

# The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

The Oldest Newspaper connected with Spiritualism in Great Britain.

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## "THE SPIRIT WORLD."

DR. EUGENE CROWELL'S NEW BOOK.

THE earlier work by Dr. Eugene Crowell, of New York, on *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*, is one of the most valuable books connected with the movement. The author spent unlimited time in examining for himself the actual facts of modern Spiritualism; he grappled fairly with all the real difficulties they presented, and deduced philosophical conclusions from the materials within his grasp. At the same time, in addition to this logical and scientific method of procedure, he paralleled the phenomena with those recorded in the Bible, thus helping to ward off the prejudice of those whose minds have been bent in particular directions in early youth by the voice of authority, and he thereby helped to predispose in favour of Spiritualism those who care more for high and holy spiritual right, than earthy and gross material might.

In his new book, *The Spirit World*, which has just reached our office from America, he attempts to give information to the public about the world beyond the grave, its inhabitants, nature, and philosophy. The information he redistributes is obtained through a solitary channel, that of the mediumship of Mr. Charles B. Kenney, an American trance medium. Dr. Crowell sets forth that he believes in the revelations so given, (1) because he is satisfied with the good character of the medium; (2) because for two years he has become satisfied of the good character of two Indian spirits who communicate through that medium; (3) because his departed father, whose identity he has frequently tested, has often communicated through Mr. Kenney, and the two Indian spirits have assured him of his father's identity; (4) because Mr. Robert Dale Owen knew the medium, Mr. Kenney, before his death, and (5) he (Mr. Owen) then promised that after he left earth-life he would communicate through said medium; (6) because after Mr. Owen's death the said Indian spirits testified that the spirit of Mr. Dale Owen was present; (7) because—to use Dr. Crowell's own words:—

"7th. From the time Mr. Owen first communicated with me through our medium to the present I have availed myself of frequent opportunities of testing his identity, and the results have always been satisfactory; and beside this he has frequently, of his own accord, referred to incidents and circumstances with which he and I alone were familiar, and to conversations between us in earth life, and to agreements and differences of opinion, and in one instance even referred to and resumed a conversation in which we had engaged, but which was interrupted, when he at one time was visiting me previous to passing away."

Let us examine these points, because if there is any flaw in the evidence that communications through the mediumship of Mr. Kenney do not reveal information in which the world can trust as to the conditions of existence in the life immortal, the whole book falls to the ground, so far as the main intention of its author is concerned.

All of us are satisfied as to the high intelligence, self-sacrifice, and valuable labours of Dr. Crowell, and will unreservedly accept his testimony as to the first point (1), the good character and trustworthiness of the medium.

As to point two (2), Dr. Crowell does not tell us whether the two Indian spirits who communicate through Dr. Kenney have proved their identity by giving details of their earth-lives to such an extent, that reference to War Office and other United States Government documents will verify the particulars they give. If their conditions of earthly existence were such as not to admit of proof of this or any other documentary kind, it were better that such fact had been stated, that all the conditions of the problem might be fully before the reader. If no such approximate evidence of identity exists, questions—ungrappled with by Dr. Crowell—remain. Might not a medium, or mesmeric sensitive, in an abnormal state believe himself to be controlled by Indian spirits, especially in the presence of a man strongly imbued with such conviction, and pour forth narratives in a state of trance bearing no relation to the realms of fact? Or might not spirits be really present, and beyond being able to stimulate the brain of a sleeping sensitive into such a state as to make his mouth talkative, be unable to do more than to give this dubious evidence of their presence, and be perhaps disgusted with the words he uttered, supposing them to have the means of knowing what those words were?

As to point (3), supposing either of the conditions of error just mentioned to be present, Dr. Crowell's father might be either present or absent, but in the former case able to give only symptoms of presence difficult to identify.

Points four (4) and five (5) being accepted as sound, the demurrers already put apply to six (6).

Point seven (7), that the spirit of Robert Dale Owen has overwhelmingly proved his identity to Dr. Crowell, is exceedingly interesting. It is just the kind of evidence investigating Spiritualists want; and had half the book of Dr. Crowell been filled with the details, instead of the above single paragraph of assertion, leaving the reader to take the whole matter upon authority, a great addition would have been made to the book-literature of Spiritualism. Here, in England, Serjeant Cox has gone from our midst, and in spirit-life has as yet been unable to give that evidence of identity at spirit circles, which down here he so assiduously worked to obtain himself. Through three or four mediums he has ostensibly manifested, but in such a way as to leave uncomfortable loopholes for rational conviction in minds not disposed to unnecessary quibbles, that the communicating intelligence may have been somebody else. But evidence which so far is unobtainable in England, a good witness in America, like Dr. Crowell, has obtained in relation to Mr. Robert Dale Owen

to such an extent as to satisfy himself. So much is this kind of evidence wanted in the present stage of Spiritualism, that Dr. Crowell is doubtless aware that there would have been a much greater rush on both Continents after a little booklet by him on *The Proved Spirit Identity of Robert Dale Owen*, than there is likely to be for his present work, which should be entitled "*The Spirit World*, as seen through the organism of Mr. Kenney, of New York."

And what is that world, as seen through this solitary fragment of human glass? Terribly materialistic. More materialistic even than as seen through the spectacles of Andrew Jackson Davis—"Spiritual" zones round the earth, at distances as measurable from us as the rings of Saturn are from the surface of that planet. Dr. Crowell says:—

"The first sphere, zone, or heaven—they term all the spheres heavens—is distant from the earth 550 miles. The second is distant from the first 100 miles; and between each of the others, above the second certainly up to the eighteenth, the distance is 50 miles. Of the distances between the heavens above this the records make no statement. This brings the seventh heaven within one thousand miles of the earth, and provided the distances between the heavens above the eighteenth are the same as below it, the fortieth heaven should be between two and three thousand miles from the earth. At my request my instructors made careful observation of the temperature at different distances from the earth, with the following results. In passing upward they found the cold to increase for a distance of about ten miles, when the temperature became stationary for perhaps ninety, but about twenty-five miles beyond this it became comparatively mild, and this temperature continued until within about one hundred and fifty miles of the first sphere, when it again became intensely cold, and so continued until within about fifty miles of that sphere, when the temperature again became mild and delightful. They formed their judgment of the distances by noting and comparing the time required to traverse them."

So here we have outside the earth transparent zones, capable of intercepting waves of radiant heat from the sun, without refracting or interfering with waves of light. The assertion is in many ways at variance with known facts.

When an observer comes into contact with a medium through whom information of a physical nature about distant regions can be given, this should be first verified by obtaining information relating to this planet, to acquire approximate evidence that what is stated in relation to regions outside the earth is trustworthy. Will Dr. Kenney's spirits, without troubling themselves as before to make, buy, or carry spiritual thermometers, tell Dr. Crowell, by merely taking the trouble to look on, all the events which may transpire in Crozet's Islands during the next nine months? Our Government is going to send a man-of-war there, in the hope of finding a shipwrecked crew. Telegraphs do not reach such high latitudes. If Dr. Kenney's spirits should be asked to tell Dr. Crowell, for weekly publication, all that transpires in those islands, and, in addition, give the details of the visit of the British ship, they will be only too delighted at this opportunity of proving the

trustworthiness of their utterances about distant regions.

