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It seeks as its main object to assist, by various means, any person desirous to obtain information respecting Spiritualism, or to commence the investigation of its facts; but, whilst Members unite for this purpose, they have opportunities of improving their own knowledge of its teachings and varied phenomena, of becoming acquainted with the experience and opinions of others, and with the general literature of the movement.

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The Objects of this Association are:—

1. Mutual aid on the part of its members in the discovery of all truth relating to man's spiritual nature, capacities, duties, welfare, destiny, its application to a regenerate life, also to assist enquirers in the investigation of the facts of Spiritualism.

2. To spread a knowledge of the truths connected with the facts, chiefly the truth of the reality of a future state of progressive existence for all.

As soon as a sufficient number of members is enrolled, a meeting will be called, at which a permanent committee will be elected for the management of the society.

The provisional committee earnestly solicit the co-operation of all who desire the spread of the true and ennobling principles of Spiritualism.

The public meetings of this association are held, *pro tem.*, at the Temperance Hall, Grosvenor-street, every Sunday afternoon, at 2.30, except when other arrangements are made, of which due notice will be given.

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MR. CROOKES ON SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

THE *Quarterly Journal of Science*, published yesterday, contains a long article by its editor, Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S., entitled, "Notes of an Inquiry into the Phenomena called Spiritual," during the years 1870-73. In the article, Mr. Crookes acknowledges the reality of more of the phenomena of Spiritualism than he has ever publicly done before. In fact, he acknowledges that he has seen human beings floating

in the air, small articles moving without contact with any person; that he has seen luminous hands, phantom forms, and phantom faces. All this is strong and probably unpalatable testimony, to many of the readers of the very orthodox scientific journal in which the narrative is published, and it is highly creditable to Mr. Crookes that he should thus brave public opinion by telling the truth. He also does not attempt to shelter himself behind the "psychic force" theory, but mentions nearly every theory which has ever been broached to account for the phenomena, without exhibiting any particular partiality for any of them. He further makes the statement that there is intelligence connected with the phenomena; he says that he has observed some circumstances "which seem conclusively to point to the agency of an outside intelligence not belonging to any human being in the room."

The greater part of the article relates to phenomenal Spiritualism, brief accounts being given by him of manifestations which he has witnessed in his own house. Such records are of more interest to the general public than to Spiritualists, although here and there some occurrences a little out of the common are described.

In one part of the article he says:—

To obtain free access to some persons abundantly endowed with the power I am experimenting upon, now involves more favour than a scientific investigator should be expected to make of it. Spiritualism amongst its more devout followers is a religion. The mediums, in many cases young members of the family, are guarded with a seclusion and jealousy which an outsider can penetrate with difficulty. Being earnest and conscientious believers in the truth of certain doctrines which they hold to be substantiated by what appear to them to be miraculous occurrences, they seem to hold the presence of scientific investigation as a profanation of the shrine. As a personal favour, I have more than once been allowed to be present at meetings that presented rather the form of a religious ceremony than of a Spiritualistic seance. But to be admitted by favour once or twice, as a stranger might be allowed to witness the Eleusian mysteries, or a Gentile to peep within the Holy of Holies, is not the way to ascertain facts and discover laws. To gratify curiosity is one thing; to carry on systematic research is another. I am seeking the truth continually. On a few occasions, indeed, I have been allowed to apply tests and impose conditions; but only once or twice have I been permitted to carry off the priestess from her shrine, and in my own house, surrounded by my own friends, to enjoy opportunities of testing the phenomena I have witnessed elsewhere under less conclusive conditions.

There are some statements in the preceding paragraph which will scarcely be considered fair by Spiritualists; for instance, we do not know that we have ever met a single Spiritualist who believes the

phenomena to be "miraculous" in the ordinary sense of the term, and in the meaning which the word will convey to the readers of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*. Spiritualists everywhere, so far as we know, consider the phenomena to be governed by laws, which laws are for the most part at present unknown, and to be discovered only by observation and experiment. Spiritualism amongst its more devout followers is truly a religion, but it is a scientific religion—that is to say, it is founded upon facts, not upon assumptions, and it calls upon its adherents to believe nothing which cannot be proved, or which does not commend itself to their common sense. Mr. Crookes is for the most part silent in his article as to the influence which mental conditions have upon the phenomena, although experienced observers are aware that mental conditions are most powerful in their action upon the physical results, consequently these phenomena occupy the border land between mental and physical science. When a medium is thoroughly comfortable and happy, the phenomena develop rapidly and powerfully, and that anxiety which must weigh upon the mind of a medium, if any person present considers the said medium to be an impostor, naturally tends to retard the manifestations, except with very powerful professional "psychics," like the Davenports; and it is a curious fact that one rarely hears of any of the higher spiritual phenomena occurring through such mediums. The spirits who have most direct power over common matter are usually excessively low ones; and it seems as if, when sitters at spirit circles furnish low mental and moral conditions, by assuming one of their friends at the *seance* to be an impostor, a correspondingly low order of spirits from the other side of the grave has to influence the medium, to meet that class of mind. The real difficulty in getting freely at good mediums arises from the circumstance that they are so few in number; that so many persons wish to have *seances* with them, and that mediums in private life feel that it is not a nice thing to invite persons to their own homes, to sit in judgment upon them, deciding whether they are impostors or not. Mr. Crookes would not like to invite acquaintances, for whose opinion he cared little or nothing, to his own house to sit in judgment upon him, in the manner just stated. Very frequently mediums have, after solicitation, invited persons out of pure kindness, and in whose belief or disbelief they felt no interest, to witness manifestations, and the visitors have assumed, if the solitary *seance* chanced to be unsatisfactory to their minds, that they had a perfect right to condemn in a public newspaper the medium who invited them. This is, of course, unbearable, and until mediums can receive the same treatment from the public as a clergyman would receive in society, they are bound, in self-defence, to expose themselves as little as possible to obloquy.

However powerful mediums may be, the best manifestations always occur when they are surrounded by persons in whom they have confidence. When surrounded by those whom they distrust, the manifestations are weaker, and every medium knows that he has particular friends with whom he can get better manifestations than with others. In such cases physiological as well as mental causes may, perhaps, have something to do with it. Mr. Williams, for instance, finds that the manifestations through his mediumship are more especially powerful at his *seances* with Mr. H. R. Russell, of Kingston-upon-Thames, and in the presence of Mr.

Russell, Mr. Williams' spirits prefer to try their first experiments at producing new manifestations.

The circumstance that physical facts are thus influenced by the affections, and by things mental, is a very great advantage to Spiritualism, since it tends to make the movement spread among a spiritually-minded people, who do not naturally look upon their neighbours as rogues and thieves. Spiritualists, consequently, are bound together by chains of sympathy; they are not at heart at war with each other to that extent to which disunion is prevalent in other sections of society. The mental conditions influencing the manifestations tend to cause Spiritualism to twine itself around the social life of its followers. All deep and thorough reforms must begin by influencing social usages, it being a well-known fact to moral philosophers and to political economists, that the social usages of a nation are more durable and powerful than political changes. No government on the face of the earth is powerful enough to suddenly change, to any great extent, the social usages of its subjects, and any violent attempt in that direction only results in the overthrow of the political power. Thus Spiritualism, by its influence in the home circle, and the manner in which it mixes itself up with social life, has a living influence which it would never possess, if it could be made a matter of mathematics, mechanics, physics, and nothing else. The realm of physics is wide, and is constantly extending in every direction, so that it has scope enough to be able to afford to have one department in which mind is shown to be the lord of matter, and which tends to raise the moral and religious character of its students. Man is naturally a religious animal, and when he has pushed his researches in any direction, as far as his intellect and moral condition will permit, he feels how very little he knows of the great universe which surrounds him, and has a solemn consciousness, at the bottom of his own heart, that the facts of matter can afford no rest for the aching mind, that the soul requires something higher and nobler to satisfy its aspirations. The intellect of the age denies the authority of tradition and of dogma, but it none the less feels that a religion is needed—a religion not of speculation, but one founded upon proved facts. The more Spiritualism is studied, the more will it be found to meet these requirements.

Mr. Crookes says:—

Like a traveller exploring some distant country, the wonders of which have hitherto been known only through reports and rumours of a vague or distorted character, so for four years have I been occupied in pushing an inquiry into a territory of natural knowledge which offers almost virgin soil to a scientific man. As the traveller sees in the natural phenomena he may witness the action of forces governed by natural laws, where others see only the capricious intervention of offended gods, so have I endeavoured to trace the operation of natural laws and forces, where others have seen only the agency of supernatural beings, owning no laws, and obeying no force but their own free will. As the traveller, in his wanderings, is entirely dependent on the goodwill and friendliness of the chiefs and the medicine men of the tribes amongst whom he sojourns, so have I not only been aided in my inquiry in a marked degree by some of those who possess the peculiar powers I have sought to examine, but have also formed firm and valued friendships amongst many of the recognised leaders of opinion whose hospitalities I have shared.

In this paragraph, also, Mr. Crookes speaks of "supernatural beings owning no laws," yet Spiritualists, from one end of the country to the other, believe both the spiritual and material worlds to be governed by fixed laws; consequently are not so deficient in education as the foregoing quotation implies.

Among the manifestations placed on record by Mr. Crookes, the following are of interest :—

A beautifully formed small hand rose up from an opening in a dining table, and gave me a flower; it appeared and then disappeared three times at intervals, affording me ample opportunity of satisfying myself that it was as real in appearance as my own. This occurred in the light in my own room, whilst I was holding the medium's hands and feet.

On another occasion, a small hand and arm, like a baby's, appeared playing about a lady who was sitting next to me. It then passed to me and patted my arm, and pulled my coat several times. At another time, a finger and thumb were seen to pick the petals from a flower in Mr. Home's button-hole, and lay them in front of several persons who were sitting near him.

