

The Spiritualist.

A RECORD OF THE PROGRESS OF THE SCIENCE AND ETHICS OF SPIRITUALISM.

No. 17.—Vol. I.

LONDON: JANUARY 15, 1871.

Published on the 15th of every Month; Price Threepence.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND.

LAST Monday night, at one of the ordinary weekly Spiritualistic meetings at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley-street, Cavendish-square, Mr. Benjamin Coleman, the President, read a paper on Spiritualism in England. The hall was filled with an overflowing audience, including many literary gentlemen of high standing, and a fair proportion of scientific men belonging chiefly to the medical profession. The following is the paper read by the President:—

THE LITERATURE OF SPIRITUALISM.

I am about to claim your attention to a succinct history of "The Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England, with an Account of some of my Personal Experiences in the Investigation of the Subject."

First as to the literature—including the periodical publications and the books which have been written and published in England—and then as to the mediums who have come amongst us from time to time, with a truthful and unexaggerated account of some of the manifestations which I have witnessed. I shall not hesitate to give the names of every one known to me who took part in any of the *séances* to which I shall refer, trusting that those who have dealt fairly with the facts demonstrated, will absolve me from further reticence, and not caring what those persons think who have not dealt honestly with the facts which have come under their notice.

As I am aware that I am addressing myself to an audience which includes men of high professional and scientific attainments, I may as well say that I lay no claim to either. I am a man who has been accustomed to commercial pursuits, and am therefore not the best qualified to stand here to enlighten men who are far my superiors in a literary and scientific point of view. But I hope I may justly lay claim to the possession of plain, practical, common sense, without fanatical bias of any kind, to a rigid love of truth, and a boldness to declare my convictions in the face of the world, however unpopular they may be; and as I have made many converts during the last fifteen years, to these qualities may be attributed whatever success may have attended my advocacy of the great truth of Spiritualism.

The *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph* was the first monthly, which shortly after changed its name to *The British Spiritual Telegraph*, edited by W. B. Morrell, of Keighley, Yorkshire, and was continued from 1857—for two years—to 1859.

The *Spiritual Herald* was the second monthly. This was ably edited by the late Mr. James Smith, brother to Dr. Angus Smith, the well-known chemist. *The Herald* was also commenced 1857, and ended after an existence of six months only.

The *Spiritual Magazine* was started in 1860. It has been from the first under the able guidance of Mr. William M. Wilkinson and Mr. Thomas Shorter. *The Spiritual Magazine* proclaims its views in the following motto:—

"Spiritualism is based on the cardinal fact of spirit communion and influx; it is the effort to discover all truth relating to man's Spiritual nature, capacities, relations, duties, welfare, and destiny; and its application to a regenerate life. It recognises a continuous Divine inspiration in man; it aims through a careful reverent study of facts, at a knowledge of the laws and principles which govern the occult forces of the universe; of the relations of spirit to matter, and of man to God and the Spiritual world. It is thus catholic and progressive, leading to true religion as at one with the highest philosophy."

The *Spiritual Times*, a weekly, was started in London in 1864, and ceased in 1866. It was edited by Mr. J. H. Powell. *Daybreak*, also a weekly, was first published in Manchester, 1867, and edited by the Rev. Page Hopps. It subsequently changed hands and title. It is now published and edited by Mr. James Burns, under the title of *The Medium and Daybreak*. *Human Nature*, a monthly, commenced in 1867, and is now entering upon its fifth year. This is also edited by Mr. James Burns. *The Spiritualist*, published on the 15th of each month, very carefully edited by Mr. W. H. Harrison, was started in 1869, and promises to be in every way worthy of the cause. Mr. Harrison

has also commenced a smaller paper, published on the 1st of each month, called *The Spiritual News*; and lastly, the Rev. F. Rowland Young, an able Dissenting minister, has just published the first number of a monthly, entitled *The Christian Spiritualist*.

These, I believe, comprise the whole of the periodical journals which have been published in England to advocate the cause of Spiritualism.

The works, which have been written by English men and women, and published in London, are much more numerous.

The first—and I think before the advent of Spiritualism in America, twenty-two years ago—were *The Night Side of Nature*, and a translation of Dr. Kerner's *Seeress of Prevorst*, by Mrs. Catherine Crowe, both of remarkable merit, and highly interesting; and in 1859 Mrs. Crowe, after full conviction of the reality and spiritual origin of the modern manifestations, wrote a clever little book, entitled *Spiritualism, and the Age we Live in*, in which she thus addresses the scientific world:—

"While I assert these things, I have no expectation of being believed; because if I were I should be the first person that ever received such a distinction as to be believed when he declared he had seen or heard a fact not recognised by science; science being an irresponsible power that absolutely rejects all evidence not according with her own views and experience. I am aware that science is generally right; but she is not infallible. She has made mistakes in her lifetime; and she may rely on it she never made one more signal, nor more fatal, to her pre-eminence, than that she has made in denying, instead of investigating, the phenomena called Spiritual manifestations. She knows it too; there are those I could name who earnestly wish they had not been so hasty in committing themselves, and who see, too late, that there was a great glory to be won by an early and courageous adoption, when they had nothing to retract. Now, it is not so easy; nevertheless, it must be done, sooner or later; and the glory be to him who has the courage and the honesty first to avow his conversion and conviction."

In 1853 Mr. Andrew Leighton re-published an excellent little work, *The Modern Spirit Manifestations*, by the Rev. Adin Ballou, one of the earliest converts, and most intelligent of the American advocates of the truth of Spiritualism, to which Mr. Leighton wrote an elaborate and highly interesting preface, reciting his experiences with a member of his own family.

In 1855-6, Mr. Newton Crosland published *A New Theory of Apparitions*; and Mrs. Crosland (Camilla Toulmin) *The Light of the Valley*.

Mr. John Rymer, a great sceptic long after his family were convinced (at whose house Mr. Home staid for some months), published his experiences through the mediumship of Mr. Home, which were of a very marvellous character.

There was published about this time *Sights and Sounds*, a very interesting volume, by Mr. Henry Spicer, a friend, I believe, of Charles Dickens, and a contributor to *Household Words*.

The Natural and Supernatural, by Mr. John Jones, and *Christian Spiritualism*, by Mr. Wm. Bertolacci, were also amongst the earliest publications in England.

Then followed several most important contributions to the book-literature of Spiritualism; namely, *The History of the Supernatural*, by Mr. William Howitt, which clearly proves that phenomena similar to that which it is so difficult for the learned men of the present day to believe in, were witnessed and accepted by some of the most learned men of all past ages.

In his preface Mr. Howitt says—

"The author of this work intends by the supernatural the operation of those higher and more recondite laws of God, which, being as yet but most imperfectly acquainted, we either denominate their effects miraculous, or shutting our eyes firmly, deny their existence altogether. So far from holding that what are called miracles are interruptions or violations of the course of nature, he regards them only as the results of Spiritual laws, which in their occasional action subdue, suspend, or neutralise the less powerful physical laws, just as a stronger chemical affinity subdues a weaker one, producing new combinations, but combinations strictly in accordance with the collective laws of the universe, whether understood or not yet understood by us. At a time when so many objections are raised to portions of the Scripture narrative, which unsettle men's minds and haunt them with miserable forebodings, the author has thought it of the highest importance to bring into a comprehensive view the statements of the most eminent historians and philosophers of all ages and nations on the manifestations of those Spiritual agencies amongst them, which we, for want of further knowledge, term supernatural."

"So great is the assembled mass of evidence from every age and people, that we are reduced to this dilemma! either to

reject this universal evidence, by which we inevitably reduce all history to a gigantic fiction, and destroy every appeal to its decision on any question whatever, or to accept it, in which case we find ourselves standing face to face with a principle of the most authoritative character for the solution of Spiritual enigmas, and the stemming of the fatal progress of infidelity."

Mr. Wm. M. Wilkinson, who has a high professional standing in this metropolis as a lawyer, and who was amongst the earliest to proclaim his conviction of the truth of Spiritualism, published a work called *Spirit Drawings*, in which he gives the history of Mrs. Wilkinson's development as a drawing medium, when—under direct spirit guidance and control, and without the least knowledge of the art—she produced a large series of very beautiful symbolic drawings in water colours. Mr. Wilkinson is also the author of another book, entitled *The Revival, considered in its Physical, Psychical, and Religious Aspects*. Both books are pronounced by competent authority as ably and philosophically written.

Mr. Wilkinson says—

"Incredulity of a fact, I take it, is that wide-spread weakness of the human mind, which is observed in men who have perfected their opinions, and have no room for learning anything more. A new fact to them is just one above the number that is convenient or necessary for them, and had they the power of creating, or of preventing creation, the inconvenient fact should not have existed."

"Indeed, if admitted into their completed system, 'the little stranger' would destroy it altogether, by acting as a chemical solvent of the fabric."

"But this is not the mode of the searcher after truth; and in determining the important question, which it is intended to submit for consideration, I would rather forget much that I have been taught, or find it all unsound, than I would reject one single circumstance which I know and recognise as a truth."

Mr. Thomas Shorter, than whom there has been no more intelligent and active worker in the cause of Spiritualism, brought out first *The Confessions of a Truth Seeker*, and subsequently a larger volume entitled *The Two Worlds*, which in its advocacy of the truth of Spiritualism takes its stand upon the Bible; and containing as it does a mass of most useful information, covers the whole ground, and forms a most valuable book of reference. Its tone may be gathered from the following remarks in the author's preface:—

"Christians now-a-days are ashamed, or as they think, too enlightened, to appeal to the direct evidence of a future life which the facts of Spiritual manifestations supply; although their Bible is the greatest storehouse of Spiritual facts, and the Christian and every other form of religion are cradled in them. But though this course is now respectable and fashionable, it should be borne in mind that it is only a fashion—that general scepticism on this point in the Christian world is of very recent day, and that it has advanced steadily, and in parallel line with it has been the advance of material philosophies, the denial of revelation and of a Spiritual world, and the gravitation of faith to a vanishing point; until at length, in the bosom of the Established Church of this country, we find the attempt made by some of its recognised and eminent teachers to get rid (as divines and professors have been doing in Germany) of the supernatural element altogether. Were the effort successful, we might say with Law, 'Behold! the kingdom of God shut up, and only a kingdom of Scribes and Pharisees come instead of it.' Nor need this state of things surprise us; it is a consistent logical result of the denial of existent Spiritual agencies."

Finally, in this category, there is a very clever book, *From Matter to Spirit*, by Mrs. De Morgan, with an admirable preface from the able pen of Professor De Morgan, the eminent mathematician. He says—

"I will not stand committed either for or against the conclusions of this book. I am satisfied by the evidence of some of the facts narrated; of some others I have evidence as good as testimony can give. I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called Spiritual which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me. But when it comes to what is the cause of these phenomena, I find I cannot adopt any explanation which has yet been suggested. If I were bound to choose among things which I can conceive, I should say that there is some sort of action of some combination of will, intellect, and physical power, which is not that of any of the human beings present."

"But thinking it very likely that the universe may contain a few agencies, say half-a-million, about which no man knows anything, I cannot but suspect that a small proportion of these agencies, say 5,000, may be severally competent to the production of all the phenomena, or may be quite up to the task among them."

"The physical explanations which I have seen are easy, but miserably insufficient; the Spiritual hypothesis is sufficient, but ponderously difficult."

Amongst the books of mark which have been written to uphold the truth of Spiritualism, and the reality of the manifestations, is that by Viscount Adare, *Experiences in Spiritualism with Mr. D. D. Home*, with introductory remarks by the Earl of Dunraven. This volume (which was printed for private circulation only), though proceeding from the pen of a literary nobleman, does not pretend to do more than to record a series of remarkable phenomena witnessed by himself and numerous friends during the last three or four years. From Lord Dunraven's preface to the book I make the following extracts:—

"The subject of Spiritualism was first brought under my notice fifteen years ago, by reading two or three accounts of the occurrences which were taking place in America. To some extent I was prepared for the fair consideration of very strange and startling phenomena, from having previously examined fully into the subject of mesmerism. . . . At that time scientific men in general, and the medical profession in particular, were loud in condemnation of what they considered sheer imposture. . . . Since then a great change has taken place in the opinion of the public on this subject. . . . When table-turning became one of the amusements of the day, I witnessed various experiments which clearly demonstrated the inadequacy of Professor Faraday's explanation of the manifestations by involuntary muscular action."

In reference to the facts recorded in this volume by Lord Adare and himself, Lord Dunraven says—

"It is obvious that the chief value of such a record must depend upon the trustworthiness of the narrator. Fidelity of description is very rare, even where honesty of purpose is undoubted. I believe that in the present case scrupulous accuracy, a retentive memory, and an unexcitable temperament are combined in an unusual degree, forming just such a combination of qualities as is indispensable for one who undertakes to record phenomena of this exceptional and startling character."

"It must be borne in mind that an actual record of facts, and not the adoption or refutation of any particular theory, is the main object in view."

"Spiritualism will, therefore, in the ensuing remarks be regarded chiefly in its scientific or phenomenal aspect. I have purposely avoided expressing any decided opinion on questions so complicated, and about which at present such conflicting opinions prevail, as upon the character of the phenomena, the source from which they proceed, and the tendency of teaching to be derived from them."

"The whole subject of Spiritualism is one which must soon command the attention of thoughtful men in this country, as it has very fully done in America, and to some extent in France and other countries of Europe."

Of the manifestations recorded by Lord Adare, it will perhaps be sufficient to say that they are among the most marvellous of those which have been witnessed by thousands, through Mr. Home's distinctive, peculiar, and high-class phase of mediumship; many of them being in advance of those recorded in Mr. Home's own book, *Incidents of my Life*, the preface to which is written by no less a man in the world of letters, than Dr. Robert Chambers, and from which preface I make the following extract:—

"It is often remarked as a marvel of a very suggestive kind in this our highly intellectual age, that men of knowledge and reflection, of whom so much better things might be expected, are found so weak as to be imposed upon by such transparent deception, and so foolish as to come forward and bear witness in its behalf. But of course this is not reasoning; it is only begging the question. The remark might be answered by another; it is a marvel of a highly suggestive nature that men of critical judgment should be so far imposed upon by their self-esteem, that they can calmly set down a number of men reputedly as judicious as themselves, and whose judgment they acknowledge—as capable of seeing and hearing that which is not—and never appear to suspect that those persons have possibly some real grounds for the faith that is in them. A little modesty would evidently go a great way to solve the difficulty. If they would go a little further, and so far yield to the behests of their favourite philosophy as to enquire before pronouncing, it might so chance that the position of a believer in these phenomena would become more intelligible to them. So at least it has already appeared with a vast number of persons, equally positive at starting that the whole was a delusion; and we are entitled to assume that what has been may be again."

