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Tuesday, 9th.—Correspondence Committee, at 5.45 p.m.
" " Finance Committee, at 6 p.m.
" " COUNCIL MEETING, at 6.30 p.m.
Thursday, 11th.—House and Offices Committee, at 5.30 p.m.
" " Soiree Committee, at 6 p.m.
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A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

VOLUME ELEVEN. NUMBER FOURTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5th, 1877.

Reviews.

Words of Warning, in Verse and Prose, addressed to "Societies for Organising Charitable Relief and Suppressing Mendicity." By S. C. HALL, F.S.A. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

THE object of this little book, by that respected and venerable worker in the cause of Spiritualism, Mr. S. C. Hall, is clearly set forth by the author in the following paragraphs:—

Many believe—as I believe—that "societies for organising charitable relief and repressing mendicity" are pernicious in their influence, and evil in their results; that they dry up the natural channel of the heart, check or destroy sympathy for suffering, stand in the stead of personal inquiry, by substituting official "inquiry," make indifference to woe excusable if not obligatory, encourage belief in the universality of crime as the concomitant of distress, and the invariable necessity for over-caution as a duty; while striving to absorb all organised and established charities into a vortex, (inviting "to avail themselves of the societies' assistance, clergymen, district visitors, the heads of philanthropic institutions, and all who are engaged in charitable work"); in short, do incalculable mischief as "set off" against a little good; it is therefore I have been impelled to write the work I respectfully submit to subscribers to these societies and to the public.

The view I take has been so well expressed by the Rev. William Pepperell, in the *Standard*, that I adopt it:—

"1. It separates the exercise of charity from the sphere of religious and moral influence, and the softening and improving effects of personal, kindly, sympathy as between the giver and receiver, and hardens the whole work of benevolence into a narrow groove of materialistic considerations, destroying all sense of real individual responsibility on account of social relations and duties.

"2. It places charity towards the poor on a fundamentally erroneous basis, by insisting that every applicant for relief shall undergo a strict investigation as to antecedents and character, instituted and carried on by its own agents, and that relief be administered or not according to their decision.

"3. The Charity Organisation Society has adopted a system which invites the clergy and all ministers of religion, and local charities and benevolent individuals in connection with it, or otherwise, in effect, to suspend their functions of local usefulness, to place their consciences in its hands, and to assist none of their poor without the information it (the Organisation Society) professes to be able to impart after its professional investigation."

In this book Mr. S. C. Hall deals with a very difficult problem. Some years ago we heard Mr. Gladstone state, that after due inquiry it had been discovered that the majority of street beggars were professional impostors; charity organisations, we presume, try to rid society of these habitual swindlers, who are supported by the donations of the well-intentioned. Mr. Hall argues that it is better to pay some undeserving persons than that others in real distress should go without. But, assuming the former to outnumber the latter in the proportion of two to one, it seems to be an easy kind of religion, governed by a doubtful kind of intelligence, which encourages giving halfpence to two swindlers out of three applicants in order that "the natural channel of the heart" may not be dried up.

"An argument," said a great thinker, "is never answered at all until it is answered at its best," and Mr. S. C. Hall's non-attention to this principle prevents us from at present coming to any conclusions upon the subject upon which he writes, except that it would be well to have both sides of this most important religious problem brought out by correspondence in these pages. The author not only does not present the arguments and facts of the other side of the question at their best, but he does not present them at all; moreover, he keeps back the address of the Charity Organisation Society, thus placing an impediment in the way of those who, like ourselves, thought of writing to them for further information. In presenting a minor portion of the position of his opponents at its worst, he points how, in Woolwich, a branch of the Charity Organisation Society had in 1875-6 an income of £112 14s., and expended only £10 11s. 6d. in

charity, whilst all the rest went in salaries, printing, and so on, and Mr. Hall says that this is "a specimen of the whole" of the branch societies, "larger or smaller." He further mentions that the parent society has a great number of these branches; "in the suburbs of the metropolis it has no fewer than thirty-seven." If all these numerous branches for "charity organisation" spend £10 out of every £11 received on other than charitable purposes, the figures are appalling. Still there is an absence of details. In building up any new social machinery there must be an outlay at first in the formation of the necessary mechanism, and the absence in Mr. Hall's pamphlet of any possible explanation by the other side, leaves an irresistible impression on the mind of the critical reader that he is listening to strong *ex parte* statements, from which no safe conclusions can be drawn until the other side has been heard. A few individual cases of hardship, apparently due to the action of the organisation, are given, but the particular does not prove the general, and in the working of the best and most useful descriptions of social machinery, there must be failures in exceptional instances. Whether the cases brought forward by Mr. Hall in his little book belong to this class of exceptional cases, there is no evidence to show.

If any society could rid our streets of the majority of professional impostors, they would do good to society; but if it made the sufferings of the deserving poor greater still, the organisation would but be a cover for stinginess, and for inflicting injury upon the helpless. Mr. Hall says that among the subscribers to the society are "several who hold prominent rank in the noble and numerous army of philanthropists," and who are "foremost leaders in the best and truest charities of the kingdom." One would like to know why these still support the institution, notwithstanding the deterrent cases put forward by Mr. Hall; they must have some reason which cannot be gleaned from Mr. Hall's book.

The question seems to divide itself into two parts: First, the ridding of the streets of professional beggars who swallow up alms intended either for the benefit of poor recipients, or for the "prevention of the drying up of the natural channels of the hearts" of the donors. Secondly, the best method of treatment of the deserving poor. If organised action keeps these questions quite distinct from each other, the difficulties of the case are simplified, because every living soul would be glad that the impostors had their deserts. Then, as to the deserving poor, much is to be said in favour of Mr. Hall's method, and much in favour of organised action when individual charity is not strong enough to relieve all the suffering.

We think that Mr. Hall's book unintentionally makes out a strong case against the Church of England, for if most of its pastors in London did their duty, the poor in every district would be well tended. The late Rev. W. Pennefather, of Mildmay Park, by the aid of his flock, kept the poor of a large district well tended, body and soul; he and the members of his church, old and young, were so well up in the troubles and deserts of the poor of the whole district that any impostor had a poor chance with them, and every individual who desired to act personally in the distribution of charitable aid had work to do. It is clear that if the clergy all over London worked similarly, both in fulfilment of the doctrines they teach and in return for the vast sums in the shape of income, lands, and vested interests they hold at the public cost, fewer deserving poor would be found in our streets, and impostors would find it not so easy to dupe the benevolent. In short, we think the evil now left to be dealt with chiefly by the laity, to be one largely created by the neglect of duty of a proportion of the ministers of all denominations, but more especially by a proportion of those who have most culture, income, and leisure—that is to say, those

who hold as sinecures their positions in the Church of England.

Mr. S. C. Hall's book is written with kindly and charitable intentions, and we hope that both sides of the question will be brought into view in these pages by correspondents versed in the details, for the best method of dealing with "God's poor" is, in the highest sense of the word, a spiritualistic question. The book will be useful to those who wish to learn the merits of one side of the problem. It contains some admirable specimens of wood-engraving.

The Court of Divorce in the Golden Land. London: Remington and Co. 1877.

This is an anonymous pamphlet, in which the writer, who signs himself "Iota," appears to possess all the characteristics of a street preacher, and has the impudence to put his ideas into the mouth of a ghost, who gives the Queen a severe and authoritative lecture for not having refused on theological grounds to sign the Divorce Bill when it was placed before her. Perhaps few bills have removed more misery from English homes than the one censured, and no ghost of any experience, no ghost with the slightest claim to respectability, would say a word against the cutting of man-made ties, in which the affections—the jewels of the spirit—have been sacrificed, perhaps in deference to the authority of the match-making mothers of the period, or perhaps because of similarly low aims and motives of the persons chiefly concerned. All the ills and troubles of human life are light when there is love at home, but where this is absent, no external conditions can remove the ever-present misery. As Emerson says, "Nothing is so severely punished as the disregard of those affinities on which alone society should be formed." If the author had brought his censures to bear upon the causes of the evil, rather than the judicious remedy, it would have been to his credit, but not a few preachers have the vice of fighting for incomprehensible dogmas which no intelligent person believes, yet of permitting the more glaring and palpable vices of society to exist untouched.

From a political point of view the pamphlet is equally objectionable. The Queen, in her official capacity, does not interfere in political or theological strife, and signs all bills as a matter of routine duty. Yet this pamphlet not only blames her for so doing, but the author pictures her as deeply and seriously impressed with the common-place rant of his own, which he has put into the mouth of an imaginary ghost.

In some parts of the pamphlet the author strongly enforces the high doctrine that God should be served rather than man, under all circumstances. But not satisfied with this noble position, he proceeds to define his notion of what serving God is, and to insist that the Queen and all others shall accept his definition. He has not yet arrived at the moral or intellectual altitude of giving others that liberty of opinion which he claims for himself, but exhibits narrow-minded priestly intolerance; the same spirit, in fact, which was at the root of the fire-and-faggot deeds of the Martyr ages.

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MR. J. M. PEEBLES.—The *Harbinger of Light* says that from Ceylon, Mr. Peebles will go on to Calcutta. He left Australia in the mail steamer *Bangalore* on Tuesday, June 10th. The same paper says:—Dr. Peebles has finished his second mission here, has sown the seed and departed on his way. On the occasion of his former visit to this city, in 1872, the press made common cause against him, and did their best during the first month of his lectures to aggravate popular prejudice and write him down. It required a considerable effort on the part of his committee and friends to overcome this antagonism, and place him fairly before the public. This they finally succeeded in doing, and the five lectures given by him in the Opera House prior to his departure in February, 1873, were fairly reported, and very extensively read. The influence of these lectures was doubtless an important factor in modifying the prevalent animus against Spiritualism, and preparing the public mind for a more favourable consideration of its philosophy. The rational views of religion promulgated by Spiritualists have had a marked influence on religious thought in Victoria, and large numbers are to be found, not connected with us as a body, whose views in all but the fact of spirit intercourse, are identical. To this we owe the more favourable reception of Dr. Peebles on the present occasion, the only abuse he has received being from the sectarian press. The modern "Ephesians" follow the example of their ancient prototypes, and cry down everything that conflicts with their vested interests. The secular press has carefully avoided giving prominence to Dr. Peebles or his lectures, but what it has said has been fair and truthful."

## WILLIAM LILLY, THE ASTROLOGER.

BY CHARLES CARLETON MASSEY.

THE following particulars (from an autobiography in the British Museum) respecting the examination of W. Lilly before a committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the causes of the great fire of London may be of interest:—

"In *Monarchy or no Monarchy*, printed 1651, I had framed a hieroglyphic, which you may see in page the 7th, representing a great sickness and mortality, wherein you may see the representation of people in their winding-sheets, persons digging graves and sepultures, coffins, &c. All this was propounded by the more secret key of astrology, or prophetic astrology. In 1666 happened that miraculous conflagration in the City of London, whereby in four days the most part thereof was consumed by fire. In my *Monarchy or no Monarchy*, the next side after the coffins and pickaxes, there is representation of a great city all in flames of fire. The memorial whereof some Parliament men remembering thought fit to send for me before that committee, which then did sit for examination of the causes of the fire; and whether there was no treachery or design in the business, His Majesty being then in a war both with the French and Dutch. The summons to appear before that committee was as followeth\* :—

"Monday, 22nd Oct., 1666.—At the committee appointed to inquire after the causes of the late fire. Ordered, that Mr. Lilly do attend the committee on Friday next, being the 25th Oct., 1666, at two of the clock in the afternoon, in the Speaker's Chamber, to answer such questions as shall be then and there asked him. "ROBERT BROOKE."

"By accident I was then in London when the summons came unto me. I was timorous of committees, being even by some of them calumniated, upbraided, scorned, and derided. However, I must and did appear, and let me never forget that great affection and care yourself (oh, most excellent and learned Esquire Ashmole) showed unto me at that time. First, your affection in going along with me all that day; secondly, your great pains and care in speaking unto many worthy members of that committee, your acquaintance, that they should befriend me, and not permit me to be affronted, or have any disgraceful language cast upon me. I must seriously acknowledge the persuasion so prevailed with those generous souls that I conceive there was never more civility used unto any than unto myself; and you know there were no small number of Parliament men appeared when they heard I was to be there.