All through the revelations through Mr. Kenney the same conditions obtain. Houses, clothes, habits of life, rocks, mountains—all in the heavens are nearly the same as on earth, only, to the deserving, they are more beautiful. If a boy, full of appreciation of Christmas luxuries, and with a mind keenly drawn to physical allurements, were in a dream to imagine what heaven ought to be, the outcome would be much the same as that unconsciously revealed in the book now under notice.

Even those spiritual powers which are to some extent occasionally developed here on earth among the children of men, are denied by Mr. Kenney's guides to exist among freed spirits. It is stated (p. 96), "Spirits can no more communicate with each other without the use of speech than we can, and two spirits of different nationalities meeting, and not understanding the language of each other, would labour under as many difficulties in attempting to communicate as they would in the flesh." Here, then, is a flat denial of the accuracy of statements made through the lips of the majority of mediums independently of each other, from Swedenborg and Thomas Lake Harris downwards. Whilst in a state of trance the inspired Harris said:—

Man cannot tell the secrets of the life  
Beyond the portals of the natural sphere ;  
At best they dimly shadow out the truth,—  
Too glorious 'tis for mortal minds to bear.  
When mortal puts on immortality,  
Corruption incorruption, when the grave  
Hath lost its sting and death its victory,  
When, free from all the passions of the earth,  
The soul becomes a conscious clement  
In the One Harmony that moves through all,  
Man is translated to a realm of thought  
Incomprehensible to minds in time.  
A language infinite in thought, whose tones  
Are as the accents of Almighty God,  
Assumes the place of the external tongue.  
He speaks as he is wrought upon by powers  
Innumerable and beyond himself,  
And can at will in perfect freedom change  
His state each hour, as crystals change their hue,  
Turned at a varied angle to the sun.  
Humanity in heaven has varied forms ;  
Each race of angels differs in the sphere  
Of its delights. Celestial faculties,  
Varied as hues and harmonies of morn  
And noon and sunset, alternating, give  
Each various race some glory which is new  
And special, and its own appropriate name.  
This speciality may be received  
By radiant spirits of each kindred sphere.  
On earth men send their writings to their friends ;  
In heaven they give divinely glorious states,  
Transmuting by the mighty alchemy  
Of thought the spherul air around their friends ;  
And filling up the void with images  
Of loveliest truths in loveliest forms combined.  
Whose beauty winds like groves of Paradise  
Round the tranced angel whom they visit.  
Angelic lovers give their blended love ;  
Sages their intellectual realms of truth ;  
Poets inspire the spirit till it grows  
Itself a melody, and floats afar  
Through unimagined realms and seas of bliss,  
And universal heavens of happy life.  
Men give cold thoughts and words on earth below,  
But living worlds and spheres of bliss above.  
Shakespeare gave Hamlet, Romeo, Juliet,  
Art-forms that, clothed with beauty, walk the world,

And multiply themselves in every brain ;  
Cordelia, Desdemona, crownless Lear ;  
Timon and Shylock, Falstaff and his crew,  
Titania, Puck, and Oberon, and all  
The fays of that sweet Midsummer-Night's Dream,  
Ariel, Miranda, gifted Prospero,  
Each form the type of some essential state  
Of mind or heart, some gift or sphere of power,  
Some use or prescience of the intellect ;  
His thoughts have grown art-poems to the world,  
Sweet, deathless entities, for he became  
Creative. All the angel-peopled sun  
Is one transcendent art-realm, where unfold  
Myriads on myriads of evolving forms,  
Which the artistic faculties of mind  
Create, projecting outward from themselves ;  
And angels dramatise their radiant thoughts,  
Marshaled in stately theatres, that ope  
Their vast prosceniums for the inner sight.

Pass into rapport with an Angel's mind,  
And it becomes to you a living world,  
Because each thought has its appropriate form.  
The idea in the image glows revealed ;  
Therefore the wonders of the life to be  
Transcend imagination. Every mind  
Creates a universe within itself,  
As various as the worlds that people space,  
The constellations of the singing stars,  
The multitudinous angel-peopled isles,  
Transferring all it sees, or hears, or thinks,  
All its enjoyments, all its ecstasies,  
Into its own pure being, there to be  
Forms in the picture gallery of the brain,  
And statues in the Pantheon of the soul,  
And landscapes in the spheres of memory,  
Beatified in its perpetual life.  
Man hath such universe within himself,  
Even while he dwells below ; strange are the beams  
That gild the mountains of the soul in sleep,  
The happy valleys, whose fair landscapes lie  
Bathed in purpureal haloes, that disclose  
Temple and palace, grotto, glen, and lake,  
And silver stream, and lotus-covered pool,  
And waterfall with rainbows glittering o'er—  
That world is man's own consciousness revealed.

'Tis hard to give man's thoughts to the child's brain,  
Or outward light to infants in the womb ;  
So hard it is to give to mortal man  
Defined conceptions of immortal life.  
The charge of mysticism that all time  
Has aimed at Revelation, is deserved.  
And mystery is the setting of the soul,  
Receding in the dimness of its sleep.

Chapter V. of the recent book, *Spirits Before Our Eyes*, is full of experimental and other proof that mortals can sometimes develop spiritual powers, enabling them to present scenes and events in clear and minute detail to the consciousness of others, without the use of language.

Assuming a caterpillar to be able to see no farther than a quarter of an inch beyond its head, a butterfly who had forgotten the caterpillar language (if such exist) would have insuperable difficulties in explaining to the crawling object on the stalk its own butterfly appearance, mode of life, and condition of existence. If the channel of communication were perfect there would be nothing in the antecedent experience of the caterpillar to enable it to take in the new ideas. A Kenney caterpillar-medium would probably reveal to his fellows that butterflies are wingless crawling insects, rather more brightly coloured than in their original state, who live in perpetual youth on a magnificent, never-dying cabbage, in a realm where cock-robins and other

hideous devils with long beaks and good appetites are unknown. The listeners would understand this, and think it much better than the more accurate description of the higher life contained in the transcendental utterances of the Ruskins and Swedenborgs of the caterpillar family, which transcendentalism they would condemn as appertaining to the limbo of the unpractical and the unreal, and unworthy the notice of any respectable grub.