A hand has repeatedly been seen by myself and others playing the keys of an accordion, both of the medium's hands being visible at the same time, and sometimes being held by those near him.

The hands and fingers do not always appear to me to be solid and life-like. Sometimes, indeed, they present more the appearance of a nebulous cloud partly condensed into the form of a hand. This is not equally visible to all present. For instance, a flower or other small object is seen to move; one person present will see a luminous cloud hovering over it, another will detect a nebulous-looking hand, whilst others will see nothing at all but the moving flower. I have more than once seen, first an object move, then a luminous cloud appear to form about it, and, lastly, the cloud condense into shape, and become a perfectly formed hand. At this stage, the hand is visible to all present. It is not always a mere form, but sometimes appears perfectly life-like and graceful, the fingers moving and the flesh apparently as human as that of any in the room. At the wrist, or arm, it becomes hazy, and fades off into a luminous cloud.

To the touch, the hand sometimes appears icy cold and dead; at other times, warm and life-like, grasping my own with the firm pressure of an old friend.

I have retained one of these hands in my own, firmly resolved not to let it escape. There was no struggle or effort made to get loose, but it gradually seemed to resolve itself into vapour, and faded in that manner from my grasp.

This last piece of testimony is very interesting; many experienced Spiritualists, including ourselves, have never felt or seen the melting of a spirit hand, though rumours that others have had that experience are prevalent. The testimony of a careful observer like Mr. Crookes is valuable upon somewhat disputed points like these. He also narrates that he has seen "shadow forms." People endowed with clairvoyant powers frequently see semi-transparent spirits, and sometimes conventional angels with wings, the effect being in some cases due to a spirit mesmerising the sensitive, and by will-power making the sensitive see what the spirit thinks. But so far as normal vision is concerned, it would seem somewhat doubtful whether the orthodox "shadow" ghost is not a myth. The hands seen by most people through the mediumship of the Davenport Brothers, Mr. Home, Mr. Williams, and other mediums, have been thoroughly materialised for the time being—we have never seen a "shadow" hand in the presence of Mr. Home or any other medium. Indeed, on fairly reasoning the question out, it will be seen that a shadow form or hand is a more improbable and irrational thing than a thoroughly materialised hand, made by clothing a spirit hand temporarily with matter; a "shadow" which will intercept or reflect rays of light must be to that extent material, but without something analogous to bones or other interior mechanism, it is difficult to conceive how motive power is applied to the matter. Therefore, it is a fair subject for debate whether a shadow ghost has ever been seen by normal vision. Mr. Crookes speaks of seeing a partly transparent form near a curtain in a dimly-lighted room; is he sure that it was not a

materialised form, visible as a dark outline upon a slightly lighter screen or curtain, so that in a hasty description it might be spoken of as a shadow form, though solid in reality?

There is one sentence in the article upon which Mr. Crookes' orthodox scientific friends are likely to concentrate their attacks, namely :—

The phenomena I am prepared to attest are so extraordinary, and so directly oppose the most firmly rooted articles of scientific belief—amongst others, the ubiquity and invariable action of the law of gravitation. . .

Here we certainly cannot agree with Mr. Crookes, and would urge that there is nothing in Spiritual phenomena which has proved that the law of gravitation does not act invariably; all that the phenomena prove is that there are forces, of which little is known, which can pull an object in one direction with more power than gravitation can pull it in the other; but the law of gravitation is in continuous action all the time. The Royal Society will consider Mr. Crookes very wicked for speaking thus disrespectfully of their fetish, "the law of gravitation;" he could not offend the society more were he to go to the length of insulting such a time-honoured thing as the North Pole. Mr. Crookes speaks of his travelling among Spiritualists as others have travelled among savages and medicine men, bringing with him all the accuracy of science; it is, therefore, unfortunate that a benighted Spiritual periodical should have to point out a mistake in physical science made by the gentleman who has come into our midst brandishing the banner of "accuracy." Just as cantankerous barn-door fowls watch for a single featherless spot to peck at in an unfortunate member of their society who is under their displeasure, so are Messrs. Carpenter, Wheatstone and the rest likely to peck at the sentence just quoted, which doubtless was written too hastily, and would have been amended had Mr. Crookes been a little more careful.

There is much about the mediumship of Miss Kate Fox (Mrs. Jencken) in the article, and Mr. Crookes is right in stating her to be a powerful medium for the raps. She is the best rapping medium in this country, and the noises may be obtained anywhere in her presence with great certainty.

Altogether Mr. Crookes deserves the warm thanks of Spiritualists for joining other scientific men like Mr. Varley in testifying publicly to the reality of the phenomena. His next article ought to be more advanced, and deal with the facts of the influence of the minds and affections of the sitters, upon the power with which physical manifestations take place.

LORD AMBERLEY ON SPIRITUALISM.

THE *Fortnightly Review* of yesterday contains an article on Spiritualism by Viscount Amberley, in which there is much that is good and reasonable, as well as much which cannot be commended. To begin with the least favourable aspect of the article, he writes authoritatively, and with a tone of superiority of knowledge, after attending five *seances* only—evidently thinking his judgment and experience to be of more weight than those of the many gentlemen of education and trained accuracy of observation, who have given half their lives to the practical examination of the facts. However pleasing this may be to general readers, who always like to have their preconceived ideas confirmed, when his article shall have become a thing of the past, and be viewed by the cold, impartial gaze of future generations,

more enlightened than ourselves, it will rank with such utterances as those of Lord Brougham in his contemptuous article against the wave-theory of light. Lord Amberley seems to be satisfied that his experience at five *seances*—most of them poor ones—justifies him in overruling the conclusions of some millions of persons who have had a hundred times more experience.

Lord Amberley began, continued, and ended his observations by the adoption of the imposture theory. If the mediums knew that he considered them to be impostors, one real cause of the poor *seances* is explained. The phenomena depend upon very delicate conditions connected with the nervous system, and are always weakened or stopped when the medium is not thoroughly comfortable and happy. There are some few exceptional mediums, like the Davenport and Mrs. Mary Marshall the younger, who can usually get manifestations in the teeth of such unfavourable conditions; but mediums with such strong powers are rare. Hence "investigators" who know everything before inquiry, who are conscious that mediums are impostors and their own friends dupes, fortunately for the movement find some little difficulty in entering Spiritualism, which consequently tends to spread most rapidly among people who think that there is some moral integrity in human nature, and do not at heart adhere to the theory of the total depravity of their neighbours.

Any intelligent man who attends a few poor *seances* may possibly frame an imposture theory sufficient to cover all the facts; so no good purpose can be served in following Viscount Amberley through the details of his account of what he observed.

Towards the close of the article he says:—

When we are told of human bodies floating unsupported in the air, the assertion is irreconcilable with a well-known law, and the probabilities are infinite in favour of mendacity or delusion on the part of the relater.

With which of these categories does Lord Amberley class the following testimony of Mr. Crookes, published in yesterday's *Quarterly Journal of Science*? A plain question should have a plain answer, especially from a gentleman and an English statesman:—

On one occasion I witnessed a chair, with a lady sitting on it, rise several inches from the ground. On another occasion, to avoid the suspicion of this being in some way performed by herself, the lady knelt on the chair in such a manner that its four feet were visible to us. It then rose about three inches, remained suspended for about ten seconds, and then slowly descended. At another time two children, on separate occasions, rose from the floor, with their chairs, in full daylight, under (to me) most satisfactory conditions; for I was kneeling and keeping close watch upon the feet of the chair, and observing that no one might touch them.

The most striking cases of levitation which I have witnessed have been with Mr. Home. On three separate occasions have I seen him raised completely from the floor of the room. Once, sitting in an easy chair, once kneeling on his chair, and once standing up. On each occasion I had full opportunity of watching the occurrence as it was taking place.

There are, at least, a hundred recorded instances of Mr. Home's rising from the ground, in the presence of as many separate persons, and I have heard from the lips of the three witnesses to the most striking occurrence of this kind—the Earl of Dunraven, Lord Lindsay, and Mr. C. Wynne—their own most minute accounts of what took place. To reject the recorded evidence on this subject, is to reject all human testimony whatever; for no fact in sacred or profane history is supported by a stronger array of proofs.

One of the best parts of the article is that which deals with the circumstance of many Spiritualists putting leading questions to the spirits, who, consequently, have but to say "Yes" or "No" in reply, and to adopt information given them by the questioner. Such a

method of inquiry tends to aid deceiving spirits, whether they be in or out of the mortal body.

