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# The Spiritualist Newspaper

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No. 307.—VOLUME THIRTEEN; NUMBER TWO.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JULY 12th, 1878.

## GHOSTLY PLAYS.

THE drama exercises a potent, religious, and moral influence on the mind, and the love of theatrical performances being deeply implanted in human nature, efforts to forcibly uproot it will be made only by the superficial, and will fail. There is much more religion and instruction in the dramatic representation of a page from the historical and dearly-bought experience of the English nation, than there is in the well-intentioned sermon of an unintellectual fifth-rate clergyman, who means well, but unlike his more advanced brethren cannot understand the mental requirements of the time, or of the divinely-appointed necessity for amusement.

With the fundamental question of the utilisation of the religious influence of the drama, and the recognition of the good done to society by the best professional actors in raising public thought from the everyday vulgarities of life into the region of the ideal, it is not our intention now to grapple. But the desire is rather to deal with a subsidiary matter of detail, and to point out how good plays, with an element of the supernatural in them, always gain a firm hold upon public attention, and should be encouraged by Spiritualists. Everybody loves a good ghost story or ghostly play. *The Corsican Brothers* had once an almost unprecedented run at the Princess's Theatre, and *Rip Van Winkle* was equally successful at the Adelphi. *Hamlet* is perhaps the most popular of Shakespeare's plays. At the Lyceum Theatre *The Bells* was largely the vehicle of establishing the national fame of Henry Irving as an actor, and the authors of the novel on which the play is founded were evidently acquainted with psychological phenomena. The hero of the piece hears bells which are audible to nobody else, reminding him of an undetected murder he had committed in striking down with an axe a rich German Jew while driving a sledge. In his happiest moments, in the midst of social and other enjoyments, these terrible bells haunt the murderer by means of his clairaudient faculty, and in visions of the night the incidents of the assassination, the pale victim, the snowstorm, and the mountain pass, reveal themselves again to his view. In dreams he beholds the court of justice, with spectral judges assembled, and himself as the criminal, but with no clear evidence against him until the mesmerist is summoned. Then is he thrown into a psychological sleep, and forced to reveal the secrets of his heart. Thus this story, which has been resuscitated at the Lyceum Theatre until the end of the present season, is written by men with real psychical knowledge, who set forth nothing outside the realms of possibility, and in this respect *The Bells* differs from the generality of plays of a "supernatural" type, although the bulk of the public are not aware of the fact.

*The Bells* deserves the fame it has gained, and the interest of the observers is constantly strained to the highest pitch by good authorship, good acting, and good scenery. At the same theatre, another supernatural play, *Vanderdecken*, has just proved a failure, although the scene-painter has carried off considerable honours in connection therewith. The authorship did not promote the success of the piece. Rigmarole, and long stilted speeches were put into the mouths of the hero and heroine, tiring out the listeners; there were no flashes of comedy, as in *Rip Van Winkle*, to give relief; and even if an average commonplace London audience could for once have fully appreciated highly-cultured poetry, poetry of that class was not there. When *Vanderdecken*, the hero, agrees to fight another to the death, he does so from essentially mean and selfish personal reasons, and not on the high ground that neither kith, nor kin, nor the influences of this world have the slightest right to intrude upon the

arena in which true love alone has regal claim to hold sway, treading down all that is vulgar under its feet.

The drama is a powerful educator, and Spiritualism ought to have the honour of being the chief religious movement to recognise the fact, and to side by side with the nobler members of the theatrical profession help to crush out that narrow Puritanism which seeks to ostracise the stage. True religion is better enforced in a good play, than in a doctrinal sermon on abstruse points by a weak-minded, well-intentioned man.

## THE FIRE TEST IN INDIA.

THE following paragraph from the *Englishman's Overland Mail* (Calcutta), May 17th, 1878, contains an account of the fire-test as presented among the Bhils, and it agrees closely with an account of the same phenomenon forwarded to us some months ago by Mrs. Showers, and published in *The Spiritualist*.

"The Bhils are much given to sorcery, practising the art during the Hulee and Dusoeera festivals. Mr. Horst, of the Trigonometrical Survey saw them do strange things in the village of Ali Rajpur. The Bhil priests were at first unwilling to perform, saying that the time was unpropitious; but their scruples were removed by the present of a rupee. A hole four feet long, eighteen inches deep and eighteen wide, was dug, and half filled with live coals. Then the purjure, or priest, having muttered some incantations, fanned the coals to a bright heat, sacrificed a fowl, waved a bright sword over the fire, lastly told a Bhil sitting by to walk through the fire, which he did without unpleasant consequences; his feet were not even blistered. Mr. Horst asked a Mahomedan chuprassee if he would walk through the fire. 'Yes,' said the man, 'because there is a charm on the fire; it cannot hurt me.' Upon this the chuprassee also walked slowly through the fire and was unhurt."

## ZSCHOKKE ON DIVINATION.

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

MR. EPES SARGENT cannot have been aware of the English translation of the autobiography of Zschokke, and that what he has translated is in the appendix to *My Letters to Miss Martineau*. Zschokke is "well known as an author, statesman, philosopher, and reformer," but best known as the Swiss historian. He says (p. 143):—

"In almost every Canton of Switzerland are found persons endowed with the mysterious natural gift of discovering by a peculiar sensation the existence of subterranean waters, metals, or fossils. I have known many of them, and often put their marvellous talents to the proof. One of these was the Abbot of the Convent of St. Urban, in the Canton of Lucerne, a man of learning and science, and another a young woman, who excelled all I have ever known. I carried her and her companion with me through several districts unknown to her, but with the geological formation of which, and the position of its salt and sweet waters, I was quite familiar, and I never once found her deceived. The results of the most careful observation have compelled me at length to renounce the obstinate suspicion and incredulity I at first felt on this subject, and have presented me a new phase of Nature, although one still involved in enigmatical obscurity. To detail circumstantially every experiment I made to satisfy myself on the point would take up too much space at present; but I think it right to mention some of the causes which have led me occasionally to vary from others in my views of nature and of God."

Here one must pause and remember the remarkable insight and power of thought-reading of the young woman's conductor,

which power might for the time have been transferred to the girl; hence she might have been only reflecting his own knowledge, somewhat as in the case of Goethe's grandfather. Had this solution occurred to Zschokke, doubtless he would have been able to satisfy us upon it.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.

#### INDIAN JUGGLERY EXTRAORDINARY.

MR. E. STANLEY ROBERTSON, late of the Bengal Civil Service, contributes to the capitally-conducted *University Magazine* (Hurst and Blackett) an interesting article with the above heading. He says:—

"Early in January, 1877, I was stationed at Moradabad, in Rohilkund. My wife was in England invalided, so instead of living alone, I had adopted a common and convenient Indian fashion and was 'chumming' with a friend. My chum was Mr. Carmichael-Smyth, acting Superintendent of Police for the district. One day Mr. Smyth told me that he expected to receive a visit from a native, an amateur conjuror, who would perform some amusing tricks. It so happened that on the same day we were waited on by a Parsee pedlar, who wanted to sell us ivory and sandal wood carvings, and such like knick-knacks, which are the usual stock-in-trade of the Parsee travelling merchants. While we were chaffering with this man the conjuror was announced, and was shown into the common sitting-room. He was followed by a crowd of our servants—for the native of every rank loves a conjuror, and gazes on a conjuring performance with the simple admiration of a child.

"There was nothing very remarkable in the appearance or dress of our conjuror. An elderly man, short and sparely made, dressed in dingy white cotton, with very tight sleeves to his robe and very tight legs to his drawers; he might have been a respectable servant out of place, but actually was a small landowner, who had taken to conjuring for his amusement.

"When he entered the room he spread a white cloth upon the floor and sat down upon it with his back to the wall, the door of the room being on his right hand. His spectators were disposed in the following fashion: Mr. Smyth sat on a chair nearly in the middle of the room, I was sitting on a sofa near the door, the Parsee merchant stood in the doorway about arm's length from me. The servants stood about in groups, the largest group being between the door and the conjuror. As soon as he had settled himself he turned to the Parsee and asked for the loan of a rupee. The pedlar at first demurred a little, but, on being guaranteed against loss, he produced the coin. He was going to put it into the conjuror's hand, but the latter refused, and told the Parsee to hand it to Mr. Smyth's bearer. The bearer took it, and, at the request of the conjuror, looked at it, and declared it to be really a rupee. The conjuror then told him to hand it to his master. Mr. Smyth took it, and then followed this dialogue: Conjuror—Are you sure that is a rupee? Smyth—Yes. Conjuror—Close your hand on it, and hold it tight. Now think of some country in Europe, but do not tell me your thought (then the conjuror ran over the names of several countries, such as France, Germany, Russia, Turkey, and America—for the native of India is under the impression that America is in Europe). After a moment's pause Mr. Smyth said he had thought of a country. 'Then open your hand,' said the juggler; 'see what you have got, and tell me if it is a coin of the country you thought of.' It was a five-franc piece, and Mr. Smyth had thought of France. He was going to hand the coin to the conjuror, but the latter said, 'No, pass it to the other sahib.' Mr. Smyth accordingly put the five-franc piece into my hand; I looked closely at it, then shut my hand and thought of Russia. When I opened it I found, *not* a Russian but a *Turkish* silver piece about the size of the five-franc, or of our own crown piece. This I handed to Mr. Smyth, and suggested that he should name America, which he did, and found a Mexican dollar in his hand. The coin, whatever it was, had never been in the conjuror's hand from the time the rupee was borrowed from the Parsee merchant. Mr. Smyth and his bearer had both of them closely examined the rupee, and Mr. Smyth and I turned over several times the five-franc piece, the Turkish coin, and the dollar; so the trick did not depend on a

reversible coin. Indeed it could not, for the coin underwent three changes, as has been seen.

"The following evening Mr. Smyth and I were to dine at the mess of the 28th Native Infantry. We told some of our friends in the regiment of the tricks our juggler had shown us; they asked us to invite the man to perform after dinner in the mess drawing-room. He came accordingly, and began by showing some very commonplace tricks. I wanted him to do the coin trick, but he made some excuse. I should mention that one of the officers was himself an amateur conjuror, and Mr. Smyth introduced him and our juggler to each other as comrades in art magic. Possibly our juggler may have been afraid that the captain would detect his method; or perhaps he only felt nervous about repeating a trick which must have depended very much on mere guess work. Be that as it may, he would not perform the coin trick at the mess. But he did another, almost equally wonderful.

"As before, he was seated on a white cloth, which this time, I think, was a table-cloth, borrowed from the mess sergeant. He asked some one present to produce a rupee, and to lay it down at the remote edge of the cloth. The cloth being three or four yards in length, the conjuror could not have touched the coin without being seen, and, in fact, did not touch it. He then asked for a signet ring. Several were offered him, and he chose out one which had a large oval seal, projecting well beyond the gold hoop on both sides. This ring he tossed and tumbled several times in his hands, now throwing it into the air and catching it, then shaking it between his clasped hands, all the time mumbling half-articulate words in some Hindostanee patois. Then, setting the ring down on the cloth at about half-arm's length in front of him, he said, slowly and distinctly, in good Hindostanee, 'Ring, rise up and go to the rupee.' The ring rose, with the seal uppermost, and, resting on the hoop, slowly, with a kind of dancing or jerking motion, it passed over the cloth until it came to where the rupee lay on the remote edge; then it lay down on the coin. The conjuror then said, 'Ring, lay hold of the rupee, and bring it to me.' The projecting edge of the seal seemed to grapple the edge of the coin; the ring and the rupee rose into a kind of wrestling attitude, and, with the same dancing or jerking motion, the two returned to within reach of the juggler's hand.

