

# The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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## THE MATERIALISATION OF SPIRIT.

IN the midst of the materialisation phenomena of modern Spiritualism, there is occasional evidence of some intelligence other than that of the medium being at the root of the manifestations. But the question we wish to raise is, whether that intelligence can manifest on the plane of matter to such an extent as to make the belongings of the spiritual world visible to normal eyesight.

Throughout the whole range of thirty years' spiritual manifestations, during which many solid substances transported by abnormal means during *séances* have been given to the observers, we believe that there is not a single instance in which the recipient is now able to produce any fabric so presented which can be demonstrated not to be of human manufacture, or any substance (such as locks of hair) demonstrably not of terrene growth. Yet a proportion of the manifestations at the *séances* had a spiritual origin.

The point of the argument is that there is a degree of relationship, yet a degree of separation between spirit and matter, analogous perhaps to that between oil and water. A layer of oil (spirit) will float upon and in contact with a layer of water (matter), and supposing intelligences in water to be unable to see anything in oil, they might deny the existence of the latter, although much disturbed at times by its action. A disturbance in the oil would agitate the water beneath, but the individual below being unable to see anything but the water, would attribute its abnormal agitation to other than the real cause.

If it be true that nothing from the world of departed spirits can be materialised at all, and that the most enthusiastic Spiritualist of twenty or thirty years' standing cannot produce anything from another world materialised at a *séance*, it follows that at spirit circles the governing powers but move, transport, and transform objects belonging to this world, to give us some idea about themselves, but are in reality manifesting to us indirectly by sign and by symbol. Thus they use the body of the medium, which they can transform, or abstract from, or free from bonds; or they present earthly drapery, which they have the power of transporting from place to place, without being able to explain how or why they do it, their utterances being considerably limited by the brain-power of the medium.

If these ideas are true, they ought to be promulgated, since they would clear away some of the perplexities of materialisation *séances*.

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## MATERIALIZED SPIRITS WITHOUT A CABINET

BY FLORENCE MARRYAT-LEAN.

EVER since the newspapers have been publishing their various opinions on the result of Sir George Sitwell's *séance* with Mrs. Corner, I have been trying to make up my mind whether I am a knave or a fool. They say that a believer in Spiritualism must be one or the other, and of course they are right. It is impossible that the Press could err. I perceive, however, that not a single paper has given the late Jules Favre his due, and called him either a knave or a fool, although in the last public speech he made he openly avowed his belief in Spiritualism. But perhaps the opinion of Jules Favre, which at times wielded a nation, is not worth so much as that of Sir George Sitwell, who, though I never had the pleasure of hearing of him before, is doubtless some old and experienced scientist who is quite capable of proving that things cannot be, because he has not found them so. Any way, if to be a knave is to try and deceive others, I do not think my worst enemy would accuse me of possessing too large a bump of secretiveness. Therefore I must conclude that I am the other thing.

In the character of a fool, therefore, I accepted the invitation of Mr. Chas. Blackburn, last Tuesday evening, to be present at a *séance* held at 33, Museum-street, by Miss Katie Cook, the sister of Mrs. Corner. The only other guests were my husband and General and Mrs. M——. We sat round a small uncovered table, with the gas burning, and *without a cabinet*.

Miss Cook had her seat between General M—— and myself, and we made sure of her proximity to us during the whole *séance*. We had sat viewing the usual manifestations for perhaps twenty minutes, when the materialised form of Lily appeared in the centre of the table, and spoke to us and kissed us all in turn. Her face was very small, and she was only formed to the waist, but her flesh was quite firm and warm. Whilst Lily was on the table in full sight of the sitters, and I had my hand upon Miss Cook's figure (for I kept passing my hand up and down from her face to her knees to make sure it was not only a hand I held), some one grasped my chair with both hands, and shook it from behind, and when I turned and spoke, in a moment one arm was round my neck, and one round that of my husband, whilst the voice of my daughter spoke to us both, and her long hair and soft white dress swept over our faces and hands. I asked my daughter for a piece of her hair and dress, and Lily came round from her side of the table, and cut off a piece of the dress herself with my husband's knife, but said she could not give me the hair until next time. The two spirits remained with us for perhaps half an hour or more, and then the power failing they disappeared. Miss Cook was not regularly entranced during this sitting. We spoke to her several times, and she answered us, although she complained of feeling sick and faint.

Mrs. Fletcher said, in her charming lecture at the Association Rooms last Monday week, that when the sky was clouded over was the time for each true heart to testify to its belief; and I am ready on my oath as a fool to swear that on Tuesday evening last

there were two presences, tangible at the same moment, in the *séance* room at 33, Museum-street, that never entered with us by the door. I was the only woman there beside Miss Cook, and I can swear Miss Cook never left my side. Yet the other woman bent over us and kissed us, spoke to us, and placed their bare arms round our necks at one and the same time. There was a marked difference, too, between the medium and the materialisations. She is a slight, small girl, and with no great abundance of hair, and both of these spirits had plump faces and figures, my daughter's hands especially being large and firm, and her loose hair nearly down to her knees. I cannot end this paper without saying one word with respect to the mediumship of Mrs. Corner (*née* Florence Cook), and to which I have borne my testimony in print before now. I have received very much kindness and courtesy from that lady, and have had the opportunity of sitting with her on many occasions, and of proving, by incontrovertible tests, the truth of her manifestations. I have been inside the cabinet with her, and even herself and the spirit numbers of times. I have been tied to her with a rope, and the same phenomena have occurred as when I remained outside. Of course I am not in a position to make any comment on what took place the other day with her at the British National Association's rooms, but I am in a position to affirm, that I not only believe, but I *know* her to have been an honest and trustworthy medium; and not the testimony of a million Sir George Sitwells, backed by the universal Press, would ever make me deny the evidence of the senses with which the Creator has gifted me, in common with themselves, although, not being a knave, I must inevitably be a fool.

February 2nd, 1880.

## VISION OF A "DOUBLE."

BY HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD, J.P.

THE following account of the vision of a "double" was given me by a niece of mine, who heard it a week or two before from the lady herself.

January 30, 1880.—Miss H. told me that after going to bed one night not long ago, and before she had lain down, she saw a figure in her room, and thinking it was her maid, she called out, "Why, Anne, what is the matter? What do you want?" Getting no answer she looked to see who it was, and then she perceived that it was not Anne; that it had an old-fashioned frilled night-cap, such as she wore herself, and a flannel gown over its night-dress, buttoned at the wrist, and looking at the face attentively she saw that it was an old face, and finally that it was her own figure, face, and dress in every particular. The apparition soon after gradually disappeared, and Miss H. lay down and went to sleep without being at all alarmed.

Queen Anne-street, Cavendish-square, London,  
February 2nd, 1880.