Sir Robert Brooke (the chairman), spoke to this purpose: 'Mr. Lilly, this committee thought fit to summon you to appear before them this day to know if you can say anything as to the cause of the late fire, or whether there might be any design therein. You are called the rather because in a book of yours long since printed, you hinted some such thing in one of your hieroglyphics.' Unto which I replied, "May it please your Honours,—After the beheading of the late king, considering that in the three subsequent years the Parliament acted nothing which concerned the settlement of the nation in peace, and seeing the generality of people dissatisfied, the citizens of London discontented, the soldiery prone to mutiny, I was desirous, according to the best knowledge God had given me, to make inquiry by the art I studied what might from that time happen unto the Parliament and nation in general. At last, having satisfied myself as well as I could, and perfected my judgment therein, I thought it most convenient to signify my intentions † and conceptions in forms, shapes, types, hieroglyphics, &c., without any commentary that so my judgment might be concealed from the vulgar, and made manifest only unto the wise; I herein imitating the example of many wise philosophers who had done the like."

"'Sir Robert,' saith one, 'Lilly is yet *sub vestibulo*.' I proceeded further; said I,—'Having found, Sir, that the City of London should be sadly afflicted with great plague, and not long after with an exorbitant fire, I framed these two

\* I first met with the story of Lilly's examination in the form of a statement that he had been summoned to appear at the bar of the House. I referred to the journals, and finding no record there concluded that the story was a fabrication, or a "growth," until I came upon Lilly's own account. All orders and proceedings of the House would be entered in the journals, but not those of committees.

† It is worth while to note this old sense (now almost forgotten) of the word "intention," as denoting meaning.



hieroglyphics, as represented in the book, which in effect have proved very true.' 'Did you foresee the year?' said one.' 'I did not,' said I, 'or was desirous; of that I made no scrutiny.' I proceeded, — 'Now, Sir, whether there was any design of burning the city, or any employed to that purpose, I must deal ingenuously with you, that since the fire I have taken much pains in the search thereof, but cannot or could not give myself the least satisfaction therein. I conclude that it was only the finger of God, but what instrument He used thereunto I am ignorant.' The committee seemed well pleased with what I spoke, and dismissed me with great civility."

From Lilly vindicated, and astrology honoured in his person by a committee of the House of Commons in 1666, let us glance back eleven years, and see him standing at the bar of the *Middlesex Sessions*, to answer a vulgar charge which seems to have partaken of the two characters (significant of a transition state of public opinion which had then, however, hardly commenced) of sorcery and fraud.

"In 1655 I was indicted at Hicks's Hill by a half witted young woman. Three several sessions she was neglected, and the jury cast forth her bill, but the fourth time they found it against me. I put in bail to traverse the indictment. The cause of the indictment was that I had given judgment upon stolen goods, and taken two shillings and sixpence. And this was said to be contrary to an Act in King James's time made."

This was the Act against sorceries, conjurations, enchantments, &c., repealed and replaced by the 9 Geo. 2, with which Slade was threatened, should the Vagrant Act of George 4th not prove applicable to his case. In 1736 the transition of opinion was complete, and obtained legislative expression. Thenceforth professors of occult arts or gifts were to be punished as aforesaid, but as charlatans, pretenders and impostors, not as sorcerers. But upon the earlier Act it was doubtful whether fortune-telling, "judgment of stolen goods," &c., were within the offences defined, and upon this doubt, as will be seen, Lilly escaped. Had the Act of George 2nd existed in 1655, he would have had no chance, for these "offences" are specifically included in it.

So, let this be a word of warning to professional astrologers, casters of horoscopes, &c., at the present day; for this Act is unrepealed, and such successful prognostications as those of "Prospero" in the *Pall Mall Gazette* may exasperate the "opponents of superstition" almost as much as did the reports of Slade's spirit writing.

"This mad woman was put upon this action against me by two ministers [persecution having not yet passed out of the hands of the priests of religion into those of the priests of 'science'], who had framed for her a very ingenious speech, which she could speak without book, as she did the day of hearing the traverse. She produced one woman who told the Court a son of hers was run from her; 'that, being in much affliction of mind for her loss, she repaired unto me to know what had become of him; that I told her he was gone for the Barbadoes, and she would hear from him within thirteen days, which she said she did.' [How this, or much like it, which follows, and which I omit, could be evidence of the particular offence charged, one fails to see. It will be remembered that similar evidence, tendered by the prosecution in Slade's case, was objected to, and only admitted by the magistrate upon new summonses, including the additional cases.] 'I owned the taking of half-a-crown for the judgment of the theft' [which could not have been in the least material upon the charge under the Act of James] 'but said I gave no other judgment than that the goods would not be recovered. My counsel was the Recorder Green, who, after he had answered all objections, concluded that astrology was a lawful art. . . . The jury, who went not from the box, brought in—'No true bill.' [The sessions were not sitting, as in Slade's case, in the exercise of an appellate jurisdiction, so there was a jury, and the "No true bill," must mean a

verdict of "Not guilty."'] "I had procured Justice Hooker to be there, who was the oracle of all the justices of the peace in Middlesex"—as Mr. Edlin, the assistant-judge should have been, on a point of law, the other day. We had our "Recorder Green" in Serjeant Ballantine; alas! that Mr. Serjeant Cox could not have played the part of that "judicious" Hooker!\*

Temple, Sept. 29th.

#### A NEW SPIRITUALISTIC ORGANISATION IN AUSTRALIA.

ON Friday, 29th June, several prominent Spiritualists met Dr. Peebles, at 84, Russell-street, Melbourne, to talk over the present prospects of the movement here, and consider what could be done to utilise the effect produced by his lectures. It was considered by those present that the time had come for a reorganisation of Spiritualists, and with that view it was determined to adjourn the meeting for a week, in order that a larger number might be present at the initiation. In accordance with this resolution, notes were sent to several of the leading Spiritualists of Melbourne, requesting their attendance on Friday, 6th July, and were in most instances responded to, twenty-six ladies and gentlemen attending. Mr. H. Brotherton was voted to the chair, and Mr. W. H. Terry accepted the office of secretary *pro tem*.

On the motion of Mr. A. Deakin, seconded by Mr. J. M'Ilwraith, those present enrolled themselves as an organisation of Spiritualists.

A provisional committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Brotherton, Bonney, Strachan, Stow, Williams, Deakin, and Mrs. Williams, and the work indicated for them—to ascertain the practicability and probable cost of establishing a library and reading-room, a monthly *conversazione* of a social and intellectual character, and such other matters as were likely to conduce to the dissemination of a knowledge of Spiritualistic truth.

The committee so appointed held two meetings, and prepared the following scheme for presentation to a general meeting, which was held at the Masonic Hall, on Thursday, 26th July:—

#### REPORT OF THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE VICTORIAN SPIRITUALISTIC ASSOCIATION.

Melbourne, July, 1877.

The committee appointed by the meeting of Spiritualists, held at 84, Russell-street, on the 7th July, to ascertain the practicability and expenso of establishing a library and reading-room, also a monthly *conversazione*, and other matters tending to unite Spiritualists and disseminate a knowledge of Spiritualistic truth, has held two meetings, and now has the honour to present for the consideration of this meeting a progress report, containing a scheme of organisation, and a plan for carrying out the objects suggested by the general meeting.

Your committee, in the first place, recommend that the organisation be called, "The Victorian Association of Spiritualists," this title being considered both comprehensive and definite.

Secondly—That the objects of this Association be the investigation and advancement of Spiritualistic truths and purposes.

Thirdly—That a permanent office and reading-room be established and maintained, at a cost not exceeding £52 per annum. That this reading-room be opened daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and from 7 to 10 p.m. Also on Sunday afternoons, if volunteer attendants can be obtained.

Fourthly—That a *conversazione* of a social and intellectual character be held once a month.

Fifthly—That membership consist of enrolment in the secretary's book, and the payment of a quarterly subscription, the amount to be fixed by the applicant. Applicants to be approved by the committee before being entered on the permanent roll, the committee having power to reject any name, or expel objectionable persons. After the first election, new members not to be entitled to vote until three months after enrolment.

Your committee recommend the election of the following officers, viz.:—One president, two or more vice-presidents, two secretaries, one treasurer and librarian, and a committee of not less than seven.

A. BROTHERTON, B. BONNEY, A. D. STRACHAN, J. L. WILLIAMS, FLORENCE WILLIAMS, A. DEAKIN, W. H. TERRY.

The recommendations of the committee were submitted to the meeting *seriatim*; the first and second were passed without alteration; in the third, the maximum present expense for maintenance of the reading-room was increased to £75 per annum, and with this alteration, passed. The fourth recommendation for a monthly *conversazione* was passed, a quarterly social gathering on a larger scale being also suggested. The fifth recommendation was passed without alteration, and the sixth with the number ten substituted for seven. A resolution was also passed to the effect that the committee submit all matters of general policy to a meeting of the Association, the quorum on such occasions not to be less than twenty.

The meeting then proceeded to the election of officers, when the following were elected:—President, Mr. John M'Ilwraith; vice-presidents, Mr. T. W. Stanford, Mr. Henry Brotherton; secretaries, Mr. S. B. Bonney (general), Mr. D. Deakin (corresponding); treasurer and librarian, Mr. W. H. Terry.

Since the meeting Mr. M'Ilwraith has been compelled to decline the presidency, owing to pressing business matters.—*Harbinger of Light*.

\* When writing the above I was not aware that the particulars given were to be found in a book so easily accessible as Mr. Bohm's edition of *Lilly's Introduction to Astrology* by Zadkiel, republished only two years ago. It would be interesting to know if your correspondent "Aldebaran" can confirm the confident statements in the preface, that *Horary Astrology* is both infallible and easily learned.—C. C. M.

\* I do not know if "Prospero" sees *The Spiritualist*. It is possible. If so, let even one of "the anti-fairy party" respectfully entreat him not to suffer his interpretation of the stars to be warped by his proclivities. Information from occult sources has at all times been discredited by this tendency, which it must require a dispassionate vigilance to guard against. The man of science, however, can guard against it; whereas, probably, in the case of a medium the communications, whencesoever derived originally, are necessarily coloured in their passage. This would be the case even with "direct writing," if, as has been ingeniously suggested in your columns, the objective manifestations are only the more perfect and rapid development of the subjective. The obviously subjective character of some of Slade's messages caused more scorn and denial than the evidence of physical interference.

## THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIUMS.

BY EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.

I HAVE no sympathy with the disposition which leads many blindly to rush to the defence of doubtful mediums when accused, upon sufficient grounds, of deception; and this, even when the accusation is made by long-tried, experienced, and intelligent Spiritualists, whose only motive may be the vindication of the truth, and a proper regard for the purity of Spiritualism. This indiscriminate and quixotic defence betokens a credulous nature, and a falsely chivalrous spirit, which, when it results in glossing the faults of the medium, is quite certain to lead to the commission of further acts of deception, and finally to his exposure and disgrace—a disgrace which all Spiritualists are compelled to share in the eyes of the world. By some of these zealous but not discreet champions of all mediums, whether true or false, it has been urged that they should have “sufficient strength and independence to enable them to deny having their divine powers tested in any way whatever.” For the sake of the cause and of mediums themselves, I hope never to see the day when this rule will prevail, for then, instead of having one pope, like the Roman Catholics, we shall have a host, equally fallible, and the doctrines taught and the miracles performed, will be of a more unreliable character than those of the Catholic Church.

Mediums, like all others, should be held to a strict accountability, for a moment's reflection will convince every reasonable mind that the knowledge of their exemption would open wide the doors to every species of charlatany, fraud, imposition, and even crime; and Spiritualism, based though it be upon the immutable foundations of demonstrated and divine truth, would crumble and decay, and its true supporters and defenders would be compelled to flee from the righteous indignation of outraged society. All good and intelligent spirits teach us to accept nothing from them without proof, or nothing at least which cannot bear the severest tests that our judgment can impose. This is the true and proper method of communicating with them, as taught by themselves, and can it be that this rule, thus approved, should apply only to them and their teachings, and not to their instruments, the mediums, through whom they manifest? Is the instrument of communication less fallible than the communicating intelligence? Does all the risk of error rest alone with the latter, while the former is guileless and free from error? Experience and observation do not confirm this; but, on the contrary, they teach us the necessity of exercising equal caution in our dealings with both.