Several other books and pamphlets have been published which possess more or less interest for the reader of English Spiritualistic literature: *Animal Magnetism and Spiritualism*, by Dr. Ashburner; *Outlines of Spiritualism*, by Mr. Barkas; *The Life of the Davenports*, by Dr. Nichol, English correspondent to the *New York Times*; *Spiritualism in America*, by Mr. B. Coleman; and *The Scientific Aspect of Spiritualism*, by Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, the eminent naturalist, who closes his most useful essay in the following words:—

"In concluding these imperfect illustrations of a subject so generally tabooed by scientific men, I do not expect or wish to make a single convert. All I claim is to have shown cause for investigation; to have proved that it is not a subject that can any longer be contemptuously sneered at as unworthy of a moment's enquiry. I feel myself so confident of the truth and objective reality of many of the facts here narrated, that I would stake the whole question on the opinion of any man of science desirous of arriving at the truth, if he would only devote two or three hours a week for a few months to an examination of the phenomena before pronouncing an opinion; for, I again repeat, not a single individual that I have heard of, has done this without becoming convinced of the reality of these phenomena. I maintain, therefore, finally, that whether we consider the vast number and high character of its converts, the immense accumulation and authenticity of its facts, or the noble doctrine of a future state which is elaborated—the so-called supernatural as developed in the phenomena of animal magnetism, clairvoyance, and modern Spiritualism, is an experimental science, which must add greatly to our knowledge of man's true nature and highest interests, and, therefore, demands an honest and thorough examination."

SPIRITUAL MEDIUMS.

Mrs. Hayden, an American lady, was the first who came to England. This was in 1853, and amongst the first who visited her were Dr. John Ashburner, Dr. John Elliotson, and Professor De Morgan.

Dr. Elliotson and Dr. Ashburner, both prominent men in the medical world at that time, had bravely fought the battle for the truth of mesmerism, and Dr. Elliotson had established a journal to advocate its cause, called *The Zoist*. The impressions made upon the minds of these two honest earnest men, from what they witnessed of Spiritual manifestations in Mrs. Hayden's presence, was widely different. Dr. Ashburner saw the truth at once, and boldly proclaimed it; Dr. Elliotson treated the whole matter as a gross imposture: and here was exhibited a strange phenomenon, a man who had suffered martyrdom to establish one great truth, turning round to denounce and persecute those who were endeavouring to establish the claims of a still greater truth of kindred character! Dr. Elliotson refused even to discuss the subject with his old friend Dr. Ashburner, and they separated. He spoke of Mrs. Hayden as a charlatan; of his friends who believed in her powers, as fools! and of Spiritualism as a degrading delusion. The pages of *The Zoist* contained most severe articles against the whole subject, and one of them was illustrated by woodcuts, to show how the tapping sounds were made. As an example of Dr. Elliotson's state of mind at that period, I make the following extract from *The Zoist* of May, 1854:— "Anything approaching to this imposture in impious audacity we have never witnessed. We have felt it an imperative duty boldly to raise our voice in condemnation of this vile and unblushing imposture."

Such was the vigorous outspoken language of a man, a materialist, accustomed to lay down the law to others.

Here was, indeed, a hopeless case to all appearances. Was it possible that a man of mature years, past the meridian of life, should ever be convicted of his error? should ever be brought to humble himself, and in sack-cloth and ashes, so to speak, proclaim openly to the world his conviction and conversion? Yet so it came about, and in this way. He was staying at Dieppe in 1863, and there at the house of Mrs. Milner Gibson he met Mr. Home, through whom Dr. Elliotson received such evidence of spirit-presence as to shake his long cherished philosophy to its very foundation. The change in his thoughts came about gradually. When I saw him soon after his return from Dieppe, he said, though he was satisfied of the reality of the phenomena, he was not prepared to admit they were produced by the agency of spirits. "But," he added, "I will say this much, what I have seen lately has made a deep impression upon my mind, and the recognition of the reality of these manifestations from whatever cause, is tending to revolutionise my thoughts and feelings upon almost every subject." When I called again some time in the year 1864, I found him in his library; we talked upon Spiritualism, and I asked him if he had read some book just then published. He raised his arm from a large Bible upon which it rested, and said, "No! I have no time to read any other book but *this*. I have lost too much time already, a proper understanding of this sacred volume will be more than I can accomplish in the few years yet remaining to me;" and he added, when we were parting, "You may tell the world that I deeply regret my folly in so long resisting the truth; when I leave this earth I shall die a Christian; and you may say that I owe my conversion to Spiritualism." I am not now stating these facts for the first time. I published them, with Dr. Elliotson's permission, in the *Spiritual Magazine*, before his death.

Now, what do you, the sceptic and opponent of Spiritualism, from the religious side, say to such a case as I have here presented? Where is the diabolism which you fear surrounds the practice of holding communion with the so-called dead? and what do you, the opponent from the other extreme—you who are wedded to the materialistic philosophy—say to such a conversion? Have either of you any reasonable answer to make to my enquiry, put in all kindness and consideration, for your educated prejudices? This is not a solitary case, be it remembered; there are thousands of such conversions through the evidences of Spiritualism. If this be so, can you wonder at the rapid strides which Spiritualism is making throughout the civilised world? Can you be surprised that such an audience as this—the majority at least—can be assembled to uphold a belief which teaches nothing worse than that spirit-communion is both possible and lawful. That our heavenly Father is a loving and merciful God! That each of us must reap as we may sow! That the future is a state of eternal progression! and that therefore there is hope and salvation for all!

Mr. D. D. Home arrived in England in 1855, and was most kindly received by the late Mr. William Cox, of Jermyn-street, who had been for some twenty or thirty years acquainted with the subject, having had, as he informed me, ample evidence of Spiritual interference with mundane matters long before the American revival. Amongst the first to meet Mr. Home was Dr. John Garth Wilkinson, of Wimpole-street; he wrote

out a full and very graphic account of several *séances* he had had with this well known medium—of which I shall have to speak presently—and he introduced Mr. Home to Mr. Rymer, of Ealing, then a close neighbour of mine, with whose family Mr. Home resided for some months, and it was then I first saw anything of Spiritualism. At this distance of time, now nearly sixteen years, when the wonders through Mr. Home's mediumship have made him a European celebrity, it is hardly necessary that I should detain you by a recital of the evidences which made me a believer, but it belongs to the subject of this "paper" that I should mention some of the incidents which came under my notice at the earliest stage of my investigations. At the very first sitting several things occurred, which, as I could always trust the evidence of my senses, satisfied me that some force, accompanied by superior intelligence, independent of any human being, was then present and engaged in producing the extraordinary manifestations which I witnessed. At this *séance* I was frequently caressed upon my knee by what felt to be a small, well-formed hand, though I was seated at the opposite end, from the medium, of a long dinner table in a brilliantly lighted room, and when the hands of all present were visibly imposed upon the surface of the table. Among other things, a large accordeon was brought, at my request, beneath the table from Mr. Home, and whilst held by me tightly, as it was necessary to do to retain it, the air I asked for—"Angels ever bright and fair"—was played by some invisible power in the most perfect manner possible. The conclusion to my mind was irresistible; and from that day to the present moment I have never been afraid to uphold, on all suitable occasions, the reality of the phenomena, though I could not at once accept the Spiritual claims. On a subsequent evening with Mr. Howard Jackson, a solicitor of Lincoln's Inn-fields, Mr. Rogers, son of the well-known dentist of Hanover-square, Mrs. Rymer, her son, and eldest daughter (who was herself a most interesting medium), and Mr. Home, we sat round three-parts of a large circular drawing-room table in the twilight of a fine summer evening, when a beautifully-formed hand and arm rose slowly from the unoccupied side of the table which we all saw distinctly. The arm was draped in a sleeve of gauzy substance, through which we could see the rounded flesh-like arm, the drapery terminating with a neat frill at the wrist; extending itself over the table, the hand lifted a small bell, rung it, and carried it away. In a moment or so I felt the hand on my knee, and the bell was given to me. At my request the hand was placed in mine, by which I could feel its form and texture. It was a small hand of velvety softness, neither warm nor cold; and then to complete my astonishment, the table rose gradually from the floor and continued to rise until it touched the ceiling, out of the reach of most of those present. I could touch it! and then it gradually descended until it again settled upon the carpet with no more jar or noise than a snow-flake. At another sitting those who wore rings had them suddenly slipped off, and presently a hand appeared at the vacant side of the table with all the rings, five in number, on its fingers. The hand was then gently inverted, and, scattering the rings upon the table, disappeared. Now I hope I may say it without offence, that it does not require a philosopher to be a witness of such facts, and that my testimony is as good, for the reality of such an occurrence, as the most able professor of physics living. And let me add that I entirely demur to the claim made by too many, that it requires a long investigation, and many experiments, to arrive at a safe and solid conclusion, and that therefore when at length the facts are admitted by them that the testimony of *séances* is more reliable than that of such men as myself, who, having no prejudices to overcome, decide at once upon the evidence of our ordinary senses. That it is possible to find a different solution for the cause of such phenomena than that of Spirit, I am not here to deny. Give us a more rational explanation, and I for one, only anxious to arrive at truth, will most readily accept it. I need not recount further the manifestations I witnessed at that time. They were then all, to me, most wonderful, but having seen with many other mediums, phenomena quite as marvellous, they are not now so. I have indeed arrived at that state of feeling and confidence in Spirit-power that nothing surprises me; I only require the testimony of two or three intelligent, truthful men and women, to give in my belief to anything, however impossible it may appear, and I am sure I stand at this moment in the presence of many who are proud to acknowledge that they share in my credulity.

Among those who have visited Mr. Rymer's house at the period I am speaking of was the late Mrs. Trollope, who came from Florence by the recommendation of her friend, Mr. Hiram Powers, the well-known sculptor, who is a Spiritualist. She staid at Mr. Rymer's house—under the same roof with Mr. Home—for two or three weeks, during which time she had such ample evidences that her materialistic views vanished; and after leaving Ealing she wrote a letter to Mrs. Rymer, which I saw, thanking her for her hospitality, and in which Mrs. Trollope said, "My visit has given a pillow to my old age, which I little dreamt of." Her

son, Mr. Thomas Trollope, frequently joined their *séances*, and both were present, when the late Sir David Brewster (after he and Lord Brougham had met Mr. Home at Mr. Cox's in Jermyn-street) came to a *séance* at Mr. Rymer's. Of Sir David Brewster's conduct in these matters, I should hesitate to speak now that he has passed to a higher life, but that it conveys a moral, which may serve as a warning to those who may still rely upon his publicly recorded statements in opposition to Spiritualism, and who might be disposed to follow in his footsteps. The day after Sir David had been to the *séance* at Mr. Rymer's, I called upon him, accompanied by Mr. Rymer, and in the Athenæum Club I had a long conversation with him. I told him, that having read an article attributed to him in *The North British Review*, dead against Spiritualism and its phenomena, I was anxious to know whether his recent experiences had changed his opinions. He said they certainly had, inasmuch as he could not attribute the phenomena either to trickery or to a delusion of the senses, but, he added, "Spirit, sir, is the last thing I will give in to."

Sir David Brewster, however, when it became known that he had been looking into Spiritualism, and it was suspected that he was a believer, wrote a letter to *The Morning Advertiser*, addressed to me by name, in which he strongly denied my version of his admissions, and the facts that had occurred at Mr. Cox's and Mr. Rymer's. One of his distinct denials was made in the following words—"It is not true, as stated by you, that a large dinner table moved about at Mr. Cox's;" and in explanation of what did occur, he says—"Besides the experiment with the accordion, a small hand-bell to be rung by the spirits was placed on the ground near my feet; I placed my feet round it in the form of an angle, to catch any intrinsic apparatus. The bell did not ring; but when taken to a place near Mr. Home's feet, it speedily came across and placed its handle in my hand. This was amusing." And he added, "I conjecture the effects were produced by machinery attached to the lower extremities of Mr. Home." This letter was written in the month of October, 1855, and was replied to by Mr. Cox, Mr. Thomas Trollope, and myself; the whole correspondence is reproduced in the appendix to Mr. Home's book. Last year Mrs. Gordon, Sir David's daughter, published his biography, and in making extracts from his diary, she innocently allowed Sir David to refute himself—thus, under the date of June, 1855, that is, four months before the date of his letter to me, he had made a long entry entirely at variance with his public statements of the same facts. He says—"The most unaccountable rappings were produced in various parts of the table, and the table actually rose from the ground when no hand was upon it. A larger table was produced, and exhibited similar movements. . . . A small hand-bell was then laid down with its mouth upon the carpet, and after lying for some time, it actually rang when nothing could have touched it. . . . These were the principal experiments. We could give no explanation of them, and could not conjecture how they could be produced by any kind of mechanism."

This, I think, settles the merits of that controversy, and vindicates Mr. Home's integrity of conduct and my veracity of statement. Sir David's daughter says that her father had "a dual nature." It is to be regretted that I and many others were only permitted to see the worst side of it. A curious fact remains to be said of Sir David Brewster. He was himself a medium; he saw spectres. "His own quaint confession," says his daughter, "that he was afraid of ghosts, though he did not believe in them, was as near the truth as possible."

A few words about Lord Brougham will complete this part of my history. Contrary to statements made in the press, I have reason to believe that Lord Brougham never spoke or wrote a word against Spiritualism; on the contrary, all that is known of his opinions upon this subject gives evidence that he was strongly impressed that it was an important truth. I had a short conversation with him, when the few words that he said, showed me that he was greatly impressed with what he saw at the *séances* he had with Mr. Home at Mr. Cox's; and in a work entitled *Nature*, by Mr. Charles Groom Napier, published early in the last year, the preface written by Lord Brougham, closes with these remarkable words—"There is but one question I would ask the author, Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce, are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud; if it be no bigger than a man's hand, it is a modern Spiritualism."

