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2.—By engaging in the education of children and others, for the purpose of developing their physical, mental, and spiritual powers.

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January 9th, 1874.

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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.

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THE MANCHESTER ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

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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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VERY soon after the introduction of Modern Spiritualism into England the subject attracted attention in Clerkenwell and neighbourhood, where several circles were formed, some of which were continued for a long number of years, and the great and increasing pressure from strangers for admission thereto led, in May, 1869, to the formation of this Association.

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.

Free public Services are held on Sunday evenings at Goswell Hall, 86, Goswell-road, and other meetings (of which announcement is duly made) are held on Thursday evenings; the latter meetings consist of *seances*, conferences, narrations of experience, the reading of papers, &c. Strangers are admitted on Thursday evenings on the introduction of a Member. Social gatherings are occasionally held for bringing Members and friends into closer acquaintance with one another. The Library is for the use of Members only.

Further information may be obtained from the Officers of the Association at the meetings, or by letter addressed to the Secretary at the Committee Rooms, 30, Parkfield-street, Islington.

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BY GERALD MASSEY.

CERTAIN things, our orthodox friends assure us, are settled. But, according to their own showing, these very things, when started, were never more unsettled; never so uncertain as at the present time. And when these certain things do get settled, I do not doubt that the occupation of those who preach them will be gone.

The world is waking from its phantom dreams
To make out that which is from that which seems;
And in the light of day shall blush to find
What things of night had power enough to blind
Its vision; what thin wall of musty gray,
As if of granite, stopped its onward way.

We are about to question everything they have assumed. They have closed the controversy; we have but just begun to open it. They have made and tied up their little bundle of dried sticks, whilst ours are only just beginning to grow, and are yet green and lusty with the sap of life. We have not done with the note of interrogation. Many questions have to be put and answered that they little dream of. Why, what are we ourselves but incarnate questions which God alone can answer?

Some people have a vision of their own they will not part with, even though they have to close their eyes and shut out everything else. But that is what others of us cannot do. There's a spirit within us that wants to see, and will see, and must tear off the bandage and the blinkers to see—each for himself—whether the traditional vision be true. And why on earth did God give us the faculty of sight, and hold up the light for us to see by, but that he meant us to see, and to go on seeing?

It has become necessary to doubt what has been taught on theological grounds as a duty to ourselves. It has become necessary to stand outside the orthodox churches before we can appreciate the character of their supposed founder, and see how little they have in common with him. They are not thinking God's thoughts by merely echoing the thoughts of the Hebrews who wrote two or three thousand years ago. Our question is, What is the Eternal thinking—i.e., thinking or shaping now? What is he driving at? Which way is the Divine breath blowing? What fresh revelation has He for England? What new message for America? Can you divine, rethink His living will in the present living time? Can you gauge the tide that is setting in from the other shores?

Only this will avail, only this will help our nineteenth century need. Spiritualism is undermining them on the one hand as fast as science saps them on the other, and they are at war against the facts of both, on behalf of a belief established on the ground that

* Extracted from the last lecture delivered by Mr. Gerald Massey, in America.

both are destroying day by day—on behalf of a religion that is at once non-scientific and non-spiritual.

Belief on the theological grounds grew less and less the more you reasoned about its postulates. Hence their dread and denunciation of reason, they had so lumped the impossible and the possible together, to the utter confusion of both and confounding of reason. But no amount of reason can ever destroy the solid body of a single fact. And their anathema against reason shows they do not rest on a solid ground of fact. What chance, think you, has the old religion of faith against our religion of fact? The same as glass in a clashing with iron. If these men truly cared for the facts of religion, instead of shaking the fist and gnashing the teeth at Spiritualism, they would embrace it as if it were the hand of very salvation itself, for it contains the sole fact that they have to go upon, or ever did have, or ever can have. But what they care for are the fables and the figments which have become their stock-in-trade. The fact may go to the devil, to whom, indeed, they generally consign it. For if God ever does try to speak with them, to prove the fact, they say "it can't be our God, He is dead and buried in a book; it must be the devil." Why, they are ignorantly, stupidly committing that crime against the Holy Spirit which Jesus called the unpardonable sin, which unpardonable sin they are puzzling their heads over, never dreaming of what our great Spiritualist meant. Look at your supposed learned doctors still trying to get at the other world as grave-diggers, still fumbling after the spiritual being of man as if his real essence were dust of the earth, which they assure us God has the power to put together again—every particle of it—and so we shall rise again. And so eighteen hundred years after their Jesus Christ hewed out His window in the blank, dense wall of Hebrew materialism, to let in a spiritual light, they are yet trying to stuff and stop up the aperture with His dead body and the physical resurrection, and to them it is a blind window still.

What is there that men have not found compatible with mere belief? Have they not cut each other's throats, believing it to be for the glory of God? Have they not burned bodies by the thousand, believing it to be the surest way of saving souls from hell? Why, men have believed that by standing on one leg for thirty years they would be permitted to hop into heaven at last. They believed that we were children of the same father, and brethren of one family, created in the image of one God, and yet for ages they could leave the poor in the grossest mental night. They have seen these poor brothers and sisters of theirs being gradually transformed into the likeness of devils by want, and squalor, and filth, and disease of all kinds, physical and mental, huddled together in the pits and dens of poverty and crime like a stock of pestilence kept for breeding purposes; never remembering they were of one flesh and blood until the effluvia of the cholera reek ascended, and the poor neglected wretches caught them in the arms of death, thus proving their brotherhood by their power to infect and kill them.

Men have believed there must be a physical resurrection, otherwise the damned could not gnash their poor teeth in eternal torment. Men believe they ought not to bow down before any graven image, who all the week go down and grovel in the dust on all fours in front of one that twinkles golden and winks at Moses, having on it the image of the queen or president stamped on the current coin of the realm. Men have

believed that God was the natural author of diseases and evils which they created, and have fostered for ages, and are responsible for before God and man to-day. They have mocked us long enough with their lying beliefs about God and the origin of evil, but we may be sure that God is not mocked. He sees through all the selfish pretence of such belief, and the reckoning has yet to come. The wrongs they have done to God and man here on earth have yet to be righted here on earth. Men have believed that on account of Adam's sin myriads on myriads of helpless, guiltless human beings were doomed to an eternity of eternities of eternalised torments in which they were to suffer out a salaman-drine immortality, if you did not think as they did. They have believed that in the field of human soul Satan is the harvester and God the gleaner, and the crowded wains roll staggering through the doorways of hell, while the redeemed vestiges of the world-crop are easily borne to heaven in the arms of a few weeping angels. They have believed in a God who was an omnipotent fiend and demoniac, quite unknown to the devil-worship of the past—a curse that sat enthroned amid the universe, breathing horror all abroad, and brooding down in blackness on the souls of men, and the ascending smoke of torments was to magnify the features of his monstrous majesty. And if you were one of the chosen, elected to a front seat in the kingdom of this dreadful God, the daintiest part of your enjoyment was to be a full and perfect view of the poor damned souls, including those of wee babies a span long. The great Mr. Spurgeon will tell you what a delectable entertainment you may expect, for he says all their veins are roads for the feet of pain to travel in, and every nerve is a string on which the devil shall for ever play his diabolical tune of hell's unutterable torment. And as the song of the ransomed was singing, word would come that your father was among the damned, and you would sing all the louder; or that several of your little ones were in hell, and your hallelujahs would be redoubled.

And orthodox hearts have been warmed and hands exultingly rubbed over these pictures in the fire. "Don't deprive me of my devil," said Charles Lamb. And in giving up the old ideas of hell, one does feel a lingering regret that these gloating ghouls should not have the taste in life of that which they have described with such infernal relish.

A SINGULAR EXPERIENCE WITH A SPIRIT CALLING HIMSELF AN EGYPTIAN.

BY CATHERINE WOODFORDE.