As a man advances in years the world of thought assumes more and more the aspect of reality, and the world of matter more and more the aspect of a shadow; he sees laws and principles to be permanent and inexorable, subjugating the phenomenal conditions of matter to their sway. He even sees a little world created by the power of human will, when a mesmerist makes five or six sensitives believe that they are shooting rooks in the branches of imaginary trees above. The scene the mesmerist has conjured up is real to the sensitives, and if any Bradlaugh told them that it was not material they would think he had lost his senses, and ask him to examine their guns, to feel the iron barrels, to handle the shot. If, as we have often said before, a man can thus temporarily surround human beings with a little world, by the use of spiritual means which he does not understand, why should not a Greater Power use the same spiritual laws in an orderly way, and by the exercise of His will, surround us with a thought-world which is real and material to us for three score years and ten? In fact, spiritual things may alone be enduring and substantial, and the common ideas about the fundamental reality of matter nothing but a superstition. And if we live already in a thought-world, it is probable that the Creator is not so deficient in resources and originality as to place us hereafter in another so much like it, that its construction is a superfluous act, for a little French polish administered to the world in which we live would turn it into Mr. Kenney's ideal heaven. The dreams of the poet may become the facts of the life beyond the grave, and "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" may, in that high spiritual state, altogether exceed in reality to our consciousness the fleeting shadow called "matter." The things of the spirit are real and eternal; though empires wane and wax, and though the body may decay, human affections remain unchanged. The phenomena of materialism are ephemeral. W. H. HARRISON.

#### AN INTERESTING CIRCUMSTANCE IN THE LIFE OF BARON VON GULDENSTUBBE.\*

RELATED BY HIMSELF.

BARON VON GULDENSTUBBE was in Paris shortly before the great war, and before his removal thence, in consequence of a prediction to him by spirits of the siege of the city, when suddenly, while reading the *Gazette* in a coffee-house, he found upon the paper before him spirit writing requiring him to betake himself the next day, with certain ladies of the first society of Paris, to the Picture Gallery at Versailles. The names of the ladies were expressly mentioned: they were some whose husbands had

already become convinced, through association with the Baron, of the evidence of the communication of spirits with earth, while the ladies, on the other hand, were still doubtful of such mysteries. The next day the ladies complied with the Baron's invitation to go to Versailles. Already, at breakfast, physical phenomena occurred, the table being raised, with the dishes and champagne bottles, to the ceiling of the room, &c., as had been the case elsewhere; so I only mention it. Afterwards, physical manifestations happened also in the Picture Gallery, and direct spirit writing, produced by the united forces and wills of Baron von Guldenstubbe and his ecstatic sister, without any other appliance than a piece of paper, with which the above-mentioned ladies had provided themselves. When each of them had received the most striking proof of the writing of one deceased, whose picture hung there, they were approached by the (late) Bishop of Orleans, Monsieur Dupanloup, in his canonicals, as he had just been celebrating mass. Being acquainted with the ladies from Paris, he also addressed Baron von Guldenstubbe, expressing regret that he, the Baron, adhered to the faith of the foreigners, being an Englishman by birth, consequently a follower of Luther, and an enemy of Rome. Luther would now himself have perceived the impiety of the division of the Christian Church, and was suffering for it in Purgatory, &c. To which the Baron replied that he was indeed a Lutheran, but a Swede, and that he did not believe that Luther was either in Purgatory or in Hell. In order to prove his opinion, he desired the right reverend bishop to lay a piece of clean paper on the floor under the picture of Luther which hung over the door, and to expect the result with confidence. The high prelate complied with the Baron's request, took a sheet of paper from his pearl-bedizened note book, and laid it under Luther's portrait.

After some minutes, when the prelate took up again the same piece of paper from the floor, the following was found distinctly written upon it—

In vitâ pestis eram Pape,  
In morte mors ero.

Lutherus.\*

Highly astonished to have accidentally made the acquaintance of Baron von G. and his sister, and to have by their means obtained the certainty of the individual survival of the human soul, the Bishop extended his hand to the brother and sister, requesting permission to visit them in Paris, as he afterwards repeatedly did. I only introduce this fact† because doubts have been expressed as to the genuineness of the direct spirit writing produced by the united mystical force of Baron von G. and his sister. Nevertheless, the facts are known in Paris, so that Baron von G. was prohibited by the Emperor Napoleon from going up to the tomb in St. Denis, where he had obtained direct writing from many kings there—if often only single words—and also from Marie Antoinette, whose writing resembled that in her lifetime. This is attested by the overseer of the Gobelins (tapestry) factory at that place, in whose

\* "In life I was to the Pope a plague,  
In death, I will be his death."

Luther."

† The other communications of the writer relate to facts of animal magnetism, in which Baron von G. was a proficient.—Tr.

\* A translation of a narrative published in *Psychische Studien* for December, communicated to that Journal by Von P. R., in B.

possession letters of the deceased queen, Marie Antoinette, are to be found at this day.

Such facts speaking, truly all earthly wisdom is put to silence

Whoever was personally acquainted with Baron von Guldenstubbé and his sister will, like Professor Fichte, not doubt the truth of that which this remarkable brother and sister have disclosed to the world in their writings. Besides his studies in occult sciences, the Baron healed the sick by his animal magnetism, and in this way, as well as by other experiments, his vitality was greatly weakened, so that he unfortunately died too soon to enjoy the fruits of his experiences and labours while on earth—fruits which surely await him on the other side.

VON P. R.

### BLOOD WRITING.

BY F. ARUNDALE.

A FEW evenings ago I had the pleasure of witnessing writing on the arm through the mediumship of Mr. W. Eglinton. As the manifestation was produced in a remarkable and interesting manner, I think a short account of the process employed by the spirits may be interesting to your many readers.

We found ourselves, a party of six including the medium, assembled in the *séance* room of my friend Mrs. Woodforde. Seated round the table, we remained chatting for some moments; the room was lighted by one gas burner, turned down a little. Mr. Eglinton having asked if we had ever seen writing on the arm, remarked also that he had sometimes obtained it. Paper and pencils being on the table, Mr. Eglinton tore two small pieces, and requested Mrs. P. and myself to write the names of some friends in the spirit world. We did so and folded each piece of paper small, and left them lying on the table. The medium then asked permission to remove his coat; we assented, and taking it off he turned up his shirt-sleeves, baring both arms, which we examined, and found the skin smooth and in a perfectly natural state.

While still in conversation the spirit Daisy took control, speaking through Mr. Eglinton in the trance. She asked for a match, and caused the medium to set fire to one of the papers, which burned to a black cinder, the medium holding it blazing in his joined palms, and the black paper cinder remained lying in one of his hands. It was my paper which had been selected. "Breathe on his arm," said the medium, still under control, extending the left arm towards me, "and wish for something in connection with your friend's name, to be written while you breathe." I did so, mentally calling on my brother George, whose name I had written on the paper, to manifest.

