

THE

SPIRITUAL TIMES

A WEEKLY ORGAN DEVOTED TO THE FACTS, PHILOSOPHY, AND PRACTICAL USES OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

WE HOLD THAT GOD IS OUR FATHER, MAN OUR BROTHER, IMMORTALITY OUR DESTINY.

Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

"The life that now is shapes the life that is to be."

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Spiritualism unfolds to our internal senses substantial realities, presenting us not only with the semblances, but the positive evidences of eternal existence, causing us to feel that the passing shadows we speak of belong not to the spiritual, but the material world. It is easy to imagine that we are dealing with the absolute and enduring, because we associate our thoughts with the external and apparently lasting; but, on reflection, we discover that the only absolute and enduring facts are beyond the tomb.

MR. SOTHERN IN A NEW CHARACTER.

"We hear," says the *Glowworm*, that Mr. Sothern, Mr. Toole, and Mr. Andrew Halliday (of the popular firm of Brough and Halliday, farce writers), have been among the mediums, beating the Spiritualists with their own weapons," or rather, say we, proving themselves counterfeits with very brazen faces. They have paid the Wallaces a visit, and tried their hand at humbugging, and what is the result? Why, they went in to cheat, and came out cheats, and the *Glowworm* sheds a faint lustre, which we suppose is contagious, over their conduct. Dundreary and his friends Toole and Halliday, "Beating the Spiritualists with their own weapons!" This means, if it means anything, that Dundreary and the others tricked, and Spiritualists are all tricksters. It will require, we opine, a much stronger light than the *Glowworm* can diffuse to make the latter part of this explanation clear. Messrs. Sothern and Toole are doubtless at home on the boards, and could make a decided hit by introducing some clever burlesques on mediums. All this kind of thing we should be ready to admit belonged to the legitimate farce; but entering Mr. Wallace's house and cheating, is quite as reprehensible as it would be for a man to enter a pulpit and, with mock solemnity do pastoral duties. We understand Mr. Sothern pretended to be entranced, and cleverly imitated Mr. Wallace, heightening the effect by frothing at the mouth. Perhaps he was "possessed." Such things have been, that men have gone to scoff and come away to pray; but from the light of the *Glowworm* we are led to see Dundreary "assuming a virtue" he did not possess. Taking it for granted, he was doing a bit of acting (we suppose he would rather be considered counterfeit than genuine), we ask what have he and his friends gained, or Spiritualism lost, by their ridiculous tom-foolery? A counterfeit bank note, although a marvellous imitation, rather proves the existence of genuine bank notes than otherwise. Dundreary's burlesque of Mr. Wallace by no means proved the medium a burlesquer. If a man closes his eyes and moves his lips, as if in prayer, knowing himself, at the time, to be simply mocking the observance, does that prove no person ever prayed sincerely? If a man personates another so successfully as to bring the original present to the mind's eye, does that prove the original never existed? Yet, this is practically the logic of the *Glowworm* in assuming that Mr. Sothern and his party have "beaten the Spiritualists with their own weapons." We do not think even Mr. Sothern can be so far lost to reason as to endorse the *Glowworm's* ignorant statement. We have a thorough respect for honest scepticism, and can understand and appreciate most of its difficulties in regard to Spiritual

ism; but we heartily abominate buffoonery of all kinds applied to subjects directly associated with the soul's destiny. If Dundreary and his associates had possessed a spark of reverence for the, to them, hidden truth, and they must allow that there is hidden truth in life, or believe themselves perfect in knowledge, they would have gone to the Wallaces in a spirit of inquiry, and have satisfied themselves by burlesquing only, that which they might ascertain to be spurious. The result, we are satisfied, would have been different. As it was they went to act, and came away actors. They went wondrously wise in their own conceit, and came away none the wiser. They went to cheat, and came away cheats. Who then are beaten, the actors or the Spiritualists? Certainly, not the latter. No amount of buffoonery can make the truth a lie, or do other than react on the buffoon. Mr. Wallace is not one whit the less a medium, because of the buffoonery of Dundreary. Can we say Dundreary is not one whit the less a true man?

Suppose Mr. Wallace had been proved to be a Dundreary, which was not the case, would that even have justified the *Glowworm* in saying "The Spiritualists were beaten with their own weapons?" But what can be expected from an insignificant *Glowworm*! Spiritualism depends on no individual medium for its exponent, and it fears not a universe of buffoons. Dundreary may go on repeating visits to mediums, and in every instance re-enact the absurd farce which he produced at Holloway; still Spiritualism will move mankind Heavenwards as though Dundreary never existed. We offer no apologies for mediums, good, bad, or indifferent; they, one and all, must recognise and hold by their own—no man can bear their responsibilities for them. If they are true to themselves they will be so to others—if false to themselves they will be so to others, and the consequences will be felt; but ten thousand false mediums cannot disprove the reality of one true medium any more than Mr. Sothern's buffoonery could prove Mr. Wallace, like himself, a trickster.

We are not so sure that even Dundreary may have been made use of as a tool in the presence of Toole, although not in reality entranced by the spirit-world. If he has not discovered, in the manifestations he witnessed at the Wallaces', proof of spirit-power, he has, at least, made himself, or allowed himself to be made, a laughing-stock for all sober-minded men. He thought to catch a Tartar and caught nothing because of his consummate buffoonery. When Mr. Sothern shall learn to respect himself he may investigate Spiritualism and gain some evidences which will teach him humility. Such brazen-faced effrontery as his conduct at Holloway, which passes current for good conduct—coin with the *Glowworm*, would certainly have excluded him from any of the drawing-rooms of the *elite*; if not, why had he not chosen some medium in the higher walks instead of a lowly man like Mr. Wallace to play off his ungentlemanly and dishonest jokes upon? As it is, he has added the coward to the buffoon, making for himself a novel character, more natural to him perhaps than his celebrated Dundreary. For our part, we have no objection to men playing the buffoon providing they recognise the common courtesies of life.

When they fail to do this, they deserve the condemnation of all who value the simplest rules of etiquette. Mr. Sothern and his friends went to Mr. Wallace, deeming him untruthful as themselves, and from a preconceived prejudice against Spiritualists, deemed them entitled to nothing like gentlemanly bearing or honest treatment. If so, it is the practical solution to prejudice, which, carried out generally, would destroy all social regulations, and turn every Englishman's house into Pandemonium. If Mr. Wallace had been the grossest humbug in existence, we assert Mr. Sothern's conduct would redound only to his own discredit. Had he acted the part of a gentleman, and shown a spirit of honest enquiry, he would have been in a much better position to detect trickery, had there been any on the part of the medium, than by assuming the trickery and himself tricking. The *Glowworm's* petty brilliancy has not in the faintest degree given us a less firm faith in Spiritualism, or a conviction that Mr. Sothern has affected it in the slightest possible degree. Mr. Sothern and the *Glowworm* may know that Spiritualists are increasing all over the world; that a cheat practised by a trickster on an honest man cannot possibly make that man dishonest; on the contrary, it is calculated to stimulate to the recognition of his honesty. Spiritualism cares for no man's patronage and fears no man's buffoonery. Mr. Sothern might as well attempt to excite ridicule of the sun as to attempt the impossible task of injuring Spiritualism. When he can do that he may close for ever the pages of the Bible, extinguish the lights of literature and science, bury all monuments of patriots, poets, and heroes that are legaced from age to age. If Mr. Sothern disposed himself to mimic the braying of a donkey without believing himself one he would not, we should think, believe his mimicry proved the non-existence of the donkey, whose sonorous voice brought his imitative faculties into play; neither can he consistently believe that his buffoonery at Holloway proved the Wallaces humbugs, or Spiritualism a delusion. Of course, the learned wonders of the stage, and the *sarans* of society, have congratulated Mr. Sothern on his triumph at the little game of deception he and his associates played together, and we doubt not he considers himself a hero. If he can feel self-congratulated after such conduct, all we can say is, that his virtues are lost in his vanity, and there is little hope for him. It is no wonder that so many go to *séances* and come away disappointed when persons like Mr. Sothern present themselves and attempt to hoax the whole circles! They cannot hoax the spirits, because their vain prejudiced minds are open, like a book, to them. Mr. Sothern may try a thousand times to conceal his real intentions from the invisibles—we feel disposed to assert, if he do, he will always be tricked by them, and never once succeed in tricking them. His late attempt at Holloway has been to his own soul a sorry failure. When he can sit at a *séance* and be sufficiently humble to be honest, other experiences may come to him. As a buffoon he is rewarded with the effects of buffoonery; if it were otherwise as regards spiritual experiences, we could not be said to reap as we sow.