The following is one of the best paragraphs in the article:—

Nor is this true only of the modern wonders alleged by Spiritualists; it applies equally to the ancient wonders alleged by other authorities. Finding, as we do, that positive falsehood is still rampant, that credulous acceptance of fantastic theories and unsifted statements is still prevalent, that the most improbable events are believed on the smallest possible evidence, how can it be reasonably doubted that similar causes must have produced similar effects in former ages? Not to dwell, as is often done, on the more scientific character of our own age—for experience shows that the spread of scientific knowledge may fail to shake unscientific habits of thought—it is sufficient to urge that the totally undisciplined minds of bygone races were not likely to furnish evidence of a more trustworthy nature than that now offered by men constantly subjected to the critical spirit of our age. It is hard to understand—or would be hard were not flagrant incongruities so common—how the same individuals can reject with scorn the statements of Spiritualists, yet receive with faith the equally incredible statements which form part of their religious creed. Evidence offered by many witnesses, whose names are known, who have positively seen what they describe, who may be personally questioned, whose untruths, if any, may be detected, they do not even deem worthy of examination. Evidence offered by single witnesses, whose names are unknown or doubtful, who are beyond the reach of all inquiry, whose untruths, if any, there are no means of detecting, they believe even without examination. To assert that a lady floats in the air is ridiculous; to assert that a man walked on the water is quite credible. To believe that spirits return to us is a sign of folly; to believe that after actual death human beings were restored to life is rational religion. Angels might descend to converse with prophets; spirits cannot descend to converse with their dearest friends. That a table should be moved in some inexplicable way is not to be believed; that a sea or a river should be cleft in twain is not to be doubted. It might almost be maintained that the readiness with which the public accepts the marvellous and the inexplicable, varies directly as it is ill-attested. For not only is the testimony offered by Spiritualists immeasurably stronger, both in kind and in amount, than that on which the orthodox miracles repose, but it conforms far more closely to scientific conditions, being offered in order to prove, not exceptional prodigies, wrought by exceptional men, in opposition to the laws of nature, but phenomena of every-day occurrence, subject to their own laws, which, if not fully ascertained, are no less constant than those of the material world. The Churchman says, "extraordinary events happened once, under conditions that will never recur." The Spiritualist says, "extraordinary events happen daily, under certain conditions, and will always happen when those conditions are fulfilled." Any argument, then, that is used against the latter, tells with hundredfold force against the former.*

There is no statement in the current number of the *Fortnightly Review* of the principles on which that journal is conducted, but it is to be regretted that it disseminates such inaccurate information about Spiritualism. Should it desire to tell *both sides* of the question, it ought to publish an article by some such representative Spiritualist as Mr. A. R. Wallace. Mr. J. Morley, the editor, is a man likely to listen impartially to both sides of a disputed question. He recently delivered some very sensible lectures on political subjects, at the Royal Institution, where among other good ideas, he promulgated the thoughtful doctrine that there is no "best form of national government," but that one particular form of government which is the best for a nation at a particular time, may not be the best at another time.

As some readers prefer to bind journals separately from the bulk of the advertisements, the pages of *The Spiritualist* are now arranged to permit such a system of binding.

* See the obverse of this ingeniously argued in an excellent little book, by M.P., "Hints for the Evidences of Spiritualism."

LAVATER'S LETTERS TO THE EMPRESS MARIE OF RUSSIA.

LETTER III.—ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

MUCH revered Empress,—The outward condition of every disembodied soul will correspond to its inward state, that is to say, everything will appear to it as it is itself. To the good all will seem good; evil will only appear to the souls of the wicked. The loving soul will attract loving souls, and the malicious soul will attract malicious souls. Every soul will see itself reflected by spirits similar to itself. The good will become better, and will be admitted into spheres composed of beings superior to itself; the holy one will become even more holy by merely contemplating spirits more pure and holy than itself; the loving spirit will love more and more; but in the same way every wicked being will become worse and worse, by the mere contact of others more wicked than itself. Even on earth, virtue and vice, love and hatred, are most contagious, but beyond the grave all moral and religious perfection, as also every immoral and irreligious feeling, must needs become far more alluring and contagious.

You, much honoured Empress, will become all love in the sphere of benevolent souls. All my comparative selfishness and conceit, and the lukewarmness which I now feel about God's kingdom and His designs, will be entirely absorbed by the sense of love, if it has been predominant in me, and I shall be continually purged more and more by the presence and companionship of pure and loving spirits. Purged—by the force with which we have exercised our power of loving while on earth, still further by the love which elevated spirits shall pour forth upon us, we shall gradually be prepared for the sight of the all-perfect love, so that we may not be dazzled or terrified by it, which would mar our perfect enjoyment of it. But, much venerated Empress, how can, how dare a feeble mortal attempt to conceive the aspect of the impersonation of love? And thou, inexhaustible charity, how couldst thou approach Him who draws love from thee alone, without terrifying and dazzling Him? I think that at first it will appear under a disguise. Has it not always been thus? Who loved more invisibly than Jesus? Who better than He knew how to represent the incomprehensible individuality of the Unknown? Who better than He knew how to disguise Himself—He who might have manifested Himself more plainly than any mortal or immortal spirit? He, adored by all the heavens, came in the guise of a humble workman, and preserved till death the character of a Nazarene. Even after His resurrection He appeared at first in a strange form, and only made Himself known afterwards. I think that He will always maintain this mode of action, so analogous to His nature, His wisdom, and His love. When Mary sought Him in the garden, and already despaired of finding Him, He appeared to her as a gardener. For some moments she did not recognise Him. It was also in a strange form that He appeared to two of His disciples who, as they walked, were full of Him and raising their thoughts towards Him. He walked for some time by their side; their hearts burned with sacred fire; they felt the presence of some pure and noble spirit, but only recognised Him when He broke the bread, the moment of His disappearance, and when they saw Him again that night at Jerusalem. The same thing took

place on the borders of the lake of Tiberias, and again when he appeared to Saul, radiant with dazzling glory. How sublime and how dramatic are all the actions, the words, and the revelations of our Lord! Everything pursues a constant course, always advancing, approaching nearer and nearer to a goal, which, however, is never a finality. Christ is the hero, the centre, and the principal character in this grand and divine drama, sometimes visible, sometimes invisible. In this drama all is beautifully simple, and yet at the same time complex; it never ends, and yet has appeared a thousand times complete. He appears always, unknown at first, in the existence of each of His worshippers. How could love fail to show itself to one who loves just at the moment of his utmost need?

Yes, O Thou most human of men! Thou wilt appear to man in the most human manner. Thou wilt appear to that loving soul whom I now address! Thou wilt appear to me also, at first unrecognised, and afterwards manifesting Thyself. We shall see Thee times without number, ever different yet ever the same, ever more beautiful according as we increase in holiness, and never for the last time. Let us try to raise ourselves to this entrancing thought, which I will endeavour, with God's permission, to explain more clearly in my next letter, and to bring home to you in a more striking light by adding a communication from one who has passed away.

LAVATER.

I, ix., 1798.

SPIRITUALISM AND MATERIALISM.*

BY THE HON. E. DALE OWEN.

THE members of the Evangelical Alliance, during their recent session, admitted and deeply deplored the increase and wide range of Materialism, and sought means to arrest it. From other authentic sources we have corroborative testimony to the same effect; as from an official report on religious worship, made Dec. 8th, 1853, to the Registrar-General of England. There we read:—

There is a sect, originated lately, called "Secularists," their chief tenet being that, as the fact of a future life is (in their views) susceptible of some degree of doubt, while the fact and necessities of a present life are matters of direct sensation, it is prudent to attend exclusively to the concerns of that existence which is certain and immediate, not wasting energies in preparation for remote and merely possible contingencies. This is the creed which, probably with most exactness, indicates the faith which, virtually though not professedly, is held by the masses of our working population.—Page 78.

And the writer adds, speaking specially of artisans and other workmen:—

It is sadly certain that this vast, intelligent, and growingly important section of our countrymen is thoroughly estranged from our religious institutions in their present aspect.

As to another influential class, not in England and on the European Continent only, but in our own country, a bishop who is held in deservedly high estimation by the orthodox body to which he belongs, stated to me his conviction that evidences of infidelity are daily multiplying among intelligent men; adding that he had lately heard a Professor of Harvard College express the opinion that three-fourths of our chief scientific men were unbelievers.

* We extract this from an article sent us by Mr. Dale Owen, which article was recently published in the *New York Tribune*.

Mr. Alfred Wallace, an eminent English scientist, well known on both sides of the Atlantic, published, last year, under his own name, in the *London Quarterly Journal of Science*, edited by a Fellow of the Royal Society, a ten-page review of an American work on Spiritual Phenomena, entitled the "Debatable Land." In that review he says that "such a subject is not out of place in a scientific journal, for in whatever light we view it, it is really a scientific question." And his conclusion is this:—"The facts here given force upon us the spiritual theory, just as the facts of geology force upon us the belief in long series of ancient living forms, different from those now existing on the earth."

Again. Mrs. Stowe, in the *Christian Union*, says of the same book:—"It ought to be reckoned as of the same class with Darwin's late work; being a study into the obscure parts of nature, conducted in the only true method, by the exhibition of well-selected facts." The editor of *Every Saturday* declares "its logic to be of a kind to command the respect of Bishop Butler or Archbishop Whateley." And, not to multiply examples, that most critical of journals, the *Nation*, at the close of a candid two-column review, thus expresses itself:—"What is spirit? What is matter? Science, to all appearance, draws nearer and nearer to answering these questions; and books which, like the 'Debatable Land,' contribute their quota of carefully observed and recorded facts to the discussion, are to be welcomed."

An old belief seems about to disappear—the belief in the exceptional and miraculous. The civilised world is gradually settling down to the assurance that natural law is universal, invariable, persistent. Now if natural law be invariable, then either the wonderful works ascribed to Christ and His disciples were not performed, or else they were not miracles. If they were not performed, then Christ, assuming to perform them, lent Himself, as Renan and others have alleged, to deception—a theory which disparages His person and discredits His teachings. But if they were performed under natural law, and if natural laws endure from generation to generation, then inasmuch as the same laws must exist still, we may expect somewhat similar phenomena at any time. Add to this that Jesus Himself, exercising spiritual powers and gifts, promised (John xiv. 12) to His followers after His death similar faculties.

The question, then, touching the existence or non-existence, at the present time, of phenomenal proofs of a life to come, may, if decided affirmatively, furnish to men of science and to other sceptics who reject the Gospel narratives, the very species of evidence that is demanded at this modern day to change their discouraging creed. To act upon the ignorance of the first century, it needed works which that ignorance looked upon as miracles; but to act upon the apathy of the present age, it needs phenomena acknowledged to be natural, yet of an intermundane character. If such can be placed before materialists, then they will have the evidence of their senses in proof that the marvellous powers ascribed to Jesus and the spiritual gifts enjoyed by His disciples were natural, and are credible; that, in fact, we have no more reason for rejecting them than for denying the wars of Caesar or the conquests of Alexander. And thus the *alleged spiritual manifestations of our day*, if they prove genuine, *become the strongest evidences to sustain the authenticity of the Gospels.*

REMARKABLE SEANCE WITH MR. WILLIAMS.

