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January, 1877.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper.

A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

VOLUME TEN. NUMBER TWENTY-TWO.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JUNE 1st, 1877.

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

THE time has arrived when it might perhaps be as well to give more attention at public meetings in London to the religious aspects of Spiritualism. Much has been done within the past two or three years, in the way of more thoroughly testing and examining the physical phenomena, and in establishing permanent means for organised and efficient public action, whenever such action is deemed to be necessary. The period has not been without its troubles, all due to the sayings and doings of physical mediums, but not always from any fault of their own. Dr. Slade, for instance, could not help the attack made upon him, as it was merely the outcome of the ignorance of a scientific man, who made a superficial and most inefficient examination of the facts. There have been annoyances brought on by Von Vleck, Bly, and others, who, surrounded by spirits of a low class and low morals, have been able to show genuine mediumship as jugglery; there have also been troubles from the extraordinary jealousy with which the majority of physical mediums regard their rivals, and this is strikingly exemplified in Mr. Home's disreputable book, which has just brought down upon the movement—as well as upon himself, who deserves it—a large amount of abuse in the *Saturday Review*, *Athenæum*, and *Times*. A case occurred recently in the provinces, in which a man of world-wide reputation had taken steps to begin the investigation of Spiritualism, but was deterred by the circumstantial slanders fabricated by one physical medium about another; to such slanders Spiritualists of any experience pay no attention. Mr. Jencken, with his large experience, has told of the "objectless lies" sometimes given through physical mediumship, and out of the enormous number of *séances* we have attended to gain knowledge through practical experience by direct observation, scarcely a single message given by means of the very wonderful physical phenomena, has been worth printing on its religious, moral, or intellectual merits. The truth is, that the lower the spirits the greater is their direct power over common matter, and it seems to require the simultaneous presence of a variety of delicately balanced conditions, to permit one of the higher spirits to manifest through the physical phenomena. Yet from the study of these phenomena, resulting in some knowledge of the laws and conditions under which they are presented, information of the most valuable kind has been obtained, throwing light upon many religious problems, and the psychical events of past ages. The phenomena are pre-eminently useful, more especially as evidence that mental impressions and subjective imaginings are not at the root of the whole of the matter, but they must be relegated to their proper position in the minds of searchers after truth.

Seeing then, that in the physical phenomena good and evil are closely intertwined, and that this class of facts has of late received a very large share of the attention of Spiritualists, would it not be well in the few weeks that remain before the season closes, to give more attention to trance mediumship, and to the religious aspects of the question as presented by our best thinkers and normal speakers? Everybody is inclined for a rest, and for a change, so a few good Sunday services, or the consideration of the religious aspects of Spiritualism at the remainder of the fortnightly meetings would be acceptable, and would tend to present Spiritualism to the outside public in a new light.

At the *séance* of the Brixton Psychological Society, on Friday last, with Mr. Williams, one of the spirits gave good tests of his power of seeing in the dark; among others he rallied the secretary upon being in a "brown study," and selected by request one in particular from among six photographs, which a gentleman had placed upon the table.

"I WILL ARISE."

THE following is an extract from a sermon recently preached by the Rev. H. R. Haweis, M.A., on the parable of the Prodigal Son:—

Grasp the distinction between divine principle undefined, and human morality defined, and you will see many mysteries of right and wrong grow clear. You will see why the laws of one nation are not the laws of another; why one statement of morals seems in conflict with others; why the conscience is trained in one way in one age and country, and another way in another age and country. All these moral codes are in fact attempts—sometimes little more partial laws, such as the laws of Moses; of Draco; of Solon; old Greek and Roman law—modern laws of Europe—of England—on many questions the better moral statements may still have to be reached, nay, certainly will be reached. We have only to look at the past and see that this is so. It was once thought immoral in Rome for women to touch wine, and the punishment was death. In Sparta it was thought wrong to be found out, but not wrong to steal. Within the memory of man an immense change of opinion has taken place about the legal rights of women and the political rights of man, and concerning freedom of opinion in religion, but these changes have all been wrought under the immediate pressure of what seemed a right or divine principle, *i.e.*, a course of action or conduct of morals, more in accordance with the progress, health, and happiness of mankind. And depend upon it the morals of property and the morals of political power, and the morals of private wealth, and the morals of family life, and the sexes are by no means in their final form. Things are now permitted as moral or indifferent which by and by will be denounced as crimes—yes, practices selfish, thoughtless, unhealthy, and dissolute, entailing lifelong misery on children unborn, and danger to the health and happiness of the community are permitted, whilst things calculated under proper control to further wholesome ends are at present condemned, which will by and by have to be regulated and reduced to moral statement, just as the use of gunpowder, poison, fire—I would I could add stimulant—have been reduced from incontinent devastators to safe and beneficent use and expression.

The Prodigal Son was thoroughly persuaded in his own mind that his mission in life was not to feed swine; that he ought not to waste his substance in riotous living, or spend his money with harlots; he knew very well that was not the right thing to do—there was not even common providence or economy along with it, for "when he had spent all there arose a mighty famine in the land, and he began to be in want."

Thus, men and brethren, I look about me in this great city, and standing here in this great congregation, I ask myself where are the examples, where are the emotions, the feelings that I can bring to bear upon those who are at this moment pricked in their hearts?

You are the prodigals, you have got the sense of sin and wrong-doing weighing on you, and you must first pour out your souls in prayer to God; the filial cry must go up at this moment with the sense of broken and violated allegiance; there must be something of the child's plaintiveness, "Father, I have sinned." Something of a rebel's submission, "against Thee only have I sinned, and done this great evil in Thy sight." "Against Thee!" mark the exact words, two and no more; standing as a man, and lonely man might stand on the pinnacle of some high mountain, and feeling only two things real in the whole universe—the soul and God—and the two face to face, "against Thee only have I sinned." So now stand, stand every one of you in this sublime spiritual isolation and make this con-

fession to God, "against Thee only have I sinned;" I have been a discordant note in the harmony of the world; I have been doing what I can to add confusion and misery to life; I have known what good was and turned upon my way and done evil. And Thou, O God, didst not leave my soul in hell; Thou didst make me divinely unhappy; Thou didst call me in the wilderness where I was feeding swine, and as the mid-day sun beat hotly down upon my head, I lifted up my eyes and saw the foulness of the grovelling swine around me. They were happy and content enough, but I could be happy no more; I felt nothing but sublime discontent, for a fire was in my heart, and my memory began to glow with strange and sweet thoughts of my father's home and all the hired servants who in their lowly offices did fulfil happily his pleasure, and then I felt what I had not known for months, that I was an outcast, "I will arise and go to my Father."

So then that is what I want you to say in this assembly, each one of you to-day. Here in this very congregation are men forgetful of principles of right dealing one with another, forgetful of purity, shut up in their own selfishness, in their own prayerlessness, and alone with their own lawlessness, I say, O God, teach them to apply the divine principles which rule the world, and by which men's hearts are to be won, and by which their individual happiness and the happiness of the world is to be built up; teach them to apply these principles to their own practices, and let them see that God is not mocked. Let them understand that in their commercial avocations when they are doing that which is ruining the character of England for truth and honesty, that they are "sinning against heaven and before Thee." Let them feel that when they are undertaking a contract dishonestly and carrying it out dishonestly that they are not clean in Thy sight, that the money they hoard up is worse than waste, for it will become inward rottenness in the spiritual bones, that it will enter like iron into their heart's core and wither their soul. Let them feel this—and the man of commerce—the young man, when he is tempted to make money by connivance, when he is engaged as inspector to see that some one else has fulfilled his contract, and when he takes a bribe, or is cozened out of his opinion by another man, or garbles his statement, and refuses to inform his employer of the truth, although he is paid to inform him—let him feel at that moment he has sinned against heaven and before Thee. And that crowd of speculators, mixed up with the unsuspecting, who go to the public with rotten concerns, who take in the fatherless and the widow, and fatten on the honest savings of the poor but industrious community, let them not lie down and sleep with the ill-gotten gain, but evermore plague them, plague them with bad dreams. Let them see the rotten ship go down which they have sent to sea. Let them hear the voice of Rachel crying for her children, who will not be comforted. Let them see the visions of misery, the poor innocent babes unclothed and unfed, and honest women brought to low depths of shame, and strong hearts broken, and many who have been brought up in ease and luxury driven from their own doors, deceived and ruined in these vile speculations, on which they, the malefactors, are fattening, like bad and noisome pest-flies on a rotten carcase! And let such an one spring from his bed as a murderer springs in the wilderness of his dreams from his solitary couch, and know the terror and blackness of his crime, and let him, broken at last with deep self-aborrence and contrition, cry out, "Father, Father, great is my sin!—what shall I do to be saved? Am I indeed Thy son? I have not chosen Thee, but Thou has claimed me, and, therefore, I can never be anything but Thine—Thy reckless, Thy rebellious son—yet a cloud has been before my eyes, I have tampered with the happiness of Thy creatures, and with my own responsibilities, with all that a man should hold most honourable and dear, and in the stillness of this awful night, in the depths of my soul, Thou hast tried me and searched me out, and convinced me of judgment, and of righteousness, and of sin—Father, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight, and I am not worthy to be called Thy son!"

If I pass briefly over some other sins, the sins of heartless impurity, in which the young and frail have been enticed from the straight path, and then left to ruin and misery—if I pass them over for the present, it is because the time would fail me, and not that I have no desire to stir men out

of the depths of selfishness and lust. Oh that I could rouse and unsettle them as with the voice of a trumpet, until they became smitten with a restless monomania, a mania to be rid of their sin, so that the young man who may have deluded with fair promises, or inveigled some one into his power, and incurred responsibilities which he had no intention of meeting—so that he might never more rest until he had made all possible reparation to his victim. I would send some Prophet of God to him in the disguise of friend, or parable, or preacher. I would lay bare his life before him, whilst seeming to speak of another. I would show him all the shadows and depths of his infamy, until he should contain his generous wrath no longer, but on himself pronounce judgment, and then suddenly hear a voice in his ear, "Thou art the man!" and then I would bid him arise and go to his Father, and let him lead thither all those who by his example have wandered far from the Father's home. Let his selfishness float away like a black cloud, and as he has thought only of himself in his sins, let him think of others in his repentance, and say, "I would not be saved alone; here are those whom I have caused to offend; I have enticed them on to evil, now help them on to Thee, O Father, so that such as were dead may be alive again, and such as were sometime lost be for evermore found."

But I may bid you arise, not only from sin, but from sorrow, and come to your Father: there come seasons in the lives of every one of us when we perceive how vain is the help of man. We may have made proof of each friend in some season of pain or loss in bitter bereavement; we have weighed the value of words and have found them utterly insufficient to bring any comfort. At such a time as that, sitting down in our loneliness and sorrow, has not the silence been broken by the voice of God calling to you in the stillness and shadow of loss, and a new impulse and hope may have seized you, and awakened you out of torpor and misery, saying, "I will arise and go to my Father!" And in a season of pain—of bodily pain, when our physicians can do us no good, wonderful are the efforts of the Spirit, even upon the body, so that a man in his agony may have turned his face to the wall and prayed that some bitter thorn in the flesh should be taken away, and even while he prayed he has felt, as it were, the spirit-like breathings of comfort stream over his heated brow; and as he now lifts up his eyes his friends are surprised to see the smile that lights up his wan face, and you perceive that the hidden mystery and root of the matter is in him. It is impossible for anyone who has had much experience of sick rooms and hospitals not to have been struck by the strange and unforeseen times of refreshing that come to the weak and agonised, who wait upon the Lord in order that He may renew their strength.

The clergyman approaches one suffering from cancer, or any other horrible disease, and feels so weak in faith and powerless, and so ashamed to deliver his spiritual message as a balm for physical pain—his lips falter over the old word, the well-worn text, how shall we comfort the afflicted? Lo! he is comforted already. He does not want you; God has been with him; go hence, thou faithless preacher of Christ. Behold the strength that is made perfect in weakness, take away thy faithlessness and thyself, thy brother whom thou camest here to comfort needs not thee; in the house of his need another voice has found him out, and even now he makes answer, "I will arise and go to my Father."