"I have no theory of any kind to explain either of these tricks. I should mention, however, that the juggler entirely disclaimed all supernatural power, and alleged that he performed his tricks by mere sleight of hand. It will be observed that he had no preparation of his surroundings, no machinery, and no confederate."

THE report of the first test *séance* given by Mr. Williams at the residence of Miss Ottley, and Mr. Munton's speech at the Psychological Society on slate-writing, have been reprinted from these pages in the *Harbinger of Light*, Australia.

ON Tuesday, last week, Mrs. Tebb gave a reception at Gloucester-gate, Regent's-park, London, to Spiritualistic and other friends, in honour of Dr. and Mrs. Hare, of the United States. Dr. Hare is the son of the Professor Hare whose scientific researches were of so much value in the early days of Spiritualism in America.

MR. JOSEPH ARMITAGE, of Batley Carr, asks us to announce that open air services in connection with Spiritualism will be held at Howley Hall, Batley, on Sunday, July 21st, at 2.30 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. Many Spiritualists from various towns in Yorkshire are expected to be present, should the weather be fine.

PIANOFORTE RECITAL.—Miss Theobald, a pianist of great promise, from the "Harrow Music School," gave a recital at 39, Baker-street, London, on the 1st July. It is gratifying to all true lovers of progress to see that our English artists are displaying, in their selections, a higher appreciation of music of a sound school than they once did, and while abandoning the fantasias of former years, do not neglect the fair claims of our own composers. The programme on this occasion comprised a judicious selection of classical music from Beethoven, Bach, Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Schumann, with a favourite rondeau by Sterndale Bennett. The sonatas of Beethoven (the Shakespeare of music, whose texts are susceptible of endless interpretation) exact from the player a fine feeling for rhythm, rapidity of finger, strength of hand, and acute sensibility. These essential qualities Miss Theobald exhibited in a marked degree, and in the still more intricate music of Schubert and Schumann, with their wildness and recklessness of manner, there was no "scrambling through as by great tribulation," which the public are apt to look for in so young a performer, but refinement and vigour. Miss Theobald terminated a performance of rare excellence, for one so young, with the rondeau of Sterndale Bennett, and won from her audience warm expressions of approval.

# THE PSYCHOLOGICAL INFLUENCE OF MATERIAL OBJECTS UPON SENSITIVES.

[ PROFESSOR WILLIAM DENTON, of Wellesley, Massachusetts, conducted a large series of experiments on the influence of shells, minerals, and relics upon psychic sensitives, and gave the results in his unique book *The Soul of Things*, from which the following is an extract :—

What light does psychometry shed on that still dark page of "Nature's infinite book of mystery"—conscious, individual existence after death, and the condition of man in that next state of being? Our researches have been confined almost exclusively to the material side of life; and yet, on several occasions, spiritual existences, apart from ordinary psychometric forms, have spontaneously made their appearance.

About seven years ago I took Sherman into a dark closet, held a magnet up, and requested him to tell me what he saw. Instead of seeing light streaming from the poles of the magnet, as I supposed he would do, he saw a man; and, on describing him, I found the description to agree exactly with that of my father, whom he had never seen. He at the same time said that he could hear him speak; and repeated to me, as from him, what appeared to be very characteristic expressions. At the same time he accurately described my mother, whom he had likewise never seen.

Some days afterward, when examining a *shabti* from Thebes, he said—

"I see two men: one has no shoes on; and the other has something tied to the bottom of his feet. They don't wear much clothing. They are homely-looking, and have very short and stiff beards. I see two old women who have more clothing than the men: they look sober, and they are a sober people.

"I see one man ready to die: he lies on a flat place, and faintly groans. Nobody appears to notice him. A man is running up to him. He is dead. The man commences to mourn over him, and kind of pray.

"I see a man's spirit standing still over him. It looks better than the dying man. It stands up, and looks a great deal better than the man. It mumbles something that I cannot understand; seems to talk with me. It points upward with a finger. He was walking, and fell over and died. The spirit is a little higher now—about as tall as I am above him. It keeps rising and rising, but slowly. Now it darts away quickly, and I cannot see it. It went like a flash.\*

"He has come back now, and three with him. He is showing them his body. He talks more distinctly than he did. He points to his body. They are dressed much better than when alive. He seems glad he is dead. They have white, thin clothes on. They are all talking away. I see numbers now not far from there: they seem talking to him. One slowly vanished: I saw his feet last. He went like snow before a hot fire, or lead in a furnace. The man that died is looking all round for him, and the others are laughing at him. They seem to have a jolly time. Why, they can go anywhere.

"I can see a mischievous spirit; he could make a hand, a large one. They seem to be looking at me and touching me.†

"The one that vanished has returned.

"I can see through the spirits. I can touch and feel that mischievous one. I cannot see through him. He is almost like a man in the body.‡

"Men are digging a hole for that dead man's body: it is easy to dig. There is no wind: all is still. They dig the hole about five feet deep.

"These spirits did not look like those I saw the other night" (my father and mother): "they look like stones compared with polished diamonds."

\* Several independent clairvoyants have described the separation of the spirit from the body in a very similar manner.

† I cannot account for such statements as these. I give them, because to leave them out would be to deal unfairly with the reader, and unjustly with the facts.

‡ Some spirits appear to him, as they have to many spiritual seers, very much coarser than others; and he says that physical manifestations can be made by such spirits much more readily than by the more refined; which is, I think, very probable.

Some years afterward, I asked him to find a dying man and watch carefully the process of the separation of the spirit from the body.

"I can see some one dying. There is something eating his heart away. I see a hole on one side. People are round him, and a minister is praying. He feels well. He does not stir at all. His heart beats very slowly.

"I see his heart commencing to be green. It beats more slowly still. They question him; but he does not answer. He is getting cold. His heart stops awhile, and then begins again, but fainter every time. Now it only beats once, and stops a long while. It does not beat at all now; but he is not dead. I can see the blood circulating, and his lungs going a little, and his pulse beating; but his heart has completely stopped.

"He was injured: a rib broke, and a piece stuck in his heart. His eyes are almost half open."

("Can you see his spirit?") "I do now. Why, he is not dead yet! his spirit has not left his body. I see a great many spirits, and he is looking up to them. He is rubbing his eyes, just as if he was getting up in the morning, and laughing at the minister, and trying to call his attention, moving his hand before his face; but the minister does not see him.

"The doctor says, 'He is dead.' When the spirit left it struggled a little: why was that? They don't go off anywhere. Many of them are round the house. Don't he feel nice now. He is dancing around quite lively. He is talking about his mother that he has left: he is afraid she will suffer. They tell him he is tied to his mother's apron-strings.

"He is trying to shake hands with a man he knows; but the man never notices him. He asks him if he has got the floor done. He hardly seems to know that he has left the body. He meets a number, and tries the same, and he is feeling himself, and looking at his hands, and seems to be surprised.

"He is clean: he left all the dirt behind. He has no nails nor hair; nor have any of them. Their heads look curious.\*

"I can see them turn over. This one says he dare not, and they laugh at him. I see them go to a library. They are looking at the books. One of them takes up a Bible, and puts it down again, and says, 'I don't want that book;' and the rest say the same. The book don't move; but he seems to hold it in his hand. Every thing must have a spirit."

The question is often asked, Where are all these things that the psychometer sees? The following, unexpectedly seen by Mrs. Denton, may shed some light upon this question. Can this be the realm into which the spirit is ushered at death? or is there a still more interior realm, from which we receive echoes occasionally, but of which we still know so little?

"I am in a different realm from any I have ever before observed. I have to become positive, not only to outward surroundings, but even to the psychometric influences usually received, in order to distinguish this. Yet it appears like a realm of real, substantial existences, stretching back, and backward still, almost interminably, into both time and space.

"I see forms—people, and the results of their labours; even the very efforts that produced the results. At first I thought it a species of mirage. It seemed like a picture of all that had ever been; yet now it seems to me that I could step from this planet upon that world (I can call it nothing else), and travel back through all the scenes that have ever transpired in this.

"What a difference between that which we recognise as matter here and that which seems like matter there! In the one the elements are so coarse and so angular I wonder that we can endure it at all, much more that we can desire to continue our present relations to it; in the other all the elements are so refined, they are so free from those great, rough angularities which characterise the elements here, that I can but regard that as the real existence.

"Something appears to me to be continually passing

\* This I do not understand.

from our earth, and from all existences on its surface, only to take on there the self-same form as that from which it emanated here, as if every moment as it passed had borne with it in eternal fixedness, not the record merely of our thoughts and deeds, but the actual, imperishable being, quick with pulsing life, thinking the thought, and performing the deed, instead of passing away into utter nothingness, that which is here and now for ever continuing, an eternised there and then.

"That portion of this realm which represents our earth and her history, appears to occupy that portion of space through which the earth has heretofore passed—her entire pathway since she became an independent member of the solar system. The form, however, as it looks to me now, is not that of a sphere, but that of a broad belt, or zone, endlessly waved, and gently curved in its general outline as it stretches back into the eternities, where it eventually appears divided, as if two streams which had for ages held a separate course had met at last, and 'mingled into one.'

"This realm appears to me to be illuminated by the same light as that by which all things are psychometrically seen."

*There appears to be a spiritual universe as well as a material one—a universe which contains all that is, as well as all that ever has been. There are the mountains that were levelled before the Alps and the Andes left the ocean-bed. All the rivers that ever ran are there—the pellucid rills dancing down from the woody hills, and the muddy streams that poured their turbid waters into lake and ocean. There are the coral-polyps that built their stony trees at the ocean-bottom, and the sea-lilies, whose stalks "bent like corn on the upland lea," where our proudest cities are to-day. All the flowers that ever bloomed, all the birds that ever sang, every leaf that waved, and every tiny insect that crawled upon it, are there, none too insignificant for preservation.*

There are the Indian tribes which have roamed over the face of this continent for ages, hunting buffalo on the plains, spearing fish in the waters, and shooting with their stone-pointed arrows the deer in the woods. The Aztecs with their bloody religious orgies, the milder Toltecs that preceded them, and formed settlements from Mexico to Lake Superior, where they mined for copper more than a thousand years before a Spaniard set foot upon the land—all are there—every tool they fabricated, every movement they executed, every word that fell from their lips.

There are Egypt, and her millions who toiled for ages to chisel out her labyrinthine tombs and rear her lofty pyramids; all the hordes that Asia sent in wave after wave from her central grassy plains to woody Europe, where they dispossessed the dark-skinned occupants, and seized their lands by the right of the strongest.

And what thus exists we can come into direct relation with. We can see the mountains, and watch the rivers run; dive to the bottom of the old Silurian oceans, and mark their ancient tenants; roam with the old Indians, sail in their canoes, and lie in their wigwams; hear the thud of the stone hammer on the copper gad in ancient mines of Superior; and know the absolute facts regarding a past that seemed lost to us forever.

*By psychometry there is scarcely anything but we can learn, and by a process so much easier and more delightful than our present cumbrous methods. A personal relic of Shakespeare may in half an hour reveal more of him than his biographers have been able to dig up by dint of the severest application for two hundred years. A pebble from the streets of Jerusalem is a library containing the records of the whole Jewish nation. I have known a little dust from a copper knife reveal to a boy the story of the ancient copper-miners of Lake Superior to the very life, as far as their story is known, and, I have no doubt—from its harmony with itself, with the times, and with the statements of independent psychometers—true to the very letter where it was otherwise unknown. The most secret deeds of even the most ancient times lie in the light of the brightest sunshine; and we have only to open our spiritual eyes to discover them.*

*History is to be vastly enlarged, and made much more reliable.—The histories of many nations of which we have*

never heard or dreamed are to be written, and the histories of all others to be rewritten, that fact may take the place of the fables that have been for so long palmed upon mankind. With a fragment from Egypt no larger than a pea, we can learn more of the Pharaonic times than if all the hieroglyphics that were ever made were in our possession, and Champollion and Lepsius had bequeathed to us their Egyptian lore. A piece of a Babylonish brick can call up the ancient dwellers by the Euphrates, and make real as the life of to-day that of Assyria four thousand years ago.