The medium then crushed the paper cinder on his arm, and passing his hand to and fro, a large smear was made on the arm; as he continued rubbing there gradually appeared in the dark stain the words: "I promised to come. God be with you!—George." These words were written in a bold round hand, the capital letters being fully an inch long, and the small

letters a quarter of an inch. We rose from our chairs, and bending over the medium watched the letters gradually appear on the surface of the skin. The medium then lighted the other paper, burned it in the same way, and turning to Mrs. P. he requested her to breathe on his other arm, and mentally desire something to be written in relation to the name which had been previously inscribed on the burnt paper.

The same process of crushing the paper cinder on the arm and smearing it was repeated, and beneath the rubbing of the medium's palm the words "Willie" appeared, as wished for, in letters of the same size as those on the other arm. The writing remained for some minutes, and then began slowly to disappear. I may state, in justice to the medium, that he did not know whom he was to meet at the *séance*, which fact would destroy the allegation on the part of sceptics of any previous preparation of the arm before joining our party.

We afterwards had some materialisations, which, as we were a very harmonious circle of earnest believers, and therefore gave forth no repellent influences, were remarkably perfect, the spirits giving their own tests. For instance, Mr. Eglinton was retiring from our midst behind the curtain, and whilst his form was still in view, the first spirit appeared—a veiled figure—actually passing him in our sight. She opened the curtains several times, advancing a little towards us. The curtains had scarcely dropped before her for the last time when Abdullah fairly darted out into the room and made a low obeisance, in Eastern fashion. Unlike the closely-draped female spirit, his tall, remarkably slender form, attired in closely-fitting white garments, was plainly visible through a long, transparent over-robe. All who have seen Mr. Eglinton's materialisations will remember the striking grace of Abdullah's poses and movements, his form presenting the most perfect contrast to the medium's rather thickset figure. The light was sufficient to enable us to see features at a distance of from three to four feet.

Subsequently, on being requested to have darkness, we were rewarded by the sudden appearance of Ernest's head in a mass of snow-white drapery, illuminated by a very brilliant light. This head approached us very nearly, floating sometimes almost to the ceiling. After a time the previously round light was formed into a cross of quite four inches in length, the arms being about three inches across, and the breadth of arms and upright a quarter of an inch—the largest cross I have ever seen formed in this way, and sufficiently bright to illuminate Ernest's face.

Before parting, Ernest gave us a very beautiful address, followed by Joey in his quaint style. I must not forget to mention Joey's very skilful performance on the mouth-organ of three tunes, one being "Home, sweet Home," with variations, the *forte* and *pianissimo* passages very strongly marked. This was Mr. Eglinton's first *séance* on his return to London, and the manifestations through him have certainly attained to great perfection, and he has evidently lost nothing during his travels.



PROFESSOR ZÖLLNER'S NEW VOLUME OF  
"SCIENTIFIC TREATISES."

IN an early number we hope to attempt some review of this, one of the most important publications in the history of Spiritualism, at least with regard to the scientific recognition of its facts, and to the effect which such recognition is likely to produce upon the public mind. Professor Zöllner is not contented with giving the authority of his name and testimony: he has resolved to do battle *à outrance*, to the prejudice and unfairness which have been manifested in Germany as in this country, but it would seem with even greater bitterness and insolence. Secure in facts which can be explained away by no hypothesis of delusion, credulity, or mistake, backed by the testimony of colleagues, of whom it may be said, as of himself, that exact observation is the habit of their whole lives, he will not suffer these facts to be either neglected or misrepresented without an emphatic appeal to the scientific and even to the moral conscience of his countrymen. His great reputation compels a hearing; and German materialism is threatened with the only reaction it really dreads—the rebound from collision with demonstrable facts.

No doubt, in Professor Zöllner's eyes, the facts have a peculiar value from the relation he supposes them to bear to the hypothesis of a fourth dimension of space, which he holds in common with some eminent English mathematicians. This hypothesis is but little understood, and scientific Spiritualists should certainly endeavour to grasp its meaning before putting it aside.

Our first interest, however, is in the recognition of the facts; and it is too early to speculate on the probable effect of Zöllner's influence.

The present volume contains full reference to the investigations of his scientific predecessors, who have so honourably committed their reputations to the avowal of unpopular truth. Among the illustrations is a portrait of Mr. Crookes, with whose name that of Zöllner will henceforth be associated in a fame which will imply an equal reproach to too many of their distinguished contemporaries in science. And not the least satisfaction we expect to find in this volume, as in the earlier ones, is the conclusive vindication of the medium Slade, in a work which will live and be read.

With the acknowledgment of the phenomena described by Professor Zöllner, presumptions which told so fatally against Slade at Bow-street will be turned in his favour, and it will be seen that spirit or other occult agency may, under certain circumstances and conditions, take on the appearance of a trick so clumsy and stupid as hardly to be attributed to a practised deceiver. Professor Zöllner's generous indignation at the undeserved obloquy from which Slade has suffered, is not the least agreeable feature in the book.

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS IN WEST SOMERSET.—I had a family in my parish which numbered seven daughters, and people came from far and near to be touched by the youngest of them for the king's evil. The practice was only discontinued when, as the child described it, she grew weak and ill, from feeling something go out of her after each application.—W. T. W., *Notes and Queries*, Dec. 13th.

## 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.]

DR. MONCK.

SIR,—A sense of duty compels me to address you in support of the appeal on behalf of Dr. Monck, which I observe you have kindly inserted in your journal.

Many Spiritualists are acquainted with the distressing particulars of Dr. Monck's case, but many doubtless are ignorant of them, and I observe that these claims are prominently put forward in the other Spiritualist papers.

Dr. Monck voluntarily and conscientiously abandoned, for the cause of Spiritualism, a respected and popular position in the Baptist Church, and thereby lost a good and permanent income. Having some private means he spent all in propagating the new truths, by *séances*, lectures, and healing, seldom taking any payment so long as his own means lasted. For doing this he was, like other martyrs for a new, misunderstood, and unpopular cause, unjustly and cruelly persecuted, and from want of timely help and good legal assistance condemned, and his sufferings during this period laid the foundation of his present bad health.

But if the seeds of disease were thus sown by an unjust and unmerited persecution for the truth's sake, his health was, I fear, ruined by the effect of the extraordinary materialisations which occurred through him in London in 1877, and which were fully reported at the time in *The Spiritualist*, and the details of which it is unnecessary now to repeat. I shall therefore only say that the lesson to be learnt, as it seems to me, from his unhappy experience, is that it is very hazardous for mediums to have materialisations such as those in the light, without a cabinet, the form and the medium continuing for a very considerable time in the same room together with the circle.

Since these materialisations Dr. Monck has been in a lamentable state of health, and his mediumistic powers have almost entirely ceased; and although he remained for upwards of a year as an honoured guest with us here, and four months in Naples with Signor Damiani, in the hope of recovery, I regret to say that no improvement has taken place. In the opinion of many friends he should spend this winter and next spring in a warmer climate; but for this he has not the means.

If his health should be restored, and if he should succeed in procuring a livelihood by means of certain inventions, spiritually suggested, which he is trying to patent, it is his intention again to devote himself, as an unpaid medium, to the investigation of psychologic and spiritualistic phenomena.