MR. THOMAS SHORTER and Mr. Walker, the Australian trance medium, will deliver addresses before the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism in a few days' time. Mr. Walker has also been engaged to deliver a few trance addresses at 38, Great Russell-street.

## TREATMENT OF SPIRITUALISM A TEST OF CHARACTER.\*

BY THE REV. W. MIALL.

DELAYS are said to be dangerous. Like many other dangerous things they have their uses. With respect to conviction this is more than ordinarily obvious. The danger here is that of letting life slip by without having attained the satisfaction which conviction brings, or exerted the influence for which it qualifies. Among the chief of the uses of delay is the more probable indubitableness of that of which we are convinced, and its consequent persistent and lifelong maintenance. Who clutches every seeming substance may find that he has appropriated the merest shadow, and become ashamed of his action; whilst he who with due deliberation tests an object before he grasps it, is less likely to be mistaken as to its qualities, and when he does lay hold of it, may be expected to do so with a manly grip, not easily to be released. "The world comes to him who waits." Presuming on the readiness of my Spiritualist friends to forgive so personal a reference, I would thus excuse my protracted occupancy of a painful and perhaps ignominious position, I may describe myself as suspended from the *chevaux de frise* surrounding the domain where I presume my hearers are comfortably domiciled, and where I would fain find my own happy home. I may add that it is on the inner side of the spike-surrounded wall that I am dangling; and that the representations I have listened to in this room, notably those of the three ladies who have favoured us with addresses, go far to compel me to burst away from my present undignified position. I only await such personal experience, as so many assure me they possess, in order to write myself a fully equipped, as I hope I should prove a respectable member of the British National Association of Spiritualists.

Last year I endeavoured to turn my position to account by employing it as a post of observation. I will adopt a similar course to-night, noting the treatment of Spiritualism and the indication of character thus furnished both by its advocates and by its opponents.

No doubt, as the nature of the soil of any district will determine certain results in all its productions, so the habit of thought in English society will determine certain results in all regions of inquiry, all departments of study. The Spiritualism or anti-Spiritualism of any given age, like all its other peculiarities, will be to a great extent the outcome, the expression, the revelation of the age itself. As, however, a man will not refuse praise, and should not resent blame, on the ground that what he does is but what his nature prompts him to do, so neither should any section of society, because its qualities are but the exponent of the period of its existence.

As "the life is more than meat and the body than raiment," so is the mental and moral character than the entertainment or the rejection of any theory, or the method which has resulted in either the one or the other. To discover that former by means of these latter may be of no inconsiderable service alike to the individual and to the interests of truth. Such is my

apology for the selection of a subject which lies rather in the vicinage of Spiritualism than within its borders.

Let me say at once, and as a matter of simple justice, that looking out on Spiritualists and anti-Spiritualists, I see among both parties a goodly number whose treatment of the subject is all which a candid man and lover of all truth would desire. They honestly describe the facts of the case as they conceive of them, and adduce the arguments which they deem conclusive. The spirit breathed by them is manly, rational, admirable, giving sure promise of the ultimate conversion of whichever side is mistaken, and, of course, of the corresponding extension of that which is in the right. Would that the number of these persons, on whichever side for the present arrayed, were greatly increased! My business is not so much with these, however, as with those whose procedure is less satisfactory.

Having respect, first to prevalent habits of thought and feeling, and next to the peculiar nature of the subject, one cannot help the *à priori* conclusion that among the upholders of Spiritualism will be found the superficial, the credulous, and the fanatical. Assuredly subsequent observation does but confirm this conclusion. A very large proportion, not of the talk only, but of the printed effusions of Spiritualists, is of a kind to suggest to their more intelligent brethren the earnest desire to be saved from their friends. Instances are adduced of spirit-agency, in the absence of evidence which any child might see to be essential to their verification. Of course, also, there is an abundance of reasoning which, so to describe, is a prostitution of the term. In some instances, the prominence accorded to certain persons of obviously small powers and few attainments because of Spiritualist proclivities or experiences, encourages them to rush in "where angels fear to tread," and to pronounce on subjects of which it is difficult to believe that they understand even the elements. Deplorable instances of the utter absence of moral principle are also but too common. Very mortifying must all this be to Spiritualists of another type, and very obstructive to the progress of what they regard as just conviction. This passing reference to these, in many cases, well-meaning but certainly ill-doing Spiritualists, is all that I think desirable.

Passing to those advocates whose various excellences—mental endowments and equipments, and high moral character—it were presumption to commend, and presuming that, as becomes persons of their calibre, they invite criticism, if but expressed respectfully and prompted by a desire to understand their position and rightly estimate their conclusions, I point out, in the first place, what seems to me their too frequent substitution of theory for facts. That they must theorise is indeed inevitable. We all do so, however unconsciously, with respect to all the objects and events which engage our thoughts. When, however, the facts are in their nature unlike all others, or when our acquaintance with them is peculiar, or new, or more than ordinarily partial and limited, our theories ought to be regarded by us as only tentative. In all such instances our modesty in their announcement will be in proportion to our

\* A paper read last Monday night before the National Association of Spiritualists.

claim on attention. Nor will thoughtful and candid but unconvinced investigators be slow in thus deciding respecting us. "If," they will say, "all persons of sound mind admit your facts, then it is natural that you should proceed to account for them; but if they do not, to establish them is your first business, which, until it be performed to our satisfaction, all attempts to explain them are premature."

Moreover, wrongly or rightly, the persons addressed conceive that they are in as good a position to theorise as Spiritualists can be. "Give us facts," they say, "indubitable facts, and leave us to deal with them as best we may. At all events establish your facts; render them beyond dispute before you expect us to be interested in your reasoning respecting them—the theories which, as you think, they prove or illustrate." Besides, where, as in this case, data are very diverse, and often apparently contradictory, and all of a kind most unique, and belonging to a region far removed from the ordinary haunts of men, it is scarcely reasonable to conclude that a perfect, or, even so far as it goes, correct theory of them will be arrived at until after prolonged thought, much interchange of ideas, and, it may be, the abandonment of many a promising suggestion, cherished hope, and confident conclusion. Suppose there were to occur in London, within the next three months, some half-dozen instances of what is called spirit materialisation. Suppose each instance were witnessed and could be vouched for by, say, only three persons, but those all of undoubted probity and great critical acumen. The readiness of these eighteen persons to make declaration in every possible way, and upon oath before any tribunal, of what themselves had witnessed, would do much more both to convince outsiders and to furnish material for a consistent theory of the whole subject than any number of arguments where the alleged facts are less satisfactorily attested. Does not indulgence in theory, when and where facts are the things most loudly called for, suggest that *doctrinaire* Spiritualists would be wise either to become or to give place to detailers of fully certified facts?