But the day and hour are coming for each one of us of which no man knoweth, yet which many of us can even now clearly foresee, for there are doubtless some here who have the seed of their mortal disease within them at this moment. Miserable are you indeed, if at such seasons in this life only you have hope; you have got sleepless, your senses are less acute, your memory has begun to fade; you do not go to business with the old zest and readiness, you see the clerks notice your failing powers, and that makes you angry; your children are married, and perhaps they do not seem to care for you as much as they did once. Your eyes are failing, and when people talk you lose much of their conversation; but the world goes on, it can't stop for you; this makes you sad at times—your old friends, and some who were lately the delight of your failing years, have been snatched from your side in the strength and bloom of youth,—and at last so many have gone, and so few that love you still remain,

"that the dead alone seem living, and the living alone seem dead." And then you begin to think whether it is not time for you to be going too, going to join the throng of the departed, and one day perchance, whilst these thoughts are pressing upon you, the first summons comes, and you are taken to the rest from which you will never rise again.

The world, and life, and time, and all things around you are indeed but shadows now, but as the eye of sense grows dull and the ear fails, and the worn out mantle of the spirit is ready to drop—you, my brother, shall be compassed about with songs of deliverance, for now the voices of the Homeland begin to mingle with your unearthly dreams, and like the prisoner who with a supreme effort struggles to burst his chains, you break free at last, with the glorious words upon your lips, "I will arise and go to my Father."

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

BY THOMAS BLYTON, HONORARY SECRETARY TO THE DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.

THE evidences of spirit identity through the mediumship of Mr. J. Wm. Fletcher are of so marked a nature as to induce me to give my individual experience at the second subscription *séance*, held with him at the Rooms of the Dalston Association, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, London, on Wednesday evening, the 23rd instant. It appears to be a public duty to record any personal experiences tending to solve the problem of spirit identity; to me it is also a pleasure.

Those present at the *séance* were Mr. J. Wm. Fletcher (trance medium), Signor Enrico Rondi, Mrs. George Noakes, Miss Corner, Mr. G. R. Tapp, Mr. John Dawbarn, Captain James, Mrs. Blyton, Mr. J. T. Dales, Miss A. Brittan, and myself. The medium, in the trance state, answered a number of questions bearing upon "Form Manifestations," so-called. Afterwards, under the control of "Winona," each of the sitters was addressed, and the evidences of spirit identity were, as on former occasions, of a remarkable character.

The medium at last appeared to be released from the control of "Winona," who said that a spirit known to me would speak for himself. Mr. Fletcher's body was then convulsed in a painful manner; he exhibited symptoms of choking and vomiting; placed one of his hands across his chest, and held out the other hand towards me in a beseeching manner. On taking hold of the medium's hand, and sitting beside him, the words came—"It is I! Charley! I have been trying to speak to you here before, but have been unable to do so until now. Tell them at home I am often near them, and will try to impress them as to the best course to follow; they must keep together at present, as otherwise it will not be for their benefit. Tell Pollicie it is well with me, although it was hard to pass over." More was said to me in an earnest and impressive manner, the control stating that it was "while playing cricket he sustained the injury from which he at length was freed, by passing away from earth-life." The nature of the communication thus made was amply sufficient to point towards the identity of my wife's brother, Charles Bear, who departed from earth-life in April last from the effects of a ruptured blood-vessel; the injury was inflicted while he was playing at cricket. The symptoms exhibited by the medium, when first passing under the influence of this spirit, were similar to those from which my brother-in-law eventually succumbed. I was also correctly informed of sundry particulars as to his surroundings during his last illness. The statements, of a private family nature, were true in every respect.

"Winona" again controlled the medium, and, in the course of the *séance*, turned to my mother and myself, and then remarked that a spirit who gave the name of "George" was present; that he was my father; he pointed to a portrait, hanging on the wall of the room facing the medium, as that of the spirit, who said that he had not often communicated with my mother or myself since he left earth-life.

I can only add that the statements thus made were literally true.

72, Navarino-road, Dalston, London, E., 24th May, 1877.

THE *Nottingham Journal* is crying out against the habit of reputed men of science refusing to investigate phenomena of nature, in the shape of spiritual manifestations.

THE OPENING OF MUSEUMS ON SUNDAYS.

THE REV. H. R. HAWES, incumbent of St. James's, Marylebone, in the course of a recent sermon, said:—

"I say the time has come for a great change in public feeling about the opening of museums and libraries, and picture galleries for the people on Sundays. These are the great safety valves for the people. It is a shame and a scandal that St. James's Hall, the Albert Hall, and other places, are not ever open, or allowed to be open even for oratorios on Sunday—some not even on Good Friday—and that we seal up our concert rooms when people are longing to come out of their public houses, and to have something elevating and recreating to listen to on Sunday afternoons. And now what prevents it? Are there any Acts of Parliament, for instance, against opening of museums and libraries on Sunday? There are none. The institutions in a provincial town may be opened with the consent of the municipal authorities; the Government institutions may be open by the permission of the Government by a vote in Parliament. We only want public opinion to move in this question. The charter of the British Museum especially provides that it shall be open to the curious and studious at such times as shall suit the public convenience, and the legislation upon this question, or the attempts at it, are very curious to trace. Before the year 1854 Mr. Joseph Hume brought forward a motion in Parliament to get the museums and libraries open on Sundays, and he got only 48 votes. In 1856 Sir Joseph Walmisley brought forward the same motion, and he got only 48 votes. Mr. Peter Taylor, three years ago, brought the question before Parliament, and he got 80 votes. Meanwhile petitions had been got up, and 625,000 names came before Parliament to petition that these places should not be open on Sundays, but when these names were examined they shrank from 625,000 to 150,000, and it was discovered that these consisted chiefly of Sunday-school children, and in many cases they had not signed themselves, but the teachers had signed *en masse* for them. That was the kind of tactics by which the Sabbatarian faction recommended its principles to Parliament. How is it then, that when the common sense of this country is on the side of opening museums and public institutions, we only get 80 votes for Mr. Taylor's motion? An American visitor was seated in the House of Commons to hear Mr. Peter Taylor's last speech, and he was cheered to the echo, and our American friend thought what a liberal nation this is. When the M.P. got up to move the amendment negating Mr. Taylor's views, nobody would hear him, and our friend thought the victory was won. But no! the members cheered Mr. Taylor's speech, but they went into the lobby and voted against him because they were afraid of public opinion. They were afraid to be true to their opinions because of the Ephesian mob outside, and that is why I am constantly saying to you, friends, if you want to get things passed in Parliament: things to elevate the people, things to recreate them, things to do them good in mind and body and spirit, you must make your opinions known, and you must support public measures by the amount of public sympathy you can express, or else Parliament will not move. The enlightened people will go into Parliament, and they will say we believe this, that, and the other, but the times are not ripe; the people do not care about it; the press will not take it up, and Parliament will not take it up; and so people will applaud to the echo an honourable sentiment, and then go into the lobby and vote against it."

A CORRESPONDENT in the Isle of Wight has sent us the details of an unusually absurd attempt on the part of idle spirits to hoax him. They told him to dress himself, head and all, in peculiar garments of corduroy, and to attach a heavy cannon-ball to one of his legs, to facilitate the development of his mediumship. Queer people who depart this life retain their eccentricities in the life beyond, and are not suddenly and miraculously changed into somebody else.

MENDICITY.—Mr. S. C. Hall, F.S.A., is about to issue a work entitled "*Words of Warning*, in verse and prose," addressed to societies for organising charitable relief and suppressing mendicancy. He says:—"That there is a vast deal of deception; that there is a large number of professional beggars, who spend in evil ways the money acquired by evil ways, who can doubt? There are few whose aim is to lessen misery who are not often 'taken in.' [Among other proofs, I have five letters, signed in five different names, from a person who assumed to have been a reporter, a sub-editor, an author; I had sent him money five times before I detected fraud.] But, thank God! there are many who would not, for a thousand times the sums of which they have been defrauded, burden their consciences with the knowledge that timely aid would have preserved a life—perhaps, saved a soul. I question the 'quality of mercy' in a woman, or man, who could boast that she, or he, had never been 'taken in.' A common labourer said to me, 'I don't believe in a man's Christianity if his dog is none the better for it.'"

CONSCIENCE.—Remember for every act committed there is a penalty, and for every tear wrung from the widow and orphan through dishonesty and deceit, there is a time coming when you who have been guilty will call upon the rocks and mountains to hide you from the fires of awakened conscience and a never failing memory. Give a few moments to reflection upon this matter, and see if you can afford to barter away your peace of mind in a never-ending future, for the vain ambition and transitory honours of the present. Your country is suffering to-day, and its perpetuity threatened by these unholy and corrupting influences—the cries of the unfortunate and poor are ascending heavenward asking for relief—and can spirits who see and know the cause refrain from giving expression to thoughts and feelings which should fill the breast and actuate every intelligent person now living in the land, consecrated to freedom by the blood of true patriots?—*Spirit Message (Religio-Philosophical Journal)*.

A VISIT TO ARA-CÆLI, ROME.

BY CATHERINE WOODFORD.

GUIDE-BOOKS diligently acquaint us with all the historical facts connected with this famous old church, and point out the various objects of interest or celebrity contained within its walls; but I merely wish to record the impressions received as a medium whilst visiting a spot which teemed with spiritual influences of a mixed, perplexing, sometimes painful character. The most painful part, perhaps, was, that, as strangers were going round at the same time with the monk who conducted us, I was compelled to restrain or withstand the effect of the crowding, clustering spirits, lest by some external expression I should attract attention, which might have been, under the circumstances surrounding me, an awkward thing to happen right under the nose of his Holiness, or within the cognisance of the party of the "Blacks," as they are called. These Blacks remain loyal to the Pope, opposed to the Government, and keep a very strict watch over the doings of the faithful, whipping them up (especially the converts) to a due observance of all those externals, a slavish adherence to which only belittles the soul, and renders it incapable of progress. It is the old mistake of cherishing the shell when the spirit has escaped. But, as a friend truly said to me once—"That is not the Church; it is the priests. There is nothing in the Church, truly understood, which is not beautiful, spiritual, and worthy of the love of the whole world; *mais ce sont ces fripons là*, fanatics, and adorers of the Pope, and of human power and greatness, who veil her beauty, and lower her; and these men finish by forgetting utterly the *spirit* of our Mother, the Church, and, consequently, the spirit of Jesus Christ."

The Church of Ara-Cœli is built on the summit of the Capitoline Hill, and occupies the site of a Pagan temple—the Temple of Jupiter Feretrius—erected by Romulus in the early dawn of Roman greatness. It occupies the very centre of the scene of some of the most wonderful occurrences in Roman history. The steps leading up to the church are on the "site of the famous staircase which Julius Cæsar descended on his knees, after celebrating his first great Gallic triumph in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Here Valerius, the consul, was killed in the conflict with Herdonius for the possession of the Capitol. Down the ancient steps on this site, Annius, the envoy of the Latins, fell and was nearly killed, after his audacious proposition in the Temple of Jupiter, that the Latins and Romans should become one nation, and have a common senate, and consuls. Here Tiberius Gracchus was killed; and at the base of the grand staircase, now called *La Cordonnata*, Rienzi, the last of the Tribunes, fell covered with wounds, his wife witnessing his death from the window of the burning palace above." (A. C. Hare.)

Here Pagan and Christian reminiscences mingle themselves inextricably, and the very stones throw back to the eyes of a seer, and the senses of a medium, the varied impressions of the past human lives which here seethed tumultuously, like an onflowing, ever restless torrent, making its way out to the broad ocean of eternity. I turned from contemplating the magnificent equestrian bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius, on the spot where Brutus harangued the people after the murder of Julius Cæsar—turned from ancient Rome, where I would fain have lingered to dream. A turn and a few steps plunged me into the midst of modern Christian Rome; and I ascended the stairs leading to Ara-Cœli, with all these impressions and recollections of the stirring events in the history of this magnificent people thrilling my mind. I passed soldiers belonging to the army of Victor Emmanuel, well hated by the Papalini, and lifting a heavy leathern curtain found myself in the darkened, dingy light of the richly decorated old church.

