

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

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

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TO SCEPTICS AND INVESTIGATORS.

## THE RESEARCHES INTO SPIRITUALISM WITHOUT MEDIUMS, BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

"Spiritualism is an experimental science . . . . It abolishes the terms 'supernatural' and 'miracle' by an extension of the sphere of 'law and the realm of nature.'"

"The cardinal maxim of Spiritualism is, that every one must find out the truth for himself. It makes no claim to be received on hearsay evidence; but on the other hand, it demands that it be not rejected without patient, honest, and fearless inquiry."—ALFRED R. WALLACE, F.R.G.S. *Vide "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism,"* pp. 221 and 223.

"Do not let us hastily call our senses lying witnesses merely because they testify against preconceptions. Try the experiments; investigate with care and patience."—WILLIAM CROOKES, F.R.S., *vide "Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism,"* p. 23.

### EXPLANATORY NOTE.

HOW TO INVESTIGATE WITHOUT MEDIUMS.—In reference to the curious phenomena known by the name of "Spiritual Manifestations," it is but natural that more or less of suspicion in regard to the condition termed "mediumship" and towards persons who are called "mediums," should be entertained by sceptics. The question—how may we investigate WITHOUT mediums? is one, however, that can be satisfactorily answered; and indeed is one already answered through the personal labours of the Dialectical investigators, herewith published in the cheapest possible form. Apart altogether from the theoretic questions involved in Spiritualism, the experiments made by the Dialectical Sub-committees, in seance assembled, are especially important, not only in proving that certain of the contested phenomena do occur, but as showing, still more emphatically, that *honest* sceptics may always investigate for themselves WITHOUT assistance either from Spiritualists or "mediums,"—and may so investigate with a fair anticipation of obtaining some of the controverted manifestations. Our present re-publication of the researches alluded to, is made mainly in the hope that many persons, hitherto prejudiced, will be induced to abandon the attitude of foregone conclusion, and will take, instead, to that of careful personal investigation,—following for that purpose the methods employed by the Dialectical Sub-committees. (*See second column of next page.*)

We would merely add, by way of suggestion, that if the success of the Dialectical investigators in eliciting phenomena is to be noted and emphasised, no less should their frequent failures be regarded as corroborating the experiences of Spiritualists, who have constantly affirmed of the manifestations in question—that they are fitful in occurrence—that they cannot be commanded at pleasure, and that the conditions which govern them are obscure and difficult to determine. In these particulars, moreover, the manifestations differ essentially from conjuring tricks, which are neither fitful nor uncertain, but are always reproducible under a known and given order of conditions. WITHOUT mediums, then, it will be found that the Dialectical experiments have not only signally endorsed the phenomena so long disputed, but have administered a "death-blow" to the conjuring hypothesis so much favoured by the unexamining public,—while showing, at the same time, that independent investigation is possible to the truth-seeking sceptic. [For amplification of these remarks *vide* our Leading Articles of this number.] USEFUL RULES for INVESTIGATING CIRCLES may be found on page 734.

### APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE.

At a meeting of the London Dialectical Society, held on Wednesday, the 6th of January, 1869, Mr. J. H. Levy in the Chair, it was resolved:—"That the Council be requested to appoint a Committee in conformity with Bye-law VII., to investigate the Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations, and to report thereon."

(*Copy of the Minute of the Council.*)

"At a meeting of the Council of the London Dialectical Society, held on the 26th January, 1869, on the Motion of Dr. Edmunds, a Committee was appointed in conformity with Bye-law VII., 'to investigate the Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations, and to report thereon.' The Committee to consist of the following Members:—

H. G. Atkinson, Esq., F.G.S.  
 G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.  
 J. S. Berghelm, Esq., C.E.  
 H. R. Fox Bourne, Esq.  
 Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.  
 G. Fenton Cameron, Esq., M.D.  
 John Chapman, Esq., M.D.

Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D.  
 Charles R. Drysdale, Esq., M.D.  
 D. H. Dyte, Esq., M.R.C.S.  
 Mrs. D. H. Dyte  
 James Edmunds, Esq., M.D.  
 Mrs. Edmunds  
 James Gannon, Esq.

Grattan Geary, Esq.  
 Robert Hannab, Esq.  
 Jenner Gale Hillier, Esq.  
 Mrs. J. G. Hillier  
 Henry Jeffery, Esq.  
 Albert Kiseb, Esq., M.R.C.S.  
 Joseph Maurice, Esq.

Isaac L. Meyers, Esq.  
 B. M. Moss, Esq.  
 Robert Quelch, Esq., C.E.  
 Thomas Reed, Esq.  
 C. Russell Roberts, Esq., Ph.D.  
 William Volckman, Esq.  
 Horace S. Yeomans, Esq.

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

Drs. Chapman and Drysdale and Mr. Fox Bourne declined to sit, and the following names were subsequently added to the Committee:—

George Cary, Esq., B.A.

William B. Gower, Esq.

J. H. Levy, Esq.

Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.

E. W. Cox, Esq., Serjeant-at-Law

H. D. Jencken, Esq., Barrister-at-Law

W. H. Swepstone, Esq.

Josiah Webber, Esq.



# REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SPIRITUALISM

APPOINTED BY

LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

Gentlemen,—The Committee appointed by you to investigate the phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations, report thereon as follows:—

Your Committee have held fifteen meetings, at which they received evidence from thirty-three persons, who described phenomena which, they stated, had occurred within their own personal experience.

Your Committee have received written statements relating to the phenomena from thirty-one persons.

Your Committee invited the attendance, and requested the co-operation and advice of scientific men who had publicly expressed opinions, favourable or adverse, to the genuineness of the phenomena.

Your Committee also specially invited the attendance of persons who had publicly ascribed the phenomena to imposture or delusion.

Your Committee, however, while successful in procuring the evidence of believers in the phenomena and in their supernatural origin, almost wholly failed to obtain evidence from those who attributed them to fraud or delusion.

As it appeared to your Committee to be of the greatest importance that they should investigate the phenomena in question by personal experiment and test, they resolved themselves into sub-committees as the best means of doing so.

Six sub-committees were accordingly formed.

All of these have sent in reports, from which it appears that a large majority of the members of your Committee have become actual witnesses to several phases of the phenomena without the aid or presence of any professional medium, although the greater part of them commenced their investigations in an avowedly sceptical spirit.

These reports, hereto subjoined, substantially corroborate each other, and would appear to establish the following propositions:—

- 1.—That 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.
- 2.—That movements of heavy bodies take place without any mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by the persons present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.
- 3.—That 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.
- 4.—That the answers and communications thus obtained are, for the most part, of a common-place character; but facts are sometimes correctly given which are only known to one of the persons present.
- 5.—That the circumstances under which the phenomena occur are variable, the most prominent fact being, that the presence of certain persons seems necessary to their occurrence, and that of others generally adverse; but this difference does not appear to depend upon any belief or disbelief concerning the phenomena.
- 6.—That, nevertheless, the occurrence of the phenomena is not insured by the presence or absence of such persons respectively.

The oral and written evidence received by your Committee not only testifies to phenomena of the same nature as those witnessed by the sub-committees, but to others of a more varied and extraordinary character.

This evidence may be briefly summarised as follows:—

- 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 figures, 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 where 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 ascertainable agency.
- 5.—Five witnesses state that they have seen red-hot coals ap-

plied to the hands or heads of several persons without producing pain or scorching; and three witnesses state that they have had the same experiment made upon themselves with the like immunity.

6.—Eight witnesses state that they have received precise information through rapping, 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.—One witness declares that he has received a precise and detailed statement which, nevertheless, proved to be entirely erroneous.

8.—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.

9.—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.

In addition to the above, evidence has been given of trance-speaking, of healing, of automatic writing, of the introduction of flowers and fruits into closed rooms, of voices in the air, or visions in crystals and glasses, and of the elongation of the human body.

Many of the witnesses have given their views as to the sources of these phenomena. Some attribute them to the agency of disembodied human beings, some to Satanic influence, some to psychological causes, and others to imposture or delusion.

The literature of the subject has also received the attention of your Committee, and a list of works is appended for the assistance of those who may wish to pursue the subject further.

In presenting their report, 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.

Your Committee recommend that this Report and the Reports of the Sub-committees, together with the Evidence and Correspondence appended, be printed and published.

## REPORTS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL SUB-COMMITTEES.

### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 1.

Since their appointment on the 16th of February, 1869, your Sub-committee have held forty meetings for the purpose of experiment and test.

All of these meetings were held at the private residences of members of the Committee, purposely to preclude the possibility of pre-arranged mechanism or contrivance.

The furniture of the room in which the experiments were conducted was on every occasion its accustomed furniture.

The tables were in all cases heavy dining-tables, requiring a strong effort to move them. The smallest of them was 5ft. 9in. long, by 4ft. wide, and the largest 9 ft. 3in. long, and 4½ ft. wide, and of proportionate weight.

The rooms, tables, and furniture generally, were repeatedly subjected to careful examination before, during, and after the experiments, to ascertain that no concealed machinery, instrument, or other contrivance existed by means of which the sounds or movements hereinafter mentioned could be caused.

The experiments were conducted in the light of gas, except on the few occasions specially noted in the minutes.

Your Committee have avoided the employment of professional or paid mediums, the mediumship being that of members of your Sub-committee, persons of good social position and of unimpeachable integrity, having no pecuniary object to serve, and nothing to gain by deception.

Your Committee have held some meetings without the presence of a medium (it being understood that throughout this report the word "medium" is used simply to designate an individual without whose presence the phenomena described either do not occur at all, or with greatly diminished force and frequency), purposely to try if they could produce, by any efforts, effects similar to those witnessed when a medium was present. By no endeavours were they enabled to produce anything at all resembling the manifestations which took place in the presence of a medium.

Every test that the combined intelligence of your Committee could devise has been tried with patience and perseverance. The experiments were conducted under a great variety of conditions, and ingenuity has been exerted in devising plans by which your Committee might verify their observations and preclude the possibility of imposture or of delusion.

Your Committee have confined their report to facts witnessed by them in their collective capacity, which facts were palpable to the senses, and their reality capable of demonstrative proof.

Of the members of your Sub-committee, about four-fifths entered upon the investigation wholly sceptical as to the reality of



the alleged phenomena, firmly believing them to be the result either of *imposture* or of *delusion*, or of *involuntary muscular action*. It was only by irresistible evidence, under conditions that precluded the possibility of either of these solutions, and after trial and test many times repeated, that the most sceptical of your Sub-committee were slowly and reluctantly convinced that the phenomena exhibited in the course of their protracted inquiry were veritable facts.

The result of their long-continued and carefully-conducted experiments, after trial by every detective test they could devise, has been to establish conclusively:

First: That under certain bodily or mental conditions of one or more of the persons present, a force is exhibited sufficient to set in motion heavy substances, without the employment of any muscular force, without contact or material connection of any kind between such substances and the body of any person present.

Second: That this force can cause sounds to proceed, distinctly audible to all present, from solid substances not in contact with, nor having any visible or material connection with, the body of any person present, and which sounds are proved to proceed from such substances by the vibrations which are distinctly felt when they are touched.

Third: That this force is frequently directed by intelligence. At thirty-four out of the forty meetings of your Committee, some of these phenomena occurred.

A description of one experiment, and the manner of conducting it, will best show the care and caution with which your Committee have pursued their investigations.

So long as there was contact, or even the possibility of contact, by the hands or feet, or even by the clothes of any person in the room, with the substance moved or sounded, there could be no perfect assurance that the motions and sounds were not produced by the person so in contact. The following experiment was therefore tried:—

On an occasion when eleven members of your Sub-committee had been sitting round one of the dining-tables above described for forty minutes, and various motions and sounds had occurred, they, by way of test, turned the backs of their chairs to the table, at about nine inches from it. They all then knelt upon their chairs, placing their arms upon the backs thereof. In this position their feet were, of course, turned away from the table, and by no possibility could be placed under it or touch the floor. The hands of each person were extended over the table at about four inches from the surface. Contact, therefore, with any part of the table, could not take place without detection.

In less than a minute the table, untouched, moved four times; at first about five inches to one side, then about twelve inches to the opposite side, and then, in like manner, four inches and six inches respectively.

The hands of all present were next placed on the backs of their chairs, and about a foot from the table, which again moved, as before, five times, over spaces varying from four to six inches. Then all the chairs were removed twelve inches from the table, and each person knelt on his chair as before, this time, however, folding his hands behind his back, his body being thus about eighteen inches from the table, and having the back of the chair between himself and the table. The table again moved four times in various directions. In the course of this conclusive experiment, and in less than half-an-hour, the table thus moved, without contact or possibility of contact with any person present, thirteen times, the movements being in different directions, and some of them according to the request of various members of your Sub-committee.

The table was then carefully examined, turned upside down, and taken to pieces, but nothing was discovered to account for the phenomena. The experiment was conducted throughout in the full light of gas above the table.

Altogether, your Sub-committee have witnessed upwards of fifty similar motions without contact on eight different evenings, in the houses of members of your Sub-committee, the most careful tests being applied on each occasion.

In all similar experiments the possibility of mechanical or other contrivance was further negatived by the fact that the movements were in various directions, now to one side, now to the other, now up the room, now down the room—motions that would have required the co-operation of many hands or feet; and these, from the great size and weight of the tables, could not have been so used without the visible exercise of muscular force. Every hand and foot was plainly to be seen, and could not have been moved without instant detection.

Delusion was out of the question. The motions were in various directions, and were witnessed simultaneously by all present. They were matters of measurement, and not of opinion or of fancy.

And they occurred so often, under so many and such varied conditions, with such safeguards against error or deception, and with such invariable results, as to satisfy the members of your Sub-committee by whom the experiments were tried, wholly sceptical as most of them were when they entered upon the investigation, that *there is a force capable of moving heavy bodies without material contact, and which force is in some unknown manner dependent upon the presence of human beings*.

Your Sub-committee have not, collectively, obtained any evidence as to the nature and source of this force, but simply as to the fact of its existence.

There appears to your Committee to be no ground for the popular belief that the presence of sceptics interferes in any manner with the production or action of the force.

In conclusion, your Committee express their unanimous opinion that the one important physical fact thus proved to exist, that *motion may be produced in solid bodies without material contact, by some hitherto unrecognised force operating within an undefined distance from the human organism, and beyond the range of muscular action*, should be subjected to further scientific examination, with a view to ascertain its true source, nature, and power.

The notes of the experiments made at each meeting of your Sub-committee are appended to this report.

#### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 2.

To the Committee appointed by the London Dialectical Society, to investigate the phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations.

Gentlemen,—We, one of the Sub-committees appointed by you for the purpose of practically acquainting ourselves, if possible, with the above mentioned phenomena, beg leave to report as follows:—

1.—That we have held numerous meetings at the houses of Messrs. A— and B—, members of your Sub-committee and of the Dialectical Society.

2.—That the said Messrs. A— and B— were entire strangers to the manifestations in question, and sceptical of the phenomena generally, and that no meetings in connection with the subject had been previously held in either of their houses.