It will cause our readers little surprise to learn that Mr. Addison, whose conjuring exploits were lately said to be spiritual, was the prime mover in the whole affair. The *Glowworm* only gives three, but there were eight persons present.

THE HARMONY OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM WITH DIVINE REVELATION.

A DISCOURSE BY J. B. FERGUSON.

(Concluded from page 195.)

The idea that unclean and wicked spirits alone communicate, robs the sainted dead of their rights, only to swell the hearts of all who honestly entertain it with the sad relittings of fear that now weep o'er the evidences of its perversity. It makes the mother that bore you, and the father that perilled his life for your good, as some mighty Gorgon, or hundred-eyed Argus, to watch your frailties, and the frailties of your kind, that your hopes may be lost and your ruin irratrivable! It sunders the nearest and dearest ties that bind you to your kind, and leaves you as a blot upon the page of a fair and glorious creation, to desecrate the paternity of God with the malice of fabled fiends.

Indeed, you may speak of fabled gorgons, hydras, devils, and malicious pythons, but neither nature nor the chronicled imagery of ages can furnish an emblem that can even faintly portray the ignorance and superstition of such a thought. Look at it upon the acknowledged and repeated premises of the religious creeds around you. Christ received spiritual communication from the transformed Moses and Elias—were He and they wicked and unclean spirits?

I have made you, in this discourse, numerous references to communications, &c., from angels, found as the most interesting portions of a Book you regard as infallible—are they from wicked or unclean spirits? Do you not see that this objection to Spiritualism would make every prophet, apostle, and even Christ himself, colleagues of wicked and unclean spirits, for the deception of the world? Oh, shame! To what miserable shifts are not the opponents of the God-given privilege of spirit communion driven, when its last resort is made to shelter itself in such self-refutatory and contradictory absurdities. Rest assured it is no mean proof of the Divine Providence that guards, guides, and so wonderfully carries forward this gracious movement, that neither reason, nor rational Scriptural interpretation can be arrayed against it without shocking every attainment of the intellect—every cherished achievement over the leaden pall of superstition and tyrannical systems of ages of darkness. It would make Spiritualism—the birthright of heaven to man—the bugbear to frighten cringing sycophancy, that has already too long suffered its soul to be hid in some saintly napkin. It would throw us back amidst the labyrinths of time, to be lost in the dusty path, whose illusions have already quite stilled the celestial chorus in many hearts. It would make us despise afresh, as every form of tyranny has done, the deified impress of All-wise God upon the heart of a common though varied humanity. It would elevate the fictitious drolleries of another day above the consciousness you have of your being in God, and all the blissful evidences of His unmeasured care, as seen faintly but promisingly in the triumphs of your science and art. It would dwell with rapture upon a Belshazzar's feast to renew the kindred forebodings of its own approaching fall; or find another Witch of Endor to break the repose of a sainted Samuel, to still the sorrows now felt as the Providence of God, but which too clearly indicates that the Theology of Devilism is "weighed in the balances and found wanting." Too long, already, has the monotonous roar of the thunder of eternal wrong, in a universe created in eternal and unchangeable right, mingling with the widow's tear and the orphan's cry, as they fall prostrate before a power that tells them they are accursed if they seek the comfort the hypocrisy of the preachers cannot give, in the symphony of angels making melody, in their deceived and sorrowing hearts. It would make humanity lifeless, and rob it of its only boon that elevates it above the brute.

And the men whose stipends depend upon the perpetuation of this unclean idea tell you we are *Infidels*. Infidelity! to believe in one God, Father, Friend, Guide, Life, and Glory of us all—to behold One Universal, enrobed in beauty, engirded in order, interpenetrated with the life of God, and embosomed in love. Infidelity! to hail a hope for all, and hold it up above all the machinations of mistaken friends, sometimes thought to be enemies, and wave it over the fallen, the outcast, the down-trodden. Infidelity! to acknowledge the pointing of angel-fingers to that sublime destiny that maketh the harmony, the everlasting harmony of the intelligent universe, whose sweet notes are now stealing o'er all the desolate chambers of sepulchral churches and crimsoned battle fields, to win all even the most stern and vindictive, to hope and charity. Infidelity! to cast light upon almost every page of that Bible men so blindly reverence, and make its incidents, which you felt were dark, confused, and contradictory, radiant with the light of a developing Providence. Infidelity! to deliver you from confused and contradictory ideas of God, of man, of human discipline and destiny. Infidelity! to bring man to acknowledge the law within as the impress of his God to be unfolded by angels in and out of this form, and bring him to think justly, feel purely, and hope wisely, in the day God has given to him, and with the generation in which he has his being and his responsibilities. Infidelity! to teach and illustrate what every father of the Church, every reformer of the world, the whole line of confessors, martyrs, scholars, and religious philanthropists have acknowledged, lived, and died to confirm: what every creed of any note acknowledged in its "communion of saints," and what the Bible teaches in almost every book of its hoary and solemn pages. Even now I feel that these hosts of holy men, from their sceptered thrones of purity and love, respond to my, even my feeble utterance of the faith, that God is One—His universe is endlessly related, and His every creature has his angel attendants to inspire him on, and to guide him toward his eternal destiny. They point us to the colossal spire of hope, that spans all time and encircles the clouds of death and the depths of the grave, to soothe our every sorrow, and bring us from fleshly beginnings and earthly struggles, in unison with our end; to deliver us from the horrified evidences of ignorance and superstition that have secured every reproach of mind that has sacrificed our rights as men, and made us false to the nearest

and dearest relations, both on earth and in heaven. They would have us stand free to receive our all, and remove the impediments that retard our progress to that beatitude that awaits all mortals. They breathe over us the atmosphere of love, chide us in sympathy for our misfortunes, and instil a thought that leads beyond the conflicting strife that seeks no higher elevation than the prostration of its kind. They would disabuse our mind of its false constructions and misconceptions of man's greatest privilege. They would reveal the fear to be a man as the charnel-house of the soul, whose atmosphere has desecrated even this fair land with every species of strife, for forms and foibles, that hide the light of one Eternal Parent and one glorious destiny to all the variegated children of His love.