The name of this famous church is generally attributed to an altar erected by Augustus to commemorate the Delphic oracle respecting the coming of Jesus, which is still recognised in the ancient Catholic hymn of the "*Dies iræ*," where occurs this line—

"*Teste David, cum Sybilla.*"

This altar bore the inscription, "*Ara Primogeniti Dei*," and is said to have been erected on the site of the chapel in the middle of the east transept, now dedicated to St. Helena,

who is believed to have had the honour of transporting from Jerusalem all that remained of the True Cross, and the Crown of Thorns. After this fashion has Christianity stepped into the footprints of Paganism, and possessed itself of shrines, temples, altars, and the wealth of rare marbles, statues, and bronzes, formerly dedicated to the service of heathen deities; and not only is a curious subject of reflection offered to the mind of the beholder, but upon the panoramic scenes of the great past succeeding each other before the eye of a seer, is imprinted many a marvellous lesson of the unfoldment of human souls for heaven.

Crowding and clustering thick come the varied and mixed spirit influences, some sweet, heavenly, and uplifting, others depressing, saddening, and perplexing; but the darkened church at midday, when no incense pervades the aisles, is redolent of fusty smells, which remind one of old clothes.

I felt that to lift up the leathern curtain hanging over the door, and let the purer air from outside flow in, and drive out the stifling air, and perhaps the conglomerations of old and subtle mesmeric auras, apparently here never disturbed, would be a great improvement. Trying not to smell, I followed the Franciscan monk who guided us, feeling that he would be the better for a new robe.

He was smiling, respectful, good-natured and ignorant, knowing nothing but the narrow life of a friar; living for heaven by profession, and crushing, stultifying, and emasculating his spirit in the mistaken process. He refreshed himself frequently with copious pinches of snuff, which, collected in the top of his nose, greatly interfered with the clear delivery of his well-conned lessons of description. I pitied the human weakness, which in the midst of asceticism, compassionately spared itself this stimulating luxury as a relief from the self-imposed deadening dulness of such a life. He told us of the twenty-two ancient columns of cipolino, white marble, and Egyptian granite, collected from various pagan edifices; and following him we stepped over a floor of the ancient mosaic known as *Opus Alexandrinum*; we stood before interesting monuments, and listened to marvellous stories; but my thoughts were ever busy with the friar, his life, his mind, his spiritual condition—the spiritual condition of his brethren, of all monks and friars. I thought of the dirty, wretched-looking creatures I had seen and encountered in the streets of Rome, and hanging about the churches, attired in their long brown robes, with sandalled feet, shaggy beards, and tonsured heads; I thought of the lives given up in this mistaken way as meet offerings to God—the God who gives life for enjoyment, progress, and usefulness; and I thought that though many be the prayers, and though the life be one of prayer, yet the one great prayer of useful labour in the vast arena of human life, loving and serving, is not said. Powerfully to my mind was presented a picture of decrepitude in the church from such abuses, and I wished that some angel's wing might sweep away all such deformities.

Thicker and thicker grew the spirit influences as we followed the monk; my head ached from them, and my limbs dragged. Now and then a sweet, loving voice was heard, and a bright form shone at my side; but it was only a momentary relief, for the cloud was thick. I felt confused and dazed, and had an oppressive sense of old things. All at once a vision came before my eyes of red flames licking and wrapping themselves round these noble columns, devouring the gold and crimson hangings, melting the golden candlesticks, spreading over the altars, and defacing the frescoes in the gilded dome. I wondered why such a vision should suddenly have come before me, and at the same time a voice said in my ear, "Would it not be dreadful if such a conflagration were to take place?" I shrank back appalled, and answered, "Oh, I hope *never*!"

Still following the monk we passed before the grand altar, and all my poetic, æsthetic feelings were shocked by the sight of a fat, animal-like, stupid old monk sitting at his ease in a chair at some little distance before the altar, where my own spirit felt ready to go up to heaven upon waves of the highest inspiration. It was such a sudden descent from the sublime to the ridiculous that I could not help a little smile curling my lips, especially as the old fellow wore an air of such superb self-satisfaction, almost command, and seemed to survey me with such supreme contempt, setting

me down no doubt for a benighted Protestant. It was the same look I have seen Protestant ladies, just arrived in Rome, give to Roman Catholic priests. Turning my back, and shutting him out of my sight, glad to forget such a loathsome incongruity, I passed on in front of the chapel of St. Helena, and from hence loving arms seemed extended to me, and I could have believed St. Helena herself stood before me, but the sight of her was not vouchsafed to me in such an unfavourable atmosphere.

We stood before the chapel of Santa Croce, the burial place of the Ponziani family, and the scene of the ecstatic elevation of one of Rome's favourite saints, Francesca Romana. It occurred at the burial of her sister-in-law, and is so remarkable as a spiritual manifestation that I will here transcribe the story.

"The mortal remains of Vanozza Ponziani (sister-in-law of Francesca) were laid in the church of Ara-Coeli, in the chapel of Santa Croce. The Roman people resorted there in crowds to behold once more their loved benefactress—the mother of the poor, the consoler of the afflicted. All strove to carry away some little memorial of one who had gone about among them doing good, and during the three days which preceded the interment, the concourse did not abate. On the day of the funeral Francesca knelt on one side of the coffin, and in sight of all the crowd she was wrapt in ecstasy. They saw her body lifted from the ground, and a seraphic expression in her uplifted face. They heard her murmur several times with an indescribable emphasis the word *Quando? Quando?* When all was over, she still remained immovable; it seemed as if her soul had risen on the wings of prayer, and followed Vanozza's spirit into the realms of bliss. At last her confessor ordered her to rise and go and attend on the sick. She instantly complied, and walked away to the hospital, which she had founded, apparently unconscious of everything about her, and only roused from her trance by the habit of obedience which, in or out of ecstasy, never forsook her" (Lady Georgiana Fullerton's *Life of Sta. Francesca Romana*). From other stories related of Santa Francesca, she must have been a wonderful medium.

At length we stood before the *Presepio* (manger), where the little painted doll, called the *Sanctissimo Bambino*, in honour of the Infant Jesus, is exhibited during Epiphany, in an appropriate surrounding scene, with images of the Virgin, Joseph, shepherds, women, sheep, and goats. The people flock to see this childish representation with the greatest delight, and innumerable prayers are offered up. The little scene doubtless helps to strengthen in the minds of the more ignorant of the people the reality of the birth-time of Jesus, and may be excused as at least innocent, although certainly too paltry and petty to engage the attention of developed minds.

The Bambino, when requested, is taken in its coffer in a carriage to the houses of the sick, and is said to perform many miracles. We were conducted to see it, carefully put away in a safe shrine all to itself, somewhere near the sacristy. At the top of an altar, in the room where the Bambino is usually kept, ornamental doors were made to glide apart, after having been unlocked by a monk who carried the keys at his girdle; then, back of these, another door was unlocked, and then a coffer was taken out and unlocked. In this room I was almost thrown into a trance, but successfully resisted the influences, although at the cost of pain to myself. Strangers were present, and I did not desire to make an exhibition of myself. No doubt I should have been set down as a peculiar woman, half-mad, or subject to fits. When the ugly little Bambino was exposed to sight, I was utterly astonished, and violently repelled by the apparent superstition of believing this image to be miraculous; but a powerful spirit influence came from it to me. Laying my fingers lightly upon it, the feeling streamed into me of that power which had gradually been concentrated and intensified through the lapse of years into this carved and painted billet of wood by surrounding spirits, aided by the faith of individuals on earth. I felt it had been used as an instrument of good to the sick and suffering, and although it might be the work of fanatic, earth-bound spirits operating upon and through the minds of beings upon the earth-plane like-minded with themselves, yet the intention was to trans-

mit good, and this feeling had doubtless drawn down blessings from above in answer to earnest prayer for the restoration of the sick. But the small, carved stone idols of the savage may be also powerfully endowed, as I have sensibly felt in a shop where such curiosities are sold, by taking them into my hand. I cannot say the sensations are comfortable, for the more ignorant and low the influences hanging about an object so endowed, the more painful to the medium. The Bambino did not give me pain, only a gentle compassion for the humble, child-like faith which could not yet rise to higher practices and reception of things spiritual. My heart responded to the fond love of simple women and grateful children that had been lavished upon this innocent little painted wooden doll, upon whose silken robe were sewn numberless jewelled finger-rings, lockets, and orders, the offerings of loving hearts thankful for favours received. Following the example of others present, I even stooped and kissed the Bambino lying in its sumptuous, silken-lined strong box, with thanks welling up in my heart for the human pain and suffering relieved by good spirits by means of this unattractive representation of the infant Jesus. At the same time came to me a feeling which had frequently come to me before, that certain low, fanatic spirits present looked upon me with the jealousy that children might feel at the presence of one who had come to take away a loved possession. My kiss was not approved by some of the spirit-guardians of Il Santissimo Bambino. In short, I was the innocent, unconscious representative of that light of a higher knowledge which must eventually remove from their ignorantly fond grasp these fusty old toys, and they resented my presence and repelled what might come with me, loving their darkness better. Spirits of the same type, narrow, bigoted, fanatic spirits, who cover us with a cloud, and enslave the minds of those they attach themselves to, have frequently made me suffer intensely in Rome. Their opposition has felt to me as a thick wall surrounding me; an atmosphere of hatred seemed to be about me, in which my spirit felt stifling; I would grow depressed, weary, with a sorrow unutterable at heart, causing actual physical pain. Sometimes I have seen them as a cloud hanging low down in the air, the front of which would take the shape of a woman, with others clustering behind her, looking at me with glowering eyes and malignant expression. I would speak to them with the gentlest kindness, repeating the beautiful words of Jesus on the Mount, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."—Even so will I do unto you: let the power of love operate also upon your hearts, and turn you kindly unto me!" and regarding them with gentle firmness, I have seen the faces droop with shame, and the cloud dispersed.

Puzzled by the strange feelings which had beset me at Ara-Coeli, on the evening of the same day, I took up my pencil to see if any of my spirit friends could throw any light on the subject. I could not tell at that time, although I have gained experience since, why in a holy place like a church I should have felt the contrary to the calm sweet influences I might have looked for. The following communication was given through my hand in answer to my inquiries:—

"The old monastery* to which Ara-Coeli belongs, like a good many others, is the haunt of wretched creatures, who encompass, and hang about the walls like so many bat-like existences, and oppress the minds of the living with sadness and weariness of life, or sink them into the dullness of an almost animal existence, which goes on from day to day in the same spiritless routine, without reflection. Elementaries throng there, but spirits of earth make it an abode too—the spirits of the lower orders of departed monks, and other weary, dark, ignorant souls, who have fed on bigotry all their lives. It is a place of rest and peace to them, for they hate the light of higher spiritual knowledge, and cling about the old venerated relics, and graves. I do not deny that there are also good, pure, and holy influences there; there are many. You know God's blue sky stretches, and the pure air blows over the infected marsh, over the pestilential graveyard, and so there, where so many of the weary infesting

spirits cling, the sweet angelic influences descend each day, blessing the ceremonies, and consecrating the church to the worship of God. These are felt by minds prepared, and able to receive them; but to the worshippers who are sunk in the grossness of the flesh, and whose prayers are mere empty formulæ, they are not appreciable.

"Why did you think of fire when you entered the church, and see a conflagration? Life grows stagnant—too stagnant here. Human beings stultify themselves, and instead of advancing, grow downwards, or backwards, or become fossilised, and do not grow at all. Then comes some grand cleansing, electrifying convulsion of nature, or society, and by one terrific sweep old encumbering things are borne into the whirlpool or abyss, and the earth is relieved of a weight. Society, stunned, knows not what to think; but at length the lessons sought to be conveyed sink into the minds of men, and the finger of God is seen.

"A great, and, as it is called, miraculous power, has been bestowed upon that ugly little wooden doll, called after the Infant Jesus, and is preserved about it by spirit power and protection. It has, indeed, been the means, in their hands, of removing disease, because, by taking it to the bedsides of the suffering, new influences are brought to bear upon the sufferers, and the old diseased influences are dispelled. So a powerful, but low and painful, influence hangs about the idols to which the African savage pins his faith. These spirits are near the earth; they establish themselves as tutelary deities of mortals, and concentrate their power about and in certain material objects devoted to them. But I do not mean to rank Roman Catholic spirits, nor Roman Catholics, with the low spirits that respond to the African worshippers; they are certainly higher, but not yet high enough.