A LADY who had been for upwards of a year, more or less, as she believed, under the influence of a spirit who stated himself to be an Egyptian, came to me to see if I could rid her of her unwelcome visitor. He had presented himself through a planchette, and given messages which she could style nothing else but wicked, told falsehoods, threatened her with dire troubles if she tried to get rid of him, and in various other ways betrayed his quality. Although much drawn to seek communion with her dear departed ones, she was repelled by the dread of encountering her tormentor, who invariably presented himself when she resorted to the planchettes. Indeed, if friends consulted the wondrous little instrument in her presence the Egyptian came, and always succeeded in disgusting them thoroughly. Clergymen being consulted naturally enough ascribed the whole thing to the devil, and warned them to beware, for Satan was undoubtedly let loose again upon the earth. But some naughty children dare to think for themselves; the voice of nature from the spirit-world is strong and irresistible, and when loving spirits find a medial relative,

they never fail to make impressions until their object of opening communion be attained. Hence the lady's visit to me.

At our first sitting the Egyptian came, giving his usual name,—which my visitor and I, for certain reasons, agreed to change to "Thoth." It is needless to relate all that occurred at our different sittings, in which our Egyptian mocked my efforts to dislodge him, and seemed to hold his own in scornful security. He had the appearance of much mental power exercised audaciously and persistently in evil; but to me he did not wear a hideous appearance. He only looked a tall dark spirit, wearing robes; his eyes glittering, his countenance sullenly serious, except when he indulged in mocking laughter, which he frequently did. I had much mental, or perhaps I might say voiceless, conversation with him, in which the attitude I bore towards him was one of considerate regard and pity. I spoke to him reasoningly, even affectionately. No doubt my feelings were inspired. I will not dwell upon the different arguments I used, inspired by my guides, to induce him to change his manner of life and seek to rise. But I felt after a time he was moved. He relented, drew nearer to me, and seemed to regard me with a deep interest. He seemed to search me, and at length a humbled, grateful, softened feeling appeared to be creeping over him, which he sullenly refused to yield to entirely. I knew it was the loving sphere of my dear guides, as well as the feelings they gave me towards him, which were gradually influencing him.

The first day Thoth thoroughly softened; feeling my own weakness and powerlessness, I had prayed earnestly to Christ to remove him. I was at a little distance from my visitor, who sat, her hand being controlled, making meaningless scrawls. I saw Thoth at her back, and called him to come to me. He came directly, as if moving almost without his own volition, and stood respectfully before me. I knew he was under a superior influence, which he seemed to care no longer to resist. I reasoned with him; he looked at me sullenly for a time, then fell on his knees at my feet, and promised he would reform. I feared deceit, and expected every moment he would jump up and begin to laugh and jeer at me for being misled by him. But he thanked me for speaking loving words, and asked to kiss my hand. I gave it fearfully, but I felt I was protected. He kissed my hand gratefully, and upon my begging him to leave his victim he promised he would—that he would never trouble her more.

I felt very joyous and thankful; told my visitor of the occurrence which had passed between me and Thoth in perfect silence, and we congratulated each other, hoping we should never see him more.

When she repeated her visit next day to undergo mesmerism and take a developing sitting, a voice told me, "Thoth is here!" I felt annoyed and distressed; but, as I did not see him, I let it pass, and busied myself with my patient. When, after some three-quarters of an hour of mesmerising, she sat down to write, a lovely, calm spirit in white bent over her—her mother. I sat at her right hand quietly, and then, for the first time, had a sight of Thoth, whose head was almost at my right elbow, but I could not tell whether he knelt or the rest of his body passed through the floor. Thoth was there for a purpose, and he controlled me to write the following singular confession, which was occasionally interrupted by mental questions on my part.

"Thoth is here!" was written.

"Have you anything to communicate?"

"I am a demon at heart!"

I had always a fear Thoth was not in earnest, and suspected deceit now, but I continued trying to draw him out, and asked,

"What is it to be a demon at heart?"

"To be a demon at heart is to love evil better than good."

"Do you?"

"I always have."

"Now, I hope, you are about to change."

My feelings towards Thoth had always been very patient and kind; indeed, I was a little surprised that he never seemed to excite in me feelings of repulsion. I felt, however, that I owed this to the influence of my guides, and my whole soul from the first had been filled with an earnest pitying desire to help him. Just at this moment, as if carried beyond himself, he wrote energetically, "Dear, dear woman, I thank you much; I love you!"

I shrank at this, but continued:—

"I am glad you love me, Thoth, it will do you good. But I want you to love my guide."

"I do love your guide."

"Do you know him—do you see him?"

"I do know him—I see him."

"He will help you, Thoth, if you wish to rise out of your present state, and will try to do so."

"I will try."

"I am glad, Thoth. You give me great happiness; I am sure you see that I am most anxious for your good, and I hope you will try to keep your promises."

In answer to my suspicions, however, came this:—

"You must not suppose I mean anything but what I say."

My mind was full of questions, unuttered, regarding his antecedents and present condition, to which he now made reply, reading them in my mind.

"I am here to make a confession. I have been in this world upwards of three thousand years of your time. I have not progressed, because I was of a dark nature by choice. I loved evil; that is, I loved a base selfish power, and was strong enough in myself to secure a great deal of power on the earth and in the spirit-world. The Great One you call God, and whom I never believed in on earth, leaves all spirits free to make for themselves any life or happiness they choose, consequently, I made for myself such a life and happiness as pleased me, and I did not believe in Him. I believed in men and spirits, because I knew they existed. I also believed in the power of those mightier than I; and those I hated, and circumvented when I could. I escaped from their control or power, as I thought, always; but I know I have always been compelled to yield to some superior power, in spite of myself, which I now suppose was the Divine Spirit, or His ministers; but that is the same thing, because His Spirit flows through them, and they are one with Him."

The thought here came into my head that Thoth was inspired to say this.

"I am not inspired with these thoughts," he wrote instantly; "they have been obtained. I am consulting my own powers of reasoning—my own mind-life alone. I know these things. Your guides do not inspire me, that I am aware of, with these ideas. I want to tell you more."

"Go on, Thoth!"

"I wish to say that I am a stubborn one. It is not easy to change a nature that for three thousand years has grown wrong,—in opposition to the spirit of harmony which sways the heavens."

"Do you ever see the angels?"

"Oh, yes! I know the appearance and the influence of those you call angels. I have laughed often at them; and preferred my own way, because it was more congenial, easier, sweeter, better to me. The other way would have troubled me: I did not wish to go so far back to mend my ways. I am beginning now, though, fascinated by the power of pure love you have about you. You are the first woman who ever showed a real, tender, loving feeling towards me. If I ever loved a woman (and I have thought I loved many, but I now see it was not love), it was that I desired to prey upon them, to make them slaves. I had many on earth; I was a gross, cruel beast,—a demon always. I worshipped wickedness, for I knew no other form of power, and I lived for power only. I have been as a spirit the tempter, the demon, the devil for ages. It was a pleasure to me to bend men and women to my wicked will: it was the exercise of power."

A fear here crept over me that perhaps the control would injure me.

"I will not hurt you; and when Sciros says you have been controlled by me long enough, I will leave you. But I must make a kind of confession, for the good of others as well as myself. And they tell me if I wish to reform and to ascend into glory, I must work for men whom I before tried to enslave and injure. You do not yet believe me true. I will give you a sign, a pledge of my integrity. I will bring you a blue ibis, and it shall be my promise to reform."

Very soon a blue bird of the stork kind stood at my side. I did not at the moment remember the form of the ibis, and I do not know the natural colour of that bird. But this bird was of a lovely pure blue colour, and as I looked at it, it lifted its short wings flutteringly, and took a few steps on its long legs, and was as natural and happy to all appearance as a bird could be. I was very much pleased, and thanked Thoth, and told him I would indeed believe him true when I saw the blue ibis. The ibis approached me, and thrust its beak lovingly under my arm, and into my hand, as if for food. I felt there was the agony of a deep sorrow creeping over Thoth. I felt he suffered, and he controlled me to write again almost convulsively—"Forgive! Forgive! Tell your friend I repent!"

I told her, and she gave her forgiveness in kindly words.

"You know not," he wrote, "what it is to wring these words from me; I mean it; it is beginning! A hell I will endure if needful. At last the spark has been fired. The voice of love which I have resisted all these ages at last I have heeded. I am to become an angel then! And you have touched me in the right place. You are Thoth's saviour."

Thoth now left us, saying he would come again, and the blue ibis disappeared.