Another circumstance akin to the one to which I have thus taken exception is a tendency in some quarters to speak disparagingly of a demand for tests. I am quite aware of the low moral status indicated by the habit of suspicion. I know, also, that much of unwisdom is manifested in the nature of the tests which are sometimes required. Of course, too, I admit that perfect confidence in the medium will often render tests alike superfluous and abhorrent. I submit, however, that it is by no means inconsistent with these admissions to describe the demand for what they feel to be sufficient tests on the part of earnest investigators as not only reasonable, but as essential to such conviction as ought to satisfy either them or the persons who are desirous of convincing them. I should feel, and I think I ought to feel, it to be gross impertinence for me to assert the occurrence of what multitudes, including men every way superior to myself, declare to be impossible, unless I have subjected it to such scrutiny as my best judgment pronounces to be sufficient.

The general and loose statements that tests are on the whole undesirable, and that phenomena occurring

in the absence of tests are the more satisfactory, I think to be unwise, and indicative of a tendency to be content with what meets one's own requirements, without due regard to the nature of the requirements of other persons. Would it not be more becoming in Spiritualists carefully to explain what tests are sufficient, and why they are so, and to urge the public more carefully to apply them, and by no means to be content with results obtained in their absence?

With some hesitancy, because of the deserved prominence of those to whom my next remark applies, I proceed to mention the too slight importance attached to the adhesion of men of acknowledged ability as scientific authorities. Not of course that their concurrence is essential to well-warranted conviction. History and observation alike prove that they are scarcely less accessible to prejudice than other people. Many a truth has had to establish itself without their aid, and even despite their opposition. Still, it is surely impossible to deny either that their habits constitute them the most competent of investigators, or that their advocacy is to any cause a greater gain than that of others. Their hostility is not a proof of the unworthiness of that which they oppose, but their approval is a most valuable endorsement of asserted worth. There are some three or four names, the frequent adduction of which, I can easily understand, severely taxes the patience of men who are conscious that their own testimony is unimpeachable and ought to be received; and yet I venture to believe that those three or four names have done more to secure for Spiritualism in this country the recognition which it receives, and the interest with which an increasing number of the more cultured regard it, than three or four hundred other names. It seems to me that if duly interested in the assertion, and verification, and elucidation, and improvement, and extension of Spiritualism, we should make a most earnest and persevering appeal to those whose habit is investigation, and whose aim is avowedly the discovery of whatever truth addresses itself to the mind through the senses. It were easy to mention the honoured names of men whose rash utterances on this subject are wholly inconsistent with the tenor of their teaching, concerning whom we must feel that they are surely manly enough to reconsider their deliverances, and who, if further examination should avail to convert them, would bring to the cause an influence which would include well-nigh all society in its sweep.

I cannot help feeling how large a demand I am making on the patience and forbearance of my hearers when I proceed to mention the absence of due zeal in the interests of Spiritualism as another matter for animadversion. The idea originates, in my belief, in the absolutely incomparable importance of the subject. If Spiritualism be not the most deplorable of all delusions, its claims transcend those of every other object and department of thought. It supplies material on which the loftiest intellectual powers may worthily be expended, whilst at the same time it appeals to the tenderest susceptibilities of all hearts. To feel confident of its truth is to assert the possession of a talisman, having power to transform death to life, and to invest life with ineffable glory.

Spiritualists are not slow to recognise this fact. But in proportion to the strength of their conviction on this point is their self and substance engrossing devotedness both reasonable and incumbent. I am far from oblivious of the energy which some have employed, the costs they have incurred, the sacrifices to which they have consented. But the very conspicuousness of these instances is evidence of their infrequency. What self-abnegation in braving the rude jeers of the coarse-minded, or the ill-concealed contempt of the more refined; what violence to their desire of confining to the privacy of their own small circle facts pertaining to their personal or family history; what persistent iteration of those facts, whether the public will bear or forbear, might we not expect to be exemplified by all those who, confident of the reality of Spiritualism, are also alive to the momentousness of the issues dependent on its belief. So far as money-force is requisite, one would imagine that the readiness with which geographical explorers, or scientific investigators, or religious and theological partisans obtain whatever sum is needed for their purposes, would be far exceeded by that to which unwavering conviction on this subject would incite.

How, I would ask, how comes it to pass that I meet, on every hand, with persons who say that having been bestirred to an interest in Spiritualism by the perusal of its literature, they have striven, in accordance with accredited instruction, to obtain phenomena in their own homes; and having signally failed to do so, have equally failed to find any intelligent Spiritualist to take them by the hand, sit in circle with them, or invite them to a seat in his own circle, or by some means or other help them to acquaintance with phenomena, and so on the high road to conviction?

Criticism which is felt to be undeserved falls scathless. Those to whom what I have now said is inapplicable will be unhurt by it. "Let the galled jade wince." Should there be any who in their treatment of this subject have merited these words of seeming censure, I trust they will regard them as the "faithful words" inflicted by a friendly hand, and that they will allow me yet further to tax their forbearance by inquiring whether all that of which I complain is not the result of a character insufficiently impressed by that mould of doctrine into which, in these latter days, all schools of religion and theology have happily a tendency to regard it as of paramount importance that all minds should be cast. A full recognition of human brotherhood would, as I conceive, constitute definite and confident belief in this subject; a power impelling to a zeal in its advocacy which would not be unwise or excessive, however ardent; a zeal which would feel that reticence were grievous sin; a zeal which, with undoubted facts to proclaim, should knock at all doors, and persist in knocking till the inmates should be constrained to open; a zeal which, instead of taking offence at the aloofness or contempt of the men most skilled in investigation, should for this evil return the good of patiently perpetuated appeal: in a word, a zeal which should deem no effort too determined, no cost too great, if but this truth, so especially adapted to meet the world's most

urgent present need, might win its way to recognition and honour.

I may just add here that, as the utmost energy in seed-sowing is not incompatible with a patient waiting for fruit-gathering, so neither is the utmost zeal in the assertion of the facts and claims of Spiritualism incompatible with a patient endurance of the delay which may occur, and which it is every way best should occur, between the periods of excited interest and of perfect conviction.

I may also say that concern for the general recognition of what we believe to be truth is not to be confounded with mere partisanship. The one is an obligation involved in human brotherhood and required by the law of love to all men; the other is one of the multiform guises of selfishness. If cautions against the habit of proselytism have any worthy meaning, it must be against this latter habit that they are directed. The well-known denunciation of that spirit which would compass sea and land to make one proselyte was uttered by Him of whom it is written that He was "eaten up" of zeal.