"You have now had a personal and painful experience that what B. wrote through F.'s hand about old houses, and the way spirits continue to linger in their old places of abode, is true. Sometimes an earthly conflagration is essential to clear all these things away, unless education teaches men to clear them away of themselves. We shall show you the beauty of the Catholic Church, but we shall also unerringly point out her deformities. Every picture has its reverse side: man progresses ever, and spiritual truth is ever developing into higher expressions of beauty. What you receive to-day is good; but to-morrow, treading upon to-day, you will rise to a higher round of the ladder. To remain in the state and condition of to-day would only deform and deaden the spirit."

Rome, May 23rd, 1877.

DR. SLADE'S OFFER TO PROFESSOR LANKESTER.

THE above offer has not been published by the London daily papers, and this is in accordance with the general want of principle displayed by most of them from first to last in presenting a one-sided view of the case. It has been strongly urged upon us that the letters of Messrs. Simmons and Slade in last week's *Spiritualist*, should be inserted by subscription as an advertisement in some of the more influential daily and weekly papers; the expense, it is said, would probably amount to between £1 and £1 10s. each paper. If it is generally desired to carry out this plan, Mr. W. H. Harrison, of 38, Great Russell-street, London, is willing to promote the public convenience by expending all sums sent to him within the next few days for the purpose, in the insertion of such advertisements to the full extent the subscriptions permit, and will publish the results next week.

SPIRITUALISM IN MARYLEBONE.—Last Sunday night the quarterly tea meeting of the Marylebone Society of Inquirers into Spiritualism was held at the Quebec Hall, Great Quebec-street, London, under the presidency of Mr. Charles Hunt during the first part of the evening, and afterwards of Mrs. Hallock. There was a good attendance. In the course of the evening a resolution was passed expressing confidence in the reality of Dr. Slade's mediumship, and approval of his recent "liberal, honest, and excellent" offer to Professor Lankester. The report read by Mr. Charles White, the honorary secretary, set forth that the society was £13 5s. in debt, partly incurred in the purchase of permanent stock. Subscriptions towards paying off the debt were made in the room, and it was resolved to get up a picnic and a concert to clear off the remainder. Messrs. Aplin, Ashman, Davids, Drake, Hocker, and Maynard addressed the meeting.

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

SEANCES WITH MR. J. W. FLETCHER.

Two impromptu *séances* have taken place recently at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, with Mr. J. W. Fletcher, the trance medium, who has recently arrived in this country from the United States. The accumulation of evidence tends to show that when Mr. Fletcher passes into the trance state in any mixed company, including a majority whom he has never seen, and could not have anticipated meeting, he gives information about their departed friends, even to the extent of spelling unusual names.

On the two following occasions Mr. Fletcher had not been engaged to give *séances*, but the sittings were improvised at a few minutes' notice.

On the first occasion the entranced medium told Mr. Serjeant Cox that his daughter, who gave the name of "Florence," was near him, and was "pushing up his hair" in a childish, affectionate way. Mr. Serjeant Cox admitted that he had had a daughter named Florence, who in earth-life was addicted to the playful practice stated. He then put questions in the endeavour to ascertain whether the revelation arose from the reading of his past thoughts, but without obtaining a decisive solution of the problem.

Last Tuesday night, at another impromptu *séance*, Mr. Fletcher told a lady, whom he had never seen before, the nature of her family surroundings, and told her that she had recently had to take the name of her departed mother. She admitted this to be true.

After telling Mrs. Makdougall Gregory that certain visitors would not come so soon as she expected, the medium turned to Prince Albert of Solms, and told him that he saw a spirit near him who gave the name of "William with four strokes (IIII.) after it" (probably IV.) who was related to him. Then he saw another person, who took him into a field where several were present, and he seemed to kill another man, but not in a war. The one killed seemed to be the brother of Prince Albert. Did he understand this?

The listener replied that he did.

A few other particulars were given.

Mrs. Wiseman, of Orme-square, Bayswater, was then accurately told some details about her private affairs.

Mrs. Ramsay, whom the medium had not seen till a few minutes before the *séance* began, was informed that a spirit who gave the name of "Mootie" was near her; that "Mootie" had been a long time in spirit life, and had departed from earth in another country, the name of which began with "I." and ended with "A."

Mrs. Ramsay said that this was true, and that the child had died in India. A long message was then whispered to her by the entranced medium, and she stated that it was entirely accurate.

Two other ladies were given truthful information about their departed relatives.

A spirit was described as standing near Mr. Harrison, who was unable to recognise the same.

Other spirits were stated to be in proximity to an Ambassador to the English Court and his wife; the recognition seemed to be partial.

The medium being by this time tired, awoke.

While the medium was in the trance state, the messages were claimed to be given by an Indian spirit who controlled him, named Winona.

The new edition of Gregory's *Animal Magnetism* will be out in a few days.

THE SLADE TESTIMONIAL.—This testimonial still lies at the offices of the National Association of Spiritualists for signature by any who have witnessed the phenomena exhibited through Dr. Slade's mediumship. As it is desired shortly to forward it to Dr. Slade, those who have not yet signed are requested to kindly call and do so.

ILLNESS OF MR. WM. TEBB.—We regret to hear from Mrs. Tebb that that faithful worker in the cause of Spiritualism, Mr. William Tebb, has been suffering from a severe illness. She, however, adds that he is recovering, and hopes to leave home sometime this week. She says:—"He has had fearful suffering from abscess in the ear, and neuralgia, and only obtained partial relief last Friday. We have good hope now that he will begin to recover his strength in a bracing air. We do not think he would have borne the pain so well without daily treatment from Mr. Ashman, who has given us the best help in his power, both night and day, during this great trial."

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE LAST SOIREE OF THE SEASON.

ON Wednesday next, June 6th, the National Association of Spiritualists will hold its last *conversazione* for this season, at 38, Great Russell-street, London. Miss Ella Dietz and Mr. Dietz have kindly promised to give some recitations from Mrs. Barrett Browning and other poets. All who have listened to either of these accomplished readers will hail this opportunity of hearing them once more, as it is only on rare occasions that they are able to spare time from their professional engagements for the pleasure and benefit of their friends.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

LAST Tuesday afternoon the third annual general meeting of the National Association of Spiritualists was held at 38, Great Russell-street, London, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read and confirmed, Miss Kislingbury read the annual report, which is printed upon another page. Its adoption was moved by Mr. J. J. Morse, seconded by Mr. Frederick Collingwood, and passed unanimously.

The President then announced the uncontested election, or, in most cases, the re-election, of the following members of the Council:—Mr. J. T. Dodd, Mr. J. Lamont, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Newton Crosland, Mr. A. E. Lovell, Mr. J. White, Mr. H. Withall, Mr. B. Coleman, Mr. W. B. Mawson, Mr. F. A. Binney, Mrs. Strawbridge, Mr. R. Pearce, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mr. W. P. Adshead, Mrs. Nosworthy, Mrs. Morell Theobald, Mr. W. N. Arnfield, Dr. K. Cook, Mr. C. Reinners, Mr. T. P. Barkas, Dr. Geo. Wyld, Rev. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A., Mrs. Louisa Lowe, Mr. G. F. Green, Mr. C. Pearson. Total, twenty-five.

Captain James moved the re-election of Mr. J. H. André and Mr. Henry Cook as auditors. This was seconded by Mr. Potts, and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dawson Rogers wished to make a motion not on the programme, to the effect that the meeting tendered sympathy to Dr. Carter Blake in respect to his severe and protracted illness, and hoped soon to have the pleasure of seeing him again at the meetings of the Association. This was seconded by Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, and passed unanimously.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Alexander Calder for his able occupancy of the office of President during the past year; Mr. Calder had won the respect of all Spiritualists who knew him by his action and work in relation to Spiritualism. This was seconded by Mr. E. T. Bennett and passed unanimously, with acclamation.

Mr. Calder said: The thanks which you are pleased to greet me with, are more appropriately due to your Council and Secretary for the very admirable way in which they have performed their various duties. It is to them that we must ascribe the largest portion of our success. It must be very gratifying to us that our Association is obtaining a firm footing. It is pleasing to know that our effective numbers were never so large as at present. Our prosperity is a sign of the solidity and expansion of a very important work. It was expected that the late aggressions against Spiritualism would have done injury, but we are now in a position to affirm that in some respects they have done good. Besides attracting to our proceedings a considerable share of public attention, they have induced some of the most gifted thinkers among Spiritualists to join our ranks. In thus casting in their lot with us, they have exhibited a creditable magnanimity, and they have set a bright example to other unreasoning ones, yet outside. I said unreasoning ones, for the true reasoner is full of goodness, and asks why he should hate? It is a pity that all Spiritualists do not see the advantage to the common cause which flows from the simple principle of unity. It is more than singular that there should be some who seem to prefer disunion, and a few, a very few, who, assuming an unwarrantable responsibility, even preach strife. And yet it is but a truism to assert that the fruits derivable to all from a state of unity are far sweeter and more enduring than any obtainable under a perilous course of strife. Then a word as to our work. When we consider the rampant attitude of Materialists, and the highly degrading forms their thoughts and their works are liable sometimes to assume, I feel deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of our existence as a society. The future of Spiritualism is intimately connected with our Association—did I say of Spiritualism, I might add of religion; and when I say religion, I might have added of society also. For we lead as it were the forlorn hope of safety. We belong to the advanced guard, battling against error for the foundation truths of nature. While other religious systems are sliding, and there rages outside the churches a controversy destructive to some of the noblest doctrines of Christianity, it is chiefly in the Spiritualist ranks that the sturdiest defenders of some of Christ's great truths are found. It is here we hold firmly the knowledge of eternal life; not as a truth learned in boyhood and held as others hold it, by tacit acceptance, but our observations are based on personal experience, and this gives a value and charm to our faith. The proclamation of this truth, if we had no other, is a sufficient reason for our existence as an Association, and you may be sure that amidst all the societies which meet at this period, however humble our efforts, none can more appropriately claim a nobler work in the cause of humanity than the National Association of Spiritualists.

Mr. Glendinning moved a vote of thanks to the members of the committees, adding that Mr. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Rogers, Mrs. Maltby, and others whom he could not mention without having the list of names of the members before him, had been especially active.

Mr. Harrison, as a black sheep who was a member of but one committee, which he had not attended for a long time, seconded this. The other members of the committees had been most active, especially Mr. Fitz-Gerald. He rose also to respectfully ask if the Council would take into consideration the question whether it would not be to the public interests of the Spiritualism of future years, to decree now that no person

in any way commercially connected with Spiritualism should ever be eligible for election upon the Council.

Mr. Rogers thought that Mr. Harrison had intended to suggest that no person who received payment for services rendered to the Association, should have a seat upon the Council. He considered that this would be a good principle to establish. He would try to do it.

Mr. J. J. Morse thought the same, although such action would affect his position as a member of the Council.

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Kislingbury, the secretary, for the excellent way in which she had fulfilled her duties. Mr. Fitz-Gerald seconded this, it was passed with acclamation, and the meeting broke up.

THE STATISTICS IN THE THIRD ANNUAL REPORT.