If persons professing to be mediums are detected in counterfeiting manifestations, they should not be allowed to shield themselves under the “plea that their hands or persons have been used by the spirits,” for mediums and their spirit guides are for these purposes units—of one mind. An honest medium will always successfully rebel against all attempts at dishonest practices on the part of his spirit guide, and it is not only impossible for any spirit to habitually or even frequently practice deception through an honest medium, but it is doubtful whether an honest medium exists whose spirit guide is not equally honest. My observation has led me to believe that this is a rule, with few, if any, exceptions. So, if we should be charitably disposed to exonerate the medium from direct action or complicity in the deception, we still have his associated spirit guide to deal with, and we cannot exonerate both; and as they are virtually one in mind and intention, we must, if we desire to avoid being imposed upon, while pitying the medium, shun both, for it is quite as often true as otherwise that “the spirits of the prophets (or mediums) are subject to the prophets.”

Modern Spiritualism appears to have been destined to bear, not only its own proper burdens, the scorn, and even malice of perverse bigotry and opposing interests, and the affected contempt of shallow and thoughtless minds, but, in addition, to encounter the organised attempts of professed friends to foist upon it practices and teachings which are entirely foreign to its spirit, its objects, and aims, and which, if firmly engrafted upon it, would surely crush out its life, and sink it to the level of those base superstitions which in all ages have defaced the records of humanity;

from which nothing beneficial has ever proceeded, and whose only fruit is evil.

The path of the true Spiritualist is not strewn with flowers alone; thorns are also to be encountered, and if we would pursue this path successfully we must exercise proper discretion and constant care and watchfulness, lest we lose sight of the flowers in the suffering inflicted by the brambles and thorns which we have neglected to guard against. We should be animated by the spirit of charity in all our thoughts and acts towards each other, and especially toward mediums, but our charity should be discriminating, and not flow so abundantly as to deteriorate in quality until it is no longer sustaining and helpful. In other words there should be a reasonable assurance that the objects of our charity are worthy of it, otherwise we are unjust to honest mediums, who alone are entitled to our full confidence and protective care, and such a false course is calculated to render valueless in their estimation the good opinion and approval which are so indiscriminately bestowed, and to cause them to become indifferent to either praise or censure.

My advice to all true and honest mediums is to comply with all *reasonably, timely, and proper* demands for test conditions. When a medium professes to render service for pay there is an implied understanding that the payer shall receive a *quid pro quo* for his money, and to this extent it is a business transaction, and I consider the medium bound to extend all courtesy and consideration, as just said, to all reasonable and proper requests for test conditions. This is the business view of it, but beside this is the question, “What do the true interests of both the medium and the cause demand, in relation to this subject?” and it should be apparent that the course here indicated is the best and most advantageous for both, for the arbitrary refusal to comply with the reasonable wishes of investigators invariably leads to dissatisfaction and suspicion, and colour is given to, it may be, calumnies, which not only react on the medium, disturbing his condition and dissipating his power, but his character and influence are unfavourably affected, and the cause itself brought temporarily into contempt. Whereas, if the requests of the investigator are met in a kindly and fraternal spirit, it is quite probable that not only all this difficulty will be avoided, but that the investigator will be favourably impressed with, perhaps confirmed in, the truth, and the medium secure a lasting friend, instead of an adversary.

But the reader should not infer from what is here said that I am in favour of a medium submitting to the senseless, or, perhaps, ill-intended demands for conditions, which sometimes are made by persons lacking every qualification necessary for investigation, or by enemies, both of the medium and the cause. Here the medium should not only refuse compliance, but he should be supported in his refusal by friends present. He and they should then decide what is, or what is not, proper to concede.

In my experience, I have always found the most reliable mediums the most willing to submit to reasonable tests, when proposed in a proper spirit and manner. How is it possible to discriminate between true and false mediums unless it be by testing them? The greatest of all mediums, Jesus of Nazareth, as a materialised spirit, invited the sceptical Thomas to test his substantiality by touching him. This is an eminent and forcible example, which none of our mediums can afford to ignore.

With our best mediums of approved honesty and power certain unsatisfactory manifestations may occur, unaccompanied by any convincing evidence of collusion or fraud, while there may be possible grounds for suspicion. The difficulties involved in the exercise of mediumship are always great, and sometimes insurmountable; the power is often exerted unequally, and is liable in its operation to frequent checks and imperfect manifestations, and with perhaps all mediums this unequal operation, and the partially accomplished results, are the principal stumbling blocks in the way of conviction. To condemn a medium upon the accusations of one or a dozen incompetent witnesses would be unwise, uncharitable, and unjust. It is clearly the duty of Spiritualists to defend the medium against such apparent but unfounded aspersions, not by denouncing the probably honest accusers, but by taking measures to demonstrate their

error, and the consequent injustice of the charge of fraud, and, if the accusation be groundless, by pursuing this course the innocence of the medium will surely be established, at least in the minds of all intelligent Spiritualists, and this result is, perhaps, more to be desired than that the accusers should be convinced. At any rate, the sensible and proper course will have been pursued, and the cause of truth will not suffer in the end.

The attempts to shield mediums from their responsibility can never result in good to honest mediums. They neither ask nor require such exemption, while, on the other hand, dishonest and immoral mediums eagerly avail themselves of the shield which such attempts interpose between them and the consequences of their acts. Their hands are strengthened by all such unwise and unworthy attempts, and they find encouragement and support in their deceptive and sometimes immoral practices, while the cause their professed advocacy defiles is rendered more or less odious to earnest and sensible unconvinced investigators who may witness and detect their imposture.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

#### AT HOME WITH FIRE.

To the Editor of the "Banner of Light" (September 15th, 1877).

SIR,—On Sunday afternoon, September 1st, I heard that Mrs. Suydam, the "fire-test" medium, was to give a *séance* at Eagle Hall, in the evening, and I went to see it. It was very satisfactory. She thoroughly and quite permanently held her hands and arms in the hot flame of a kerosene lamp, also manipulated burning alcohol, breathing it into her mouth. She did enough of this to have blistered or roasted flesh under ordinary circumstances.

After she had finished (and the committee of sceptics had stated what any one in the room could see was the fact, that neither her flesh, nor even the small hairs on the flesh experienced in the least degree any disturbance by the operation), a person claiming to be a Spiritualist, whose name was said to be Moore, arose and said the whole thing was a fraud; he afterwards qualified it, as "his opinion." The rudeness of the attack was based not on any knowledge of Mrs. Suydam, but wholly on the fact that people had advertised and performed more wonderful fire feats, such as holding live coals and melted lead in their hands, and putting them into their mouths. He said that spirits had nothing to do with it, but that it was the result of chemical protection. This speech was followed by an animated but disagreeable discussion. Finally a man named Butler, who said he was not a Spiritualist, but had some knowledge of chemicals, offered to come prepared to test the lady on some occasion for his own satisfaction, and said he would like to bring with him some experts and doctors. This was agreed to by Mrs. Suydam. Tuesday evening (4th) was fixed for the *séance*, and a very intelligent-looking audience gathered on the occasion, Mr. Butler appearing with a number of chemists and doctors, who, by general consent, took charge of the exhibition. Dr. Thayer, a well-known city physician, was requested to examine Mrs. Suydam's arms; he did so minutely, and pronounced them perfectly healthy and natural; he could detect no chemical application on them. Mr. Butler then bathed her arms and hands in a solution that would annul any chemical application; Mrs. Suydam then washed them with soap and water, and wiped them dry, Mr. Butler providing the materials.

Mrs. Suydam next deliberately took the hot glass with both hands from the lamp, held it steadily in her hands, and then laid it on her cheek and neck, with apparently the same effect as if it had been only blood warm. She then put her hands into the flame and kept them there, drawing her arms slowly through it, allowing it to run up through her extended fingers, turning her hand slowly without withdrawing it, allowing the flame to run through the fingers the other way.

The exhibition was as remarkable as it was satisfactory, and was unanimously and enthusiastically applauded. Remarks were made by several persons, and the discussion was quite animated. Every one was satisfied that the thing was fairly and actually done, but the how was quite a problem. The committee did not seem to think the spiritual claim good, they not being Spiritualists; that was a matter of

course. Mr. Butler, who seemed to be the leader of the evening, thought by practice he could do it, and while saying so, his first attempt to remove the glass (which was some degrees cooler than when Mrs. Suydam took hold of it) made him jump, and the audience smile; he thought the carbon, or smoke of the high flame, possibly became gradually a protection to the skin, and then proceeded to put his hands in and out of the flame, not as Mrs. Suydam did, to stay and be at home in the flame, but as any raw operator would, moving them all the time, and not in the flame two consecutive seconds. Still, he thought that by practice he could do all that the lady did. At this point he remarked that he smelled burnt hair, and looking at his hands, he found his trifling manipulation of the flame had burned all the small hairs off of his hands. It was the testimony of the committee, including Dr. Thayer, and the experience of any who chose to examine, that after Mrs. Suydam's protracted association with the same flame, and also the manipulating of an alcoholic flame, not a hair on her hands or arms was singed.

This was so evidently a success, and the astute observers were so at a loss to explain it, that the closing discussion was quite scientific and respectful; even Mr. Moore, though disbelieving the spiritual claim, seemed inclined to apologise for his rudeness, as some considered it, on Sunday evening. A full report of the remarks would be interesting reading, but I have confined this article to the simple details of the "test." One remark which Dr. Thayer made was so true, and from so intelligent a source, that it is worth noting independently of the *séance* I have attempted to describe. The doctor said that he did not say he was not a Spiritualist; the study of material science, physics, tended to make people materialists, and he had had doubts of a future existence, but as he had grown older he had become satisfied that man was immortal. "Most of you here," said he, "seem to be Spiritualists. Let me say to you that one-half of the brain of Boston is very hospitable to modern Spiritualism. One half of the brain of this city receives the manifestations of modern Spiritualism with a good deal of tenderness, and many more would own up their belief if by admitting being Spiritualists they did not seem to be approving manifestations that are silly, degrading, and fraudulent. When the subject is purged from tainted associations many will be openly with you of culture and science who know it roots in truth, but do not wish by identification seemingly to endorse the doubtful or discreditable."

JOHN WETHERBEE.

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We are born to an inheritance of opinions, right and wrong, and right or wrong, we cling to them with a pertinacity exceeded by nothing but our attachment to life. The seeds of error, as well as of truth, are planted by the stupid parent in the minds of his unfortunate children, and lucky is the child in whose mind the tares do not choke the wheat before he is able to distinguish one from the other.—*Voltaire*.

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MR. TYERMAN.—Mr. John Tyerman, the well-known Spiritualist lecturer, returned to Sydney by *The Barrabool* on the 24th ult. Our readers may remember that his visit to Melbourne was undertaken in the hope of restoring his health, which had failed principally from over-exertion of the mental powers. We are happy to be able to report that the object of his visit has been so far attained that there is every prospect of his being able, in the course of a few weeks, to resume his public labours. This result is in a great measure due to the mesmeric treatment of Mr. Singleton. Mr. Tyerman expressed the regret he felt at being unable to give any public lectures here, and requested us to thank the many kind friends who contributed to the fund initiated on his behalf. The only occasion on which he spoke in public here was at the Melbourne Spiritualists' Lyceum for Children, on Sunday, 15th July, of which the following is a brief report:—Mr. Tyerman prefaced his remarks by referring to the unfortunate circumstances under which his present visit to Victoria was made. He had come here in the hopes of recruiting his failing health, and although he believed he was decidedly better, he felt that he was not yet strong enough to speak in public as he desired. He had seen a little of the Lyceum when here before, but what he had recently seen had so heightened his estimation of that institution that he should, when his health was restored, endeavour to establish one in Sydney. It appeared to him that the principle of the Lyceum was not to cram or indoctrinate the children, but to cultivate and draw them out. He had formerly had considerable experience in connection with orthodox Sunday schools, to which the Lyceum formed a marked contrast. He exhorted the little ones of the Lyceum to practical goodness, and to remember the proximity of their spirit friends. To the elder members he enlarged upon the truths of Spiritualism, and the eclectic nature of the Spiritualistic belief, comprehending Freethought, and all that was good in the Christian religion. Mr. Tyerman's remarks were listened to with attention, and were applauded at the conclusion.—*Harbinger of Light*.