3.—That, in addition to the members of your Sub-committee, the wives of Messrs. A— and B— took part at such meetings, as did also Mr. C—, a brother-in-law of one of your Sub-committee-men.

4.—That our meetings were held without the aid or presence of any professed mediums (so-called) and under circumstances that precluded the possibility of trick or deception.

5.—That, for the purpose of a seance, we always assembled in the evening, and seated ourselves around a dining-table, upon which we lightly placed our hands, engaging in conversation.

6.—That the rooms in which we so assembled were lighted by gas, and that we usually commenced with a full supply of light, which, if afterwards occasionally reduced, was always sufficient to enable us to read or write without difficulty.

7.—That the phenomena termed “rapping,” “table-rapping,” and “table-moving” occurred at our first and at many subsequent meetings.

8.—That the table-moving referred to was in the nature of heaving, oscillation, or tipping; the table often moving in any direction suggested.

9.—That, during such movements our hands were sometimes removed from the table altogether without abating the phenomena, and that at all times we were careful not to induce any movements by either muscular action or pressure.

10.—That “table-moving” ceased, or nearly ceased, after our first few meetings, apparently in favour of the rapping phenomena.

11.—That the rappings in question did not always proceed from the table, but sometimes from the floor, the walls, and the ceiling; frequently coming from parts of the room suggested by those present—but not always.

12.—That the raps had a sound distinctive and distinguishable, appearing to be in rather than on the substance from whence they proceeded; sometimes, however, they sounded like detonations in the air.

13.—That when we occasionally, by way of experiment, made a series of raps in rhythmical order upon the table, and asked that the rhythms should be imitated, our requests were complied with by responsive raps exactly imitating the rhythms prescribed.

14.—That our experience in regard to the phenomena we witnessed, appears generally to be corroborative of the statements of many of the witnesses examined by you upon the subject, to the extent that such phenomena have, or appear to have, a basis of intelligence.

15.—That this intelligence was principally manifested (a) by replies more or less pertinent, and sometimes most unexpected in their character, to our spoken and audible questions, (b) by original communications made to us as hereinafter mentioned.

16.—That such replies and communications were made by means of raps given when the alphabet was pointed to, letter by letter, or spoken by one of the party—it having been previously understood that three raps should signify “yes,” two “doubtful,” and one “no.” This arrangement, however, was sometimes altered by way of test, but without disturbing the accuracy of the replies.

17.—That through the processes detailed in the foregoing clause we presumably established occasional communication with a number of spirits or intelligences, announced to be such by themselves, many of whom stated they were connected in various degrees of relationship to certain members of our party, for whom they professed a friendly regard.

18.—That such presumed spirits displayed distinct individualities, each having a manner peculiar to itself, and rapping delicately, emphatically, or deliberately, as the case might be, expressing as it were, character, mood, and temper.

19.—That when we attempted to shorten the process of communication detailed in clause No. 16, by anticipating words or phrases which we thought were intended, we frequently found our anticipations emphatically negatived in favour of more appropriate expressions or of words of a different signification altogether. For illustrations upon this point we refer you to the seances reported in clause No. 39.



20.—That intelligence was further manifested by the occasional dictation to us of special conditions for our then observance, such, for instance, as requesting us to sit in a different order at the table; requiring one or more to sit away from it; asking for an increase or diminution of light, or for the appointment of some particular person to ask questions; directing us to link or unlink hands; to be more quiet in our conversation; to avoid disputation, &c.

21.—That on our compliance with such directions the manifestations were invariably intensified.

22.—That we are convinced of the objective character of the phenomena from finding that persons sceptical as to the existence thereof invariably confirmed our own experiences, even when suddenly introduced during the progress of a seance. As a case in point, we instance that when one of our sittings was far advanced and the phenomena of table-moving and rapping were in full operation, we sent for a neighbour to witness them. He came immediately, the manifestations continuing without break or interruption, and presenting to him the same aspect that they did to ourselves, notwithstanding that he at any rate must have been free from any antecedent influence, mesmeric or otherwise.

23.—That as a further evidence of the objectivity of the phenomena, we report that manifestations have occurred to us spontaneously upon occasions when we had not assembled for the purpose of a seance, and were not seated round any table. We instance—(1st) That one evening, when some of the members of your sub-committee were assembled at the house of Mr. A—, not, however, with any intention of then investigating the phenomena, the conversation turned upon a seance lately held by some of the members of your general committee, at which Mrs. Marshall had been present, and when raps had proceeded from the pianoforte. While we were discussing the genuineness of these raps, the strings of Mr. A—'s pianoforte suddenly and simultaneously vibrated, although no person was near the instrument. As these sounds were twice or thrice repeated, followed by raps, and were too sonorous to be accounted for by any vibration of the house or room, we immediately examined the instrument internally and externally with great care, but without discovering any cause for the sounds produced; and even after such examination, raps proceeded from the instrument at intervals during the rest of the evening. This was the only occasion when phenomena other than "rapping" or "table-moving" occurred to your Sub-committee, and we think it right to add that no circumstance of the kind had ever before or has since happened in Mr. A—'s house. (2nd) That upon another occasion, some time after we had concluded a seance, and while we were taking refreshment, the rapping returned with great vigour, proceeding simultaneously from various parts of the room. On asking the presumed intelligences their names, they informed us in reply that they were the spirits who had been in communication with us during the evening, and that they were in a happy and merry mood, and did not care to leave us. One of our party jocularly drank to their health, and asked them to respond, which they did by volleys of raps, indicative, as they informed us, of laughter and good fellowship. Each ultimately bade us good night by a succession of raps, so to speak in perspective, being at the commencement loud and rapid, but gradually diminishing in force and increasing in interval until out of hearing. These raps, we should state, were more like detonations in the air than the result of percussion on any hard substance.

24.—That we instance as further evidence of the spontaneity of the phenomena, that frequently emphatic raps occurred by way of assent to, or dissent from, remarks made by your Sub-committee to each other. Thus, at a sitting during which the raps had been unusually sonorous and fluent, one of the party asked the presumed spirit then in communication to state when he died, but no answer was returned, notwithstanding the question was somewhat persistently repeated. This apparently abrupt termination to the most successful seance we had yet had, caused us much surprise, and we were conversing upon the subject, when it was remarked that as the presumed intelligences claimed to be spiritual, they probably rejected the application of such a term as "death" to themselves or their state of existence, it being likely that of whatever import death might be to the body, it would, as concerning the spirit, be the continuation of life under a new form. Scarcely had the speaker concluded, when loud raps again sounded from the table, such being given, as we were informed, by way of assent to the remarks just made. Arising out of this, a conversation of great interest took place between ourselves and the presumed intelligences. Death, we were informed was, so far as the body was concerned, of comparatively trivial import, but as regarded the spirit, it was a birth into new experiences of existence; that spirit-life was in every respect human; that friendly intercourse and companionship were as common and as pleasurable in spirit-life as on earth; that although spirits took great interest in earthly affairs, they had no wish to return to their former state of existence; that communication with earthly friends was pleasurable, and desired by spirits, being intended as a proof to the former of the continuance of life, notwithstanding bodily dissolution; that spirits claimed no prophetic power. We were further informed that the two ladies in our party were mediums, and that others of our party were mediumistic, and might in time develop into mediums; that our seances would improve by being held periodically and frequently; that they could not state the result of seances with reference to health, or give us any information of invariable application as to conditions; that disputation amongst ourselves at a seance was a disturbing element, but that they liked joking and fun occasionally; that they knew the Dialectical Society, and were interested in its investigation of Spiritualism, but that

they did not know whether such investigation would have any good result.

25.—That the independence or objectivity of the intelligence regulating the phenomena appears to be evidenced by the fact that we have frequently received answers and communications unexpected in their character. For instance, we once inquired, by way of test, where a lady of our acquaintance then was, she being at that time in Bolton. In reply, the word "in" was rapped out, and then the letter "b." This so far was satisfactory, but as the next letter given was "e," we regarded the answer as a failure. Going on, however, with the alphabet, "d" was our next letter, and this, we were told, completed the sentence. It being past twelve o'clock at night, the appositeness of the reply "In bed" excited some merriment, which was responded to by a series of raps. We then gave the names of certain towns, and asked in which one of them the lady was staying. As each town was named, we got a single negative rap, until we gave Bolton, when we immediately received the three raps indicative of "Yes." It also happened at this seance, that while we were sitting at a heavy dining-table with our hands linked (in compliance with a request made to us by one of the presumed spirits), one of us asked another spirit, then in communication, whether it had sufficient power to move the table. The alphabet was asked for, and the words spelt out were "Unlink hands." We had scarcely obeyed this instruction when the table lurched round suddenly and violently forced some of the party out of their chairs. This spirit claimed to be that of an acquaintance who had lately lost his life by a railway accident in America, and who, when living, was of a sportive disposition, and fond of feats of strength. He first announced his presence at our seances by a somewhat unparliamentary term of badinage that he and his companions had been in the habit of using towards each other, and when asked to which of two friends of his then present he applied the term, answered "Both." He objected to making original communications, but being urged for one, at last replied by giving the message, "Tell my brother J—I have visited you;" it being somewhat singular that the brother in question a few days previously had much ridiculed the phenomena.

26.—That we, your Sub-committee, did not succeed in ascertaining any specific conditions that would command the production of the phenomena—those that appeared to be necessary on one occasion seeming to be superfluous on another, while at many consecutive meetings the due observance by us of all the presumed conditions within our experience failed entirely. Upon this subject, however, we submit the following clauses by way of analysis.

27.—The phenomena were principally manifested under the conditions or circumstances specified in clauses Nos. 5, 6, and 20 of this Report, we having, under such conditions, obtained manifestations in various rooms of the houses in which we met, and at several tables, three of the latter being dining-room tables of full size; the attendance upon such occasions varying from five to seven members. The manifestations appeared generally to be aided on our part—

- (a.) By orderliness in the conduct of the seances.
- (b.) By a quiet, but not particularly passive, demeanour and conversation.
- (c.) By quietude in the house in which we assembled, we failing sometimes to obtain phenomena early in the evening, but obtaining them later, when the servants had retired and domestic noises had ceased.
- (d.) By a somewhat moderate supply of light.

On the other hand, we have occasionally had powerful manifestations, when seated away from the table, when observing no particular order or ceremony, when engaged in animated conversation, when indulging in laughter and merriment, when ordinary household business was in progress, and with a full supply of light.

28.—That sometimes, without any perceivable change of conditions, the manifestations became faint and rapidly died away, apparently beyond recall, thus closing our seance; while, upon other occasions, without any particular regard by us to conditions, the manifestations continued strong and vigorous, we, ourselves, being obliged at last to break up the sittings, which usually lasted from one hour to two hours and a half.

29.—That, as relating to the subject of conditions, we have noted the following facts:—

- (a.) That we invariably failed to obtain the phenomena in the dark.
- (b.) That at our few trials by daylight, we invariably failed to obtain manifestations.
- (c.) That we invariably failed to obtain manifestations without the presence of the two ladies in our party.
- (d.) That our compliance with conditions dictated to us by the presumed spirits, invariably intensified the manifestations at the time. (See clauses Nos. 20 and 21.)

30.—That we have not discovered any conditions identical with those ordinarily deemed necessary to the production of the so-called electro-biologic or mesmeric phenomena—but often the reverse. Thus we may state—

- (a.) That intentness or desire for the manifestations (as preparatory processes) far more frequently prefaced failure than success, we commonly finding that those seances were the most successful at which the phenomena occurred immediately, or almost immediately, we seated ourselves at the table.
- (b.) That, as detailed in clause No. 23, the phenomena sometimes occurred to us spontaneously and unsought.



(c.) That no influences existed at our seances that impaired our powers of observation or discrimination, inasmuch as the remembrance of each person present thereat as to what had taken place invariably accorded with the experience of all the others, and was further corroborated by the notes taken at the time, as well as by independent testimony. (See clause No. 22.)

31.—That whatever might be the force or power employed in the manifestations, or whatever the conditions under which those manifestations took place, we frequently noted that there appeared to be a desire to conserve or economise such force or power; for example:—

(a.) We rarely obtained second replies to questions already answered, even when we inverted such questions for the purpose.

(b.) The phraseology of communications was mostly succinct, redundant words or terms being seldom, if ever, employed.

(c.) We seldom have superfluous or meaningless raps, the rapping that took place conveying either original communications or answers to our questions.

(d.) In order as it were to minimise the power or force referred to, the presumed intelligences sometimes preferred to give concise answers, rather than to make sustained communications. For instance, we once asked somewhat persistently, for an original communication, and received as such the words "Will answer any question;" the same being a compliance with our request, clothed, however, in the form of a reply.

32.—That from such observation of the phenomena, we have occasionally found it desirable as a condition to success, not to stimulate or overtax the rapping; while at other times no such precautions appeared to be necessary or were taken.

33.—That from Good Friday, in March, 1869, until the end of the following month of May, the manifestations presented themselves under the conditions assumed to be such throughout this Report at our various meetings, with but few instances of failure.

34.—That during the following months of June and July, we continued our meetings as before; but notwithstanding that we duly observed all the conditions assumed to be necessary, and that the two ladies of our party were present, manifestations took place upon two occasions only, and then of a subdued and apparently weakened character.

35.—That failures and successes alike took place, under the same average condition of health, of weather, and of temperature.

36.—That from August, 1869, to February 1870, inclusive, your Sub-committee held no meetings and witnessed no phenomena, but that on March 7th, 1870, the raps returned spontaneously, whilst two members of your Sub-committee and their wives were playing at whist, a third lady (a stranger to the phenomena) being present. At the conclusion of the rubber a seance was arranged, when a few questions were answered by the presumed spirit, but no original communications were made.

37.—That, as bearing upon the subject of conditions, we ought, perhaps, to state that a domestic event of what is generally termed an interesting nature, took place with respect to one of the ladies of our party in the month of February, 1870, inasmuch as this may possibly afford some clue to the failure of the manifestations during and after the previous month of June.