LAST Tuesday the third annual meeting of the National Association of Spiritualists was held, and it is gratifying to find this efficient organisation in so healthy a state; it is doing good and efficient work, is free from inharmoniousness, and free from debt. During the year closing with the third annual report, 110 new members have been elected; during that and previous years several lukewarm non-paying members had been on the books, and these, after due notice to themselves, were recently struck off *en masse* to the number of 53; in addition to these 25 members resigned during the year chiefly for private reasons, and 3 have been removed by the finger of earthly death. Notwithstanding this reduction to the extent of 81, the new and efficient members have not only replaced them, but given a substantial increase of 29. The retiring 81 being so largely composed of non-paying or small-paying members, cause little reduction in the receipts of the Association, but the 110 efficient members who more than replace them, have largely added to the receipts. The average number of members elected monthly in 1875 was 6; in 1876 it amounted to 12; and in the year just reported upon, to between 9 and 10; but the latter have been almost entirely paying members, whilst in the previous year more honorary and non-efficient members were elected. Thus the average monthly increase of efficient members for the last two years is probably the same. The figures just given do not agree with those in the report, which erroneously show a decrease of 40 members during the year, instead of an increase of 29. On inquiry, we learn that the actual number this year had been compared with the registered number of last year, which included those who had resigned previously. Probably some official correction will be made next week. Several of the older members have increased their subscriptions, so that altogether there has been foundation for some recent talk about abolishing the remainder of the three years' Guarantee Fund. In all probability, however, the rest of the fund will be required this year, in accordance with the original calculation; but next year the Association will probably be in a flourishing state, solely from the ordinary income arising from members' subscriptions; and it is a great result to have established such a large and useful public institution in so short a time. America, with its numerous Spiritualists, has not been able to do the same, nor is there any other Spiritualist organisation in Europe at all equal to the one in our midst.

MR. E. W. WALLIS, trance medium, is about to visit Newcastle to give some inspirational public addresses.

MISS FAIRLAMB is in Edinburgh, giving *séances* to a private circle of inquirers, consisting of nine sitters.

DR. CARTER BLAKE is improving in health, and, we are glad to state is now considered to be out of danger.

THE BARQUE *M. A. Dixon*, Captain Corner, has passed St. Helena on her homeward voyage, as telegraphed from Madeira. Mrs. Corner (Florence Cook) is on her way home in the same ship.

MR. W. EGLINTON, in consequence of continued ill-health, leaves London for Malvern to-morrow, and intends, when sufficiently restored, to visit towns in the south-west of England, and in South Wales.

MR. BENJAMIN COLEMAN'S interesting pamphlet, *The Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England*, is now out of print. Messrs. Colby and Rich, of Boston, United States, may possibly have a few copies on hand.

MRS. WELDON'S ORPHANAGE.—Mrs. Weldon has recently taken four additional deserted children into her Orphanage at Tavistock House, Tavistock-square, London. Mr. J. N. T. Martheze has subscribed £10 towards the Orphanage; Mr. W. J. Colville has made two or three collections after his *séances* in its aid; and several Spiritualists have sent orders for a new book of music which Mrs. Weldon is about to bring out, and for which she wants subscribers.

A SERMON ON HARRIET MARTINEAU.—A few days ago the Rev. H. R. Haweis preached a sermon at St. James's Church, Westmoreland-street, near Portland-place, London, on Harriet Martineau. After speaking of her great nobility of character in devoting her whole life and powers to the good of others, which is the truest religion, he said that the defect of her mind was to reject all belief in that which she could not wholly comprehend or master. This defect, Mr. Haweis went on to say, is peculiarly characteristic of the present age, thinking men being so weary of theological controversy that they will have nothing to do with what they term the "unknowable," forgetting that knowledge and religious belief, though each occupying a distinct domain, do not preclude one another, and each serve a separate purpose. He enjoined on his hearers, as the highest Christianity, to do such work as that done by Harriet Martineau, for "though she could not get hold of God, God had got hold of her." Nevertheless, he said, a "conscious" faith in Him was the most desirable state to arrive at. The church was quite full on the occasion, and, as usual, a large proportion of the congregation consisted of Spiritualists, who regularly attend the services at St. James's, and form a large proportion of the seat-holders.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE following is the third annual Report of the National Association of Spiritualists, read by Miss Kislingbury, the secretary, at the annual general meeting of the members last Tuesday night at 38, Great Russell-street, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—In reviewing the proceedings of the Association during the past year, your Council feels that there is every reason for congratulation on the progress that has been made in this, the third year of its existence. In point of numbers, the increase of members has not been particularly great, for though we are always adding steadily to our ranks, the balance is kept very nearly even by the withdrawal of those who, from indifference, or more frequently from private reasons, no longer care to be publicly associated with the Spiritualist body. At our last general meeting we reported 442 members. Since then as many as 81 have been erased from our books—53 from default of payment, 25 from resignation, and 3, viz., Mr. W. E. Bassett, Mr. Andrew Leighton, and Mr. C. T. Hook, from removal by death. So that, though our numbers now stand at 402, we have in fact had during the year a considerable increase of effective members.

By far the largest part of our reinforcements have come from the ranks of the inquirers who have been admitted to the free circles for investigators. These circles, first started last spring by Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester, have been this year continued by the united liberality of that gentleman and Mr. Martin Smith, and have proved of inestimable benefit. Since the beginning of this year they have been attended by over 200 persons, about 80 of whom have been inquirers. With a very few exceptions, these *séances*, always held under strict test conditions, and very rarely in the dark, have been successful in their results, and being conducted in an orderly manner, with honest and straightforward mediums, they have given general satisfaction to those who have been privileged to attend them.

The second great feature in the progress of the Association is the growth of the library, which has been, if not rapidly, at least steadily increasing. The permanent library, the actual property, by purchase or presentation, of the Association, has now reached 444 volumes, mostly standard works on Spiritualism, mesmerism, science, and philosophy. The lending library, which was formed about this time last year, now consists of 105 volumes, chiefly duplicates of those in the permanent library. This branch is made great use of by new members and subscribers, and the loan of books is now being extended to the societies in alliance with us. There are also in the library 138 volumes, valuable works, which have been lent for an indefinite period, chiefly by Mr. David Wilson, Mr. Chinnery, and Mr. Martin Smith. The whole collection of books, therefore, amounts to 687 volumes, 549 of these being the property of the Association. In addition, we must also reckon a large collection of pamphlets and periodicals, the more valuable of which are being bound from time to time, as the funds of the Association will permit. There still remain a large number of works bearing directly or indirectly upon Spiritualism and kindred subjects, which are not yet on our shelves, and which it would be highly desirable to place there. A gentleman has lately offered £1 towards a fund for increasing the library, if eleven other members can be found to join him, and we sincerely hope to see this plan worked out, since it should certainly be one of the objects of this Association to have in its library the best and most complete collection of works on Spiritualism and the science of man.

The amount of foreign literature has increased largely during the year, and our relations with Spiritualists in foreign countries have been strengthened by the exchange of periodicals and correspondence. The Spanish society at Madrid, and another at Mexico, have entered into friendly alliance with us, and our bond of friendship with the French Spiritists has been drawn closer by the visits of your president and secretary to Paris during the troubles that befell the editor of the *Revue Spirite*. Since that time advertisements of the National Association and particulars of our reading room are inserted regularly in the French and

Spanish journals, and visitors from the Continent frequently find their way to our offices.

Returning to the commencement of our Association's year, the earliest event we have to chronicle is the election of our beloved and honoured chairman, Mr. Alexander Calder, officer of the Order of the French Legion of Honour, as first president of the Association. His devotion to the duties of the Council and to the general interests of our body must be acknowledged by all with pride and thankfulness.

The next event of importance was the arrival in England of the famous slate-writing medium, Dr. Slade, on his way to fulfil an engagement with the St. Petersburg Committee of Enquiry into the Phenomena of Spiritualism. As soon as the news of his intended prosecution by Professor Lankester was made known, Mr. W. H. Harrison called a meeting of Spiritualists, from whom a committee was chosen to concert measures for the defence of Dr. Slade, and other mediums who might be attacked. Although this was not a committee of the Association, its plans were approved and aided by your Council as far as circumstances would allow; the meetings of the committee were held at these offices, and at a special meeting of the Council on the 29th of December, it was resolved, "That a memorial be sent to the Home Secretary, signed by your president, remonstrating against the action of the Government in conducting the prosecution on appeal." Copies of this address were sent to all the members of the Legislature, to all the Middlesex magistrates, to various members of the Royal Society, and of other public bodies. The result is known to you all. The celebrated table, now become historical, which was used by Dr. Slade, has lately been received at our offices, where its innocence of trick arrangements can be tested by all investigators. On the 31st of January this year, when fresh proceedings had been instituted against Dr. Slade, resolutions of protest were passed at a second special meeting of the Council, and were inserted in the daily papers. These were followed by articles in the *Examiner* and other journals, unfair and unfavourable as need hardly be said, but which at any rate helped to give publicity to our existence as a united body of Spiritualists, of greater strength and extension than had hitherto been supposed.

We have further to notice the meetings for the reading of papers and for discussions, which have been held fortnightly under the auspices of the Research Committee. Papers of great value and interest have been contributed by Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Dr. Carter Blake, Mr. W. H. Harrison, Mr. Stainton Moses, and others, and the discussions have fairly made up in interest what was lacking in point of attendance, the numbers present having been sometimes discouragingly few.

The Conference held in February last was well attended, and the papers were of a superior order. They were contributed by Mr. T. P. Barkas, Mr. T. Shorter, Mr. R. Pearce, Mr. W. H. Harrison, Mr. A. J. Smart, Mrs. Lowe, and Mr. G. F. Green.

The *soirées* have also been continued monthly since November last, and have on the whole been successful, though not very well attended of late. Great credit is due to the friends who have contributed to the pleasure of these social meetings, especially to the Misses Withall, who have so admirably carried out the musical arrangements. On the last occasion in particular the special musical entertainment was highly successful; the sum of £5 0s. 6d. was realised, and was contributed to the fund for the alterations in the reading room. The last event has been the recent substitution of folding doors for the partition wall between the reading and the Council rooms; the alteration has been successfully carried out, and it is agreed by all to be a great improvement to the appearance as well as to the comfort of the rooms.

Among those who have done special service to the Association, in addition to the liberal contributors above named, we must mention Dr. Carter Blake and Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, who have given an unusual amount of time and labour to the work of the Research, Library, and *Séance* Committees.

A statement of the financial position at the close of the year 1876 is appended to this report, duly audited. It will

be seen that the sum of £120 was contributed by special donation to the guarantee fund. At the beginning of the present year a circular was issued by the Council, at the advice of the Finance Committee, requesting members to raise their subscriptions in order that no call should be made on the guarantors this year. About twenty-five members have responded to this appeal, leaving still a large deficiency to be filled up. We would therefore urge upon those members who have not yet paid their subscriptions for this year, not to allow the burden to be borne by a generous few, nor to leave an Association whose work they believe to be of great importance to the world, in any want of means to carry out efficiently that which it has undertaken. The following is an account of the income and expenditure for the year 1876:—

RECEIPTS.

Cr.		£	s.	d.
Balance from last account	...	57	5	8
Subscriptions	...	257	13	11
Donations	...	23	8	0
Guarantee Fund	...	120	15	0
		401	16	11
Balance from soirees	...	5	15	9½

£164 18 4½

EXPENDITURE.

Dr.		£	s.	d.
Rent, Rates, Taxes, &c.	...	143	12	0
Less received for Rooms sub-let	...	19	3	3
		124	8	9
Salaries and Wages	...	204	14	0
Printing and Stationery	...	30	16	6½
Advertising	...	29	3	0
Postage	...	19	2	8
Housekeeping and Coals	...	7	7	8½
Sundries	...	2	13	6½
		89	3	5½

£153 12 3½

Library Expenses	...	22	8	1
Furniture and Repairs	...	12	18	0

£165 12 3½

Balance in hand, viz.:—				
Cash	...	£19	4	5
Petty cash	...	0	3	1
Stock on sale	...	5	1	3
		£24	8	9

Less due to Séance Committee	£9	19	0
" " Research	2	0	8
" " Provincial	1	3	0
	£13	2	8

11 6 1

£164 18 4½

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers.]

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION.

SIR,—Mr. Green's opinion on the mode of arriving at the foundations of the Christian religion, viz., "personal spiritual experience," and "authority on the authentic experience of others," may be correct, but the conclusions and principles he draws from it are most uncertain. How can a science or philosophy of "religion" be defined by "the light which is given to every man," seeing that that light is variable in each? It is extraordinary that the "light" given us by Christ, the undoubted Founder of the Christian religion by the authority of undeniable historical evidence, should not be set up as to lighten "every man that cometh into the world" without controversy. What private judgment can impugn that "authority?" "The rotten superstructures" that have been raised upon that foundation have been caused by those very varied lights of men's own devices. But my object is to ask Mr. Green if "it is the special mission or result of Spiritualism to throw a light on the foundations of religious belief," why this has not been done by the communications of Swedenborg from the spirit world, which attested the infallibility of the Bible, and gave mankind its spiritual sense, showing its relation to the whole world? This assumption of infallibility is given by Spiritualism. If the experience of other mediums controvert its truth, which "light" is to shine as the guiding star? "The comparison of authorities" would surely give the "rational foundation" to the double evidence, and the attempt to "relegate the Bible to the place of the fables and mythologies of the past" be shown to be the destruction of the life-giving Word of God.