And, doubtless, in his forthcoming biography, we shall hear more of Lord Brougham's thoughts and feelings upon a subject which it is evident greatly interested him, and which he never discredited.

In the article written by Dr. Garth Wilkinson, to which I have alluded, after describing his experiences, he says:—

"I differ, therefore, with Sir David Brewster in his mode of exploration, and also in his valuation of presumptive honesty and human testimony, which always hitherto has been the most substantial word in the world, and a pillar which Divine Providence has not disdained to use in supporting the canopy of His revelations. . . . It seems probable, from experience, as well reason, that, granting the phenomena to be spiritual, the presence of determined scoffers at, and disbelievers in them, should in case the said persons be preponderant in their influence in the circle, render the manifestations imperfect or perhaps null. The known laws of human sympathy, and the operations of our own spirits when antipathetic persons are near us, may be also cited in proof of this. I conclude, then, that to the scoffer and the strongly prejudiced, who want no evidence, and to whom evidence has no appeal, evidence is, for the most part, not forthcoming. This simplifies the position; but what still remains is the peculiar Christian politesse of this century, viz. the necessity of good manners, and the agreeing to differ. On the part of those who believe, this may be best secured by letting the other party be. Providence can convince them, too, as easily as ourselves, when the time and their function comes, but by snatching at them prematurely, before they are ripe, we may evoke, on a great scale, two of the most formidable spirits of this world—WRATH and FEAR."

"As a final remark, let me caution the public against being led by Sir David Brewster, Professor Faraday, and other men of great names in their own departments, in this matter, which is not obviously within their field. . . . They are so alien to the subject, that they do not know the first condition of prosecuting it, viz. a gift of sympathy, and openness to conviction. Their very speciality of excellence in physical explorations, is against them in this new walk, which is combined spiritual and physical. The common observer, with little in his mind, with no repute to support, and no case to uphold, may perchance be equipped by nature for those revolutionary sciences where the savans are stupid upon them. Twelve fishermen, and not the high priests, are the everlasting resources of Providence. I therefore invite the unattached laity, of all descriptions, the willing fishermen, to remember that they have no overmen in this department; that it is an untrodden field; and that by the Grace of God there is at least a freedom for us all from the pressure of big names, 'because the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.'"

About the same period, i.e. 1855, Mrs. A. E. Newton visited England. She is the wife of a gentleman who now holds an important post in the Government Educational Department at Washington; they were among the earliest converts to Spiritualism, and suffered martyrdom. They were members of the Congregational Church in Boston, from which body they seceded, and published their reasons for so doing, in which they said:—

"A truth so novel and startling could not be at once received, however demonstrative and convincing the evidence might be upon which it rested. Nor was it until evidence had accumulated upon evidence, and proof became piled upon proof—not until manifestations of the most marvellous character had been repeatedly witnessed under a great variety of circumstances; and notwithstanding the application of every conceivable test—that we could consent to acknowledge, even to ourselves, a belief in the agency of spiritual beings. That belief, however, in spite of prejudice and scepticism—in spite of the general cry of 'Delusion and imposture'—in spite of all attempts of scientific men to explain the marvels on the basis of materialism (which explanations we found to be in every case wholly inadequate to account for what we witnessed), that belief became at length forced upon our minds by irresistible evidence."

It was an important epoch in my life in view of the results which have followed, when I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Mrs. Newton, whose religious tone of mind, and most eloquent reasoning, smoothed down all the difficulties which naturally arose in my own mind, even after I had seen and acknowledged the reality of the phenomena. But this is not the time to dwell and enlarge upon that point.

Mrs. Newton was at this time a medium, a seer, which I take to be a superior development. The following is a remarkable instance of her mediumistic powers:—

On one occasion, in my presence, a Mr. Holmes engaged her in conversation. He was confessedly a materialist. He started several propositions, which Mrs. Newton combated in language so eloquent and manner so simple and earnest, with reasoning so logical, that Mr. Holmes was speedily driven into a corner, and at length he said, "Well, well, all that you have urged may be true, but it does not convince me, and indeed nothing will, until I have direct evidence from some one whose memory I revere. If, for instance, I could obtain a manifestation from my mother, it would go far to satisfy my doubts." "Why," exclaimed Mrs. Newton, "it is your mother's spirit who has impressed me to speak these truths to you! I see her now, standing by your side, she tells me that her name is Betsy, and the child standing by her side is Ellen, your child; they implore you to believe that there is a spirit-world and a life immortal." Mr. Holmes countenance changed, and he remained for some moments silent. I asked him if he recognised the names? He admitted that his mother's name was Betsy, and that he had lost a child whose name was Ellen. The seed, however, in this instance was scattered on "stony ground," for on meeting Mr. Holmes some two or three years after, I found that he was still an unbeliever.

One of the most remarkable and gifted mediums who have come from America to England is the Rev. Thomas L. Harris. He is an inspired poet and preacher. Two of his poems—*The Lyric of the Golden Age*, and *The Lyric of the Morning Land*, published in 1856—were dictated whilst he was lying in a state of profound trance, the words coming from his lips without a falter or correction as rapidly as they could be written down by an amanuensis. Of *The Golden Age*, a competent authority, Mr. S. B. Brittain, one of the attesting witnesses, says:—

"This lyric has scarcely less than Miltonic grandeur, while in parts, at least, it has more than Miltonic

splendour. The descriptive portions are wonderful as illustrations of the compass of our language."

Mr. Harris preached a series of sermons in London in 1859, and among his constant attendants were Lady Oliphant, widow of Sir Anthony Oliphant, and her son Laurence Oliphant, late M.P. for Stirling, a well known *litterateur*, and at this moment, I am told, engaged in France as correspondent to the *Times*. He accompanied Lord Elgin in his special mission to China, and he was Secretary of Legation in Japan. He has written many works of travel, and is a contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*. In his last work, *Piccadilly*, which is a strong satire on the follies of fashionable life, one of his characters of most excellence is the Rev. T. L. Harris. Shortly after Mr. Harris left England he founded a religious community of Spiritualists at a place called Wassaick, in the State of New York, where Miss Ina Fawcett, now Mrs. Cuthbertson, a friend of mine, a lady of high culture and ample fortune, and Lady Oliphant joined him. This community, I have been told, live in perfect peace and contentment, their habits and mode of life are of the most primitive character; they carry on various industrial employments, working at trades according to their choice, having no servants, and, indeed, living somewhat after the manner in which the first followers of Christ are said to have done. They regard Mr. Harris as a chosen servant, a great light and high priest of the New Christian Church. During the parliamentary vacations, Mr. Laurence Oliphant was accustomed to make an annual visit to Wassaick, and about two years ago he resigned his seat in Parliament, and joined this community. How it is that Mr. Oliphant has now returned again to the world and to literary pursuits, I am not informed. He is a man of brilliant talents, of great social influence, and a Spiritualist. But, as a disciple of Mr. Harris's, I do not think he would now join a *séance*, as he would eagerly have done when I first knew him.

His conversion to Spiritualism, as he described it to me, came about in this way. He was walking through the streets of New York, when seeing on a door plate the name and calling of a spirit medium, he entered, and asked the medium for some proof of his power. After a short time the man went into a dreamy abnormal state, and, springing up, caught hold of the hand of his visitor, shaking it heartily, and exclaimed,—"Laurence, my friend, I am happy to meet you again." "Who are you?" was the inquiry. "Why, I am Tom So-and-So, who died in your arms in the Crimea." Satisfied that the medium could know nothing of himself or history, Mr. Oliphant became deeply interested, pursued his inquiries, which ultimately, as I have said, in his becoming a disciple of Mr. Harris, who claims to be controlled and guided by Spiritual influx.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

When staying at an hotel some years ago in Edinburgh, I made the acquaintance there of a well-known physician, Dr. W. A. Browne, a Commissioner in Lunacy, who was engaged on official business in that city. At breakfast one morning, where we were joined by his son, a medical student, I received, with my letters, a copy of the *Spiritual Magazine*, which I handed to Dr. Browne, and I asked him if he knew anything of that subject. "No," he said, "I look upon it as a great delusion! I received a letter the other day though, from a former pupil of mine, telling me of some strange antics of tables being lifted and broken by invisible agency, of which he had just heard, and he asked me if I thought 'such things could be.' I told him I did not think they could, and that such matters were not worthy of a serious thought." "You are mistaken, Doctor," I said, "such things can be, and are well worthy, in my opinion, of a medical man's most serious consideration. I know who your pupil is, and I know that the incidents mentioned by him happened in his own presence, and at his own house." This led to further conversation upon the subject, and, in compliance with the Doctor's request, I related some of my own experiences, during the recital of which, by his gestures and expression, I gathered that he thought it would be but a waste of time to talk further with a man so lamentably weak as to insist that these things were true. I however pressed Dr. Browne before we parted to answer me a question—"Supposing," I said, "that my friends, like the great mass of mankind, ignorant of the facts of which I have just spoken, were led to suspect my sanity, and you had been called in to give your professional opinion upon the state of my mind, and I had repeated seriously, and emphatically, the statements which I have just made to you; would you not have thought me mad, and have sent me to a lunatic asylum?" "Well," said the Doctor, with great gravity and candour, "I think I should."

"Then," I retorted, "see what an awful responsibility rests upon men like you, and how necessary it is that you should know, as much as I know, before you can discharge your duties faithfully. You know that I am not mad; and yet I insist that these things are not delusions, but that they are realities, and your pupil now knows they are, and the evidence lies broadcast throughout society."

The Doctor smiled, but made no reply, and our conversation ended. I do not know if he profited by it; but I have reason to believe that his son did, for he wrote to me some time after, telling me how much interested he had been in the conversation I had had with his father, and as he was about to read "a paper" to the medical students before he left Edinburgh, in which he would like to introduce the subject of Spiritualism, he begged me to lend him any books of reference upon the subject, which I did. This gentleman, Dr. Orichton Browne, is now, I am told, a very rising and able man, and has charge of the County Asylum at Wakefield. How much of his acknowledged ability he may owe to his study of the questions raised in my conversation with his father, I know not. But I do not suppose he will forget the lesson in psychology, which he did not learn at college.

Let me now claim your attention to an important history relating to Dr. Browne's former pupil, who now holds an eminent position in the medical world. This doctor edited a scientific journal at the time when he first heard of Spiritualism, from reading Mr. Rymer's pamphlet (to which I have alluded), and straightway without, as he will now confess, knowing much about it, he proceeded to slay the monster; to destroy the "delusion" by which, as he thought, so many weak men and women were being enthralled; and in the columns of his journal, after repeating some of Mr. Rymer's statements respecting the phenomena, the worthy Doctor says:—

"These are strong facts, and it is allowing a great deal to say that we think Mr. Rymer to be in earnest in stating his belief in them. For ourselves, we entirely disbelieve them, and shall gladly give any one the opportunity of convincing us. In the meanwhile we venture to recommend to Mr. Rymer's attentive study, an old-fashioned college text-book, which we suspect he has never opened—Pratt's *Mechanical Philosophy*. He will there learn of those immutable laws which the unchanging God has impressed once and forever on Creation! and reading of the wondrous harmony and order which reign by their operation throughout the whole bounds of Creation, he may, perhaps, come to share our doubts and disbelief of those imaginings which tell us of their violation, in moving tables and shaking lamps, and dancing chairs; and he may, perchance, should his study prosper, catch also a sense of the pitying scorn with which those nurtured on the strong meat of the inductive philosophy, within the very courts and halls that Newton trod, view these sickly spiritualistic dreamers, thus drunk with the new wine of folly and credulity."

I can imagine with what an air of proud satisfaction the Doctor rose from his editorial chair after hurling from his facile pen such an eloquent denunciation against these stupid mummeries, and, probably, saying to himself: "There! that will settle the question; no intelligent man, I think, will ever dare to stand up in future in defence of the so-called spiritual phenomena." But there is an end to all delusions, and the day was at hand when this doctor was to be relieved of his hallucinations; when the tables were to be turned in a double sense, one of them being literally smashed in his presence, and "the immutable laws of creation" rudely violated. When this came about "the old college text-book" was lost sight of in the bewilderment which overcame this worthy Doctor, now himself "drunk with the new wine of folly and credulity."

It so happened that some time after the doctor's essay had been published, I accidentally made his acquaintance, when we talked of Spiritualism, in which he seemed to take a lively interest; I did not know why, nor that he had been a public opponent of "the delusion." In the conversation I mentioned Mr. William Wilkinson's name as a friend of mine, and a full believer in the subject. "Is it possible? I know him," said the Doctor; "he is a very able man; I shall call upon him and talk the matter over." We exchanged cards and parted, and the next that I heard of him was, that having called upon Mr. Wilkinson, that gentleman had arranged to take Mr. Rollin Squire, a young American and a very powerful medium, to the Doctor's house in the country, where, during their stay, a series of sittings were held, when, among other striking incidents, a strong iron-bound table was, at the Doctor's request, smashed in half a minute by some invisible power, and the fragments thrown across the room; and this was one of the facts of which Dr. Browne spoke to me in Edinburgh.

The Doctor was so strongly impressed with all he had seen, that he at once wrote another article; not, however, for the *Scientific Journal*, but for the *Spiritual Magazine*, and to which, to his honour be it said, he would have appended his name, but Mr. Wilkinson dissuaded him from doing so lest he should evoke "the pitying scorn" of those less enlightened, who were "nurtured on the strong meat of the inductive philosophy," and he accordingly withheld it. In that paper, which was published in the first volume of the *Spiritual Magazine*, he gave a full account of what he had witnessed, and subsequently he wrote a second article for the *Spiritual Magazine*, published in August 1860, in which he says:

"I have been very much laughed at for my former record of facts. My own brother has informed me that he does not believe one word of them. A valued friend refused to reprint them in his medical journal solely from regard to my reputation. Well! I must remember the old adage, 'Magna est veritas,' and trust to its final victory. In the meantime I feel

it due to science and to truth, without troubling myself about the consequences, to place the following FURTHER FACTS on record.