No! I call no man Infidel, and repel the name with a determination that knows no fear and asks no favour but what a common humanity should claim. We leave every man's faith in the guardianship of his own conscience and his God. Our position fortunately cannot be mistaken. We associate together for mutual help, and not to establish an impudent espionage over freedom of thought and sentiment. We ask no man to believe in the sublime disclosures of the spirit-world; but we present them and their attendant confirmations, and leave all free to receive or reject, as they shall value their wants and hopes. If our faith be called Infidelity, we ask what is the faith of our opponents with the array of Bible facts, Church testimony, and their own confessions before the world? And while we make a common humanity the basis of sympathy and help, we would be judged by our own conduct, private and public.

You see, by unmistakable proofs, that the ministry of angels is the teaching of the Old Testament and the faith of the New; that however shrouded in superstitions concerning the Devil and his fabled dominion and power above the prohibitions of God, it has ever been the faith of all orthodox and most heterodox Churches; that the brightest lights of modern Protestant theology have asserted it in uncompromising terms.

We not only believe in their ministering, but believe that its existence and advantages are demonstrable to all who candidly seek and willingly choose the responsibilities that seeking incurs. And we hail it as the hope of humanity and the dawn of its brightest day. The suspicious and the unthinking may re-echo the cry of madness and infidelity, as they did of the Holy Nazarene; but the intelligence from the spiritual world will spread, despite and by the aid of every obstacle vainly placed in its way. It will not be arrayed against any truth, either in the laws of physics or of mind. It will not desecrate any known principle; but it will teach the world that truth is immutable, and no weapon formed against it can prosper. And as it moves forward in steady but certain strides, it will carry with it a liberality of sentiment, a freedom of soul, and a beneficence of action that will awaken a host of minds to its heavenly and harmonising teaching, and at last lead us all to a holy triumph.

But I will be told that God has prohibited spiritual intercourse, and the law of Moses against witchcraft will be appealed to for the proof. This objection betrays so much ignorance, not to say duplicity, that I confess I scarcely know how to treat it seriously. The law of Moses prohibits the use of pork, enforces the offering of blood-sacrifices, and the annihilation of enemies (Canaanites).

Do our opponents carry out its requisitions? If so, what mean the grunting hordes, that people the fair pastures of their smiling farms, and the steaming representatives which weigh down their tables? I have eaten ham at Jewish tables, while a learned Rabbi suggested that Moses knew nothing of ham, and I felt that our Israelitish brethren had more clearly seen to the end of that which was abolished, than some professed Christians. Does not every rational man see that, upon the assumption that God prohibited spirit-communication, it has existed and perpetuated its privileges despite Him, as every page of the Bible proves, and the faith of the entire religious world confirms? Truly, the veil that was upon the face of the orthodox Jews of Paul's day is not yet removed from the eyes of Christians who see not the whole Jewish ritual superseded by the spirit of Christ, and the Providential movements of the race. If God prohibited spirit intercourse, Christ set aside the prohibition, by communion with the very Moses who made the prohibitory law; and so did every prophet and apostle of both dispensations. To show you the inconsistency of this position, I would have you call to mind the lengthy discourses of divines (which you all must have heard), labouring to prove spirit intercourse of the Devil, and inhibited by the law of God, and wisely concluded that it is a sin to investigate the subject. In the name of common honesty we would ask, "Did these divines investigate before delivering their discourses?" If so, they are sinners against God upon their own premises. If they did not, upon what authority can they speak upon the subject at all? Or are they, like all other priests, allowed to do what no other man dare? Such is the hopeless dilemma into which opposition to this natural birthright of man precipitates its adverseries. And where, I would ask, are the boasted appeals of these same divines upon the change of the Covenants; the fleshy and temporary nature of the Mosaic institution, the disannulling of the law of Moses, and the nailing of its ordinances to the cross of

Jesus? Do they have to disannul their monotonous arguments upon these their common themes, to set aside the experience of the present generation? Truly, the legs of the lame are not equal.

These teachers have told their hearers that "The law and the prophets were till John;" but since the kingdom of heaven is proclaimed, that "The day of Pentecost," whose spiritual manifestations they did not understand, and now say God had prohibited by Moses, was "the bringing in of a better hope;" that even Peter had said "That neither he nor his father were able to bear the yoke of Moses;" and that Paul had declared that the Mosaic Covenant, like a moth-eaten garment, was folded up and had passed away, supplanted by the gifts of prophesy, of tongues, of healing, and of discerning of spirits, the spiritual confirmations that everywhere attended the apostolic preachings despite the prohibitory law.

Their Pentecost now is a feast of penitence for gifts they are compelled to deny or attribute to the Devil; for Devilism is the result of their boasted theology, and to him and not to God, all of spiritual life, for which they might have hoped to save their fleshy forms from utter neglect, is now ascribed. Truly, as has been said of their reformation, by the most impartial observers, "Alas! it has no God. Its adherents acknowledge no true paternity, but have shrouded and shielded their souls by innumerable strata, paved by the conventionalities of men and times, till it is absorbed in a chief communion that looks not beyond the fleshy nature of man. They would rob the sceptre of thought of the only pure gems that transmit our hope beyond the veil of superstition; but it cannot be done!"

Strange that the theology of the 19th century should end in Devilism! But it is not strange that being thus precipitated, dissension and strife should seal its hope, unless it can anew see what it is that makes the life of religion in all ages.

Then we conclude, that if God is the same, and the human mind the same, if we secure the same revelations, all that was ever true in the spiritual or angelic experience of past ages is still true, and can be realised.

But I may be told that a curse has been pronounced upon any man who will add to the words of the Bible, and Rev. 22: 18 and 19, will be quoted to prove it. How inconsiderate these references. That curse was pronounced against additions to a single Book, the Book of Revelations, and as now used, would make several books of the New Testament additions involving their authors in the curse; for the best orthodox critics will tell you the Book of Revelations was written before this book. No, 'tis not so. The language thus used would dethrone and deny the God of all revelation. What? God has revealed Himself and ceased His life of inspiration. If He ever revealed Himself He is still revealing, or He would not be the unchangeable! What He did once He does now; He ever does; and what man calls a revelation is simply his conception of God, or his own unfolding mind to recognise and realise the living, breathing, loving spirit of his Father.

Why, Christ himself, according to this Book, teaches the progressive and ceaseless nature of revelation. He says, "Of all born of women there has arisen none equal to John, and the best in my kingdom shall be greater than he." Here is recognised progress from Abel or Abraham to John, and a still further advance promised for the future. Again, "Greater works shall ye do because I go to the Father!" And again, compare the law of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, with the command "Do to all men as you would have them do to you," and you have progress in admitted laws of Divine revelation. Or compare the prayer of the author of the 109th Psalm, where God is invoked that an enemy's wife may be a widow, his children fatherless, and an usurer catch his goods, and the sin of his mother never be forgiven him, with the prayer of Jesus, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do;" and you will see not only progress in Revelation, but in the results attending. Moses and David cast away many. Jesus tells a miserable outcast he shall share a place with him in paradise. No; it is a sad mistake to deny the Revelations of God to man, to any age or time. And the spiritual evidences of these times, born often in the lowliest places of human ignorance, suffering and want, are a stern rebuke to all our pretension to a love of past disclosures, where words are two often mouthed, only to deny the spirit that gave them. Every elevation of the human mind above the plane of its mere animal indulgence but develops the Divine power given it, which opens it to higher and holier views of all things, and of God revealing Himself in all. Revelation, therefore, is as universal as man, or as eternal as God. God speaks in all, but is confined to none. Why, man is the revelation of God, and the inscriptions upon his being are the inscriptions of Divinity; and let it never be said we fail to read them. By the light of all ages, by the evidences of present hope, let us read and know our immortality.