## THE BARON AND BARONESS VON VAY.

IN the course of a private letter from Prussia, dated Sept. 27th, to Mr. W. H. Harrison, the Baroness von Vay says:—

"Early in October we shall be back again in Gonobitz. We hope to return to England in 1879, and to make a longer stay in London, the magnificence of which pleased us very much.

"Would you be so kind as to repeat the Baron's and my best thanks to all the members of the British National Association of Spiritualists for the hearty and nice welcome they gave us. That evening remains one of the best remembrances of my life; you were all so kind and friendly to us. I scarcely thank you enough with these simple words, and wish I could express all the '*estime*' I feel for the Association and its members. Had it not been for the illness of my mother-in-law we should have spent several weeks in London, but this hastened our steps homewards.

"Our *séance* with Mr. Slade, at the Hague, was one of the best ones. I am fully convinced, and so is the Baron, of that medium's genuineness and good character.—[*N.B. Before the séance the Baron and Baroness von Vay were fully aware of all the assertions of Messrs. Maskelyne, Lankester, and Donkin about Dr. Slade.*]

"We sat in full daylight at midday, and got spirit-writing upon our *own* slates, Slade holding them upon the Baron's head. He (my husband) felt the writing upon the top of his head, and we heard it distinctly. Then Slade held the slate upon the Baron's shoulder, and again a message was written.

"When our hands were all united upon the table, I felt somebody pressing my knee. On looking under the table I saw a nice little woman's hand coming near to me; I took it in mine; it grasped me, then melted away in my touch. Once the table *floated* upwards, and a chair too, which stood very far from Dr. Slade. So the *séance* was a very convincing one, this occurring all in broad daylight before our eyes."

## THE PHENOMENON OF THE MATERIALISATION OF A SPIRIT CLOSELY OBSERVED.

BY THE REV. THOMAS COLLEY, LATE CHAPLAIN TO H.M.S. "MALABAR."

Springs the immortal from the mortal;  
Heaven is twin with earth;  
Man is made the Spirit's portal,  
And th' invisible hath birth.—THOS. COLLEY.

I have just witnessed the most marvellous materialisation phenomenon I have ever heard of or can conceive. About half-past six o'clock this evening, Dr. Donald Kennedy, of Boston, U.S., with Dr. Monck, called on me to accompany them to a hastily-improvised and telegram-arranged sitting at the house of a friend near London.

First we sat, four men only, with our wits about us, I hope, for preliminary manifestations in the light, consisting of test slate-writing. Dr. Kennedy was instructed to write a question, secretly, on one slate, and then tie it over another, with a bit of pencil placed between, so that by invisible power the spirit answer might be given. This was done, the slates being tied up in a handkerchief and placed for a moment on the carpet, in the shade, under the table, all hands being visible while the writing was in audible process. The answer was pertinent to the question put, a communication to Dr. Kennedy also being added, which had in it the nature of a test, inasmuch as it bore reference to a matter of private interest and importance to the gentleman named.

After this some writing paper was placed between the leaves of a book, and, with a lead pencil, these were put beneath the table, Dr. Kennedy instantly placing his foot upon the volume to secure it. Samuel (Dr. Monck's control) then requested him to name the number of the page and line for an extract; page twenty and line ten at random were suggested, and quickly the mystery was accomplished, Dr. Kennedy removing his foot for a moment for the book to be handed up. The extract was literally and correctly given, and a further message to Dr. Kennedy was found, consisting of fifty-six words over and above the thirteen transcribed answering to the page and line desired, making, with the slate and other direct writing yet to be noticed, one hundred and four words in three totally different styles

of handwriting, each communication being consistent as to style throughout.

And now a small bell, placed on the table, was seen to rise from and float over it, and hang suspended in space, then dip obliquely, and ring several times, we surrounding it, passing our hands above and about it, to be perfectly sure that no hair, or wire, or thread, magnet below, or fraud from any place still lower sustained it, as, in wicked opposition to known laws, it acted in a manner frolicsome, contumacious of scientific propriety, and was sadly regardless of what might have been expected from it on the score of gravitation.

Then a lead pencil, placed on some paper, got up, sloped itself to the writing angle, and, with no hand visible to guide it, wrote with considerable pressure, manifest from the depth of colour and indentation of the pencil point in the paper, a sentence of five words. The surpassing swiftness with which these few words were written was amazing. I tore the paper, and placed it under the pencil, which latter, no sooner raised itself to the proper pitch to feel its point, than with electric speed it moved, and the sixty-eight separate movements of the pencil necessary to write the five words were effected instantaneously.

But yet another slate-writing test was to be given. Two slates were placed together, with a splinter of slate pencil between them, and Dr. Kennedy, resting his hand with force, with Dr. Monck's, upon the upper one, dictated that the word "Remember" should be written; and while so held in this manner, precluding all possibility of deception, with six eyes watchful to detect, and six ears acute to discover anything like hanky-panky, no sooner was the word given than the sound of writing under Dr. Kennedy's hand was heard, and instantly the unpremeditated word was written.

Then having half-an-hour still to spare, the two ladies of the house joined us, and we sat for materialisation. The back-room, divided from the front by folding doors (one shut, and a curtain partly covering the other) formed the cabinet, which was little needed; for Dr. Monck, under control of "Samuel," was, by the light of the lamp—the writer not being a yard away from him—seen by all to be *the living gate for the extrusion of spirit forms from the realm of mind into this world of matter*: for standing forth thus plainly before us, the psychic or spirit-form was seen to grow out of his left side. First several faces one after another, of great beauty appeared, and in amazement we saw, and as I was suffered to stand close up to the medium, even touching him, I saw most plainly—several times, a perfect face and form of exquisite womanhood partially issue from Dr. Monck, about the region of the heart. Then, after several attempts, a full formed figure, in a nebulous condition at first, but growing solid as it issued from the medium, left Dr. Monck, and stood, a separate individuality, two or three feet off, bound to him by a slender attachment as of gossamer, which at my request, Samuel in control severed with the medium's left hand; and there stood embodied a spirit form of unutterable loveliness, robed in attire spirit-spun—a meshy web-work from no mortal loom, of a fleeciness inimitable and of transfiguration whiteness truly glistening.

But Dr. Kennedy was now invited to draw equally near, and realise more closely, with me, the marvel of the separate identity of the spirit form from the medium, and as we stood, looking with all our soul upon the mighty fact of *spirit birth from mortal man*, Dr. Monck, still entranced, placed the lovely visitant from the inner world between us, and affording it the support each of an arm, we advanced with our sweet spirit companion some steps further into the room. Meanwhile, holding the hand of the spirit arm that rested on mine, I felt the wrist, palm, fingers, and finger nails. It was in every respect a living hand, answering to my touch, yielding to pressure, having natural weight and substance, and all things pertaining to humanity, but it was damp and stone cold; and the thought passed through my mind how like steam, first invisible, condensed, is then seen as cloudy vapour, which precipitated, may finally take solid form in ice, this figure at my side had, by a somewhat analogous process, been rendered visible and tangible, from the vital force, viewless and imponderable of the medium. It had, under the chemistry, not yet understood, of the higher



life, condensed into the nebulous condition instanced of the form's first appearance, then further solidified into the lovely creature we supported and wistfully beheld.

But, not to theorise, I now come to the climax of the night's most wonderful phenomena.

When the form at last retired, I was, as an extreme favour, which might cost the medium great prostration, permitted to accompany it, and draw near with it slowly and cautiously until I came again close up to Dr. Monck, as he, still entranced, stood forth full in view of all, waiting to receive back unto himself the marvellous *Æon*, phantasm or emanation that we *must* call angel or spirit. As it neared him, the gossamer filament again came into view, its attenuated and vanishing point being, as before, towards the heart. By means of this subtle cord I noticed how the psychic figure seemed to be sucked back into the body of the medium. For, like a water-spout at sea, funnel-shaped, or sand column such as I have seen in Egypt, but horizontal instead of vertical, the superior vital power of Dr. Monck seemed to absorb and draw in the spirit form, but so gradually that I was enabled closely to watch the process; for, leaning against, and holding the medium, with my left arm at his back, and my left ear and cheek to his breast, his heart beating in a most violent and alarming way, I saw him receive back the lovely birth of the invisible spheres into his very person; and, as I gazed for the last time on the sweet face of the disintegrating spirit, within three or four inches of the features, I marked its fair aspect, eyes, hair, and delicate complexion, and kissed the dainty hand, as, in process of absorption, it dissolved, and saw the angel face disappear and fade, as it was drawn, positively, into the bosom of the medium. Gazing thus closely, with awe and breathless interest, did I, therefore, watch the departure of our angel friend, and, through the living gate and avenue of the medium's very self, did I, with feelings indescribable, mark the steps of her progress to regain, through the living organism and body of Dr. Monck, her home in the viewless spheres.

London, Tuesday, Sept. 25th, 1877.

#### SEANCES IN PARIS.

For some time past the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, has published in these pages many of the details of interesting *séances* held in Paris by himself and the Count de Bullet, with the medium Mr. Firman. The *groupe* in Paris has been one of those best of all circles for obtaining advanced results, namely, one in which the medium is not worried, but protected like a delicate instrument from bad or stupid usage by the ignorant, and wherein the powers at the root of the matter, freely have their own way. Mr. Blackburn conducts a circle on similarly wise principles in England.

Another good feature about the *séances*, is the unquestionable honour and integrity of the chief witnesses. This at once reduces all questions at issue, to problems of a purely scientific nature, and to the amount of absence of error in observations and conclusions.

One of the results obtained at Count de Bullet's *séances* seems to be thoroughly established, namely the passage of solid matter through orifices too small to permit the transmission of the objects by any means known to science. The objections made to such results do not seem to us to have sufficient weight to be taken into consideration, as possible alternatives, without practical demonstration.

Photographs of the results have been presented to the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists, which, after thanking donors for presents, always refers the gifts connected with phenomenal Spiritualism to the Research Committee, before they are placed on permanent public view. Of this Committee Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, the electrician, is chairman. There may be a few natural questions which the public would like to ask and Mr. O'Sullivan to answer, about the moulds, so perhaps those questions had better be put through the Research Committee.

THE new session of the Psychological Society of Great Britain begins early in November.

MR. W. H. HARRISON's book of selected prose and poetical compositions, many of them written while engaged in the work of daily and weekly newspaper editing, before Mr. Cromwell Varley called his attention to Spiritualism, will be published to-morrow.

#### MESMERISM.

BY HENRY G. ATKINSON, F.G.S.

You should remember that but a few of the older mesmerists are now alive, and that they *are* old, so the work must be recommenced by the young. It was in 1851 that my *Letters to Miss Martineau* were published, the same year as Dr. Gregory's book, which together seemed to form a sort of termination to what I may call "the mesmeric period," since the interest found in mesmerism was transferred to the more startling phenomena of Spiritualism, and it is only lately that Spiritualists have shown a more real scientific interest in the phenomena in question, and seen that all the correlated facts, such as the mesmeric, must be taken into their account. Until lately I do not think that even you, sir, would have given place to detailed accounts of mesmeric cases.\*

Captain James refers to a case of mine of a young lady kept in the mesmeric state, not for weeks, as he says, but for seven months, during which time she neither ate nor drank anything, and was continually spitting blood. She was one of the most perfect clairvoyants I have known. But a still more remarkable case of mine is given in the Rev. George Sandby's book on *Mesmerism and its Opponents*, dedicated to Captain James, but which has been long out of print. The case I refer to was that of Annie Vials, who became an ecstatic. Hundreds of persons, actors, poets, authors, artists, and scientific men, together with the nobility, visited my house to witness the striking beauty of the phenomena, and I should be happy to copy out the case, with additional remarks and information, if I knew that it would be acceptable. There are not many such cases as those I am alluding to, because to devote yourself for seven months night and day to one case is not a light matter; but the remarkable phenomena that occurred during all that time repaid me for the labour. I have received a note this morning from a Mr. Francis Ashley, who, it seems, is a mesmerist, but, like Mr. Serjeant Cox, does not believe in any actual mesmeric force. Mr. Ashley thinks the so-called mesmeric state is "self-induced," and that is a matter to be considered, of course, but that could not account for thought-reading, brain-sympathy, and sympathy at a distance, of which I could give most positive and striking instances. It would not account for Mr. Thompson and myself causing a sensitive in a crowded room to go and do what we silently willed. So common is thought-reading with some operators, that they refuse to believe in phreno-mesmerism, considering it to be all and only thought-transfer. Unfortunately people *will* generalise from insufficient evidence and from their own particular experience, but it so happens that I never induced thought-reading in any of my patients notwithstanding the cases of sympathy at a distance, certainly not in the cases of phreno-mesmerism, on which I relied. The case of Goethe's grandfather, related by himself, makes it certain that there is such a fact as mental transfer, and indeed a large portion of what is termed clairvoyance, must be accounted for in this way—that is, by a sympathy at a distance with persons *en rapport*, and Lord Bacon himself reports instances. It seems to me that sympathy is the first step in mesmeric matters. Similar phenomena occur in the normal state, and of them we have such abundant accounts on record. The principle on which Mr. Braid acted was quite a different thing. To conclude, I hold that the older mesmerisers have done their part, and now it is for the younger ones to do theirs.