A few nights subsequently at my circle, I was controlled by a spirit whose influence I felt to be saddening. In a short time the spirit spoke, and begged in eloquent terms the prayers of the assembled circle. The words are now given me again by one of my guides.

"Pray! pray for one who never prayed; who never knew the true God, who never worshipped. Pray for light to his soul; for elevation, purification. God is merciful; He has pardoned; but the long, weary road of return from evil must be journeyed o'er, and your prayers will aid. The life must be re-lived: the fight must be fought of resistance to old habits which have fixed themselves in the soul, and deformed it. The whole nature is corrupt, it must be healed, and made anew; this will entail dire suffering. Your prayers will be as balm to gaping wounds; as dew to the thirsty plant; as water to the weary traveller in the desert; music to my ears; like strong waves upon whose crests the storm-driven barque is lighted safely to security and rest.

"I am an Egyptian. Upwards of three thousand years ago I lived upon this earth. I lived for self, power, and dominion. I believed in nothing else, and as a spirit I have lived for the same, and I have always had it. Others more powerful, angels you call them, have at times overcome me, and I have been driven from my haunts on earth, where I tempted, and tormented mortals, to inhabit lower abodes. Enraged I sank before their power, and hated them for it.

"On earth I delighted in human suffering: I loved to torture. I had many wives and concubines: I had many slaves, and frequently have I driven the enslaved Israelites to their tasks with the scourge.

"Who was my king? I care not to remember. I hated him, because he was more powerful than I. I am here to beg your prayers, to humble myself before you, and to confess; not to be questioned. You know not what I have to endure; what I do endure. It is a release to me for a time to be here in the sphere of the medium. An experience of bliss compared with what I have to suffer, that is accorded to me in mercy because I bent before the angelic power of the love she extended to me to save me. She has saved me, she has won me. In my long probation, my long struggle to earn those heavenly gifts of spirit I have all along despised, when my spirit is wearied in resisting evil inclinations, the remembrance of those moments I have passed with her in your circle will return to me, to cheer and encourage, to remind me what heavenly happiness is.

"Still you question. I cannot know all I may have to endure. Myself will be my greatest torment. I must stand face to face with the hideousness of myself, as seen in the light of heaven. I must retrace all the steps of my existence back to infancy, when I shall be purified, innocent.

"I have seen the one you call Christ. He is a glorious angel, of almost unlimited power. To Him I owe the blessing of being called to the medium. Perhaps from His high place He saw I was ready; I know not. I knew Him on earth. I was one of His demon-tormentors from the spirit world. I hated Him, and rejoiced over His sufferings; and this is the return He makes. Oh, God, how great is Thy love, when thus it shines forth through thy ministers!

"Oh, pray that I fail not, that I falter not. I thank you for your gentle kindness, and the promises you make to remember me in your prayers. I am now recalled. I will visit the medium again,—you may hear from me again."

Thoth here retired to give place to other controlling spirits. I have since occasionally seen the blue ibis. It is the embodiment to me of Thoth's grateful remembrance, and a pledge of his well doing.

May, 1874.

THE price of *The Spiritualist* will be reduced to twopence the week after next.

MR. GERALD MASSEY reached Liverpool from America in the *Java* last week, and is now at home at Wards Hurst, Hertfordshire.

IF Mr. T. Hudson sincerely regrets his past misdeeds, he should reveal the names of his accomplices to the National Association.

A SPIRITUALISTIC NOVEL.

London Society has behaved in a very honourable manner of late, in publishing much truthful information about Spiritualism. In addition, Mrs. Ross-Church (Florence Marryat) is publishing a novel month by month in its pages, written with much talent, and telling not a little about the nature of Spiritual phenomena.

The heroine of the tale is anything but one of the usual milk-and-water characters, but has a mind of her own, as evidenced in the following quotation:—

"I have tried France and Germany, Belgium and Italy, and I have always been glad to return home again. It would entirely depend—"

"On what?"

"On whether I was allowed to have my own way in everything—to be free as air and unguarded as sunshine—or walked out and walked in again at stated times like a well-cared-for child. I hate to be looked after, and watched and protected! I like to take care of myself—to do as I choose—to have my own friends, my own opinions, my own plans. I detest the artificial life we lead. I rebel against all the rules of decorum. I should like to take the exigencies of society, and smash their heads against a wall; I am a woman; and when I am not allowed to behave as a woman, I behave as less."

And Miss West-Norman, quite led away from her original subject by the proximity of the Earl, looks round the assembly with a heated face, that is not entirely devoid of fear lest she may have gone too far.

"My dear girl! what an extraordinary time you have chosen to air these shocking principles of yours," titters Mrs. West, as, with secret delight, she views the dismayed look on Lord Valence's countenance.

"Both unseasonable and unreasonable," murmurs Mr. Mildmay disapprovingly, which incites her on to fresh disorder.

"I only say what I mean, Guardy; and I don't care who hears it. Why should women be debarred from so many of the privileges you male creatures accord to yourselves? Why shouldn't we travel, and go to parties and theatres alone; and ride on horseback, and knock about the world as men do, without being for ever dependent on chaperons and escorts? Are we not just as well able to take care of ourselves as you are? Could we get into more scrapes, or better play the fool, than most of the young men of the present day? I doubt it?"

The following description of a regular *seance*, also introduced into the novel, has given the readers of *London Society* some useful information:—

A SEANCE WITH A TRANCE MEDIUM.

It was a large saloon, fully lighted, and freely open to the air, with a marble floor, a heavy table, and some dozen chairs. When the visitors had assembled (there were only five besides Borghesa and myself), the clairvoyante came in, and the doors were closed and fastened. Bianca was a young woman of perhaps five-and-twenty; small, not at all pretty, and rather sickly in appearance. Apparently she had no colleague or assistant in her business, for of the few assembled Borghesa knew the names, and no one else entered the saloon. She bowed to us all in turn, and then, taking a chair at the head of the table, motioned us to be also seated. I sat down opposite to her, and scarcely took my eyes off her face, which struck me as strangely emotionless and indifferent to what was about to happen. In a few minutes her eyes closed. She leaned back in her chair; a few convulsive shivers passed over her frame; her face looked pained; she raised her hand as though to keep off something that was oppressing her. Then the look of trouble gradually cleared away; her eyes opened brightly; she sat upright, with a broad smile upon her face, and a determined, manly air about her, and commenced to speak volubly in German, with a deep bass voice. I was astounded. I had never been witness to anything of the kind before, and I could not believe but that it was trickery. The woman was a ventriloquist—there was no doubt of that—and she played her part extremely well: but it was too undisguised an imposition to deceive any one. It surprised me, however, to see one of our company, on hearing the deep German voice, start up with all the alacrity of one who recognises the tones of a familiar friend; and, grasping the hand of

Bianca, enter into an eager and animated conversation with the influence that was supposed to possess her.

"My friend!" he exclaimed, in his own language, and with tears standing in his eyes; "my good friend Böhler, have you really returned to speak to me? Ah! how long is the time since we parted! how good is heaven! This is worth everything in the world beside."

The man seemed perfectly in earnest. He wept, he laughed, he talked all at once, whilst the medium's hand was grasped in his, and, in the same mellow, German voice, she continued to pour out what appeared to be confidences to him, to which he responded with every demonstration of belief.

But I set him down as a confederate of Bianca's; or, at all events, some weak-minded creature who would credit anything a stronger organisation set before him as the truth.

The other visitors, however, did not seem to share my incredulity; on the contrary, as soon as the bass voice had ceased to sound, and Bianca had sunk back, apparently exhausted, in her chair, they pressed eagerly around her to demand if no spirit friend of theirs was present and willing to communicate with them.

"Hush!" she said, in her own weak tones, but with her eyes still closed. "Some one is speaking to me. Hush?"

[Now I should have premised that my name was unknown to any one there except Borghesa, and of my antecedents even he knew nothing. We had made acquaintance with each other without the ceremony of a formal introduction; and though he was, of course, aware of my title and family, of my father's death, my lonely youth, or my future prospects, not a syllable had passed between us.]

Nor had we given our names on entering Bianca's saloon. The ordeal was unnecessary, and Borghesa had begged me, as a precautionary measure, to remain incognito.]