38.—As further illustrating the foregoing statements, your Committee think it advisable to give a short history of what took place at certain of their sittings,—names, however, being for obvious reasons omitted or altered, and the terms "spirit" or "intelligence" being used for the sake of brevity to signify the power or force through which the various phenomena were produced. Our first sitting took place on the evening of Good Friday, in 1869, there being six persons present, three of whom were members of the Committee. After a time, the table at which we had seated ourselves (and which we had, as a preliminary formality, carefully examined) began to move, at first slowly, but afterwards more quickly. During a pause, one of the party exclaimed, "What singular things the raps must be!" immediately upon which we heard as if in response, two or three faint, but perfectly audible sounds, like the ticking of a clock, proceed from the centre of the table. The question was at once asked, "Was a spirit present?" Three raps. "Did three raps mean 'yes'?" Several raps, as if in acquiescence. "If the spirit meant to communicate with us, should three raps mean 'yes,' two 'doubtful,' and one 'no'?" "Yes." "Would the spirit tell us its name through the alphabet?" "Yes." The preliminaries being thus settled, one of the party was asked to speak aloud the letters. He did so. "A, B, C," up to "W," with which latter letter came one of the promised raps. The next letter was A, then L, and so on, until the word "Walter" had been given. "Has the spirit any other name?" was asked. "Yes." "Will it tell us what it is?" "Yes." The same method which had produced the name "Walter" now gave us the surname of a gentleman present. "Is the spirit in any way related to Mr. A——?" we inquired. "Yes." "Will it state in what degree?" "Yes." More alphabet work, letter by letter, and the result, "Infant grand." "Infant grandfather?" somebody suggested. The ludicrousness of the suggestion caused us to laugh, in which the spirit appeared to join by a number of raps of different degrees of intensity. On again with the alphabet to the completion of the sentence. "Infant granduncle." Several questions having been answered by this spirit, we asked it for an original communication. The raps continuing, we expected the letters now taken down would form the message we were to receive, but, instead of such being the case, the words given were, "A new spirit," and it transpired from what subsequently took place,

that a new intelligence was in communication with us. This spirit also answered a number of questions, as to its name and the time when it was in the flesh, &c., as, in fact, did also other spirits upon subsequent occasions; but as these replies partook more or less of the same character, and did not present anything peculiarly worthy of note, we have thought it better to confine our Report to a short statement of what took place at certain of our sittings where the most marked manifestations occurred, merely observing for your information, that at the sittings in question, not less than two of your Committee were present, with their wives, and that the whole party never consisted of less than five, nor more than seven persons.

39.—At one of our sittings, organised without premeditation, at the close of a musical evening on the 7th of May, 1869, a spirit came, who, in reply to our inquiry, stated its name was Henry. As a lady present had lost a relative of that name, she became impressed with the idea that it was his spirit that had visited us, and this so affected her that we found it necessary to bring the sitting to a close. Two days afterwards, we held a sitting in the dining-room of a member of the Dialectical Society, the party consisting of five persons. For a considerable time no manifestations took place, and we were about to break up the seance when two or three peculiarly sharp raps from the centre of the table induced us to continue the sitting. Upon this occasion our hostess was seated in her usual place at the head of the table, having her husband on her right, a lady and gentleman on her left, and a gentleman opposite to her. The latter gentleman, therefore, occupied the position usually filled by the host at the foot of the table. The raps being heard, a question was asked whether the conditions were satisfactory. "No." "Does the spirit wish either of the party to change places?" "Yes." "Perhaps the spirit will state who is to move?" "Yes." The gentleman at the foot of the table, who had been appointed director of this seance, now named and pointed at each person present in turn, commencing with his right-hand neighbour. A single rap was given at each name until the host's turn had arrived, when three raps were heard, and ultimately (acting under instructions from the spirit), the host and the gentleman at the foot of the table changed places, an arrangement which at once, placed the former in the position he, as master of the house, ordinarily occupied. The effect this alteration had upon the conditions was at once apparent; the raps which had been remarkably clear and decided before, becoming now louder and vibrative, sounding as if the table, an ordinary dining one, had been struck with a small hammer. "Will the spirit tell us its name?" "Yes—H E N R Y." When this name was given, we at once assumed that the spirit which had visited us on the occasion mentioned above, had come to us again, and as the lady who had caused the seance to be broken up then was present now, we feared lest this sitting also might be abruptly terminated. This, however, did not turn out to be the case. All parties remained quiescent, and the spirit was asked to give the surname it had been known by on earth. It did so—"K——." We had all expected that the spirit would have announced itself as the relative of the lady referred to, but it did not do so, the name given being that of a step-brother of our hostess who had died abroad fourteen years previously. This spirit replied in the usual manner to questions put to it by the director (who had never before known or heard of the existence of Henry K——), stating truly the name of the place where, and the year in which it had left the flesh, such replies being given sharply and unhesitatingly, as if for the purpose of identification. It then, as if satisfied that it had done all that could be required in that direction, persistently declined to answer any more questions, but intimated that it had a communication to make. This communication, carefully noted and taken down, letter by letter, was as follows:—"I love dear M—— (the Christian name of our hostess) very much, although I N.E." At this point our hostess, remembering, as she informed us, that her brother had been an irregular correspondent, suggested "never wrote." "No." "Perhaps the spirit will proceed," said the director; "having 'N.E.' of the last word, we shall be glad to receive the next letter." The interrupted sentence was resumed—"glected her when I was"—"Alive?" somebody suggested. "No." "Living?" "No." A rap clear and distinct, and strangely suggestive of annoyance being experienced by the spirit at the interruption of its communication. The director repeated the sentence as far as it had gone, and it was at once continued by the raps—"on earth. She ought to have had A L."—"A letter," suggested the hostess, her mind evidently dwelling on her brother's shortcomings as a correspondent. "No." The next letter rapped at was "L." "We already have L," said the director. "The sentence as I have it is, 'I love dear M—— very much, although I neglected her when I was on earth; she ought to have had A L.'" This interruption produced a series of sharp and petulant raps from the spirit, as if it were calling the speaker to order. "Then the spirit means double 'L,' and the sentence runs, 'She ought to have had all.'" "My property" was next spelt out. "It was money. X——, my executor, has it." It can be understood that a message of this personal nature thus communicated, surprised all present, the hostess in particular, who became agitated, but without losing her presence of mind. While the name (a peculiar one) of the executor was being rapped out in a clear and decisive manner, letter by letter, she evidently strove to recall it to her memory, and in so doing hit upon one or two names somewhat similar to, but not quite the same as the name given by the spirit, and which latter name transpired, upon reference to certain letters in the possession of the hostess, to be the



correct one. The following conversation then took place with the spirit, the host himself putting the questions. "Why have you made this communication to us?" "As a proof of spiritual existence, and a token of my love for M——." "Do you wish any steps to be taken to recover the money?" "No; money does not give happiness." "Are you angry with X—— for what he has done?" "Animosity does not exist in spirit-land." The spirit now intimated to us that he was about to depart, and bade us good-night in the usual manner, by a series of raps, loud at first, and gradually dying away into the distance.

40.—Your Committee have since ascertained that Henry K—— resided abroad at the place named to us, several years previously to his death, and that shortly after that event happened, Mr. X——, his executor, wrote to the trustees of certain funded property in England forming part of the estate of the deceased, requesting them to send him a portion thereof to enable him to pay certain liabilities, and authorising them to pay the balance to our hostess (then Miss ——) who was the residuary legatee, and who received the same, but nothing beyond; the statements of Mr. X—— upon the subject of the liabilities referred to passing unchallenged, and no account whatever having been rendered by him of his executorship. Such being the facts of the case, your Committee inquired whether any doubts had ever arisen in the minds of the lady or her husband as to the trustworthiness of Mr. X——; but they have been informed that so far from having any suspicion upon the subject, the lady was at the time so impressed with the honourable conduct of the gentleman referred to (whom, it appears, she never saw, and from whom she has not heard since), that she transmitted to him when the matter was settled a sum of money (above £50) wherewith to purchase on her behalf some acceptable article as a present from her to his wife and family. We are also assured by the host that when he first became acquainted with his wife, and she occasionally spoke of Mr. X——, she always did so with great respect, and that nothing whatever had transpired down to the time of the seance to cause her to alter her opinion; that with regard to himself he had been perfectly passive upon the subject throughout, and had long since forgotten the fact that such a person as Mr. X—— had been in existence; that he had never, in any way, troubled himself about or investigated the position of his wife under her brother's will, the deceased having lived and died on the other side of the globe, and the whole matter having been entirely closed some considerable time previous to the marriage; and that it was only since the communication in question had been made that he had perused certain letters which were in his wife's possession, and which had not been looked at for many years, and ascertained from them the facts stated in this clause.

41.—At another seance held in the evening of the 2nd July last, six persons were present, four of whom were members of your Committee. During a considerable period no manifestation of any phenomena took place, and it was only after a long interval, and when one of the party had left, that some raps came of a character different to any we had previously heard. We several times asked this spirit whether it would tell us its name, and received in reply two dull thuds from the table, and it was only after much perseverance that we at last obtained an affirmative answer, followed up by heavy lumpish raps at the following letters: "J E M C L A R K E." "Would Jem Clarke tell us why he has visited us?" we asked. "No." "Would he make any communication to us?" "No." "Would he answer any questions?" "Doubtful." We were discussing the question we should next put, when the lady in whose house we were assembled exclaimed "Clarke! Clarke! why, that is the name of my housemaid, who is about to leave me. Perhaps the spirit is some relative of hers." Three thuds from the table. "Have you come to see her?" "Yes." "She appears unhappy. Do you know why she is going away?" No response. "Are you her guardian spirit?" "Yes." "Perhaps an ancestor of hers?" Three more thuds, given as if with difficulty, and Mr. James Clarke had evidently left us.

42.—Before concluding this our Report, we deem it to be right to state for your information that when we commenced our investigation your Committee consisted of three members only, all of whom were totally unacquainted with the phenomena except by rumour, and that a fourth member was subsequently added who had had a previous acquaintance with the subject, but who did not join our party until the last of our successful meetings in May.

#### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 3.

It was proposed and arranged by your Sub-committee that its members should meet regularly and punctually from time to time, and try by the commonly prescribed forms to elude what is called "medium power" from amongst themselves, or their intimate friends, who might be invited to attend with them.

It was determined that any unusual occurrence which might take place under such conditions should be thoroughly examined and tested, and the result carefully noted.

A primary condition of any possible success from this plan, so your Sub-committee were informed, was, that all the members should continue to attend a certain number of meetings with regularity. But this was found to be impracticable, chiefly in consequence of the locality chosen for the meetings being so far from the homes of a majority of the members. From this circumstance but ten meetings were held, and the results obtained were of less importance than were some of those which other Sub-committees, more favourably placed, have had opportunities of

witnessing. Our members, however, have all had, at various times, the privilege of attending with one or more of the other Sub-committees, and have thus been placed in a position to form larger and more accurate opinions than could have been drawn from such elements merely as were obtained in the experiments of this Sub-committee.

The visitors who attended our meetings, on all occasions but one which is specified in the minutes, were well known to one or more of our members. Two were gentlemen and three ladies. Of the gentlemen, one is a clergyman of the Church of England, the other is a civil engineer. Each attended on two occasions. The ladies are near relatives of two of the members of the Committee.

We have therefore good grounds for assuming that everything which has been described as occurring took place in the presence of ladies and gentlemen of honest purposes, whose conduct throughout the experiments was guided by the most perfect good faith.

Owing, probably, to the small number of our sittings, the development of our "mediumistic" power did not proceed so far as to enable us to witness here such plain unquestionable evidence of the presence of strange forces as has been manifest to the members of some of the other Sub-committees—as in the movements of heavy tables repeatedly without contact of any kind. But we have made careful experiments in order to distinguish between the forces applied by such contact as was found to be necessary, and that which would be required to produce some of the actual movements witnessed, and we find that though the pressure exerted by a man's hands, as laid on the table at the seances, varies with every movement or change of position, and according to the proportion of arm-weight bearing on it—there are tolerably well-defined limits at which, in the various attitudes, conscious pressure or muscular effort begins. Taking a very extreme and unusual case, in order to give the utmost extent of allowance for unconscious pressure, we will suppose that from fatigue or indolence a person assumes a listless attitude, sitting forward on the seat of his chair, and leaning heavily against the back of it, his hands and arms stretched nearly horizontally forward, and resting on the table to about the middle of the forearm, the muscles of the back and shoulders being entirely relaxed. The "dead-weight" thus thrown on the table will be nearly 8 lbs. In this attitude, probably, the largest amount of involuntary force is applied. If these conditions be modified merely by sitting more upright, so that the arms are bent at the elbows to about right angles, the pressure then becomes about 4 to 5 lbs. If the muscles of the back and shoulders are kept in a certain degree of tension, and the arms drawn backwards until the wrists and hands only rest freely on the table, the pressure then becomes about 2 lbs. This is the attitude most commonly assumed, so that a pressure of 2 lbs. may be taken as the usual amount of force exerted by an attentive sitter, though, when some of the more active "manifestations" are in progress, the pressure which each person exerts generally ranges downwards from this to less than an ounce, or to the lightest touch possible.

These data apply to a man of ordinary size and weight. They will apply equally, or nearly so, to the force which a woman exerts under similar conditions, if one third be deducted in all cases. Practically they give a sufficiently exact indication of the amount of force which may be unconsciously exerted in various ways by persons engaged in these seances.

By careful experiments with the smaller of the tables,\* we have found that the force necessary to tilt it when applied at the most favourable angle, viz., 90 degrees to the legs, is nearly 21½ lbs. But in applying the force in this direction, some obstruction must be placed on the floor against the legs, otherwise it will slide and not tilt at all at this angle.

Even when the force is applied at 45 degrees the tendency is to slide rather than to tilt or cant, to ensure which the angle must not much exceed 30 degrees, at which the pressure necessary is about 43½ lbs. As will be seen, the force necessary to tilt it from one end is very much greater.

A man of ordinary strength standing at one side of the table, with his hands having the necessary cohesion with the smooth surface of the top, finds he can push it along the floor with tolerable ease. To drag it towards him is not so easy, and he finds great difficulty in moving it from right to left in the direction of its length. With his hands placed in a similar manner on the top surface at one end, he cannot on the smooth floor tilt up the opposite end. It was found that two men could do this; but the hand of a third laid lightly on the opposite end made it impossible even for two to produce this tilting endwise. In the easiest of these imitative movements, if three other persons occupy the three remaining sides of the table as in the actual seance, the additional weight, though really very small, is so greatly multiplied by leverage that it is impossible for the one experimenter to produce some of the movements without great and evident exertion, whilst others he cannot do at all.

Yet, usually, during the seances this table moved in all directions—from side to side—from end to end—and round and round—over a large room with great ease and smooth regularity, as well as with a kind of rushing speed—halting suddenly, and as suddenly starting off again. The movements were often made with an ease and facility which indicated a large reserve of unexpended force. At other times, on the contrary, they were so weak as to be scarcely discernible.

In some of the movements of this table—which is without

\* See Minutes, Sub-committee No. 3.



castors—a rattling sound was made as though its legs were rapidly “making and breaking contact” with the floor. An opinion was expressed that this was probably caused by unconscious pressure from the “mediums;” but our subsequent experiments showed that when a downward pushing pressure was applied by the hands, the table glided along noiselessly, and the rattling sound could be exactly imitated when we lifted a considerable portion of the weight off the floor, and so dragged the table along, thus indicating that the forces which in the “seance” produced the noisy movements in question must have been applied *upwards* and *forwards*, whilst it was evident that the only forces which could have been applied by the “mediums” must have been directed *downwards* and *forwards*.