*Psychometry must greatly enlarge the boundaries of every science.* Scientific men will at first look upon it with great distrust, if not with absolute disgust. All royal roads to learning have, say they, only proved by-paths for idlers to loiter in, without enabling them to gain one step toward any desirable station. Will psychometry prove any better? It certainly will; and a test, by any unprejudiced scientist, of some one of the multitude of sensitives that exist everywhere, would soon satisfy even the most sceptical. I have tested its value in geology during many years. When the oil excitement broke out in Pennsylvania, Mrs. Denton psychometrized a specimen of *Favosites Gothlandica* containing petroleum in its cells, and saw at once its animal origin, and that it had no necessary connection with coal or carboniferous beds. This I announced in my lectures and through the papers as early as 1860, at a time when, as far as I could learn, all scientists who had written and were writing upon the subject attributed its origin to vegetable matter, and generally taught its necessary connection with carboniferous beds, ideas now entirely exploded. Though petroleum is not yet regarded as the product of coral-polyps, who stored it away in those cells so frequently found supplied with it even now, opinions with regard to its origin approach nearer and nearer to the view of the psychometer as the matter becomes better understood. Hundreds of times I have had psychometers describe to me, from various specimens entirely unknown to them, scenes in the earth's past history in harmony with the formations to which the specimens belonged. The same animals and plants have been described over and over again for specimens, also unknown, that had been previously seen by the same persons with specimens from the same period. I have had independent psychometers describe the same animals and plants with the same specimens, without knowing that they were the same, and, in some cases, animals previously entirely unknown; and I am satisfied that some psychometers can see as clearly the forms of life that existed on this planet twenty million years ago as they can those that are on the globe to-day, and with much greater ease. Persons who have not the slightest geological knowledge can see and describe forms known only to the geologist; and children can solve some problems in a few minutes that have occupied the attention of professors for years.

In astronomy, psychometry will do as much as in geology, or more. A first-class telescope cannot be had for less than ten thousand dollars. The labour of a working man's lifetime would hardly buy one; and, when bought, he could but faintly discern the outlines of land and water on a planet as distant as Mars. Tens of thousands possess telescopes as much better than that as sunshine is brighter than candle-light: all they need is a knowledge of their own powers, and a little instruction in the way to make use of them. With these telescopes they can not only see the outlines of land and water, but they can see water, rocks, plants, homes and people, and watch those people as they follow their daily avocations. A telescope only enables us to see; but the spiritual faculties enable their possessors to hear, smell, taste, and feel, and become, for the time being, almost inhabitants of the planet they are examining. The secrets of our solar system that scientists have sought so earnestly to penetrate are soon to be revealed; and the process by which this is to be accomplished is such a simple one it seems amazing that we had not previously discovered it.

It must be imagined that all this can be done without close investigation and careful discrimination. It is quite interesting to watch the progress of a psychometer when getting at the history of a specimen which is familiar to the listener; to

see theory after theory thrown down as more and more light is revealed by the psychometric vision. I have known a psychometer to remain in the dark in reference to some important point after even five or six examinations; and where the objects examined are such that we cannot check the statements of the psychometer, or only by the statements of other psychometers, the greatest caution is necessary. For some examinations it is best that the psychometer should know nothing about the history desired from the specimen; but, in most cases, the more highly cultured the psychometer is, the better and more reliable the results. Had Sherman the knowledge of comparative anatomy possessed by Owen of England, or of botany that Gray of America has, his description would be almost infinitely superior to what they are now, and carry conviction, by their harmony with known facts, to the minds of the most sceptical capable of appreciating them.

The parties experimenting need a good knowledge of the times to which the specimen is related, or they may think a psychometer very wide of the mark when his descriptions are the very truth. Many statements given in this volume I only discovered to be true after careful examinations of authorities; and many things stated, that I regarded at the time as extremely improbable, proved to be in complete harmony with known facts.

Psychometry will enable us to appreciate a class of people who have never yet had justice done to them. I refer to the sensitives, the "odd people" of the world, who see what no one else can discern; who dislike persons and places, though their friends may be perfectly satisfied with them, and can give no reason for their dislike. Some of them feel uncomfortable in a railway carriage unless close to an open window, and are liable to faint in churches or crowded halls. Some cannot sleep well unless their heads are to the north; and copper or brass affects them unpleasantly. Such people are endowed by nature with a more active condition of the spiritual faculties; and they can, as a general thing, readily develop into good psychometers, who will, before long, fill a very prominent place in the intellectual advancement of the race. The lunatic asylum has imprisoned some of the best of these, in consequence of their extreme sensitiveness, who, by judicious treatment, might have been the noblest pioneers of science.

Woman, who is by nature much more sensitive than man, and who derives, often unwittingly, much knowledge by the exercise of her spiritual faculties, is to be greatly benefited by a knowledge of psychometry. Instead of spending her time in writing or reading caricatures of human nature, such as are nineteen-twentieths of our popular novels, she can read and write true histories of men and women, tracing the most noted characters of the past, rapidly or slowly, as she pleases, through every event of their lives, see and read the documents they have written, and hear the very words that fell from their lips. What fiction can equal such true stories as these? From experiments that I have tried, I am satisfied that many of them might go back from living individuals, step by step, into the past, along the line of either parent, and give a true description of their ancestors for thousands of years. Indeed, I know of no limit to this power.

The cultivation of the psychometric powers will aid materially, I think, in weakening the influence of the animal passions, and bringing the individual under the control of the moral and spiritual faculties. The passions may be gratified till the individual descends to the level of them, and the brute is master of the man; or the spiritual may be cultivated till it holds the reins, and guides the individual only where it is for his highest interest to travel. The habitual exercise of these highest powers allies us to the pure and good, and helps to bring about that better time for humanity that we all desire so much to see.

Psychometry will shed much light upon the spiritual nature of man. Every successful psychometric experiment is a revelation of its wondrous powers. I sometimes listen with breathless awe to the statements of psychometers as they unravel the profoundest mysteries of Nature; and I see that we possess powers which we have hitherto considered the exclusive property of the gods. If we could but realise what we are, we should scorn to be mean or impure. How

could we, the royal children of Nature, live unworthy of our lineage and destiny?

Our destiny is also indicated by it. It cannot be that we should possess such powers as psychometry reveals, and yet these be scarcely used by one in a thousand. Death cannot extinguish these god-lit fires, which must burn and illumine for a future commensurate with the past that psychometry reveals. Here is a magnificent palace, on which architects have been employed for an immense period in rearing, improving, and decorating. Here are rooms fit for angels, and appliances innumerable for the comfort and happiness of those who may be fortunate enough to dwell in them. Is this built merely to be thrown down before one thousandth part of it has been occupied or used? These spiritual faculties that we possess are the evidences of the spiritual realm for which they are fitted, and where life is to be perpetuated under more favourable conditions. What the psychometer sees for an hour at a time, and with difficulty, we may be able to observe at leisure, and draw instruction from as a living volume. What a realm!—the heavens of all ages for the astronomer; all the past of our planet, and its myriad life-forms, for the geologist; all the facts of man's existence for the historian; all plants, from the fucoids, that spread their arms on the tepid seas of the primeval world, to the soaring cedars of California, for the botanist; for the artist, all the giant mountains that the rains of æons have washed away—the bare, black precipices, seamed with white veins, that frowned above the old Devonian seas; and the cañons, eaten by the mad streams that went roaring through them, and then leaped into the ocean with a more than Niagara fall; the smoking mountains, the flaming craters, and the spouting geysers, not of this planet alone, but of all worlds in our system, and, it may be, of all worlds in all systems; the ever-growing soul finding unlimited time and an ever-expanding universe to gratify its unceasing desire to be, to do, and to learn.

THE Rev. John Tyerman, of Australia, is now lecturing on Spiritualism in the United States.

JOHN ROBERTS AND THE LOST CATTLE.—In the *Memoirs of John Roberts*, of Siddington, near Cirencester, one of the early Friends, there is this account:—"I had a poor neighbour who had a wife and six children, and whom the chief of the parish permitted to keep six or seven cows upon the waste, which were the principal support and employment of the family, and prevented them from becoming chargeable. One very stormy night the cattle were left in the yard as usual, but could not be found in the morning. The man and his sons sought them to no purpose; and after they had been lost four days, his wife came to me, wringing her hands, and in a great deal of grief cried, 'O Lord, Mr. Roberts, we are undone! My husband and I must go a-begging in our old age. We have lost all our cows. My husband and the boys have been round the country, and can hear nothing of them. I'll down on my bare knees if you'll stand our friend.' I desired she would not be in such an agony, and told her that she should not go down on her knees to me; but I would gladly help them in what I could. 'I know,' said she, 'you are a good man, and God will hear your prayers.' 'I desire thee,' said I, 'to be still and quiet; perhaps thy husband or sons may hear of them to-day; if not let him provide himself with a horse, and come to me to-morrow morning, as soon as he will; and I think, if it please God, to go with him to seek them.' The woman seemed transported with joy, crying, 'Then we shall have our cows again.' Her faith being so strong brought the greater exercise on me, with strong cries to the Lord, that He would be pleased to make me instrumental in His hand for the help of the poor family. In the morning, early, comes the old man. 'In the name of God,' said he, 'which way shall we go to seek them?' I, being then deeply concerned in my mind, did not answer him till he had thrice repeated it, and then said, before I was aware, 'We will go to Malmesbury, and in the horse fair we shall find them.' When I had spoken these words, I was troubled lest they should not prove true. On approaching the town, I inquired of the first man we met, whether he had seen any stray milch cows thereabouts. 'What manner of cattle are they,' said he. And, on the poor man describing their marks and numbers, he told us there were some such standing quietly in the horse fair, and that, thinking they belonged to the neighbourhood, he had not taken particular notice of them. When we came to the place, the old man found them to be his, and suffered his transports of joy to rise so high that I was quite ashamed of his carriage; for he fell a hallooing, and threw up his montier cap in the air several times, till he had raised the neighbours out of their beds to see what was the matter. 'Oh!' said he, 'I had lost my cows four or five days ago, and thought I should never see them again; but this worthy neighbour told me this morning, by his own fireside, nine miles off, that here I should find them, and here I have them!' I desired the poor old man to be quiet and take his cows, and be thankful—as, indeed, I was, being reverently bowed in my spirit before the Lord, in that he was pleased to put words of truth in my mouth. And the man drove his cattle home, to the great joy of his family."

THE INFLUENCE OF THE AFFECTIONS UPON INTER-COURSE WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD.

THOSE humble minds who seek their satisfaction and happiness in the conscientious performance of their daily duties in the spirit of service, and are not blessed or cursed with a critical spirit of inquiry into history and science, can well afford to be indifferent to the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, and the evidence they afford of intelligence and power hitherto unimagined, and by narrow minds considered non-existent. Yet even to these gentle children of God the evidences presented by Modern Spiritualism of the presence and continued interest of the dear departed ones must be, one would think, consolatory.