BY WEBSTER GLYNES.

I FORWARD you an account of a very successful private *seance* held on Tuesday, the 16th December, at the Palace Hotel, Buckingham Gate, through the mediumship of Mr. Williams. It may, I think, be considered more than usually interesting, because it helps to furnish Spiritualists with an answer to that important question so persistently put to us by unbelievers as a crucial test, viz., "Have the spirit and the medium been seen separate and apart from one another at the same moment?" The account I am about to give will demonstrate the possibility of procuring a very satisfactory reply.

Our party consisted of five persons, namely Prince Wittgenstein, *Aide-de-Camp* to the Emperor of Russia, a distinguished medium who had come over to England expressly to investigate instances of spirit materialisation; Presutto, his confidential servant; Dr. Boulland; and myself.

We assembled in a sitting room occupied by the Prince, on the first floor of the Hotel. The windows looked into the street, the only door to the apartment faced the windows, and opened out upon the corridor. The room was furnished in the ordinary way. A round table stood in the centre of the apartment, and various chairs and tables were arranged round the walls. Daylight was excluded, and the door secured by placing against it a heavy piece of furniture, which could not be moved without causing considerable noise and disturbance. The medium was placed in a chair, away from the windows, and behind a folding screen, while the rest of us sat down round the table in the middle of the room. The candlelight was extinguished, which left us in darkness.

After about twenty minutes had past, the medium, who up to this time had been joining in our conversation, became silent, and the presence of a spirit became known by the appearance of a small light, flitting up and down the screen.

Soon afterwards we began to distinguish a whitish mist in the gloom, and then "John King" appeared at full length, with great distinctness, in front of the screen, and spoke to us. He was dressed as usual in a white turban, and loose flowing robes, somewhat similar to the costume of an Arab, or Moor. I observed his swarthy countenance and curly black hair, which, however, did not seem so long as I have seen it on former occasions. He held in front of him his wonderful lamp, which suffused over the upper part of his figure a soft, luminous, phosphorescent glow, of a bluish green tint. The light, though brilliant, was yet so mellow that the eye could rest on it without discomfort.

Having had an opportunity on a previous occasion of examining this lamp, when placed by John King on the palm of my hand, I will here attempt some description of it. It consists, apparently, of a semi-transparent oval shaped piece of unpolished crystal, of about three by four inches in breadth, and one in thickness, rounded at the edges like the flat stones that may be found on the sea shore. It feels hard, and of a palpable weight, and in temperature about the warmth of the human body.

The glow of light from it is subdued, steady, and phosphorescent. In the heart of the substance, I have noticed, a small spark like a kernel of fire. This lamp-stone is held by John King in front of his waist, wrapped in the folds of his robe, and encircled by his hands, as

though hugging a great treasure. Sometimes the light disappears, as he draws the stone into the folds of his mantle, seemingly to foster it; and then, as he brings it out again, its brilliancy increases to its full lustre, until in turn it fades away as it is returned again to its repository. This extraordinary light was shown to us many times, but on one occasion with more than usual brilliancy. The spirit seemed to be making a great effort to show himself clearly, for holding the lamp down underneath his loose robe, nearly as low as the knees, he lit up his figure with wonderful brightness, and illumined a part of the room.

Presently he advanced to us through the table; and then at our request raised his figure, about four feet from the ground, and looked down over us: Afterwards he assumed a recumbent attitude, as if floating on his back in the air, on about a level with the table. He also shook hands with the Prince, Dr. Boulland, and myself. The hand was somewhat warmer than my own. The arm as it stretched across the table, seemed to me to elongate itself to an unnatural size, and was draped in a loose sleeve of some delicate texture. As the hand slowly reached across to mine, I felt a slight pricking sensation at the tips of the fingers, as though some mesmeric current were passing between us. The spirit's grasp was manly and expressive, implying to my conception the idea of much cordiality, tempered with self-respect. We now asked, as a special test, to be allowed to see the medium at the same time as the spirit. John King made no reply, but withdrew for some time. We next heard the screen moved, and soon afterwards we were invited to look. We left the table, and approached the screen, one flap of which had been set back. We were told not to come too near, and only one by one. John King seemed most desirous to show us the medium, and moved his light into several positions for the purpose, but for some reason or other the light, notwithstanding the spirit's efforts, became so dim, that we could see no more than a dark something in the medium's place. With feelings of considerable disappointment we resumed our places, and were kept some time in suspense, while John King made another effort. At last his voice was heard to say; "Let the Prince come!" Prince Wittgenstein went to the screen, from which we now observed the reflection of a dull light, and in a short time returned, declaring that he had really seen Mr. Williams asleep in his seat, while John King stood over him lighting up his figure with his lamp. We all were most anxious to witness this important test, but the spirit informed us that there was not sufficient power left. The Prince thinking that the *seance* was over, proposed to strike a light, but John King interposed, stating that he was busy restoring to the medium so much of the power as had not been expended. In answer to our questions on this subject, he stated that power was not only taken from the medium, but from the sitters also, and that while it was necessary to restore the power to the medium, it was not important to return any to them. John King having finished his task, gave his usual benedictions, and left, so terminating a very interesting hour in his company.

WEBSTER GLYNES,
4, Gray's Inn Square, W.C.

We declare the above to be a correct account of what took place in our presence.

(Signed) E. B. Boulland, LL.D.,
Giuseppe Presutto.

I declare the above account to be correct. I saw the medium as stated, and John King holding a lamp over him.
(Signed) Prince Emile Wittgenstein.

THE LADY OF BURNHAM GREEN.

THE following abstract of a narrative by Miss Florence Marryat, is given by Mr. Robert Dale Owen in his recent book, *The Debatable Land*:—

Florence Marryat, daughter of the celebrated novelist, gave, less than a year ago, in an American periodical,* three stories of apparitions, which she attests as "strictly true and well authenticated." Of these the last was witnessed by her father, Captain Marryat, and is related as she heard it from his own lips. I condense portions of it, giving the main facts in the author's own language.

In one of the northern counties of England stands a country house, Burnham Green, inherited by the present occupants, Sir Harry and Lady Bell.† Their house had its ghost: but, "like most sensible people, they laughed at the report:" surrounding themselves with every luxury and not heeding the legend.

Their numerous friends, cordially invited, flocked to Burnham Green, thought the place and its host and hostess charming; yet, after a while, made paltry excuses to curtail their visits and were shy of being lured there again. It came out that they had heard of the ghost, some declared they had seen it, and the rest could not be persuaded to remain under a haunted roof.

"Sir Harry and Lady Bell were thoroughly vexed, and did all they could to dissipate the superstition. They disinterred the history of the ghost, who went by the name of 'The Lady of Burnham Green,' and found that it was supposed to be the spirit of one of their ancestresses who had lived in the time of Elizabeth, and had been suspected of poisoning her husband. Her picture hung in one of the unused bedrooms."

Lady Bell caused this bedroom to be renovated and cheerfully fitted up; and she had the picture of the Lady cleaned and new-framed. In vain! "No one could be found to sleep in that room. The servants gave warning, if it was simply proposed to them, and visitors invariably requested to have their room changed after the second or third night. Guest after guest took flight, to return no more."

In this dilemma Sir Harry applied to Captain Marryat, an old friend of his, for advice. The Captain, utterly disbelieving the story, offered to occupy the haunted chamber: an offer which was eagerly accepted.

With a brace of loaded pistols under his pillow, he was undisturbed for several nights, and was beginning to think of returning home: but he was not to escape so easily.

After a week had passed, one evening, when Captain Marryat was about to retire for the night, Mr. Lascelles, one of the guests, tapped at his door and asked him to cross to his room and inspect a newly-invented fowling-piece, the merits of which they had just before been discussing in the smoking room. The Captain, who had already divested himself of coat and waistcoat, picked up a pistol—"in case we meet the ghost"—he said jestingly—passed along the corridor to Mr. Lascelles' room, and after chatting for a few minutes, over the virtues of the new gun, turned to go. Mr. Lascelles returned with him—"just to protect you from the ghost," he said laughingly, in imitation of the former allusion. The corridor was long and dark, the lights having been extinguished at midnight; but as they entered it they saw a dim light advancing from the farther end—a light held by a female figure. The children of several of the families were lodged on the floor above, and Lascelles suggested that this was probably some lady going to visit the nurseries. The Captain, remembering that he was in shirt and trousers, and unwilling to face a lady in that guise, drew his companion aside. The conclusion shall be told in the narrator's own words:—

"The rooms in the corridor were placed opposite each other, and were approached by double doors, the first of which, on being opened, disclosed a small entry, and the

* *Harper's Weekly*, issue of December 24th, 1870, pages 846 and 847.

† These are not the real names. The writer says: "While I preserve all details of these stories, I carefully hide the names of persons and places, lest by negligence in this respect, I should wound the feelings of survivors." She says also that the stories which she has related are selected from a number of similar anecdotes which rise in her memory as she writes.

second door, which led to the bed-chamber itself. Many persons, on entering their rooms, only closed this second door, leaving the other standing open; and thus, when Mr. Lascelles and my father stepped into one of these recesses, they were enabled to shelter themselves behind the half-closed portal.