Quai de la Douane, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Sept. 30th, 1877.

MR. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—On Sunday next, October 7th, Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver an inspirational address in the Spiritualists' Hall, Newgate-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne—subject, "The Spirit-Man"; to commence at 6.30 p.m. On Monday, October 8th, Mr. Morse will deliver another address at eight p.m.—subject, "Gods, False and True." On Tuesday evening, October 9th, Mr. Morse will address the Spiritualists of South Shields; and on Wednesday and Thursday, October 10th and 11th, he will deliver trance addresses in the Hall School, Sunderland. During the next two months he will deliver several trance addresses at Stockton-on-Tees.

\* This is quite a mistake; we have been for years to all the mesmeric experiments we could get a chance of witnessing, and with the full knowledge they were connected with Spiritualism. The first mesmeric lecture so witnessed was summarised in *The Spiritualist* eight years ago. All through the last eight years we have also given much time to the gathering of information about the physiology of the nervous system, instead of giving attention to the exact sciences which constituted our former "groove," and the facts ascertained were recorded in these pages, ready for Spiritualistic students when the should begin to feel the want of them.—ED.

## DR. SLADE'S MOVEMENTS.

A LETTER from Mr. Simmons, dated September 30th, informs us of the intention of Dr. Slade and his party to leave Brussels, October 2nd (last Tuesday), for Nykjoebing in Denmark; after staying there for a time they expect to go on to St. Petersburg.

The *Harbinger of Light* (Melbourne), received by the last mail, contains the following paragraph:—

We are in receipt of a letter from Dr. Henry Slade, dated "The Hague, Holland, 10th May," in which he definitely announces his acceptance of an invitation, formerly sent to him, to visit Melbourne immediately after the fulfilment of his Russian engagement. In reference to the latter, however, he intimates the probability of the Russian war interfering with its fulfilment, in which case he would be prepared to leave Holland, *en route* for Melbourne, before the end of October.

Dr. Slade is one of the most gifted and reliable mediums living, and to those who imagine that the Bow-street conviction was the result of fraud or trickery on his part, we would recommend the perusal of *The Slade Trial and its Lessons*, by M.A. (Oxon.)

Our esteemed friend, Dr. Peebles, has been intimately acquainted with Dr. Slade for many years, and has every confidence in his honesty as a medium. We have little doubt that the Spiritualists here will give him a cordial welcome, and take steps to prevent any attempts at persecution by prejudiced bigots.

## A HAUNTED HOUSE.

(From the "St. Louis Globe-Democrat.")

IN one of the most pleasant and aristocratic localities of our city, a few evenings ago, there were some strange manifestations, by some supposed to be spiritual doings. The bells began to ring. First the front door bell, then the servants', then the kitchen, and then all the bells rang at once. The inmates watched first one and then another of the bells, but they always rang when they were not watching. After guarding outdoors and in until exhausted, and they had become extremely alarmed, the ringing stopped at 3.30 in the morning. The servant girls gave notice that they would leave next day, but to quiet them the gentleman of the house told them that the disturbance was caused only by electricity, and he would have the bells fixed; and away he went to see the bell-hangers, and get them to ascertain what was the matter. They tightened some of the wires and loosened others, spending nearly a day in the work. "All right, now," said they to the gentleman, "you'll have no further trouble." But the bell-hangers had barely reached the street when all the bells began to ring again, and with astonishing violence.

The next evening at eleven o'clock the invisible bell-ringers began their clanging music again, and continued it half an hour before reaching the closing note. For two evenings they acted only as they were acted upon by the tangible fingers of doubting Thomases. It was thought that electricity had completed its work, and there would be no more trouble; but that thought was a mistake. In the morning the beds of the children were found moved across the room, the location of other pieces of furniture changed to different parts of the room, the pictures broken down, and the cords cut. The children denied that they knew anything about it, with the exception of the eldest, who said he had heard loud raps around the room. This disturbance was repeated three evenings, when the children were removed into the parents' room, as they were all too much frightened to sleep in their own apartment.

The next evening, however, they returned to it, and they were just comfortably turned in for the night, when the piano began to play. They opened the door and listened, and it played most beautifully, accompanying a lady's voice in song. They then went down stairs and opened the parlour doors, when the music ceased, and the instrument was found locked, with no indications that any one was near or had been there. For five nights peace and quiet reigned within, the children occupying the room adjoining that of the parents, the door being left open between the apartments. One little boy went to bed on the sixth night at eight o'clock, and he had not been there long before the family saw the bed moving across the room; and loud rappings and other singular noises were heard on the furniture. The little fellow was taken into the parents' chamber again, when an invisible power picked him up, lifting him three feet, and carried him along and placed him back in his bed. The terrified parents were now satisfied that it was not done by any human agency.

While meditating as to what should be done, the family standing in a group in one corner of the room, they all saw what appeared to be a little boy emerge from the fireplace. He looked natural, but thin and pale. He went toward the door, and then vanished before their eyes. This frightened them more than ever. They made their beds on the floor, and all slept together.

In the morning the gentleman related the whole occurrence to an old friend, and that person said he had heard of a gentleman in the city of the name of Charles Tuckett, who was posted in spiritual phenomena, and he would hunt him up and see if he could solve the mysterious problem. Seeing the latter as per agreement, Mr. Tuckett, with a clairvoyant and trance medium (the beautiful daughter of one of our wealthy citizens), and two gentlemen (not Spiritualists) repaired to the disturbed residence and agitated family at eight o'clock the following evening. A circle was formed, consisting of the persons just mentioned and the family.

The medium soon being under "spiritual control," said: "I see a lady by you, madam. She is tall, with dark hair, and says she is your sister. A little boy is holding her hand."

The sister-spirit then took control of the medium, and said—"Sister: When I died you promised to take care of my two little children. You neglected them, and this one now with me in the spirit world died from neglect. It is the same little fellow you saw in your room. You placed them among strangers and they were cruelly treated. This one died, and the other is being used cruelly by the persons you have placed him with. I desire you to bring him away to-morrow and take care of him as one of your own, as you promised me. If you do not I will trouble you more than you ever dream. Your own little boy is a medium, through whom I can operate. If you take care of my little boy I will trouble you no more, but will be around you to impress your mind with all that is good and lovely, and will be a guardian angel to you and yours, greeting you when you cross the river to where I am. Teach my boy to love me and to be a good and true man. Good-bye.—Your SISTER."

The medium came out of her trance perfectly ignorant of what had transpired.

The boy was brought away, and there has been no trouble of any kind at the haunted mansion since.

## 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.]

## A SEANCE WITH MR. FLETCHER.

SIR,—I desire to report the results of a *séance* held at my house some time ago. Mr. J. W. Fletcher, the medium, and ten sitters were present.

The *séance* commenced at eight o'clock, each of us joining hands. In a few minutes the medium became entranced; a beautiful invocation followed, after which Judge Edmonds took control and delivered an address on the subject of "Life in the Spirit World," and answered questions respecting reincarnation and other subjects. Winona, an Indian spirit, then took possession and gave several of the sitters tests of spirit identity, some of them of the most conclusive kind. For myself, I can conscientiously say I never had so clear and direct a test since I first began my inquiries into Spiritualism. He gave me the Christian names, the age, and the time of year he died of my son who passed on to the higher life nearly fourteen years ago. Altogether it was a most successful *séance*, and gave general satisfaction; so much so that several of the sitters requested me to make arrangements with Mr. Fletcher for another *séance*.

Mr. Fletcher is not aware that I am making this report. I think, however, it is only justice to him that I should do so.

THOS. WILKS.

The Library, Green-lanes, Newington-green, London.

## SPIRITUALISM AND MESMERISM IN DUBLIN.

SIR,—Almost everywhere I have come in contact with people in this city, I have especially noticed, when the conversation turned to Mesmerism, and then to Spiritualism, a general belief in the former, and strong desires expressed to see and know more about it—the work done by the late good Archbishop Whately not being forgotten. With reference to Spiritualism, notwithstanding the general scepticism manifested on the surface, there is also an under current of inquiry about the subject. I have attended three *séances* up to the time of writing, and I find that Spiritualism is steadfastly and surely making headway here. It was remarked by me in *The Spiritualist* a short time before the Conference of the British National Association of Spiritualists in 1875, that Spiritualism would here take hold of the educated classes first, and from them work its way through the masses. Only those who are acquainted with the people here know the rigid bigotry that exists in connection with religious and sectarian questions, and the fact that Spiritualism is taking hold of the people of influence shows at once the wisdom of the controllers of the movement. I find that my then prediction is now substantially correct, and although not at liberty at present to make use of names, I have noticed many in connection with the scholastic establishments of this city of learning, ready and anxious to make a quicker acquaintance with the subject, and a desire to be introduced to *séances*.

Good mediums for physical manifestations, tests, raps in the daylight, would do well here; while the inspirational powers of Messrs. Morse and Colville, lecturing on subjects chosen by the audience, would carry the city by storm. I had the pleasure of attending a *séance* on Tuesday morning, at which the principal manifestations were raps in the daylight, distinct and intelligent. Questions were answered, and messages spelled out accurately; the medium was an elderly lady. I have seen some curious drawings by this lady that are very interesting, for two reasons; first, because the lady was over sixty years of age before she commenced to draw, under influence, never having the slightest ability or desire to sketch or draw before; secondly, because the gift came to her about three years ago, when ill, confined to bed. It proved an occupation to the mind and a source of amusement, and her recovery from a very serious illness was mainly due to this. The drawings bear all those strange metaphorical, symbolical characteristics peculiar to those I have seen done by other mediums elsewhere, although this lady has not until lately either come into contact with other mediums or seen other drawings. At a subsequent *séance* we had some excellent tests and trance speaking. It is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when the superstitions of the Irish peasant will give place to the sterner facts of modern Spiritualism—belief replaced by knowledge, priestcraft by science. One of the popular beliefs, if not perfectly true, is really beautiful in conception, and indicates the ground

there is here for sowing the truths of Spiritualism—"When the child smiles in its sleep an angel whispers to it."

The articles which have recently appeared in *Saunders'* newspaper have excited considerable attention and comment; as much, if not more so, than the able article on Spiritualism which appeared in the columns of the *Noneonformist* some two years ago, by Professor Barrett, of the Royal College of Science, Ireland.

At present I am engaged in giving a series of mesmeric *séances* before some of the leading men—literary, medical, and scientific. How far they will be useful or successful remains to be told, and by others.

To make these *séances* more interesting and convincing, in no instance have I seen the subject before the *séance* commences. It is intended that a record of the various methods used shall be made, to see how far they agree with Dr. Carpenter's "dominant idea" or Mr. Serjeant Cox's "self-induced" theories.

J. W. COATES.

Dublin.

MATERIALIZATION OF SPIRIT HEADS. NO. XII.—PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE DARK.

SIR.—Sept. 15.—This has been, thus far, on the whole, a poor week for us. The "power" has been never good, and sometimes null.