Having stated thus shortly the leading facts of the case, I leave the matter, trusting that they will be carefully weighed and properly responded to, as the circumstances of the case require, and as Spiritualists, with their superior advantages, ought to respond to them.

Mediums have been generally rather hardly treated, and I think Spiritualists should seize an opportunity when laid before them of doing justice and practising benevolence, also what superiority in moral effect does Spiritualism offer over any other system of belief?

A. J. CRANSTOUN.

Villa Flühli, Lucerne, Switzerland, December 14th, 1879.

### NEW BOOKS ON SPIRITUALISM.

SEVERAL new books, likely to be of considerable value to Spiritualism, will shortly be issued from *The Spiritualist* office. One of the earliest to be published will be *Psychic Facts*, containing within one cover a great concentration of authoritative testimony as to the reality of the phenomena. It will consist of an authorised collection of some of the writings of Mr. William Crookes, Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. C. F. Varley, the Dialectical Society's Committee, Mr. Serjeant Cox, and others. It will also contain general information about Spiritualism, to serve as a guide to those who know nothing of the subject.

This, and other works, will be published in about five or six weeks' time.



## CAN THE USE OF ANÆSTHETICS DEMONSTRATE THE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL?

BY GEORGE WYLD, M.D., EDINBURGH.

IN the year 1800, Humphry Davy, then twenty-two years of age, suggested that the inhalation of nitrous-oxide gas might be used in surgical operations as a means of preventing pain; but it was not until 1844 that Mr. Horace Wells, a dentist residing at Hartford, Connecticut, used it in extricating teeth, and thus demonstrated the truth of Humphry Davy's conjecture.

In the year 1846 Dr. Morton, of Boston, U.S., demonstrated for the first time that the severest surgical operations could be performed without pain under the inhalation of the vapour of sulphuric ether. Lastly, Sir James Simpson, of Edinburgh, introduced the beneficent use of chloroform in the labours of child-bed.

Anæsthetics having thus conferred on poor suffering humanity the inestimable blessing of painless surgery, I ask with reverence and hope: Are anæsthetics not yet destined to confer on the human race the infinitely greater boon of scientifically demonstrating the existence, free from the body, of the human soul?

It is true that the vast majority of human beings do instinctively believe in the existence of the human soul; and this is of all arguments the strangest, because any spiritual belief, which is all but universal in the human mind, must be regarded as an instinctive revelation in harmony with the nature of man, and therefore true; and when, further, this instinct is found to increase the happiness and welfare of the human race, the proof to me seems absolute, because no falsehood can produce ultimate good.

There are, however, among the scientific minds of the present day, an ever-increasing number of thoughtful, truthful, and benevolent men, who doubt or deny that there exists any entity or ego apart from the body, and these men assert that when the bodily organisation dies the man himself, so far as evidence goes, becomes extinct.

Let us then inquire whether or not this materialistic assertion is true, or whether the use of anæsthetics cannot demonstrate that this assertion of unbelief is contrary to fact.

It has been long known that persons who have been all but drowned, so as to appear actually dead, but who—it may be after hours of restorative labour—have been restored to consciousness, have sometimes declared that the process of drowning, after the first struggle, was not agonising, but actually pleasurable.

These individuals have sometimes said that the entire history of their lives flashed before them as if photographed instantaneously, and that then they have seemed to ascend to heavenly regions and celestial felicity.

Again, many of those who have inhaled nitrous-oxide, which produces asphyxia exactly analogous to that of drowning, have expressed their enjoyment of like happiness, even as their teeth were being extracted.

The same results have often followed the use of chloroform; and I myself, some six years ago, on one occasion, while inhaling chloroform as a relief to the agony of passing a small calculus, suddenly, to my

surprise, found my ego, or soul, or reasoning faculty, clothed, and in the form of my body, standing about two yards outside my body, and contemplating that body as it lay motionless on the bed.

This startling discovery was to me most significant, and I have mentioned the fact to many others since.

Yesterday, becoming suddenly awakened to the important signification of this experience, I called on three medical men who had very large experience in the giving of anæsthetics.

In reply to my question, one gentleman said, "I can quite believe your assertion, as I have often heard patients express a similar idea, although in a confused way." Another gentleman said, "He had himself on those occasions taken chloroform, and on each occasion he found himself, as it were, pleasantly whirling and soaring in the air;" and the third gentleman said, "My patients have often said that under my operations they felt no pain, but *saw* all I was doing like spectators looking on and watching the operations."

In connection with these facts concerning drowning and anæsthetics, I will here draw attention to what are called mesmeric experiments.

I have, during the last forty years, witnessed many mesmeric experiments, and I have found that certain individuals, while their minds have been concentrated on a point and their breathing has become slower and slower, have passed into trance more or less profound, and while in this state it is well known from the evidence of Dr. Esdaile, of Calcutta, and others, that the several surgical operations have been performed not only without pain, but while the patient has at the same time passed into ecstatic joys.

The history of ecstatic martyrs has furnished additional evidence in this direction.

Thus we find in mesmeric trance a condition of things exactly analogous to what we sometimes find during the administration of anæsthetics.

Lastly, those who have studied Oriental Theosophy know that there is an order of Hindu Ascetics who, living lives of fasting, contemplation, and prayer, can so discipline their bodies as by practice to retain the breath until they become asphyxiated.

They assert that thus they can project their souls from the body, and, becoming entranced, ascend to God.

The Romish saints, without exactly practising the same method, so far as the breath is concerned, also became entranced, and, "ascending to heaven, unite their souls with the Lord."

Now all this is *one*.

Whether by drowning, asphyxiating gases, mesmeric asphyxia, or "internal breathing," or the self-imposed asphyxia of the Hindu Ascetics, or the entrancements of the ecstatic saints, the *modus operandi* is analogous and the result identical, namely, the temporary death of the body, and thus the temporary freeing of the soul. As St. Paul says, "Dead in the body, but alive in the spirit."

This asphyxia is dangerous if pushed too far by the operation of medicinal substances; but in the entrancement produced by mesmerism or ecstasy, the condition may exist for hours, days, or even weeks, while the ecstatic declares on his return to earth-consciousness that he has in spirit outside his body

been in Paradise, and beheld things impossible to utter. Although St. Paul says that when caught up into Paradise he beheld things not lawful to utter, he knew not whether he was in or out of the body.

The sceptic will say all this proves nothing but hallucination and dreams.

In reply to this objection, I would say that trance is a condition entirely beyond mere sleep, and that visions of the spirit are entirely distinct from the dreams of imperfect sleep.

No one in mere sleep can submit to painful operations, not only without flinching, but with the smile of joy on his face; and no one dreams that he is *outside* his body; he dreams that he is with his body; and sceptics who merely suggest explanations cannot have the weight of those who assert their beliefs from experience.