"There, in the gloom, they crouched together, very much inclined to laugh, I have no doubt, at the situation in which they found themselves, but terribly afraid lest by a betrayal of their illegal presence they should alarm the occupant of the bedroom before which they stood, or the lady who was advancing to the place of their concealment.

"Very slowly she advanced, or so it seemed to them; but they could watch the glimmer of her lamp through the crack of the door; and presently my father, who had pertinaciously kept his eyes there, gave the half-smothered exclamation, 'Lascelles! By Jove!—the Lady!'

"He had studied the picture of the 'supposed apparition carefully, was intimate with every detail of her dress and appearance, and felt that he could not be mistaken in the red satin sacque, white stomacher and petticoat, high-standing frill, and cushioned hair of the figure now advancing toward them.

"A splendid 'make-up,' he said, beneath his breath; 'but whoever has done it shall find I know a trick worth two of his.'

"But Mr. Lascelles said nothing. Imposition or not, he did not like the looks of the lady of Burnham Green.

"On she came, quiet and dignified, looking neither to the right nor to the left, while my father cocked his pistol, and stood ready for her. He expected she would pass their place of hiding, and intended to pursue and make her speak to him! but instead of that, the dim light gained the door, and then stood still.

"Lascelles shuddered. He was a brave man, but sensitive. Even my father's iron nerves prompted him to be quiescent.

"In another moment the lamp moved on again, came closed, closer; and round the half-closed door, gazing inquisitively at them, as though really curious to see who was there, peered the pale face and cruel eyes of the Lady of Burnham Green.

"Simultaneously my father pushed open the door and confronted her. She stood before him in the corridor just as she stood in the picture in his bedroom, but with a smile of malicious triumph on her face; and goaded on by her expression, hardly knowing what he did, he raised his pistol and fired full at her. The ball penetrated the door of the room opposite to where they stood; and, with the same smile upon her face, she passed through the panels and disappeared."

"Of course there was no explanation except what the appearance and disappearance of the apparition afforded. If spirits *cannot* appear, what was it that these two gentlemen saw and one of them fired at?

THE NEW AUSTRALIAN SPIRITUAL NEWSPAPER.

A WEEKLY newspaper, price threepence, edited by the Rev. John Tyerman, has just been issued in Melbourne, under the title of *The Progressive Spiritualist*. It contains scarcely any Australian news, and is mostly filled with articles relating to religious subjects. The following extract from an article by its editor will give an idea of the general tone of the utterances of the new journal:—

SPIRITUALISM IN ITS RELATIONS TO ORTHODOXY.

"No one acquainted with the teachings and tendency of Spiritualism can fail to perceive that it has an important bearing on the theology and general conduct of the churches. It will leave untouched everything that is intrinsically good and practically beneficial in the popular religions of the world; or rather, to everything of this character it will impart new life and vigour, and surround it with additional guarantees of safety; but it will boldly challenge all the speculative dogmas of those religions, and demand that they shall either prove their claims at the bar of reason and science, or

abandon the pretentious and authoritative position they have so long held.

I am aware that there are those connected with the movement who have tried to harmonise Spiritualism and orthodox Christianity, and make it appear that they are practically at one; but the effort, as might have been predicted, have hitherto completely failed. Those who have attempted this have either a Spiritualism peculiar to themselves, or a Christianity which orthodox churches would repudiate. The term, "Christian Spiritualist," by which a few who believe in spirit communion wish to be distinguished, has always appeared to me a misnomer. It would be just as consistent and proper to speak of a Christian Mohammedan, or a Christian Pagan, as a Christian Spiritualist. If we are one we cannot be the other, according to the ordinary meaning of the term Christian; and if we use the term in a sense different from that ordinarily attached to it, we are simply misleading others. I do not doubt the sincerity of those friends who try to make fire and water blend, and mutually help each other; and I can appreciate their motive in desiring to avoid another rupture in the churches, and the consequent formation of another sect. It is very difficult in most cases to rid the mind of early beliefs and influences; and some persons have a remarkable aptitude for making any new fact or truth fit their old established opinions. But if our Christian Spiritualists will give their reason free scope, and apply, fearless of consequences, some of the first principles of Spiritualism to the majority of Church dogmas, they will find a fatal antagonism at once spring up.

In proof of this, we need only notice the three following positions:—First, Spiritualism proves that divine inspiration is a continued and universal fact. It was not confined to a few of the ancients, and did not cease some eighteen hundred years ago. God still inspires men's minds, and reveals His will to them, through the ministry of angels and other means, as He did in olden times. And, therefore, the claim to exclusive inspiration set up for the Bible is unwarranted. And if its assumed exclusive inspiration and consequent infallibility are disproved, away go all the doctrines founded on that assumption. Secondly, Spiritualism teaches that man's happiness or misery depends upon his obedience to, or violation of, the laws of God as impressed on his own physical, mental, and moral constitution, and on external nature. From this position it follows that his 'salvation' or moral well-being is placed in his own hands, and is the inevitable effect of wisely-ordained natural causes; and, consequently, no other being in the universe can 'bear his sins,' or 'purchase his salvation,' as Christians phrase it. And hence, the doctrine of Vicarious Atonement—the chief pillar of Church theology—is alike unnecessary and impossible. Thirdly, the doctrine of eternal progression, which Spiritualism unfolds, as the destiny of all men, makes sad havoc among theological dogmas. It overthrows the doctrine of the 'Fall' at one end of theology, and that of 'Eternal Punishment' at the other; and, as the first and last links in the chain of dogma are snapped, all the intermediate doctrinal chain, dependent on those links, of necessity also gives way and falls to the ground. Seeing, then, that there is such a vital and irreconcilable difference between some of the fundamental principles of Spiritualism and many of the dogmas which bear the name of Christianity, it appears to me not only unwise on the ground of policy, but absolutely impos-

sible as a matter of fact, to make them fit with each other, and pass off before the world as harmonious parts of one grand system.

If by Christianity were meant nothing but the simple, beautiful, practical, benevolent religion taught and exemplified by the noble Jesus, then Spiritualism and Christianity would indeed be at one. Spiritualism, as a religion, is essentially Christian in that sense. But that is not what creed-making and creed-defending believers mean by Christianity. True, they call their religion by the name of Christ, and profess to base it on His teachings; but, alas, how little there is in common between primitive and modern Christianity! How little most of the professed followers of Christ possess of His spirit, or exemplify of His teachings! His religion of 'Good Works' has run to seed in a system of barren 'faith.' His principles of all-embracing love and God-like forbearance have degenerated into sectarian bitterness and persecuting intolerance."

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA.

BY J. M. PEEBLES.

The Friend of India, published at Serampore, had among its selections, some time since, this telling paragraph:—

The Bombay papers contain accounts of a mania for spirit-rapping which they say has set in among the natives there. If the statements are correct, it would not be surprising if the mania ran through India. Everything connected with the spirit-world is a profound mystery to the native of India. He has no definite ideas as to the future. He confesses at once that it may be this or that—he knows not what. A city with golden pavement astonishes him, but really the definiteness is what puzzles him. If spirit-rapping finds its way among such a people, we shall have queer revelations by-and-by. They will intensify a hundred-fold all the mysteries, and will make a thousand more. Religion will not stand in the way in the slightest degree. A Hindoo is free to examine anything on the face of the earth, and speculate to his heart's content.

A rare tissue this of the true and the false! Hindoos, thank Heaven! are "free to examine anything on the face of the earth." And this confession, all unwittingly made, should put to shame the Churchman's bigotry. "Everything connected with the spirit-world," however, is not a "profound mystery to the native of India." Converse with spirits is as old as the Vedas, while Indian oriental writings generally are freighted with the teachings of inspired seers and sainted Rishis.

Opening Captain Forsyth's volume on *Central India*, I find important passages on page 362 and others. Here is the substance:—

Theirs—the *Bygas*—it is, to hold converse with the world of spirits, who are everywhere present to the aborigines; and theirs it is also to cast omens, call for rain, and charm away disease. The *Byga*—medicine-man—fully looks his character. He is tall, thin, and cadaverous—abstraction and mystery residing in his hollow eyes. A great necklace, carved from forest kernels, marks his holy calling. Ghosts are supposed to be ever present, inciting to either good or evil. Many profess to see them. * * * These *Byga* medicine men further possess the gift of throwing themselves into a trance, during which the affluence of the Deity is supposed to be vouchsafed to them, communicating the secrets of the future. "I am thoroughly convinced," says the Captain, by evidence from other quarters, "that this *trance* is not mere acting."

Both Hudson Tuttle and J. O. Barrett have heard me speak of receiving Indian letters from Peary Chand Mittra, a Calcutta commission merchant, writer, and Spiritualist. It can well be imagined that it gave me much pleasure to clasp the hand of this Hindoo thinker, and the more so when I found his soul deeply absorbed in spiritualism as against the vices of this sensuous life. The Brahminical tinge permeating his Spiritualism had for me a thousand charms. He was for a time a writing medium; but at present his gifts pertain more to spiritual insight. He assured me that his ascended wife was as consciously present to him at times, as though in her body. Parting with this excellent man, he gave us, besides other presents, a small volume from his pen entitled *The Development of the Female Mind in India*. I find it rich in historic references to woman's independence in the Vedic period—the golden age of the Aryans.

Mohindro, Saul Paul and Romanath Senx—two interesting young gentlemen, connected with the higher castes—called upon us several times to converse of spiritual phenomena in America, and the best methods of holding private *seances*. Conversant with the spiritualistic literature of England, these young men are Spiritualists; and yet they have never witnessed a shred of the phenomenal. A correspondence was

agreed upon with these gentlemanly Hindoos. Are we not brothers, all?