The anecdote told by Mr. Home of his interview with the then Queen of Holland, in 1858, may be quoted as an instance of this. After long and fruitless *séances* with her Majesty for six or seven evenings, she took him to the play-room of the little one she had lost. I give what follows in Mr. Home's words:—"Taking a light, the Queen had passed through two rooms, and was about to unlock the door of a third, when I, as it were involuntarily, said, 'It is there the next *séance* is to be held.' Unlocking the door and handing me the light, the Queen said, 'I well knew it would be in that room; go in and see my treasures.' Dimly though it was lighted, I saw at a glance that it had been a room where a child or children had been, for in one corner was a broken toy-cart, and near it a toy drum. Other toys were strewn here and there, as if the little ones, weary with play, had left the room for a time, and as if the silence would soon again be broken by their presence. At last my eyes rested on a bunch of faded flowers, and these betokened a lapse of months, or even years, as having been undisturbed. The Queen informed me that this had been the play-room of her child now in heaven, and that every object had remained just as he left it. The flowers alone had been added, and these had been near the little form after the change we term death.

"The next evening a *séance* was held there, and that sorrowing mother was granted the most perfect and convincing proof that her loved one was still near her. It is impossible to give the details of what took place, for they were of a nature so intimate to the one person that to recapitulate them to the public would seem almost sacrilegious. There were present relatives of her Majesty, and one maid-of-honour, who, as well as myself, were witnesses, and they cannot have forgotten the tears of joy shed by that most noble and highly-gifted woman as she bowed her head in thankfulness to God for the solace sent to cheer her.

"On a scrap of paper in my possession, and of far greater value than gold or precious stones, is this simple memento, wherein is written:—'*I will ever remember with gratitude the *séance* with Mr. Home.*'—SOPHIE."

I am not writing this paper as a collection of evidences of Spiritualism, or I might out of thousands of instances have selected many more specific in details, and less open to that criticism which is not altogether captious. I have selected this narrative as an instance of the sort of consolation some spiritualistic phenomena are capable of affording, and the conviction they carry to the minds of those who from long and affectionate intimacy are well qualified to judge of the reality of the presence of those they have mourned as lost. The instance is valuable also on account of the rank of the chief personage in the narrative. The thing was not done in a corner, and exaggeration or misrepresentation was not likely to occur without contradiction. Another point worthy of note is that the inquiry was an earnest and persevering one, and that a strong affection bound the mother and child together. The description of that play-room, with its relics and its locked door, tells a tale of a sanctuary in which probably hours of solitary retirement had been spent, of the consecration of much time to the memory of the dear departed. It must have been the scene of much heartfelt emotion, and of many tears. The Father, who seeth in secret, must have been with that pious devotion of a bereaved mother in her secure retirement. The repeated failure of frequently repeated attempts at intercourse is noteworthy. Did the departed spirit determine to manifest himself openly only in the sanctuary consecrated to his memory—the scene of his earthly joys, and of his mother's

persistent affection and tender recollection of him? It seems so. This, then, was not an affair of the crucible, but of a cultus; not of analytical science and detective skill, but an affair of the heart. Here, I think, we have reached a most noteworthy distinction, which involves very grave issues. A distinction this which involves success and satisfaction, not in spiritualistic inquiries only, but in those of religion, and the manifestation of the real man which is within all the external appearances, with their animal varieties of manifestation which we see around us in our fellows, and experience, to our sorrow and our shame, in ourselves.

Why is it that the modern Athenian, with his restless love of novelty—why is it that the critical, sceptical and sometimes self-conceited man of science so often fails in coming to a satisfactory conclusion in his spiritualistic researches? Why do inquirers generally go away from *séances* without having their hearts stirred—without becoming more thoughtful, serious, religious men than they were before? Is the fault on this side the veil, or is it on the other? To answer these questions it is only necessary to prosecute them. Whose fault was it that in the early Gospel times not many men who were wise in externals, or powerful men, or noblemen, were called to the knowledge of God? Whose fault is it now that the human race, even in its most civilised varieties, and often in its most cultured specimens, lives in the external, isolated by selfishness, pride, love of pleasure, animal passion, and love of this life, away from God, from the heaven of blessed and harmonious spirits, and the moral dignity of its spiritual being? Is the darkness of the cellar the fault of the sun, or of the material obstacles put in the way of his light?

A subject prolific this of applications. Who is the man most likely to profit by a good poem springing out of a loving heart? The man who reads it with a critical eye and passes on to something else as if it were a matter of the intellect merely, or the man who reads, and re-reads it—makes it the subject of his daily thought, and repeats it over until it dwells in him and becomes a part of his inner man, so that he can reproduce it at will to an intimate friend as a part of his valued treasures? It is needless answering such questions. They carry their own answer. To profit by anything we must treat it reverently, must yield it such service of attention and time as to incorporate it in ourselves and make it a part of our being. Spiritualism has not generally been approached in a spirit of reverent inquiry, but much more frequently in a spirit of eager curiosity, or of gay levity, or supercilious criticism. What wonder then if it should sink gradually in the estimation even of its believers. Few now think of it as a means of establishing a *bonâ fide* intercourse with their friends gone before.

Indeed, it is getting a common thing to hear people explain away all the phenomena, and the last thing thought of is to take them *au pied de la lettre*, as what they declare themselves to be. A clairvoyant is believed and relied upon as long as he speaks of material objects and occurrences about which his accuracy is capable of being tested and verified, but whenever he speaks of the appearance of a spirit, who has passed from the earthly form and presents features and gestures which are recognised by those who knew him well as having belonged to him in the flesh, his evidence ceases to be admissible; so that there are found those who maintain that Spiritualism has afforded no proof of the continued existence of our friends who have passed from us. It is not my object to go into details as to the evidence that has been afforded in various ways of the existence in another life of the friends we have lost. The identity of the intelligences who communicate has been proved in every conceivable way, but still there are those who persist not merely in doubting, but in denying the proof of a life after this afforded by spiritual manifestations. There is a state of mind in which belief becomes impossible. Even though one rose from the dead, what would this avail to a mind not grounded in religion, in fact dwelling entirely in externals, with all its interests here, and all its aversions to a change of being from this to another world?

Every age has its Moses and its prophets, and every age has its vast majority of persons who will not believe them, who are untrue to their deepest and inmost consciousness;

and who consequently have lost the capacity of believing the things that pertain to that inner world. Every form of selfishness, when it becomes dominant, shuts up the individual as it were in a shell; now, as formerly, the love of approbation and of distinction from one's fellows prevents the influence of the higher beliefs; now, as formerly, it can be asked from the depths of a mournful insight, "How can ye believe, ye who receive honour one from another, and seek not the honour which cometh from God alone?" It may be a small matter to the eternal interest of mankind that men turn away from the spiritualistic phenomena with incredulity, aversion, or contempt, but it is no small matter if their isolation in this world from the harmonies of the next depends on causes which shut them up in themselves and in this worldly sphere, and which would continue to isolate them even in Heaven, even if they were surrounded by hosts of blessed beings, animated by far other feelings and interests than those which limit their being. There are interests which affect us more nearly and deeply than any connected with the extension of our knowledge through the instrumentality of external phenomena. Mr. Buckle thought otherwise; I wonder if he thinks so now. These interests lie in the will, in the direction of its aims, and in their conformity with the conditions in which we are placed.

No action is sweet, no action is elevating, no action is pure unless it be done in the spirit of service, and as a means of humble communion with the Source of all strength.

In such a spirit all friendly intercourse is made more real and more close, and communion with spirits requires this frame of mind as its essential condition. Without this it is merely phenomenal; it is merely peeping and muttering. It can bring nothing but disappointment and a heavy heart and a sense of desecration. God is not in it, and the human heart turns from it in disgust and utter scepticism. *θ.*

"Having in my youth severe notions of piety," said a Persian writer, "I used to rise in the night-watches to meditate, pray, and read the Koran. One night, fully occupied with these practices, my father, a man of practical piety, awoke. 'Behold,' said I, 'thy other children are lost in irreligious slumber, while I alone awake to praise God.' 'Son of my soul,' answered he, 'it is better to sleep than wake to remark the faults of thy brethren!'"

Mrs. Loomis, who informs us that she was one of the earliest clairvoyant and healing mediums in America, was wrecked a few days ago in the steamer *Idaho*, off the Irish coast, with the loss of all her baggage. Her present address is 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury, London.

THE TESTIMONIAL TO MR. EGLINTON.—In the course of the entertainment on the evening of the presentation of the Eglington testimonial, Mr. Alfred Moore contributed two excellent songs, in addition to those by other friends, as previously published. Messrs. Kirkman kindly lent the performers one of their "Melo" pianos, a very beautiful instrument recently introduced by them, combining the sustained tone of the organ with that of the ordinary grand piano. We are asked to state that, thanks to the assistance of the several artistes and other friends, the contents of the purse were considerably in excess of the sum we at first understood them to be. The purse itself and cushion were worked by two ladies of the committee.

A MODERN MIRACLE.—A miracle is alleged to have been wrought at the village of Maunch Chunk, in Pennsylvania. A lady, by name Miss Amelia Greth, has, it is asserted, been raised from the dead by Father Heinau, a German Catholic priest at Maunch Chunk. Miss Greth, according to her own account, was enabled, through a communication from her guardian angel, to predict her own death from consumption on the 2nd inst., but the prediction was accompanied by the gratifying announcement that she would be restored to life by a miracle, would get up from her death-bed, attend mass, and return from church cured of all ailments. On the day mentioned Miss Greth died accordingly, and her remains were viewed by 7,000 persons, who were permitted to pass through the room in which the corpse was lying. After Miss Greth had been dead for about an hour Father Heinau, who had attended her in her last moments, announced amid the most profound silence that he was about to call "her." He then cried "Amelia!" and, there being no response, shouted her name again in a loud voice, upon which Miss Greth immediately came to life and responded "Father." The scene in the room, it is stated, was at that moment "indescribable." Cries of joy and weeping were heard on all sides. Miss Greth then asked for a shawl, and was accommodated with a seal-skin jacket, which a lady who stood by the bedside took off and placed on her shoulders. She then walked alone and quite rapidly to church, followed by an immense concourse of people in a state of wild excitement. When she arrived at the church Father Heinau preached two sermons—one in German, the other in English—and on the conclusion of the service Miss Greth returned to her room apparently strong and hearty. She has since been interviewed by several reporters; but as she is not permitted to describe her sensations during the time she was dead, her revelations were confined chiefly to details as to her health, which seems to have been far from satisfactory.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

## THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

### MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

LAST Tuesday night, at the ordinary monthly meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists, at 38, Great Russell-street, London, Mr. Alexander Calder, president, occupied the chair. The other members present were Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mr. March, Mr. Algernon Joy, Miss Houghton, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Miss Withall, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. Lowe, the Rev. W. W. Newbould, Mr. Morell Theobald, and Mr. W. H. Harrison.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

One new member was elected.

Mr. Morell Theobald read the report of the Finance Committee, which announced a balance in hand of £108 16s. 11d., and recommended payments to the extent of £104 5s. 8d. The total outstanding liabilities of the Association were estimated at £5.

Mrs. Lowe moved that the rooms of the Association should be closed on national holidays. This was passed unanimously.

The report of the General Purposes Committee was asked for by the Chairman. The Hon. Sec. stated that nobody was present in charge of it, and asked whether he should read the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee.

Mr. E. T. Bennett said that that plan would be out of order, because the minutes of the Committee might be of a private character.

The Hon. Sec. announced the present of an original cast of a materialised spirit hand to the Association by Mr. Reimers. A vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Reimers, and on the motion of Mr. Bennett, seconded by Miss Houghton, the cast was referred to the Research Committee.

It was resolved to close the offices of the Association from July 27th to August 24th, and to transact no business at the August Council meeting beyond adjourning till September.

Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald announced that Mr. Stainton-Moses would continue to take charge of the fortnightly meetings during the next season, and would draw up in advance a programme of the papers to be read.