I therefore submit that sceptics have, with the use of anæsthetics, a physical and scientific means of testing the beliefs and assertions of pneumologists as to the existence outside the body of the soul or ego as a scientific fact.

The sceptic will deny that the all but universal belief of human beings in the existence of the soul has any scientific weight. He will further deny the authority of spiritual revelations. He will discredit the experiments of mesmerists, and deny the assertions of Hindu or Christian ecstasies; but if he experiment with medicinal anæsthetics on his own person, and find out, as I and others have done, that the soul may be projected outside the body, and externally exist as the true ego, he may then be induced to believe in the existence of the human soul.

If thus the soul can be demonstrated as a *fact*, the next step is to postulate that the ego, or soul, or mind is a *unity*.

All visible substances are compounds, and as compounds are liable to disintegration, decay, and death. Even the royal gold can thus be, from its liability to slow decay, shown to be not an elementary but a compound substance. But the soul as a *unity* is incapable of division, therefore incapable of decay, and is therefore immortal.

12, Great Cumberland-place, Hyde Park, London,  
December 16th, 1879.

#### PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS.\*

BY GUSTAV THEODORE FECHNER.

Zöllner, in the account which he has given in his "Scientific Treatises" of the spiritualistic sittings at Leipsic with the American medium, Slade, has made mention of my testimony as well as that of W. Weber and Scheibner; nor have I disclaimed this testimony, only it falls far short of, and weighs even with myself much less than that of Zöllner himself and of his other co-observers, for I was only present at two of the first series of sittings, which were not among the most decisive, and even then much more as a mere looker-on than as an experimenter; and this would certainly not have sufficed, for myself

even, conclusively to repel the suspicion of trickery. But taking what I saw myself, without being able to discover any deception by the closest attention, with the results of the recorded observations and actual experiments of my scientific friends in the latter sittings, and with those of English investigators, and taking also into consideration that *the same phenomena which are here suspected to be fraud and trickery are established by good observers as having occurred elsewhere through mediums who were exempt from all suspicion in this respect*: all this influences me with a force of conviction from which I cannot escape, much as I should like to do so in regard to certain phenomena.

Yes, incredible as the spiritualistic facts from the first may appear, it is, nevertheless, my opinion that, given generally faith in persons, and the possibility of establishing facts by observations, all empirical science must be abandoned, if we will not yield to the mass and weight of testimony which are forthcoming for the actuality of the spiritualistic phenomena. Without regarding the multitude of voices, I will here speak only of one voice, reference to which not only influences me most strongly, but has also the greatest contemporary interest.

If Zöllner, who may be considered as the principal champion of the actuality of spiritualistic phenomena in Germany, as well as myself, who make no pretension to independent authority as an observer in this field, but rely upon his observations, is regarded as a visionary, who sees what he wishes to see, it should first be asked whether he has ever shown himself such in the province of observation, and whether his fine inventions and discoveries, so faithful for the exact natural sciences, are illusions. But should one insist upon confounding the boldness with which he builds conclusions upon facts with defective observation of the facts themselves, and upon opposing the personality of his critique, to which I will not commit myself, to the respect due to his person (which is to return a blow with a death-blow), yet his account of spiritualistic facts rests not solely on his authority, but also upon the authority of a man in whom the very spirit, so to say, of exact observation and induction is embodied, W. Weber, whose renown in this respect has never been impugned up to the moment when he avouched the reality of spiritualistic phenomena. To hold him also from this moment for a bad observer, who has let himself be duped by a conjurer, or for a visionary, seduced by a predilection for mystical things, is truly somewhat strong, or much rather weak, and yet that is implied in the rejection of his testimony. For my own part I confess that after he, in a whole series of sittings together with Zöllner and, for the most part, also Scheibner, one of the most acute and rigorous mathematicians, not only looked on at the experiments with Slade, but took in hand and had in hand all appliances and measures adopted at them, one word of his testimony for the reality of the spiritualistic phenomena weighs more with me than all that has been said or written on the other side by those who have never been themselves observers in this field, or have only observed it as one looks on at

\*From "The Day-View versus the Night-View," of Gustav Theodore Fechner (Leipsic, 1879). Translation of part of an extract from the above, published in *Psychische Studien*, for December.

conjurers, and who hold themselves thereafter entitled to speak of objective conjuring tricks. Yet is W. Weber only one of a succession of investigators worthy of the highest respect who, after similar careful testing, vouch for the reality of these phenomena, against the multitude of those who, so to speak, throw stones at them from a distance; in other words, heap against them all possible indefinite grounds of suspicion which can be thought, or indeed cannot be thought, with reference to the things as described, and so believe they have said something to the purpose. Superficiality in this field is certainly far more on the side of the opponents than of the defenders of Spiritualism, among whom I reckon only those defenders who are outside of Spiritualism. Yes, even if Spiritualism were a perversion, the means used against it would be yet more perverse, and the fact that none better are found speaks for itself that there are none.

In all other departments of investigation conclusions are only drawn from successful attempts, and the failures are cast aside, just because they are failures; but in relation to Spiritualism the reverse method is adopted by its opponents, who draw conclusions only from failures, and throw aside the successes just because they are successes. Had Zöllner's knot experiments not succeeded under the most stringent precautions adopted, stress would have been laid upon them; succeeding, they are worthless! But tricks, which every one can imitate who has learned the art—only not under those secure conditions—these count. And so with all successful attempts in this field conducted by good observers. Elsewhere, investigations in a new field of observation are carried on under the conditions of their success: here the conditions are prescribed beforehand; and if, for example, an attempt under safe precautions succeeds in the dark or in shade,\* it is of no account because it was not in the light; if it succeeds also, under more favourable conditions, in the light, then is it of no account because it has succeeded at all! Elsewhere maturity of experience and of judgment are considered favourable to every investigation; here they pass for senility, if the result is in favour of Spiritualism; and eggs esteem themselves here cleverer than hens. Elsewhere, if fingers point to things, one looks in the direction to see if the things are there; here, one hacks off the fingers that point to them, so that one first takes care not to see, and then writes treatises to prove that nothing is to be seen.

Why, now, instead of such methods, which only evince impotence in dealing with Spiritualism, not adopt the *only* sufficient one, that is, to oppose to the actual observations which evidence Spiritualism, others against it, carried out with the like circumspection, care, conscientiousness, impartiality, under just as many altered circumstances, with non-professional as with professional mediums, as the best of those which attest it? And is there nothing whatever of the kind? Truly! Only that this method, when it has been adopted, has led rather to compulsory recognition

than to the designed refutation of Spiritualism; for, indeed, none of the physicists who have declared themselves for Spiritualism after searching and earnest investigation could have originally intended anything else than this refutation.\*

Speaking and writing against Spiritualism go their way, and Spiritualism goes its way; but the first way does not cross the latter at all, but is merely beside it; and Spiritualism is not retarded in its advance by the outcries against it; that has proved so hitherto, and will be proved further.