"Hush!" said the medium. "Some one is speaking to me. Hush!"

I leaned forward curiously, expecting to receive another proof of her ventriloquial skill; but she continued to speak in her own voice:

"A man—tall, and somewhat old-looking, but not with years," she said, waving her hand towards the place where I sat. "He had much care and grief before he passed away. His face is serious, but calm. He has grey eyes, a straight nose, a mouth sweet but feeble; hair slightly grey. There is a scar across his right temple; but the hair conceals it. It looks as though it had been done from a heavy fall. Ah! he smiles. He has lost a tooth in front! He raises his arm! He has a circle marked upon it, drawn round the letter 'S.' He——"

"Good God, woman!" I exclaimed, starting up and spluttering in my broken Italian. "Do you know of whom you speak? do you know that you are describing my——"

"Hush, Valence! Do be quiet!" entreated Borghesa, as he forced me down into my chair again. "Don't give her any clue, or you will spoil everything."

There was no need for him to use violence. The excitement was so great, I was no longer able to stand. I covered in my seat, trembling like a child.

"He wishes to write," continued Bianca calmly. "He says my tongue cannot frame the English language. Give me pen and paper?"

The materials which were on the table were pushed towards her, and for a few moments nothing was heard but the scratching of the pen as it traversed the paper.

"Who is here by the name of Bernard?" said Bianca, as she ceased writing. "It is a good name—a saint's name; but I can read nothing more. These are English words. I think. Ah! he points to you, signor," she added, addressing myself. "The paper is then for you! I am very glad."

I stretched out my hand mechanically for what she gave me, and turned it to the light. On it was written, in my father's bold, irregular writing, though somewhat shakily transcribed:

"Bernard, my son; I am always with you! I long to speak to you! Pray more—hope more! Have faith and patience, and I will come to you. Life is dark at present; but in the future a great light shines. From Valence, your father."

* * * * *

"Who wrote it?"

"Is it satisfactory?"

"Can you recognise the hand?"

"Have you had a convincing proof?"

They poured the questions upon me like hail—idle questions to satisfy their own curiosity, whilst I—I felt as though I were stifling.

"Borghesa, my dear fellow; let me go!" I stammered. "I have no wish to disturb you, or break up the evening; but, for God's sake, let me get away from this place, and out into the open air, or I shall faint!"

HUMBOLDT ON SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

MR. WILLIAM CROOKES, F.R.S., has favoured us by forwarding the following letter for publication:—

New Braunfels, Texas, April 18, 1874.

William Crookes, Esq., F.R.S., London.

SIR,—As I take the greatest interest in your investigations of the so-called spiritual manifestations, and admire the high moral courage that enters into the same contest with the scientific world, as my great countryman, Carl v. Reichenbach, did years ago, I trust you will kindly excuse the liberty I take in calling your attention to a remark made by Alexander v. Humboldt in regard to those manifestations. The authentic reference to his words is to be found in an essay published by Carl v. Reichenbach under the title, *Odische Begebenheiten zu Berlin in den Jahren 1861 und 1862*. Berlin: Verlag von E. H. Schneider. On page 57 the author says: "In the year 1853 A. v. Humboldt sat at the royal table in Berlin. Close to him were General Bertrand and Lieut.-General Count v. Liittichau. The latter authorises me with reference to his person and name to publish some words from Humboldt's mouth. Bertrand had mentioned the table moving, and similar things which were then new. After the conversation had continued for some time on these topics, Humboldt closed with the words: "*Die Thatsachen stehen uneinigbar, die Erklärung bleibt der Wissenschaft schuldig.*" "The facts are undeniable; to science belongs the explanation."

As far as I can learn, there exist no English translations of Reichenbach's many Odic works, except his *Dynamics* and the *Odic Magnetic Letters*, both of which are his first publications, and of secondary importance only; while his paramount work, *Der sensitive Mensch* and the complemental treatise *Die odische Lohe*, but little known in Germany, and seem to be entirely unknown in England; for not even the report of the London Dialectical Society in its list of works mentions them.—I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

R. WIPPRECHT.

THE National Association of Spiritualists will probably try and enter into some arrangement with Mr. Gerald Massey, for the delivery of a few lectures by him on "Spiritualism in America."

ST. JOHN'S ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—The fifth annual meeting of this Association was held at Goswell-hall, Goswell-road, on Thursday, the 28th ult. The statement made by Mr. R. Pearce, the honorary secretary, showed that the society's position had much improved in all respects. It is now out of debt, and has sixty-six members. The meetings held on Thursday evenings during the past twelve months were 38 *séances*, with an average attendance of 40 persons; four conferences and one tea meeting; total, 43 meetings. The Sunday evening services at Goswell-hall were commenced on the 21st September, and continued down to the present time, 36 addresses having been given by Dr. Sexton, Mr. Morse, Mr. Everitt, Mr. Bullock, Miss Keeves, Rev. F. R. Young, and others. The total receipts during the year had been £47 19s. 7d., and the expenditure £49 14s. 10d. The following were elected as officers for the ensuing year:—President, Mr. Barber; Treasurer, Mr. Bullock; Librarians, Mr. Cain and Mr. Ed. Bullock; Secretary, Mr. W. Cotter. Committee, Mrs. Barber, Miss Barber, Mr. J. Hawkins, Mr. Richards, and Mr. White. The question of becoming affiliated with the British National Association was brought before the members by Mr. Pearce, and, after some discussion, it was decided to take no steps in the matter at present.

THE LAST OF "KATIE KING."

THE PHOTOGRAPHING OF "KATIE KING" BY THE AID OF THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

BY WILLIAM CROOKES, F.R.S.

HAVING taken a very prominent part of late at Miss Cook's *seances*, and having been very successful in taking numerous photographs of Katie King by the aid of the electric light, I have thought that the publication of a few of the details would be of interest to the readers of *The Spiritualist*.

During the week before Katie took her departure she gave *seances* at my house almost nightly, to enable me to photograph her by artificial light. Five complete sets of photographic apparatus were accordingly fitted up for the purpose, consisting of five cameras, one of the whole-plate size, one half-plate, one quarter-plate, and two binocular stereoscopic cameras, which were all brought to bear upon Katie at the same time, on each occasion on which she stood for her portrait. Five sensitising and fixing baths were used, and plenty of plates were cleaned ready for use in advance, so that there might be no hitch or delay during the photographing operations, which were performed by myself, aided by one assistant.

My library was used as a dark cabinet. It has folding doors opening into the laboratory; one of these doors was taken off its hinges and a curtain suspended in its place to enable Katie to pass in and out easily. Those of our friends who were present were seated in the laboratory facing the curtain, and the cameras were placed a little behind them, ready to photograph Katie when she came outside, and to photograph anything also inside the cabinet, whenever the curtain was withdrawn for the purpose. Each evening there were three or four exposures of plates in the five cameras, giving at least fifteen separate pictures at each *seance*; some of these were spoilt in the developing, and some in regulating the amount of light. Altogether I have forty-four negatives, some inferior, some indifferent, and some excellent.

Katie instructed all the sitters but myself to keep their seats and to keep conditions, but for some time past she has given me permission to do what I liked, to touch her, and to enter and leave the cabinet almost whenever I pleased. I have frequently followed her into the cabinet, and have sometimes seen her and her medium together, but most generally I have found nobody but the entranced medium lying on the floor, Katie and her white robes having instantaneously disappeared.

During the last six months Miss Cook has been a frequent visitor at my house, remaining sometimes a week at a time. She brings nothing with her but a little hand-bag, not locked; during the day she is constantly in the presence of Mrs. Crookes, myself, or some other member of my family, and, not sleeping by herself, there is absolutely no opportunity for any preparation even of a less elaborate character than would be required for enacting "Katie King." I prepare and arrange my library myself as the dark cabinet, and usually after Miss Cook has been dining and conversing with us, and scarcely out of our sight for a minute, she walks direct into the cabinet, and I, at her request, lock its second door, and keep possession of the key all through the *seance*; the gas is then turned out, and Miss Cook is left in darkness.