Probably the strongest exhibition of force through this table occurred when two ladies were sitting—one at one side, the other at one end, and a gentleman at the other end, the side opposite the first lady being vacant, except that Mr. Meyers sat there to watch the proceedings. Some of the tilts under these circumstances were very strong—even violent—as though, when one side had been tilted up to a certain height, a powerful spring became released, and the descent was so sharp, strong, and sudden, that it shook the strong floor of the room, and could be heard all over and outside the house.

Mr. Meyers, in his Report, says:—“I noticed that the table invariably tilted towards No. 2, at times with so much force, that, in the position in which I was sitting, I was unable to prevent it rising, though I succeeded in modifying the vigour of the tilts.”—*Vide Minutes* of this Sub-committee.

The side No. 2 was occupied by one of the ladies. Mr. Meyers was seated at the opposite side.

As an example of the force exerted through the larger loo table, we may refer to the minutes of April 8th. It would be difficult to estimate accurately the effort required to produce the rapid whirling movements described there. To cant up this table—which weighs more than 90 lbs.—until its top touches the floor, and it remains resting partly on the outer rim of this, and on the triangular foot-base, requires a considerable lift; but to raise it just beyond this point, and until it is poised on the rim alone—as was twice done on the evening referred to—requires on the smooth floor at the largest practicable angle, to prevent sliding, a force of about 85 lbs.; though at right angles, and precaution taken to prevent sliding, 42 lbs. is sufficient.

In the imitative experiment it was found that, besides actual lifting force a considerable force as well as great care was necessary to preserve the balance on one point of the rim, and to prevent swinging or rolling in its ascent; but in the actual seance no swaying or tendency to lose balance was at any time felt.

To slide this table—which is on castors—takes a force of from 15 to 20 lbs., according to the *set* of the castors, or slight inequalities in the floor.

None of the experimenters were conscious of contributing in any appreciable degree, in the production of the force thus shown to be necessary to the effects witnessed. All hands being lightly kept on the top of the table throughout the movements.

Besides the evidence thus afforded of the presence of this not generally recognised force, we believe we have had in these experiments evidence of an intelligence directing it—as in moving by request in a particular direction—tilting a certain number of times as required—and by tilts or taps spelling out words and sentences addressed to those present.

It will be observed that it was only when certain persons were present that any evidence of this force and intelligence was presented. Two friends were particularly noticed as indispensable. These were a clergyman and the wife of another clergyman, both of the Church of England.

The room in which we held our meetings has a smooth polished floor, and is 28 feet long by 22 feet wide.

These minute details we have felt to be necessary, in order that the Committee might be made as fully acquainted as possible with all the conditions and circumstances connected with the production of the occurrences described in the Minutes.—*Vide Minutes*.

In concluding our Report, we desire to express to the Committee our unanimous conviction that the phenomena we have witnessed in the course of these investigations, though comparatively unimportant, do nevertheless raise some most important questions in science and philosophy, and deserve the fullest examination by capable and independent thinkers.

#### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 4.

Nothing occurred in presence of this Sub-committee worth recording.

#### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 5.

The Committee appointed to meet Mr. Home for the purpose of investigating the alleged spiritual phenomena produced through his agency, report thereon as follows:—

The first seance was held on the 2nd April, 1869. The entire Committee, consisting of Dr. Edmunds, Messrs. Bergheim, Bradlaugh, Dyte, and Gannon, were present, as were also Lord Adare, the Master of (now Lord) Lindsay, General B—, and Mr. Jencken. Previous to the formation of the circle, Mr. Home begged permission to change his dress, for the purpose of demonstrating that he had no machinery of any kind concealed about his person. This was accordingly accomplished in the presence of Dr. Edmunds and Mr. Bergheim, the former reporting to the

Committee, on his return, that Mr. Home possessed an extremely muscular and elastic frame. The seance was then held in the dining-room; a table of more than ordinary solidity and weight being used. At the request of Mr. Home, Mrs. Edmunds consented to assist at the seances, and attended all the subsequent meetings.

The seance occupied two hours and twenty minutes, and the manifestations were of the most trifling character, consisting of a few raps and slight movements of the table. The motion was of the usual swaying, irregular kind, and the raps were very feeble.

General B— was slightly affected with convulsive movements in his right arm, which he declared to be beyond the control of his will. A pencil was handed to him, and his hand wrote some irregular characters which could not be deciphered by anyone present. At the close of the seance, and after the departure of Mr. Home and the visitors, Dr. Edmunds demonstrated that the dining-table, although large and massive, could be easily moved by slight muscular exertion.

On the 9th of April the investigation was resumed, Mr. Home being again accompanied by Lord Adare and the Master of Lindsay. All the members of the Committee, with the exception of Dr. Edmunds, were present. Within half-an-hour after the commencement of the seance, a few slight raps were heard which seemed to come from the spot where Mr. Home was sitting. Messrs. Bradlaugh and Dyte, were under the impression that they proceeded from the leg of the table, and at the request of Mr. Home, the former gentleman seated himself on the floor to guard against the possibility of fraud. The table now moved slightly, in the same manner as before, and the raps continued; Mr. Bradlaugh asserting that they came from the leg of the table, and Messrs. Bergheim, Home, and Jencken maintaining that they were produced upon its surface. In the course of the evening, Mr. Home seemed slightly affected; he started, exclaimed “Ah!” and covered his face with his hands. A few minutes afterwards the Master of Lindsay stated that he was unable to move his left arm, and that the muscles were quite rigid. It was examined by Mr. Dyte, but that gentleman was unable to discover any abnormal symptoms. The raps continued at intervals; but, although the sitting was prolonged until a quarter past ten o’clock, no further phenomena of any importance were observed.

On Friday, the 16th, Mr. Home again met the Committee, accompanied by the Master of Lindsay and Lord Adare. The “circle” was formed at half-past eight o’clock, and the raps and movements of the table were again repeated. The raps were very feeble, and resembled the sounds produced by the tapping of a finger-nail on the table. In reference to the movements, Dr. Edmunds explained that the table moved with remarkable ease on its castors, and could be pushed from its position by the exertion of a very slight force.

The fourth and last seance of the Committee afforded only the most feeble phenomena, and owing to the subsequent illness of Mr. Home, the investigation was not revived. During the inquiry, Mr. Home afforded every facility for examination, and appeared to be anxious to further the object which the Committee had in view. It is almost unnecessary to add that nothing occurred at any of the meetings which could be attributed to supernatural causes. The members had fully expected that they would have witnessed some of the alleged extraordinary levitations of Mr. Home, but he explained at the opening of the inquiry that the phenomena produced through his agency were of uncertain manifestation and that he had no power whatever to produce them at will.

The seances were held in a fully lighted room.

#### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 6.

This Committee met four times, but failed to obtain any phenomena that deserve to be recorded. On one occasion, a lady visitor brought with her two little girls aged apparently about eight and ten years respectively, whom she declared to be mediums. The children were placed at a small chess-table, which they proceeded deliberately to rock to and fro, to their own intense delight, and to the amusement of the company.

At no other meeting was there even the pretence of any spiritual phenomena.

(Continued on p. 730.)

“A presumptuous scepticism that rejects facts without examination of their truth, is, in some respects, more injurious than unquestioning credulity.”—HUMBOLDT.

“One good experiment is of more value than the ingenuity of a brain like Newton’s. Facts are more useful when they contradict, than when they support, received theories.”—SIR HUMPHREY DAVY.

“The perfect observer in any department of science will have his eyes, as it were, opened, that they may be struck at once by any occurrence which, according to received theories, ought not to happen, for these are the facts which serve as clues to new discoveries.”—SIR JOHN HERSCHELL.

“With regard to the miracle question, I can only say that the word ‘impossible’ is not, to my mind, applicable to matters of philosophy. That the possibilities of nature are infinite is an aphorism with which I am wont to worry my friends.”—PROFESSOR HUXLEY.



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## THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1877.

### THE LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

#### PART I.—ITS OBJECT.

To enable our readers the better to estimate the value of the Report and experiments we republish this week, we append a few remarks as to the Society which appointed the Reporting Committee.

The London Dialectical Society was established some eleven years ago by a number of earnest men, in the interest of TRUTH-SEEKING, but particularly in reference to subjects too commonly excluded from public discussion.

In pursuit of this laudable object, the members discard the merely rhetorical and declamatory aims of ordinary debating societies, requiring strictly from each and every speaker, on each and every subject discussed, not eloquence or special pleading, but the frankest avowal of his or her opinion, and the clearest statement of the reasons upon which the opinion uttered is based. To quote from the Prospectus the words of Professor Bain:—"The essence of the Dialectic Method is to place side by side, with every doctrine and its reasons, all opposing doctrines and their reasons, allowing these to be stated in full by the persons holding them. No doctrine is to be held as expounded, far less proved, unless it stands in parallel array to every other counter-theory, with all that can be said for each." In this philosophical spirit the Association has addressed itself to a great variety of controverted questions—roughly designated political, social, religious, metaphysical, and legislative—amongst which may be named by the way of illustration—*Liberty*; the Rights and Wrongs of Women; the Belief in a Deity; the Population or Malthusian Theory; Ancient and Modern Marriage Systems; Pauperism: its Causes and Remedies; Compulsory Vaccination; Co-operative Wealth Production; Lunacy Legislation; Capital and Labour; together with many other disputed questions relating to moral, mental, and physical well-being. That such a Society should have encountered obloquy and misrepresentation from without, in its earlier days, was only to have been expected, notwithstanding modern claims to what is termed "freedom of thought and discussion." Detraction, however, has nearly passed away, and the Society (now more flourishing than ever) is greatly respected in philosophic circles.

#### PART II.—ITS COMMITTEE ON SPIRITUALISM.

It was at one of the ordinary debates, about nine years ago, that the question of Spiritualism was raised. So much conflict of opinion was excited that the Council was petitioned to appoint a special Committee to report upon the phenomena alleged to be spiritual manifestations. A thoroughly representative Committee was accordingly formed, including within its ranks medical men, clergymen, barristers, solicitors, scientists, and merchants, nearly all of whom were avowed sceptics as to the phenomena at the time of their appointment. In due time the Committee presented to the Council the General and Sub-Reports to be found in this issue, supplementing the same by a voluminous mass of evidence taken directly from the lips of Spiritualists practically acquainted with the subject,—persons of the highest respectability, and representing nearly every grade of society.

Objection has been taken in some quarters to the fact that the Society itself did not publish the Report, but left the matter of publication as an open question to its Committee. It may be replied, however, that the Society was under no pledge to publish, and indeed possesses no special provision for such purposes. The Council, after formally receiving the Report and thanking the Committee for its labours, took the only proper course in leaving the Reporters unfettered, who, in exercising their undoubted right of publication, have given to the world the best possible proof they could of the sincerity of their views on a subject admittedly difficult. We append the actual resolutions of the Council passed on the 20th day of July, 1870:—"(1.) That the Report be received and entered upon the Minutes. (2.) That the thanks of the Council be given to the Committee for the indefatigable way in which they have discharged their duties. (3.) That the request of the Committee, that the Report be printed under the authority of the Society, be not acceded to."

#### PART III.—THE LESSONS OF ITS RESEARCHES.

Several vexed questions, of interest to the sceptical, have been placed in a more favourable light by the labours of the experimental Sub-committees. Their researches have shown to the

public, as said in another column—(1.) That it is possible to experiment successfully in Spiritualism without the aid of professional mediums; (2.) That honest scepticism is no bar to investigation; (3.) That mediumship, so called, is a quality (however obscure in its nature) to be found in varying degrees among the community at large; (4.) The favourite opposing theories of fraud and delusion, moreover, have been proven inadequate by these famous experiments; while, in like proportion, the phenomenal contentions of the Spiritualists have been corroborated, and in a manner making further investigation by sceptics an easy task.

Attempt has been made, of course, to undervalue these telling researches. The non-successful Committees have been brought gleefully into prominence, in the hope that the *positive* results obtained by the successful Committees might thereby be discredited. Such critics have "reckoned without their host," and have but garbled the Report itself; for as failure was the occasional lot of the successful Committees also, it stands simply as one element, among others, to be duly assessed, and to be by no means slightly considered, seeing that it corroborates the well-known fact that occasional failure is an abiding characteristic of every seance-circle in the experience alike of Spiritualists and investigators universally. It must be remembered, too, that the successful Committees sat far more frequently than the failing Committees, and that the failures in question were further compensated in the circumstance that several of the non-successful sitters were visitors to, or members of, the more fortunate sections. Thus, then, is the assertion of the General Report amply vindicated in its statement to the Society, that "a large majority of the members of your Committee have become actual witnesses to several phases of the phenomena without the aid or presence of any professional medium, although the greater part of them commenced their investigations in an avowedly sceptical spirit."

It has further been objected that the testimony of the Sub-committees covers so few of the phenomena alleged by Spiritualists. Properly considered, this circumstance adds weight, rather than otherwise, to the testimony in question. Experienced observers know as a certainty, that although there are many and varied forms of the phenomena termed spiritual, yet it but seldom happens that several of such forms occur through one and the same medium. The sub-reports are, therefore, internally consistent in the fact that their testimony is clustered around a comparatively limited range of phenomena. They verify, at the same time, a primary experience of Spiritualists, that on the average one person in ten or twelve throughout the population is a medium of greater or lesser importance. Had the Committee been of double or treble its numerical strength, it is highly probable that a few of the rarer manifestations would have occurred in its presence, and that direct corroboration would have been found in reference to some of the writing, trance, artistic, clairvoyant, healing, musical, vocal, phantomic, incarnating, and levitating results of mediumship, testified to by the thirty-three witnesses examined in General Committee.

Although, for the most part, the forenamed manifestations are unusual in comparison with "rappings" and "table-movings," yet we have ample warrant for the conviction that persevering followers of the Dialectical method of experimentation will frequently find their reward in witnessing some of these rarer developments. Enough, however, has been said to encourage inquirers, and to show that the main lesson to be learnt from the Dialectical researches is, the value of experiment over unexamining theorising.

### SPIRITUALISM MILITANT,

OR

### THE DIALECTICAL EXPERIMENTS VERSUS THE CONJURERS AND THEIR DISCIPLES.

*Note.*—For want of space, many corroborative quotations have been omitted from the following article. The reader is therefore referred not only to the general contents of this number, but especially to the courageous works of Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.G.S., for experimental testimony to the truth of the phenomena called spiritual.—*Vide* full particulars on the last page.

#### PART I.—THE LIBELLOUS THEORY.

Illusion—considered as a fine art—is not only a justifiable, but even a useful pursuit, when confined within obvious limits of propriety.

Between the honourable conjurer and his patron an understanding is established, mutually agreeable and advantageous. On the one side there is the ability to deceive the senses—highly trained and harmlessly displayed; on the other there is the effort to pit eye-sight and reasoning powers against the dexterity of the illusionist, and the willingness, moreover, to pay for the luxury. So far a fair compact exists—one wide enough for the fullest exercise of the conjurer's craft, and for the delectation of his auditors.