Mr. Algernon Joy said that he had given notice of a motion of rather a personal nature; he wished to substitute another for it, enforcing the general principle, but omitting personalities.

Mr. Dawson Rogers objected. Mr. Joy had no right to give notice of one motion and to substitute another.

Mr. Joy then moved—"That no payments on account of services rendered, after this date, in any way, to the Association, be in future made, directly or indirectly, to *The Spiritualist* newspaper, so long as its editor and proprietor continues to be a member of the Council."

Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald said that he would second the motion as a matter of form, in order that there might be a discussion of the point, but he hoped that he should not be expected to vote for it.

Mr. W. H. Harrison said—If Mr. Joy had been allowed to take the personalities out of this motion, and to make it applicable to all, I had arranged with him to second it. In future times, when commercial interests in connection with Spiritualism may be numerous and large, some such rule will be a safeguard against corruption. I was sorry when I read that the Council abolished the rule in 1876, but after they did so I had a clear right to stand for the Council if I saw fit; nobody knowing my willing sacrifice of ten years of my worldly prospects for Spiritualism is likely to accuse me of corrupt motives. Our president, now in the chair, once had a written certificate from the proprietors of *The Engineer* newspaper, that, as regards their journal alone, I had voluntarily given up a large annual income to attend to Spiritualism, and I voluntarily did the same in other cases, until I relinquished about £400 a year, with prospective regular increase. I desire not to be on the Council; Mr. Martin Smith, Mr. C. C. Massey, and other strong pillars of the Association wish me to be here, but whenever in times past they suggested it, I held out against it. More recently, while I was speaking against it to Mr. Stainton-Moses, he nominated me for the last election, and I reluctantly yielded. My objections are not of the nature raised by Mr. Joy. Putting advertisements in a public newspaper for personal convenience is not fairly describable as placing a journal in "the service" of the advertiser, and the editors of the *Times* and other newspapers are therefore under my conditions to be found in Parliament; editors also quite commonly have seats on local government boards. Still, despite the Council having judged it to the interests of the Association to remove the rule, despite nearly all the strongest pillars of the Association wishing me to act, and despite the body of the members having similarly expressed their opinion by their votes at the last contested election, it is more to please others than myself that I am here, and I shall be glad to resign at any time when the Council adopts those general principles which Mr. Joy desired to substitute for his present motion.

The motion was then put to the vote. Mr. Joy alone voted for it, consequently it was lost.

The other motions on the list were postponed until the next meeting.

The proceedings then closed.

An Edinburgh correspondent writes:—"A good deal of investigation into Spiritualism is going on here in private among inquirers little suspected. It is gaining ground." In Cambridge there has been considerable activity in relation to Spiritualism for some months past.

*The Poet's Magazine* for this month says of Mr. Harrison's *Lazy Lays*—"We have much pleasure in adding our congratulations to those already expressed by our contemporaries. . . . There is much clever humour in some of these *Lays*, while others contain philosophy and thought which will bear serious attention and study."

## DR. MACKENZIE AND SPIRITUALISM.

BY W. STANTON-MOSES, M.A.

I AM always sorry to do any one an injustice, or even to find that any friend should think I do him wrong. I had, however, no sort of idea that Dr. Mackenzie would propound himself, or desire to be considered, as an authority on Spiritualism. I thought that he dealt only with one small phase of the vast subject, and that his dealings even with that had not been of recent date. I have mixed rather extensively in Spiritualistic circles for the past seven years, but it has not been my good fortune to meet Dr. Mackenzie either at *séances*, discussions, or social meetings. I have a large acquaintance with the literature of the subject also, and during that time have been busy with it as a contributor, and have made myself acquainted with what goes on here and elsewhere; but I have not met with Dr. Mackenzie, save in the earliest days of the movement, and then rarely. This must be my excuse for having apparently ignored one whom I am glad to welcome as a fellow-worker in a cause where there is room for all. His researches must have been conducted in esoteric secrecy and seclusion, and I am sure we shall all welcome the day when he feels himself able to prevent further misconception by placing his results before us.

I hope, however, that I may be pardoned if I still say that these results must be other than what he hints at in his paper on "Crystallomancy," and in the explanation published on June 28th, if I am to admit that he has grasped the "full significance" of this great movement. It was his statements with regard to the place which Spiritualism fills in "adding weight to the arguments of the philosopher on immortality" that led me to say that he had not fully estimated its significance. It was to me extremely astonishing to hear that "Spiritualism, in its most extended application, is not a social need," is not "a necessity for the educated mind;" only a degree less startling than to be told that, in the opinion of a thoughtful man, no one "moderately considering the works of Nature and Providence can be wanting in a faith in a future life and world."

I do not know whether Dr. Mackenzie intends to enter his protest against the "much learning that makes mad" the student who *immoderately* considers these works; but most assuredly many of our most eminent philosophers and men of science, who have spent long years of patient care in such studies, are utterly destitute of that robust faith which Dr. Mackenzie would credit them with. Nay; they, and those whom they influence, are precisely of the mental type which is most easily reached by the experimental method which Spiritualism furnishes. That feeling of profound and distrustful questioning as to the future, which a careful study of the book of Nature has induced, will yield to no speculative reasoning, however subtle and acute, and must be approached from another side—the side of scientific demonstration. And the first step is—as I have always felt, and as I have found in repeated instances in the course of conversation with such inquirers—to prove the existence and action of an intelligence outside of a human body. The "force unrecognised by science, governed by an intelligence outside of a human body," a formula now grown stale by repetition, is nevertheless unshaken as embodying the first great truth that must be recognised.

Nothing can be done until the fallacy that a long course of materialistic thought has engendered is swept away; the fallacy, I mean, that intelligence is impossible apart from a physical brain, and a physical organisation. The phenomenon of psychography to which Dr. Slade's visit to this country drew attention, is one of the methods by which this point is most readily demonstrated. There are other means, but that is ready to our hands.

When this is proven the rest is comparatively easy. The next step comes logically and simply. If it be indeed possible that an intelligence, no matter of what sort, can live and act apart from a physical body, then it is possible for *me* to exist after bodily death. If possible, is it true? Can it be demonstrated that human beings have, in spiritual existence, survived physical dissolution? Again Spiritualism supplies the answer. It *can* be proven. It *is* demonstrated in a multitude of cases which the inquirer, leaving the first principles of his inquiry, is invited to estimate according to

the received laws of evidence. In this pursuit he will, doubtless, find it necessary to sift with care, and to reject much that is not to the point, or not above suspicion; but I fearlessly assert that a careful and prolonged course of such inquiry will place before him evidence that a fair and candid mind will be unable to reject. That evidence will be both presumptive—leading, in a certain number of cases to establish a probability; and demonstrative—establishing, either as a matter of personal experience, or of unimpeachable and sufficient testimony, the identity of spirits who have once inhabited this earth, and who now communicate with it.

These are matters of scientific or logical demonstration, but they do not touch the religious aspect of the matter.

This, however, the student who would fathom the depths must be prepared to face; for in it lies one of the most far-reaching truths connected with the whole subject of the intercommunion between the world of matter and the world of spirit. For this subject is not solely of scientific import. It is concerned with something more than the demonstration of the existence of a new force. Its phenomena are, as Dr. Mackenzie tells us, contradictory and, to a superficial observer, fleeting and illusory. They puzzle the man who has not the key, and that key is to be had only as the result of all-round investigation. None who leaves out of view the religious aspect can do more than observe certain phenomena—"a series of phantasmata"—and perplex himself with endeavours to understand their *rationale*. He may do valuable service in that way, no doubt, but it will rather be to others than to himself. He will be, at best, a guide-post. Others may occupy themselves with the study of their own powers, and will do work far more useful in exploring the *terra incognita* to which the occultists have drawn increased attention. But all will miss the real significance of this movement if they do not see in it a great solvent of religious creeds, an organised attempt to set man thinking about those questions with which creeds are most concerned.

Dr. Mackenzie's shuddering horror of setting any body thinking, or, as he calls it, of "unsettling a mind," is funny enough. "Rather," he says, "than one mind should be rendered unsettled, and therefore unhappy, it would be better that the whole of this series of investigations should cease and determine." Why? That very unsettlement is precisely what I should like to effect in a great number of minds. I should like to stir them up and make them face for themselves the problems that most concern them. If they are right in their belief, they can give a reason for the faith that is in them; and I should very much like to hear it. If they are wrong, then they *ought* to be unsettled, and the sooner the better. If, as will be found to be the case in a great number of instances, they have never thought at all, but have assented to a hereditary creed without taking the trouble even to think what one of its articles implies; and if that creed on analysis proves to be, as it will in many cases, a human invention, foolish and contradictory, or even dishonouring to God and pernicious to man, then I should not only like, but I will very earnestly try to unsettle it, and to substitute for it something nobler and better, and more suited to man's intelligent wants and cravings. Why, if Dr. Mackenzie's shuddering conservatism of faith had been the rule throughout this world's history, that record would have been of a very different sort from what it is, for the story of human progress and enlightenment has been little else but this very unsettlement of erroneous belief which Dr. Mackenzie deprecates. All great movements onward have been preceded by convulsion, by the unsettlement of opinion, by the tearing up of prejudices, the sweeping away of old errors, and the preparing of the mental soil for the reception of the new seed.

It is necessary for the progress of mankind that such epochs should occur. Man marches on; and that faith which sufficed an earlier and less enlightened age is not sufficient for extended knowledge. The craving for more light springs up in the hearts of those who are the pioneers of the new age, and God's answer is not far to seek. It comes in proportion to man's need, and his fitness and receptivity. And thus it is, and always has been, that the courier-fire is handed on, and the world made better for more light.

That which is good for the race is good also for the

individual. If a few, who would fain be left alone, are unsettled and do not find the process pleasant, it is perhaps because they need it most, and will be most benefited by it, as torpid and sluggish constitutions are most helped by a thorough shaking. Or it may be that they are not fitted for the rough work; or, again, that they have slumbered so long that the waking is hard, and the eye dreads the light. But whatever the cause, the work must go on, is going on, and will progress. And among the many causes for dissatisfaction with the present age, its crude materialism, its social sins, its hollow shams, and its pervading selfishness, I, for one, thank God that there is considerable chance that the minds of many will be unsettled, as the first necessary step to advanced knowledge, from which alone a truer and higher life can be inspired.

### Poetry.

#### THE PHANTOM.

BY ALICE WORTHINGTON.

Beckoning with phantom hand,  
From out the dim vision land  
Bordoring death's vale,  
In moonlight's soft gleaming  
That face in my dreaming  
Looked weary and pale.  
Midst silence unbroken  
Each trembling word spoken  
With heart beating fast:  
The phantom replieth,  
"Man's soul never dyeth,  
Though ages roll past.  
"When loosed from earth's prison  
The vexed soul hath arisen  
From sin's fatal blight,  
Then from flesh rent asunder  
Lost in love and deep wonder  
It expands in God's light.  
"Still earth-bound and weary,  
In pilgrimage dreary,  
I cling to this sphere;  
True love is immortal,  
Uneeked by death's portal,  
Sho dwelleth still here."  
Past firelight now dying,  
Dim shadows were flying  
And waved to and fro;  
A chill hand fast bound me,  
Strange music stole round me,  
"Twas whispered, "I go!"  
Then swift disappearing,  
No footsteps in hearing,  
All passed from my sight;  
Uproused from deep slumber,  
I counted each number  
Tho clock struck that night.