Dr. Nichols, of Malvern, has been here. I rather rashly ventured to take him up to our *séance*, or rather to give him rendezvous to meet me there. What I meant to do was to introduce him to the Count, and then consult with the latter whether or not we could venture to take him in to the *séance*. But as we were a little behind time, and acted somewhat in a hurry, this was not fully carried out, and, in point of fact, Dr. Nichols went in to the *séance*, with the Count's kind acquiescence. Dr. Nichols is so good a Spiritualist, and so good a man, and, as I knew, was so well known to John King, and had recently been having such fine *séances* at Malvern—as recorded in your columns—that I took him in, notwithstanding the prohibition we have had against bringing anybody without previous notification and consent. The result was rather disastrous. We got nothing at all, though he had some signals in the dark corresponding to what had been pre-announced to him at Malvern. John King neither showed nor spoke. He afterwards wrote—"John O'Sullivan has broken my rule, and, therefore, I could do nothing." But he added that he was very glad to see Dr. Nichols, and formally invited him to come next day. And next day there was a tolerable *séance*. Now whether "could not" meant "would not"—or whether really the "could not" was literally exact, by reason of some fine mysterious delicacies in what are called "the conditions"—I do not know. Dr. Nichols will probably write you his own account of what passed, and, therefore, I do not. Though he too will, I know, have to suppress one curious point in it (harmless enough, however), because John King himself made a secret of it. I certainly shall not give rise to another "scrimmage" by publishing it.

Yesterday occurred a something worth noting. Things have been ripening for some time towards the result of our getting photographs as we have got moulds and busts. There have been various talks about different lights for that purpose—about our present vacuum-tube light—about a certain variation of it for photographic purposes—and about open sunlight—and about better photographic apparatus. We have on hand a small gimcrack camera, of the kind called "scenographic," and some of the sensitised plates connected with it, though these are now old. Well, yesterday, John King directed us to try the experiment, after the *séance*, of putting up that machine with a sensitised plate, in the dark. He wanted to "try an experiment." We supposed that he meant himself to stand before it. It was done accordingly, with two successive plates. We drove straight to a photographer's, to get the plates "developed," the plates being, of course, shut up in the usual rayless prison box. When developed they proved conclusively that there had been something there which had acted on the sensitised plates. By rights, according to the common laws of photography, the uniform whiteness of the collodion ought not to have been changed or affected, no ray of light having existed in the room. Yet on one of them there were vague confused clouds, with an outline of something suggestive of a head; while on the other was a loose cloudy column of darkness, indicating a standing figure without outlines, together with a strange white transversal band at about its mid-height. The photographer, to whom no explanations were given, and who was only told that the plates had been simply exposed in the absolute black dark, was amazed, and could only say that, in the absence of light, there must have been something capable of exerting some chemical action upon the sensitised plates. When this was told to John King this morning, he said that the photographer could not know, and never would know, how it was done. He told us to continue; that this had only been a first attempt; but not to do it to-morrow, as the weather had turned so bad. And he said that it was not himself, but Angela, who had stood.

We have interchanged the remark that we had much rather they would go on with the moulds and busts, instead of thus diverging off into photography. Eleven busts, by name, have been promised, and as yet we have only three, and are longing for others. But the Count's system is to let "them" do as they please; to take and be thankful; to accept and not to ask, still less to demand, even when promise has given a claim to fulfilment. And photographic impressions in the absolute black dark are no small fact in themselves, whether regarded in the Spiritualistic or the scientific aspect. In two or three days we shall have a better machine, and plates more highly sensitised. I do not despair of being able to send you over a photograph of "Angela" (taken in the dark), to be put alongside of those you already possess of her moulded bust.

To-day occurred this small thing worth noting. Our large musical box had got quite out of order, so as to have become intolerable. John King took it in hand, and there in the dark (to us) he lifted the outer and the inner lids, and we could hear his fingers working about the machinery for some five to ten minutes, after which he wound it up, and

started it off again apparently all right. He said it was not yet entirely right, but that, if he had had the power to stay a little longer, he would have made it so. It is all right except at one point where there is a hitch in the passage from one of the six airs to the succeeding one, at which there is some confusion in the notes, and an improper violent jump takes place. It is evident that our dark is light to them. We congratulated him on his successful work, but he said he did not want to go into the watch and clock making business. It did not seem to be will work, but regular finger work. He took out one piece and handed it to me, and afterwards asked for it back. As our dark is light to them, it is easily conceivable how our light may be darkness, and a hindrance to them in their manifestations. It was certainly curious for us to witness a piece of mechanical watch-work of that nature done by fingers in the dark. They touched my hand once or twice, accidentally. "Keep your hand down on the table," he said.

The arrangements concerted with Mr. Boyard, of Brussels, for a photograph of John King, to be taken by him through the mediumship of Williams, and also on another point (see *Spiritualist*, of 7th inst., page 117), have fallen through for the present, as Williams has found himself unable to get to Brussels, though he may do so in a few weeks.

Sept. 17th.—But all that has yet been done in the way of spirit-photography is cast into the shade by what we have just now obtained. Yesterday, in pursuance of John King's directions, the Count again set up his poor little scenographic camera in the absolute black dark. He and Firman stood behind it, holding hands. I was in the next room, separated only by a door, and had to mark and call the time. The first trial was to be of five minutes, the second of three. The plates were of dry collodion; which ordinarily, as I am told, requires seven or eight minutes of exposure under sunlight, sometimes ten to twelve. After the two attempted impressions had been taken, and the plates secured in the usual way from any possible intrusion of a ray of light, John King wrote that they should be taken at once to a photographer, and that he thought we should have a "surprise." It being Sunday, we could not find any photographer's place open; but after I had parted from the Count he chanced to find an operator accidentally, at that of Fontaine, Boulevard des Capucines—a well-known first-class photographer; and there the plates were developed. The result is shown in the following note which he at once wrote to me: "My dear O'Sullivan—Two words to tell you, the most complete success! Two superb portraits of John King (developed at Fontaine's). The first, standing; the second also standing, with his lamp in his hand, and the portraits of the Countess and myself suspended from his neck. I write you these two words, knowing the great pleasure they will give you."

The Count had, of course, seen only the negatives. It seems he (very naturally) mistook a something circular in the picture for John King's "lamp," for John King explained to-day that it was not his lamp, but his trumpet. He has, in fact, a commander's brass speaking-trumpet, long ago given by the Count, with the aid of which he usually concentrates his voice. The pictures of the Countess and Count referred to are photographs, the latter small, the former much larger, which have been given him at his request, attached to a long blue ribbon, and which he generally shows us when he presents himself, suspended from his neck, just below his long and heavy black beard—sometimes holding them out to attract our attention. I have not yet seen the pictures, as the plates are at the photographer's to be printed, but hope to do so before posting this letter. The Count says that in the negative the outlines looked good and strong, and they seemed to be good photographs. The operator was amazed when told by the Count that they had been taken in the total dark, by himself, on his own fresh plates. "I never deny a fact because I do not understand it," was the sensible reply; "there must have been something to exert chemical action." He was not told that it was a spirit that had posed.

We talked the matter over with John King this morning, and the following is the substance of what he said about the *modus operandi*: "In ordinary photography what produces the effect on the sensitised plate is not the rays you see, but rays you do not see.\* It is they that exert the chemical action. They exist in the dark as well as in the light, but in the full light they are able to exert a much stronger action than without it. Now we are able, in a way I cannot explain to you, to give those invisible rays a stronger power, and to cast them on the figure to be photographed, thence to be reflected to the plate. And this is precisely the same thing as in the ordinary photography. The same rays act on the sensitised collodion in the one case as in the other, only we strengthen them, so as to enable them to act chemically in the dark, which otherwise they would not have sufficient strength to do. But I had first to take some lessons before I could do it. [These italics of emphasis are mine.] We will now take all further photographs in the dark. It is simpler and easier for us. Bring some more plates, and have them more highly sensitised." This was the substance of what he said, in part consecutively, and partly in dialogue with us, and he spoke with great lucidity. He afterwards asked the Count to shake hands with him, "in token of your approbation," and he shook hands with us all round (a gentleman from Bordeaux being present, to whom he also showed himself, by his lamp, very finely). The Count asked whether they should try again to-day.—"No, there is not power enough. To-morrow."—"To-morrow I shall have a larger and better instrument, and more solid," said the Count.—"I hope so, for this one is very rickety, and I had a good deal of trouble with it."

I remarked that this was not the first time impressions had been taken in the dark, Mr. Slater having obtained them in London, and then with his (J. King's) help, as we had been told; and also in America, I believed. "Yes, but this is the first time they have been obtained so strongly and satisfactorily."

\* This does not necessarily, as would at first sight appear to be the case, contradict well-established facts, the most active photographic rays being in the visible part of the blue end of the spectrum, and not in the ultra-violet. It may mean that rays or powers of which science knows nothing extend over portions of the visible and invisible parts of the spectrum.—Ed.

We now hope and think we shall get them of all the band of our spirit friends. "We all, you and we," said John King, "make one circle."

I rather retract what I have said above about regretting our diverging for the moment from moulded busts into photography. We shall get all that has been promised, we do not doubt. All in their own time, and in their own way. And that is best, our human impatience to the contrary notwithstanding.

I have been to Fontaine's. They had not yet printed from the plates (French promises), and I could only see the negatives. The figures exhibited are very majestic. The outlines are not quite so sharp as I had expected to see. Still the faces and features and outlines of form and draperies are quite distinct, though with some shadowiness. They are very impressive, and very marvellous. You will soon see and judge for yourselves, and compare them with the other existing and well-known portraits of "John King," which, after all, we know to be a mere pseudonym, varied with different mediums and in different countries.

Would it not seem to follow from the above that the chemical rays do not issue from the sun, but from the "bodies" of "matter" themselves? For it is certain that no ray of sunlight, or of artificial light, existed in that small tight-closed room, yet John King speaks of the chemical rays existing there, which they had to strengthen by reason of the dark, *i.e.*, of the absence of solar light.

I beg pardon of "M. A. (Oxon.);" if I accidentally, in a recent communication, used a personal name instead of his well and widely known *nom de plume*. It was an inadvertence; I had not before me at the time the excellent paper of his to which I referred. If I was mistaken in my identification of that honoured pseudonym, and in my supposition that all motive for its original adoption had got worn out and had passed away, I repeat that I regret the slip of a hurried pen, and apologise for any breach of literary etiquette. Anyhow, the gentleman thus named, or any other Spiritualist in England, might be proud to be confounded with "M. A., Oxon." I say this, while still fully adhering to my conviction of the great value and opportuneness of the book I suggested.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

2, Rue Solferino, Paris.

#### PROBLEMS.

SIR,—I am familiar with examination papers. I have answered many, and set more. I am familiar, too, with requests of all kinds from persons in all parts of the globe, that I would be pleased to explain things in general in a few plain words, or to elucidate at sight some mysteries that I hope to be permitted to look into some ages hence. But Mr. La Roy Sunderland's examination paper is about the "largest order" I ever received. He must excuse me if I say that I am a busy man, with neither time nor inclination to write a volume of dissertations on his problems, even if I could understand them. Some are quite unintelligible to me. What, for instance, is meant by "the personal sexual identity of an invisibility"? Some I cannot answer, seeing that they deal with matters which neither he nor I can understand in this sphere of existence. Many are so stated as to imply a fallacy, or an assumption which needs proof. Some I should have thought that a little experience would throw light upon. When I come to the proper place in my contemplated volume of *Researches* I shall try to deal with these and kindred matters. Meantime, a man who has been "fifty years in the field of psychology," forty years acquainted with the subject, and has "witnessed all the phases of mediumship" since the early days of the Hydesville rappings, is surely as capable of answering his own problems as I am.

M. A. OXON.

#### PROVINCIAL NOTES.

SIR,—The various centres of Spiritualism in the Provinces have not of late displayed any marked activity. As the autumn approaches fresh life will appear, and will become more vigorous as winter unfolds. In some places a marked decline has occurred, a decline that will not admit of reaction for some time. In other localities the stream flows with unabated force and volume.

The experiences of the past year have not been unmitigated blessings. The enemies to the advance of psychological science have not laboured in vain. Still, so marvellous is the recuperative power of Spiritualism that, seemingly, disasters feed it in the long run, and rebuffs make it more robust.

The progress of Spiritualism is assisted by the efforts of two distinct classes. One class sees in it a merely phenomenal question; the other—a more numerous body—see in it at once a powerful stimulus to moral and spiritual life, as well as a series of phenomenal facts. This latter section is by far the greatest in the Provinces, Spiritualism being with them at once a consciousness of the presence of the departed, an inspiration from the higher life, and a glorious philosophy of spiritual democracy that speaks of the love of God, flowing to all His creatures. Hence it is that provincial Spiritualism presents itself for public notice chiefly in the form of Sunday services for devotional purposes.