"Above below, in earth and air,
God's Spirit moveth everywhere;
And SPEAKETH whereso'er a voice
Uplifts to sorrow or rejoice!"

MEETING TO CONSIDER "THE NECESSITY OF ORGANISATION."

On Sunday evening last, a goodly company of the friends of Spiritualism assembled in the Lyceum Hall, 14, Newman-street, Oxford-street. After partaking of tea, the friends assembled to discuss "The Necessity of Organisation."

Mr. ROBERT COOPER was elected Chairman. He said—I think we all understand this meeting to be more than a social or friendly gathering. We have met for the purpose of discussing the question of Organisation—to consider the proper methods and principles for a basis of action. I can say for myself, and, I think for others, that Spiritualism is shedding a new light upon the world, and I feel that it is our duty to unite our energies, in order that this glorious light may be diffused. God evidently works by human means in the advancement of His children. When I took this Lyceum, I must confess I anticipated a more liberal support than we have hitherto had; but I do not regret what I have done, and shall, if possible, continue to promote its success. It is proverbial that Union is Strength, and all the great companies of the day are but combinations of effort. Our gigantic railway schemes, the various religious bodies, missions, &c., afford us evidence of the work of Organisation. They combine, organise, and collect vast sums of money to promulgate their views. Let it not be said that these bodies are more zealous and earnest in propagating their principles, which, in the light of Spiritualism, are seen to be fraught with a large admixture of error and superstition, than we are in promulgating truth—truth, because based on facts, of which every one may have evidence for himself. I cannot, myself, offer any plan upon which we can successfully unite, but I trust some of you are prepared with a practical plan of operations. There are many reasons which seem to me to lead to the idea of Organisation. One is, we might be able, were we united in a manner befitting our cause, to rebut the scurrilous abuse which disgraces the Press. I have here a letter signed "Forret," which is a specimen of the kind of trash our newspapers are prepared to insert. (Mr. Cooper here read the letter in question, which caused much laughter.) He continued—Such a statement as this carries its own refutation. The writer said he saw Mrs. Marshall's naked toe, and inferred that the writing was done by that member. But it was well known that Mrs. M.'s feet had been frequently subjected to scrutiny, and sometimes persons had put down red pencils, and the writing produced had been found of that colour. A letter was also read from a gentleman at Ryde, an extract from which we shall print next week.

Mr. J. H. POWELL said he rose simply to urge upon the friends present the necessity of speaking freely.

Mr. G. E. HARRIS said he could heartily agree with the Chairman in his strictures on the Press, and he felt the necessity of supporting the *Spiritual Times*, in order that Spiritualists might have a defence in their own organ. [The speaker then detailed some personal experiences, which will be found in another column.]

Mr. JENNISON remarked that he doubted not there were many difficulties in the way of Organisation. Many attempts had been made without success, but he thought something should be done towards Organisation. The Davenportes, owing to the conduct of the Press, were believed by the public to be put down. Most present knew that was not the case, and it did seem a strange thing that such wholesale abuse as they had from time to time exhibited in the Press—power of this country should have no check placed upon it.

Mr. J. H. POWELL said in the event of others not wishing to speak, he would present them with a few thoughts on the subject they had not to consider. Whatever opinions might be entertained as to the fitness of the word "Organisation," he did not see how any of us could escape the duties of Union, Co-operation, Association, or whatever word they preferred, which are implied in the necessities of existence. Mr. Cooper and himself were organised in the establishment and conducting of the *Spiritual Times* and Lyceum. Now, it was self-evident that the uses of the paper and the Lyceum must necessarily be dwarfed, while there were only two persons allied to carry them on. Hence the necessity of others, with earnest, honest heads and hearts, to aid and so extend the uses of the machinery which already existed. He did not suspect for a moment they were going to organise on a very extensive scale at present. He believed they should begin small and gradually grow large, which is the order of nature—the child first, then the man. Nor did he conceive an Organisation, on a small scale even, could be established without barriers being placed in the way. It was not in the nature of human associations to live free from differences. Harmonious action could only exist in harmonious feeling; therefore, it appeared to him necessary simply to organise on a basis they all recognised. Surely there could be no subjugation of man's individuality in a union of his noblest powers. Of course those who disagreed on the very basis of an association should have the freedom to keep from becoming members of it. But where the recognition of a basis existed, a union could be formed which would in reality work without the subjugation of either individual conscience or duty. Whilst at this point, he wished to observe that a great deal was said about individuality which did not and could not affect it. If a man, because he was an individual, becoming loyal only to selfishness, failed to recognise duty, he necessarily exercised his "individuality" to the injury of others. Free agency, in the sense of individual freedom from social, domestic, and religious duties, was simply a non-existing condition. Only the man who could produce, unaided, the coat he wore, the food he ate—who could lay claim to nothing of either a physical or mental character but which originated solely in and by himself, was the man to throw off all allegiance to the principles of united action. None of us could, however much we tried, escape from our individual and social responsibilities. He believed one of the greatest barriers to anything like extensive Organisation among Spiritualists, was, that many of them were yet so entangled in conventionalism that they failed to adopt the Christian principles Spiritualism enforces. They clung to position, and were very apt to treat in quite a patronising manner the more humble and poorer Spiritualists. They wanted a more intimate connection of the classes, which he trusted Spirit-

ualism would eventually bring about. In order to organise and work together harmoniously, it would be necessary to sink all doctrinal differences. He conceived it no impossible task for men to learn to work together for the promulgation of great principles, regardless of minor particulars. It appeared to him that all Spiritualists accepted the ideas of God, spiritual communion, and immortality. Why could they not make these a basis of Organisation, and agree to differ on all doctrinal points? It was really absurd to allow minor doctrinal differences to prevent a union upon the grounds of agreement. One Spiritualist might say he would not work with an Organisation without the doctrine of the Trinity be admitted by it; another would declare he would not become a member without the orthodox view, of the Atonement was accepted by it; another would add the Resurrection, Baptismal Regeneration, Eternal Punishment, and so on, as doctrines which must be acknowledged before he could consent to unite himself with any body of men. Now, without Spiritualists could learn to respect the right of conscience, and, consequently, the right of men to differ, he must say, anything like Organisation, Co-operation, or Union was impracticable. But he believed they could organise on a basis of agreement, and allow all doctrinal and personal feeling to fall back. Having passed through various phases of doubt in his progress towards his present views, he felt that he had not lost by having been once a doubter, but had gained in so much as he had learned to recognise the rights of conscience in others. God was the Father, not alone of the Spiritualist, but of the Athiest, and it would be well that they learned to be humble, and to treat all men as His children. Let them, then, unite, and rather welcome those who differ on minor points, whilst agreeing on the major, that in the commerce of opinion they might each and all improve. (The speaker spoke next of the character of mediumship, urging his opinion that manifestations were only given when the necessity for them arose, and that Spiritualism had a philosophy which ought never to be lost in its sensational phenomena. He next spoke of the negative faith, which, like negative virtue, resulted from the inefficient teachings of the pulpit and the schools, and showed how Spiritualism was destined to bring about the much needed conditions of positive faith and positive virtue. He concluded by summing up a few of the advantages which he thought would accrue from a union of even a few earnest Spiritualists.)