#### A SONG IN SEASON.

Cuckoo has done her worst.  
The blackbird's last loud burst  
Has charmed and gone;  
All ruffled on the lawn  
He sits, like wretch aspersed,  
With clothing soiled and torn.  
The cushat only, now,  
Sings her last lonely vow,  
With the first fall  
Of feathers, that is all;  
Not yet the foliage, still each bough  
Hangs thickly clad on oak and elm tree tall.  
But still a fall; alas,  
How swiftly pleasures pass!  
From genial spring  
Rise summer heats, to bring  
Sad silence o'er the grove. A faroe  
Is life? Ah! Nay! A serious thing.  
And soon the leaves, the leaves,  
They too must go; the sheaves  
One scarcely gathers,  
When loaves all fall, like feathers;  
But cold or sunshine, how man grieves  
O'er his losses; all the weathers!

SCRUTATOR.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DERBY PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The first annual meeting of the Derby Psychological Society was held in the small room of the Temperance Hall, Derby, on Friday evening last, Mr. J. J. Morse in the chair. The report and balance-sheet for the year were presented and adopted. The income for the year expired was £16 10s. 8d., and a balance in hand of £1 5s. 8½d. was reported and carried forward. Mr. J. Mayle was re-elected treasurer, and Mr. T. W. Ward, 15, Railway-terrace, Derby, was re-elected secretary. The society contemplates extending its operations by more frequent meetings, and the establishment of Sunday services during the coming season.

### 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. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

#### DARK AND LIGHT SEANCES—THE RING TEST.

SIR,—As I notice in the American papers much discussion going on respecting the dark and light *séances*, I merely now offer my opinion that both are useful.

To offer a materialisation "light" *séance* to sceptical or inexperienced persons is most unwise, and should never be done until after the sitters have had many dark *séances*, and become familiar with their genuineness. Tests can always be followed up in darkness, proving that nothing is done by the medium, and when the mind becomes satisfied of such fact, after a dozen or more tests, then only is the learner fit to be allowed to attend a materialisation *séance*; and then only is the mind prepared to receive the facts. The inquirer should be introduced to a very short materialisation *séance* at first, for the phenomenon is so wonderful, and is liable to be judged as imposture, when nothing of the kind really exists.

In dark sittings (in darkness it is easier for the spirits to work into material nature) it is proved by the tests that "spirits" do the work; we, then, ought to give them credit in trying to visibly show themselves in twilight; and in their statement that they will ultimately do so in a strong light. As to their *modus operandi* that is their business; we shall ultimately learn it from them; but let us now quietly register all the facts that occur, and get all the information we possibly can from good and honest mediums.

On one evening no visitors were present at my house except my medium, Miss K. S. Cook. So myself and daughter and Miss Cook went into the library and shut ourselves up in the dark, without a cabinet. We sat round a table on three chairs, and in a few minutes the spirit Lillie spoke to us. When we had joined hands, I said, "Now, Lillie, I should like the iron ring placed on my daughter's arm to-night, as she has never had that done, and it is our last night." Lillie replied, "I'll try." I struck a light, got the playthings together, found the ring, laid it on the table, saw their two hands joined, blew the light out, and joined both my hands to theirs. In two minutes my daughter said, "Father, the ring has come on my arm, and our hands have never separated."

I then said, "Lillie, I want you to materialise, as we are now, for you know the room is only like a large dark cabinet." She replied, "I will do so, but only Miss Blackburn must hold the medium." I said, "Why not both of us?" She said, "I can do it with both, but as your nature is not exactly the same to me as hers, it interferes and makes it more difficult."

I therefore pushed the table aside, and told my daughter to hold both the medium's hands with her left hand; I held my daughter's right. Then we were told to shake or pinch the medium to keep her conscious, which we did, and in two or three minutes from the medium's left side, out came Lillie, in a great deal of calico, which she kept stroking downwards to make fit. She came over to me, and kissed my forehead, then went and undid the iron bar of the window shutter, turning also one of the leaves of the Venetian blind, but suddenly shut it, saying, "It will hurt my medium." My daughter had never left hold of Miss Cook all the time. Whilst at the Venetian blind Lillie said, "Miss Blackburn, bring my medium here, and you will see us both." So my daughter and Miss Cook rose from their seats, and went two or three yards towards the Venetian blind, and Lillie said, "Now, Miss Blackburn, go to your chair; you see us both." My daughter left hold of the medium, and returned to her seat, saying, "I see two distinct forms, but I cannot clearly see your face." Lillie instantly replied, "But your father, three minutes since, knows my face was on his forehead, when I spoke to him, and patted his cheeks." Then the spirit Lillie said, "I must go. I am melting. The power is gone. Good night," and sank apparently through the floor at the medium's feet.

Now, I ask, were the face and lips that kissed my forehead, and spoke to me, and the hands which patted my face, flexible or not? Could a dummy undo an iron bar whilst my daughter held both hands of the medium?

I say, from these facts, doctors of medicine, and others who can, ought to investigate the variations of pulse and heart-beatings of mediums, for the benefit of mankind, and not from frivolous curiosity.

CHARLES BLACKBURN.

July 7th, 1878.

#### SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA IN SCOTLAND.

SIR,—A few more *séances* with Miss Fairlamb have been given in Edinburgh since the publication of those in No. 305 of *The Spiritualist*, and with greater success. But the most important event of all, is that one of the members of the circle invited Miss Fairlamb to spend a few days at Cramond, a few miles from town, on the Firth of Forth, and on the Sunday, at midday, while in the garden tent, she became controlled, and said that the conditions favoured a *séance*. Her host and hostess took their position a few yards away, under a tree, and in a few moments the well-known form of "Geordie" protruded through the aperture of the tent. On it being remarked that a photograph would be a valuable acquisition to the cause, it was arranged that the following morning, at six o'clock, everything should be arranged for that purpose. Monday came, and the results were two clear, distinct photographs—one of the head only, protruding through the tent, which every one who has seen the face will recognise at once; the other "Geordie" outside the tent, standing on one leg, with the other resting on a camp stool. The features and the whole form and surroundings are beautifully perfect, and to my idea of the matter I think the results the best acquisition to the truths of Spiritualism since the photographing of Katie King. Geordie says Miss Fairlamb's mediumship has much improved since her visit to those kind friends; and Miss Fairlamb's account to me is that as she was

lying at the bottom of the tent she was quite conscious. She says that there were two forms in the cabinet at one time. Anyhow, as the whole account will be published in full, and copies of the photograph sent up to London, I need not say more.

J. T. RHODES.

26, Albert-street, Edinburgh.

#### TREATMENT OF GUESTS IN THE HOUSE OF A BIRMINGHAM MINISTER.

SIR,—I think I am in duty bound to forward to you an account of a *séance* we have had lately. It has been often asked why, if the phenomena of Spiritualism are true, they have not made greater strides, and why the manifestations read of as being produced at home circles cannot be produced in public? The following account will, I think, furnish the answer. I write this that it may be the means of placing all honest mediums on their guard, to ascertain beforehand who their sitters will be when they receive a most pressing invitation from people of position, to visit and give them a sitting in a friendly way.

On Thursday last Mr. John Summerfield and myself received an invitation from Mr. George St. Clair (successor of the late George Dawson, minister of the Church of the Saviour, Birmingham) to visit him and give him a sitting, not in a professional way, but as friends. I may here say that Mr. Summerfield's name had been mentioned to Mr. St. Clair (who intended to give a lecture on Spiritualism at the above church), by Mr. Franklin, Spiritualist, of this town, who was also present at the sitting. We accepted the invitation, and after we arrived at Mr. St. Clair's house, we found, among others present, Mr. Glydon, a manufacturer of some note; also one of the members of the Town Council, Mr. Lawson Tait. When all had assembled, Mr. Summerfield (medium) sat with ten others at a large oblong table. After two short addresses from his guides, darkness was asked for, and given as far as circumstances would allow, but Mr. St. Clair left a small jet of gas on. Having resumed our seats, all were told to hold hands, and the medium was controlled again. Flowers were asked for, and in about two or three minutes they came; the room was light enough to see the flowers drop, also for us to see each other. The table was rising and the flowers dropping, when a flash of light illuminated the whole room. Mr. St. Clair had broken conditions, and turned up the gas so much that the flame rose above the globe, and I saw Mr. St. Clair getting hastily down from the chandelier.

But what did they see? Not the medium a trickster? No. He had not moved, and was still entranced, with his hands on the table, like the rest of us. But this they did see. They saw roses and flowers of various kinds round each sitter's hands, and they saw they had lit up their own confusion. They felt ashamed of themselves.

Now, sir, I should like to ask you, who know the danger of a sudden light to a medium, whether, after receiving a friendly invitation, it is straightforward and gentlemanly to be awarded such unfriendly treatment at the hands of Mr. George St. Clair and Mr. Lawson Tait? One would not have expected such. I conclude by making a statement that Mr. John Summerfield has always accepted any test suggested, and with cheerful good humour, and I have his consent to say that he is still able and willing to sit with those two gentlemen under any test conditions and in the company of recognised Spiritualists, if it would do any good.

JOHN COLLEY.

312, Bridge-street, Birmingham, July 8, 1878.

#### A PRIVATE SEANCE.

SIR,—The following account of a truly wonderful *séance* you may perhaps think of sufficient interest to lay before your many readers:—

A few evenings ago, by the kind invitation of Mrs. Corner, of 3, St. Thomas's-square, Hackney, London, I formed one of a circle of ten at her house, with Mr. Haxby as medium.

The first part of the sitting was in the dark, when all the usual physical manifestations, so often reported, immediately commenced. We had several spirit voices speaking at the same time, spirit lights in abundance, spirit music and whistling, raps and noises, and the lifting of heavy articles of furniture over our heads into the middle of the circle. This continued for about an hour, and I was not sorry when the din ceased, and we were instructed by the spirits "to light up" and sit for materialisations.

The medium now took his seat in the cabinet, which was a very temporary affair, formed in a corner of the room by means of a piece of string and a light curtain, the sitters forming a kind of semicircle, the extreme person at either end being close to the cabinet. Next to Miss Nina Corner, who was first, I occupied the second seat from one of these ends, so that by leaning forward (which I did), I could bring my face within a foot of anything that might appear from or that was going on in the cabinet.

It is now important for me to assure you that there was a good light in the room, every person being distinctly visible. I tried the experiment, and had no difficulty at all in seeing the time by my watch.

We began singing "Beautiful Star," &c., when, in less than three minutes after the medium entered the cabinet, a tall, portly woman, in Oriental costume, with dark hair and face, stepped out and bowed to us; she did not speak or move from the cabinet, but stood before us about a minute, and then retired whence she came.

The next spirit, who appeared almost immediately afterwards, was that of a tall, Turkish-looking individual, clothed in pure white robes, and with a turban on his head; the hair and beard were quite black, his arms and face copper-coloured. The arms from the elbows (excepting jewelled ornaments), and the legs from the knees, were bare. In his turban shone with wonderful brilliancy five large stones, apparently diamonds, flashing the light in every direction. This spirit, with the greatest ease and freedom, immediately walked out into the middle of the room, going round to each sitter, shaking hands with some, bowing and smiling to others, and allowing others to inspect his arm

ornaments, which were apparently golden bracelets set with precious stones. He was thus engaged about ten minutes. He afterwards, in the most deliberate manner, came and placed his naked foot on my knees. I asked him to allow me to touch it, so that I might be able to judge of its solidity (I could feel its weight), a request he smilingly assented to. I did so. The foot and leg were perfectly formed, and all the difference apparent to me between it and that of a mortal was that its temperature was less, feeling quite cold and somewhat moist. I distinctly felt the joints of the foot and toes, and the bones in them.

The spirit now retired, when "Joey" ordered us to extinguish the light altogether. This we did, and consequently were in total darkness, but only for a few seconds, for the cabinet was strangely illuminated from the inside, and then once more out came the Turk, but this time bringing his own light with him; he passed round the circle as before, going through the same performances, staying several minutes, and finally retired altogether.