Let the reader follow your correspondent on a tour of inspection. Birmingham, as being nearest London, shall be the starting point. The Birmingham Spiritualists have a local society that, up to a recent date, held Sunday evening meetings in the Templar Hall, Ladywood-road. The locality was quite unsuited for the purpose. It was too far from the centre of the town, consequently the attendance, as a rule, was not good. There is also not such complete harmony as could be desired. During the summer months, while the regular meetings are suspended, open-air meetings are held, and the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism are thus placed before the multitude, the people listening attentively, and respectfully, as a rule. In the neighbouring town of Walsall, Spiritualism is conducted in more privacy. Home circles, the private development of media, and personal conversations on the subject, being the means of spreading and upholding Spiritualism

usually adopted. The same is the case in Wolverhampton. In the latter town, and the surrounding district, many influential gentlemen are inquiring into the matter, and, in a quiet and unostentatious manner, Spiritualism is surely gaining ground.

Manchester possesses a good society, holding regular meetings every Sunday in the Temperance Hall, Grosvenor-street. While not specially remarkable for vigour, the Manchester Society has done much valuable service in bringing the subject before the inhabitants and establishing a central place of meeting, with a good library attached, for local Spiritualists. The towns round Manchester, such as Stockport, Hyde, Hayfield, and Macclesfield, do not call for any special notice. They are not characterised by much, if any, public display; they feel their best plan is to push on the work quietly. On the occasion of any extra event in Manchester, detachments of visitors from the above towns pour into Manchester to participate in the proceedings. Rochdale at one time was very active, but local divisions occurring the activity lapsed, and no public meetings are now held. In Oldham the public work of Spiritualism has fallen somewhat into abeyance. Meetings are not well attended, and the society's managers have been much divided over personal matters. In Burnley, Wigan, Bolton, and Bury Spiritualism is well known, though at present it does not excite much public interest; but in such cases it is unsafe to estimate the position or influence of Spiritualism from its lack of purely public expression. Privately many are quite satisfied as to the truth of our facts, but from position or family interest, and sometimes a lack of moral stamina, they play Peter, and deny their Christ.

I will send you hereafter some of the causes of the ebbs and flows of Spiritualism in various localities, for ebb and flow it unquestionably does. Scientific prejudice operates; at times clerical intolerance and social obloquy are brought to bear against us, and to combat such forces successfully, it is imperative our own weapons and defences be in the best order in every department. We must then honestly meet defects, skilfully repair every breach, zealously guard all weak places, and success will be more easily attained.

X.

#### THE ASTROLOGICAL LOOK-OUT.

To the Editor of the "Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR,—On the 17th of July, when the anti-English party were all agog in the expectation of the speedy collapse of the national defence in Turkey, you allowed me to give a somewhat unusual reason for a contrary anticipation. If the forecast with which I concluded my letter had been written, like the majority of prophecies, after instead of before the event, it would have been difficult to condense more truth in fewer words. "If we find obstinate and sanguinary battles to ensue next month, with no remarkable advantage to either party, although the balance of evil is against the invader," I then wrote, "call me Prospero." And I specially pointed out the danger of interrupted communications, and of the assailing of fortified posts, on the part of the Russians. In fact, this anticipation was like a short summary of recent events. Few of your readers can have failed to observe the fiery splendour of the crimson torch which the planet Mars has nightly held forth since I wrote. It is, to say the least of it, a remarkable coincidence that the most brilliant astronomical discovery made since the detection of Neptune, one which has shown the existence of a systematic regularity in the solar system that few astronomers anticipated, and has raised Mars to the dignity of an orb attended by satellites, should have been made during the raging of the most sanguinary war on which that planet has ever shed its beams. But many observers who are not astronomers have asked how it is that Saturn, the more slowly moving planet, has for the last two months become more and more distant from Mars. The reason is that the relative position of the three planets, Saturn, Mars, and the Earth, in their respective orbits round the sun is such as to make the apparent motion of the two former retrograde. Thus Mars, the more rapid, gaining on Saturn, leaves that planet instead of approaching it in the usual way. The retrograde movement of Saturn will continue until about the 7th of November. Mars retrogrades until the 7th of October, when the two planets will have attained their maximum distance apart (during this portion of their course) of 6 deg. 26 min. Mars then, after an apparent immobility of three days, will approach Saturn, and on the 3rd of November will be in the same degree of the zodiac as that planet. The Earth, Mars, and Saturn will then be in a direct line, as far as longitude goes; and the two outer planets will be within half a degree of the same latitude. The conjunction will thus be so close that the planets will form an object much under the size of a small comet. The astrological import of the phenomenon is one of the greatest menace. The chief difficulty which opposes detail (as far as my modest acquirements go) is the want of knowledge of the exact time for which to set up a figure. If we take noon on the 3rd of November (as I took noon on the former occasion) as the time for the inquiry, Jupiter is applying to the ascendant, which may intimate that the worst of the crisis is for one party nearly over. There is a remarkable conjunction of Herschel with the descending node of the moon, on the cusp of the Eighth House, which seems to indicate some unexpected death of a nature to convulse Europe. Astrological rules forbid the adept to predict death; and perhaps the hecatombs offered to the Moloch of Russian ambition may satisfy this part of the forecast. The conjunction of the two malefics is on the House of Wealth. This may be taken to indicate financial collapse, or perhaps the failure of supplies of food and ammunition. If I pursue the subject, I shall perhaps make converts whose faith in astrology may be more robust and less guarded than my own. But whether as a physical phenomenon of unprecedented rarity, or as a relic of an asserted science long venerated and perhaps too ignorantly despised, let me commend to the observation of your readers the aspect of the heavens on the 3rd of November next.

September 19th.

PROSPERO.



### THE DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.

THE usual Thursday evening meeting of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism was held on the 20th September, at the Society's rooms, 53, Sigden-road, Dalston, London, Mr. Colville having kindly consented to give an inspirational address to the members and their friends.

Mr. G. R. Tapp, having been elected to preside, said:—Ladies and Gentlemen—We shall have the pleasure this evening of listening to a discourse by Mr. Colville, and as I see that we have here strangers not acquainted with the nature of the address given, a few words of explanation would not be inappropriate. In mediumship like that of Mr. Colville, spirits control the sensitive by rendering him unconscious, or partly unconscious. His is a phase of mediumship, more or less developed, which is known as trance mediumship. I shall make no remarks as to what the spirits may be going to say, but shall leave them to speak for themselves, and you will thus be able to better judge the evidence. I may mention that, as Mr. Colville does not choose his own subject, Mr. Blyton will give to the audience pieces of paper; if you will please propose various subjects, I will put them to the meeting, and the audience can then determine which of them it shall be. This mode of selection does away with any idea of collusion, and the spirits communicating through Mr. Colville always willingly accede to whatever is chosen.

Two subjects were proposed—(1) "What is the Best Way of Detecting Mediumship in any Individual?" and (2) "What Evidence can be Adduced to Prove that the Manifestations are Produced by Disembodied Human Spirits?" The majority of the audience was in favour of the latter question, which, therefore, became the subject of the medium's address.

Mr. Colville prefaced his inspirational discourse with the following invocation:—

"O Thou Infinite Spirit, Thou Creative Intelligence, Thou Divine and All-pervading Soul, Thou, who fillest the universe with Thy glory! We, Thy creatures, whom Thou hast endowed with sentient lives, with intelligent being, would offer unto Thee our praises and thanksgivings for all the priceless boons, for all the inestimable benefits which Thou hast conferred upon us from the earliest dawn of our mortal existence. We would praise Thee, not only for that which Thou hast bestowed upon us individually, but for those blessings which Thou hast conferred upon the human race in every age and to every nation. Oh, Thou abundant Light, Thou omnipotent and omniscient Father of Lights, we pray that we, Thy children, may be endowed with a desire for truth, and with aspirations after heavenly love, and that thus we may be one with the angels in that bright and glorious realm to which the disembodied spirits of humanity who have passed through all spheres, having profited by all experience, have been exalted. May our aspirations reach those fair and beautiful abodes, where Thy praise occupies every being, and where worship of Thee is continually expressed in lives of love and usefulness, in harmony with Thy laws. Oh, may every soul, filled with love divine, offer unto Thee, both now and ever, acceptable worship, even the worship of spirit and truth, and which shall express itself in love for Thee, and for all mankind. Amen."

You desire that we should address you this evening upon "What Proof is there that the Spirits who Communicate are Disembodied Human Beings?" You are doubtless aware that Spiritualism is as old as humanity. Spiritualism has been known in every age and in every nation. At every epoch in the world's history there have been those who were endowed with spiritual powers, and the oldest mediums who have been recognised by posterity may be said to be the anchorites and recluses of Hindostan. In Egypt, in Persia, and in various other lands which are celebrated in history, you will read of those who were specially endowed with spiritual power, and in whatever sacred book you produce, you will find that there is a continuous vein of spiritual inspiration running throughout the records of every age and in every nation.

You desire to know what evidence there is that the spirits who communicate are the disembodied spirits of humanity, and while we say that the proofs given are undoubted and undeniable, that no argument against this is tenable and no other hypothesis is tenable, yet we do not take up that ground, or assert that all spirits which have communicated with man in every age, and in every clime, have necessarily been human spirits. For there are spirits in every state of development, from the Lord himself down to the spirits which inhabit the lowest forms of material life. There are gradations and spheres of spiritual existence. You are doubtless aware that Plato and Socrates of old are said to have communicated with their guides, and a belief in spirits is almost as old as humanity.

One of the most ancient of the philosophies promulgated in the world has given forth the following thesis:—"That there is a good spirit and an evil spirit attendant upon every man, and that the good spirit may be termed the angel and the bad the demon; and it is believed that these angels and demons are separate in existence from any which inhabit the human form. That the good spirits are those who have passed through life nobly, but that the dark spirits are those who have lived upon earth sensual or ignoble lives." You are also aware that in other philosophies known to the ancients, four primary elements, as they were termed, have been recognised, viz., air, earth, fire, and water, and that these were the only elements once known. Men then supposed that nymphs, sylphs, and undines dwelt in the water, and salamanders in the fire, and in these days you are told that these spirits are capable of communicating with man, and are capable of gaining the mastery, or he is capable of gaining the mastery over them, as the case may be. If you have investigated alchemy or various other sciences

known to the ancients, and if you are acquainted with the fakeers, sorcerers, or workers of magic, you are doubtless aware that they almost invariably believed that there are spirits inferior to man, who will gain the mastery over him if he does not gain the mastery over them, that these spirits can have dominion over man, even as he has dominion over the animals. We would freely admit that there is great probability, if not an absolute certainty, that spirits are communicating even in your own midst, who are not human spirits, but who will ultimately become human spirits. Yet if you look around you in nature, if you take the dog or the horse and examine the intelligence it displays, you see there is nothing like human intelligence. However close may be its proximity to that of man, there is always a wide chasm between the intelligence animals display and that of the human race. Now, supposing I were unable to see, and supposing I heard something strike against this table, that I heard something move about and make some curious noise, I should *not* be satisfied; I should know that there was some form of life manifesting itself, but as to the character of that life I should not be able to decide. And if some of these spirits which are outside of yourselves, and who inhabit the vast realm which surrounds your spiritual globe, produce manifestations which are inferior to the ordinary average of human intelligence, then I say you are not warranted in your opinion that they are human spirits. There are various orders of human spirits, and some have been servants of man. The fakeers have under their more potent control orders of intelligence, which may be of a meaner type prior to its ultimatum in the human, and after the ultimatum in the human takes place, then is the divine soul of man imparted, the divine soul which shall not be lost, destroyed, or absorbed. We say that there are all phases of spirit life, and your dog, which has been devoted to you, may for a considerable time after the death of the body retain his identity, and it is possible that your dog or your horse may return to you in the same form, familiar to your sight and senses. Clairvoyants have actually beheld dogs and other animals in the other world, and these, no doubt, have been spirits which have not yet developed into the higher order of human spirits; perchance this might have been, as Swedenborg might tell you, "man resuming the forms of animals in the world of spirits." For spirits who are developed, are capable of producing at will other forms, even as the painter is capable of producing on his canvas the ideas which are floating in his mind. There are secret societies in existence to-day, yea, in your own centres of civilisation, where elementary spirits have been evoked, and where their apparitions have been seen, and when we tell you this, we shall doubtless state that which will be laughed to scorn even by Spiritualists. We might say that Freemasonry deals with external doings at the present time. It certainly did not at the time of its formation, and in ancient Egypt, in Persia, even among the Jews, there were those who were Freemasons who practised arts of sorcery and witchcraft, and had under their command a vast number of intelligences, which were submundane. You are told that there are edicts in your Scripture forbidding sorcery and witchcraft, yet these were but the decrees of an arbitrary ruler, who desired to suppress all intelligent inquiry. In many cases communication with these spirits was established by a people who were in so low a moral and spiritual condition, that they became subjects of sport and ridicule to the unseen powers, which by the superior and regular mind would have been reduced to the capacity of servants.