Mrs. JENNISON (in the entranced state) said—Some persons have mooted the question of Organisation, it is necessary that it be carefully discussed. I apprehend that the necessity for some sort of an Organisation cannot be repudiated. There are certain vices which must be subdued before a complete Organisation can exist—I mean ambition, jealousy, cupidity, and prejudice. Unless we feel that we are in reality brethren, and are fitting ourselves to give an account of our stewardship, we shall fail to Organise on true principles. But the evidences of Organisation are everywhere. Look at the late American war. Organisation was employed to free the slaves, and it has resulted in tyranny of the worst kind. Ambition, jealousy, cupidity, and prejudice are at the present hour working death amongst the best minds there. All united movements are simple instruments of Organisation, even to the distribution of the gifts of the Lady Bountifuls, who often make their charities a means of glorifying their names. Those who have opened this Lyceum deserve well and need support, which can be best given by Organisation. (The medium continued in a plain, practical strain for a considerable time, giving many useful hints which our space does not permit us to reproduce.)

Mr. J. ALLDIS, in a very earnest manner, read a paper he had prepared on the subject. He further offered, in a suggestive spirit, some practical ideas. He hoped to see the Spiritual Lyceum occupied every night in the week by good mediums; and threw out some useful hints for the conducting of the Sunday lectures. He thought a good working committee would be of great service in relieving Mr. Powell of some of the labours connected with the Lyceum, and in working up an interest in Spiritualism together with means to assist Mr. Cooper.

After a few more remarks from Mr. Harris and Mr. Powell, the subject was adjourned till Sunday next, July 2nd, at half-past six p.m., when the Rev. J. M. Spear, Mr. Shorter, Mr. Orvis, J. Perceval, Esq., and others, are expected to take part in the discussion.

JEAN HILLAIRE.

(Continued from Page 191.)

THE day after the *seance*, which we last described another took place at Monsieur H.'s country house. Hillaire was much exhausted from the exertions of the previous day, but nevertheless, soon falling asleep, announced that he saw a spirit by the side of Madame V., that it was that of her husband, and he looked about twenty-eight years of age (he had died when he was twenty-nine.) He described the figure with a certain accuracy; but Madame V. wished for a strong proof of identity, and asked mentally that her husband should speak of his wedding ring. In a few moments the medium exclaimed, "Dear spirit, why do you show me your hand; what am I to look at? Is it the gold ring on your finger? Your wedding ring you say?" Madame T. then rose and explained that she had particularly wished him to mention this ring. Hillaire said that the spirit asked for his little child, who was, at that time, playing in the park. It was fetched, and the medium kissed it, declaring its father was embracing it through him; and leading it round, Hillaire said, "Dear spirit, you wish me to take your son to your wife, to your mother-in-law, and to your father-in-law; and you say that he is your only blood relation present" (this was quite true.) A conversation then ensued between the medium and the spirit, of which, unfortunately, only a few words were intelligible; but it was evident the spirit was endeavouring to dissipate some doubt which Hillaire was experiencing. "Have faith," said the spirit, "Have faith!" and thanking him for having served as his interpreter, he shook his hand with fervour; but Hillaire withdrawing his, exclaimed, "Not so hard, dear spirit, you hurt me." This incident, which seems so trivial, was invaluable in the eyes of the family, for during his life time, the spirit had often shaken hands

so vigorously as to cause pain to his friends. Turning to Madame V., the medium spoke, "your husband is happy; after death you will be united. What glorious journey am I going? How can I describe the marvellous beauties which surround me?" He ceased, and appeared in such ecstasy, that all maintained perfect silence. His beaming countenance, his attitude, all proved more clearly than words could describe the ineffable joy of which he was partaking. We cannot say whether his spirit soared, and on awaking he could not remember.

Madame V., however, assured us she had mentally begged from her husband a confirmation of the promises of happiness which he had made her in writing since his passing away, relating to their future state. It was understood by all, that the answer, although allegorical, was clear; and that the beauties described by Hillaire were those of the future state.

Without awaking, Hillaire continued, "The spirit which was with me just now has left, and another has taken his place. This is a young man about twenty years of age. He is a fine tall young fellow with a good figure. He says he is here to console a sorrowing mother, and that I must conduct him to her, in order that he may embrace her."

Thus speaking he advanced towards a lady in mourning, who trampled with emotion, begged for a description of her son's appearance. This Hillaire gave most accurately and minutely, even mentioning the colour and pattern of his tie, which the poor mother remembered as the last she had made for her son; and afterwards showed to the company, in order that they might be convinced of the exactitude of the description. She then asked for her son's name, and after some slight hesitation, Hillaire said, "Henri Thiel," which was quite correct. Before awaking he said, "Oh, my God, why do you accord to me, who am most unworthy, the privilege of seeing and conversing with spirits, and withhold it from so many longing parents, who seem far more deserving."

It must have been remarked by our readers, what very simple language Hillaire always makes use of; and it is not to be wondered at, for he has received but the rudest elements of education, and is more accustomed to work in the fields than to turn elegant phrases.

At that time he was in the daily habit of seeing spirits, and it would be utterly impossible to describe all these visions; but some are most remarkable. On one occasion Monsieur Guerin, belonging to the Spiritual Society of St. Jean d'Angely, wished ardently that the spirit of his former friend, Pierre Petit, might manifest itself to the medium, and in a short time Hillaire described a figure, its arm linked with that of Monsieur Guerin, and clothed in ordinary garments. Monsieur Guerin then requested that his friend would appear in the same clothes he wore at the time of his decease. The spirit vanished, but re-appeared in a few moments in the uniform of a Grenadier Guard. The Petit had been killed in the Crimea, while serving in that branch of the army.

All the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages were most anxious to get a glimpse of the great conjuror, as they considered Hillaire; and in compliance with one of many petitions, he agreed to hold a *séance* at Barbezere, in the department of the Charente. Monsieur Vitit drove him over in his chaise, and on the road, Hillaire said he saw a spirit by the side of the horse, first on the right, and then on the left. After a short time it vanished. At that moment it became evident that the traces were unbuckled. Monsieur Vitit having, however, harnessed the horse himself, was very certain that he had not been guilty of such carelessness. Recovering from their surprise, they re-adjusted the harness, and reached their journey's end without any further adventures.

Hillaire's arrival caused great excitement at Barbezere. Everyone wished to catch a glimpse of him. People crowded on his road, and disappointment was felt by many, at seeing a man with nothing remarkable in his outward appearance; and many old women muttered prayers, and made the sign of the cross, as he passed by. The *séance* took place that night, at the house of Monsieur Avrilland, and the mayor had accepted an invitation to attend. It must here be mentioned that Barbezere is at a considerable distance from Souillac, that Hillaire had never been there, and was totally unacquainted with its inhabitants. He opened the *séance* with a prayer, in which he begged for the aid of good spirits, to carry conviction to the hearts of those present. He then described the spirit of a female by the side of the mayor; and when asked for her name, wrote it at once; also that of her husband, the mayor, which he had never heard before. The spectators were deeply impressed, and no more mocking smiles were visible on their lips. Soon afterwards he fell into a *clairvoyante* state, and described the spirit of a child. Its name, he said, is "Leon Avrilland." At this announcement many present could not restrain their tears, as they recognised from the description, that the son, for whom their host still mourned, was with them. Hillaire went round to embrace the parents for their son. The spectators showed so much emotion, and expressed so much heartfelt joy at this manifestation, that the *séance* was interrupted, and Hillaire awoke. Order having been restored, the medium, now perfectly awake, described a fire on the table near him, which in a few moments appeared to him as a vast burning pile. He saw a spirit wandering round it, holding a bottle in its hand. His hand was moved to write these words—

"This is to prove to my friends that I am really here, by reminding them now, at the midsummer bonfires, I always brought a bottle of brandy, which we drank together."