If in the foregoing I have interested myself for the reality of Spiritualism, that is, as is not less evident from the foregoing, not from any sympathy with it, but because justice is due to the thing and to persons; for willingly as one might put aside Spiritualism altogether at any price, yet is the price of truth too high. The "Day-view" (Tagesansicht) can exist with or without Spiritualism: preferably, however, without rather than with it, for if in some weighty points they coincide, and the latter may, and I believe up to certain limits actually does, support the former, yet does its abnormality disturb not only this, but the whole system of our previous knowledge; and only just on this account can I content myself with its reality, because I take account at the same time of this its abnormal character, owing to which it can find a fitting place neither in the healthy life itself, nor in the healthy life of science. Now it is no satisfaction for the champion of the "Day-view" to be obliged to admit one more shady side in the account of the world. That I am not generally well disposed to mystical phenomena is proved by my pamphlet *On the Last Days of the Doctrine of Od.* However, I am seventy-eight years old, and have written the *Zendavesta* and this book, facts which will be more in requisition by opponents who encounter Spiritualism in the manner described above.

#### SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS IN PUBLIC.

A CONTINUOUS IRON RING THREADED ON THE NECK OF A MEDIUM.

PROFESSIONAL mediums, to be successful in the world, should either present undeniably real manifestations or none at all; every dubious phenomenon does more harm than good to their reputations, for sceptics never give them the benefit of any doubt.

As the threading of a large iron ring on one of their arms, in the dark, while the hand of that arm is held by an investigator, is a common manifestation, why do not those who wish to give *séances* in public, sit to obtain the manifestation of the threading round the neck of a thick iron ring, too small and inflexible to pass over the head?

We quote from an old number of *The Banner of Light* the following article, by Mr. Washington Danskin, to show that it has already been repeatedly done in public in America:—

In a recent number of the *Banner of Light*, I per-

\* That darkness is conducive to the success of spiritualistic experiments should not appear so strange, the disturbance from an irritation on this side being thereby removed; in general, however, it has been shown that with stronger power in the medium the same experiments succeed also in the light which with less power require darkness or shade.

\* With all deference to the learned author, such an intention, before all investigation, is hardly consistent with the "impartiality" (unbefangenheit) which he has mentioned as one of the qualifications for arriving at the truth.  
—Note by Translator.

ceive that one of the visitors to your "spirit-circle" asked whether the ring manifestation, said to be given in the presence of Mr. Danskin and others, were genuine or not? As the controlling influence seemed not prepared to answer the question definitely, I will assume that responsibility, and assure our inquiring friend that the "ring manifestation" is not only true and genuine in its character, but is so perfectly simple and free from all possibility of trickery or legerdemain, that it never fails to convince the candid investigator of the presence of an invisible, intelligent power.

In order that your readers may understand the rise and progress of this new fact in physics, which has puzzled the most advanced of the scientists among us, I will, as briefly as the subject will admit, narrate the facts as they have come under my notice.

I must observe, however, preliminarily, that this particular class of spirit manifestations has no special attraction for me. I delight in the communion of spirits—in the interchange of sympathies and affections between the visible and invisible worlds. I revel in the sublime idealities ever springing forth under the quickening influence of our angelic inspirers. I enjoy a new heaven and a new earth in the ever-expanding revelations of our divine philosophy, and I do *not* need these physical manifestations of spirit power either to strengthen my faith or sustain my interest in that work to which I have so unselfishly devoted those hours of my life that can properly be spared from secular avocations; but I do honour and uphold, as far as my power extends, all classes of media who honestly and fairly submit their manifestations to the candid examination of the earnest inquirer, whether their labours be of the intellectual, sympathetic, or physical phases. And now to my narrative.

On the 20th of January, 1867, a youth, apparently about nineteen or twenty years of age, introduced himself to me, and stated that he, like the Davenports, could free himself, no matter how securely he might be tied. After conversing with him sufficiently to convince myself of the probability both of his honesty and his mediumship, I proposed to investigate his claims that evening, provided he would submit to *any test* I might deem proper to apply. He readily assented, and presented himself at my dwelling at the appointed hour. Meanwhile I had procured a pair of handcuffs, ninety-six feet of small rope, and a board about the height and width of his body, with twenty-five holes in it, each large enough to pass the rope through.

He was first handcuffed, then placed with his back against the board, and the ropes, securely fastened about his limbs and body, were then passed through the holes and tied on the outside. A large and powerful man was present, and aided me in tying the youth. We both worked diligently for twenty-five minutes, and were both confident that no unaided mortal could free himself from such bondage.

He was then carried into an adjoining room, left there in the dark, and in four and a half minutes he walked in among us, with the board under his arm, and the handcuffs dangling from his finger.

At this time, the first Spiritualist congregation of

Baltimore was holding weekly social meetings at Saratoga Hall, which, after some further experiments at my dwelling, I induced the medium to attend. The exhibitions there were perfectly successful. On one occasion an experienced sea captain was one of the committee on tying, and being skilful in handling the ropes, he did the work more perfectly and artistically, perhaps, than usual. Besides some ten or a dozen knots, which were tied behind the board, there were two loops around the neck, drawn nearly as close as could be borne without strangulation, and tied with all the skill of this sceptical mariner. But the medium came from under the cover, after a few minutes, entirely free and without any of the knots being untied. The greatest sensation, however, was created by the fact that the loops, which had been around the neck, were not at all enlarged, but still remained some six or seven inches smaller than the medium's head.

This singular occurrence made so strong an impression upon a gentleman present, that on the next day he went to a coachsmith's shop, and had an *iron ring* made some seven inches smaller in circumference than the medium's head; and, bringing it to me, asked if I would place it, when next sitting with the medium, in connection with the ropes and handcuffs, and see what result would follow? I did so on three or four occasions without effect; but on Sunday night, some ten days after the ring was first placed in my possession, the medium was sitting in my dressing-room, a number of friends were in the adjoining chamber, and, after some forty minutes passed in the dark, he called me to come to him, his voice indicating fear or mental excitement. Upon entering the room we found him tied securely to a chair, the iron ring around his neck, and a portion of the rope wrapped around the ring. After carefully examining the ring, we extinguished the light, left him again alone in the room, and the same power that had produced this wonderful phenomena released him from his fetters.

After this manifestation had occurred some five or six times in connection with the ropes and handcuffs, I tried the experiment with *the ring alone*, and sometimes he would remain in the dark only two or three minutes before the ring would be around his neck. At other sittings fifteen or twenty minutes would pass before it was accomplished, and occasionally the effort would be unsuccessful, no manifestation occurring.

The gentleman who suggested the ring, and the smith who made it, entered into a conspiracy to test the matter most effectually.

Another ring precisely similar in appearance was made, marked by four indentations while the metal was soft, and brought to the hall, at one of our public exhibitions, without the knowledge of myself or the medium. Watching their opportunity, they substituted the marked ring for the one originally used, and placed it under cover with the medium.