"I again pledge my word of honour to their strict accuracy. I have only recorded what I have myself verified and seen."

A *séance* with Mr. Home is then described, and the writer concludes with the following propositions:

"1. In the presence of a medium raps on and about the table, on the floor, on the walls of the room, do occur without the intervention of any physical agent, &c. 2. These raps and knocks are, moreover, intelligent. 3. The table at such circles is frequently moved and tilted, and suspended in the air without any visible agency, and other articles of furniture are similarly moved. 4. A shadow hand, not that of any one present, is sometimes formed, which places a bell on the table, or lifts a pencil laid on a piece of paper and writes with it. 5. Most wonderful music is played on an accordion without any human agency, &c. &c."

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, you will expect me, in fulfilment of my promise, to divulge the name of this gentleman, and I shall do so for the purpose of holding him up to the admiration of all right thinking men and women, for the candour and rare moral courage he has evinced in retracting an error of judgment as soon as he was satisfied that it was no longer tenable. His name is Lockhart Robertson, a member of the Royal College of Physicians, and recently promoted by the Lord Chancellor to fill one of the highest offices in his profession, and I have to add that he has done me the honour of being here present, and he will, no doubt, have something to say to me by-and-bye, as he did not know that I was about to give his name, and his most admirable conduct, so much prominence in my address. But I trust, seeing the desperate fight which we Spiritualists have, in overcoming the prejudices of his contemporaries, that Dr. Robertson will not think I have made an unfair use of the facts with which his name is so honourably associated.

EXTRAORDINARY SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

Amongst my early experiences a very remarkable incident occurred at Malvern, where I was well known, and had a close intimacy with the two leading Hydro-paths, Dr. Gully and Dr. Wilson. Both were materialists, and both were converted through my instrumentality to Spiritualism. The following are the circumstances:—

I occupied, with my wife and step-daughter, at the time I am about to speak, apartments at the house of a man named Wilmore, who, with his wife and daughter, conducted the house. They had staying with them a Miss Lee, of Worcester, and a Mr. Moore, of Halifax. I was a frequent visitor at Dr. Wilson's establishment, and on intimate terms with most of the patients, and I excited considerable interest among them, by talking unreservedly of Spiritualism and its phenomena. One day, Mr. Howard Kennard, a member of the well-known firm of Iron Merchants, in Thames-street, London, asked me if I would use my influence to induce the Marshalls to come to Malvern, and he would guarantee that they should receive a fee of not less than £10.

I wrote accordingly, and the Marshalls came to Malvern, where I took rooms for them. Mr. Kennard invited whom he pleased to the various *séances* which followed, and the usual differences of opinion arose amongst the sitters. One person, whom I did not know at the time, Mr. Novra, a professional conjurer, of Regent-street, was looked up to by Mr. Kennard and his friends as a clever fellow, and a great authority; and to Mr. Novra was assigned the duty of quietly watching the movements of the mediums, and explaining the method by which they accomplished "their dexterous tricks." And by the way this conjurer afterwards tried to make professional capital out of his experiences at Malvern, by getting up lectures at St. James' Hall, illustrated by large transparencies to expose Spiritualism, which were a gross travesty and a signal failure, but which, nevertheless, were greatly praised by two or three of the London journals.

We retired after the second *séance* to Mr. Kennard's rooms, and there Mr. Novra explained to Mr. Kennard's entire satisfaction, that the Marshalls effected their manifestations by the aid of a little boy, or a well-trained monkey, concealed under the petticoats of the elder female!

On the following day the Marshalls told me, when I called upon them, that Mr. Novra, who I found sitting in their room, was keeping guard over them to prevent their leaving the town, and that Mr. Kennard had gone to the magistrates for a warrant to arrest them as rogues and vagabonds.

I went immediately to the court, and there I found Mr. Kennard with the Clerk of the Peace, who had made out an order awaiting the magistrate's signature. Col. Wilmott, the presiding magistrate, having arrived, he was handed the document for his signature, when I interposed, and demanded to know upon what ground such an outrage was about to be perpetrated. The Clerk read the section of the act affecting the conduct of rogues and vagabonds, "That if any money should be received under false pretences," &c. I asked Mr. Kennard if any money had been demanded of him, or if he or any one had paid any money to Mrs. Marshall. He was obliged to admit that he had not; and his shameful attempt to punish these innocent women, who had come to Malvern to oblige him, failed. This very unlooked-for episode, however, had a result which fully compensated me for the annoyance. The Marshalls could not leave as they had intended to do on that day, which was Saturday, and at my request they consented to remain until the following Tuesday. On returning to my apartments that evening, my landlord, Mr. Wilmore, asked me, as a special favour, to let him see something of these mediums' powers. He had he said, been bath-man at Dr. Gully's for some years, and knew something of Mesmerism, but he had never seen anything of Spiritualism, and he did not believe in it.

I gave him a note to the Marshalls, and they arranged to come to his house on the following afternoon, when he invited several of his neighbours and their wives, who, with the inmates of his own household, formed a party of about ten or twelve persons. I and my family were to spend the day out, but before leaving I was accosted whilst walking round the garden by Wilmore's visitor, his daughter's suitor, Mr. Moore, who said in a strong Yorkshire accent—"I beg your pardon, sir, but I understand you say that a table can be lifted without

human hands or machinery." "Yes," I said, "it can, by spirits." "And you say music can be played in the same way?" "Yes," I said, "it can." "Whoy I would as soon believe that this house could be pitched over yon hill; I'm surprised at a gentleman like you talking in that way." I could not help smiling at the little man's earnestness and incredulity, and I asked him if he were to be of the party who were to meet that afternoon? He said he was stopping on purpose; then I said, "You had better save your indignation until you have had an opportunity of seeing what may happen."

I left home and returned about 10 o'clock, letting myself in, when my wife and daughter went to bed and left me alone in our sitting room, which was shortly after entered by Wilmore in a state of great excitement, and looking very pale. "Oh, sir," he said, "I am glad you have come in; do come downstairs; there's my wife and daughter in hysterics, and I don't know what to do." I accompanied him at once, and entered upon a scene which I shall never forget. On a chair near the door Miss Wilmore was seated, rocking herself about with her handkerchief pressed close to her eyes, screaming as hard as she could; a small round table on three legs, whose antics it appeared was the cause of all the confusion, ambled up to me, *no one touching it*, and made me a profound bow, as if to say, How do you do? Mrs. Wilmore was pale and trembling, and Miss Lee was lying on the sofa kicking and screaming in concert with her friend at the other end of the room. I went to her and tried to pacify her; the table accompanied me ambling like a dog in a frisky humour, and stood by my side. She recovered herself after a time, and in sobbing accents was about to explain, when the table, upon which her eyes were fixed, made a sudden jump at her and set her off again into violent hysterics. I then seized the table, and putting it down in the middle of the room, I said sternly, "Now, spirits, you have done quite enough; leave this family in quiet. Go! I insist upon it in God's name, go!" Whereupon the table remained quiet, and as soon as these good people had recovered themselves sufficiently, they commenced to explain what they had been doing, and how the excitement I witnessed had come about. At this moment I discovered that my Yorkshire friend of the morning was seated with his arms folded, doubled up, in a dark corner of the room, as much frightened apparently as the women, but quite silent. They then told me that during the *séance* of the early part of the evening, when the Marshalls were present, among other things it was said by the invisibles, that both Wilmore and his daughter were mediums, and after their family supper Mr. Moore suggested that they should try what they could do with the table on their own account. They accordingly sat round it, and soon obtained responses to their questions. Mr. Moore said, "I assure you, sir, it has been talking to us like 'a human.' It told me where my father lived, and where he died; and when we wanted to give up, the table actually refused, and it has been going about as you saw it, like mad, for nearly an hour. It's most extraordinary! It's most extraordinary! I shall deliver a lecture upon it in our town. Do you think I might?" "Well," I said, "I think you had better not, no one would believe a word of your statement. You would find them much in the same condition of mind that Mr. Moore was this morning."

I went on the following morning to see Dr. Gully; I told him of the strange events of the previous evening, and this I believe was the first incident that stimulated him to a serious inquiry. He requested me to arrange a *séance* that evening with Wilmore and his daughter, which I did, and they proved to be the strongest mediums I have ever met, without having had any previous experience. The 'rapping' sounds were loud, and the intelligence was even more than usually clear and coherent. Dr. Gully got a message purporting to be from his father, who gave the name of "Daniel." From that moment Dr. Gully's interest was awakened to the importance of the subject, and having many opportunities of investigating since then, chiefly through Mr. Home, who has frequently been his guest, Dr. Gully is now, and has been for some years, a full and firm believer.

Dr. Wilson, too, became a convert and an enthusiastic advocate for the truth of Spiritualism, and in one of the last letters he wrote to me before his sudden death, he said he had determined to go to America to obtain all the information he could upon the subject.

The following is another incident of interest, which came within the range of my personal experience:—

Mr. John J. Schenk, a merchant in the City, who is a German by birth, but long resident in England, was introduced to me by Mr. Hy. Gibson, also a merchant in the City, who had himself been convinced of the truth of Spiritualism. Mr. Schenk was deeply imbued with the German philosophy, and as a matter of course totally opposed to Spiritualism. We talked over the subject for some time, when he exhibited the strongest, most contemptuous feelings for my reasoning and facts. He, however, consented to accompany me at once to the Marshalls, where among other startling evidences for which he was so little prepared, a small table, upon which the medium's fingers were lightly imposed, rose about a foot from the floor and remained suspended, when at my request Mr. Schenk stood up, and placing one hand on each side of the table, he tried in vain with all his strength to press it down.

The table resisted his efforts, just as if it had been supported by a powerful spring. This was enough; he threw up his hands and exclaimed in a state of great excitement, "Good God! is this true." On the following morning he called upon me to tell me of his interview with his wife, who had been for some years a delicate invalid and unable to go into society. On arriving at home he immediately sat down and gave Mrs. Schenk a full account of his evening's adventures which, wonderful as they were to him, seemed to excite no interest in her. She shook her head, and smiled at his earnestness. "You don't seem," he said, "to be in the least surprised at what I am telling you. Ah! I suppose you think I have been deluded, and you don't believe a word of it." "Yes," she replied, "I do believe it all. I have no doubt of the power of spirits; I know they can make themselves seen and felt. I have had experience of the fact for years past! My mother's spirit frequently comes to me, and only this very morning she laid her hand upon my shoulder as I was coming downstairs." Such a statement made to him for the first time quite overwhelmed my friend.

He asked her "How it was that she had never told him of these things before?" and her reply conveyed a lesson which I hope will not be lost upon some of my auditors. "Look," she said, "at the state of my health! Knowing your condition of mind, I dare not speak to you of these things. You would have thought them proofs of an infirmity of intellect, and as our doctor would probably have agreed with you, I might have spent the rest of my days in a lunatic asylum."

Mr. Schenk is now a confirmed Spiritualist; but he told

me the other day he had ceased to talk about it, for he was sick of meeting with people who were so obstinate and incredulous."

AN INTERESTING INCIDENT.

To show how much wisdom there was in Mrs. Schenk's caution, I will relate a story as a case in point. I may not, in this instance, mention names. It would not be fair to the members of an excellent family who reside in the neighbourhood of London:—

I made a visit to a lunatic asylum in Yorkshire, some few years ago, and I asked the matron who was conducting me through it, whether any of the patients imagined they saw spirits. There is one lady she said that did, and at my request I was introduced to her. After a few words of ordinary conversation, I said to this lady, "I understand that you know something of a subject in which I am much interested. You see spirits, I am told, and have intercourse with them. Have you any objection to speak to me, and tell me of your experiences?" "Do you think," she replied, with a significant glance at the matron, "that this is the time and place to talk upon such a subject?" I felt at once the force of her remark, and turned the conversation to other topics. Before I left, she asked me if I knew A. B. "Yes," I said, "I know him intimately." "I am so pleased to hear that, he is my brother, and though I was placed here, where I have been detained for seven years by his consent, I know his loving and generous heart would not allow him to do an unkind or unjust act. He has provided amply for my comforts, and he has corresponded regularly with me until within the last two or three months, and now I cannot get a reply to my letters; will you, on your return, call upon him and ask him why he does not write, and why I am still detained here." I of course, promised to do so, but before leaving, I sought an interview with the doctor in charge of the establishment, and I asked him why Miss Blank was detained there. He said, "Because she is mad." "Do you think, I asked, she is mad because she says she sees and talks with spirits?" "Well," he replied, "I think that would be pretty strong proof." This was enough to satisfy me of his delusion, and I left the place with a sad heart. On my return to London, on the following day, I sought her brother, who is one of the most worthy men I know. He explained the case, which seemed to justify him in giving his consent to his sister being placed there in the first instance, and he showed me her letters. They were splendid specimens of a highly educated and superior woman. But in one corner of every letter there were two words written in large characters, which were not comprehensible, the meaning of which she refused to explain, and this was the doctor's proof that she was not sane. Her brother listened with great respect to what I had to say upon the subject. I suggested that those enigmatical words might be her spirit-name, which many mediums adopted, and which, if she had so explained it, would have been taken as additional proof of her lunacy. I entreated her brother to go and see her, and to judge for himself, not heeding what the doctor might think or say. He did so, and brought his sister away with him at once. This occurred about eight years ago, and they have lived, I am told in perfect harmony together under the same roof ever since. For the reasons I have stated, I do not mention the name of this family, but if any of the medical men present feel sufficient interest in this case, I will in confidence give the name to them that they may make enquiry and satisfy themselves that this is a truthful statement of facts.

THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

Of all the Spiritualistic exhibitions in England, that of the Davenport Brothers created most excitement. The conduct of the English press was very unjust towards these young Americans, and the brutality exhibited by the mob at Liverpool, and afterwards at Huddersfield, where, in both places, their cabinet was smashed, without discovering any concealed apparatus, is a disgrace to the police and magistracy of those towns. I have no hesitation in saying that the phenomena witnessed in the presence of the brothers and Mr. William Fay, who accompanied them, were genuine from first to last.