When, however, mere conjuring is made an agency for the retardation of truth and for the dissemination of unjust scandal; when it seeks to brand as imposition significant phenomena—which, although susceptible of surface imitation, are in their very nature impossible of reference to the processes of legerdemain—then the bounds of rectitude are overstepped; then does conjuring become a trading upon ignorance and prejudice—a foe to research and progress. And should all this, and similar thereto, be done for the sake of gain men of honour would scorn to pocket—then a useful recreation is degraded, and its power to teach lessons of discrimination, in regard to the strange or unusual, is imperilled.



While accrediting the art of illusion within its *legitimate* sphere, we deem it our duty to forewarn the inexperienced investigator against possible attempts to persuade him that the phenomena termed spiritual and the tricks of the conjurer are of identical nature. Nothing can be further from the truth. The differences are essential; and to one of the most important of such differences, summed up in the word "CONDITIONS," we invite especial attention. Let the investigator be but on his guard to discriminate between the conditions necessary to the conjurer, and the total absence of such conditions in the case of genuine mediumship, and he will quickly find that Spiritualism presents him with a problem incapable of solution by the conjuring hypothesis. The phenomena in both cases may have, indeed, an apparent similarity; but the conjurer requires a platform, machinery, long practice, and confederacy for the production of his results, and cannot achieve success apart from these adjuncts of his craft. The marvels of Spiritualism, however, are conspicuous through the absence of such assistance; are remarkable in their *unaided manifestation*; are noteworthy in the general fitfulness of their recurrence; in their independency of time and place; in their unexpected variations; and by their frequent alliance to an intelligence not traceable to the investigators or to confederacy. All this is clearly demonstrated by the Dialectical experiments, conducted as they were by sceptics, without professional mediumship.

The hold which the conjuring hypothesis (as a solution of Spiritualism) has taken upon the public mind owes its origin to the very stalest of stage tricks. The method of the conjurer mainly consists in the adroitness with which he diverts the attention of his patrons from the crucial point of his performance to some wholly indifferent matter. Similarly he has dealt with Spiritualism,—directing the minds of his auditors to the likeness of his platform tricks to some of the multifarious phenomena called spiritual, but keeping carefully in the background the utter *unlikeness* of the "conditions" involved in the two cases.

Although the public may be thus easily misled, it may safely be asserted that not a Spiritualist is to be found who does not recognise the "conditions" as making a most remarkable element to be studied in reference to the manifestations now under review. It is not to "rappings," "table turnings," and kindred phenomena that the Spiritualist blindly "pins his faith," as erroneously supposed. These are but effects arresting his attention to far higher considerations; and, at the least, to modes of force which neither the conjurer nor the scientist has hitherto succeeded in controlling or explaining.

The Dialectical Report is most valuable to the cause of truth, in the independent testimony it bears to these disputed manifestations of force, and to the strangeness of the conditions under which the said manifestations occur.

Without premeditation or intention the conjuring hypothesis has thus been overthrown; and that, too, by *sceptical* investigators, whose repeated experiments have verified the assertions of Spiritualists as to the actuality of the hitherto controverted phenomena,—phenomena, we may add, daily taking place in the privacy of many honourable homes, and occurring without platform, without confederacy, without mechanical aids, without professional mediumship, and without possibility of explanation either by legerdemain or delusion.

The conjuring hypothesis, then, is more than worthless—it is even libellous. For not only does it conceal the immense dissimilarities—in nature and condition—between spiritualistic occurrences and conjuring imitations thereof, but it operates as a cruel charge of dishonesty against hundreds of reputable persons, moving (like the Dialectical Reporters) in private life; and who are no more accountable for the fact of mediumship in their own persons, than they are for the colour of their eyes or the hour of their birth.

## PART II. SCIENCE DISHONoured.

The world of science has been too busy to give that *systematic* attention to the phenomena called spiritual, which they are thought by many to deserve. When it has deigned to glance in the direction of Spiritualism it has been (with some highly-principled exceptions) more prone to throw contempt upon spiritualistic theories, than carefully to investigate the phenomena on which the said theories are based. Or when in a fitful and wholly inadequate manner it has stooped to an occasional experiment, it has been with an air of lofty patronage very amusing to contemplate, and with a restlessness utterly disregarding of the well-known fact that the manifestations can rarely be evoked at command. In such impatience, too, the scientific mind has commonly endeavoured to dictate inapplicable conditions, born of ignorant foregone conclusions; forgetful of the fact that the tests appropriate to one realm of investigation, may be wholly unsuitable to other departments of research.

In the main the average scientist may be said to be yoked to the conjurer's car. With conjurers for guides, philosophers, and friends, he is content with the imposture explanation of Spiritualism—saving scientific appearances, to some extent, by glibly reproducing from time to time, theories of "expectant attention," "snapping tendons," "credulity," "unconscious muscular action," "lunacy," "dominant prepossession," and so forth.

Such theories, having a certain appearance of pertinence, are calculated, of course, to abuse the mind of the sceptic, and to deter him from that personal examination which so frequently has resulted in negating the prejudices of scientific dogmatism. It should, moreover, be generally known, that few, if any, of the theories called scientific, can be claimed as the especial property of the scientist. Nearly all have been anticipated by Spiritualists them-

selves, and each such hypothesis has been proven, over and over again, inapplicable as an explanation of seance events. Still the phenomena occur; and scientists, in the face of accumulating verification, are finding themselves placed on the horns of a dilemma. To advance, now, in the direction of persevering experiment would be tantamount to a confession of past prejudice. To maintain the ignoring attitude would be, on the other hand, to imperil their fond pretensions to public leadership, and to forfeit much of that popularity so dear to some scientific minds. Scientific nature, being but human, cannot rise all at once to the moral heroism of acknowledging a blunder. Only time can abate the self-created difficulty. Meanwhile the Spiritualist, strong in his position, can afford to indulge such sensitiveness a little longer, and can wait with patience until scientists cease to perform their self-imposed task as advertising agents to showmen, and take up the more dignified role of practical investigators.

It is greatly to be regretted, however, that the sins of science, in relation to Spiritualism, are not limited to those of slighting or prejudice. Before us is lying a trenchant review, by Alfred R. Wallace, of two lectures adverse to Spiritualism,—which, through their recency and pretension, are at once the latest and most complete deliverance of science on the subject. The lectures in question are entitled "*Mesmerism, Spiritualism, &c., Historically and Scientifically Considered.*" That the reader may appraise their historic and scientific value for himself, we direct him to Mr. Wallace's admirable criticism (now re-published in a cheap form\*) from which, meanwhile, we make the following extracts:—

" . . . . Every particle of evidence is ignored which 'is too powerful to be explained away.'"

" . . . . There is hardly any attempt to deal with the 'evidence. Instead of this we have irrelevant matters put prominently forward, backed up by sneers against believers, and false 'or unproved accusations against mediums.'"

"In place of the impartial summary of the historian, he (the 'reader') will find the one-sided narrative of a partisan; and instead of the careful weighing of fact and experiment characteristic 'of the man of science, he will find loose and inaccurate statements, and negative results set up as conclusive against positive 'evidence.'"

"Again, this work, professing to be 'scientific,' and therefore 'accurate as to facts and precise as to references, has been shown 'to be full of misstatements and misrepresentations.'"

From these charges—amply warranted by chapter and verse—we think the reader will come to the conclusion that either the ability or the morality of science is greatly at fault. Well may Mr. Wallace ask—"whether it is in the interests of human progress 'and in accordance with right principles, that those who have the 'ear of the public should put forth, under the guise of impartial 'history, a thoroughly one-sided and erroneous account of a disputed question.'"

Science is dishonoured by all such handiwork. Misrepresentation is ever the result either of carelessness or dishonesty, and cannot be condoned by any amount of the "*special early training*," asserted so loudly by some scientists as the indispensable qualification for investigation when it stoops to such abuses.

The Dialectical investigators are the representatives of the true scientific method—the method of systematic experiment. This common-sense course hitherto so much avoided—in relation to the phenomena called spiritual—is yet open to every scientist who is really desirous of unbiased examination. He is under no necessity to hound this medium or to libel the other, as exercises preparatory to a calm and dignified entrance upon new fields of research. It is possible for him to form a seance circle in the bosom of his own family, without appeal for help to Spiritualists, private or professional; and we venture to add that should scientists so challenge the subject, in a spirit of fair-play, often they will find in a wife, a son, a sister, or a daughter (or perhaps even in their own persons) those very mediumistic qualities they have so frequently made the excuse for bringing obloquy upon the guiltless and scandal upon the honourable.

If men of science are not prepared by persevering experiment to make their researches into an unexplored realm of nature, it would be better for their own sakes to leave the subject alone altogether. Science rejecting the disinterested testimony of thousands of educated citizens to become "cat's-paw" and "trumpet-blower" to a few conjuring adventurers, is a spectacle by no means to its credit,—is an instance of gullibility well-nigh bordering upon hallucination.

## PART III. SPIRITUALISM IN THE OPINION MARKET.

Between conjurers and scientists on the one hand, and irrepressible Spiritualists on the other, the editorial mind has been sorely exercised in its bearing towards the public on the debatable question of spiritual manifestations.

Editors, however, "who please to live, must live to please," and therefore are driven, by the common necessities of their nature, to the manufacture of articles really saleable in the opinion market. The "opinion" termed "public," and daily offered for purchase by the ubiquitous newspaper-boy, ever represents what may be called the bread-and-butter view of a case—briefly, is always the opinion that will command the best sale for the time being.

This is as true of the press of to-day (with some praiseworthy

\* To be had of J. Burns, 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, W.C., price 6d., post free 7d. Every truth-lover is indebted to Mr. Wallace for his masterly, and at the same time temperate, *exposé*.



exception) as of a generation ago, and on many subjects besides that of Spiritualism. When a quarter of a century since, "rapping" and "table-turning" began to excite some attention, incredulity and ignorance thereupon were in the ascendant, and therefore were found to be the best investments for the editorial pocket. Somewhat later, indignation and derision secured a better sale; and later still the quizzing, ironical, and humorous treatment, coupled with the distortion or suppression of unanswerable facts, proved to be the most paying market. Now, however, when Spiritualists are too numerous to be ignored; now that many are too favourably known to be scorned; now that the phenomena, in all their variety, are becoming too well verified to be "pooh-poohed;" and now that it is not altogether unfashionable even for opinion manufacturers to be seen at a seance—the commercial aspect of the case is again changing; but always in the interest of bread-and-butter.

Much of misrepresentation yet prevails and still more of disregard to unexplainable facts—for appearances must be saved. But meanwhile there is, here and there, a more tempered allusion to the ever-assertive phenomena; the press, in some quarters at any rate, is beginning to find that perhaps there is something in spiritualistic pretensions after all, and that, although coy, it has never been wholly averse to conviction in that direction.

By their own account opinion-manufacturers do but require a little more evidence—the evidence, be it said, they have hitherto steadily repudiated. If the press affects, just now, to have one "prepossession" which is more "dominant" than another it is expressed in its occasional cry for trained and sceptical experts. The candour of this cry is seeming, rather than real; for opinion-makers, in their iteration thereof, are conveniently oblivious of the persistent manner in which they have mystified the public mind on the question. The press is overlooking its treatment of trained and sceptical experts in the past; the garbling at one time, and the withholding at another, of researches which have amply proved the phenomenal truths of Spiritualism—of researches far more persevering, and far more significant, than those instituted by the Dialectical sceptics. It is overlooking, too, that among the many competent men who have attested the phenomena, not one can be found who is a backslider from his convictions, and that not a few have remained true to the facts in the face of public contempt, and sometimes even at the expense of reputation and social advancement. It is forgetting, also, that the great majority of Spiritualists commenced their investigations as sceptics, and that many are noted for their sceptical habit of mind on controversial topics generally.

Reasonable as may be the cry for experts, it is but a cant cry for the press, and otherwise has a delusive character. There are experts *and* experts. The editor in want of a sound horse would, in his choice thereof, give greater heed to the judgment of his stable-boy than to that of a gentleman profound in deep sea soundings. No amount of expertness in performing the "inexhaustible bottle trick" would necessarily qualify for spectrum analysis or the writing of an operative critique.

Each, then, to his department with common sense and honesty of purpose. The bulk of Spiritualists are expert in their department: studying the conditions, canvassing results, eliminating sources of error, intolerant of fraud, and resolutely putting to the test all adverse hypotheses—hypotheses which the outside world but too readily adopts without proof of any kind, and simply at newspaper suggestion.

There is no dearth of experts—trained, sceptical, and reliable\*—but only of the courage to give them a fair hearing.

When newspaper prejudice gives place to private examination, and opinion-market theorising to actual experiment, then we predict that a general acknowledgment of the phenomena called spiritual will take place, to the satisfaction alike of the claims of truth and the interests of editorial bread-and-butter.

In conclusion, we express our conviction that justice on the subject before us may scarcely be expected from the passing generation of conjurors, scientists, and editors. These have their share of human frailty, and, with a few worthy exceptions, are too deeply committed to their time-serving aims and theories to withdraw gracefully from the false position they have so long occupied. Meanwhile the public, in its own protection, may examine for itself and think for itself; may follow that example of independent research set by the Dialectical investigators, and now put forward for general imitation. And in the execution of this task we do not claim that investigators should put imposture and delusion out of the reckoning; for if prejudgment is to be found amongst scientists, perversion amongst critics, and quackery and hypocrisy all the world over, it is scarcely to be expected that Spiritualism should be altogether free from taints common to every department of life.

In the long run, facts can neither be gainsayed nor patronised. The manifestations called spiritual (in all their astonishing diversity) are facts, and—notwithstanding the illusory "prepossessions" of mountebank critics and their disciples—are facts daily receiving new adherents from educated experimentalists in every grade of society.

On the facts of the case we are now insisting, and NOT upon any theoretic explanations thereof. Before so much as attempting explanations, it is the duty of the sceptic to acquaint himself with the facts. The road to such acquaintanceship is through careful experiment, and not through the opinion market. "PHŒNIX."

\* *Vide* "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," by Alfred Russel Wallace; and other works by sceptical authors.

## MINUTES (Continued from p. 727)—SUB-COMMITTEES.

### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 1.

EXPERIMENT I.—*Feb. 24th, 1869.* Six members present. A circle formed. Private house. Medium non-professional.

All hands resting on a square heavy dining-table on four legs with castors. For one hour and a quarter no motion or sound. Two members left; the four remaining sat for an hour. Phenomena at intervals. 1st. Motions of the table, sometimes very gentle, then rapid, and such as would require, to produce them voluntarily, a great and visible exertion of muscular force. A slight rising of the table from the floor. This was easily seen by all present by reason of the corner of the table being close to a writing-table, one inch and two-thirds higher, up to the level of which it was raised twice. 2nd. Sounds. These consisted of creakings and taps. The former were such as would result from efforts to move the table by the legs or from unequal strains applied to various parts of it; the latter were such as could only be produced by distinct blows with a pencil, finger tip, or light hammer. On questions being asked, they were followed by one, two, or three sounds. During the whole time the hands of those present were laid flat on the table: the room was well lighted with gas, and everything could be distinctly seen.