The manifestation was successfully given, but the time was somewhat extended, and the medium was very much exhausted. *The first ring had been thoroughly mesmerised by our invisible friends, and the other had not.* Had I known the purpose of the parties I would not have permitted it; for although

the intention was, probably, not unkind, it might have caused much annoyance and injury to the medium.

I append to this article the certificate of some thirty persons who have witnessed the manifestation—not because I deem it necessary to offer any corroboration of my own statement, for it is entirely immaterial to myself personally who accepts or who rejects the facts here narrated, but because, in presenting an account of this remarkable phenomenon, I desire to have the evidence perfect and complete.

By special invitation, a party of eighteen or twenty gentlemen was assembled in my parlours one evening for the purpose of investigating this wonder which was then exciting the public mind, and among them was one of the most learned and eminent of our medical men—a man who stands foremost among the scientific celebrities of our city. He, with two others forming the committee, carefully examined and marked the ring previous to the manifestation. The medium retired to the adjoining room, and in a few minutes returned with the ring around his neck, and remained in the parlour among my guests some fifteen or twenty minutes, giving ample opportunity for the most careful scrutiny.

The distinguished gentleman to whom I have before alluded, after submitting the ring to the closest examination, after passing the edge of his penknife around the entire circumference of the ring, while it was upon the medium's neck, said to me:

"Mr. Danskin, I will not attempt to say by what power this effect is produced, *for it is beyond the known laws of Nature*; but I do say, sir, that the fact to which you invited our attention has been unquestionably established."

Once, when only three persons were present—the medium, a friend, and myself—we sat together in a dark room; I held the left hand of the medium, my friend held his right hand—our other hands being joined—and, while thus sitting, the ring, which I had thrown some distance from us on the floor, suddenly came around my arm. I had never loosened my hold upon the medium, yet that solid iron ring, by an invisible power, was made to clasp my arm, thus demonstrating the power of our unseen friends to separate and reunite, as well as to expand, the particles of which the ring was composed.

In the earlier manifestations of this remarkable phenomenon, when a portion of the rope was wrapped around the ring, some cavillers, more captious than wise, suggested that a joint in the ring might be concealed by the rope; but when the rope was dispensed with and the naked ring was used alone, all intelligent scepticism was silenced.

And now, Messrs. Editors, in conclusion permit me to say that this simple fact, occurring as it does outside and independently of all the known laws of Nature, is not only potent in its defiance of those maligners of physical mediums who call themselves Spiritualists, but it appeals with *direct* and *irresistible* power to every phase of scepticism but two; the one being based upon hopeless imbecility, and the other the result of invincible hostility, and with neither condition do I desire to interfere; my personal efforts for the propagation of our Divine Philosophy

being directed only to those who have sufficient intelligence to appreciate its value, or sufficient candour to avow their convictions.

Baltimore, Md., Nov. 24, 1867.

(Copy of an advertisement in the *Baltimore Sun*.)

#### A REMARKABLE PHENOMENON.

Simple in character, yet transcending all the theories of all the scientific schools, it demonstrates that a power wielded by an invisible, intelligent agent or agents can expand and contract the hardest of all our metals.

A solid iron ring, weighing fourteen ounces, and measuring but fifteen inches on its inner circle, has been placed around the neck of a young man whose head measures twenty-two inches.

There is no possibility of fraud or deception, as the "ring" is submitted to the closest inspection, both before and *while on the neck*.

It may be witnessed, if conditions are favourable, at the social meeting of the first Spiritualist congregation, to be held at Saratoga Hall, this (Wednesday) evening. Doors open at seven o'clock; services commence at eight o'clock.

We, the undersigned, hereby testify that we have attended the social meetings referred to in the above advertisement, and that a "Solid Iron Ring," seven inches less in size than the young man's head, was actually and unmistakably placed around his neck. There was, as the advertisement claims, no possibility of fraud or deception, because the ring was freely submitted to the examination of the audience, both before and while on the neck of the young man.

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LEVI WEAVER,	FRANCIS H. SMITH.
BENJ. MCCLELLAN,	

Mrs. Matheson, an occasional contributor to the columns of this journal, and a much-esteemed personal friend of some of its readers, died on the 6th of this month at Ardross Castle.

In February considerable additions will be made to *The Spiritualist Library*, in the shape of rare and curious works on apparitions, Spiritualism, and mesmerism.

On Monday evening next the Dalton Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism will give a public reception to Mr. J. J. Morse, the trance medium.

On New Year's Eve the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists will hold a midnight meeting to "ring the Old Year out and the New Year in."

A LETTER from Mr. Cranstoun in another column, also an advertisement, set forth that Dr. Monek, the medium, is afflicted with serious illness, and that contributions on his behalf are requested by a committee. It is to be hoped much will be done to relieve the suffering medium. For a long time Mr. Cranstoun has acted as a good Samaritan in this case.

## MESMERISM AND ITS PHENOMENA,

OR

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Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office 33, British Museum-street, London.

## INFORMATION FOR INQUIRERS.

In thirty years Spiritualism has spread through all the most civilised countries on the globe, until it now has tens of thousands of adherents, and about thirty periodicals. It has also outlived the same popular abuse which at the outset opposed rail-ways, gas, and Galileo's discovery of the rotation of the earth.

The Dialectical Society, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, appointed a large committee, which for two years investigated the phenomena occurring in the presence of non-professional mediums, and finally reported that the facts were true, that the raps and other noises governed by intelligence were real, and that solid objects sometimes moved in the presence of mediums without being touched.

Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, discoverer of the radiometer, and discoverer of the new metal thallium, investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism in his own house, and reported them to be true. Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Cromwell Varley, Prof. Zöllner, and a great number of intelligent professional men have done the same.

## HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES AT HOME.

Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or stranger to the family present.

The assertions of a few newspapers, conjurers, and men of science that the alleged phenomena are jugglery are proved to be untrue by the fact that manifestations are readily obtained by private families, with no stranger present, and without deception by any member of the family. At the present time there are only about half a dozen professional mediums for the physical phenomena in all Great Britain, consequently, if these were all tricksters (which they are not), they are so few in number as to be unable to bear out the imposture theory as the foundation of the great movement of modern Spiritualism. Readers should protect themselves against any impostors who may tell them that the phenomena are not real, by trying simple home experiments which cost nothing, thus showing how egregiously those are duped who trust in worthless authorities.

One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household, and about one new circle in three, formed according to the following instructions, obtains the phenomena:—

1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is of little importance. Any table will do.

3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is weakening.

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

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

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

7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class of messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits, usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of credulity, but should believe no more about them or the contents of messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.

8. Should no results be obtained at the first two sittings because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.

Mediumship may either be used or abused. Mediums should not lower their strength by sitting more than about twice a week; angular, excitable people, had better avoid the nervous stimulus of mediumship altogether.



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