The phenomena, for the most part, never were, and could not be, successfully imitated by any conjuror. These young men, on their arrival in London, came first to me with letters of introduction from friends of mine in America. I was the first person in England who witnessed some of the manifestations in a private room, and being quite satisfied of their reality, I got up the first two sances at the Hanover-square Rooms for a party of twenty city gentlemen, the majority of whom agreed at once that it was no delusion of the senses, nor were the manifestations explainable as a clever piece of legerdemain; indeed, if the Davenport were such accomplished conjurors, they must have been so from their birth, for the same phenomena were witnessed through their mediumship seventeen years ago when they were children. I will only speak of two among many marvellous facts witnessed by me:—

One was at the residence of Lord Borthwick. On that occasion Ira Davenport and William Fay were each bound to a chair within two yards of the company present. It was intended to show the wonderful feat of Mr. Fay's coat being twitched off in the dark interval of a few seconds, while his arms were fast bound behind him. But instead of that Ira Davenport's waistcoat came off, and was thrown at my feet, his coat remaining on, and on examining the waistcoat it was found to be fully buttoned, with his watch in the pocket, and the chain suspended and fastened through the buttonhole, just as he was seen to have worn it ten or fifteen seconds before.

The other instance was at the Hanover-square Rooms, when Professor Taylor, as he was called (who lectured at the Coliseum against Spiritualism, as long as it paid, but who since then has become a convert, and is now a proclaimed Spiritualist), tied Mr. Fay up in a most intricate way, with a long piece of rope, making many knots, and fastening the final knot at the back of the chair. It was then sealed by Colonel Drayson (I think it was he, who is an astronomer, of high repute in her Majesty's service at Woolwich, and an avowed Spiritualist), and in two or three minutes, when the

light was restored, we found Mr. Fay liberated with every knot removed *except the final knot*, which, of course, under ordinary circumstances, must have been the first to be loosened before the other intermediate knots could be untied. *This*, however, the final knot, with the seal intact, remained, and this is the identical piece which I cut off and carried away, and which I have had in my possession ever since.

MISS NICHOLL THE MEDIUM.

Miss Nicholl (now Mrs. Guppy) has from the first period of her Spiritual development, now about four years ago, exhibited a peculiar phase of mediumship which is as rare as it is extraordinary.

Flowers and fruits in great profusion, and many other substances, are invariably brought and presented to the persons composing the circle, which with her is always a dark circle—that is, the sitters, after making all necessary examination of the room—any room, and the surrounding conditions, are required to remain in total darkness, with the light restored at intervals to examine the results.

Those, therefore, who are not content to trust four out of their five senses, need not seek to know anything of the great marvels which undoubtedly occur at Mrs. Guppy's sances.

As I desire to speak only of such evidence as I have obtained by personal experience, I refrain from repeating statements which have been made to me by witnesses who are as competent and as reliable as I am, of what they have witnessed recently at various sances with Mrs. Guppy and Miss Neyland, a young medium who generally sits with Mrs. Guppy, and who is rapidly developing, I am told, as a seer and a very powerful medium for that phase called physical manifestations, which is the most useful, as it is the most convincing to the uninitiated; and as Miss Neyland has, I am happy to say, decided to make it her profession, all can avail themselves of her services by making an appointment with her; she resides with Mrs. Guppy. I had many sances with Miss Nicholl before she was married, at the houses of different friends, never at her own house, where, I believe, the most remarkable phenomena occurred.

I will describe the occurrences at one sance only, which convinced me of the marvellous power and intelligence which the spirits who manifest through Mrs. Guppy display:—

I was invited to the late Mrs. Houghton's residence, with whom her daughter, Miss Houghton (who is here present), lived; they, with Mrs. Pearson, Mr. John Tawse, a retired East Indian merchant, Mrs. Tawse, Miss Nicholl, and myself, composed the circle. The Houghtons always commenced their sances with prayer, and then sat quietly awaiting whatever the spirits chose to do. I had not been accustomed to sit quietly, but rather to ask questions of the invisibles to induce them to do what I required, instead of what they chose.

On that occasion we sat for a quarter of an hour in darkness, without obtaining a sound, and growing impatient I begged Mrs. Houghton to let me conduct the sance in my way; but she objected, and I was obliged to submit. We sat another quarter of an hour without obtaining a manifestation of any kind.

I then appealed again to Mrs. Houghton, telling her that the only interest I now had in coming to a sance was that I might obtain something out of the ordinary routine, which I could carry away, and tell to others. She at length consented, and I at once asked if there were any spirits present? to which three raps were made in response, meaning yes! I then said I suppose that you are prepared to bring us fresh flowers as usual? to which the response was again yes! Then I said I don't want any flowers, and I will thank you not to bring us any; but bring us fruit instead, will you? Answer, yes! Then bring me, if you please, French plums. In less than a minute two French plums, remarkably fresh, and of fine quality, were placed in my hand. Mr. Tawse asked for almonds, and got them; Mrs. Tawse for raisins; Mrs. Pearson for a lemon; and each obtained what each had asked for. I was assured that no French plums, nor almonds and raisins, were in the house, and if there had been, it would have made no difference to me in the test I was making, for up to the moment of making my request I had not thought of French plums, and therefore I need hardly say the medium could not have known my object. This is the fruit I obtained on that evening, somewhat shrivelled by time, having been in my possession more than three years.

We then, each of us, were sprinkled profusely with a perfume which we each had asked for. Essence of bouquet, lavender, and verberna, were three of the scents.

I was satisfied, and nothing can disturb my conviction of the complete intelligence and power, independent of any human being, which the spirits exercised at that sance.

Since then, the fruit manifestations have been, I understand, quite as common as flowers; and the recent manifestations of this character, both as to size and the variety of fruits which have been brought to those composing the circle, far transcend in wonder anything in my experience. It must be understood that when these material substances are brought by the invisibles, the doors and windows are fast-closed, and no ordinary means left of entering the room.

This brief sketch of Miss Nicholl and her mediumship would be incomplete without introducing an episode, which carries with it a moral; and you will, perhaps, bear with me, whilst I tell the story in my own way:—

An independent gentleman of large experience, thoroughly materialistic in his views, wrote a book, the title of which was to have been, *Light, Instinct, and Intellect*. He has an intimate friend, Mr. James Wason, an eminent solicitor, residing in Liverpool, with whom in early life, say forty years ago, our author spent much of his time, and who joined with him in his war against the Bible and a belief in a life hereafter.

Mr. Wason is also a friend of mine of twenty-five years standing, and about ten or twelve years ago I had the happiness of making him a convert to Spiritualism, under circumstances peculiarly interesting, of which, however, it is not my purpose now to speak.

Meeting with his friend Wason, after a long absence in India, our author was told by him of his changed views and of his experiences in Spiritualism, and he replied, "I think the best thing you can do is to go to some highly respectable lunatic asylum and state your belief, which will entitle you to immediate admission," but Mr. Wason would not be satisfied until he had brought his old friend to witness some of the marvels of which he had spoken, and after some difficulty he accomplished it. "Whatever subject was talked of," says our author, "seemed secondary to him: in short, there was no peace till I went with him to see those mediums." Our author, however, was not at all impressed by what he saw; he was convinced they were cheats, and he ridiculed the whole affair, lamenting to think that this was the man who before they had parted years ago was, as he expressed it, always what might be termed a very materialistic character, such as might be expressed in the words, "I believe what I see, and I am not to be gammoned by any nonsense."

Our author, notwithstanding his regrets, gained something, as he thought, by contemplating the strange condition of his friend Wason's mind, and he sat down at once to add another chapter to his book with the heading, "What is Belief," in which he says:—"Belief is of all sorts, and shades, and quantities, dependent on a thousand circumstances."

"General belief we use every hour in the day. When we read the newspapers, we admit the evidence at once, as we do also in most of the minor affairs of life. But it is when something weighty affecting our happiness, or well-being, is presented to us that the question of belief becomes more intricate. Perhaps we believe because Dr. Johnson tells us it is so. Then it is not really we who believe, but Dr. Johnson who believes, and we are only looking-glasses who reflect the image Doctor Johnson holds up before us; and if next day Doctor Jamieson holds up a stronger image before our minds, our belief in Dr. Johnson fades away, and we reflect Dr. Jamieson's belief. Or perhaps Dr. Johnson changes his opinion, and then we poor looking-glasses are very indignant with him, and feel ourselves at sea without a compass."

"Belief is not certainty, even although a person may say, 'I have not the slightest doubt on the subject.' That expression only means, 'The evidence is so strong that I admit the fact.' But it does not amount to *bona-fide* positive certainty."

"The action of the mind, if influenced only by the facts presented to it, is easy, and may be termed agreeable; but it becomes disagreeable when extraneous authority is pressed into the service to induce and compel a belief repugnant to reason, and contrary to the known laws of nature."

"When my friend W— puts the weight of his truthfulness in the scale, and insists that he feels affronted because I do not believe these strange things, I say he is wrong, and that he ought to carry moving and talking table always about with him, as organ boys carry monkeys—otherwise it is the positive duty of every person, in the interests of society at large, to disbelieve every portion of such statements as are not capable of proof anywhere and everywhere; because, when once the mind is induced to open its doors and admit one absurdity, the door remains open to a hundred others. Respectable people say they have seen spirits; . . . the worst of such nonsense is that numbers of very respectable well-educated people believe it, and numbers of others, influenced by their respectability, are frightened, and know not what to believe."

With this celebrated chapter our author closed his now celebrated book, and after writing a very amusing preface in the same tone and temper, it was sent to the press, in the full confidence no doubt that it was a book above the common order of literary productions, containing impregnable scientific truths for all times.

But strange to say, before it was out of the printer's hands, 'a change came o'er the spirit of his dreams,' and he forthwith stopped the press, until he should consider how best to relieve himself from the dilemma in which he had suddenly been involved by that unfortunate chapter—"What is belief?" Strange things were positively taking place at his own house, and through a medium whom he could not doubt. Chairs and tables moved about, and material objects were carried out of the room and hidden in a very mysterious way. What was to be done? The case, as put by himself of Dr. Johnson changing his opinion, came home with a point. Our author, however, was equal to the occasion. He is an earnest, honest man, as you have seen, and a thinker; and after he was now satisfied that there was neither trickery nor delusion in the physical manifestations which he repeatedly witnessed at his own house, he set to work to find a solution—spirit, of course, was out of the question—some one of the half-million laws of nature, as Professor De Morgan suggests, "about which no one knows anything"—must be the cause.

First he thought it would be only fair to read what the Spiritualists had to say in support of their "nonsense," and he accordingly, with some impatience, read through eight works. "Thank God!" he writes to a friend—"thank God, as people say, I have done reading about spirits. I have read the following works," which he enumerates, "2,894 pages, which, I think, is pretty well; and I have seen as much, or more, about it at home, as all these books put together contain. I have seen a table move totally alone, and a chair move totally alone—move just as you see a leaf carried along by the wind on a turnpike road, and I have had reasonable conversations with Mary Jane whenever I please; but I have neither seen nor heard anything to convince me, in the slightest degree, that Mary Jane is the spirit of a deceased person. It is only a hitherto unexplained phenomenon of nature, which, until chemists and scientific men analyse, will be made use of to get money from the many."

Now came the question: what is this power which issues from the human body which, among other things, gives motive power to inert substances? I cannot follow the author in his very strange and possibly reasonable philosophy from a materialist's point of view; but he is an amateur chemist, and he makes it out that "Man is a condensation of gases and vapours," and "that these vapours (which Reichenbach calls *odylic*) emanate from certain persons, who appear to have phosphorus in excess in the system, they form a positively living, thinking, acting body of material vapour, able to move a heavy table, and to carry on a conversation, etc." When he had completed his ingenious and curious speculations, he published the whole in an appendix to his book, the title of which he changed, instead of *Light, Instinct and Intellect*, he adopted a less dignified title, and called it *Mary Jane; or, Spiritualism Chemically Explained*. And those who are in search of a solution against the spirit theory might be inclined to accept him as an authority, but for a very important fact, which (in giving the author's name to you in strict confidence) I am about to reveal. After the book was published, and fairly in the hands of the public, he had other evidences which overturned his philosophy for the second time.

The Davenports went to Paris, and resided with him for some months, and with the opportunities thus afforded through their marvellous exhibition of spirit power, our author's education was completed, and he became a Spiritualist. On his return to England, he made the acquaintance of Miss Nicholl, and ultimately made her his wife; and now, through her mediumship, which increases in wonder, Mr. Samuel Guppy, the author of *Mary Jane*, is no doubt prepared to meet all comers, and to do battle in defence of Spiritualism, and is now in his turn "entitled to immediate admission to a respectable lunatic asylum."

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE.

I will close this part of my subject by giving a few more particulars about remarkable mediums:—

Mrs. Emma Hardinge's arrival in England, in 1865, introduced a new phase of Spiritualism.

That lady, who is an inspirational speaker, made her first address from this platform, the subject being selected by the audience, and for an hour and a-half, without break or falter, this untrained woman, in the ordinary sense, poured forth and expounded the subject of her discourse in the most eloquent manner possible.

Mrs. Hardinge claims to be influenced by spirits, some of whom she recognises, and I believe in the claim: for in no other way can I reasonably account for the readiness and ease with which she takes up and dilates without a moments preparation upon any and every subject presented to her. I know that some of my scientific friends deny the soundness of her expositions, but that is not her fault, and does not detract from the marvel that is presented in her person. If she be influenced by the spirits of departed men, they may not have belonged to the modern schools of science, which have thrown aside, as in chemistry, for instance, many of the teachings received as truths at the commencement of the present century; but who, nevertheless, may have been the great lights—the Faraday's and Tyndall's—of their day, with a great deal more to learn not "dreamt of in their philosophy." Mrs. Hardinge, who is an English woman, has again returned to London, and during the last few weeks she has delivered several orations of remarkable eloquence in this hall; she is now engaged in holding Sunday evening services (with which I am not identified) at the Cleveland Assembly Rooms, near Fitzroy-square, where those who go to hear her discourses will, I am sure, be enlightened in many ways, whether they agree with all her teachings or not.

MRS. EVERITT, THE MEDIUM.