Shibchunder Deb—another devoted Spiritualist, introduced by P. C. Mittra—presented us a neat volume that he had recently published upon Spiritualism. It contains liberal extracts from American authors—in fact, the works of Davis, Tuttle, Barrett, Denton, Edmonds, and others, are well known in India. This gentleman has also translated Emma Hardinge-Britten's *Spiritual Commandments* into the Bengalese language, and they are now being circulated as a tract in India. We saw several Hindoo *healers* relieving the sick in the streets.

India's better class of minds—metaphysical and contemplative—are singularly adapted to accept the Harmonial Philosophy. It is a common saying that "Hindoos, educated in English colleges, return to India Theists and Pantheists." Though willing enough to believe in Jesus as one of the Asiatic saviours and prophets, they cannot believe in the immaculate conception and vicarious atonement. Oh! that there were self-sacrifice, sufficient liberality, generous enthusiasm and missionary spirit among Americans to send Spiritualist papers, pamphlets, books, and lectures even, to India, to disseminate the beautiful principles of brotherhood, free thought, and a present spirit ministry. The seed has already been sown by the angels—there are many Spiritualists in different parts of this great country—can they, *will* they not perfect organisations, and thus come into working order? The next letter will take us through Central India by railway, *via* Benares and Allahabad to Bombay.

"India of the East, o'er whose valleys sweet
Too quickly pass my ever-wandering feet;
Ere yet your shores in lengthening distance fade,
Let faithful memory lend my pen her aid."

Banner of Light.

HEALING OF THE SICK BY PSYCHOLOGICAL POWER.

The Religio Philosophical Journal (Chicago), of December 20th, has an article five columns long, containing evidence relating to a remarkable case of the healing of disease. The invalid was the wife of the minister of a Methodist Episcopal Church, the Rev. M. Sherman, who published the following letter about the cure:—

Piermont, N. H. Nov. 6, 1873.

To the Editor of the "Christian at Work."

I have great pleasure in sending you the following account of the wonderful restoration to health of my wife, who had for years been a bed-ridden, suffering invalid. We desire to do this only for the glory of God and the good of His cause, in obedience to the word of the Heavenly Healer: "This thing is not done in a corner; go, tell how great things the Lord hath done for thee."

I will preface the account of the cure with a few words in regard to her religious experience, hoping it may be for the benefit of precious souls.

Ellen Clark was born in Llandaff, N. H., August 3d, 1835. Her parents were decided Christians, and gave her sound religious instruction. Nevertheless, she remained without Christ till the age of seventeen. Then, one Sabbath, at the invitation of her pastor, she went into his Bible-class in the Sabbath-school. The lesson was concerning Peter's walking upon the water. His words, as he was sinking, "Lord, save me," went as a dagger to her heart. She then and there resolved to be a Christian. Action followed resolution, and she was made exceedingly happy in the Divine love. She was never very robust, but retained usually good health till her sixteenth year, when, through an injury received by over exertion, she laid the foundation for a spinal disease. The spinal trouble was very much aggravated, four years later, by a fall down a flight of stairs, and a few months after that, her constitution received a further shock. Immediately after the injury first mentioned, she commenced having exceedingly distressing sick and nervous headache, which continued all through these years, as often, on an average, as once in two weeks. In time her whole system became seriously deranged. Her nervous system became nearly a wreck. At times she was somewhat mentally deranged, and more than one physician expressed the fear that the case would result in permanent insanity. Besides all this, the year before her health began to fail, through a fall on the ice, she partially dislocated one of

her knees, so injuring the ligaments that she was unable to walk for weeks without the aid of crutches; and ever since it has been, in a considerable degree weak and stiff.

On September 10th, 1872, through a severe cold, she took her bed, where she lay, except when lifted from it, till the night of Aug. 27th last. She was wholly unable to walk a step, or even to stand; nor could she be raised to a fully upright position. She could sit up but a few minutes at a time without the most extreme distress. The best medical skill that we could avail ourselves of was employed. Only temporary relief could be obtained. The spine grew worse, in spite of every surgical appliance, the nervous prostration and irritation increasing. During the following two or three weeks she was especially helpless, the services of two being required to lift her on and off the bed.

This was the condition, as accurately as I can describe, on the morning of August 27th, and she was in a more than usual degree of pain. As to the state of her mind, her reason was at this time, so far as we could see, unclouded. She had, until within a few months, usually kept up good courage that she would measurably recover. But the conviction had been growing upon her, and never seemed so clear as that night, that her lot for life was to be that of a bed-ridden, suffering invalid. Then, she had recently been made the subject of some very uncharitable remarks which had come to her ears, and which were very cruel, giving her great pain. In this state of body and mind she was left for the night, between nine and ten o'clock, her husband sleeping in an adjoining room, within call. It was the night of Wednesday, August 27th, that my wife retired for her night's rest, feeling that she must have more grace to bear these cruel speeches, and to be perfectly submissive to all God's will. She asked for this grace. She went over the ground of entire consecration; she was enabled to feel to submit entirely to the divine will. As she felt thus, she felt that Jesus saved even her. It was then that she began to be conscious of a real presence. She knew it was Jesus. He seemed to stand at the foot of her bed, though recognised only by the inner senses, and He appeared surpassingly lovely. While she said within herself, "Oh! if I could always have such presence with me, it would be joyful to lie here and suffer." Then, Christ's promise to send the comforter to His disciples, to abide with Him for ever, occurred to her. She asked for the fulfilment of His promise, and cried out, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean!" and instantly her prayer was heard, and there came the response, "I will; be thou clean;" and instantly she felt a sensation like that of an electric shock.

Promise after promise of Holy writ was brought before her mind as vividly as though printed in letters of light, such as: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you," &c. In the bliss of that hour she thought: "What am I, or what have I done, that the Lord should so bless me?" The answer was: "I, even I, am He that blot out thy transgressions for My own sake." She thought: "But why bless such a sinner as I?" "This man receiveth sinners," was the reply.

Up to this time the thought of having anything done for her body had not crossed her mind. But now came the question: "Should you be willing to be raised up, and work for the Lord?" And this thought of being raised up she conceived to be only as possible by God's blessing as means used, which might result in a gradual recovery. Whenever, in the past, the thought had been suggested to her by others, of being healed in answer to prayer, she had repelled such an idea. She did not doubt that God was able, or that it had been done for others, but she said: "It is not for me." She had not the least faith that any such thing would ever be done to her.

But to return. She found this, at first, hard to assent to. She was willing to be a bed-ridden invalid; but, to get up, and face the storms and trials and vexations of every-day life—she shrank from it. But she finally thought: "Yes, Lord, by Thy help, I would;" and then the presence drew near, and whispered: "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" She reasoned, as the question was repeated many times: "All power is given Him in heaven and on earth; He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Her intellect was convinced, and her whole heart, divinely helped, believed, and she said: "Lord, I do believe; help my unbelief." At once a sensation, as a warm breath, was forcibly breathed upon her face, followed by a thrill all through her frame, like a current from a galvanic battery, removing her pain—up to this moment very severe—and strengthening and invigorating her whole body. All this time she had lain motionless. Now she raised one hand, and then the other, without pain. The previous day

she had been unable to get either one to her head, without the help of the other. Then she turned in the bed, with almost no effort—coming over "like a cork," as she expressed it. At this point she rang the bell to awaken her husband. I came into the room, when she said: "Do you not feel that there is a strong influence in the room?" Upon my answering in the negative, she said: "There is; the Saviour is here, at work upon me." While these utterances were passing her lips, the word came from Jesus: "That the people may know that the Son of Man hath still power on earth to forgive sins, arise and walk." She at once arose from the bed, and easily and without pain, save a little hurt in her feet and ankles, walked alone several times across the room. This was about one o'clock of the morning of August 28th, up to which time she had not closed her eyes since retiring to bed for the night. After a time she lay down and slept till near seven; then rose and dressed herself, and walked out to breakfast.

Two months have since passed away. She remains free from disease, with increasing strength. She finds constant rest of soul in Jesus. Assailed by the adversary, she constantly holds by faith. Meanwhile, the Lord is giving her work to do, in public and private labour for souls, and with her pen, in answer to scores of letters of inquiry. They ask: "Is all this that we hear true?" I answer, the facts are exactly as I have here stated. Some may say that the experience of that night was but the hallucination of a disordered imagination. But the fact of the cure remains; as also that of the spinal transformation. Somehow it has been done—what medical skill and careful nursing utterly failed to accomplish, or, indeed, ameliorate. Many will attempt to account for this on natural principles; but we are simple enough, and incredulous enough, if it be incredulity, to believe unwaveringly, that our Lord Jesus Christ has, even in these days, wrought as real a miracle as any He ever performed when He walked upon earth in His flesh. Not for our sakes has He done this, but for the confirmation of the faith of Christians, and to convince a sceptical age that He is still a living God, and that Christ is still able and willing to forgive sins, and make a clean heart, and save to the uttermost.—Yours in the faith,

M. SHERMAN, *Pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church.*

The editor of the *Religio Philosophical Journal*, is not entirely satisfied with the foregoing letter. He publishes another letter from Mrs. W. E. Clark, sister-in-law to Mrs. Sherman, setting forth that she (Mrs. Clark) had consulted Mrs. A. H. Robinson, a healing medium, about Mrs. Sherman's case, and he ascribes the cure to the action of Mrs. Robinson's spirits. He argues that her conviction that the spirit of Jesus was present, was a psychological delusion, but that Mrs. Sherman was cured by spirit-power. With reference to Mr. Sherman's statement that his wife "had recently been made the subject of some very uncharitable remarks, which had come to her ears, and which were very cruel, giving her great pain," the editor adds—"Not a doubt of the truth of that statement. A minister's wife who should appeal to a spirit medium for aid, although given up as incurable by a dozen of the best physicians, would be the subject of 'some very uncharitable remarks.'"