May I here be permitted to say that it seems to me quite possible for Spiritualists to underrate the ability, if not of the public generally, of at least a considerable proportion of that public, to understand or even appreciate the alleged facts of Spiritualism, and of the arguments based upon them? "Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?" Did not Spiritualists themselves belong to the general public? and if they were capable of just conviction and consequent conversion, why should they regard it as impossible in others? Here, as everywhere, I fancy outspokenness to be attended, if with some ill-consequences, with more than counterbalancing advantage. State, I would say, state the thing as it is, bring out all its features—its difficulties, its grotesquenesses, its contradictions. If mediums play false, say so. If certain phenomena are only capable of being explained in a way which to the uninitiated is provocative of ridicule, and almost certain to elicit the remark that mediums are knaves, and those who credit them are fools, even then I would say so. If freshly obtained evidence invalidates previous conclusions, say so. If more mature thought and more extended observation have the effect of qualifying earlier impressions, say so. Just as I believe that the perception of any truth involves responsibility for its assertion and maintenance, so do I believe that only such presentation of it as reflects as precisely as possible our present knowledge of and ideas respecting it, is compatible with self-respect and likely to be promotive of the greatest ultimate good. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath My word, let him speak that word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." I also believe that as the pappus of the dandelion, borne hither and thither by the summer breeze, will be caught as if by instinct by soil which contains the proper elements for the germination and growth of the seed, so honestly presented truth, passing by the minds which are wanting in adaptation to perceive and value it, will never fail to approve itself to other minds whose previous history has been a course of

preparation for it, even as it has been in course of preparation for them.

I have not forgotten that discussion is an object contemplated and desired in these meetings. As nothing is more certain to call up reply than suggestion of our need of improvement, I may anticipate that this desideratum will be forthcoming. To hear our neighbours, and especially those of them who differ from us reflected on, is much less likely to provoke opposition. I do not, therefore, imagine that what I have further to say will give rise to controversy. In truth, however, it is that which I had in view in selecting the topic of this address. If I feel that there is somewhat in the language and proceedings of Spiritualists on which animadversion is just, much more do I feel that there is that in the treatment of the subject by non-Spiritualists which suggests and demands remark and censure, nay, even rebuke and condemnation. There are, as it seems to me, few things more illustrative of the prevalence and potency of prejudice than the treatment which the subject is accustomed to receive from persons whose principles and professions might have led us to anticipate a wholly different procedure.

Belonging to various sections of society, and engaging in various spheres of enterprise, they together form a phalanx, which anything short of the peculiar knowledge to which Spiritualists lay claim might well pronounce invulnerable. That they can boast of no such quality Spiritualists are well assured. If aught were wanting to make such assurance doubly sure, it might be found in the recent utterances of many of the best and most popular of the organs of political and social and religious life.

Spiritualists may well be encouraged, looking their opponents boldly in the face, to brave the ostracism to which many would consign them, and to cry with one whose position was similar to theirs, "It moves, it moves."

The facts for which they contend are getting to be indisputable. The ball of public conviction has been set rolling; it is gaining in velocity daily, and no opposition can prevent its progress.

In the meantime, and until the period of tide-turn, opponents may be expected to be numerous. They are so. The difficulty I feel is their classification.

Leaving the occupants of high places in the domains of philosophy and science to be dealt with by respondents more nearly on a level with themselves, I will confine my reference to persons of less pretension, and with whom one is brought into more frequent contact.

There are, for instance, those whose boast it is that they are guided by common sense, and whose lips are ever pouring some such wise saw as "Seeing is believing." With what an air of self-satisfaction they say, "None of your Spiritualism for us. We want something less shadowy, more real; something that we can lay hold of and be quite sure about; and something that does not need the special qualification either of imagination or of learning in order to its being perceived and appreciated." Nothing can be further from what these persons suppose to mark their conduct than the habit of doing violence

to common sense. Do they not, however, lay themselves open to the charge? Spiritualists say, "Facts are of daily occurrence, acquaintance with which not only extends the field of our knowledge, but affects the views we take of all the ordinary phenomena of life, and of these facts any sane person may with patience convince himself. They are not difficult, recondite, of a kind which only the peculiarly gifted or especially trained can perceive. It needs only that the eyes and ears and hands perform their proper functions, and the evidence of their existence is complete and irresistible." The reply which common sense suggests must surely be, "I'll make experiment of the matter. If these statements be false, the evidence being of a kind with which I am especially competent to deal, I can discover its falseness; if true, I cannot fail to perceive its truth." For men who profess that their guiding star is common sense to express contempt and refuse to make a personal examination of the matter is for them to belie their own profession, and to make evident that instead of being *par excellence* the votaries of common sense they are the victims of uncommon prejudice.

(To be continued.)

#### BONFIRES ON ST. JOHN'S EVE.

THE custom of kindling bonfires on St. John's Eve and St. John's Day (23rd and 24th June)—a practice that extensively prevailed in England and Ireland, if not also in Scotland, till a comparatively recent date—is supposed by some to have resulted from the grafting of the observances of the Catholic religion upon the ancient pagan rites of the natives, and to perpetuate the worship of Baal, or fire, or the sun, existing among the pristine Irish populations. The time of this celebration is the arrival of the sun at the summer solstice, or the commencement of its retrograde motion. In 1782, the Rev. Mr. M'Queen, of Skye, thus records his observations of the practice of this solemnity:—"At the house where I was entertained, it was told to me that we should see at midnight the most singular sight in Ireland, which was the lighting of fires in honour of the sun. Accordingly, exactly at midnight the fires began to appear; and going up to the leads of the house, which had a widely-extended view, I saw, in a radius of thirty miles all around, the fires burning on every eminence which the country afforded. I had a farther satisfaction in learning from undoubted authority that the people danced around the fires, and at the close went through these fires, and made their sons and daughters, together with their cattle, pass through the fire; and the whole was concluded with religious solemnity." The prevalence of a like practice was noticed by a traveller in Norway, in the earlier years of this century, who, on the 24th June—the Festival of John the Baptist—saw, at Lödingen, in Norway, on the borders of Lapland, the people flocking from all quarters to sport the whole night round a blazing fire, kindled on the top of a neighbouring hill; "a practice common about the time of the solstice, to the whole of the Gothic tribes, being a vestige of that most ancient worship of the resplendent image of the divinity, the glorious luminary of day."—*Diprose's Scientific Omens.*

A PREMONITION WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE  
OF AN ANÆSTHETIC.