Mrs. Everitt, the wife of Mr. Thomas Everitt, a highly respectable tradesman, residing in London, is well-known as a spirit-medium. It is two or three years since I had the privilege of attending one of their private circles, when I witnessed some manifestations sufficiently marked, but much of the same character as I have already described with other mediums. Since that time, however, Mrs. Everitt's power has, I am told, greatly developed. Moving of ponderable bodies, chairs, tables, and other heavy pieces of furniture without human contact, and in a well-lighted room, are of very common occurrence. But the most striking manifestations which occur in this lady's presence, are those of flashing lights of various colours and size, and direct writing. Sheets of paper, previously marked for identification, are frequently filled with philosophical remarks in the space of a few seconds. Some of these sheets have contained upwards of one hundred words, which were written in less than one minute.

The sitters, who are for this manifestation always in the dark during the process of writing, hear the pencil moving over the paper with lightning rapidity.

The facts on the whole, connected with Mrs. Everitt's mediumship, are extremely interesting, and would, if necessary, be attested by the signatures of more than a hundred respectable witnesses resident in London.

DR. J. R. NEWTON, THE HEALER.

Of Dr. J. R. Newton, the eminent healer, by whose recent visit to this country another phase of mediumship was brought to our notice, I need only say, that I and many others had ample evidence that he possessed the great gift of healing. Numerous well attested cases are to be found in London where the blind have been restored to sight; tumours have been instantly removed; and the lame have been made to walk. The cases in all instances, according to the testimony of the sufferers, had been of long standing, and had baffled the ordinary treatment of medical science. But whatever may be thought of his gift, of Dr. Newton himself it may be truly said, that he is an unworldly, simple-minded, kind hearted philanthropist, who has done a great work, and has made many sacrifices in the cause of suffering humanity.

Now I have presented to you, as briefly as it is possible in justice to this most important subject, a number of facts, together with the reasoning and testimony of many intelligent Englishmen, all more or less known to fame, who, after diligent and serious investigation, proclaim their convictions of the truth of Spiritualism and the reality of the phenomena. Is it possible to push aside such a mass of evidence, and treat such men as dreamers and fanatics? Can you have stronger cases than those of Dr. Elliotson and Dr. Robertson of the folly of condemning and denouncing before enquiry. It cannot be that you do not wish to believe; or that you can remain indifferent to the subject, whether it be a truth or not! For my part, though I have long made up my own mind that spirit is the only solution that covers the manifold phases which are being developed hourly, I do not, and never have insisted, that others should accept that belief. All that I am concerned in is, to establish, beyond cavil, that marvellous manifestations, apparently in violation of natural laws, do occur, and that we, who believe in them, are under no delusion.

That being once acknowledged by the master minds, whose dictum rules society, I shall be content to wait the issue, and ready at any moment to change my convictions if it can be shown that I have been hugging an untenable belief. So far, and I have been a diligent student, no explanation that has been offered—no theory that has been put forward, covers the facts

which have been witnessed by tens of thousands in this country, and I believe by millions in America, where I myself went ten years ago for the express purpose of fortifying my judgment. I put aside at once, and treat with profound contempt, all the childish nonsense that has been written about the tricks of conjurors, as explaining the manifestations of which we speak, and I warn those who have been misled by pretended exposures practised upon their credulity by another class of men, to put no faith in them. They are mediums; but from very base and worldly motives, choose to deny it.

There have been, however, various theories put forward in opposition to the spirit-theory, which are entitled to the most respectful consideration. That of Dr. Rogers, which he propounded several years ago, is one. He embodied his ideas in an elaborate work entitled *The Philosophy of Mysterious Agents*, in which he refers the whole body of phenomena, physical and mental, to a cerebral action through the medium of "a physical force associated with the human organism," which agent, it is suggested, may be the *od* or *odic* force of Reichenbach. Professor Mahan, Dr. Samson, Mr. Bray, and others of the No-Spirit theory, have merely amplified Dr. Rogers' theory. None of these opponents, however, descend to the feeble position of denying the facts. "We admit the facts," says Professor Mahan, "for the all-adequate reason that, after careful enquiry, we have been led to the conclusion that they are real;" and he adds: "We think that no candid enquirer, who carefully investigates, can come to any other conclusion." And I may add that had these intelligent and candid men but waited awhile, they never would have published their theories, for the "all-adequate reason" that they do not meet the facts which have been since developed; and Reichenbach himself disclaims for the force which he discovered all such power as these writers attribute to it.

I will conclude by repeating a few words from an article written by myself four years ago, which, in the main, are applicable to the present time. I said:—

I have been recently assured by one of our leading journalists that Spiritualism finds favour at length with many literary and scientific men in this country; but, unfortunately, we do not see them; we have not yet heard their voices; they are silent when most needed. It is known that almost every journal published in the Metropolis has one or more members of its staff who are thoroughgoing believers in Spiritualism; and yet if any public emergency arises, they are dumb, and stand by whilst their associates are permitted to wield the pen, to misrepresent the truth, to mislead the public, and to encourage every charlatan in his pretended exposure of Spiritual phenomena.

"How long is this state of things to last?" I have asked of one who views with sorrow the position taken by certain members of his craft. "Ah," he replied, "if you knew as much of the press as I do, you would know that its tone may be changed in a day; and I think the day is not far distant when Spiritualism will find open advocates in the leading journals of this country."

We must, therefore, I suppose, stretch our patience, watch and wait, taking consolation, in the meantime, in the assurance that no honest man, whatever his condition of mind may be, saint or sceptic, religious or scientific, who will take the pains to investigate—can withstand the evidence, and who will not at last feel abashed at his previous ignorance, and at his folly in so long standing out against a truth so cheering and enlightening. It is thus satisfactory to know, despite all opposition, that Spiritualism is marching on. I know it is, by the number of enquirers who personally seek information from me, and others who communicate their experiences to me. Much that we hear of, however, does not exhibit the best side of Spiritualism, and there is still much that is extremely puzzling even to the initiated; but all is instructive, and most of the facts deserve to be recorded so that they may be readily classified by the WISE MEN of the future—I say future, for it is evident that nothing in elucidation of these mysteries is to be expected from the leading authorities of the present day (recollect I was speaking four years ago), who are too deeply committed to the erroneous theories, and dogmatic assumptions they have already permitted themselves to promulgate upon this subject. To the new generation, therefore, of thinking men, some of whom we know are now at work, we may hopefully look forward for a fair and candid examination of the claims of Spiritualism so soon as the rule of the savans, who have led the public astray, shall be a thing of the past.

A very interesting discussion followed the reading of this paper, and among the speakers were Dr. Lockhardt Robertson, Mr. C. F. Varley, C.E., Dr. Wyld, Mr. Leighton (of Liverpool), and Mrs. Hardinge. A report of this discussion will be published in the next number of THE SPIRITUAL NEWS.

NEXT Monday (January 16th), the Rev. Dr. Davies, a minister of the Church of England, will read a paper at the usual weekly meeting of Spiritualists at the Beethoven Rooms. The paper is sure to be of good quality, and a warm discussion is expected.

SUNDAY evening services in connection with Spiritualism are held regularly at seven o'clock, at the Cleveland Hall, Cleveland-street, Fitzroy-square, near the Portland-road-station of the Metropolitan Railway. Mrs. Hardinge usually occupies the platform.

SPIRIT-RAPPING IN JOHN WESLEY'S FAMILY.

IN TEN PARTS.—PART SEVEN.

THE following are some more of the letters published by John Wesley:—

LETTER XII.—MISS SUSANNAH WESLEY to her brother SAMUEL. "March 27.

"DEAR BROTHER WESLEY,—I should farther satisfy you concerning the disturbances; but it is needless, because my sisters Emilia and Hetty write so particularly about it. One thing I believe you do not know, that is, last Sunday, to my father's no small amazement, his trencher danced upon the table a pretty while, without any body's stirring the table; when, lo! an adventurous wretch took it up, and spoiled the sport, for it remained still for ever after. How glad should I be to talk with you about it. Send me some news, for we are secluded from the sight or hearing of any versal thing except Jeffrey.

"SUSANNAH WESLEY."

A passage in a letter from my Mother to me, dated March 27, 1717.

"I cannot imagine how you should be so curious about our unwelcome guest. For my part, I am quite tired with hearing or speaking of it: but if you come among us, you will find enough to satisfy all your scruples, and perhaps may hear or see it yourself.

"S. WESLEY."

A passage in a letter from my sister Emily to Mr. N. Berry, dated April 1.

"Tell my brother the sprite was with us last night, and heard by many of our family, especially by our maid and myself. She sat up with drink; and it came just at one o'clock, and opened the dining-room door. After some time it shut again. She saw as well as heard it both shut and open; then it began to knock as usual. But I dare write no longer, lest I should hear it.

"EMILIA WESLEY."

My Mother's account to JACK.

Aug. 27, 1726.

"About ten days after Nanny Marshall had heard unusual groans at the dining-room door, Emily came and told me that the servants and children had been several times frightened with strange groans and knockings about the house. I answered, that the rats John Maw had frightened from his house, by blowing a horn there, was come into ours, and ordered that one should be sent for. Molly was much displeased at it, and said, if it were anything supernatural, it certainly would be very angry, and more troublesome. However, the horn was blown in the garrets; and the effect was, that whereas before the noises were always in the night, from this time they were heard at all hours, day and night.

"Soon after, about seven in the morning, Emily came and desired me to go into the nursery where I should be convinced they were not startled at nothing. On my coming thither, I heard a knocking at the feet, and quickly after at the head, of the bed. I desired if it was a spirit, it would answer me; and knocking several times with my foot on the ground, with several pauses, it repeated under the sole of my feet exactly the same number of strokes, with the very same intervals. Kezzy, then six or seven years old, said, Let it answer me too, if it can, and stamping, the same sounds were returned that she made, many times successively.

"Upon my looking under the bed something ran out pretty much like a badger, and seemed to run directly under Emily's petticoats, who sat opposite to me on the other side. I went out; and one or two nights after, when we were just got to bed, I heard nine strokes, three by three, on the other side the bed, as if one had struck violently on a chest with a large stick. Mr. Wesley leapt up, called Hetty, who alone was up in the house, and searched every room in the house, but to no purpose. It continued from this time to knock and groan frequently at all hours, day and night; only I earnestly desired it might not disturb me between five and six in the evening, and there never was any noise in my room after during that time.

"At other times, I have often heard it over my mantle tree; and once, coming up after dinner, a cradle seemed to be strongly rocked in my chamber. When I went in, the sound seemed to be in the nursery. When I was in the nursery, it seemed in my chamber again. One night Mr. W. and I were waked by some one running down the garret stairs, then down the broad stairs, then up the narrow ones, then up the garret stairs, then down again, and so the same round. The rooms trembled as it passed along, and the doors shook exceedingly, so that the clattering of the latches was very loud.

"Mr. W. proposing to rise, I rose with him, and went down the broad stairs, hand in hand, to light a candle. Near the foot of them, a large pot of money seemed to be poured out at my waist, and to run jingling down my nightgown to my feet. Presently after we heard the noise as of a vast stone thrown among several dozen of bottles which lay under the stairs; but upon our looking, no hurt was done. In the hall the mastiff met us, crying and striving to get between us. We returned up into the nursery, where the noise was very great. The children were all asleep; but panting, trembling, and sweating extremely.

"Shortly after, on Mr. Wesley's invitation, Mr.

Hoole staid a night with us. As we were all sitting round the fire in the matted chamber, he asked whether that gentle knocking was it? I told him yes; and it continued the sound, which was much lower than usual. This was observable, that while we were talking loud in the same room, the noise, seemingly lower than any of our voices, was distinctly heard above them all. These were the most remarkable passages I remember, except such as were common to all the family."

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers.]

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

SIR,—For many years I have watched the progress of Spiritualism with mingled feelings of pleasure and sorrow. My object in writing now is not to go into the numerous flippant or false mediumistic manifestations which have occasioned the latter feelings, although in the outset I think it well for you to know I am fully alive to them. Possibly for this very reason, I yield to the wishes of many friends, whom I highly esteem, in asking you to allow me to record very briefly an account of two evenings it has been our privilege to spend, at our own house, with Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, friends whom we met *vis-à-vis* for the first time, although well knowing them by repute long ago. Those who know me will attach some credit to my belief that Mr. and Mrs. Everitt are truly Christian people, utterly incapable of any attempt at deception; and will know also that from the large experience I have had with men of business and men of the world, of all shades of character, I am not liable to be deceived myself.

At my wife's invitation, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt came to our rural home to stay from Saturday until Monday. My wife and I are both to some extent writing mediums—and our children (alluded to in *Heaven Opened*, by F. J. T.*) are all more or less seeing mediums; one, a little fellow of ten years of age, remarkably so. I mention this now as it will be seen it has an important bearing in corroborating some parts of the *séances* to which I now ask your attention.

On Saturday evening, November 19th, after having during tea had spirit raps continually upon the table and around the room, replying intelligently to questions, and endorsing various parts of our family conversation, we sat down around a heavy dining-table. Our party comprised Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, F. J. T., myself, my wife, and four children. Our unseen, but ever-active spirit-friends, directed us to read the 12th chapter of 1 Cor., and then to offer a short prayer. Lights were then put out by their direction, and the cool spirit breeze very soon was felt by all in the circle; as also very strong and delicious perfumes as of violets. Our little boy soon said, "I see a beautiful spirit with a bowl containing four different coloured waters! Now she's throwing some over us!" and immediately we discovered a different scent—an aromatic one followed by others. We sang some little part songs with the children; then spirit lights appeared—seen by all. Small pure lights sprang from the table, rocket-like, leaving a thin trail of light in their course upwards. Stars floated about the room which suggested to the children to sing "Twinkle, twinkle, little star," upon commencing which a large bluish one floated about and twinkled to the song. At the end we asked for a greeting for each of the little ones; when a shooting-star darted from the centre to each little upturned face in turn. A very faint whisper of a spirit-voice was all we could obtain at this sitting, so the children, with some little disappointment, but yet with glad hearts, went to bed. On opening the folding-doors into the adjoining room, we found perfumes strong even there.

After supper we sat again—the five adults only.