F. C. P.

ARCHBISHOP HUGHES AS A SPIRIT.

SIR,—As you have had the goodness to publish (March 30th) my account of the remarkable *slate-written* communications received by me in San Francisco on the 21st and 22nd January last, from the late Archbishop Hughes, of New York, on Spiritualism as a religion in general, and specially on the point of the conception and birth of Christ, I deem it proper, and due to the subject, to follow it with a further one received by me here in Paris from the same eminent Catholic prelate three days

ago, through Madame R., the lady through whom came all the Publius Syrus communications in Latin, and various others (Spanish, Portuguese, and Hebrew), which appeared in *The Spiritualist* last year. I will only remark that she is a devout Catholic, though I am not so a bit. At Firman's I could only see my mother materialised, nor always that. That has been a great blessedness, but I naturally wanted also to hear from her, as I used to do here before. I went to Madame R. for that purpose, to which was added the desire of asking Publius Syrus for a certain explanation (which, by the way, he gave, though that is not the question now). I accordingly invoked my mother, so far as strong desire and appeal may constitute what you may call invocation. Instead of the expected name came that of "Hughes." And this was what he wrote, through the rapid hand of the medium, who writes what she hears. I translate:—

HUGHES: *I come, friend, to confirm to you my communications, and to give you, as a sign of friendship, the words of peace and consolation necessary to all Christians of the faith truly admirable.* [Observe that he thus paraphrases the *Pax vobiscum* with which he used in California to introduce himself; and if you refer to his former communications, I think you will agree with me that by "*chrétiens de la foi vraiment admirable*," he means simply Christian Spiritualists]. *I come to you glad to have been understood [remember how I before spoke of his Catholicism as being now esoteric, and so different from its former dogmatic orthodoxy as to be simply our Spiritualism], and my language will exhibit the influence of that; for where sympathy reigns the links of union quickly fasten. When He who was Jesus came upon your earth, men were already very greatly perverted, and His grand and holy form came to confront all their iniquities, to make them shrink back (reculer) before it, to make them repent; in a word, to return into God (revenir en Dieu), their Father, their Creator, whom they had forgotten. I am sure that if the men of your world descend to the bottom of their conscience, to find there their honest candour, they would give to the crucified Jesus a part of their soul—a part which they would offer to Him as a just tribute to His devotedness and to His love. But, alas! the men of to-day resemble those of former times. The same passions excite them, and, though they may have changed in name—perhaps according to language and customs—they are none the less of the same essence. And so Jesus is still ignored (méconnu, i.e., not understood); but there is found here below a nucleus of enlightened spirits which renders justice, which yields tribute, which offers love and sacrifice to Him whom we honour as a holy prophet. And that nucleus of ardent souls (âmes zélées) who are on the path of truth, will see the faith which will feel daily develop in them the faith which will give them all the germs of the virtues which Christ has sown upon the earth. Be one of those. Strive by self-sacrifice (renoncement), by self-abnegation, by charity, to become one of those chosen of Jesus. Let your heart honour Him, and serve Him faithfully. Let all your thoughts, like His, rise towards God to adore Him, and descend towards men to serve them. And then, my son, you will feel an interior voice descend into your heart, and say to you with benign accents, Man of faith, Man of good, be blessed, and may all your virtue serve to glorify Him who was your Saviour, your friend, your prophet, in a word, Him who united in Himself all the truths to transmit them to mankind whom He came to save.*

This is certainly sublime, lovely, and divine language, while yet so simple. Chance of occasion and of means of communication (if there is such a thing as chance) brought me into this relation with Archbishop Hughes, who, knowing that I would write and print, found in me simply an available organ or channel for the expression of his present mind. How far he has changed his former dogmatic beliefs I need not further point out; I only repeat that his Catholicism now is simply our Spiritualism.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

Paris.

THE HUMAN DOUBLE.

SIR,—In the account I gave at the discussion on Form Manifestations on the 14th May of the appearance of what appeared to be my double to a friend of mine in London, while I was at Cardiff, I appear to have omitted part of what my apparent double said to my friend. It was, as nearly as I can remember, as follows:—"I have been hurt, old fellow; go home; you will get a letter from me in the morning, telling you all about it."

You will observe that the coincidence is made very much more remarkable by the presence of the words "I have been hurt," spoken at the time, within a few minutes, when I was being knocked down.

A. JOY.

Great Russell-street.

FORM MANIFESTATIONS.

SIR,—My friend, Mr. O'Sullivan, calls in question my wisdom in desiring the abolition of the cabinet, and declares that such a course of experiment as I desiderate would be fatal to successful manifestations, such as the Count de Bulle has obtained. Permit me to explain, for the benefit of my friendly critic, and of others who are interested in the question, that my remarks were addressed to a special kind of experiment only, viz., to that conducted in public circles for the benefit of investigators, and for the conviction of sceptics.

To make my position clear, it is necessary for me to restate what I have often insisted on before. I should like to see circles adapted to the needs of those who frequent them. For those whose scientifically-trained minds need exact experiment, I should like to see *séances* conducted on the severest principles of test; for I am fully sure that any attempt to demonstrate such a phenomenon as that now under notice to men of logical and exact minds by any means that do not preclude error absolutely and entirely will fail, and not only that, but will react in the opposite direction, will send the inquirer away with prejudice roused, and with a shrug of contempt for the methods used for his enlightenment. So long as investigators and sceptics are invited to seek light in public circles, the experiments must be conducted with precision. It may be well, or not, according to opinion, to concern oneself with such inquirers;

but so long as we do, for our own credit's sake, for the sake of the cause we advocate, for the sake of the medium on whom suspicion falls, we must take pains to be exact.

But side by side with these circles I should like to see others, such as that of which Mr. O'Sullivan speaks, where the communicating intelligences conduct their own experiments, make their own conditions, and do what they can in such manner as they see fit. With these I would not venture to interfere in any way, either by prescribing tests, or even by introducing the sceptical element which so frequently ruins all by its presence. I should feel myself holden from either course. I should regard the circle as the laboratory in which the spirits perfect their experiments before producing them under the captious and critical eye of the investigator. In that circle I should expect to see many tentative experiments, some failures, and many successes, to which repeated sitting and patient watching and waiting would contribute. As in Professor Tyndall's upper room those experiments, so beautiful in their simplicity, so seemingly simple, yet so perfectly elaborated, are prepared for public exhibition in the theatre of the Royal Institution, so I should regard the private circle of which I speak as the laboratory of spirit in which the invisible operators learn our conditions, feel their power, and perfect their experiments.

To be sure, there is one thing else that I expect to find in such circles, respecting which my analogy does not hold. There, if anywhere, I should look for the meeting with friends gone before, and with those whose mission it is to console, instruct, and build us up in knowledge. I have been a member of such a circle for some years now, and Mr. O'Sullivan has seen much of Count de Bullet's painstaking and prolonged investigations. He writes in terms not one whit too highly coloured of the Count's patience and care; and he tells us in language which is clear and precise, of the admirable results he has obtained. He will understand me then when I say that for such sacred family circles I have nothing but praise; to meddle with their machinery would be as impertinent as it would be foolish; to question their mode of procedure, or the quality of the results obtained would be (to my mind) as stupid as to intrude into the number of their members a Lankester or a Carpenter.

But it is a different thing when we deal with open circles professedly held for the purpose (among others) of affording the investigator, sceptical or otherwise, opportunity for experiment and demonstration. He comes there—the room is open to him, whatever his mental, moral, and spiritual tone may be—to air his crotchets, to demonstrate the folly or expose the trickery that he fancies he has detected; or, if not that, he comes in hope that he may be permitted to lift a corner of the veil, and reverently to look into the laboratory of spirit, and see how these things can be. The firm believers who are satisfied to frequent circles for the sake of breathing the atmosphere of spiritual manifestations, or for the gratification of curiosity, or on the chance of meeting a friend, may be left out of the calculation here.

In a circle such as this I desiderate the utmost care, the most scrupulous precision in testing the evolution of phenomena. We know that deceit and fraud have cast obloquy and ridicule on our investigations. I would make them impossible. We know that for many long years we have gone on with these form manifestations without materially increasing our knowledge, solely for want of opportunity for so doing. I want that reproach removed. We allow investigations which do not deserve the name to be carried on year after year in such a way as to convince nobody, provoke ridicule and contempt from men used to experiment in physical science, and to raise a cloud of suspicion and doubt in the minds even of the most assured Spiritualist. I would have that method for ever swept away. We are face to face with one of the most complex problems, one of the most astounding allegations that can be propounded for our solution and acceptance. Yet we conduct our experiments in such a way—it would almost seem as if by malice aforethought—that we are unable to answer the most primary questions respecting it. We allow it to be environed with conditions which seem perversely contrived to look suspicious; and lest we should simplify trouble, and eliminate one element of doubt, we place the medium where we cannot even see him, much less carry out the simple and harmless experiments which should advance our scanty knowledge. I want this process reversed.

I have every wish to avoid any rash act. I would err, if at all, on the side of caution. I agree that "it is not for us to lay down laws, and conditions, and methods" with dogmatic prescription. All attempts to do so I should regard as proofs of ignorance and folly. The grasping of the form when outside of the cabinet, as has two or three times been attempted, is even worse. Any handling of the form, save by agreement with the controlling intelligence, I equally set aside. It is not by such rude methods that truth can be arrived at. I do not even desire to impose any of the mechanical tests which find favour with some. I look upon tying, and sealing, and nailing up, and putting in a bag or in a cage, as so many expedients which, to a type of mind, are necessary so long as the present conditions are maintained; and no longer. So long as they are resorted to, I am sure we shall not get the best class of phenomena; and I believe, moreover, that they establish in the mind a confidence which is illusory. They will not prevent the unseen operators working their own will; and to suppose that any bond yet invented is "spirit-proof" argues want of knowledge.

No: the desideratum is a test which shall be conclusive to the observer; which shall leave the medium at ease; and which, at the same time, shall enable investigation to be conducted without injury to him, and with some hope of progress. That which I have proposed answers all these requirements; and be it remembered, that it is not my presumptuous suggestion. It comes to us from one who may be supposed to know what he is doing, and who has suggested that the best conditions would be for the medium to be placed on a sofa in a corner of the room. That may not do, as Mr. O'Sullivan suggests, for all; but here, at any rate, is one case in which it may be tried.

Mr. O'Sullivan does me the honour to call me a fellow-labourer and a student. I hope the time will never come, here or hereafter, when I shall cease to be a student of the mysteries that surround me. I draw a wide distinction between the investigator, who too frequently assumes the name for the purpose of cloaking curiosity, or disguising a wish to find what he is searching into untrue, and the student who not only investigates with an unbiassed mind, but takes pains to correlate his own shred of experience with the facts explored by others, and recorded both now and in days gone by. The true student not only sees, but reads, and thinks, and takes wide views. I would that Spiritualists at large could be persuaded that the most advanced of them are but dabbles on the margin of the great ocean of truth; that their own private knowledge must needs be limited, and that the best way of extending it is to establish communication, and exchange signals with those who, now and in time past, are, or have been, co-students with themselves.

In this spirit I cordially admire the perseverance and truly philosophical method in which the investigations of the Comte de Bullet have been carried out. My observations were never meant to apply to such circles as his. His results are obtained after another method, and I hope we may one day be favoured with such a statement of them as he may find himself able to give us.

W. STANTON-MOSES.

London, May 27th, 1877.

VEGETARIANISM.

SIR,—It is a well-known fact that man as he now exists possesses a series of teeth which are partly adapted for vegetable, and partly for animal food.