At the termination of the sitting there was quite a volley of raps, according to request preferred that "Good night!" might thus be signified. *Note:* All present were members of the Committee, and declare upon their honour that none of these motions or sounds were produced voluntarily or consciously by themselves. Moreover they have found, by repeated experiment, that they are not able to produce similar sounds and motions when endeavouring to do so.

EXPERIMENT II.—*Feb. 26th.* Conditions as before. Seven members present. In about half an hour the table moved along the floor, but did not rise as on the former occasion. This or similar movements occurred three or four times in the course of a sitting of about two hours' duration. The tapping or other sounds were not so distinct as on the first evening.

EXPERIMENT III.—*March 2nd.* Conditions as before. Five members present. In a sitting of about an hour and a half no effects whatever were produced.

EXPERIMENT IV.—*March 9th.* Nine members present. Conditions as before. The following phenomena were produced: 1st. The members of the circle standing, rested the tips of their fingers only on the table. It made a considerable movement. 2nd. Holding their hands a few inches above the table, and no one in any way touching it, it moved a distance of more than a foot. 3rd. To render the experiment absolutely conclusive, all present stood clear away from the table, and stretching out their hands over it without touching it, it again moved as before, and about the same distance. During this time, one of the Committee was placed upon the floor to look carefully beneath the table, while others were placed outside to see that no person went near to the table. In this position it was frequently moved, without possibility of contact by any person present. 4th. Whilst thus standing clear of the table, but with the tips of their fingers resting upon it, all at the same moment raised their hands at a given signal; and on several occasions the table jumped from the floor to an elevation varying from half an inch to an inch. 5th. All held their hands close above the table, but not touching it, and then, on a word of command, raised them suddenly, and the table jumped as before. The member lying on the floor, and those placed outside the circle, were keenly watching as before, and all observed the phenomena as described.

It may be observed that the motion of the table, whether upward or horizontal, was not produced by any sensible attractive force of the hands of those present. The persons forming the circle were quite unconscious of any expenditure of attractive force, but the force, whatever it was, seemed to obey, to some extent, the will of those present.

EXPERIMENT V.—*March 15th.* Seance from 8.30 to 10 p.m. Conditions as before. Eight members present. Sounds were heard, seeming to proceed from various parts of the table. They consisted chiefly of one or three creaks or taps. These followed questions put by those in the circle, but were generally very faint, and in many instances the questions were not followed by any sounds whatever.

EXPERIMENT VI.—*March 22nd.* 8 to 10 p.m. Conditions, the same as before. Six persons present. Sounds were audible soon after the seats were taken, and lasted till the end of the sitting. Frequently they were faint, but were always sufficiently distinct to be heard by all. For the most part they appeared to proceed from the floor. It being suggested that, in consequence of a succession of five or six raps following a question, communication should be established by means of the alphabet, it was called by one of the members; certain letters, on being called, were followed by three distinct and quick tappings. The letters thus indicated were set down upon paper, and in this manner the following sentence was spelt: "You stupefy everybody with your nonsense." A request was made that the table be moved, but was not complied with. At the termination of the sitting, one of the circle asked for an expression of "good night" to be conveyed by raps on the table, there was quite a volley of sounds—not proceeding from the table but from the floor.

EXPERIMENT VII.—*March 25th.* Conditions as before. Seven members present. Seance at 8 p.m., lasting about an hour and a half. Very slight effects produced.

EXPERIMENT VIII.—*March 30th.* Conditions as before. Six members present, and one visitor. Sitting at 8 p.m., lasting about two hours. A member of the Committee having objected to the assumption of one and three sounds meaning no and yes, it was asked, "If one sound means 'No,' give three raps;" which were immediately given. Again it was asked, "If three sounds are to mean 'Yes,' let three more raps be given;" and three raps were immediately heard. It was thereupon agreed that, in future reports, it will only be necessary to speak of answers being in the negative or affirmative, without specifying the number of raps or sounds indicating such answers. That one rap shall be taken and expressed as a negative, three as an affirmative, and two as uncertain; the sounds hitherto, by this interpretation, having conveyed intelligible answers.

A round tripod table, smaller and lighter than the square table hitherto used, was employed for the first experiments. All hands were placed on it, and every member of the circle placed each of his feet in



contact with that of his neighbour on the right and left. The usual tapping sounds were speedily produced, and when questions were put the table tilted once or thrice on one side, the elevation varying from one to about three inches. It also moved along the floor, but with the hands resting on it. These manifestations becoming weaker, the circle was formed at the square table. This, in the course of the evening, moved along the floor, but not without contact with hands, although the experiment was tried more than once. But the sounds which came from the table, sometimes during conversation, as if in approval or dissent of the remarks made, and those following the questions put, consisted, not only of gentle tappings and distinct raps, but sometimes of heavy blows; and occasionally, when a physical manifestation was asked for, as that the table might be raised, of creaking, cracking, scratching, and other sounds quite indescribable, coupled with a trembling or vibratory movement of the table.

Five distinct raps following a repeatedly expressed wish for physical manifestations, the alphabet, as on a former occasion, was used as a means of communication, and then the following sentence was formed: "Do keep your mouths shut;" another was as follows: "This is a great work; it demands your life, your soul, your all; go on, friends, God prosper your work."

Occasionally, to save time, when a word was partly spelt out, a guess was made at the remainder and the question asked, "Is it such a word?" The answer being in the affirmative the word was written down accordingly. But in more than one instance the answer was in the negative, and the supposed word only formed part of another word. It is to be remarked that the sounds in correction of the letters and formation of the words of the communications were very sharp, distinct, and regular. During the whole of the time the communications were being spelt out, every member of the circle placed each of his feet in contact with that of his neighbour, and his hands on the table.

EXPERIMENT IX.—April 6th. Conditions as before. Five members present. Raps were heard proceeding from the table. The alphabet was proposed, and on inquiry it was found that a certain member present was to call the alphabet. On his doing so, the table rapped at certain letters which were written down, and a sentence was thus spelt, and the communication caused considerable amusement. Other questions were put and answered by the usual signals. The raps, however, at times seemed to manifest the most lively disposition and occurred continually during conversation; they also distinctly kept time to music with perfect accuracy.

EXPERIMENT X.—April 11th. Conditions as before. Six members present. The sitting lasted about one hour and a half. In less than five minutes tapping sounds were heard, proceeding from the leaf of the table; at first faint, but soon they became louder, and so continued during nearly the entire sitting. During conversation, they were of a sharp, decided, and lively character, often occurring in volleys, and came from different parts of the table according to request. There were also motions of the table. These consisted: (1.) Of a rapid to-and-fro movement along the floor, in one instance while only the tips of the fingers were in contact with the table. (2.) A peculiar tremor of the whole table followed by a sudden jerk, somewhat similar to the jolting of a cart. (3.) Tiltings of the table three times on a question being put, the elevation being about half an inch.

EXPERIMENT XI.—April 15th. Conditions as before. Eight members present. Sitting at 8 p.m. Within five minutes tapping sounds were heard on the leaf of the table. Various questions, as to order of sitting, &c., were put, and answered by rappings. The alphabet was called for, and the word "laugh" was spelt out. It was asked if it was intended that we should laugh. An affirmative answer being given, the members laughed; upon which the table made a most vigorous sound and motion imitative of, and responsive to the laughter, and so ludicrous as to cause a general peal of real laughter to which the table shook, and the rapping kept time as an accompaniment. The following questions were then put and answered by the number of raps given:—"How many children has Mrs. M—?" "Four." "Mrs. W—?" "Three." "Mrs. D—?" No rap; "Mrs. E—?" "Five." "Mrs. S—?" "Two." It was ascertained upon inquiry, that these replies were perfectly correct, except in the case of Mrs. E—, who has only four children living, but has lost one. Neither the medium nor any person present was aware of all the above numbers, but each number was known to some of them. The inquiry for a written communication being responded to by three raps, some sheets of paper with a pencil were laid under the table, and at the end of the sitting examined, but no letter or mark was found on the paper. In order to test whether these sounds would continue under different conditions, all sat at some distance from the table, holding hands in a circle round it. But instead of upon the table as before, loud rappings were heard to proceed from various parts of the floor, and from the chair on which the medium sat; while some came from the other side of the room, a distance of about fifteen feet from the nearest person. A desire having been expressed for a shower of raps, loud rappings came from every part of the table at once, producing an effect similar to that of a shower of hail falling upon it. The sounds throughout the evening were very sharp and distinct. It was observed that, although during conversation the rappings are sometimes of a singularly lively character, yet when a question is put they cease instantly, and not one is heard until the response is given.

EXPERIMENT XII.—April 20th. Eight persons present. Conditions as before. Sitting, a little before eight, lasting about two hours. Sounds from the table were heard within ten minutes. On a song being sung, rapping commenced immediately. A lively air was always accompanied by a spirited beating to time, the sounds, in harmony with the song sung, being loud or soft, and following the measure note by note, conveying as much musical expression as such an accompaniment was capable of. The sounds were frequently accompanied by slight vibratory or trembling motions of the table. It was asked—"Will you answer a written question by the alphabet?" To this the usual token of assent was given. A member of the Committee wrote on a slip of paper: "What is the name of my sister?" but what was so written was not disclosed to any person present. The words "Mary Ann" were spelt. The answer was not quite correct, it should have been Marian. In order to place beyond doubt that these sounds could in no way be produced by any person present, the back of every chair

was turned to the table, and at some distance from it, each person kneeling upon the chair and resting his arms on its back, with the tips of his fingers only upon the table.

EXPERIMENT XIII.—April 29th. Nine members present. Medium and conditions as before. In about a quarter of an hour the table made sundry movements along the floor with rappings. The sounds at first were very softly given, but subsequently became much stronger. They beat time to the airs played by a musical box, and came from any part of the table requested by the members. Some questions were put and followed by raps, but more frequently by tilting of the table at its sides, ends, or corners, the elevation being from one to four inches. An endeavour was made by those sitting near to prevent the table from rising, but it resisted all their efforts. The chair on which the medium was seated was drawn several times over the floor. First it moved backwards several feet, then it gave several twists and turns, and finally returned with the medium to nearly its original position. The chair had no castors, and moved quite noiselessly, the medium appearing perfectly still, and holding her feet above the carpet; so that during the entire phenomenon no part of her person or dress touched the floor. There was bright gaslight, and the members had a clear opportunity to observe all that occurred; and all agreed that imposture was impossible. While this was going on, a rapping sound came continually from the floor, beneath and around the chair. It was then suggested that trials should be made if the table would move without contact. All present, including the medium, stood quite clear of the table, holding their hands from three to six inches above it, and without in any way touching it. Observers were placed under it to see that it was not touched there. The following were the observations:—

1.—The table repeatedly moved along the floor in different directions, often taking that requested. Thus, in accordance with a desire expressed that it should move from the front to the back room, it took that direction, and on approaching the folding doors and meeting with an obstruction, turned as if to avoid it.

2.—On a given signal all raised their hands suddenly, and the table immediately sprang or jerked up from the floor about one inch.

3.—Without any movement of the hands the table jerked off the floor, sometimes at one side or corner, sometimes at another, according to request, the elevation varying from one to four inches.

The distance of the circle from the table was now considerably increased, all standing about two feet from it, and without extending the hands towards it. The same phenomena were frequently repeated. Once the table jerked up on one side, making a considerable forward movement, and again it moved along the floor about two feet, rising at one end and causing some noise in its fall. After a time, the power appearing to fail, all approached the table, placing their hands in contact with it. Then, on withdrawing all hands suddenly, the same movements were renewed.

During many of these phenomena, various members of the Committee volunteered by turns to keep watch below the table, whilst others standing round them carefully noted everything that took place; but no one could discover any visible agency in their production.

EXPERIMENT XIV.—May 4th. Nine members present. Place and conditions as before. Within ten minutes, sharp, snapping sounds were heard, appearing to come from the table. They kept time with airs played by a musical box, and with a song sung for the purpose of the experiment, and there were frequent inquiries and questions.

It was indicated by rappings who should preside.

In the course of the evening there were many slight movements of the table, accompanied by creaking and tapping sounds. Subsequently, however, all stood quite clear of the table, with hands extended two or three inches over it, but without in any way touching it, and the table made two lateral movements, rolling each time at least six inches from the place where it stood.

Then the experiment, as formerly recorded, of raising the hands suddenly at a given signal, was repeated three times, but without result.

The chair on which the medium sat was frequently drawn back from the table, and as she expressed a conviction that she did nothing to cause these movements, at the request of the Committee she knelt in the chair, perfectly motionless, and with hands extended, and it again moved, having no castors, smoothly along the floor, about six inches from its original position. No one touched her or the chair during this experiment. Although the tapping and other sounds were not confined to one part of the table, they generally came from that part before the medium. It was therefore suggested that she should sit at a distance, one of the Committee holding her feet, and two others of the Committee holding her hands. The sounds, however, continued to come as before, from that part of the table immediately facing her, contact by her being thus rendered impossible.

A dark sitting being proposed, the gas was turned off, and a variety of remarkable phenomena occurred, which, not being under test conditions, are not reported.

EXPERIMENT XV.—May 11th. Eight members present. Conditions as before. All present sat at the table in the usual manner for about one hour and a half. The room was lit with gas as usual. Afterwards, in pursuance of a suggestion by Professor Varley, the gas was turned out, and a faint light thrown by two lanterns, each provided with a wax candle, and fitted with coloured glass; and subsequently the room was made totally dark, but no phenomena whatever were produced throughout the evening.

EXPERIMENT XVI.—May 18th. The meeting was held at the house of another member of the Committee. The table was a large and heavy dining-table. Twelve members present. Conditions as before. Within ten minutes faint sounds were heard, proceeding from the table, which soon grew stronger. Some answers were given to questions. Music was played on the pianoforte, and one piece was accompanied by tapping sounds from all parts of the table, and another piece both by tapping sounds, vibrations, and slight vertical movements of the table at its sides, ends, and corners. The sounds and movements all kept time with the music. The same phenomena also occurred when a song was sung. During the seance the sounds were very equally distributed, being seldom confined to one part of the table. On two or three occasions the table made lateral movements, but on contact of the hands with it being broken, no effect was produced. During tea, when the



business of the meeting was concluded, there were several slight upward movements of the corners of the table, and the rapping sounds proceeded loudly from different parts of it, and for some time were frequent and lively.

**EXPERIMENT XVII.—May 27th.** Twelve members present. Conditions as before. The usual tapping on the table in answer to questions and keeping time with music. An intimation being thus given that a communication was secured, the word "dark" was spelt. It was thereupon decided to put out the gas. The various sounds from the table immediately increased in number and intensity. The table tilted at different sides, moved along the floor in various directions, lurched to and fro, and finally went into the back room. The hands of all present were in contact, and resting on the table. Nine of the members affirmed they distinctly saw luminous sparks in the middle of the table, and in the neighbourhood of the medium. Some of these were apparently phosphorescent clouds, and others points or stars of blue light, dancing in the air like fire-flies. The same luminous points appeared at the tips of the fingers of some of those present, and when the hand was shaken these luminous drops were scattered from it like drops of water, retaining their luminosity for some time upon the objects on which they fell.