*The Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Chicago) of January 17th last, quotes the following narrative from another American paper, the name of which is not mentioned:—

A sudden death occurred in Briggsville, Mass., last Saturday night. Mrs. Phoebe, wife of Joseph Wetherell, died at her residence, aged 84 years. Late in the evening she left the room where she had been sitting with her husband, remarking that she did not feel just well, and passed to the room adjoining. A few minutes later her husband followed and found her in a chair dead. The old gentleman was alone with her in the house and hastened to arouse some of the neighbours. A remarkable coincidence is told in connection with this death. The son of the deceased, Mr. Joseph L. Wetherell, was, at the time of his mother's death, at the house of Mr. W. H. Kent, a mile and a half distant, with others watching by the bedside of Mrs. Kent, who is very low, and who for the greater part of the time is under the influence of morphine. Not many minutes from the exact time of Mrs. Wetherell's death, the sick lady raised herself, and addressing Mr. Wetherell, insisted that something awful, something terrible, had happened. Mr. Wetherell tried to quiet her, but she persisted in the remark, and added "pretty soon you will know all about it." A little later, a neighbour to Mr. Joseph Wetherell, who had come to inform the son of his mother's death, knocked at the door, at which the sick lady started and exclaimed, "There; didn't I tell you; now you will know." This incident is made a little more impressive by the announcement that the Wetherells are believers in Spiritualism.

HEALING BY BREATHING, AND BY MESMERISED  
WATER.

THESE mysterious methods of cure seem to be of unknown antiquity, and to have been used from the earliest times of which we have any records by the magicians, theurgists, therapists, and priests in the East, all of whom appear to have been well acquainted with what we, in our ignorance of the laws of nature and spirit, call occult powers.

In the very interesting work of Professor Vambéry, of Pesth, *The Journey of the False Dervish*, he describes himself, when disguised as a dervish, making use of the cure by breathing, as practised by them, although he himself did not believe in its efficacy; but did so only to carry out his assumed rôle of a dervish. When in Turkestan (peopled by a branch of the descendants of Ham, the race *par excellence* for occult and magic practices, and allied in blood to the Akkadians of Chaldea and the ancient Egyptians) many sick people came to him to be cured by what is there called the "Nefes," or "Nef," that is, the "sacred breath." His method of cure was to touch the diseased part with his finger, and then to breathe for a considerable time with a deep breath on it; and he alleges that his patients were either generally cured or greatly relieved, and he probably correctly attributes the cure to their strong faith. No doubt faith and will act mesmerically, and attract occult

means of cure which are not yet rightly understood.

But this word Nefes is Nef, used by the Turkomans for the "Sacred Breath," Spirit, or Ghost, is curious, and comes probably from an archaic root in the ancient Hamite and Turanian speech, for the Egyptian god Kneph,\* or Nef, means The Spirit, or breath, and he was specially the god of the spiritual life or breath, the god of the internal breathing.

This mode of cure by the sacred breath was, therefore, appropriately called by these Turanian races by the same name as the great spiritual God of old Egypt; that means of cure probably being originally practised in Egypt by the priests of Kneph in his temples, as well as in Chaldea by the priests of the corresponding Chaldean god.

According to Oppel, the god Knef was one of the four gods included in the quaternity of Amun, "the unknown God," viz. :—

- 1st. Knef, or Spirit, the primal spiritual force of the universe.
- 2nd. Net, the goddess Matter (hence Natura), the original molecular stuff of which all things were formed.
- 3rd. Sebek, or Time—Eternity.
- 4th. Paseht, the goddess of infinite Space.

These four were the forms, emanations, or essences under which the hidden unconditioned Amun manifested himself to the senses of man in the phenomenal earth world.

This ancient quaternary system explains why the number 4 was sacred in ancient times, as being symbolic of perfection—of God, who manifested Himself by four emanations. Hence, also, so many old names of God are expressed by four letters; A l l h (Allah) are said by the dervishes to be the four mystical letters expressing the divine essence.

The splendid temple of Esneh was dedicated to this Knef as the "Creative spirit of the Universe, the vital principle of the divine essence, and the support of all the worlds."—(See "*L'Egypte*," par Champollion—Figeac)

Knef, the Spirit-God, filled the precise place in Egyptian theology that the Holy Ghost (sacred Breath or Spirit) does in our Christian system; for in the temple of Ombos is a most curious Mammisi or birth chamber, in which are a series of bas-reliefs representing an annunciation scene, and the birth of the Founder of the temple, Amenophis-Memnon. In it the god Thoth (the Scribe and Messenger of Amun) announces to the Queen Tmauhemoa, just as Gabriel does to Mary, that Amun the Generator had granted her a son; the Queen is represented as *enceinte*, and as being led by Knef and Hathor (Venus) into the birth chamber, where she gives birth to Amenophis. Divine genii ranged round the bed raise up the symbol of life, called by some the Crux ansata, although it is not a cross, but is really a knot, towards the new-born infant. Who can doubt that the Scripture symbolism (written in Alexandria) of the annunciation by Gabriel, holding the magic staff towards the Virgin, and the generative action of the Holy Spirit (the life breather), has been derived from this earlier Egyptian symbolism?

\* With this Egyptian Knef or Nef compare the Greek *Knepos-Nepos*, Latin *Nebula*, German *Nebel*, all meaning mist, vapour, cloud. In early pre-scientific times clouds, from their resemblance to human breath, were supposed to be caused by the breath of gods, particularly the evil dark gods or demous.

Knef was the male generative principle of the universe, as Neith, a form of Isis, was the female.—(See Champollion—Figeac.)

Many of the legends as well as the "myriad names" of Isis have passed over to the Christian Mary, the Mother of God.

A similar birth chamber yet exists with the representation of Cleopatra giving birth to Cæsarion, the son of Julius Cæsar, with the same symbolism.

Knef was also the god who presided over and inspired the celebrated oracle of Amun-Knef in the Oasis; and naturally so, as he was the spirit or inspiring God.

Knef is sometimes represented as a serpent (the Agatho daimon of the Greeks) breathing on water, symbolising the breathing of life into the material creation. The same idea as that of the "Spirit moving and brooding over the face of the water," the primeval substance out of which all things arose.

Knef represented in Egypt that "Comforter" or Spiritual force foretold by the inspired Jesus, as to come in the future, and which is now slowly but surely working a silent revolution in the beliefs of the present materialistic age.

It is curious to find that the Chaldean god Eâ, the divine intelligence which breathes through the universe, the Master of the eternal secrets, the god who presides over all theurgic action, is, like Knef, one of the first emanations of the supreme unmanifested god, Ilou; thus,

Ilou, the absolute-hidden-unconditioned god.

Anou—Eâ—Bel, the first triad or emanation pro-  
Chaos & Time—Spirit } Demiourgos. cceding from Ilou.  
Logos! Creator of  
organic world.

