8 a.m. and 2 p.m.

SOWERBY BRIDGE, at Mr. W. Robinson's, Causeway Head, Children's Lyceum, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Public Meeting, 6.30 p.m. Trance-Medium, Mr. Wood.

BREARLEY, Public Meetings, 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 6.30 p.m. Trance Medium, Mr. Illingworth.

BOWLING, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, 2.30 and 6 p.m. Hall Lane, 2 and 6 p.m.

BOWLING, in Hartley's Yard, near Railway Station, Wakefield Road, at 2.30 and 6 o'clock.

MANCHESTER, Union Chambers, 15, Dickenson St., Mount St., at 2.30.

COWMS, at George Holdroyd's, at 6 p.m.

HAGG'S LANE END. 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Trance-Mediums, Mrs. N. Wilde and Mrs. R. Hudson.

GAWTHORPE, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, 2.30 and 6 p.m. Mrs. S. A. Swift and J. Kitson, Mediums.

MORLEY, Mr. G. Butterfield's, New Scarboro', Mrs. J. A. Butterfield, medium, at 6.30.

HALIFAX, at the Stannary, 2.30 and 6.30. Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Wood, Trance-Mediums.

NOTTINGHAM, at Mr. Gilpin's Rooms, Long Row. Children's Lyceum at 9.45 a.m. and 2 p.m. Public meeting at 6.30 p.m.

OSSETT COMMON, WAKEFIELD, at Mr. John Crane's, at 2 and 6, p.m. Healing and Trance-speaking Medium, Mr. John Crane.

BISHOP AUCKLAND, at Mr. Fawcett's, Waldron Street, at 6 o'clock. Notice is required from strangers.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, at Freemasons' Old Hall, Bell's Court, Newgate Street, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW Association of Spiritualists. Public Meeting at 6.30 p.m., at 164, Trongate.

BIRMINGHAM, at Mr. Down's, 42, Aston Road. Trance and Test at 7 o'clock. Also on Tuesday and Thursday Evenings, at 8 o'clock.

LIVERPOOL, Public Meetings at the Islington Assembly Rooms, at 2.30 and 7 p.m. Trance-mediums from all parts of England, &c.

MONDAY, JANUARY 13, HULL, 42, New King Street, at 7.30.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, KEIGHLEY, at 7.30 p.m., at the Lyceum. Trance-Mediums, Mrs. Lucas and Messrs. Wright and Shackleton.

GAWTHORPE, at Mr. J. Mercer's, at 7.30 p.m. Medium, Miss A. Mercer.

SOWERBY BRIDGE, at Mr. W. Robinson's, Causeway Head, 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, BOWLING, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, 8 p.m.

HAGG'S LANE END. at 7.30 p.m. Trance-Mediums, Mrs. N. Wilde and Mrs. R. Hudson.

MORLEY, Mr. G. Butterfield's, New Scarboro', at 7.30.

OSSETT COMMON, at Mr. John Crane's, at 7.30. Healing and Trance-medium, Mr. John Crane.

GLASGOW Association of Spiritualists. Weekly Conference, at 8 p.m., at 164, Trongate. Circle-room open to members and inquirers, at 8 p.m. on other evenings.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, BOWLING, Hall Lane, 7.30 p.m.

GAWTHORPE, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, a Developing Circle, at 7.30.

WEST HARTLEPOOL, Seance at Mr. Hull's, Adelaide Street.

BISHOP AUCKLAND, at Mr. Fawcett's, Waldron Street, at 8 o'clock. Notice is required from strangers.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE. Old Freemasons' Hall, Bell's Court, Newgate Street. Seance at 7.30.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, LIVERPOOL, Weekly Conference, at Mrs. Bohn's, Caledonian and Temperance Hotel, 6, Stafford Street, at 8 p.m.

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MRS. JENNIE HOLMES'S (late of New Orleans, La., U.S.A.) SEANCES, for Musical, Physical, Trance, Inspirational, and Materialisation Manifestations, will be held every MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, and THURSDAY Evenings, at her reception rooms, No. 16, Old Quebec Street (two doors from Oxford Street), Marble Arch, W., at Eight o'clock; donation, 5s. Private Sittings, for Business and Medical Consultations, from One to Four o'clock p.m. same days; fee, One Guinea. Strangers, investigators, and non-believers especially, are invited to attend, to "Prove all things and hold fast to that which is good."—Her powers as a Medium have been the subject of wonder and comment throughout the United States, Canada, and Central America. Her endorsements are from some of the most prominent gentlemen of the States.

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