Other spirits came out of the cabinet, one an Indian called "Rattlesnake." He went back and brought out the medium, so that we could plainly see them both at once. Ordinary gaslight having been restored, another spirit came out, apparently a woman; she also brought the entranced medium out at the same time, but her form was not well defined. The power was evidently getting exhausted, and we soon after, by the spirits' orders, concluded a sitting of two hours.

In the above I have merely given the principal incidents of the *séance*. Had I gone into details I could have filled several pages of *The Spiritualist* with the account; but the above is sufficient for the contemplative mind to ask itself if such things be true, and if it is possible for mankind to put itself almost at will into intelligent communication with the spirit world.

I know what awful doubts and surmises must pass through the brain of all honest, intelligent, and religious people who may read such accounts as the above for the first time; but, brother and sister, whoever you are, I *know* (not believe) from long experience that they are true. I also know that all the members of the circle here alluded to are people whose evidence would be accepted before the Law Courts, even in a case of life and death, and that they would swear to this truth on oath before a magistrate, and they thankfully accept the facts as steps in advance, for our benefit, permitted by Him who made, governs, and sustains the whole universe.

JOHN ROUSE.

80, George-street, Sloane-square, London, July 9th.

#### MEDIUMSHIP AND MORALITY.

##### No. II.

(From the "Banner of Light.")

It is not affirmed that mediums who fall, in any of the ways noted in a previous article, under the psychological power of others, are wholly free from responsibility in all cases. It is only asserted, as a common-sense truth, that by far the greater share of culpability rests upon the aggressors—the dominating power—whose participation is apt to be overlooked. How far any individual may be able to resist that power, in any given case, we have no certain means of knowing, and therefore will not presume to judge. A modern poet has truly said:—

The world needs a new theory of crime  
And retribution, based on all the facts  
And fixed in all the reason of the race—  
As full of hope as Christ's great heart of love.

The peculiar facts of medial experience, and of psychological impulsion, have not been taken into account in framing the popular theories of moral responsibility. It is time this were done, and that more just judgments should prevail. And multiplied modern experiences are forcing the matter upon the public thought.

The writer believes it to be an undeniable fact, though seldom recognised, that mediums, in consequence of their peculiar susceptibility to surrounding influences, are largely what their visitors make them. They are affected, for good or ill, by the physical, mental, moral, and spiritual states of those who approach them to an extent that is little realised. Like the sensitive needle of the mariner's compass, they are liable to be swayed, in this direction or that, by every human magnet that is brought near them; and every human organism is a magnet of its kind. The responsibility, therefore, for their careers must rest largely upon those who consult and employ them, and this in ways and to an extent that few are aware of.

Liable to be swayed, please note; not that they necessarily are so in all cases. On the contrary, it is believed there is a way in which, if understood and earnestly availed of, all honest and true-hearted sensitives may either protect themselves or secure protection from invisible helpers against serious moral defection. But of this further on.

Let us look at some of the practical lessons which are deducible from the foregoing observations. Even though they may have been often pointed out before, they should be reiterated until more generally heeded.

One is that mediumship, while in its wise and intelligent use fraught with the highest blessings to both its possessor and the world, is yet attended by dangers. The state of keen susceptibility which it implies, especially in its more elevated and valuable forms, which renders the subject sensitive to the thought-vibrations and the will-impulses of denizens of the Wisdom Sphere, at the same time exposes either him or her to intense sufferings from sources unfelt by ordinary mortals; also to subtle invasions from other wills, perhaps entirely unsuspected at the moment, which may lead to words and actions at variance with one's better convictions. Hence mediumship should never be tampered with by persons of frivolous and immature character, nor sought or practised as a source of mere amusement, or for pecuniary gain. It should never be urged upon persons whose own interior feelings are averse to it—as it sometimes thoughtlessly is by over-curious or impatient inquirers—

for there is probably a good reason why such persons should not incur its liabilities. When they can safely do so, the inner prompting will doubtless come to them. The only motive which should lead to its exercise is a supreme and sincere love of truth and good, and a conviction that these may be promoted thereby. Spiritualists would save their cause from an immense amount of reproach and obloquy, were they careful to encourage only this class of mediums.

A second lesson relates to the disposition or attitude of mind in which a medium should be approached. This should never be done in a state of mental positiveness or predetermination as to results of any kind, since this mental attitude is liable either to suspend the exercise of the mediatorial gift entirely, or to so dominate the sensitive organism as to produce a mere echo of what is in the visitor's mind. Numerous illustrations of such results might be given, had we room, explaining many of the puzzles and failures of superficial investigators. The proper spirit in which to approach one of these sensitive instruments for transmitting the thoughts of angels is that of receptivity and teachableness. This does not mean open-mouthed credulity and unreasoning assent. It implies that readiness to observe and to listen, that hospitality to what may be new and strange, which can lay aside, for the time, all preconceived opinions, and which permits, nay, invites, a free flow of the inspiring influence, or free action of the occult force, whatever it may be. In this way only can this influence or force express itself without obstruction, and thus fully reveal its true nature and significance. *Afterwards* apply your critical powers, and judge as you may of its character and value.

Many persons seem unable, from constitutional bias or force of habit, to assume this receptive or negative attitude, even temporarily. This seems to be the case especially with those who pride themselves on their "scientific" attainments. "Knowledge puffeth up" sometimes in these days as it did in Paul's time. And those who are puffed up by it naturally conceive themselves to be most capable of investigating all things. They may imagine themselves to be the only "experts" who are competent to investigate. Yet this mental attitude of itself disqualifies them for investigation where subtle and delicate forces are in operation, liable to be swayed and counteracted by their very thoughts, and by the unperceived auras which surround them.

But a third, and still more important lesson relates to the objects or purposes for which the services of a medium are sought. These should always be of an exalted, worthy, and noble character. As the medium should be actuated only by a supreme and sincere love of truth and good, so the inquirer should ever be impelled by the same lofty motive. If the object is mere amusement, love of novelty, desire for the marvellous and astounding, or greed of gain, or if the mind is full of suspicions of fraud or evil surmisings of any nature, a corresponding atmosphere is thrown around the medium, and the results are liable to be affected accordingly. If a mixed company is present, the individuals being actuated by various motives, the results may be expected to be mixed and incongruous. But if all assembled are united in an earnest aspiration to receive that manifestation of truth or of power which shall be of the highest good to themselves and to humanity, they may hope to attract the presence of exalted beings who will delight to answer such aspirations. Then the medium will be surrounded by celestial auras, and the wisdom of angels may be breathed through his or her organism. Beyond all question, the disorders and follies, the delusions and immoralities which have been and are the reproach of Spiritualism, have had their chief source in the base and unworthy motives of those who seek the services of mediums. Nor can a higher type of mediumship be expected to prevail, and the questionable and unreliable class to disappear, until the people desire it. The demand for wonders instead of wisdom, for selfish gain instead of golden truth, induces the attempt to furnish a supply, and counterfeits, deceptions, and delusions are the natural consequence.

It is not denied but that some good, on the whole, may come to individuals and to humanity through the exercise of mediumship of a low grade, and the pursuit of investigations from curiosity or other selfish and unworthy motives. It is only claimed that not the highest or best results can be expected in that way, and that disorders and evils of various kinds are inevitably attendant thereupon.

This suggests another lesson, namely, that mediums who would preserve a high tone of integrity and of spirituality must not sit for nor mingle their spheres with all sorts of persons. They must reserve the right to select their visitors. They should require candour, honesty, sincerity and elevation of purpose, purity of motive, and cleanliness of person, *i.e.*, freedom from offensive odours, as of tobacco, and from obnoxious auras as well. By keeping their own spiritual perception keen and alert, they may discriminate in every case, and thus save themselves from deteriorating influences. Motives of gain, or fear of giving offence, should never be allowed to overbear a medium's intuitive feeling of repugnance to offensive spheres, or an inward caution to beware of mingling with them. If insincere and impure persons are taught that their interior states are discerned, and that the gifts of the spirit are not for them, this will be a powerful inducement to reform and to become worthy of angelic communion.

So sincere inquirers, earnest seekers for truth, should utterly refuse to sit in promiscuous (*i.e.*, unselect) circles, or to encourage any medium who indulges in them. The practice is harmful to all, and specially perilous to sensitives; particularly if such circles are held in the dark, which induces an increased degree of negativeness.

Again, mediums who would preserve themselves from detrimental and degrading influences, must beware of physical and nervous exhaustion, through excessive exercise of their gifts, or from any other cause. Many are tempted to late hours and other dissipations by the eagerness of inquirers and the unwise importunities of friends. It is when in depleted and exhausted states that they are most liable to the invasion of subtle deteriorating forces. It is then that their own wise guardians, which all may be supposed to have, are least able to act upon them,

through lack of the nervous aura by means of which they act. By all means, beware of attempting to recover from such exhaustion by the use of spirituous liquors or other narcotics.

This practice is believed to be alarmingly prevalent in some sections, resulting in the wretched debasement if not utter destruction of useful mediumship. The proper means of restoration when exhausted is rest or repose. The seeming temporary relief afforded by alcoholic beverages and narcotics is a sham and a delusion. They do not restore the vital forces. Spirituous liquors and other narcotics, no doubt, under some circumstances, render certain organisms more susceptible to control of spirits; but of what class? Rarely, judging from what the writer has seen, do the truly exalted and wise mingle their spheres with the fumes of alcohol, tobacco, or opium, but the field is more likely to be usurped instead by those who were addicted to the use (or rather misuse) of these articles while in the body, and have not yet risen beyond it. The influence of such is at least questionable. Facts within the writer's knowledge indicate that the practice referred to on the part of mediums is ruinous to body, mind, and morals. Beware, then, I repeat, of exhaustion by excess of any kind, or depletion by absorbers, who are ready to fasten like vampires upon every accessible medium; but, if exhausted, rest, and do not stimulate.

Finally, though our subject is far from being exhausted, a word as to means of protection available to mediums against deteriorating influences. These means have already been hinted at. It would seem, in accordance with spiritual laws, that if mediums keep their own interior aspirations for truth, purity, and good ever alive and strong, these will hold them in constant *rappor*t with the pure beings of exalted spheres, where presence and aura will be as a wall of fire round about them, through which the impure and evil may not penetrate. And if they are careful to avoid association with gross-minded, frivolous, selfish, and sensual persons, thus keeping their own atmospheres free from taint, and also abstain from all excesses and depletions, by which their vital and nervous forces are wasted, they may hope to be either impervious to the invasions of evil, or at all times in a condition to receive seasonable warning of danger from kind, angelic guardians.

— Failing to do their utmost in these regards, of course the responsibility of moral lapses under the psychical power of others rests in some degree on them. But it is not for those whose influence has in any way contributed to these lapses to cast the stones of condemnation.

In truth, the liabilities, capabilities, responsibilities, and high possibilities of mediumship, form a subject well worthy of more careful study than it has usually received at the hands of either Spiritualists in general, or mediums themselves.

A. E. N.

#### THE BLOOD OF MARTYRS THE SEED OF THE CHURCH.

IF St. Paul could say that he could wish himself accursed from Christ for the sake of his brethren after the flesh, I do not think that his greatest followers looked merely on the world as a great sea of fire, in which, amid the universal shipwreck, they had nothing to do but to seize for safety their individual plank. No! I think that they knew well that "there is nothing fruitful but sacrifice," that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, that by their death and by their constancy they were securing the victory of the cause they loved. And so it was.

"The angels of martyrdom and victory," says Mazzini, "are brothers. Both extend their protecting wings over the cradle of future life." It was the martyrs who mainly won the victory of Christianity, nor did it shake them that they were to die not having seen the victory, as Moses did before his feet touched the Holy Land. They walked by faith and not by sight; and trusting in God they knew that in due time the victory would come.