On entering the cabinet Miss Cook lies down upon the floor, with her head on a pillow, and is soon en-

tranced. During the photographic *seances* Katie muffled her medium's head up in a shawl, to prevent the light from falling upon her face. I frequently drew the curtain on one side when Katie was standing near, and it was a common thing for the seven or eight of us in the laboratory to see Miss Cook and Katie at the same time, under the full blaze of the electric light. We did not on these occasions actually see the face of the medium because of the shawl, but we saw her hands and feet, we saw her move uneasily under the influence of the intense light, and we heard her moan occasionally. I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook's head.

During the time I have taken an active part in these *seances*, Katie's confidence in me gradually grew, until she refused to give a *seance* unless I took charge of the arrangements. She said she always wanted me to keep close to her, and near the cabinet, and I found that after this confidence was established, and she was satisfied I would not break any promise I might make to her, the phenomena increased greatly in power and tests were freely given that would have been unobtainable had I approached the subject in another manner. She often consulted me about persons present at the *seances*, and where they should be placed, for of late she had become very nervous, in consequence of certain ill-advised suggestions that force should be employed as an adjunct to more scientific modes of research.

One of the most interesting of the pictures is one in which I am standing by the side of Katie; she has her bare foot upon a particular part of the floor. Afterwards, I dressed Miss Cook like Katie, placed her and myself in exactly the same position, and we were photographed by the same cameras, placed exactly as in the other experiment, and illuminated by the same light. When these two pictures are placed over each other, the two photographs of myself coincide exactly as regards stature, &c., but Katie is half a head taller than Miss Cook, and looks a big woman in comparison with her. In the breadth of her face, in many of the pictures, she differs essentially in size from her medium, and the photographs show several other points of difference.

But photography is as inadequate to depict the perfect beauty of Katie's face, as words are powerless to describe her charms of manner. Photography may, indeed, give a map of her countenance; but how can it reproduce the brilliant purity of her complexion, or the ever-varying expression of her most mobile features, now overshadowed with sadness when relating some of the bitter experiences of her past life, now smiling with all the innocence of happy girlhood when she had collected my children round her and was amusing them by recounting anecdotes of her adventures in India.

"Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seemed lighter from her eyes,
They were so soft and beautiful, and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies;
Her overpowering presence made you feel
It would not be idolatry to kneel."

Having seen so much of Katie lately, when she has been illuminated by the electric light, I am enabled to add to the points of difference between her and her medium which I mentioned in a former article. I have the most absolute certainty that Miss Cook and Katie are two separate individuals so far as their bodies are concerned. Several little marks on Miss Cook's face

are absent on Katie's. Miss Cook's hair is so dark a brown as almost to appear black; a lock of Katie's, which is now before me, and which she allowed me to cut from her luxuriant tresses, having first traced it up to the scalp and satisfied myself that it actually grew there, is a rich golden auburn.

On one evening I timed Katie's pulse. It beat steadily at 75, whilst Miss Cook's pulse a little time after, was going at its usual rate of 90. On applying my ear to Katie's chest I could hear a heart beating rhythmically inside, and pulsating even more steadily than did Miss Cook's heart when she allowed me to try a similar experiment after the *seance*. Tested in the same way Katie's lungs were found to be sounder than her medium's, for at the time I tried my experiment Miss Cook was under medical treatment for a severe cough.

Your readers may be interested in having Mrs. Ross Church's and your own accounts of the last appearance of Katie, supplemented by my own narrative, as far as I can publish it. When the time came for Katie to take her farewell I asked that she would let me see the last of her. Accordingly when she had called each of the company up to her and had spoken to them a few words in private, she gave some general directions for the future guidance and protection of Miss Cook. From these, which were taken down in shorthand, I quote the following: "Mr. Crookes has done very well throughout, and I leave Florrie with the greatest confidence in his hands, feeling perfectly sure that he will not abuse the trust I place in him. He can act in any emergency better than I can myself, for he has more strength." Having concluded her directions, Katie invited me into the cabinet with her, and allowed me to remain there to the end.

After closing the curtain she conversed with me for some time, and then walked across the room to where Miss Cook was lying senseless on the floor. Stooping over her Katie touched her, and said, "Wake up, Florrie, wake up! I must leave you now." Miss Cook then woke and tearfully entreated Katie to stay a little time longer. "My dear, I can't, my work is done. God bless you," Katie replied, and then continued speaking to Miss Cook. For several minutes the two were conversing with each other, till at last Miss Cook's tears prevented her speaking. Following Katie's instructions I then came forward to support Miss Cook, who was falling on to the floor, sobbing hysterically. I looked round, but the white robed Katie had gone. As soon as Miss Cook was sufficiently calmed a light was procured and I led her out of the cabinet.

The almost daily *seances* with which Miss Cook has lately favoured me have proved a severe tax upon her strength, and I wish to make the most public acknowledgment of the obligations I am under to her for her readiness to assist me in my experiments. Every test that I have proposed she has at once agreed to submit to with the utmost willingness; she is open and straightforward in speech, and I have never seen anything approaching the slightest symptom of a wish to deceive. Indeed I do not believe she could carry on a deception if she were to try, and if she did she would certainly be found out very quickly, for such a line of action is altogether foreign to her nature. And to imagine that an innocent school girl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed on her,

should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a *seance*, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests,—to imagine, I say, the "Katie King" of the last three years to be the result of imposture,—does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms.

It would not be right for me to conclude this article without also thanking Mr. and Mrs. Cook for the great facilities they have given me to carry on these observations and experiments.

My thanks and those of all Spiritualists are also due to Mr. Charles Blackburn for the generous manner in which he has made it possible for Miss Cook to devote her whole time to the development of these manifestations, and latterly to their scientific examination.

THE LAST ILLNESS OF JUDGE EDMONDS.

As all matters connected with the latter days of Judge Edmonds will, no doubt, be regarded by many readers of this journal with much interest we give the following extracts from a second letter addressed to Mr. Benjamin Coleman by the judge's daughter, Miss Laura Edmonds, whose mediumship helped materially to establish her father's faith at the commencement of his enquiries:—

"As I have already told you his sufferings were very great during this last attack, which commenced on the 21st of March, and from the first he said to me, 'Let us look calmly on this state of things. I shall never recover, and I am glad of it, for I want to go. Life has been more hard to bear of late. I suppose it is well to have this torture, it is purifying my spirit. . . . If I ever doubted the efficacy of prayer I can do so no longer.' Calmly, patiently, he looked forward to the change. His intellect was clear and vigorous to the end. . . . As Easter morning dawned his poor body was suddenly relieved of the pain he had been suffering, he lifted his eyes, and a look came into them of intense love, as if he had seen all he had hoped for, a reflection of light, almost divine, shone in his eyes of gladness and peace, and then slowly closing them he was gone. We who are left are the sufferers. For him we could not grieve, so glorious, so happy was the end. Dr. John F. Gray, his friend of 30 years, and another, a friend of his boyhood, both believing as he did, were with him at the last.

"Will you be so good as to say to my father's friends in England, that the testimonial was hung up in his library, and the books and photographs had a special place, and were enjoyed by him daily up to the last fortnight of his life. They are now consigned to the care of Mrs. A. B. Hall, of Boston, for safe keeping, as our home is broken up, and will be for some time to come. Mrs. Hall was a dear friend of my father's and was with him in many of his early experiences in Spiritualism.

"As to the books you speak of, I know he contemplated sending them to your care, but I am not aware that he had commenced any preparation of them, as he was not well, and very much engaged in his profession up to the time he received the testimonial. But I will enquire of a J. Davis if he had ordered them, and see to their being sent if such were the case. I hope to see you in England in the autumn."

Poetry.

TWO SAINTS' DAYS.

In Memoriam.

G. V. T. born June 3rd., 1833, passed away Feb. 12, 1864,
E. D., born June 4th., 1831, passed away July, 1872.

To K. P.

Two Saint's Days! Thine to-day, to-morrow, mine:
Two broken lives on earth; yet fancy fond
Loves to imagine them, as now they stand,
With full unfoldment in the World beyond.

A reckless babe to-day; anon a boy;
Then grown to battle in the world of men;
A centre fixed for others' love and joy,
Diffusing happy influence; and then—

Then, after Nazareth, Calvary. Such is life,
As here we name this span of fleeting breath—
A little mingled scene of peace and strife
Quick speeding to its climax—so-called Death!