It is also established, that the oldest paleontological evidences we have of human teeth (I allude especially to those from Arcis-sur-Aube and La Naulette) do not indicate any diverse type of dentition from that which now prevails.

It may be admitted that a very long period of time has elapsed since the old mammoth-hunters of La Naulette split the bones which they had previously roasted, to extract the marrow. I leave the amount of such time to be estimated by others.

If man has, therefore, gone on under like conditions, with mixed food for such a long period, I would contend that some time at least would be necessary to produce by selective breeding a race of men with broader and less cuspidate molar teeth, no canines, and incisors diminished in size and perhaps in number. Such a race of purely phytophagous man would require also an important deviation from the present form of articulation of the condyles of the jaw, in order to be able adequately to comminute a vegetable diet.

The first step, therefore, for the vegetarians to do should be to produce such a man; the second to ascertain what he would like to eat.

C. CARTER BLAKE.

SIR,—When suffering at the age of three-and-twenty from a weak and disordered state of digestion of long continuance, and which had found allopathy impossible and homœopathy powerless, I turned to vegetarianism with immediate benefit. I left off all products of the animal kingdom—(milk I never liked)—took apple sauce with my bread, or oatmeal porridge without it, and feasted delightfully on flour-and-water dumplings with fresh fruit stirred up with them. I drank nothing but water, and little of that, at any time, and I said, "The very stones under my feet must feel new life in my tread." I pursued this system for over twelve months, but was much disappointed at last to find my appetite unsatisfied and my œsophagus resisting the swallowing of the maccaroni. Of course if I could not put it down in one way, I had to put it down in another, and I returned with recalcitrant spirit to the carnal habits of my friends. It is possible that with cooks and circumstances in my favour, a mere modification of my diet would have sufficed; but my conclusion is the plain one, that stomachs differ, and necessity knows no law. Vegetarianism is a good thing, and very likely "most strong constitutions could be perfectly maintained" on it, if their owners willed it; but in the meantime moderation is a still better thing, and though practicable for all, yet not always observable in the practice or preaching of reformers, who think "the little leaf is all the forest," and lose by bigotry more than they gain by truth.

W. W. FAWCETT.

SIR,—Having seen your article upon "Vegetable Diet," and the wish expressed for the brief experiences of those who may have tested the matter, I may state that about two years back I passed through a serious illness, the chief symptom of which was gout in the stomach, which caused indescribable agony for many weeks. No relief was obtainable from the regular medical profession, but happily it was found at a private circle, where by the aid of spirit-power the disease was drawn entirely from the system, and, strange as it may appear, from that period I have experienced an aversion for flesh food to such an extent that I never touch it for weeks together, and then only in response to the earnest entreaties of my family, who often express the fear that I shall go wrong unless recourse is had to the old habit; but if I may speak my real conviction as to a "no meat" diet, it is in my case far preferable in the present state of my appetite, and is adapted to the needs of my system. My object in writing is to see if any of your correspondents can assign a cause for such a change in one's habits and tastes in so short a time, and if the reason is to be found in the change the system underwent when relieved of that dire malady in the way recorded above.

JAMES FRANKLIN.

34, Sutton-street East, Commercial-road,
London, May 23rd, 1877.

SIR,—In your leading article of last week's issue, you asked for the experience of those who had tried to adopt an exclusively vegetarian

diet. Allow me to give your readers an abbreviated record of my own experience.

Previous to the time of my resolving to practically prove or disprove the efficacy of a vegetarian course of living, I had been suffering from both hereditary and chronic complaints. From my mother's side I had inherited something of a plethoric constitution, and frequent effusions of blood from the nostrils produced in me many unwelcome periods of physical exhaustion. I had from my earliest remembered times been habitually subject to constipation of the bowels, and partly, if not entirely, owing to the nauseous practice of smoking, I had latterly also fallen a victim to a stomache disorder, manifesting itself in diarrhoea, general inertia, and colic complaints. I commenced reformation by abandoning the pipe, and felt very sanguine of results, but was disappointed, for I could perceive but a slight change in my somewhat lamentable condition. I felt that something else must be done, and as I had lost faith in the supposed recuperative properties of medicines, I thought I would experimentally put to trial the vegetarian plan.

My first trial, though I persisted in it for a good length of time, terminated in a failure. Plain peas, beans, cabbages, and other articles of the kind, seemed too tasteless to a palate that had long been accustomed to more highly flavoured foods. Hence, I fell into the folly of making up for quality by quantity, and so, abusing myself, I made a crab-like progress to the object desired. The conflict between a morbid desire for animal food and a stubborn denial thereof, had the effect of gradually reducing me in physical bulk and muscular ability, and at last I yielded myself to defeat and allowed myself flesh meat in very stinted quantities. But my old and chief enemy, a determination of blood to the head, made me halt again and consider which way I should turn. I had become possessed of a fuller knowledge of vegetarian cookery by this time, so I bethought myself I would give the system another and last trial ere I finally followed it or finally abandoned it. I persevered, and I succeeded, and I have now been absolutely subsisting on vegetable and farinaceous food for about seven months; I am so well satisfied with the results that I have no idea of returning to my first habits of life. I am convinced that failures are often clearly attributable to ignorance, and that if experimentalists would study and contrive a variety of flavours in their dishes, they would more often succeed than they do. The eating of insipid food will not satisfy our peculiar cravings, and then, though the stomach be filled, yet the unsatisfied state of the mind will retard those healthful processes which convert the food into flesh and other life-essentials. Body and mind must alike be consulted in this matter of food. Since adopting my new regimen, I imagine I have reaped advantage in many ways. My bowels and stomach have assumed a more normal and healthy condition, my mind has become easier, memory more retentive, and certain neuralgic pains that troubled me in the head and face have almost, if not entirely, disappeared.

W. GAUTREY.

Fencehouses, Durham, May 24, 1877.

SIR,—Since the early part of last November flesh food has been withdrawn from our dietary. My wife, four sons, two daughters, and myself enjoy excellent health. Our youngest son, aged three and a quarter years, cut a gash in his head of one and a quarter inches long and a quarter deep, and although he broke the place open twice during the healing, yet not the slightest inflammation or suppuration followed, a result the surgeon who attended him said was due entirely in his opinion to the coolness of his blood from the absence of flesh food in his diet. We have lived upon cereals, fruit, vegetables, eggs, cheese, butter, milk, fish about once a month, and brown bread made of whole meal.

We mentioned our diet to Mr. Garth Wilkinson recently. He said: Remember you have had flesh-eating ancestors; therefore you must carefully watch results in your family, a caution I thought wise.

C. W. PEARCE.

Devon House, Acre-lane, S.W., May 28, 1877.

SWEDENBORGIANISM V. SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—Mr. Joy's argument for not accepting the position laid down by the Rev. J. H. Smithson, in his pamphlet, entitled *The Word of God and Spirit Manifestations*, that the Scriptures condemn open intercourse with spirits as injurious to man's progress in regeneration, proceeds upon parallel lines with that urged by Professor Lankester and Dr. Donkin as their reason for prosecuting Dr. Slade.

This is a blunder. The issue raised between Messrs. Smithson and Joy is sharp and distinct. Mr. Smithson says—"The Scriptures condemn open intercourse with spirits as injurious to man's progress in regeneration." Mr. Joy says—"The Spiritualists know from personal and practical experience, and from rational considerations founded upon the teachings of Spiritualism, that it conduces eminently to man's progress in regeneration."

The authority acknowledged by Mr. Smithson is the Scriptures; by Mr. Joy, the teachings of Spiritualism.

Now, whilst it is not denied that Mr. Smithson (or the Swedenborgian) is willing to discuss the question upon the merits of the "Teachings of Spiritualism," Mr. Joy, speaking as if for a "vast majority" of Spiritualists, says he will not accept the statements of Scriptures upon their merits, but only as far as they are endorsed by (what he understands as) Spiritualism.

Listen to the prosecuting Royal Society men: Dr. Slade, we shall refuse credence to you, unless your phenomena agree with *our* science. Listen to the hon. secretary of the Slade Defence Fund: Mr. Smithson, I shall refuse credence to your Scriptures unless they agree with *my* Spiritualism.

This is a blunder on Mr. Joy's part. He can do better, and must. He has raised an important question to many, and must give such an

answer as a late hon. secretary of the National Association of Spiritualists ought to be able to give.

Let him first show whether the respective authorities really disagree, or whether the divergence arises from a misunderstanding on the part of one or both of the two gentlemen. If the authorities disagree, expose the pretender. Next let him define correctly regeneration, and then the question at issue can be logically argued, and comfort in more light be given to many.

C. W. PEARCE.

Devon House, Acre-lane, London, S.W., May 28, 1877.

TRANCE LECTURES IN OLDHAM.

SIR,—We shall be glad if you will insert in your next issue of *The Spiritualist*, the announcement that Mr. Colville, trance medium, of Brighton, will deliver two addresses in the Temperance Hall, Oldham, next Sunday, June 3rd, at 2.30 and 6.0 p.m. He will also remain with us during the following week.

JOSHUA WOOD.

6, Fielding-street, Oldham, May 28th, 1877.

MR. J. J. MORSE, trance medium, in reply to the question whether he is a vegetarian, writes that he is a moderate flesh eater, and enjoys good health.

MR. J. J. MORSE will lecture at Newcastle-on-Tyne on Sunday next, at the Freemasons' (Old) Hall, Newgate-street, in the evening, at 6.30, subject, "Elements of Cosmic Philosophy—Spiritualism." Monday, June 4th, in the same place, in the evening, at 7.30, he will give a brief address, closing with the answering of questions. Thursday and Friday, June 7th and 8th, Belper; Sunday, June 10th, London; Sunday, June 17th, Liverpool; Sunday and Monday, June 24th and 25th, Birmingham; June 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th, Wolverhampton.

SPIRITUALISM IN ROME.—A correspondent says:—"In Rome the priesthood are so against Spiritualism that those who cultivate it are obliged to keep it very close, and are, generally speaking, what you might call liberal Catholics. I have met with but one priest to whom I have dared to mention the subject, and he is decidedly of a liberal turn of mind. There is a division of parties here, since the occupation of Victor Emmanuel, some being for the Pope, others for the King; those who cling to his Holiness are of the old style of spying, watching, arbitrary, Jesuitical priests, and are, with the laity who coincide with them, called Blacks. Those who are on the King's, or Government's, side are called Whites, and are certainly much the most pleasant people to deal with, being more ready to receive new ideas, and to tolerate improvements."

THE PROMULGATION OF NEW TRUTHS.—Mr. J. T. Markley, of Peterborough, writes:—"It is well known in press circles that if the newspapers ventured to endorse Spiritualistic experiment and discovery, the world would soon 'believe in ghosts,' without either inquiry, test examinations, or cautious, critical reflection, and sham mediums would abound and prosper, to the speedy degradation of civil society. Therefore the press, as the exponent of thoughtful progress, must not too readily proclaim the divinity of new and exciting beliefs. At the same time new opinions, based upon earnest discovery, should have fair play. This is far from being the case in respect to 'Spiritualistic' inquiry. With the exception of the *Nottingham Daily Journal*, the *Brighton Daily News*, the *Newcastle Chronicle*, and a few other equally outspoken, impartial, and independent organs of the press, all the popular journals treat séance experiments as a huge, solemn joke. The impartiality of the *Spectator* and the *Nonconformist* newspapers must be here mentioned in connection with this question of Spiritualism. They have dared to be Daniels in psychological research, and the records of history will hereafter refer to the bold foregleamings of the vision and faculty by which they thus early found a wonderful new force. The *Times* compares Spiritualism to the unlettered epidemic delusions of past ages. Now, it knows better than that. It also knows that its own staff comprises many less eminent literary, scientific, and influential names than those pursuing this important inquiry, or even than many of the intellectual and widely famous contributors to your and other Spiritualist journals."