The people present recognised this spirit at once. Several other spirits were seen at this *séance*; but these examples must suffice. Hillaire made many converts at Barbezere, and had every reason to be pleased with the result of his visit.

THE ALLEN BOY PHYSICAL MEDIUM.

We learn from the *Rockland Free Press* that Dr. Randall, with the boy medium, has been holding *séances* for physical manifestations in that city. On Tuesday evening, May 9, the editor of the *Free Press* attended one of these *séances*, and relates what

took place there. After describing the usual preliminaries with which our readers are already familiar, he says:—

At first the light in the room was dimmed a little, but after the manifestations commenced, the full light was let on, and even the shawl was removed from the boy, so that his hands were plainly perceived by all present. For some time after the sitting commenced no manifestations were visible; but at length the covering of the instruments began to move, the guitar was touched, lifted from the chair, and by some invisible agent raised above the heads of the sitters, and placed in its proper position for playing, in the lap of the gentleman who acted as committee; frequently tunes of all sorts were played upon it; it invariably joining in any piece started by any one of the company. The bell was jingled, the drumsticks were in constant motion, and at times thrown out violently on to the floor. Once the chair in the rear was taken up and thrown over the heads of the sitters in front of them. The hands were plainly seen fitting above the heads of the sitters, now holding a drumstick, now stroking or rapping the head of the committee; and the hands of other persons in the room were touched by them; and all this while the room was perfectly lighted, the boy uncovered, and his hands seen by all. These are some of the manifestations as we recollect them. We cannot doubt their reality. We saw no chance for deception. What occasions them is more than we can answer. We are not inclined to believe that it is the effect of supernatural causes, but that it is produced by natural agents, not yet perfectly understood. There are many natural phenomena, now well understood, but once attributed to supernatural causes, which it required many centuries of research and study to explain, and it may take many years to clear up the mystery in these manifestations. We have no doubt of the genuineness of the latter, and we cannot see what possible good can come of denying or ridiculing them without investigation. What is true may as well be admitted, for it will make its way over all opposition.

What have the *Portland Press* and *Portland* sceptics to say to this?

Dr. Randall informs us that the invisible intelligences who control the medium for physical manifestations, have signified that they shall be unable to produce the electrical hand, in the light, the present summer, as fully as they did last winter; but that next winter they feel satisfied they shall be able to present to mortal vision, not only a hand and arm, as they have heretofore done in the light, but an entire spirit-body.

Dr. Randall will hold *séances* with the boy medium in Troy N. Y., during the present week.—*Banner of Light*

CORRESPONDENCE.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

CO-OPERATION OR ORGANISATION.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Dear Sir,—I have just read the letter of Mr. G. E. Harris, upon the subject of Organisation, together with the remarks made by you and appended thereto. You appear to me to have misapprehended the conclusion of his letter. Co-operation is as evidently distinct from Organisation as any two ideas can possibly be. Co-operation never implies Organisation as inherent to its constitution. I work with you, but without mutual consultation, the doing of which implies Organisation, presuming that I admit your modification of my action, or you admit mine of yours.

Co-operation is healthful and valuable, as it permits the greatest exertion of individuality; but Organisation implies a rule, sometimes irksome and always hazardous. We are not so infallible, in our several degrees, as to be satisfied with organisation as an end. "We err and stagger," as the poet writes—(no mean authority, being Goethe, in his world-renowned epos, *Faust*)—"We err and stagger from our birth;" yet there remains to us the power of Co-operation. The Member of Parliament—such men, for instance, as, I hope, the future member for Westminster, John Stuart Mill—may exercise his Co-operative influence without Organisation. He, as a person, entrusted with a function, is the able judge of its application. Here despotism, the will of one, and democracy, the embodied action of the many, come to the same conclusion, that of the famed Jeremy Bentham—"the greatest happiness of the greatest number."

Now, I trust that in the solution of so infinitely delicate a problem as that of Spiritualism, it may not be considered singular on my part if I fearlessly assert that Organisation on such a subject, upon which, with all our strenuous attentions applied, we can only, as yet, arrive at the conclusion of an ultra-mundane existence, without pledging ourselves to the goodness or the badness of the inhabitants of that realm of God's Providence, is simply, truly, and utterly impossible.

If Spiritualists are to arrive at an adequate appreciation of the blessing conferred upon the world by the certainty of our friends being "not lost, but gone before," it cannot be accomplished without the fullest and most absolute sphere of liberty being awarded to all. Individually speaking, I should recommend more earnest attention to the phenomena than can be obtained in a fashionable drawing-room, where spiritual inter-communication is treated as a pastime, and rejected as an insignificant joke. Whoever thinks of extracting merriment from mathematics, or approaching astronomy without awe and reverence? But the world can treat their

fathers and brothers, whom they professed to love and cherish—their sisters and mothers, who, next to heaven itself, should be the utmost objects of their individual veneration and devotion, as merry ghosts come to beguile a passing hour, and satisfy an unfitting and disgraceful whim.

With the great and glorious Creator of the wonderful Universe as our Father and Friend, our truest organised and most beneficent Master, why should we fear? The paths of goodness, greatness, and happiness are open to all; but no doubt the inscrutable ways of one higher than ourselves limits our vision.

People Co-operate who never behold each other, and Co-operate much more to the general good than those only possessed of individual aims.

Your own motto that "God is our Father, Man our Brother, and Immortality our Destiny," is the best evidence that can be alleged on behalf of an unselfish devotion rather to the principle of Co-operation than that of Organisation, the results of which might be perverted, as Hosea Biglow sings, "to very privit uses."

I trust to your sense of fairness, as a friend and a Co-operator, to give admission to this letter, and I remain, yours truly,

KENNETH R. H. MACKENZIE.

Chiswick. June 26, 1865.

[We willingly print Mr. Mackenzie's able letter, and hope he will not be shocked at our daring, when we assert, that every argument, both he and Mr. Harris have used, only supports the conviction we entertain of "The Necessity of Organisation," on as large a scale as circumstances will allow. Co-operation, in Mr. Mackenzie's sense, on the part of people who never behold each other, seems to us no argument why people who do behold each other should act as though they were isolated from each other. If we could obtain the advantages of Organisation without uniting, why is there so little done in the way of disseminating spiritual literature? We do not anticipate a very extensive Organisation amongst the Spiritualists at the present; but is that a reason those who can should not organise? As for Organisation favouring despotism, and being a finality, whilst Co-operation favours freedom, &c., we have simply to say, that that which is powerful for evil, properly used, would be powerful for good. Let us rather endeavour to find out how to organise for good, than to denounce Organisation because of its abuse. Respecting the finality argument, we imagine no institution can hold together which prohibits progress. We have yet to learn that an organisation cannot be established, which shall admit the utmost possible freedom, without ignoring duty. All union entails responsibility; so does all existence. When we can escape our responsibilities as individuals, we may hope to do so as unionists.—Ed. S. T.]