In the Cuneiform tablets a process of cure is mentioned by means of this god Eâ, but through the mediation of his son Silik-Moulou-Khi, another means of cure used was breathing, prayer, and mesmerised water. It is curious that Eâ does not act directly, but is represented as giving the secret for the cure to his son, who is the personally officiating god, as in the following form of incantation for a cure of a disease of the head (from the description, probably eczema), taken from one of the tablets:—

"Silik-Moulou-Khi has assisted him; he has gone to the abode of his father, Eâ, and has said to him, 'My father, this disease of the head has issued from the hills, give thou the remedy.' Eâ answers: 'My son, you do not know the remedy; let me teach it to you; what I know you know. Come, my son Silik-Moulou-Khi, take a vessel, draw water from the surface of the river, place your lips upon this water, with thy sublime breath make it shine with purity, assist man, the son of his god, envelop his head, let the disease of his head depart, let the disease be dissipated like the nocturnal dew. May the precept of Eâ cure him! May Daoknia cure him (the wife of Eâ)! May Silik-Moulou-Khi, the eldest son of the ocean, make the image that will cure!'—(See *La Magie chez les Chaldéens*, par F. Lenormant, page 21.)

The mode of cure was partly by surface water of the Euphrates, that is, water which has been mesmerised by the strong sun of Mesopotamia, and then again by the breath of the priest or magician, as

acting for and in the name of the god Eâ and his son.

This is probably one of the earliest cures on record by mesmerised water and breathing. It is remarkable that in all ancient systems of cure dependence upon the Deity was acknowledged, and religion brought in as a necessary part of the cure. Medicine was not treated specifically or looked at only from a materialistic point of view as now, but synthetically, as a part of philosophy, it being recognised that the soul was ill as well as the body.

In another incantation, the sun is described as the curer of the same disease of the head.

"Do thou (Sun) in thy coming cure the disease of his head; thou who bringest peace, act thus, cure his disease. Let man, the son of his God, place before thee his affliction and his fear; appease his malady. O Sun, at the elevation of my hands, come to my appeal, eat the aliment, absorb his victim, strengthen his hand; may he, by thy order, be delivered from his affliction, and may his fear be removed."

There is nothing new; Dr. Babbitts' cure by the sun's rays was probably practised in Chaldea 3,000 years ago; in Greece, also, Apollo was the great therapeutic god.

Curcs by means of saliva are also mentioned in these early brick-books of Chaldea; and Jesus, the great Healer and Saviour, is stated to have cured by all these means—by the sacred breath, by the laying on of hands, and with saliva. It seems very remarkable that His *professed* followers laugh at the possibility of cures being effected by such means, as being contrary to the laws of nature. It is truly wonderful how the majority of Christians utterly cast aside the peculiar teachings of Jesus, quietly passing through life believing themselves to be followers of Jesus, without paying the slightest attention to so many of His precepts and practices. Lessing, in the last century, exposed this falling away and inconsistency of the Christian Churches; and Ruskin and the Spiritualists are doing the same thing now, and getting well laughed at by Church-Christians for their pains. The emperor Vespasian, walking in Alexandria, was requested by a blind man to spit on his eyelids, as the god Serapis had told him that he would be cured by that means. It was said that the cure was effected. An early example this of curing by the king's touch.

The devolution of authority in the old cures from the God to the Son of the God is very curious; the same thing occurs in the Egyptian system with regard to Chous, the great Healer; and we find the same thing in the Christian theology, where it is stated that "the Father has committed all things unto the Son." It would appear that this idea can be traced back to the early Spiritualism of Chaldea, and probably Egypt.

But perhaps the most interesting case of a cure by occult means is that of the Princess Bint-Reschit, which is engraved on an Egyptian stele of the thirteenth century B.C., and which has been translated—first by Dr. Birch, and afterwards by the celebrated Egyptologist, the Viscount de Rougé.

This princess, whose name means the "Daughter of Joy," was the younger sister of the Queen of the Pharaoh Ramses-Meri-Amun of the XXth

Dynasty, and was an Asiatic (probably a Semitic) princess of Bachtan. Being ill in Bachtan, the inscription records the sending, at her request, from Egypt to Bachtan (Egypt being renowned for its medical skill), an embassy, accompanying the god Chous\* (the great healing god), consisting of priests and "Doctors of the Mysteries."

On examination of the princess, she was declared to be possessed by an evil spirit, and the cure, from the description given, appears to have been effected by mesmerism and by breathing; the number of passes made appears to have been four—the mystic number.—(See *Étude sur une Stele Égyptienne*, par M. le Vicomte de Rougé. Paris, 1858.)

At page 78 of this most interesting study, the physicians sent with Chous are described in the Latin translation as "*Doctores arcanorum*," "Doctors of the Mysteries;" and one specially chosen, after due inquiry, to go on this expedition, is described as a "Master of skilful fingers." This I should think points to his having been chosen as being an eminent mesmerist.

In a tablet of Thotmes III., Amen-Ra says: "My hands touch thy limbs behind with delicious life."

The mesmeric forces were known in Egypt as life.

Christian baptism rites in Egypt are curious as probably preserving pre-Christian ideas: in them the priest breathes three times (three is also a sacred Egyptian number) into the basin, in order to make the water holy; then makes three crosses on the child's forehead; adjures the demons to quit it; then makes three crosses with oil; then breathes again three times in the form of a cross, anoints the whole body with oil, and then plunges it into the water.

In the interesting work of J. P. Brown, *The Dervishes, or Oriental Spiritualism*, it is stated (at page 85) that the dervishes are often seen manipulating the faces, heads, shoulders, and arms of invalids, and after praying over them, to blow in their faces, and gently breathe upon the limbs affected. The invocation of the name of Allah has, it is supposed, in such cases sanctified the breathe of the dervish, and enabled him to produce a salutary effect upon the sufferer.

At page 107, Brown states the belief that the frequent invocation of the Zikti (the name of God) renders the breath of man additionally holy, and gives it a spiritual or superhuman power.

He also states that it is believed that the Neffes or Nef is an original emanation from the Creator, and which, after a serious and impressional invocation of Him, becomes holy.

The writings of the dervishes, particularly those of the Sufi sect, which is an outcome of the older Brahmanic and Zoroastrian theories incorporated into Islam, are full of the most advanced spiritualistic doctrines. The dervishes are very well acquainted with the phenomena of the "Double," or "Doppelgänger," which condition is called by them "Insilâ," in which they allege that the soul leaves the body and wanders about without regard to time or space.

The works of Sheikh Mulce ed Deen el Arabce are especially full of spiritual doctrines. He teaches

that the earth was inhabited by many other species of human beings previous to the creation of Adam and Eve, each of various degrees of stature and spiritual faculties; that the spirits of mankind after death continue to people the vast space which surrounds the earth; that some persons of a high spiritual power are able to behold these spirits, and that a superior spiritual faculty possesses power over an inferior one; that visions are not connected with the ordinary senses of the body, but are wholly spiritual, and are often connected with the soul leaving the body, whilst ordinary dreams are but an effect of the senses.