THE FORMATION OF A SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY IN DERBY.—On the evening of Thursday, last week, the Spiritualists of Derby held a meeting convened for the purpose of taking the necessary steps to form a society in that town. Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, was called to the chair. After a few remarks from the chairman explaining the object of the meeting, the following resolution was moved by Mr. Mayle, seconded by Mr. Ward, and unanimously adopted—"Resolved: that in the opinion of this meeting of the Spiritualists of Derby, the time has now arrived for us to form a society in this town, and that we now proceed to do so." It was then decided, on the motion of Mr. Edge, seconded by Mr. Smith—"That this society be called 'The Derby Spiritualists' Association.'" An amendment, "That it be called 'The Derby Psychological Society'" was negatived by the casting vote of the chairman. Mr. Curtiss Bardill, of 2, Derwent-street, Derby, was elected secretary; and Mr. J. Mayle, of 133, Parliament-street, Derby, was appointed treasurer. The election of president was deferred. On the question of the amount of entrance fee and subscriptions, after considerable discussion, it was resolved—"That the entrance fee be 1s., and the annual subscription 4s., payable quarterly in advance." The formation of the working committee was next considered, and it was voted—"That it consist of nine members, inclusive of secretary and treasurer; that it retain office for one year, and be eligible for re-election on retirement." A committee of five was then appointed to prepare a draft of the rules, and to submit them at the adjourned meeting to be held at the same place and time on Thursday, June 7th. A vote of thanks to the chairman brought the proceedings to a close.

SPIRIT MUSIC ABOVE THE BEDS OF THE DYING.

ALL that I have hitherto recorded of my psychological experiences (and likewise those of my friends) have been of a violent and annoying nature, which leads me to conclude that the spirits, if such they were, who so uninvitedly visited me, were far from being good or benevolent. And on pursuing many accounts in your journal, and other papers, I deduce, perhaps erroneously, that the majority of "perturbed spirits" are not those we are likely to meet hereafter on high—no "Beautiful spirit with thy hair of light, and dazzling eyes of glory"—could be guilty of acts, which in this world, or the world to come, must be pronounced ungenerous, coarse, and inelegant.*

That, now and then, a good spirit *may* be permitted to revisit its former mundane abode, I believe; and I recall an instance of this kind which happened some years ago in my own family. I had a brother who lived some eight or nine months only. My mother was excessively fond of the infant, more so than she appeared to have been of any former child, and, indeed of any subsequent one. Some few nights before the poor babe left its clay tenement—occupied for so short a time—sweet, seraphic music "held sublime communion with the soul." My mother has frequently described it to me as composed of the sweetest and most powerfully entrancing strains she ever heard. The melody was hymn-like and holy, such as we might expect from a choir of children.

But now comes the thought "did these angelic strains proceed from spirits who had ever crowded with the scenes of calamity and affliction on earth; or were they not rather direct from the inhabitants of that beautiful and unimaginable ether to which the soul of the poor infant was so soon to proceed?" I know not.

To introduce another phase of Spiritualism, how is it, may I ask, that we sometimes dip into the *future of locality* in our dreams? I mean, how do we visit in advance, perhaps months or years, spots at which, when we arrive in the flesh, we ask ourselves, "How knew I that such a place existed? How is it that I can thread my way unerringly through these streets; and how do I know such a house, or such a monument, when I have never been here before in the course of my existence?"

This is by no means an uncommon phenomenon, for many are those who have related to me such like dreams; and my own experience has been great in them. I revive in my memory two towns in particular which I inspected, so to speak, more than once, before I really visited them, viz., Hastings and Portsmouth.

In the former, I was struck, in my dream, by the Albert Memorial, and its surroundings; in the latter, by the numerous draw-bridges, and the soldiers set to watch the forts. Of course, it suggests itself that I must have read or heard of them. Possibly with regard to the latter, but of the former I am convinced I knew nothing. Then, there are other places of minor historic importance with scarcely anything to describe, save field and trees; and yet I have known the nooks and corners, hills and dales, as well as though I had traversed them for years. But it is only lately that I have given much thought to the subject—only since I was so forcibly compelled to consider somewhat more than superficially the phenomena of Spiritualism. E. G.

22nd May, 1877.

RELIGIOUS MANIA.—*The Christian at Work*, U.S., discourses upon the case of insanity produced by over excitement consequent upon attendance at the Moody and Sankey meetings, and protests in a quiet way against the unreasonable discussions going on in the secular papers regarding it. When Whitfield preached his first sermon, it tells us, fifteen lost their reason. People by the thousands and tens of thousands attend churches every Sunday, and hear the Everlasting Word preached, who yet get nothing of Christ in the heart, and live only for time and sense. It asks if any insanity could be more pitiful than this, and then it adds: "We could wish people would never get unduly excited; but shall we refuse the loaf because of the dry crust? Because human agencies are at best imperfect, shall we therefore reject them? At the first performance of the *Messiah* in London an ardent lover of music fell dead in the audience through excitement when the Hallelujah Chorus was being sung; is it, therefore, a matter for regret that Handel ever wrote his sublime oratorio? Human life, and the human reason as well, hangs on a thread which is easily snapped. The most beneficent measures are attended in their operation by some measure of injury."

* The law appears to be—"The lower the spirit the greater its direct power over common matter."—[Ed.]

Poetry.

"NOT DEAD, BUT RISEN."

[Read by William Lloyd Garrison at the funeral of Nancy W. Jenkins, wife of Charles E. Jenkins, Nov. 25th, 1876.]

*He who died at Azim sends
This to comfort all his friends:*

Faithful friends! It lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, "Abdallah's dead!"
Weeping at the feet and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers;
Yet I smile, and whisper this—
"I am not the thing you kiss:
Cease your tears, and let it lie;
It was mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends! what the woman lave,
For the last sleep of the grave,
Is a hut which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a bird, my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room—
The wearer, not the garb—the plume
Of the eagle, not the bars
That kept him from those splendid stars.

Loving friends! Be wise and dry
Straightway every weeping eye:
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a single tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell—one
Out of which the pearl has gone:
The shell is broken—it lies there:
The pearl, tho' all, the soul, is here.
'Tis an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of his treasury,
A mind that loved him: let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold is in his store!

Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now Thy world is understood;
Now the long, long wonder ends!
Yet ye weep, my erring friends,
While the man whom ye call dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead,
Lives and loves you; lost, 'tis true,
For the light that shines for you;
But in the light ye cannot see
Of undisturbed felicity—
In a perfect paradise,
And a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! But not farewell;
Where I am, ye too shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's worth, a little space,
When ye come where I have stepped,
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by true love taught,
That here is all, and there is nought.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain—
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death—for death,
Now we know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life centre.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above:
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home!
La-il Allah! Allah la!
Oh Love divine! Oh love away!

*He who died at Azim gave
This to those who made his grave.*

From the Arabic.

At the last meeting of the Council of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, applications for membership from Messrs. F. Young, J. C. Gerard, and Dacre Bremer were declined.

A CIRCULAR has been sent to us, setting forth that Mr. L. Hillyard, aged sixty-five, was the first to introduce Spiritualism to Northampton and the surrounding district ten years ago; also that he has cured many sufferers free of charge by his healing mediumship. As a working shoe manufacturer he has always led a hard life, and now so much needs help that some of the local Spiritualists are trying to start him in a small business which they believe will afterwards be self-supporting. Good may be done if those who feel so inclined send subscriptions in aid of this step to Mr. John Letts, 98, Lower Thrift-street, Northampton.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

B. A. (Dub.)—In answer to B. A. (Dub.) I wish to say that I have read *The Day after Death*, by Figuier, and like the book very much. Although the writer professes to condemn what he terms "the so-called Spiritualism" of the present age, and speaks in strong words against table-tipping, still I think the book favours the higher forms of manifestations; to my mind it is certainly a Spiritualistic book, and would be read by B. A. (Dub.), or any other Spiritualist with profit and pleasure.—SILVA.

BOOKS ON SPIRITUALISM, PSYCHOLOGY, MESMERISM, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND BIOLOGY,

Representing the English and American Literature of Spiritualism, obtainable of W. H. Harrison, *Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office*, 33, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.

[For purposes of mutual convenience the above office has been rented on the premises of the National Association of Spiritualists, but the Association and *The Spiritualist Newspaper* and publishing business are not in any way connected with each other.]

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY and MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Eugene Crowell, M.D., of New York. This is a standard work on Spiritualism by a competent observer, who, after studying its facts for many years, has drawn from them only such conclusions as they warrant, and who has comprehensively dealt with the whole subject. In two volumes, price 10s. 6d. per volume.

THE DEBATABLE LAND, by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, formerly American Minister at the Court of Naples. A standard work containing interesting and well-authenticated facts, proving the reality of spirit communion. It also contains an elaborate essay defining the author's views of the relationship of Spiritualism to the Christian Church. 7s. 6d.

FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD, by Robert Dale Owen. An excellent book of absorbing interest, replete with well-authenticated narratives, describing manifestations produced by spirits. 7s. 6d.

REPORT ON SPIRITUALISM, by the Committee of the Dialectical Society. This committee consisted of literary, scientific, and other professional men who investigated Spiritualism for two years without engaging the services of any professional medium, after which they published the report. Original edition, 15s.; moderately abridged edition, 5s.

RESEARCHES IN THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM, by William Crookes, F.R.S. The best work ever published to scientifically demonstrate the reality of some of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, 5s.

MIRACLES and MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Alfred Russell Wallace, F.R.G.S. This book contains a masterly argument in reply to Hume's "Essay on Miracles." It also records a large number of interesting spiritual manifestations, and contains some of the personal experiences of Mr. Wallace. 5s.

PLANCHETTE; OR, THE DESPAIR OF SCIENCE, by Epes Sargent. A book rich in descriptions of well-authenticated spiritual phenomena. Information about the relationship of Spiritualism to Religion and Science is also given. 5s.

CONCERNING SPIRITUALISM, by Gerald Massey. A brilliant well written little essay on Spiritualism. Neatly bound, with gilt edges. 2s.

LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM, by the late J. W. Edmonds, Judge of the Supreme Court, New York, U.S. This book consists of essays on the Social, Moral, and Scientific aspects of Spiritualism. 3s. 6d.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD? OR, SPIRITUALISM EXPLAINED, by Fred. A. Binney. A practically useful work for inquirers, giving general information about English professional and non-professional mediums; also about the periodical and other literature of Spiritualism. 3s.

THE OUTER WORLD, by the Rev. G. F. Lee, D.C.L. This newly-published book contains Facts and Traditions relating to Dreams, Omens, Apparitions, Wraiths, Warnings, and Witchcraft. The author admits the reality of Spiritual visitations, but considers modern Spiritualism to be diabolical. He, however, gives valuable facts, previously unpublished, and prints the only authorised and complete account of the Apparition seen by one of the ancestors of Lord Lyttleton. 2 Vols., crown 8vo., 16s.

PROOF PALPABLE OF IMMORTALITY, by Epes Sargent. This work, by an American author of acknowledged ability, gives an account of the materialisation of Spirits in England and America during the past few years in the presence of famous mediums, and, as a rule, before educated witnesses of more or less literary and scientific ability. The work also contains remarks on the relations of the facts to theology, morals, and religion; and it is prefaced with a portrait of the materialised spirit Katie King, copied from a photograph of her taken by Mr. Harrison by the aid of the magnetism light. 5s.

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HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES AT HOME.

Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or professional medium present. Should no results be obtained on the first occasion, try again with other sitters. One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household.

Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is usually of no importance. Any table will do, just large enough to conveniently accommodate the sitters. The removal of a hand from the table for a few seconds does no harm, but when one of the sitters breaks the circle by leaving the table it sometimes, but not always, considerably delays the manifestations.

Before the sitting begins, place some pointed lead-pencils and some sheets of clean writing paper on the table, to write down any communications that may be obtained.

People who do not like each other should not sit in the same circle, for such a want of harmony tends to prevent manifestations, except with well-developed physical mediums; it is not yet known why. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acid feeling against them is frequently found to be a weakening influence.

Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature.

The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tiltings or raps.

When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three signals be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

Afterwards the question should be put, "Are we sitting in the right order to get the best manifestations?" Probably some members of the circle will then be told to change seats with each other, and the signals will afterwards be strengthened. Next ask "Who is the medium?" When the intelligence asserts itself to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as the alleged spirits are found to exhibit all the virtues and all the failings of humanity.

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