PSYCHOLOGICAL UNACCOUNTABLE EVIDENCES.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Sir,—Naturally belonging to that order of mind which is full, at times, of doubt, melancholy, and the suicidal periods when my whole being is enwrapped in thoughts the most grand and unexplicable to me; moments of hesitation when aspirations have whispered noiselessly within me, "Is it worth while to remain longer in this lying, cheating, soul-destroying phase of existence, or by opposing end it. Allow me, even at the expense of being laughed at, and placed in the category of the *weak minded*, to give your readers a fact or two which has recently come under observation in my own household. I will be plain and simple in statement without attempting to account for the agency or cause.

About three weeks since I was suffering through this low state of mental depression—my physique was equally low. I felt merely a bodily buoyancy, if I may so express myself. My melancholy or depression was deepened by an impression that an aunt—nay more—whom I had never seen but once in my life, was dead. Three days elapsed, and this impression sat heavily upon me. I scarcely cared to speak to, or see, anyone, and I did not feel as if I could burst through this pent-up feeling. At length my wife spoke to me about it, and I told her the cause of my seeming indifference—silence. I immediately felt relief, and we proposed to "try the tables." We did so. Two or three seconds, and the table came gently over into my lap. This my wife assured me was indicative of "Spirit presence." Should she put the interrogatories? Yes, I replied.

Will the agency or spirit present indicate through the alphabet who or what it is?—Three mild tips into my lap, which my wife said meant yes.

With the alphabet, and the table tipping at the letters, brought out R, Y, A, L, L.

This was wrong as it appeared to me, and not the name I had been impressed with. However, my wife proceeded as before when there came out M, R, A, B, A, W, D, K, N. This was the name of the aunt causing the impression.

How long have you been dead? Please tip the number of days, weeks, months, or years?—Six, and a faint effort at the seventh tip, was given.

Do you mean days?—One tip—no.

Weeks?—One tip—no.

Months?—Three quick, or rollicking, tips were given, which I was told, meant yes.

And now, said I, for the first name,

Can, or will, you tell me how long it, or she, has been dead?—Three tips, meaning yes.

Proceed then as before?—Eleven tips into my lap.

Do you mean months?—Three tips.

Is there any other spirit present?—Three tips.

Will you spell your name?—Three tips.

Proceed?—S, I, M, O, N.

Is there any one else present?—Three tips.

Will you give your name?—Three tips.

Proceed?—S, H, K, P, H, E, R, D.

Then there are four of you present?—Three tips, and a continuation of tips.

More than four?—Three tips.

Please tell me who besides?—Three tips.

Proceed?—E, V, A.

Any more?—One tip.

Five spirits present?—Three tips.

Other questions were put and replied to, which I must for private considerations, reserve. Enough said I; and now to ascertain the truth or fact as to the deaths of either of the two first-mentioned names. The deaths of the others I was aware of. Now, directly nor indirectly, I have held no correspondence with any relative for five years, who could have given me any idea of their deaths; neither have I, directly nor indirectly, held any communication with any mortal being upon the subject. To satisfy myself, I wrote, on the 10th inst., to a cousin, whom I have seen but once in my life, merely asking if aunt so-and-so were dead, and if so, how long? Time passed on, and I thought myself outlawed here, too, when on the 22nd inst. I received a letter, bearing the Helston post mark, and dated Mullion, June 21, 1865, saying, "In answer to your very kind, and I can assure you, your very welcome letter, what shall I say? I was overjoyed to have a letter from you. Aunt Bawden died about Christmas last, and aunt Rail about twelve months before.—Mary C. Now there occurs some slight discrepancies in the spelling of the name Ryall and Rail, and the number of months elapsing since her death. But here is one difficult point. Her name had never occurred to me till at the table, and my wife knew nothing of her. I leave the rest, merely remarking, that there are more things in heaven and earth, than are dreamt of in our philosophy. G. E. HARRIS.

FLANEUR YATES AT HOME.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Sir,—I am much surprised and disgusted at the conduct of Mr. Home, in asserting "that the Davenportes are unmitigated humbugs." Mr. Home, who has been for years greeted with the same appellation by the anti-Spiritualist public, ought to have been the last man to throw out such an accusation against brother mediums, whom the leading Spiritualists of London, and, indeed, nearly all the Spiritualists, have had the amplest opportunities of testing, and who have publicly and repeatedly avowed their thorough conviction of the reality of the manifestations of these young men. Mr. Home's friend, and, I may say, *de facto* biographer, Mr. Wilkinson, has, in his own person, and as Editor of the *Spiritual Magazine*, asserted his fullest persuasion of the truth of these manifestations. Mr. Coleman, Mr. Howitt, Mr. Cooper, yourself, Mr. Shorter, Mr. Spear, and the majority of the most earnest Spiritualists of London, have made, again and again, after repeated examinations of the most searching kind, the same declaration of the actuality of the manifestations of the Davenportes. To say the least, then, for Mr. Home to come forward and declare the Davenportes unmitigated humbugs, is a sheer piece of impudence. These gentlemen have had greater opportunities of judging of the truth of these manifestations than Mr. Home has; and it is nothing less than a gross insult to them and to their judgments and common-sense, to assume that they are all dupes and idiots, and that he only is "a Daniel" come to judgment.

The fact is, that Mr. Home is so notoriously jealous of every medium but himself, that he is utterly disqualified for passing a judgment on any medium whatever, or himself into the bargain. Who has not heard him say the very same thing of the Marshalls? In fact, I do not believe that any of Mr. Home's spiritual friends, raking over the whole of their memories, can recollect him evincing anything but the most uneasy jealousy of every medium but himself. His vanity and egotism have assumed such proportions that he evidently thinks there is but one medium in existence, in *esse* or in *posse*—namely, Daniel D. Home! After the knowledge which the London Spiritualists have had of the Davenportes and of Dr. Ferguson (who, if they are humbugs, must be one too), this conduct of Mr. Home can only injure himself. People are not gone so far mad in these dog-days as to set themselves all down as dupes of the dullest kind, in order that Mr. Home may plume himself on a sagacity superior to that of the collective Spiritualists of England.

But that he should play into the hands of such a silly donkey as the Flaneur of the *Morning Star*—in other words, of Yates the player, who has learned no wisdom by his being kicked out of the Garrick Club by Thackeray, is really a degradation of the most pitiable kind. To have such Grub-street vermin flattering him as that frank, honest-looking fellow, whose portrait is in the Exhibition of the Royal Academy; a man who, if the question were put to him the next moment, would pronounce Home equally a humbug, is really too much for any man of decent reputation. Does this libellous comedian think Mr. Home an honest, manly fellow? Then he must be a genuine medium, or he pretends to be; and if he be so, why does not our player say so? This honest, manly looking person is a professed medium; if Mr. Yates believes in him, he must, of course, believe in Spiritualism, which he is every day casting filth on in the *Star*. What, in truth, is he? and what is Mr. Home, who is willing to receive praise from him? I think it can require no conjuror to decide. For my part, I beg to record my unmitigated disgust at

the conduct of Mr. Home; at the vile channel through which we find his jealous venom against brother mediums oozing forth; and at the odious composition of the silly *Planeur*, the degraded *Star*, and the dirt-flinging medium, Mr. Home.—Yours,
HOMETHRUST.

EXPERIENCE.