After lights and perfumes again in profusion, we heard the card-board tube, which we had placed in the centre of the table, tapping against the ceiling. A cooler breeze came, followed by vibration of the table and atmosphere, and suddenly "John Watt," addressing F. J. T., said in a clear voice, different to any human one, and giving me the impression of a voice without chest force—

"Good evening!" (F. J. T. started, at which John said more softly, "I thought you were so brave?"
F. J. T.—"So I am, but you came so suddenly."
J. W.—"I'll be more careful another time. You have friends here to-night. Introduce me."

Upon this being done we all in turn had a most interesting conversation for over an hour. During this time one of the servants came into the adjoining room to make up the fire, and heard much of what transpired.

J. W.—"Who's that in the other room: she might be here?"

I asked, then, if the children might come.

"J. W.—"Better not—it frightens children."

M. T.—"But ours are accustomed to *séances*—will you come and talk to-morrow evening to them for a short time?"
J. W.—"I'll try. It's getting late—I must go—the tube is rather clumsy!"

We promised a lighter one: and I asked him to touch me with the tube before he left. John then said, "Good night, friends," and the tube was thrown from above, and hit my shoulder as requested.

Sunday evening, November 20. All who were present on the previous evening sat, with the addition of my wife's sister and the two servants. I had previously provided paper upon which to take notes as well as I could in the dark, and from their help the following is written:—The passages of Scripture to which we were directed by the much despised table raps were remarkable; viz., Ezekiel, 8th ch., 1 to middle of 3rd verse; 11th ch., half of 1st verse; and 10th ch., 1st to 4th verse. Our first sitting was rather unsuccessful. Diverse elements were at work; which your readers will understand; but after perfumes in profusion, and fainter lights than on the previous evening, John Watt came. His voice was much weaker, and he commenced speaking with more caution. As soon as he had established a freedom with the children, and said one or two funny things to make them laugh, John suddenly in a loud voice turned to little Nelly, who was laughing, and said, "Little Nelly." She is naturally very shy and timid, and this was too much for her—to be so addressed by a strange voice. She began to cry.

John, turning to F. J. T., said, "There—I'm sorry, but I told you so. I must go." And we broke up the *séance*, the little girl's timidity being, however, a powerful proof of the reality of the voice, and of its being distinct from Mrs. Everitt's, with whom she was now on the best terms.

The next sitting, after supper, was the most interesting of all. It was protracted, and I can but briefly indicate the kind

of conversation which transpired. Our nurse was the only addition to the five first named.

John appeared again after the perfumes and cool breeze, with a full voice before Mrs. Everitt was entranced; so that at first we heard her voice distinct from his, which to me was very satisfactory.

He first said how sorry he was to have frightened little Nelly. He was going to give her little spirit-brother's and sister's love, and tell her about them. He told us much of their happy home together, in a beautiful house situate in a garden; told us of some spirits with them known only to us, and not to the medium: spoke of my mother as a very beautiful spirit; and, at our request, went away for a minute to see what they were doing, during which time another spirit came, who always attends John Watt, named "Zippy." His voice and accent were entirely different, and suffused with playful humour.

John on returning, said that my father and mother were together, sitting in a beautiful arbour, the seats of which were covered with crimson velvet. They were clothed with purple robes lined with white; his was made of velvet, hers of satin, their usual evening dress. In the morning they were crimson lined with white. They had various dresses for different times and seasons; and the dresses there were all made by love—in the Love Society—and were symbolical. My father was reading. "What book?" John went to see, and said it was "The interior meaning of the first book of John." We remarked, "How natural!" and he went on to tell us that when we reached Heaven all would appear to us most natural—nothing strange, for in deep sleep we often visited them, and we had experiences both here and there, the key to those to follow after.

After some conversation as to sleep, I asked about the raising of Lazarus, and how it was when he returned to life he could not—so far as is recorded—give any account of the scenes he had visited those three days. John said—

"Was he dead? Who said so? The cord of life had never been sundered?"

"He was entranced then?"

"Yes."

"If so, he visited your world probably as we do, you say, in deep sleep? Why not tell us what he saw?"

"Because it was not permitted. His entire state was all for a particular purpose. He never died."

"But Christ died?"

"His body died."

"Then I suppose the body He rose with was a different one—it could do as you do, and come through material substances."

"Matter is nothing to us."

"But what became of the body?"

"Part of His material body—the grosser parts, evaporated on the Cross; the remnant when the linen clothes were left in the sepulchre. The body He rose with was entirely spiritual."

"Then during those three days a change went on which in our case will take many years to accomplish?"

"Yes; it was an acceleration of chemical power."

"You are good chemists, I suppose, in the spirit land?"

"Yes—chemistry is no hindrance to us."

"How do you manufacture that voice by which you speak now?"

"I dissipate the materiality around you, and draw you for a time into this sphere; you help me by conditions, and I do much more by chemicals."

"Is darkness necessary?"

"No, not necessary; we can sometimes speak in the light."

He then spoke of the spheres of spirits above and below us, we occupying the middle sphere. We were being constantly watched over and assisted by our ministering spirits; and we in our speech, and a hundred other ways, influenced lower spirits who eling to us to be assisted to rise: thus teaching, as we remarked, the vast unconscious influence ever emanating from us. Much of the above is beyond my comprehension, for I am no chemist; and in reporting the conversation, as near as I can remember, I am aware I may have fallen into error—unintentionally. But, if such conversations are possible from the spirit land, we may well ask to what golden heights may we not yet be led.

John offered up a short prayer to the Father of Spirits in parting; invoking a blessing and praying for our influence to be kept pure.

I was silent; and thinking with some degree of perplexity of what had occurred, and how real and near the spirit-world is, when we heard rapid but slight tapping on paper, similar to the dropping of water. Mr. Everitt said, "That's some direct spirit writing"—and counted one, two, three, when pencil and paper dropped in the centre of the table. When a light was struck, we found the following message, written apparently within five seconds—a physical impossibility—which we preserve as a precious gift from the spirit world:—

"You seem to be puzzled at our close proximity, but as regards your spirits you are living in our world. You only require your material body to move with in this your material world. Remove your atmosphere, you are then present with us; by giving us the conditions we are joined with you—in fact we make a part of yourselves. We influence you to do and say things that you believe are from your interior selves. By-and-by we shall be able to make ourselves visible to you, so that we form part of your family. You are now the medium of earth and heaven."

I might have considerably extended this paper, but I fear I have already, in my first communication, exceeded your space.

MORELL THEOBALD.

Hendon, N.W., Dec. 1870.

P.S.—We have since had a very long message in direct spirit-writing, of over 400 words, written in five seconds (a physical impossibility), purporting to come from Newton, Locke, and Boyle, showing the spirit-world to be to the earth-world what the soul is to the body—its life.

SPIRITUALISM is beginning to spread in Birmingham rather more rapidly than it has hitherto done.

THE occasional visit of a good physical medium to the Brixton Society of Spiritualists would much aid the young Association, which is not a very strong one.

NEXT Thursday evening the St. John's Association, of Spiritualists will have a tea-meeting, after which some platform addresses will be given, and probably a Spiritual communication through Mr. J. J. Morse, who will be present.

SPIRITUALISM IN KILBURN.—The new Spiritual Society at Kilburn is working very energetically. It holds public meetings in the Carlton Hall, Carlton-road, every Monday evening, and it is making its mission widely known by means of placards, handbills, and the aid of the local newspaper. The *Kilburn Times* has treated Spiritualism with unexampled fairness, and the editor actually thought it his duty to learn something about the subject, before publishing anything respecting it in his newspaper. If other editors followed his example, how hampered they would be upon losing their present privilege of inventing facts about Spiritualism while they write.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. M. (Somerset-town).—There is no space to spare for such a series of letters, and it is impossible to say anything about the publication of any communication without first seeing it. Some letters, news, and notices of books, are crowded out this month, and will, for the most part, be printed in the next number of *The Spiritual News*.

MIRACLES.

ONE of the foremost workers in the Spiritual movement has written us a private letter, questioning the desirability of abolishing the words "miracle" and "supernatural" from Spiritualistic literature, as recommended in a recent leading article in this journal. As it is evident that Spiritual manifestations are governed by the fixed laws appertaining to a higher state of existence than our own, why should the phenomena be called miraculous, however astounding they may appear to be? The Spiritual world is only an advance on the animal world, just as the animal world is an advance on the vegetable world, and the vegetable world an advance on the mineral world. Why should the phenomena of any one of these stages of life be called miraculous rather than another? And if we now call the phenomena of the Spiritual world miraculous, what shall we do if in another state of being, we discover that there are other stages of existence higher than the Spiritual? As already stated in these pages, supposing a vegetable could see and think, it must have been greatly startled when it saw the first animal, and must have considered it a most miraculous kind of vegetable, walking about with its roots in its stomach. To the savage, the locomotive and all the appliances of civilisation are miraculous; neither can we teach him the principles of construction of the steam-engine, because his brain is not sufficiently advanced to receive the information. Even so, if we are astounded by the rising of ponderable bodies in the air without mortal contact, and by the passage of solid bodies through brick walls, ought we to call them miraculous because they are above the level of our comprehension, and possibly cannot be explained to us?

Instead of extending these arguments we will tell a story which shows how an uninformed Turk misled himself, because he ascribed things above his comprehension to miraculous causes. We wrote the tale, assisted by a friend, a few years ago, and it was originally published in *The British Journal of Photography*. The following is an abbreviation of the original, in order to economise space; but enough is left to clearly illustrate the points we have just raised:—

"The original of the following letter having been written in the choicest Arabic, we here present our readers with a translation. The letter is from Hadji Ali Shacabac, a gentleman now in London on business connected with the Turkish Loan, to Ali Mustapha Ben Buckram, chief of the College of Howling Dervishes, at Constantinople:—

"Sweet O Ali! are the moments thus snatched from the hurry of existence, when in the silence of the night I take up my quill to hold sweet communion with the friend of my youth. Allah is great; so now with sable fluid, and the quill of a grey goose, I tell thee, O Ali, of my fearful adventure with the wizards of the crystal cages, in this vast city of the infidels. May the graves of their fathers be eternally defiled!

"Thou hast heard of the wicked Magi, or worshippers of fire, whom our holy prophet kicked out from his vast dominions as he would unclean dogs. A remnant of these unbelieving curs exists here, within the walls of this unholy city, and gain, it is said, immense sums by taking portraits by the aid of their incantations. Allah bismillah! It is said they bottle up sunbeams for this unholy purpose, and the powerful and malignant genii, Kilo Ryne and Sil Ver, are their chief abettors. The wizards, unlike those of yore who haunted the dark caverns of the earth, live in glass cages upon the house-tops.

"I longed for my portrait to send to thee, O Ali, and the fourteen wives who mourn because of my absence in the land of the stranger; yet my infidel friend, Sammi Ben Jones, was long in overcoming my scruples against visiting these wizards in their crystal cages. However, by his advice, I walked along the street of Mi Lend, where many wizards, for the sum of sixpence in infidel money, exercise their unholy incantations. It was a fine morning. I walked along with the dignity remarkable to my family, dressed in my best pink breeches, yellow coat, and scarlet turban, wondering whether I should have to pass through many difficulties before one of the wizards would allow me to enter his domicile. My fears were soon at rest. I was forcibly seized. O Ali, by six of the filthy emissaries of these magicians, who caught hold of my flowing robes, thrust gleaming squares of crystal beneath my very nose, each pulling me with all his force, and uttering curses in the barbarian tongue against the others who sought to force me into their masters' abode. 'Allah kerim!' I exclaimed, in fainting accents—these dogs will murder me, and my bones will whiten in the land of the stranger! Suddenly a dragonman in blue came along the path, uttering the cabalistic word 'Moovon,' which I entered afterwards in my note-book. At the sound of it the miserably-clad glaucous each slunk into the entrance to his employer's den, and contented himself with verbal adjurations.

"I entered one abode which seemed less repulsive than the rest, and asked the imp at the door to admit me to the seer, his master. He shouted up stairs, 'Olio, eez anothergu!' which I was afterwards told by Sammi Ben Jones means, 'Make ready, O master! the wise and noble hadji comes!' Having taken the fatal step into the dark archway, I must confess, O Ali, my frame shook with terror—my trembling knees refused their office. To propitiate the evil genii I took my shoes from off my feet at the entrance, and proceeded along the passage to a flight of stairs, where I prostrated myself, bowing three times towards Mecca. With faltering steps I trod the rickety stairs, and at last stood before the portal of the dread abode, on the panels of which were inscribed fearful cabalistic signs of mystic import, and in large red characters the name 'John Jones,' which, I believe, was the name of the vile son of Jehanum himself.

"The door opened. The figure of the dread wizard, with a fiendish grin across his thin face, stood before my awe-struck gaze. Directly he saw me he opened his eyes and shouted—'Ogolly! Omosis!' Then he sauk into a seat, his sides shaking with idiotic laughter. He motioned me to a seat in a chair with no bottom to it, and told me to gaze my hardest at a small picture nailed to the wall. O Ali, how shall I describe that picture! In our native land nothing but the eyes of our hours are visible to the stranger; yet here the women run about wild without any keepers, have even their necks bare, and are supposed to possess souls. But the one in this picture, O Ali, stood in a barbarian theatre. She was dressed only in gauze, was spinning round on one leg like your tame monkey Korae when in the height of his antics. 'Allah akbar!' said I. What can equal the wickedness of these Christian dogs! May their fathers' graves be for ever defiled! The wizard next fixed the back of my neck in an iron instrument, so that I could not turn away my gaze. 'Saffir, Allah!' I cried in agony; 'the anguish of the bowstring cannot equal this. I choke! I expire! Shades of my fathers! the wretched Shacabac will soon die with the throes of suffocation, and skate over the bridge Al Sirat into the paradise of the true believers!' I thought my last hour was nigh, especially as I saw the magician hide his head in a black curtain, as though he wished not to witness my agonies. He then retired to his secret den, O Ali, muttering accursed incantations, and came out with a small cabinet constructed of cedar, in which, no doubt, a wondrous talisman was concealed. He placed this in a kind of cannon covered with a pall of funeral black, and then he pointed this direful weapon at my head. My hair stood on end, my eyes dilated with terror, my parched tongue clung to the roof of my mouth. He uncovered the opening of the cannon. I sprang up with a shriek of terror, the iron instrument of torture still clinging to my neck, and with outstretched arms implored Allah to forgive me for entering the unhallowed den of the wizard of the crystal cage. In this attitude did the evil genii take my portrait.