DR. SLADE'S MEDIUMSHIP.

DR. SLADE is one of the finest test mediums for physical manifestations in America, and the following description of a part of one of his *seances*, which we extract from the *Religio Philosophical Journal*, is of interest:—

To describe this feature of Dr. Slade's mediumship, I will simply relate my own experience, assuring your readers that the truthfulness of my statements can be verified by similar experiences on the part of anyone who desires to investigate.

On the occasion of my first visit early in July last, I was then and had been totally unacquainted with Dr. Slade, having never seen him or held correspondence with him. On announcing the object of my visit, we repaired together to his private room. It was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and the room was perfectly lighted, same as any ordinary

room. He first gave me the privilege of minutely examining the small table in the centre of the room as well as all its contents. I was satisfied that no other person was present, and also that there was no possibility of deception. I was also reassured by the doctor's very kind and indulgent treatment, and convinced of his honesty. We sat down, he at the side, and I at the end of the table. During some fifteen minutes I witnessed nearly all his other physical manifestations. Among other things, my chair with me in it holding my feet clear of the floor, was drawn all about the room by some unseen agency, which also caused, at the verbal request of the doctor, all the chairs in the room to approach the table as though each one were to accommodate some person with a seat at the table, and afterwards in like manner to remove them. Objects were picked up and transported in plain daylight, visibly, unsupported, through the air, and handed to me! An accordion which I held firmly by one side upon the top of the table in my right hand, my left being under both the doctor's hands in the centre of the table, played two stanzas of "Home sweet home," although I cannot play any musical instrument. But now for the wonderful slate writing.

The doctor asked audibly, "Will the spirits present write some for us?" Immediately a tapping was heard upon the slate and it moved unaided toward me! I took it up and could very distinctly feel the slight vibrations of the taps as they were applied. Dr. Slade then placed a very small fragment of slate pencil on the surface of the slate which we had cleaned with a sponge, and instructed me to hold it tightly with the fingers of my left hand, pressing it up against the under side of the table, which I first examined. You will understand that the fragment of pencil was small enough to move between the surfaces of the slate and the table-leaf. I did so. I then placed my right hand in the centre of the table, and the doctor placed both his hands, in plain sight, on my right. As soon as the contact was complete between our hands, I could distinctly hear the little piece of pencil moving over the slate as if writing. We exchanged mutual expressions of surprise at so very wonderful and unaccountable an occurrence. Thus far I had given him no information at all of a personal nature. When the noise of the pencil ceased, it began tapping briskly, and the slate was forcibly moved from under the table as I held it. On removing it, I found to my surprise the words legibly written, "We will try to do so," and signed with my mother's signature, "Jane Barnard." Now, even if Dr. Slade had ever heard the name, which is improbable, as she had never lived in the United States—who did the writing?

After I had made some statements describing results I had obtained in my private sittings, which I commenced in response to instructions in answer to a sealed letter, a rapid tapping came on the slate, and I held it again as before, having first erased the former writing. This time the message, written by unseen hands, was as follows: "Go on, go on, we will soon be able to show you all," and signed as before, "Jane Barnard." I may here state that my mother had been in spirit life for nine years. Some three days afterward, by special invitation from Dr. Slade, I visited him again. This time I received the following communication in the same manner. "My dear son Henry, you are blessing your loving mother by coming to this city, and you will bless the dear one you are now on your way to see. Tell her the loving angels stand ready to receive her home. Give my love to all. I often go and make William feel my presence; also Annie and Emily. My dear son, do all you can for this truth, and bless your loving mother, Jane Barnard."

Subsequent communications were equally satisfactory and convincing. I received some of them on new slates purchased for the purpose, which never went out of my sight, and were continually in my grasp! I at length bought a double folding slate with wooden frame, closing like the covers of a book, and fastened together with brass hinges. It was obtained at A. S. Barnes and Co., of William-street, and my name written on it to identify it, so that substitution, were it possible, could be detected. On this occasion, I put the little grain of pencil inside the slate, and both sides were written full while we held both our hands together on the table, neither of us touching the slate, which lay before me in plain sight on the table. The writing continued audibly for about two minutes, and when completed, the raps were repeated as before. I opened the slate, and found the following message, which was written while the doctor and I conversed on other subjects: "My dear son Henry, how noble you are in the course you have taken with your brother and sister and friends. Oh, be kind

to them, and never, never say of them as they say of you. They do not understand this beautiful truth as you do yourself. Oh, how can they talk against you as they do. My dear son, your loving mother will never forsake you, for your soul is noble and true to the laws of God and man. Live pure and true as you have in the past, and as you receive the Light, let it shine for all. Fear not; angels will bless all souls like yours. The day is coming, dear son, when all will see you are in the right. Give them all my warmest love, and tell them I am often with them and know all they say. I am, your loving mother, Jane Barnard."

This communication, with the little piece of pencil, I still have in my possession, and take pleasure in showing it to my friends. But most people refuse to believe my most direct and unqualified statements, on the principle of Tom Paine's argument against revelation, that after being revealed to one man, it may not be a matter of testimony and veracity to all others. To me it is most convincing. I received tests that left not a shadow of doubt, and which give me the blessed assurance of immortality and future life. I now have as good evidence of my mother's existence and presence with me as I have of that of my brothers and sisters whose letters I receive by mail. Here is scientific evidence of the most substantial kind, and until scientific men can demonstrate some other more reasonable and obvious cause, I shall continue to believe in the sense before alluded to that I was in direct and immediate communication with my spirit friends. When another cause is distinctly demonstrated, I am ready to change my belief.

Hoping that I have not already wearied your readers, and monopolised too much of your valuable space, I remain, fraternally and truly,

H. BARNARD.

Lock Box 1702, Minneapolis, Minn.

Correspondence.

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

MATERIALISATIONS THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MISS SHOWERS.

SIR,—The experiences of Mrs. Fredericka Showers and her daughter, as published in your last, are undoubtedly of so interesting a nature that, for the benefit of your readers, I ask your kind permission to be allowed to add my mite of testimony in support of Miss Showers' remarkable mediumship.

On Monday evening, 29th inst., my wife and I had the pleasure of spending the evening with them at their temporary residence, Graham-road, Dalston. The peculiarity of the different voices was apparent in the light, even during our taking tea, when two of the spirits, named "Peter" and "Florence" respectively, conversed with us through the organisation of Miss Showers, without any apparent difficulty; the effect was remarkable, Miss Showers being, during the time, fully conscious of all that was taking place. A *seance* was then proposed by us, and, sitting round the large heavy mahogany table with sufficient light to clearly discern everything in and about the room, we soon had the usual vigorous table movements. After a sitting of short duration, with singing, to help to evolve sufficient power or force for an attempt to materialise, Miss Showers was placed in an adjoining room, separated by curtains. A lighted candle, with sealing wax, and some tape, were left in the room with the medium; and we were given to understand, by the voice answering to the name of "Peter," that at present he binds and seals the medium, which was very securely done. The tape was, on close scrutiny, found to be placed round the waist, then knotted a number of times, sealed, and passed over a brass rail at the foot of a bedstead, and again knotted and sealed. The wrists of the medium were also bound close together, and sealed. The length of tape between the medium's waist and the rail was about nine inches. We then removed the lighted candle, wax, and spare tape to the front room, where a fire and lamp were burning.

After singing, at the request of "Peter," several well known pieces, the face of one claiming to be that of the spirit "Florence" appeared at an opening in the curtains. The head was draped in white exactly like Miss Cook's "Katie King" and other spirit forms. The eyes were markedly dilated, and upturned, while the features were as life-like as possible, although wanting, perhaps, in vitality of expression. At my request we were allowed to stand in close proximity,

even to within a distance of about a foot, and in a clear light were allowed to scrutinise the face, which kept within our view, talking to us in a most natural manner for upwards of ten minutes.

Bidding "Florence" good-night, after she had stated that she thought she would have no difficulty in coming out amongst us in full form on another occasion, the face receded, and the voice of "Peter" was then heard singing several pieces in a very powerful masculine voice at our wish. At our request "Peter" roused his medium from the trance condition when we entered with the lighted candle, and I again carefully scrutinised the fastenings which were certainly in the same condition as I left them. Having obtained permission, I cut the bonds from the medium, and retain them in my possession at the present time, and they can be inspected by any person desirous of so doing.

I may add that, in addition to the sealing of the knots, they were also sewn together; and, further, that the hooded face of "Florence" was not so markedly like that of the medium as I had been led to expect, but was dissimilar in several respects. The voices continued during supper-time; and the remarks made by them on different topics of interest were very appropriate. That Miss Showers possesses medial qualities of no ordinary type is manifestly certain, and, having been elected with her mother as members of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, careful and kind development will do much to aid our investigations.

Apologising for the length of this letter, which I trust you will endeavour to find a corner for in your newspaper,

THOMAS BLYTON.

12, High-street, Bow, London, 30th Dec., 1873.