Another dervish, Ibn Isay, had also very advanced views on occult subjects. He points out the way by which, in thinking of any person, you can make his soul appear to you; and seems to have been acquainted with mesmeric biological phenomena, such as the complete subjection of the sensitive to the will of the mesmeriser. He also treats largely of fascination, which he describes in connection with mystical numbers, and a curious process of breathing upon an imaginary form of the person to be fascinated. His followers have what they call mystic circles, which appear to be very like spiritual circles for materialisations. When a follower has attained to what is called the "Circle of the Spirit" he can bewitch men and lovers; on reaching that of the mind, he can bewitch aged persons; in the secret circle he can enchant the learned and poets; in the circle of the Jelâl (the name of the Deity), these powers are used for purposes of revenge; in that of the Jemâl (beauty), for purposes of kindness. It is said that this sheikh, by reciting certain incantations, and by gazing steadily at certain mystical numbers, could produce the vision of any person desired, and that no one could withstand the ardour of his gaze; and that he could hold any one completely under his control. He appears to have been a powerful mesmeriser and clairvoyant.

It is curious to find from this work that the dervishes most celebrated for occult knowledge and practices come from India, showing the immense influence of the Yoga beliefs of that country.

#### CURIOS VISION OF A TURKOMAN IMMEDIATELY BEFORE ACQUIRING THE POETIC FACULTY.

Vambery, in the work already mentioned (page 294), gives an interesting account of Makhdumkali, a celebrated Turkoman poet, who died about ninety years ago, and who evidently was a trance medium and seer of symbolic visions.

He was not an educated man, never even having visited the only seats of learning in that part of the world—Khiva and Bokhara. One day he suddenly became entranced, and in a vision, or perhaps in the trance state, his soul was carried to Mecca, into the hall of council where Mohammed the Prophet and the first khalifes (followers) were sitting. Struck with awe, he cast a timid look upon the august assembly, whereupon Omar, the patron of the Turkoman, signed to him to approach, which he did; and then the Prophet touched him on the forehead, and gave him his benediction, upon which he awoke from the trance, dream, or vision. Immediately after this vision he suddenly became a poet of a very high

\* Chous was the third person of the great Theban triad: Amun, the Hindu Father; Maut, the Mother; and Chous, the Son.

order, and the learned of these parts place his poetic productions in the first rank of the efforts of the human mind. From this time also, although uneducated, he is said to have acquired intuitively, by a divine inspiration, a knowledge of all the sciences, and the contents of books.

A similar power was claimed by the ascetics of India, when they had reached a high stage of ecstatic enlightenment or lucidity; as in the Yoga of Patanjali, when the Yogin, by certain ascetic exercises, attains to transcendental powers (*vibhūti*) by means of "Sanyama," or perfect concentration of mind, and then has knowledge of past, present, and future things, and a knowledge of the universal sciences. (See "*Bhagavad Geeta*," by Cockburn Thomson. Introduction, page 87.)

It would be very interesting if any of the members of the Theosophic Society in London or Bombay would come out from their self-imposed secrecy, and give satisfactory evidence of these powers being in possession of any Hindoo or other person at present. This would be a striking proof of the great powers of the human mind or spirit, when relieved from the gross burden of matter, by occult powers and practices.

A. J. C.

Lucerne, January 24, 1880.

#### HOW MY WRITING MEDIUMSHIP BEGAN.\*

BY THE BARONESS ADELMA VON VAY (COUNTESS WURMBRAND).

IN the autumn of the year 1865 my husband and I made the acquaintance of a mesmerist, Dr. G——, who told us that he detected the faculty of spirit-sight plirenologically impressed upon my forehead, and moreover advised me to try for automatic writing. I turned aside from such with contempt, it being opposed to the tenets of my Roman Catholic creed. From childhood I had been counselled to avoid all superstition, and to preserve a clear and healthy judgment. This principle I would not wish to depart from now.

However, Dr. G—— would not let us rest. He attempted to mesmerise me, and maintained that I should feel disposed to sleep; but he produced not the slightest effect, neither did the glass of mesmerised water which I drank. The doctor then explained that I was possessed of great mesmeric power myself, being both a seeing and a writing medium; and he besought me to develop these gifts, if only for the benefit of my health. Without being really ill, my constitution was at that time very delicate, and I was subject to a species of painful rheumatism.

I had almost forgotten the advice of Dr. G——, when one day, whilst suffering from an attack of rheumatism, my husband jestingly remarked:

"Suppose we resort to the healing properties of automatic writing?"

No sooner said than done. I took a pencil in my hand, and immediately my arm felt as though an electric current were passing through it. My hand was moved to and fro, and then wrote in huge characters:—

"I am Thomas, your tutelary genius. Continue the writing: it will do you good—Heinrich—Coffin—1867 will be a sad year for you—Napoleon's downfall 1870."

Somewhat exhausted, though much relieved, my husband and I steadily deciphered the writing, not one word of which was previously known to me.

With sorrow I bear testimony to the truth of the statement concerning Heinrich, my husband's brother, who died in 1867 after great suffering.

We then felt very uncomfortable and gloomy: the weird and supernatural were disagreeable to us both, and I retired to rest fully determined to have nothing more to do with this mesmeric writing, as I called it.

We had no knowledge of Spiritualism, nor of the existence of so many books on that subject. Although mysticism had always possessed a charm for me, yet in the word *Geister* (ghosts, spirits) there was something uncanny and awful. I then recalled how, as a child of twelve years, I, with the assistance of my younger sister, had "turned" a small table and caused it to cut capers round the room, until this pastime was forbidden us, and I was taught to regard "table-turning" as superstitious and ridiculous.

Referring to our diary I can now trace the gradual development of the mediumship of my husband and myself. Inexperienced as we were at the commencement we both cherished a steadfast faith in the goodness of God. Although the writing was somewhat weird yet it opened up a narrow way into a vast expanse for me, as from childhood I had ever felt sympathy for the poor suffering souls.

I soon became deeply attached to the spirits who wrote through my hand, more especially so as I discovered that many yearned for sympathy and help.

The Roman Catholic motto, "Comfort the poor distressed souls," had been my constant companion and guide from my sixteenth year; and now I found in the utterances and entreaties of these spirits confirmation of that which I had read in the aforesaid book.

Certainly this automatic writing (without thought or effort on my part) was singular. It was as though somebody narrated a story, and I listened to it; the movement of the arm as well as the writing was quite apart from my will or influence.

The spirit Thomas, who first wrote through me, was a friend of my childhood, a talented young man, and universally beloved; he died at the early age of nineteen. The night of his death I had a remarkable dream. It was that he came to me and said in a sorrowful tone:

"Farewell, I must go away now. Pray for me; I always cherished a strong affection for you."