Not Death, but truest Life: not even Sleep!
Life, than this poor existence far more grand.
While here below we earthbound mourners weep,
Our loved ones live and work in Spirit-land:

Work with us, on us. Such our creed to-day,
Becoming daily more our Pearl of Price,
Breathed, we believe and who shall say us nay?—
From our dear Household Saints in Paradise.

"Leave all and follow Me!" So spake of old
A silvery voice along the Sacred Lake:
Leave earthly hopes, ambitions, gauds and gold,
For Jesus and the Resurrection's sake.

Thus seems an inner voice to whisper me—
A still small voice, this Pentecostal* morn;
So plain, I know the accents it must be
Of our lost loves to better life reborn.

*Whit-Tuesday, 1873.

MAURICE DAVIES, D.D.

Correspondence.

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

MR. SERJEANT COX ON "INCARNATION."

SIR,—I have but one desire, to ascertain the very truth. I am at all times anxious to adapt theory to facts, not to square facts to theory. But the first business and duty of investigators of science, is to see that the facts are proved by sufficient evidence.

The amount of evidence required to establish a fact varies according to the nature of the fact to be proved. If it be a probable fact, by which I mean such a fact as according to human experience is likely to occur, comparatively slight proof may be accepted. But the amount of proof to be demanded will increase in precise proportion to the lessened probability of the asserted fact, and if that fact is not only out of experience, but opposed to it, and still more, if it be contrary to all known or even imagined natural laws, the most perfect proof, based upon the best evidence of the most indisputable character must be produced, before credence can be given to it, or fairly asked for it.

This proposition will not, I presume, be disputed by the most unreasoning of your readers. You, at least, as professing to take a scientific view of the phenomena of Spiritualism, will, I am sure, readily accept it, and with this rule of reason and science to guide us, I ask you calmly and dispassionately to review with me the evidence upon which the astounding fact is asserted of the incarnation of spirits, as exhibited in the instances of the so-called "Annie Morgan" and "Florence Maples." Let us, first, clearly comprehend what is the fact asserted and to be proved.

It is that the medium is placed alone in a dark room, or cabinet or recess, wearing her ordinary clothes with her hair dressed *a-la-mode*, a curtain being drawn between this room or recess, the spectators sitting in the room on the other side of the curtain, that room being sufficiently lighted to enable them to see distinctly whatsoever occurs there. But after more or less of interval, varying from a quarter to half an hour, a form comes from behind the curtain into the room where the spectators sit, clothed with a white head-dress and in a white robe that falls to the feet. This form is almost if not completely a fac simile of the medium who was placed behind the curtain, in face, in figure, in movement. It is no phantom, not even the crust of a human form, but a perfect human body, having so far as the senses can show us, all the shape and organs and functions of a woman. It has flesh, and bones, and hair, and nails, and saliva, and blood, and veins, and a beating heart, and a perspiring skin. Moreover it has a brain

and a nerve structure obedient to that brain. And that brain is an educated brain, and has received an English education, for it converses in English. Nor does the wonder end here. It has learned to play the piano, which is a mechanical as well as an intellectual performance, only to be acquired by practice. This form talks the language of our own time, plays and sings, jests, and is quick at repartee. Talking involves the possession of the entire apparatus needful to that process; hence, though we cannot see or feel them, we know that there must be lungs and the complicated mechanism of the trachea, and this implies blood, and blood implies a heart and muscles to move it, and nerves to set the muscles in action. It is a solid form, for Mr. Crookes has more than once, by permission, put his arms round its waist, and it is a warm, womanly form, with feelings, for it kisses and is kissed. According to some reports, it eats solid food, but whether it digests what it eats is not known. But a query here suggests itself; what, when it is re-incarnated, becomes of the food so eaten?

This is what the spectators see, and if they had never heard otherwise, they would undoubtedly come to the unanimous and unhesitating conclusion that the form thus seen before the curtain, so closely resembling the medium who went behind the curtain, was that medium *in propria persona*.

But it is asserted that in this the spectator is mistaken; that the form he sees and touches is not the medium, but another being; that although so like one to the other, they are not the same; that at the very time the form is before the curtain, walking, talking, playing, the medium is behind the curtain, in a condition of unconscious trance, dressed in gown and hair precisely as when she was placed there.

It may be answered that if this be so, some other human being is personating the medium before the curtain. If not this, what is it?

And this is the explanation given: "The form you see, hear, touch, that precisely resembles a human being in shape and structure, and differs in no perceptible particular from other human beings, is no human being at all, but a spirit that presents itself in perfect human form."

This is an astounding answer, not to be accepted on any mere assertion, and the amazed spectator demands the proof of it, and the obvious method of proof is by conclusive evidence—by which I mean the best evidence that can be given—that the fact, seemingly incredible as it is, is nevertheless true.

Now the only conclusive evidence in such a case, and that which alone can overcome the apparently overwhelming evidence of the senses, and conclusions of reason and science against this alleged incarnation of a spirit, is the exhibition of the medium and the form coexisting at the same moment, the one on the one side of the curtain, the other on the other side of it, to be witnessed by several spectators at the same time, and in circumstances and under conditions that preclude deception by the medium, or delusion of the senses by the spectators.

The assertors of this marvel of marvels say that they have obtained such evidence, and it is this evidence that I am about to review.

I must preface it by stating that I do so with a purely judicial mind, with no other desire than to discover the truth. If I have any bias, it is from a most anxious desire I have that the fact of spirit incarnation should prove to be true. No greater joy could be given to me than to be convinced by conclusive evidence that "Katie" and "Florence," or either of them, are not Miss Cook nor Miss Showers. But it is not because we earnestly desire [something to be true, that we are to accept it on insufficient proof. Hundreds of your readers who preserve their powers of perception and reason amid the strange phenomena they continually witness, will, I am confident, share my motives for insisting upon the best evidence that can be given of the most wonderful fact the world has ever known; and, let me add, the most important,—if it be true.

As I have said, the best evidence is alone admissible in such a case, and the best evidence would be that which the senses of a sufficient number of spectators viewing at the same time, in unequivocal circumstances, the medium and the spirit.

Fortunately such proof is easily to be had. It might be obtained by the lifting of a curtain; all the spectators would then see the medium and the form at the same moment, and it is equally easy to assure themselves that the medium is herself and no other.

I can find no evidence that this ample test has been tried. The nearest approach to it is the report of Katie's final *seance* at page 258 of the *Spiritualist*, which states that "the curtain was drawn back, and all could clearly see the sleeping

medium, who did not stir from her original position, but lay quite still." This appears at the first glance to be conclusive; but what follows? "Her face," says the report, "being covered with a red shawl to keep the light from it." May it not have been to keep eyes from it?*

If the face was hidden under a shawl the proof fails entirely, for it is impossible for any of the persons present to say certainly that Miss Cook herself was lying there. All that is proved by this experiment is that while a form precisely resembling Miss Cook in face and figure was outside the curtain, a body wearing her dress, or a dress like hers, was lying inside the curtain. But there is no proof whatever that it was Miss Cook's body. The concealment of the face by the shawl raises indeed a very strong presumption to the contrary.

I observe, also, that you do not state where this remarkable *seance* took place, for much of its value as evidence depends upon the more or less of facility for observance that was either provided or prevented. I must also remind you that when a similar view of the medium shown with her face concealed was thus reported by Mr. B. Coleman, in the *Spiritualist* of May 15, that "both the living form of Miss Cook and the materialised Katie were seen by Mr. Crookes, myself, and others twice on the 9th day of May last," yourself sensibly remarked in an appended note, that "as the face of the medium was not visible on this occasion, we do not see that this was a test manifestation"—nor would any other rational man. Yet is this very test now advanced as the sole proof of Miss Cook's identity at the sitting on May 21st.

Mrs. Ross Church states that she went behind the curtain at this sitting, and felt Miss Cook on the floor while Katie was standing by her side. But what she felt was the body of a living woman, doubtless the same body all had seen with the face hidden in the shawl. The touch of her hand does not carry the proof a step further than their eyes, and you, Mr. Editor, have yourself declared that proof to be worthless.