**EXPERIMENT XVIII.—June 1st.** Four members present. Seance at 8 p.m. No medium in the room. Sat at the dining-table with hands resting on it for about one hour. No effects whatever were produced, nor could the slightest creaking or rapping on the table be detected. The members afterwards purposely endeavoured to produce the sounds they had heard in the previous experiments, but were unable to do so.

**EXPERIMENT XIX.—June 9th.** Eight members present. Seance at 8 p.m. Conditions as before. The usual rappings and tiltings occurred. The most interesting fact this evening was, that though tapping sounds proceeded from different parts of the table, but principally from that in front of the medium, yet when she went into the hall to receive a message, they still continued to come from that part of the table. The alphabet being repeated in accordance with the signal, "Queer Pals" was spelt out. These words seemed to amuse and puzzle the meeting; however, it was suggested they might apply to the Christy Minstrels, whose nigger melodies, at St. George's Hall, were very clearly heard through the open window of the back room. At this suggestion the table gave three considerable tilts. "I must ask for your patience for a short time" was next spelt out; and subsequently another sentence was commenced, but the raps occurring without regard to the letters called over, it was not complete. Tilting, lateral, and vibratory movements of the table occurred at frequent intervals, one or three tilts being generally given when a question was put.

The manifestations becoming weak, a dark seance was decided on, and the gas turned out. Then, after a few minutes, loud knocking, scratching, and other sounds proceeded from different parts of the table, and were often accompanied by violent movements of the table itself. Sometimes it rose at one end about six inches, and dropped suddenly, making much noise. Sometimes, however, the fall was very gradual. It also moved from side to side, with the legs at one end raised above the floor, and the part so raised felt to the hands as if floating in the air. Some cups and saucers on the tea-tray in the centre of the table rattled frequently as if they were being overturned and struck against one another, while the table itself was perfectly motionless. During the whole of these phenomena all the persons in the room sat round the table, the hands of each one resting on it and in contact with that of his neighbour on either side.

**EXPERIMENT XX.—June 17th.** Seven members present. Conditions as before. The following phenomena occurred.

1. Sounds on the table of many different tones, from delicate taps to loud distinct raps, and appearing to come from all parts of the table, especially from the end farthest from the medium.
2. Raps of various degrees of loudness were also heard on the floor, walls, and chairs, and they were frequently given at the part requested by the members. On four loud raps being asked for as a test, they were at once given, appearing to come from the part of the table opposite to the medium and far beyond her reach.
3. *Paper Experiment.* The medium held a sheet of note-paper at arm's length over the table by one of its corners, and at request faint but distinct taps were heard upon it. The other corners of the paper were then held by members of the Committee, and the sounds were again heard by all at the table; while those who held the paper felt the impact of the invisible blows. One or more questions were answered in this way by three clear and distinctly audible taps, which had a sound similar in character to that produced by dropping water. This new and curious phenomenon occurred close under the eyes of all present, without any physical cause for it being detected.
4. Rapping sounds beat time to a song, and imitated the laughter of one of the members.
5. Paper and pencil were placed under the table with a request that it should be written on; but shortly afterwards the following message was spelt out by raps in the usual way: "We are not able to write."
6. A member having previously written some name on a paper, requested that it should be spelt by raps. On going over the alphabet the word "Emily" was formed, and the sounds then ceased. "Is that all?" was asked. "No," (by one rap). "Am I to go on?" "No." The member then stated that he had written two names, of which the first was "Emily." The second was repeatedly refused to be given. He then proposed to try another test, and privately wrote on a slip of paper, which he folded and held in his hand unseen by the medium or any person present. The answer given was, "Sister-in-law." He now showed the question to the party; it was: "What is the second name of the Prince of Wales's eldest son?" It was now proposed to discontinue the questions, which seemed to have failed, when the questioner asked: "Is there any connection between your answer and my questions?" The reply came, "Yes." "Will you explain that connection?" "Yes." The member then repeated the alphabet again, and the following sentence was spelt: "You tell who Emily is." (It is to be particularly noticed that while these words were being given, the medium was conversing with another lady; and the member declares he had no knowledge of what the sentence was which was being spelt). The questioner at first declined to do as requested; declaring that the spirits ought to tell the name he had written down; but on being urged by

the members of the Committee, he stated that the lady named "Emily W—," whose name he had first written down, was his "sister-in-law."

It may be noticed that the raps by which these communications were spelt seemed chiefly to come from various parts of the floor of the room, and when any indistinctness caused a question as to the correctness of any letter, the confirmation was frequently given by very loud raps on the table.

**EXPERIMENT XXI.—June 21st.** Seven members present. Place and conditions as before. It was stated that the medium could remain but a short time. Immediately loud tapping sounds issued from the table opposite to the place where she was sitting. Rapping sounds of different tone and intensity were incessant during her presence, and continued for some time after she had gone from the room, coming from the table and various parts of the floor and walls. The paper-tapping experiment was again tried with the same result as before. A small harmonicon was held by the medium, and it was asked to be played upon. A number of faint tapping sounds were made on the wooden frame, but no music was produced. A small round table was placed on the floor inside a cylinder purposely constructed so as to preclude the possibility of contact of the feet or legs with any part of it. The table thus protected gave out repeated raps in reply to questions, one hand only being placed upon its surface.

Raps, in conjunction with vertical and slight lateral movements of the large dining-table, beat accurate time to an air played by a musical box. The dining-table moved along the floor several inches, three times, without contact by any person present. *Movement of harmonicon without contact.* On the medium and two other members holding their hands above the harmonicon without in any way touching it, it moved almost entirely round by successive jerks on the table on which it was placed. The dining-table was strongly moved a distance of six feet, the hands of the members present resting lightly on it.

The medium left at 9. The phenomena for a time ceased; but in about 15 minutes after her departure very distinct rappings were heard upon the floor, door, and table. Their character was more that of knocking than tapping. Five raps were asked for and given. Questions were then put and the alphabet called over, but they failed to elicit any intelligent communication by the ordinary signals.

**EXPERIMENT XXII.—June 28th.** Six members present. Time of sitting, 8 to 9.30 p.m. Conditions as before. *Phenomena:* As soon as the circle was formed, the rapping sounds came from the table, close to the member who sat at the end opposite to the medium, and distant from her twelve feet; and, with occasional slight vertical movements of the table, kept time to the airs of the musical box. "Will you disclose your name?" was asked, and the word, "Elizabeth" was spelt; but nobody present had an acquaintance with that name. It was then asked, "What is the best means of producing the phenomena?" The answer spelt was, "Make a circle." This was accordingly done, all present holding hands and resting them on the table, which then gave sundry movements, chiefly lateral, and once rather suddenly shifted its position some five or six feet. All present then turned the backs of their chairs towards the turned table, and distant from it about ten or twelve inches, holding the hand of his neighbour on either side. All

hands were then extended towards the table, but not nearer to it than about twelve inches; so that there was no possibility of its being touched by any person present. The table, a heavy dining-table, then rolled forward and backward slowly along the floor, with a sort of laboured movement or effort, four times; the distance varying from three to six inches. This experiment was subsequently repeated with similar results. A dark seance was held for about ten minutes, the usual conditions being observed, but the phenomena were very trifling.

**EXPERIMENT XXIII.—July 5th.** Five members present. Conditions as usual. The ordinary tapping sounds from the table occurred, but no phenomena worth reporting; and the raps did not continue beyond the first half-hour, when they ceased suddenly and did not return.

**EXPERIMENT XXIV.—July 12th.** Seven members present. Miss —, a young lady, was introduced as a trance medium. After sitting for a short time, her eyes closed, and she spoke and replied to questions as one would in assuming different characters. There were four of these personifications, but nothing transpired which in the opinion of the Committee afforded evidence worth recording.

**EXPERIMENT XXV.—July 19th.** Seven members present. Conditions as before. *Phenomena:* A few creaking and tapping sounds unaccompanied by any intelligible communication.

It was resolved to adjourn the meetings for vacation.

**EXPERIMENT XXVI.—Sept. 27th.** Five members present. Conditions as before. The medium present was Mr. Morse. No rapping or motions produced. Mr. Morse fell into a trance, delivered an address, and answered some questions in writing, but they were not test questions and nothing satisfactory was elicited.

**EXPERIMENT XXVII.—October 4th.** Four members present. Conditions as usual. A few minutes after sitting, taps were heard proceeding from the table, and the musical box being played, they kept time to its music. On the alphabet being repeated, "Table is too large" was spelt out, and a flap was accordingly removed. It was then signified that the lights were to be put out. The room was then darkened and all present joined hands. After a few minutes there was a sound of something falling upon the table; and on re-lighting, it was found that a teaspoon had been thrown a distance of fourteen inches from a saucer, which had been left with a few tea-things on the middle of the table. During the seance the tapping sounds from the table, and others from the floor, were very distinct; and there were also lateral movements of the table in various directions, but not without the ordinary contact of the hands.

**EXPERIMENT XXVIII.—October 11th.** Seven members present. Conditions as before. The usual rappings were produced. The table was moved seven or eight times. A book, in the pocket of one of the members, having been audibly rapped upon while in his pocket, he was requested to lay it on the table. Having done so, there were several distinct rappings on the cover. The book was then suspended upon ivory paper-knives held by two of the members. In this position there were repeated and very distinct rappings upon the covers of the book. No other phenomena occurred requiring note.

Communication rapped out: "Next Monday I will ring the bell in the canvas."



**EXPERIMENT XXIX.**—October 18th. Eight members present. Conditions as before. No sounds or movements of the table occurred during the first hour of sitting. After tea, very loud and distinct knocking, rapping, and scraping sounds proceeded from all parts of the table, and from the floor. They beat time to music, and intelligent communications were made in the usual manner. The following were spelt out: 1. "Coming if we can." 2. "Mrs. —" (the medium) "is too sensitive for us at present."

A cylinder of canvas, three feet in height and about two feet in diameter, was placed under a small table, the legs of which were contained within it; inside the cylinder was a bell, resting on the floor. No sounds proceeded from the bell, but there were repeated rappings upon and jerking of the table. This cylinder precluded the possibility of contact with the table by a foot of any of the persons present, during the entire continuance of the knockings and jerkings of the table.

**EXPERIMENT XXX.**—Oct. 25th. Five members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Knocking, snapping, and rapping sounds from the back room, floor, and table; and one member stated that he felt repeated tappings on his knee. There was the usual accompaniment of these sounds to songs, and some intelligent communications were given in the usual manner. The bell was placed within the cylinder of canvas, under the table, as described in the last experiment, but it was not sounded. It was asked that "Cheer, boys, cheer," might be rapped on the table. The measure of that air was instantly and loudly rapped upon it, the time being kept very exactly.

**EXPERIMENT XXXI.**—Nov. 1st. Five members present. Conditions as usual. No phenomena whatever occurred, during a sitting of an hour and a half.

**EXPERIMENT XXXII.**—Nov. 8th. Six members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Raps, and slight tilting of one side of the table. Affirmative raps during a story related by one of the members.

**EXPERIMENT XXXIII.**—Nov. 15th. At the residence of another of the members. Seven members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Knocking and rapping sounds, and slight movements of the table. The sounds generally proceeded from the table and floor; but in one instance, one loud knock came from the door, on a remark being made in reference to a member present. The following words were formed in the usual manner: "Nux Vomica, beware of." It was then asked to whom this applied, and the lady whose name was given stated that she was taking homœopathic medicine, which probably contained that drug. It was then asked what treatment she required, and the reply rapped out was, "Heat." "Does she require anything else?" was asked. "Nothing" was spelt out. Raps were made upon the table, in perfect time to songs sung.

**1st Experiment.**—All sat away from the table, forming a circle round it and holding hands. The sounds, although less distinct, continued to come from it, keeping time with a song.

**2nd Experiment.**—The medium placed each hand in that of her neighbour on either side, whilst her feet rested on the hands of a third member. The sounds, however, continued to proceed from the table and floor as before.

**EXPERIMENT XXXIV.**—Nov. 22nd. At the same house as last week. Six members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds from table and floor. A song was sung, to which the raps kept time. The presence of one of the circle seemed to affect the phenomena, for the sounds, which before her entry were very distinct, became very feeble; and immediately on her quitting the circle, they again become clear and distinct. No cause could be traced for this effect, except that the lady in question was not in good health.

**EXPERIMENT XXXV.**—Dec. 7th. At the same house as the last experiment. Five members present. Conditions as usual. The table was a large and heavy dining-table, twelve feet long by five feet wide, and not on castors. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds of various characters from table and floor, and movements of the table.

Communication by raps: "Have Tuesday for meeting." Some one present asked "Why?" "It was the original day; you will have better manifestations; get all the old members, if possible."

It may be observed, that there had been some conversation at the beginning of the evening, on changing the day for meeting; but all present who could have known affirmed that they had forgotten that Tuesday had been the original day, until reminded of the fact by the communication. The rapping sounds kept time to songs.

*Movements of the table.*—At first these were slight, and in a lateral direction. They then increased in force, with a slight vertical movement at one end, the tips of the fingers only being in contact with the table. All hands were then held within a few inches of the table, no one touching it, and all standing up; and it then gave three horizontal movements in different directions; each movement being from three to four inches, and occurring at intervals of about one minute.

A visitor, who stated that he was a stranger to these phenomena, sat under the table for a considerable time during the production of the sounds, and said that he distinctly felt vibration of the wood with which he placed his hand or head in contact when the taps were heard. After tea the gas was turned out, but the fire in the grate prevented total darkness. Nothing then took place for about a quarter of an hour. Then the table frequently and violently shifted its position, moving along the floor in different directions, the movements varying from one to three feet. During the greater part of these phenomena, the members stood up, with the tips of their fingers only in contact with the table.

**EXPERIMENT XXXVI.**—Dec. 14th. At the same house, with the same table as last week. Six members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Raps of varied tone and intensity from different parts of the table. In one instance, where a question was put, three sounds followed, resembling blows on the table with the clenched hand. The raps at times proceeded from different parts of the room. Rapping sounds kept time to songs and to music on the piano.

*Sounds from table without contact.*—All sat away from the table, without in any manner touching it, and the sounds, although somewhat fainter, continued to proceed from it. Some of the questions that were asked were followed by the usual affirmative or negative signals, and the following communication was also given, through the hand of a lady present: "Wait a little, you may have something." Soon after there were horizontal movements of the table in different directions, all hands resting

on it. Also two or three slight movements, from half an inch to an inch, without contact, every person kneeling on a chair, the back of which was placed about six inches from and turned towards the table, and all hands being held a few inches above it—three gas-lights above, so that the slightest movement was visible. Peculiar vibratory movements of the table followed, keeping time to the measure of a song.