Sir,—With your permission, I will give your readers an account of the little experience I have had in Spiritualism. The subject had engaged my attention from time to time, but I, like most persons are apt to do, regarded the whole thing as a myth. I had occasionally seen accounts of wondrous doings in the newspapers; these I looked upon as so much food provided for the lovers of the marvellous. I read the article in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and for the first time heard of a "floating medium." This affair, though perplexing to the mind, was disposed of by supposing that the persons present were deceived by the events taking place in the dark. I next had the direct testimony of a friend, in whom I could place implicit confidence, that he himself had seen some wondrous things, one of which was a table standing in mid-air, untouched by any one present. Inexplicable as all this appeared to me, I was, nevertheless, reluctant to give in my adhesion to statements so contrary to general experience, and for the accomplishment of which the established laws of nature must be set aside, or new, or unknown ones brought into operation. The subject was, however, soon after brought more practically under my notice. About three months ago a young gentleman was staying in this town, and Spiritualism was incidentally mentioned to him; he said that some years ago, when table-turning was in fashion, he had sat at a table and seen it move. He was asked to try again. He did so, and very decided movements soon took place, but nothing more was done on this occasion. The next night I was invited to attend, and after being seated about ten minutes, the table seemed as if endowed with life and intelligence. It responded to questions by giving the usual affirmative or negative raps with the leg. An alphabet was extemporised, and immediately a remarkable and *apropos* sentence was spelt out, purporting to come from an old clergyman who had died a few weeks before. It will be well to mention that this gentleman held the idea, so prevalent among the clergy, that if there is anything in Spiritualism at all it is Satanic, and that it should on no account be practised. He had given me a pamphlet to read, written by an Irish clergyman of the name of Nangle, plausibly setting forth that Spiritualism was of the devil. "There," said he, very assuredly, "that will show you where it comes from." Well, this old clergyman having announced himself, was asked if he had anything to communicate, and without hesitation was spelt out "When I was alive I did not believe in Spiritualism." "Is it Satanic?" "No." "Then good spirits as well as evil spirits are engaged in these manifestations?" "Yes." The names of deceased friends were spelt out on this occasion, but no further communication was made, the chief interest centreing in the movements of the table, which were remarkable to us on account of their novelty, we never having seen anything of the kind before. The next evening of some description of manifestations took place; some questions of a theological character were answered, and the movements of the table exhibited greater power. An interesting circumstance occurred which is worth recording. A child was taken from a cradle and placed upon the table, which at once proceeded to rock with a cradle-like motion. We were expecting the table to go along the ground, as we had seen it on the previous evening, when a person mounted it. On retiring to rest our medium was greatly disturbed by rappings, which continued the greater part of the night, and he could not be induced to attend a *séance* again. Not liking to abandon our experiments at so early a stage, we tried among ourselves, and had the satisfaction to find that two of our party were mediums, though not very powerful ones. The movements of the table, however, increased in power on repetition, and were produced more readily. I have frequently seen, at my own house, a heavy man raised on the table, the only contact with it being our finger-ends lightly resting on it. We get questions promptly answered, affirmatively or negatively, but an appeal to the alphabet is seldom successful. The name of a lady has been rapped out as a medium, but as she cannot be persuaded to join in our experiments, we have not been able to test her mediumship. "Here are fair spirits," was on one occasion spelt out; this, on enquiry, we found to mean that the spirits present were good spirits.

At this stage of the proceedings, a gentleman (a civil engineer) requested permission to see our experiments. He witnessed them, and was much struck with what he saw, and became so much interested in the matter, that what we could show him was not enough; to use his own words, he wanted to "see the hands." I recommended him to visit Mrs. Marshall in London, of whom I had heard. He went, and sent me the following report:—"Knockings and scratchings were heard about the room, and on the table. Questions were promptly answered by loud raps on the table. The name of my sister was correctly spelt out; and

the place where her remains are buried, and several questions were correctly answered. After this, the table rose about three feet in the air, and remained so for several seconds, in defiance of the laws of gravitation. I watched the movements with great earnestness and care, and could discover no appearance of fraud."

On receiving this account, I made a journey to London, to see and judge for myself. On arriving at Mrs. M.'s, I found a party of about six, among whom was a lady receiving a long communication from her father; a page or two of which she read for our edification. On putting the usual question, whether there was any spirit present who knew me, the name of "Mary Cooper" was rapped out, the alphabet being pointed to by an American gentleman, who happened to be present. Not recollecting any one of that name, I enquired who it was, and was answered, "Grandmother." She stated she died about thirty years ago, and was my guardian spirit. I have since ascertained the year of her death to be 1833. She died when I was very young, and my parents having died previously, the responsibility of my care devolved upon the old lady, who always manifested great interest in my welfare. How wonderful that she should thus spring forth to light again, at a time when I had all but forgotten that such a person had ever lived! At this stage of the proceedings, a friend, who accompanied me, enquired if any manifestations of a different kind to those we had yet seen could be produced. "Yes." "Can any spirit present give us direct writing?" "Yes." Hereupon I placed on the floor some note paper and a pencil, and on taking it up, about two minutes after, the name "Mary Cooper" was legibly written, in a bold, free hand. I marked the paper previous to putting it down. I afterwards placed on the table a photograph, enclosed in an envelope, of a dear deceased relative; her name was instantly spelt out, accompanied by the benedictory words, "Joy be with you." The American gentleman, before alluded to, now began singing, which seemed to increase the movements of the table (a 4-foot loo), and it rose fairly from the floor to the height of about a foot. The rappings now were not confined to the table, but were all about the floor, which shook with a tremulous motion, resembling, as one present observed, an earthquake.

I attended again a short time afterwards, when the same description of phenomena occurred. Singing was again introduced, and on this occasion the table, a smaller one than that before used, rose in the air, and remained there with a vibratory motion till the close of each verse, when it descended, and rose again at the commencement of the next. The spirit of Dr. Esdaile was invoked, and on being told that he was present, the gentleman requested that he would, if possible, mesmerise him. The table hereupon rose from the ground, and assumed the actions of a mesmerist in making the usual mesmeric passes; the imitation was perfect. Dr. Esdaile, the celebrated mesmerist in India, was well known to the gentleman who had made the request. On another occasion, a military gentleman threw a handkerchief on the floor; the alphabet was called for, and the words, "We have made you a pretty present," were rapped out. On taking up the handkerchief it was found to be tied in knots.

Such are some of the striking incidents I saw at Mrs. M.'s; and coupled with what I have witnessed in my own house, where anything like deception or imposition is out of the question, they appear to me so conclusive, of the truth of the spiritual theory, and, indeed, so impossible on any other theory than that of spiritual agency, that I unhesitatingly give my testimony to its truth, and I believe it destined, under Providence, as the great antidote to materialism, to work marvellous results in the future of humanity. After what I have seen, I can no more doubt the existence of spirits and of these spiritual phenomena, than I can the sunshine that warms and irradiates the earth; and I feel assured that all who will take the trouble to investigate the matter properly, will very soon be of the same conviction.—I remain, &c.,
ROBERT COOPER.

2, Terrace, Eastbourne, Nov. 9, 1863.

P.S.—Since the above was written, and originally published in the *Spiritual Magazine*, my experience has been much extended. I have repeatedly observed the manifestations in my own house, and in those of others. I have also witnessed the Davenport manifestations, in public and private some thirty times, and am quite certain of their genuineness. I saw on one occasion, in the cabinet between the Brothers, when my spectacles were transferred from my face to one of theirs. At a private *séance* I took part in a conversation with the spirits, who spoke with audible voices nearly half an hour, and the circumstances were such as to admit of no possible doubt as to the reality of the facts.

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LEIGHTON.

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