Mr. Crookes states that he went behind the curtain in a room in Miss Cook's house (was the parting *seance* in this same room?), and saw Katie and Miss Cook together. But how? Not by the light of a candle, but by that of a bottle of phosphoric oil. Now, all who have seen objects by that light know that it is exceedingly doubtful and deceptive. Not only does it change the colour of objects, but it illuminates only a small space at once, and nothing would be more easy and probable than to mistake features seen by it. Mr. Crookes is doubtless perfectly convinced that the form he saw by his bottle upon the floor was that of Miss Cook; but did he not also see with the assumption on his mind that if any living body was there it must be Miss Cook herself? I am sure that he would have based none of his admirable scientific discoveries upon a view afforded only by his phosphoric bottle, and therefore he will excuse me, and others who are in pursuit of the very truth, from accepting that dubious light as decisive proof in a discovery infinitely more wonderful and apparently impossible. Certainly he would not have been content to use the dim light of his bottle when it would have been equally easy to use the sure light of a candle.

Mr. Dunphy's evidence does not carry the case much further. He did not see Miss Showers and Florence at the same time. All it amounts to is, that he followed Florence so quickly, that he does not conceive it to be possible that she could have thrown herself into the chair and presented herself there as Miss Showers. But this is a question of time and circumstance, too undetermined to justify the acceptance of it as proof of such a marvel, especially when it would have been unequivocally proved by walking inside with a candle while Florence was standing outside.

I must here apologise to Mr. Dunphy for having mistaken for his Mr. Coleman's statement, that he saw the medium with her face concealed in her shawl.

But Mrs. Showers, who has witnessed the phenomena from

the beginning, and who can scarcely fail to know, has from the first persistently asserted in writing and speech, by letter and in conversation to myself and to others, that her own conviction was that Florence was no other than Miss Showers herself in a state of trance. Surely her testimony is of more worth than that of all others combined, and was entirely confirmed by my own experience.

The same doubts attach to all the other evidence. Not a single witness beheld the medium and the spirit together by the plain honest light of a candle. The proof was never given to all the spectators at once. With the readiest means of perfect truth, it is a strange fact that it has never been proffered. Why not? If it be said that the conditions of the proposed tests were inconsistent with the manifestation, the answer is obvious—this proof is not desired before the production of the phenomenon, which it might conceivably prevent, but after the phenomenon is produced, when nothing is needed but its verification.

I turn now to the electrical test invented by Mr. Varley and tried by Mr. Crookes. I am not electrician enough to form an opinion as to the validity of that test. It was tried by Mr. Crookes with Miss Cook, and satisfied him that she was personally within, while Katie was obviously without. He tried it with Miss Showers, and he informed me that it failed. But I must confess myself unable to comprehend how a perfect test could fail. Either it proved Florence to be Miss Showers, or it fails to prove that Miss Cook is not Katie. But in any event I return to my argument, that indirect evidence cannot and ought not to be accepted in such a case, when direct and positive evidence is easily to be procured.

Such is, I believe, a fair statement of the case produced on the part of those who affirm the fact of spirit incarnation. Is it sufficient? Would it satisfy any jury in England on a charge of simple larceny? Certainly not. How much less can it be received to establish such an astounding fact as a spirit eating, talking, laughing, jesting, kissing, and for all practical purposes becoming a mortal again!

I am aware that improbability is no answer to facts; but in estimating the amount of evidence necessary to establish the fact, we must take into account the circumstances that tell against it, and therefore demand the more jealous scrutiny of this investigation. Having witnessed this strange phenomenon, I am bound to say that it is surrounded with extraordinary features of doubt and suspicion. I will name some of them.

1. All the prescribed conditions are such as facilitate trickery, if designed, and to prevent, and not to promote inquiry. Friends are posted on either side of the curtain, as if to exclude a too curious eye. If any strangers are present, hands are to be held. The singing usually invited diverts attention, and prevents the intent ear from perceiving movements behind the curtain. The hand of the "spirit" is not to be held, only opened to a hasty touch. Visitors not known to have the firmest faith are placed in a semicircle, and conditioned not to rush forward or grasp. A considerable time elapses before the form appears. The sitting is not closed and the curtains withdrawn so that all may see, for a long time after the form has retired. None are admitted behind the curtain until the most perfect confidence is placed in their previously assured faith. Even the few thus favoured were not admitted at once, but by slow degrees—thus far to-night—a little further another night—as trial proved the extent of their inquisitorial purposes or powers.

2. This unquestionable likeness of the form to the medium. When I saw them they were not merely resemblances; they were facsimiles. I had carefully noted the shape of the eyebrows, which cannot be altered, and they were the same in the medium and the form. The hands were identical. The movements of the body were precisely similar. Now what is the answer to this most suspicious fact? There is no escape from it. Either the form is "the double" of the medium, or it is another being. If the double of the medium, and the substantial form is borrowed from the medium, the weight of the substantial form must be so much taken from the weight of the medium. If this were so, the medium must be a mere shell, and must die. The theory of "the double" is therefore exploded. But if Katie and Florence are distinct beings from Miss Cook and Miss Showers—the forms of persons who once lived—to wit, Annie Morgan and Florence Maples—and whose atomic spirit structure is suddenly changed into molecular structure, how comes it that they precisely resemble Miss Cook and Miss Showers? It would be a marvellous coincidence if the real Annie Morgan claimed to have been a facsimile of Miss Cook, and it would be a combination of coincidences almost amounting to impossibility, that Florence

* If Mr. Serjeant Cox desires to question the fact of materialisation in such a way as to avoid appearance of special pleading, why does he seize for criticism a mere passage in a newspaper report, on which nobody probably has ever based any opinion, instead of seizing the vital points? For instance, why does he in criticising the testimony of Mr. Crookes ignore that Mr. Crookes says he saw the faces of Miss Cook and Katie at the same time? Or why does he not try to invalidate the evidence given by Mr. Varley's galvanometer, and the mathematics connected therewith? Or why does he not now take up the example published on another page, wherein Mr. Crookes testifies that he looked up one human being in the shape of Miss Florrie Cook in his own library in his own house, and shortly afterwards he and several other witnesses saw two living human forms in that library, under the full blaze of the electric light. We, at the time of writing it, knew the weak points to the physicist in the paragraph quoted by Mr. Cox quite as well as he does, but in reporting *seances* say what is seen, without turning to the right hand or to the left out of deference to any non-Spiritualist.—En.

Maples should also bear an exact resemblance to Miss Showers.

3. But the difficulties do not end there. Assuming the forms to be Mesdames Morgan and Maples, who lived on earth some years ago, and who ever since have been dwelling in spirit land, how comes it that they think the thoughts and speak the languages and have the manners of girls of the year 1874, instead of the very different ideas, structure of talk, and manners of our own time? And, more than this, why does Miss Maples play upon the piano tunes that have been composed since her death, and sing songs of recent date, instead of those that were known to her in life? It might have been thought that the best proof the two spirits could have given of their identity would have been to present themselves as *they were* in life, instead of appearing as the *mediums are*.

I might fill many pages with similar doubts and difficulties, but these will suffice to sustain my contention that the evidence as yet produced is wholly insufficient to be accepted as proving the genuine incarnation of the asserted spirit forms. It demands the withholding of credence until some more satisfactory test is tried, such as the exhibition of medium and spirit together in full light and to all eyes, or marking the medium with burnt cork upon the forehead, or throwing a strong scent upon the spirit, or any one of the many other devices by which identity could be proved beyond question, and which could not possibly interfere with the manifestation.

I am confident that I shall have the cordial assent of all rational readers to this—that if these phenomena are real, they ought to be proved beyond doubt by indisputable evidence; if they are delusions they ought to be discovered and denounced. If facts, their importance cannot be exaggerated—if frauds, their wickedness cannot be exceeded.

Moat Mount, Highwood, N.W.

EDWARD W. COX.

1st June, 1874.

THE SEANCE AT MR. SERJEANT COX'S.