"The magician retired again to his den, where I heard the sound of running water; then he returned with a plate of crystal and showing it to me made signs of approval, uttering in a commendatory tone, the words, 'Tharz astuneri!' But, O Ali, the picture of my friend was ugly in the extreme. The aspect of abject fright was upon my countenance; stars were represented bursting above my head; a long-tailed comet streamed from my nose; whilst my body was spotted all over, yea, even like unto that of the monkey Korae. No doubt the mighty power of the sun had copied the evil planetary influences which in that dreadful moment had threatened me, and were at the time invisible to mortal eye. I carefully tied the crystal tablet in my turban, handing sixpence to the wizard as I turned to leave, but with horrid threats he made me pay five shillings, after which I descended the stairs saddened in spirit. The imp at the door demanded a fee, upon which I called him the son of a burnt father, and made him a long speech in the Turkish tongue.

"O Ali! friend of my soul! the night wanes apace. Even as I write the sun tinges with crimson and gold the light clouds of the east. The winds of heaven blow gently through my open window, and I think of the time when I journeyed with thee on the road to Ispahan at the same silent hour. I like not the turmoil and noise of the busy city, and long for the time when we shall once more tread together the bowers of Al Kilbar, and hear from thy learned lips the true doctrines of Islam. My mind is much disturbed by the invisible stars and comets that lurk around me, so on my return we will lay my crystal portrait before our wisest astrologers to learn what these mystic signs portend. Fare thee well, O Ali! friend of my bosom! Peace be unto thee and thine house! Mayest thou live long in the land of our fathers, and when thou art called to Paradise, mayest thou receive the richest fruits of the tree Jubah, which produces pomegranates, grapes, and dates of a taste unknown to mortals!"

"AL SHACABAC."

FACTS FOR NON-SPIRITUALISTS.

THE phenomena seen at spiritual circles are so extraordinary, and so unlike those coming within the ordinary range of human experience, that it is quite right not to accept them on the testimony of others. Each individual should witness and test them personally, and believe nothing until the absolute knowledge is gained that denial is impossible.

EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

The testimony of reliable and respectable witnesses that the phenomena of Spiritualism are actual facts, and not imposture or delusion, has of late years so accumulated as to possess very great weight. In the case of Lyon v. Home, Mr. Robert Chambers, Mr. C. F. Varley, Dr. Gully, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, and others, all made affidavits strongly in favour of Mr. Home. The following was a portion of the affidavit of Mr. C. F. Varley, C.E., F.R.G.S., M.R.I.:-

"I have been a student of electricity, chemistry, and natural philosophy for twenty-six years, and a telegraphic engineer by profession for twenty-one years, and I am the consulting electrician of the Atlantic Telegraph Company, and of the Electric and International Company.

"About eight years ago, I called on Mr. Home, the defendant in this suit, and stated that I had not yet witnessed any of the physical phenomena, but that I was a scientific man and wished to investigate them carefully.

"He immediately gave me every facility for the purpose, and desired me to satisfy myself in every possible way, and I have been with him on divers occasions when the phenomena have occurred. I have examined and tested them with him and with others, under conditions of my own choice, under a bright light, and have made the most jealous and searching scrutiny. I have been, since then, for seven months in America, where the subject attracts great attention and study, and where it is cultivated by some of the ablest men, and having experimented with and compared the forces with electricity and magnetism, and after having applied mechanical and mental tests, I entertain no doubt whatever that the manifestations which I have myself examined were not due to the operation of any of the recognised physical laws of nature, and that there has been present on the occasions above-mentioned some intelligence other than that of the medium and observers."

It also came out in the evidence given at the trial, that Mr. Home had been the invited and unpaid guest of the Emperor and the Empress of the French, the Emperor, Empress, and the late Empress Dowager of Russia, the Grand Duke Constantine, the King of Prussia, the late King of Bavaria, the late King of Wurttemberg, and the Queen of Holland. Mr. Home says that all his life he has never taken a farthing of pay for his seances. In March, 1869, the *Spiritual Magazine* gave the names of the following gentlemen as those who have long been investigating the subject:-

"Cromwell F. Varley, Esq., Fleetwood-house, Beckenham; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., 9, St. Mark's-crescent, N.W.; Professor De Morgan, 91, Adelaide-road, N.W.; Captain Drayson, R.A., Woolwich; Dr. J. M. Gully, The Priory, Great Malvern; Dr. J. J. G. Wilkinson, 4, St. John's-road-villas, N.W.; Dr. Dixon, 8, Great Ormond-street, W.C.; S. C. Hall, Esq., 18, Ashley-place, Victoria-street, S.W.; Newton Crossland, Esq.; William Howitt, Esq., The Orchard, Haregreen, Essex, Surrey; Robert Chambers, Esq., St. Andrew's, Edinburgh; H. D. Jencken, Esq., Kilnrose-house, Norwood; J. G. Crawford, Esq., 52, Gloucester-crescent, N.W.; W. M. Wilkinson, Esq., Oakfield, Kilburn; Lord Adair, 15, Buckingham-gate; The Master of Lindsey, Grosvenor-square."

Mrs. De Morgan has written a book, entitled *From Matter to Spirit* (Longmans), where she gives many interesting particulars, the result of ten years' experience in Spiritualism. Professor De Morgan, President of the Mathematical Society of London, in his preface to the book, says:-

"I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make it impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be explained by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me."

Dr. Hooker, in his opening address, as President of the British Association at Norwich in 1868, spoke very highly of the scientific attainments of Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, F.R.S. Mr. Wallace is an avowed Spiritualist. Professor Hare, of Philadelphia, the inventor of the Hare's Galvanic Battery, once refused to witness spiritual phenomena, alleging that Faraday's "unconscious muscular action" theory explained all the facts. A friend wrote to him, detailing things he had seen which were inexplicable by that theory. Hare at once, like a sensible man, went to see for himself. The result was that he came into communication with some of his own departed relatives. He then made mechanical telegraphic machines, which were intelligently worked by spirits while the apparatus was screened from the sight of the medium, and he wrote a book recording all these facts. That book is now in the British Museum Library. Judge Edmonds, of New York, is another very eminent American Spiritualist, who has also written interesting books on the subject. Recently, in England, Viscount Adair has written a book bearing testimony to the truth of Spiritualism, and it has a preface by Lord Dunraven. This book is printed for private circulation only, which is an error in judgment. Valuable evidence in favour of Spiritualism is given by John Wesley and his family; for spirit rapping and movements of wooden materials by invisible agency occurred in their own house. Documentary evidence of what they witnessed was drawn up and signed on the spot, and is published in Southey's *Life of Wesley*.

Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S., editor of the *Chemical News*, is now investigating Spiritualism, and he has published an article in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, stating that its phenomena are real, and not delusion or imposture, though he does not know as yet whether they are produced by disembodied spirits. The following letter, which he wrote to Mr. Varley, was published in the *Spiritualist* of July 15th, 1870:-

"20, Mornington-road, London, N.W.
"July 13th, 1870.

"DEAR MR. VARLEY, I was very pleased to receive your letter of the 9th inst., in which you discuss some points alluded to in my paper on 'Spiritualism viewed by the Light of Modern Science.'"

"You have been working at the subject for more years than I have months, and knowing as you do, the enormous difficulties in the way of accurate investigation—difficulties for the most part interposed by Spiritualists

themselves—you will not be surprised to find that I only feel the ground firm under me for a very short distance along the road which you have travelled so far.

"I was deeply interested in reading of your experiments, the more so, as I have been working in a similar direction myself, but as yet with scarcely a tangible result.

"You notice that I admit freely and fully the physical phenomena. Let this openness be a guarantee that I shall not hesitate for a moment in recording with equal fearlessness for the consequences, whatever convictions my investigation leads me to—whether it points to a mere physical force, or makes me, as you predict, a convert to the spiritual hypothesis—but I must let my convictions come in my own way, and if I hold somewhat stubbornly to the laws of conservation of force and, impenetrability of matter, it should not be considered as a crime on my part, but rather as a peculiarity in my scientific education.

"I have already had many letters, both from Spiritualists and from leading men of science, saying that they are glad I have taken up the subject, and urging me to continue the investigation. In fact I have been agreeably surprised to find encouragement from so many scientific men, as well as sympathy from the good friends I possess amongst the Spiritualists.—Believe me, my dear sir, very truly yours,

WILLIAM CROOKES."

A work entitled *The Book of Nature*, by C. O. Groom Napier, F.R.S. (London, John Camden Hotten, 1870), has a preface by the late Lord Brougham, in which that eminent statesman says:-

"There is but one question I would ask the author, is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age?—No! for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce, are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties;—to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most clouded skies of scepticism, see a rainbow, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is Modern Spiritualism."

Signor G. Damiani, a Sicilian gentleman, living at Clifton, has written a pamphlet, still in print, in which he severely censures Professor Tyndall, Mr. G. H. Lewes, and others like them, for refusing to investigate the subject. He further offers a reward of 1,000 guineas to any respectable, scientific, or educated man, who will investigate the subject and prove it to be an imposture. The following are his words:-

"I now offer you two challenges."

"First, I challenge you, or either of you, or any of the public who, like you, disbelieve in the genuine character of spiritualistic phenomena, to deposit in the hands of any well-known London banker whom you or they may name, the sum of five hundred guineas; and I pledge myself to immediately deposit in the same bank a like amount, the ownership of such sum of one thousand guineas to depend upon any proving by evidence sufficient to establish any fact in history or in a criminal or civil court of justice.

First—That intelligent communications and answers to questions put, proceed from dead and inert matter in a manner inexplicable by any generally recognised law of nature.

"Secondly—That dead and inert matter does move without the aid of any mechanical or known chemical agency, and in defiance of all the admitted laws of gravitation."

"Thirdly—That voices pertaining to no one in the flesh are heard to speak and hold rational converse with men."

"A jury of twenty-four gentlemen, twelve to be chosen by each party (such jury to consist exclusively of members of the learned professions and literary men), to decide whether or not the facts contained in the above propositions are conclusively proved *per testes*—i.e., by witnesses of established character. A majority of the twenty-four to decide. If the verdict be that these facts have not been established, the thousand guineas are to belong to the party accepting this challenge; if the verdict be that these facts are established, the thousand guineas to be mine."

"Secondly—Immediately after the above wager being decided, either way, I offer a like challenge of five hundred guineas to be met on the other side in like manner as above—the ownership of the second sum of one thousand guineas to depend upon the establishment of the facts contained in the propositions already given, by experiments conducted in the actual presence of the twenty-four gentlemen who have decided the previous wager; the verdict of the majority to decide in this case likewise.

"In either case, the seances are to be conducted in any public or private building which the jury may select, and which may be available for the purpose."

"The result of these challenges, if accepted and decided, to be advertised by the victorious party, at the expense of the defeated party, in all the London daily papers."

"I hope this is plain English."

"Awaiting a reply to this letter, and to the challenge with which it concludes, I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

G. DAMIANI.

"Clifton, Oct. 1, 1868.

"P.S.—Letters addressed 'Sign. Damiani, care of Manager of West of England and South Wales District Bank, Corn-street, Bristol,' will always reach the writer."

In addition to the above evidence, there is the testimony of numbers that the modern spiritual manifestations are realities. Mr. Hepworth Dixon in his *New America* estimates the number of Spiritualists in the United States at rather less than three millions, and this is about the lowest estimate that anybody has made. There are no accurate statistics, and different authorities vary in their estimates from three to eleven millions.

When reports of the speeches of spirits are printed in this journal, non-Spiritualists should understand that spirits out of the body are wise or foolish, truthful or untruthful, just the same as spirits in the body. Moreover, they are but individuals, so do not know everything. The statements of a spirit are but the assertions of an individual; but by comparing the statements of many spirits, it may in time be possible to discover in what points they agree, and to sift out the unreliable communications. Many spirits cannot see each other, any more than we can see them, and as some of them are in different states of life, it does not follow that contradictory messages are therefore untruthful. Spirits are of different religions, consequently their teachings do not altogether agree; there is no more uniformity in the next world than in this one. It is the business of this journal to report facts, so we are in no way responsible for the religious, scientific, or any other teachings given by individual spirits.

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

An experimental trial at home, among family friends and relatives, often gives the most satisfactory evidence of the reality of spiritual phenomena. At the same time, as no fully developed medium is present among those who have never obtained manifestations before, the probability is that there will be no results. Nevertheless, it is a very common thing for striking manifestations to be obtained in this way at the first sitting of a family circle; perhaps for every one successful new circle thus started without a medium, there are six or seven failures, but no accurate statistics on this point have yet been collected. When once manifestations have been obtained they will gradually increase in power and reliability at successive sittings. The following is a good plan of action:-

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle. Wet, damp, and foggy weather is bad for the production of physical phenomena.

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

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

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

5. 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. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle is likely to attract a higher and more pleasing class of spirits.

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

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

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

Possibly at the first sitting of a circle symptoms of other forms of mediumship than tilts or raps may make their appearance. Information respecting the many kinds of mediumship will be found in Mrs. Professor De Morgan's book, *From Matter to Spirit*, published by Longmans; and this is a good book to read before trying to start a new circle.

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has been removed from Camberwell to No. 15, Southampton-row, Bloomsbury-square, Holborn, W.C. There is a Publishing Office, and Shop for the sale of Books; a Circulating Library of all Works on Spiritualism, &c.; a Reading-Room supplied with the Spiritual and Progressive Publications of the World; a Drawing-Room for the special use of Ladies and Subscribers; Private Rooms for Seances, Committees, Meetings, &c.; and where all information respecting the Cause and the Progress of events may be obtained.

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A SOCIAL TEA MEETING in connection

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Printed for the Proprietor by BEVERIDGE & FRASER, at the Holborn Printing Works, Fulwood's-Row, High Holborn, in the Parish of St. Andrew-above-Bar and St. George the Martyr, London, and published by E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, London, E.C.