A CHALLENGE.—A Mr. John Francis Colling having published, in the *Bristol Daily Post*, a challenge connected with Spiritualism, Miss Lottie Fowler, the trance medium, wrote to the editor of that journal from Darlington, on the 22nd of last month. In the course of her letter she said:—"As a Spiritual medium, now pretty well known in this country and in America, I hereby challenge Mr. Colling, or any other person, to produce, by non-spiritual means, the phenomena which are produced by my mediumship. I engage to go to your or any other strange city, and amidst twelve or fewer strangers, whose respectability and trustworthiness shall be vouched for, I will, in the light, whilst in the unconscious trance, reveal to most, if not all of them, a knowledge of their affairs, and of persons with whom they have been associated, both living and dead, of which I could not by any possibility have been aware beforehand, and of which I personally shall know nothing after passing out of the trance state. Whilst under such conditions, the spirit who controls me describes spirit relatives of those present, with such clearness as to establish their identity, and generally gives messages from them of such a character as to convince those to whom they are given that they could not possibly come from any other source." For the verification of my possessing such powers I can refer you to reports in newspapers of good standing and unquestionable veracity. I enclose one such from the *Darlington and Stockton Times*."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. F.—When the collected earlier pictures are placed in series the doubly exposed ones can be crudely separated from the others at a glance. Through exposing twice and keeping the plates in between, much of what photographers call "fogging," was the result, so that the prints from such negatives have mostly a "washed out" look, and are usually devoid of the deep, rich dark shadows of the pictures produced in the same place by single exposure. We have one likeness of Mr. Wilks, formerly president of the Dalston Association, taken on a sunny day. During the first exposure the shadows of the bars of a window projected upon the background were photographed; they were also photographed on the second exposure, but on a different part of the background, the lapse of time having caused the shadow to fall on another portion. The two exposures pictured the carpet over Mr. Wilks's boots, to hide which the negative was worked upon with a cutting instrument, and the collodion scratched off the glass. Consequently the boots and lower parts of the legs of our respected friend, Mr. Wilks, are scratched off, and appear to end in a mass of dark scratches. A plan of publicly exhibiting these early pictures is under consideration; it may serve the useful purpose of enabling spectators to recognise the sham ghosts who assisted the photographer in his work. The pictures, viewed in series, make strange revelations, but we are not quite decided whether it is well to resuscitate the matter.

MRS. TAPPAN'S EXPERIENCES.

LAST Monday Mrs. Tappan gave a lecture at St. George's Hall, on her "Experiences," the proceeds to be devoted to the covering of some of the debts of the *Medium* newspaper. The *Standard* of last Tuesday says of the proceedings:—

"The overture brought to a close, Mr. Noyes, M.A., bewailed the comparative sparseness of the attendance, and attributed the circumstance to lack of advertising. Mrs. Tappan then rose, dressed in simple black, and wearing a wreath of flowers in her hair. After a short supplication to the Deity, Mrs. Tappan said that her guides—whoever they were—had decided to relate her experiences. Always speaking of herself in the third person, she said that at the age of eleven, while preparing a school lesson, living in a village in Wisconsin, U.S., she was thrown into a trance, and her slate covered with strange writing, which was afterwards found to be that of her mother's deceased sister. This naturally caused the mother some surprise, but nothing was said publicly of it. Shortly after "Cora" was again entranced with even more striking manifestations, and it was then discovered that the child was a trance medium, and chosen by various departed spirits as a means of intercommunication. From "spirit writing," Cora progressed to speaking for and with the spirits, and thence to the "healing" phase, a German physician controlling the medium and working many extraordinary cures, and speaking through her several languages of which she professed entire ignorance. Various peculiar instances were here related, and were most marvellous—if true. When thirteen years of age she was employed day and night in healing the sick, and in preaching the new spiritual gospel. A year after her father died, and Cora said she was able to see and describe the departure of the spirit from the body. At the age of fifteen the gift of healing was withdrawn, and that of "inspirational" speaking substituted, and since then she had delivered in public about 3,000 impromptu and unaided speeches. When peculiar subjects were chosen by her audiences, the one most fitted among her circle of controlling spirits would "inspire." Never was the same oration twice delivered, and Mrs. Tappan triumphantly inquired if any professional lecturer could match her performance for quantity. After an illness four years ago her spiritual vision became enlarged, and she was enabled to dictate an epic poem on the *History of the States*. In concluding her discourse, Mrs. Tappan demanded the inquiry which Spiritualism courted, and said that all who had seriously examined the phenomena had admitted their truth. It was but twenty-five years since the first rappings were heard, and now there were thousands amongst them, and millions in the world who accepted the spiritual truth. Mrs. Tappan then requested a subject for an impromptu poem. Mr. C. S. Hall suggested "Temperance," whilst another auditor proposed "The Religion of the Future," which latter was adopted on a show of hands, and Mrs. Tappan at once proceeded to recite a poem, some twenty verses in length, bearing on the chosen subject, which was an undeniably fine composition, and eloquently delivered. The gathering then passed a vote of thanks to the lectress and dispersed.

THE letter from Mr. Volekman, published in our last, reached us too late on the Wednesday of the preceding week, for publication in the next issue. Only a very little matter, which must reach the office by first post on Wednesdays, can, as a general rule, be published the same week.

RECENTLY, when Mr. Charles Blackburn attended a *seance* at which Mrs. Jencken (Kate Fox) was the medium, the spirits gave a message to him, to be delivered to his friend, Mr. James Wason, solicitor, Liverpool. Mrs. Jencken has just written to us from Brighton, giving information that Mr. Wason is satisfied that the message came from his departed wife.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.—Last Tuesday night a meeting of the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists was held at 1, Great Conduit-street, Westminster, and work connected with the election of officers and new members of the Council proceeded with. A draft letter was sent to Mr. Burns, certifying that certain statements published about the Association were the reverse of fact, and had no foundation in truth. The organising work is going on harmoniously and prosperously, and the prospectus will soon be published.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF ENQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM. (ESTABLISHED 1870.)

President.—Mr. Alfred E. Lovell.

Council.

Mr. George Blyton,
Mrs. Amelia Corner,

Mr. Joseph Stephens,
Mr. Thomas Wilks,
Mr. E. J. Wilson.

Secretary & Treasurer.—Mr. Thomas Blyton.

A DESIRE for investigation being felt by many on hearing of the phenomena of Spiritualism, several residents in Dalston and its neighbourhood thought that if an Association were formed, and investigation instituted, the alleged facts of Spiritualism, if true, might be demonstrated. Accordingly, a preliminary Meeting was called and this Association formed on the 15th September, 1870.

Its purposes are the collection of facts, through its own circle, or circles, so as to form a perfect basis for honest opinion, and by various means to induce others to give the matter careful enquiry, before judging of the manifestations of modern Spiritualism.

Ordinary experimental *seances* are held weekly, on Thursday evenings, at 8 p.m., to which Members are admitted, as well as Members of similar Associations (*vide* Rule IX). Strangers can only be admitted to the *ordinary seance* held on the first Thursday evening in each month, on introduction by a Member. The last Thursday evening in each month is devoted to *special seances* with professional media, lectures, discussions, reading of papers, or narration of experiences of investigators; to which strangers are admitted, under the same regulations as are enforced on the first Thursday evening in each month.

All communications to be addressed to the Secretary, at the Rooms of the Association, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, E. A stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed in all letters requiring replies.

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SPIRITUALISM deserves investigation because within the last twenty years it has found its way into all the civilised countries on the globe; it has also a literature of thousands of volumes and not a few periodicals.

The London Dialectical Society, Adam-street, Adelphi, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, Bart., M.P., appointed a Committee to investigate spiritual phenomena. The Committee was appointed on the 26th January, 1869, as follows:—

"H. G. Atkinson, Esq., F.G.S., G. Whistley Bennett, Esq.; J. S. Berghelm, Esq., C.E.; H. R. Fox Bourne, Esq.; Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.; G. Fenton Cameron, Esq., M.D.; John Chapman, Esq., M.D.; Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D.; Charles R. Drysdale, Esq., M.D. D. H. Dyte, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Mrs. D. H. Dyte; James Edmunds, Esq., M.D.; Mrs. Edmunds, James Gannon, Esq.; Grattan Geary, Esq.; Robert Hannah, Esq., F.G.S.; Jenner Gale Hillier, Esq.; Mrs. J. G. Hillier; Henry Jeffery, Esq.; Albert Kisch, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Joseph Maurice, Esq.; Isaac L. Meyers, Esq.; B. M. Moss, Esq.; Robert Quelch, Esq., C.E.; Thomas Reed, Esq.; C. Russell Roberts, Esq., Ph.D.; William Volkman, Esq.; Horace S. Yeomans, Esq.

"Professor Huxley and Mr. George Henry Lewes, to be invited to co-operate. Drs. Chapman and Drysdale and Mr. Fox Bourne declined to sit, and the following names were subsequently added to the Committee:—

"George Cary, Esq., B.A.; Edward W. Cox, Esq., Serjeant-at-law; William B. Gower, Esq.; H. D. Jencken, Esq., Barrister-at-law; J. H. Levy, Esq.; W. H. Swepston, Esq., Solicitor; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.; Josiah Webber, Esq."

After inquiring into the subject for two years, the Committee issued its report, which, with the evidence, forms a bulky volume, published by Messrs. Longmans. Among other things this Committee reported:—

"1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.

"2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.

"3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.

One of the sub-committees of the Dialectical Society reported:—

"Your committee studiously avoided the employment of professional or paid mediums. All were members of the committee, persons of social position, of unimpeachable integrity, with no pecuniary object, having nothing to gain by deception, and everything to lose by detection of imposture."

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

INQUIRERS into Spiritualism should begin by forming spirit circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or professional medium present. Should no results be obtained on the first occasion, try again with other sitters. One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household.

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.

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 gives the higher spirits more power to come to the circle, and makes it more difficult for the lower spirits to get near.

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.

9. A powerful physical medium is usually a person of an impulsive, affectionate, and genial nature, and very sensitive to mesmeric influences. The majority of media are ladies.

The best manifestations are obtained when the medium and all the members of the circle are strongly bound together by the affections, and are thoroughly comfortable and happy; the manifestations are born of the spirit, and shrink somewhat from the lower mental influences of earth. Family circles, with no strangers present, are usually the best.

Possibly at the first sitting of a circle symptoms of other forms of mediumship than tilts or raps may make their appearance.

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