Another grand thing they did was to set the loftiest of all examples, to bear witness to the most necessary of all truths, the only truth which can purify a corrupt society, or ennoble a selfish world—that there is in life something better than ease and comfort, more delightful than pleasure, "more golden than gold;" that the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment; and that man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth. Such men, as has been well said, "create an epidemic of nobleness." Men become better and greater from gazing at their example; more ready to do and dare; more willing to lift their eyes out of the mire of selfishness and the dust of anxiety and toil; more brave to try whether they cannot too scale the toppling crags of duty, and hold converse with those their lofty brethren upon

"The shining table-lands

To which our God Himself is moon and sun."

Through the darknesses and disappointments of life, amid the wars and miseries of history, those high examples glide ever before us like a pillar of fire. And thus their power of example by death becomes a power of influence in life. It is with good men as with evil. Evil, as we all know to our cost, attracts by its sympathies, and those who have once been overcome by it add, alas! even unconsciously, to its power of attraction. Well, so it is, thank God! with good. "The heroic self-sacrifice of one single man may not only rally a whole wavering host, but may even flash like lightning through the centuries, and kindle in a whole nation a flame of holy enthusiasm."—*Canon Farrar in "Saintly Workers."*

"THEY came here," said Artemus Ward of the Puritans, "that they might worship in their own way, and prevent other people from worshipping in their'n."

ON Sunday next Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver a trance address in the Good Templars' Hall, Churchgate, Low Pavement, Nottingham. Subject: "Spiritualism, and the Work of the Spiritualist." To commence at 6.30 p.m.

## MRS. PICKERING'S SEANCES.

MRS. PICKERING'S seances are now attracting much attention in America; the following account of one of them is from the *Lowell Morning Times* (Massachusetts), June 10th, 1878:—

On Saturday evening last Mrs. Hannah Pickering, of Rochester, N.H., whose exploits as a materialising medium have created such excitement in Spiritualistic circles during the past two years, gave a seance at the residence of a well-known and respectable family in Westford, the members of which are not Spiritualists. There were about seventy-five applications for tickets, so eager were the people to witness the remarkable manifestations. But twenty persons, however, could be accommodated, and about a quarter past seven o'clock on Saturday evening these persons assembled at the house where the seance was to be given. Every one was given an opportunity to thoroughly examine the apparatus used as a cabinet, and nearly all availed themselves of the privilege. The so-called cabinet was placed in the north-east corner of a large parlour, and was made up as follows:—There was a background of some dark material, and the curtain consisted of black velvet, with an aperture of about a foot and a half. A small bow-shaped piece of wood was used, from which the curtain hung, the entire length of the same being three and one-half feet. The height from the top of the curtain to the floor was six feet six inches, and to the ceiling of the room eighteen inches. The greatest space at any one point inside the curtain was three feet. The closest scrutiny failed to reveal anything by which fraud could be carried on, the whole arrangement being so simple as to dismiss at once any such thoughts.

At 7.45 the circle was formed, which was composed of the following persons: Rev. Mr. Moulton, F. L. Fletcher and wife, Charles L. Fletcher, Mrs. John Lanktree, Mr. Albert Wright, Misses Carrie and Ellen Davis, Mr. David P. Lawrence, Mrs. Parmelia Stanchfield, Mrs. Luther Prescott, Mr. Elbridge G. Spaulding, Mr. R. S. Stoddard, Miss Minnie L. Searle, Mrs. Flora Moran, M. H. Fletcher and wife, all of Westford; Marcus D. Cole, Mrs. A. A. Coburn, of Lowell, and the representative of the *Times*. The gentleman who conducted the affair explained that the weather was very unfavourable for a seance, as rain or dampness generally destroyed the influence, and that it was only on clear and bright days that successful seances were held. The circle was then informed as to the conditions necessary to be observed, which were simple, merely being that no one should touch the spirit-forms or carry on a loud discussion.

At 7.50 Mrs. Pickering was introduced to the circle. She is a middle-sized woman of rather prepossessing appearance, apparently about thirty-three years old, and weighs in the vicinity of one hundred and twenty pounds. She was clad in a tight-fitting dress of black material, and her form was scrutinised very closely to see that she did not conceal about her person any clothing or articles that might be used in the manifestations. There was not any white article about her. She entered the cabinet, and Miss Belle Messerve, an accomplished pianist and singer, played some familiar music, the circle joining in with her in singing.

At seven minutes past eight hands were shown at the aperture, and three minutes later the form of a female dressed in white from head to foot was seen. There was not a button, or anything dark, seen on the form. The features were not distinct, and it retired, emerging a moment afterwards with apparently increased strength, for it left the cabinet and stood out clear, when it was recognised as Lizzie Ferris, by her sister, Mrs. Stanchfield. The form came directly in front of Mrs. Stanchfield, and when it was recognised it seemed highly pleased. Shortly afterwards the form of a tall man made its appearance. It had long black chin whiskers, and was recognised by several as John Tower, a former resident of Westford. The third form which appeared was a female figure of about medium height, which then came to the front of the cabinet and then retired. The second time it made its appearance it came directly in front of the writer. The lady next to the writer asked if it was for her, when the form shook its head and pointed to the writer, who asked if she meant him, and she nodded her head and smiled. The writer, however, failed to recognise the spirit. She went back to the cabinet; and the third time she emerged she came before him and threw a calla lily into his lap. Notwithstanding her proximity to him, he failed to detect any resemblance to any of his departed friends. She seemed greatly disappointed at not being recognised. As she retired she lifted up the curtain and held it back long enough to allow every one in the circle to see the medium sitting on the chair. The next figure was that of a tall young woman, but she failed to be recognised. The form of a man next appeared, and in response to inquiries if he was Mr. Moran three raps were given signifying yes, but his sister, who was present, could not identify him. The sixth form was that of a woman, and was recognised by Mr. Stoddard as that of Mrs. William Stoddard, a relative, who died ten years ago. The peculiar manner in which she wore her hair was one of the features by which he distinguished her.

A little delay here ensued, and the spirits called for a slate, and wrote thereon a request that the door at the other end of the room, which was open, should be closed. This was complied with, and a young lady appeared, crowned with a garland of flowers. She was followed in turn by another form, which was immediately recognised by many present as that of an old neighbour, Augusta Goodhue. Mr. Lawrence recognised the next form as that of Joel Lawrence, who died in the army. The spirit acknowledged its pleasure of the recognition by bowing and smiling. As it retired, the curtain was held up; two forms beside that of the medium were distinctly seen, and in answer to a request of one of the circle, the curtain was again raised, and the same was seen, if anything, more distinctly than before. The form of a little child was then produced, but it came no further than the cabinet. Mr. Wright thought the next form had the appearance and manner of his mother, but was not satisfied. A small boy then appeared and

danced around the room, and seemed to be in a gleeful humour. The twelfth form was that of an Indian chief, decked out in feathers and the usual ornaments of the Indian. This form was fully six feet high, and seemed very strong and vigorous. An Indian maiden, who answered to the name of "Bright Eyes," was the next apparition, and she seemed delighted at appearing before the circle, several of whom recognised her, having seen her before. She danced, took up a bell, and laid it in the lap of Mrs. M. H. Fletcher; passed flowers to another person; and then, with a bunch of feathers which she held in her hand, she touched several persons. She seemed to possess considerable animation, and was evidently a very strong form. The form of a young man was then produced, and recognised by Mrs. Stanchfield as that of her adopted son Theodore, who died twelve years ago. He had a dark moustache, and was dressed in brown pants, white shirt, with a dark coloured vest. The fifteenth form was that of a female, and shortly before she made her appearance the cough peculiar to consumptives was heard. The figure was that of a tall, thin woman, and was easily recognised as that of Mary Mason, who died in Fairfield, Me., years ago, of consumption. The curtain was again opened, and a spirit-form, with a baby in its lap, beside the medium, was shown. Shortly afterwards two faces were shown at the aperture in the curtain. The medium seemed to be suffering, and could be heard groaning. By a rap it was known that a slate was wanted, on which was written, "You folks come again."

This ended the seance, as no more figures were shown.

The time occupied was nearly three hours, and fifteen different forms were seen, many appearing three or four times. There was a certain similarity in the female figures, but there was something about each one by which you could distinguish it. They were all dressed in some white gauze material, and such a thing as a button or string was nowhere to be seen. The male forms were dissimilar, and one could easily be distinguished from another. For fully fifteen minutes after the last form appeared the curtain remained down, the medium in the meantime groaning, and giving evidence of suffering considerable pain. When the curtain was raised the medium was discovered sitting in the chair, and apparently physically exhausted. She seemed unconscious, and it was not until half an hour later that she could be removed to her room. The phenomena produced were certainly most wonderful. That the medium had not the assistance of any confederates, every one who was present will admit. Whether the forms that appeared were disembodied spirits, the writer does not undertake to say. He has merely striven to give a statement of the forms which appeared to the whole circle. The medium and another form were distinctly seen at the same time on two occasions, and on another the medium and two other forms were seen. If this was an illusion, it was certainly a most remarkable one. It is, no doubt, hard to believe that the forms were spirits; but whatever they were they had the appearance and took the form of spirits. Their recognition by people in the circle is another point to be considered, although they may have been deceived by some fancied resemblance to departed friends. The sceptics present, and there were several, the writer among the number, admit that the phenomena produced were something inexplicable, and though not by any means acknowledging that the forms produced were those of disembodied spirits, they admit the effects produced were amazing and remarkable. During the entire seance Miss Messerve played and sang, which relieved in a great measure the tediousness of waiting.

Mrs. Pickering has recently given several highly successful seances in Salem, but the one on Saturday night was as successful as any. She is in rather delicate health, and it was thought a short time ago that she would be compelled to relinquish giving seances, but lately her health has been improving. In some of her seances she remains outside the cabinet and in full view of the beholders, and would have done so on this occasion had the weather been more favourable for materialising purposes. The fullest investigation is courted by Mrs. Pickering, and her husband is ready and willing to afford every one an opportunity to thoroughly examine and scrutinize.

"RIFTS IN THE VEIL."—*The Harbinger of Light* (Australia) says of the new book *Rifts in the Veil*:—"We have often had occasion to comment upon the unfairness of the press in its references to Spiritualism, the eagerness to publish its faults, its failings, the vagaries of its ignorant adherents, and the follies of its parasites, at the same time keeping its substance and its beauties studiously out of sight. The book now before us is the antithesis of all this, being a collection of spiritualistic gems and flowers, culled with care by the editor, Mr. W. H. Harrison, who himself contributes two poems to the collection. The selections of inspirational poetry from T. L. Harris, Lizzie Doten, and Cora Tappan Richmond, are excellent; and the communications from 'Imperator,' through the mediumship of 'M.A., Oxon.,' are lucid and philosophical. We have quoted from and commended the writings of this spirit in previous numbers of the *Harbinger*. An essay on 'The Ends, Aims, and Uses of Modern Spiritualism,' by Louisa Lowe, is in keeping with the other parts of the book, brief and pithy. In an introduction, the editor mentions that a chief object in its compilation was an attempt to abolish a prevalent idea that all messages given through mediumship, when judged on their literary and intellectual merits, are worthless. For this purpose the book is eminently adapted, and from the absence of dogma and temperate tone of its contents, will be found a useful book for Spiritualists to place in the hands of prejudiced friends."

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R.—When detractors are at work, the best thing to do is to publish their assertions, or to send the details to the person slandered. Truth never fears daylight or publicity; but those who vilify honourable people behind their backs always crave for secrecy and darkness, "because their deeds are evil." It is a duty to expose such persons.

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