I begged him to stay, but he grew very pale and then vanished. I wept so violently in my sleep that I awoke. Within three weeks we received intelligence of his decease. The night of my dream he passed away.

THE Lunacy Law Reform Association has just opened a branch office at 79, Chancery-lane, E.C., in addition to the old office at 64, Berners-street, W. Mrs. Lowe and Mr. P. T. Blackwell (barrister) are honorary secretaries, and Dr. Carter Blac, secretary.

\* Translated by Caroline Corner from *Studien über die Geisterwelt*.

## THE NATURE OF ELECTRICITY.

A few evenings ago Mr. C. F. Varley, F.R.S., delivered a lecture at the Town Hall, Bexley-heath, Kent, on electricity, in the course of which he said that his object was to show that electricity had an independent existence, like other forms of matter, and that the various phenomena were due not so much to electricity itself as to the force which had been put into it by means of chemical action. Electricity was rather a component of matter than merely a motion of its molecules. Heat was a vibration of the molecules of matter. Electricity, in passing through a circuit, possessed the same amount of power at each end. This power was shown by its ability to produce heat at a distance of uniform amount, and also by its power of producing an equivalent amount of decomposition at any part of the circuit. This proved that the electricity was not consumed, and the lecturer stated that he had never found any indication that electricity could be decomposed into any other force, as heat and light could be; therefore it possessed an individuality as much as platinum, gold, or silver. Numerous experiments were made, and these simply showed that the phenomena were produced by the power which electricity was made to carry. Mr. Varley performed many interesting experiments, and concluded his lecture by stating that a telegraph engineer had to reverse the order of visible things. The atmosphere through which we move, and do not feel unless a strong wind is blowing, is opaque to electricity, and is about the best known insulator. If a man were to try to walk through an iron wall, such as an iron-clad vessel, he would find it impossible to move; but an electric current which would not pass through the atmosphere will pass with great facility through a metal vessel. Therefore the telegraph engineer, when working out his problems, had to consider the atmosphere as a solid rock, and the telegraph wire as a hole through that rock through which electricity can be passed, and so communicate intelligence from one end to the other.

Mr. Varley was frequently applauded during his lecture, and at the conclusion a cordial vote of thanks, on the motion of the vicar, the Rev. G. Graham, was awarded to him.

## 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.]

## A PROPHECIC DREAM.

SIR,—As a reader of your valuable paper, I think it may be of some interest to your readers if I describe a dream I had before I knew what Spiritualism was.

In the year 1868 I was steward aboard the brig *Nathaniel*, belonging to Colechester, under the command of Captain Plane; we were bound from Shields with a cargo of coal to Caen, in France. We sailed from Shields on the 1st of December, having a fair wind and fine weather as far as Ramsgate, where on the 5th of December both wind and weather changed, making us and some other ships that were in our company let go our anchors, about three miles from land, to wait for a fair wind. At eight o'clock that evening our captain gave an order for two men to keep the anchor watch, and told the rest of us to go below to our hammocks. I had slept about two hours, when I dreamt that a gale

sprang up which made us and all the ships around us drag their anchors, and in the offing I saw a ship driven before the snow-squall right in the track of our ship. I kept watching this ship in my dream coming nearer and nearer until it came into us, with a crash, getting foul of our rigging and then swinging alongside. That ship being light, and ours loaded, the sea sometimes lifted it up like a nutshell, and then brought it down on top of us, breaking our ship into match-wood. Amid all the crashing and roaring of sea and wind I heard our captain give the order for two men to go and cut the foresail adrift, and the rest to slip the anchor, if possible, so that we could run the ship ashore and save ourselves. I was one who went up to cut the foresail adrift, but before we got on the yard I saw that the two ships were clear of each other, and that we were sinking. I, with horror, shouted to the man who went up with me to hurry down into the long-boat and save himself. When we got down, the rest of our men made for the boat also. We all entered it in safety, and a sea which came over our sinking ship took us clear of her. The wind being fair for Ramsgate, we rode into the harbour without any oars.

On seeing all this in my dream I became alarmed, and was thereby aroused from my sleep. With one bound I sprang out of my hammock on to my box, dressed myself, took the best clothes I had and made them into a bundle, ready for a jump. Two hours after my dream all that I had seen took place in reality.

ALBERT PRICE.

70, Adelaide-street, South Shields, Durham.

## DR. MONCK.

SIR,—The committee who have charge of Dr. Monck's testimonial will feel obliged if you will acknowledge specially a donation of £5 from Percy Windham, Esq., which has been omitted in their former acknowledgments.

As many friends are collecting small sums together in the provinces, and we have promises from abroad, the list will remain open a short time longer, and we shall ask your courtesy for further acknowledgments.

There are many friends still out of the list who will now have an opportunity of assisting Dr. Monck, and thereby facilitating the cause of science, by securing mediumship independent of cabinets, curtains, or the state of the light.

MORELL THEOBALD, *Hon. Sec.*

62, Granville-park, Feb. 3, 1880.

NEVER give way to melancholy; nothing enervates more; I fight against it vigorously. One great remedy is to take short views of life. Are you happy now? Are you likely to remain so till this evening? or next week? or next month? or next year? Then why destroy present happiness by distant misery which may never come at all, or you may never live to see it? for every substantial grief has twenty shadows, and most of them shadows of your own making.—*Sydney Smith*.

NEVER teach false morality. How exquisitely absurd it is to tell girls that beauty is of no value—dress of no use! Beauty is of value; her whole prospects and happiness in life may often depend on a new gown or a becoming bonnet, and if she has five grains of common sense she will find it out. The great thing is to teach her their just value, and that there must be something better under the bonnet than a pretty face for real happiness. But never sacrifice truth.—*Sydney Smith*.

THE LAST WORDS OF THE DYING.—It is probably natural that at the last the scenes which have made the strongest impressions in life should be recalled by memory. The old mountaineer, when he comes to die, with his last whisper, says his snow shoes are lost; with the stage driver he is "on a down grade, and cannot reach the brake;" the miner cannot get to the air pipe; the sailor says, "eight bells have sounded;" and the gambler plays his last trump. A little girl died here a few years ago, and, as her mother held her wrist and noted the fainting and flickering pulse, a smile came to the wan face, and the child whispered, "There's no more desert here, mamma, but all the world is full of beautiful flowers." A moment later the smile became transfixed. In an Eastern City not long ago a sister of charity was dying, and at last from a stupor she opened her eyes and said, "It is strange; every kind word that I have spoken in life, every tear that I have shed, has become a living flower around me, and they bring to my senses an incense ineffable."—From the *Virginia (Nev.) Enterprise*.

## MESMERISM AND ITS PHENOMENA,

OR

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## 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 railways, 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*, deviser 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 *séances* 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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