We think you will be prepared to admit that, connected with the modern manifestations, an intelligence expresses itself which has the attributes of humanity—consequently, is a human intelligence. Concerning the spirits who so communicate we would say, follow the injunction of the apostle Paul, to "try the spirits," and prove to yourselves, and for yourselves, of what orders they are; study what intelligence they display, and what powers of mind they manifest. As regards manifestations of physical force, if we have no more than the levitation of musical instruments and tables, then we say that you have no proof that the spirits are the spirits of the departed, because it does not require the intelligence of man to knock about material objects, or to produce physical movements. These manifestations are produced by some force which men of science cannot explain, and which baffles the philosopher in his researches. The agency of electricity has been entirely excluded, and yet the phenomena occur; the law of gravitation has apparently been suspended, not suspended in reality, but some other law has been called into action by some other intelligence outside the circle. Perchance this table moves, and you know not what force moves it; the raps are heard, and you seek to enter into communication with the "force;" and you say to this spirit, or to this force—"If you wish to answer me 'yes,' give three raps; and if 'no,' one;" and if the intelligent powers understand and comprehend you, even then you have no evidence that human spirits are communicating. But, supposing that you are seeking to enter into communication with some known one gone from earth; that the name of a dearly loved relative or friend is spelt out, that tests are given which place beyond doubt that you are entering into communication with your departed relative—why be so absurd as to invent a theory that this is done by other spirits other than those of the departed? Attack the problem till you know that your own relative is communicating with you; that the spiritual telegraphy is complete; that the link exists which unites you with the loved one who has gone before, and that your friend or your relative who has passed away, with an undying love is seeking to convince you of his identity. Then, we say, be reasonable, be rational, accept the fact that your friend is communicating with you, although you are unable to touch him. The simple giving in to the facts, and to this simple solving of the problem, is the most satisfactory, most rational, and most comprehensible course. There is a higher phase of mediumship than intuition and clairvoyance—which both give you evidence of the existence of your departed friends; there are other sensitives whose intuitive faculties let them know that their friends are with them again. Clairvoyants can sometimes describe to you the

spirit who is communicating with you, and you can, through his eyes, behold the loved form once more, clothed even as when the change which is called "death" came upon it.

You, through clairvoyance, are capable of beholding the communicating intelligence, and when you behold your friend surely you will not doubt his identity. And in the highest phase of materialisation you even have the spirit form developed; you even have the spirit clothed with the symbols of that which it wore when upon earth; it is then absurd to seek a far-fetched explanation when you have a reasonable one close beside you. It is possible to write volumes, and yet never to exhaust this comprehensive scheme.

We do not say that the spirits manifesting on all occasions are necessarily human. Yet we must say that a spirit must be equal to that of man to produce manifestations, displaying not lower than human intelligence. Perchance spirits are operating capable of materialising the symbols of their own forms; in such cases, in these forms you behold the symbols of your long lost friend, and if this form speaks to you in human accents, manifest the intelligence of a human heart, even that of a beloved friend seeking to convince you of his identity, and that he is capable of bringing together or manipulating atoms, which, aggregated, will constitute the symbols of a human body; you have evidence that it is in reality the spirit of the departed. Why, therefore, invent some theory which will be entirely unprofitable, which shall only launch you into the ocean of speculation, when the explanation is here—both spiritually and materially—in the throbbing of your own heart, that it is your own beloved friend who is seeking to convince you of immortality.

It may reasonably be presumed that there is an elementary spirit-stage or state. We cannot disprove it. If the communications you receive at your circles are lying, or absurd, or ridiculous; if they display human intelligence, whether it be of a high or low order, are there not liars and thieves in the world who have passed through the change which is called "death"? And if those spirits who commune with you display characteristics which men, women, and children display in your midst every moment, undoubtedly they are human spirits in a low degree of development. And some come to you who can clothe their thoughts in human language, speak to you of spirit worlds, do they not bear the marks of spirit identity? If you pass onward and upward through the spheres of space, into the higher realms, there you may perchance meet with the bright and shining ones who have developed from other planets. Some of these are human spirits, and others are not, but all are equally developed, and all united in the great brotherhood of spiritual existence may return and communicate with you. These you may term "angels." We say that even as you here acknowledge your friends on earth, you have almost equal means of recognising your friends who have passed on into the spirit world. Therefore, we submit our arguments and statements to your own consideration, and we ask you to invent an hypothesis more satisfactory, intelligible, and consistent with reason, if you have the power of doing so. Meanwhile you will accept this—that the manifesting spirits are human when human intelligence is displayed.

We are now prepared to answer those questions which the audience may see fit to propound to us.

Mr. Marsh: *Do you know, of your own knowledge, that there are elementary spirits, inferior to man's spirit, and who can interfere with him?*

The Entranced Medium: We ourselves have beheld spirits which are inferior to human spirits, and we tell you, upon the testimony of those who are greater than we, that they themselves have been present at magical *séances*, where there were other agencies than human spirits, but decidedly of a lower order. Therefore, we tell you, partly from our own experience, and partly from the testimony of those who are greater than ourselves, that such is the case.

Two or three other questions having been answered to the satisfaction of the audience, Mr. Colville concluded with an impromptu poem—"The Educational Power of Sorrow." The theme for this poem was selected by the members, in a similar manner to the subject of the address.

The meeting was brought to a close with a vote of thanks to Mr. Colville, proposed by Mr. Marsh, and seconded by Mr. Parkes, for the generous way in which he came forward to deliver the address.

Mrs. F. A. NOSWORTHY, of Liverpool, is at present in Leeds, and says she would be happy to aid in the establishment of Sunday meetings or in any other way to promote the cause of Spiritualism in Leeds or the adjacent towns. Address, 6, Cowper-street, New Leeds, Leeds.

At the Marylebone Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, to-night, at half-past eight o'clock, the discussion on Dr. Carter Blake's lecture, the "Difficulties of Inquirers into Spiritualism," will be continued.

"THE cures effected by spiritual means are among the best-attested events on record. And if they are to be attributed to the operation of imagination on the part of the patient, it will be difficult to parry the application of the same theory to the cures related in the New Testament."—*The Evidences of Spiritualism*, by M. P.

Mr. W. L. SAMMONS, of Cape Town, South Africa, has been in bad health for some time, but is somewhat better. He has forwarded some local newspapers, giving an account of a furious onslaught on Spiritualism by the Right Rev. Dr. Richards, Roman Catholic Bishop of Graham's Town.

Mr. JOHN CHAPMAN writes that Mrs. Victoria Woodhull, of the United States, is in Liverpool, with her mother, daughter, and sister. She lectured on "The Human Body the Temple of God," and was well received. He says that most of the local papers reported her lecture well, and spoke favourably of her. She will lecture in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, October 8th, and afterwards come to London.

## SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA IN AUSTRALIA.

THOSE who read my experiences of Spiritualism in England, published in the *Harbinger of Light*, of 1873, will remember that I narrated some very extraordinary phenomena occurring in the presence of private and public mediums.

I have had the pleasure of lately being present at the Chiltern circle by invitation of the spirits themselves; and as I was long convinced by personal investigation of the reality of the phenomena, and the causes of the same, I hardly expected to receive much fresh evidence, or to witness anything new. I was, however, agreeably disappointed. The power of the spirits over matter is beyond our comprehension, and, as it appears, beyond their explanation. Mediums are so varied in their constitutions that each one displays some new phase. It seems undeniable that successful manifestations do not depend so much on the will of the spirits as on the capacity of the medium. Our medium here is a young married man with a family. He is an engineer, and is employed by the Chiltern Valley Gold Mining Company. His mediumship, like that of most others, came upon him unsolicited. The intelligence manifesting through him professes to be his brother "George," whose earthly life was cut short by being killed in the mine at which Robert is now engineer. Other spirit friends co-operate with him at *séances*, and we were told that at this *séance* "nineteen bright and loving spirits were around, mostly onlookers." The circle is generally composed of personal friends and relatives, but the same people do not always sit together, nor do they retain particular seats. They have changed their place of meeting repeatedly, without any cessation of the phenomena. It thus appears that the potentialities of the medium, Mr. Robert Brown, are of the very highest order, as he is not hampered by many of the conditions which are usually considered essential. He is a steady, sober man, and his wife is a firm believer in his wonderful intercommunication with the other world. He and wife and two children accompanied us to the house where they have sat for some time. At their former sittings they have been annoyed by "larrikins" shouting outside the house. The circle consisted of four men, three women, and a little girl, about fourteen years old. Mrs. Brown had a baby in her arms, which she retained the whole *séance*, and another youngster, aged three years, lay down on the sofa, and, accustomed to the performance, behaved well. This, to me, was not the least extraordinary part of the performance, as it evinced such an absolute certainty of the manifestations exhibiting themselves, that no condition seemed necessary but darkness, and the presence of the medium.

We had hardly seated ourselves, all holding hands, when loud raps, as with knuckles, were heard from the table. The alphabet was called for, and "sing" was elicited. Merry songs were sung the whole evening, and seemed to elicit manifestations of the best kind. I, who had been seated outside the circle, was now made to take a particular seat by the spirit voice. Lights like glow-worms flickered about over our heads. The medium was ordered to stand on the table, and several voices seemed vying with one another as to who could speak loudest. They came around us, to my ear, close at the back of my head. Soft warm hands were placed on mine, and around my neck. A large warm head, with long hair, was pressed on my occiput, and on my requesting to feel the nose it was rubbed on my face, and the teeth were clashed together.

I held conversation with the invisibles. They wished me to come oftener, they said. They were happy; so would we be when we came to them. They could do even better if we attended to the conditions. What were the conditions? I asked. "Harmony," was the reply. George, Barlow, and a French spirit, Nicklers, were the operators, and they assured us repeatedly that they loved us. We were told at nine o'clock to "knock off" for ten minutes. We returned in twenty minutes, and the same extraordinary voices occurred, with singing, whistling, and shouting by these indefatigable labourers, and all communications, be it remembered, were in loud tones, and each different from the other. We were all called by name, and towards the end Mr. Pringle, who was present with his wife, was addressed by George, who, as I have already said, was buried in the mine. The spirit said, "Keep the laths well ahead, Pringle, for the ground is flaky." The kind good spirit did not desire that Mr. Pringle should leave his family prematurely, and this caution was given evidently because he saw danger, and remembered his own untimely end. Somebody asked, "Were you down there, George, then?" "I was," said the spirit.

After all these marvels had been repeated again and again, either Barlow or George said, "I'll tell you the time if you strike a light. It is four minutes to ten o'clock." A match was struck, and sure enough the clock on the chimney-piece pointed to the exact minute named.

All present heard the time given, and all present saw the hands of the clock when the match was struck. What living intelligence could see in the dark the exact minute, or guess the time, after sitting from twenty minutes past nine, when we extinguished all light?

On thinking over this most remarkable demonstration of immortality, I find that—

1st. We had absolute proof of the existence of invisible and intelligent agents around us, and outside the circle.

2nd. The identity of one at least was proved to the satisfaction of the living brother.

3rd. They all declared they were happy, that they came because they loved us.

4th. That they could see without their earthly eyes.

5th. That they had the power of will to re-form apparently out of the atmosphere, bodily organs.

W. L. R.  
Chiltern, July, 1877.

Mr. J. J. MORSE's complimentary *soirée* will be held at the Cavenish Rooms, on Wednesday, October 17th.

## 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*, 38, 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.

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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 acrid 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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