*Experiment:*—A glass tumbler, with two finger-rings near it, and a pencil with a sheet of paper, which was carefully examined, and found perfectly free from any mark, were placed on the floor under the table, in view of the circle, who carefully watched the proceeding. Some time after the paper was taken up, and found to have a mark resembling the letter I, distinctly pencilled on it. The glass and rings were found as they were placed.

**EXPERIMENT XXXVII.**—Dec. 22nd. Three members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Sounds, and slight movements of the table. Rapping sounds commenced a few minutes after sitting. Several questions were put and followed by the usual negative and affirmative signals, but no communication by the alphabet was given. At the question, "Do you know Mrs. Sims?" the table vibrated and trembled in a remarkable manner, and gave out a shower of rapping sounds. It also jerked or jumped considerably, when "Can you ring the bell?" was asked. The sounds varied a good deal in tone and character. Some were remarkably loud, and came from every quarter of the table. They beat time to the airs of the musical box, and accompanied the conversation at tea-time.

*Experiment:*—A bell was suspended in a closed hat-box, placed on the table; it was not, however, sounded. Also a sheet of paper, with pencil, was placed under the table, but this experiment likewise failed.

**EXPERIMENT XXXVIII.**—Dec. 28th. Eight members present. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds from the table and floor, and movements of the table, with and without contact. The alphabet was repeated, and the following letters were rapped: "A bad circle—want of harmony." At the letter "f" the table tilted three times, and at the letters "a, r," gave several forcible horizontal movements, tilting at either end.

Raps, with slight tilting of the table, beating time to the measure of a song. Two or three poems were recited, to the measure of which there were loud raps from the table and floor, and the table also marked the metre by various horizontal movements and tiltings.

Hood's Anatomy Song being repeated by one of the members, the knocking, rapping and tilting sounds, with various horizontal, trembling and vibratory movements of the table accompanied it, in exact harmony with the measure, added to which were strange movements, in accordance with the character of the verses. In one instance the table shifted its position several feet, the tips of the fingers only being in contact with it.

*Movements without contact.*—Question: "Would the table now be moved without contact?" Answer: "Yes," by three raps on the table.

All chairs were then turned with their backs to the table, and nine inches away from it; and all present knelt on the chairs, with their wrists resting on the backs, and their hands a few inches above the table.

Under these conditions, the table (the heavy dining-room table previously described) moved four times, each time from four to six inches, and the second time nearly twelve inches.

Then all hands were placed on the backs of the chairs, and nearly a foot from the table, when four movements occurred, one slow and continuous, for nearly a minute.

Then all present placed their hands behind their backs, kneeling erect on their chairs, which were removed a foot clear away from the table; the gas also was turned up higher, so as to give abundance of light, and under these test conditions, distinct movements occurred, to the extent of several inches each time, and visible to every one present.

The motions were in various directions, towards all parts of the room—some were abrupt, others steady. At the same time, and under the same conditions, distinct raps occurred, apparently both on the floor and on the table, in answer to requests for them.

The above-described movements were so unmistakable, that all present unhesitatingly declared their conviction that no physical force exerted by anyone present could possibly have produced them; and they declared further, in writing, that a rigid examination of the table showed it to be an ordinary dining-table, with no machinery or apparatus of any kind connected with it. The table was laid on the floor with its legs up, and taken to pieces as far as practicable.

**EXPERIMENT XXXIX.**—January 4th, 1870. Seven members present. Conditions as usual. Nothing occurred during the seance, except a few rapping sounds from the table. Various experiments were tried, all of which failed.

**EXPERIMENT XL.**—January 11th. Six members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds and slight movements of the table.

The medium left about twenty minutes before the termination of the sitting; but the raps continued to come from the table as before, and gave affirmative and negative signals to questions.

Some experiments were tried, including the movement of the table without contact, but they were not attended with success.

#### SUB-COMMITTEE No. 3.

**EXPERIMENT I.**—Feb. 26th, 1869. This section of the Committee arranged a series of meetings at the house of one of its members, and met for the first time this evening. Six members present. After some preliminary conversation, and the reading of extracts from books on the subject, those present sat in circle at a large loo-table for more than an hour without any apparent results.

**EXPERIMENT II.**—March 5th. Six members present. The members present sat in circle, but without any visible movement of the table.

At 9.30, when the Rev. Mr. D— arrived, and had sat about four or five minutes, there occurred some gentle tapping on and swaying of the table. These were continued, with occasional cessation, for about 45 minutes; during which time some negatives and affirmatives were given in answer to a variety of questions. Frequently the replies were confused, and as if given with difficulty or reluctance.

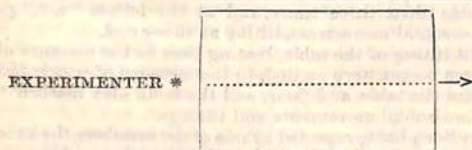
P.S.—The table used on this occasion was an oblong oak hall-table, on four legs, without castors. Weight between 50 and 60 lbs. Size of top, 3 ft. 10 in. by 2 ft.



**EXPERIMENT III.—March 12th.** Five members present. All present sat down to the table about 7.45, and continued until about 9.15; but no unusual sound or movement could be recognised during the whole sitting, or any part of it. No medium was present.

**EXPERIMENT IV.—April 1st.** Four members present. No medium present. Nearly three quarters of an hour elapsed without any other than "slight manifestations;" but on two members leaving their seats at the table, it began to move—slowly revolving on a centre; it tilted once or twice on two legs in the direction of its width, and then moved quickly in the direction of the carpet, which opposed its further progress for a time. It ultimately overcame this difficulty, and proceeded at a rapid rate across the room—moving first in one direction, and then, after a short interval, in the opposite. The motion was usually smooth and uniform, though on two or three occasions, the noise made by the table on the board floor, seemed indicative of pressure. Several of those experimenting now left the table, and it then moved slowly, with three persons—two ladies and a gentleman—touching it apparently with the tips of their fingers. After a pause, it moved again in various directions, with four persons touching it. Its movements afterwards may be summarised as follows:—

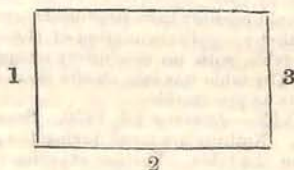
Three tilts and knocks on floor, with two legs. Two others—another tilt—four persons resting the tips of their fingers on the table. Tilt movement, and tilt again. Rapid movement of table half across the room, back again in a circular direction. Reverse movement and two violent tilts. The hands as before, apparently resting lightly on the table. Circular motion to the right and then to the left, several times round. Semicircular movement and violent tilt. Backward movement across the room, driving the reporter, Mr. Gannon, out of his chair. Three persons only at the table. Slight movements again with two persons, and motion as indicated in the diagram was produced by one person.



At the suggestion of several of the Committee, the lights were lowered, and a succession of tilts and knocks followed. Mr. B— now left the table, which immediately tilted five or six times, and on Mr. H—, who was not at the table, calling over the alphabet the following words were rapped out: "Not so many to sit." Several other manifestations followed, but the room being but dimly lighted it was difficult to observe so accurately. The movements appeared to be a repetition of those already recorded. After the seance the table was examined, and it was found that one gentleman of medium strength could slide it along the floor and tilt it from the side only without difficulty. With several others resting their hands upon it one operator could move it—though not easily—and tilt it in one direction by the exertion of considerable force. The examination proved that a certain rubbing, rattling sound which was in the sliding movements, supposed to indicate pressure by the persons round the table, was really due to the large amount of weight being raised, and the table partly relieved of its own gravity, whilst performing the movements. All hands were on the top surface of the table, and, of course, any force they may have exerted must have been downwards.

The table is of carved oak, of strong make. The top is 3 feet 9½ inches by 2 feet wide, and projects 1½ inches over the frame-work in which the legs are fixed. There are strong bracing cross-bars near the lower end of the legs which are without castors.

In reference to the darkened part of the seance, a member of the Sub-committee says: "During the time the lights were at the lowest I was seated close to the table, three persons having their hands resting on it, their positions being as follows:—



The fourth side being vacant. I noticed that the table invariably tilted towards 2; at times with so much force, that I was unable in the position in which I sat to prevent it rising, though I succeeded in modifying the vigour of the tilts. On one occasion the table tilted so much that it over-balanced itself, and would probably have fallen to the ground had it not been upheld by those round it."

Some of the tilts were given with great force and sharpness, as though when raised to the full height it desired, a powerful spring were released, snapping the two legs down on the floor, so that the noise could be heard all over and outside the house.

**EXPERIMENT V.—April 8th.** Five members present. At about 8.30 all present sat down to a large loo-table, which, in a few minutes, began to sway and tilt in a very lively manner, and it continued these movements from 12 to 15 minutes, when it began to take rotatory movements, which were rapidly accelerated, and the speed became so great that the experimenters dropped off one after another from fatigue and the impossibility of running fast enough and long enough to preserve his or her position. The table took long circular sweeps round the room and at the same time rotated on its base. The room is 22 feet wide and about 28 feet long. It has a smooth floor with Persian carpets here and there, which were put away from the middle of the floor to prevent obstruction.

The table afterwards tilted twice, so that it stood with its rim on the floor. The pillar, with its heavy foot base, standing of course at right angles, and all quite clear of the floor.

Some of the company became alarmed at these violent proceedings, and for a moment left the table; but being for the most part persuaded to keep or resume their places, the table let itself down again gently enough.

The operations lasted more than an hour, and consisted of such movements as described, with the occasional rapping out of some unimportant sentences, which were not invariably courteous or complimentary to all present.

Regret was felt that so few of the members of the Sub-committee were present this evening.

**EXPERIMENT VI.—May 13th.** Five members present. A paid medium. The company sat about forty-five minutes with but slight indications of force. Then some sentences were spelt out by rapping, and writing through the medium's hand, and then the medium appeared to suffer a series of spasmodic jerkings, during which he spoke of himself in the third person, and answered to a variety of questions put by some of the Committee.

Nothing took place on this occasion to warrant any decided opinion as to the nature of these occurrences, other than that no test or satisfactory evidence was given that any external foreign intelligence had been acting through the medium.

The sitting continued about two hours. At times the table swayed about a foot from one side to the other. It was the same loo-table.

#### RULES FOR INVESTIGATING CIRCLES.

Careful readers of the *Dialectical Researches into Spiritualism* will have already ascertained the usual manner of conducting experiments. But for the sake of convenience we append a brief isolated statement of regulations useful to observe at seances by investigators.

1. An investigating circle should number not less than three or more than nine healthy persons; should consist of both sexes; and should be comprised of those who feel at ease or "at home" in each other's company.

2. Such persons should be mutually pledged to honourable investigation; to attend the appointed sittings with punctuality; and to meet, if possible, periodically; once a week, for two or three months, would be a fair trial.

3. The circle should assemble on each occasion half-an-hour before commencing to sit; and the seances should be held in a room of comfortable temperature, moderately lighted, and with doors fastened against interruption. The same room should be used for the series if possible. All the members on seance occasions, should be in a rested and placid state of body and mind.

4. The members should seat themselves around a bare table (one just large enough to accommodate the circle without crowding) and should place their hands, palms downward, thereon,—each sitter touching his or her neighbour's fingers, or not, as may be agreed upon. It is usual to alternate the sexes at the table; and it is desirable to appoint some one of the party as president, or chairman, for the sitting.

5. Any really strong impressions, on the part of a member, as to the arrangement of the sitters at the table should be obeyed; for such impressions are frequently indications of the "mediumistic" temperament.

6. Conversation—non-controversial in character—varied or not, at pleasure, by a little singing or reading, is calculated to produce the harmonious feeling generally admitted as a most favourable condition for manifestations. A musical-box, of soft tone, is a useful seance adjunct.

7. Among the various phenomena occurring at seances, "rappings, tickings, and table-tiltings," are usually the earliest in a newly-formed circle. When such occur, let the members first satisfy themselves that they are not due to some accidental cause. This ascertained, let the president (or some other member agreed upon) audibly and deliberately state that three raps or tiltings shall signify "yes," two "doubtful," and one rap or tilting "no." Five raps or tiltings are usually arranged as a signal for reciting the alphabet.

8. When through the above means (or any other simply-arranged code of signals) indications of intelligence are displayed by the phenomena, then should some one inquire whether the conditions are satisfactory, and whether any alteration is required in the order of sitting at the table, with a view to making such changes immediately. Such preliminary questions should always be put in a form requiring only "yes," "no," or "doubtful" for answers.

9. If the alphabet be signalled for, then it should be deliberately recited, by someone agreed upon, and every letter at which three raps occur should be taken down. In this way messages may come to the circle, paving the way for further communications and conversation.

10. All impatience, confusion, or hurry, should be avoided in such questioning, and at first no attempts should be made by any member to anticipate the words or the nature of the answers.

11. Should indications of trance, clairvoyant, or writing mediumship be manifested by any member, let the sitters remain composed. A member entranced will appear to fall into a deep sleep, and probably will breathe heavily. He or she should not be interfered with during the seance, for most manifestations occur more powerfully during the trance state. Sometimes communications as to conditions, and on other subjects, are uttered by mediums when entranced. In such case they may be questioned, but always quietly and without excitement. At the close of the seance, if the medium does not awaken from the trance, a few UPWARD PASSES of the hand over the medium's breast and head will restore him or her to consciousness. Such passes should preferably be made by a friend. Automatic movements or numbness of the right arm commonly indicate "writing mediumship." Let members so affected be provided with a large sheet of paper and a pencil. Clairvoyants should be encouraged to tell their visions voluntarily to the sitters, but should not be plied too eagerly, nor for too long a time, with questions.

12. After a sitting all mediums should take a little exercise in the fresh air, or in a room with all the windows open; and should partake moderately of plain food, as precautions against any weariness of feeling.

13. If after three or four sittings no manifestations occur—a lack of suitable conditions is indicated. Such non-success may often be obviated by the retirement of two or three members and the introduction of new ones into their places. Or if the circle be a small one—then its enlargement by the addition of a friend or two will commonly have the desired result.



14. When a new circle, by its own experiences, is thoroughly convinced of the verity of the phenomena termed spiritual, the members will then feel themselves at liberty to call for the advice of any Spiritualist in whose honour and judgment they can rely—as a means to further investigation.

*Take Notice.*

15. That no one should sit immediately after a full meal; when in ill-health, or when in a fatigued or drowsy condition. Confirmed invalids should not sit at all.

16. That attempts to simulate the phenomena should be rigorously prohibited. Investigators should refuse to sit with any person guilty of such dishonesty or indiscretion; or with anyone prone to practical joking.

17. That in newly formed circles, sittings should not take place oftener than once in six or seven days. On the other hand long intervals should be avoided. Successful sittings, as a rule, should not occupy more than two hours; and unsuccessful sittings should be closed in an hour.

18. That boisterous or disagreeable manifestations may be discouraged by firmness on the part of the sitters; and if by no other means, then by breaking up the sitting for a time—recommencing with a determination always, not to tolerate annoying phenomena.

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