Sm,—Mr. Serjeant Cox is unquestionably right in asserting that “before we perplex ourselves with the problems of the how and the why, we should be certain of facts,” but those same “facts” are, unfortunately, the very point on which he and I are at issue. I have already given a tolerably detailed account of all that transpired on the occasion of the *seance* at his house, and, had he proved to me that the face presented was actually that of my daughter, I would never have made the slightest attempt to oppose his testimony, however I might have expressed my dissatisfaction at the mode in which he chose to conduct his investigations. But he not only *did not prove it*, but told me the next morning how deeply he regretted his failure, adding—“I wish, I dearly wish I could have gone into the cabinet; but not for a thousand pounds would I have let in the light on an entranced figure.”

I may as well here mention one circumstance that a few Spiritualists may recognise as quite characteristic of his shuffling mode of dealing with spiritualistic phenomena—that while my daughter was coming out of the trance he frequently asked—“How is the medium, Peter?” “Peter, how is the medium?” To whom was he speaking as Peter? Was he merely humouring the *somnambule*? And, if so, why?

A large amount of testimony is, undoubtedly, needed to convince us of the truth of any circumstance that is completely at variance with our past experience, but in the illustration given—that of the possibility of a man's jumping through a glass window without breaking it—I fear he could hardly arrive at any very satisfactory conclusion if informed, on authority equally credible, that the person most interested in the non-accomplishment of the feat had first *purposely* smashed the pane of glass in order to make sure that the man did not jump through without breaking it.

The concluding paragraph in Mr. Cox's letter to the *Medium*, stating that I have persistently asserted it to be my conviction that Florence was Miss Showers, simply furnishes an additional proof in favour of the veracity of my statement. What possible object could I have in denying it now? Will Mr. Serjeant Cox please to point this object out? It is, however, altogether erroneous to suppose that I have ever expressed any “conviction” of the kind. The fact of materialisation, not only in one but in *all* cases, was inexplicable to me, and apprehending the opposition that so extraordinary a theory was likely to encounter, I never committed myself to any opinion whatever on the subject. During the last few days of my residence in town, I obtained such striking

evidence in proof of the theory of materialisation, that hesitation began to give way to conviction, and after a careful observation of the phenomena that have occurred here since my return, I have ceased to struggle against that which—whether I understand it or not—is obviously a fact, viz., that by certain individuals the forms of the medium and the spirit can be distinctly and separately seen and felt. Are these people (who are by no means in a minority) gifted with some peculiar and additional sense? and if so, does our own deficiency, or comparative blindness in this respect, justify us in ignoring their testimony, particularly when we know that many things are going on around us which, for want of appropriate senses, we fail to perceive?

On the occasion of my first introduction to him, Mr. Serjeant Cox told me that he had both seen and felt materialised—or, perhaps, I had better say “incarnated” hands. Can anything be more wonderful than the human hand? Or does the miracle lie in the size of the materialised object? I see, I confess, no more difficulty in the materialisation of a body than in that of a hand.

No doubt the conditions imposed at *seances* are fraught with suspicion; an atmosphere of suspicion unquestionably surrounds the whole of these phenomena, but who imposes these conditions? How do we find the *same conditions* imposed wherever manifestations of a similar nature occur, however far the mediums be divided in race or in country? In the case of Miss Showers (and I presume that *I may* be allowed to be a judge of what has taken place in my own house), there was *no knowledge* whatever of the spiritual manifestations that were going on in the world. She was a mere child, and had never even glanced at a paper treating on the subject. One fact *alone* has been demonstrated by the opposition and annoyance we have had to endure, and that is, that the investigation of Spiritualism is a most serious subject, and not a mere after-dinner amusement; and that unity of spirit and religious elevation of character are the most favourable conditions for the development of Spiritual phenomena. These conditions it is not possible to obtain in a mixed assembly. The persons competent to undertake the investigation of this subject must already have passed through the phases of intellectual pride and of disbelief, and as it is impossible to ascend to the highest without beginning at the lowest; they must have gone through all the intervening stages. No one can at a glance understand Spiritualism any more than he can instantaneously master any other science. It deals most undoubtedly with subjects lying outside the region of ordinary sense and sight, and tests which may satisfactorily be applied to phenomena of a merely physical origin may possibly be of no avail here. Besides, I, at any rate, will know where I ought *not* to cast my pearls in future; and as mediums of the stamp of Miss Showers are rather uncommon at present, I would advise those gentlemen who, in almost utter ignorance of the subject, seem disposed to respond to the urgent appeal of Mr. Serjeant Cox, and aid him by the suggestion of “tests,” to find some better occupation for their brains. Men only furnish a most convincing proof of their own littleness when they express or imply their disbelief in another's sincerity and goodness. No intelligent Spiritualist will of course wish to hold opinions that will not bear rigid investigation; but unless the correspondence on this important subject be conducted in a decorous manner, how can people feel otherwise than confounded by such contradictory testimonies? The letters of Mr. Serjeant Cox are so full of disingenuous and inaccurate statements that I feel astonished that the editor of the *Medium* can let them go on without comment. Perhaps he sees that they answer themselves. Spiritualism has lost nothing by the publication of these details, and has not much to fear in future, unless its adversaries manage to disguise their motives more cleverly than Mr. Cox has done. I am not aware that the theory of incarnation, though incomprehensible, is anything new to the student of history, either sacred or profane, from the ancient Egyptian down to the more modern Christian; and we are beginning to doubt whether it is really true that miracles are ended, and that human actions alone are to be seen in the world. As to poor, ill-requited mediums, it would be presumption on my part to attempt to recite to any candid and reflecting mind that

All the way from Calvary down
The carved pavement shows
Their graves who won the martyr's crown,
And safe in God repose.

* They are usually mediums, or persons of an affectionate and spiritual nature.—Ed.

The saints of many a warring creed
Who now in Heaven have learned
That all paths to the Father lead
Where Self the feet have spurned.

Hazel Down, Teignmouth, FREDERICA SHOWERS.
June, 1, 1874.

MR. AND MRS. HOLMES.

SIR,—We have been holding *seances* in this city with Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, who have recently returned from England, and have had some very good materialisations. Last evening, May 12th, at ten o'clock, the spirit of a coloured person appeared at the aperture. He was the first who has spoken to us; he said his name was Romahun Roy; after him came a spirit giving the name of Katie King; she appeared much more distinctly than any other spirit had been able to. She accosted Mrs. Holmes with the familiar words, "You stupid," and then remarked that her medium, Florence Cook, was sick that night, but in reply to a question said, "Not very ill." This afternoon, Wednesday, May 14th, at four o'clock, we had another circle; several spirits appeared, among them a young lady, the daughter of Dr. Noble of this city, who has been recognised on several occasions, and who has taken away bouquets to different friends in spirit life. Katie came again and said, "Doctor Child, I wish you would write to Willie Harrison, and tell him I am here in Philadelphia." She called me "stupid," but it was very pleasant to have such a person speak to us as she did. She informed us that she had been in spirit life one hundred years. I have seen materialisations with Dr. Slade, of New York City, and Mrs. Andrews, of Moravia, but never saw anything plainer or better than Katie. I hope she will tell you what has transpired here, long before this reaches you.

HENRY T. CHILD, M.D.

634, Race-street, Philadelphia, U.S., May 18th, 1874.

[Mr. and Mrs. Holmes are powerful American mediums, but circumstances infinitely to their discredit became known directly after they left London, and they are not likely to venture to set foot in England again.—ED.]

PSYCHIC FORCE.

SIR,—Mr. Serjeant Cox reminds one of the fable of the dog crossing the water and dropping a substance in pursuit of its shadow. Mr. Cox denies the existence of a physical force called animal magnetism or mesmerism, in favour of a fanciful unintelligible "something" he terms "psychic force." Never was a fancy more ably supported by assumption and assertion, and never did a writer exhibit such complete ignorance of the matters in question, and, at the same time, with such boastful pretensions to exact knowledge. How can the attention of the patient being drawn to the seat of the disease be the reason of the cure, when almost all my cures were effected by rendering the patient totally insensible and unconscious, with the remarkable exception of any pain caused to the mesmeriser being instantly and sympathetically felt in the same or corresponding part of the patient. Mr. Cox ought to know better, but the conceit of most theorists renders them blind to facts and unconsciously disingenuous. Again, I seldom used "passes," but either laid my hand on the head or shoulder, or just sat quiet, directing my will towards the patient, much as Spiritualists sit quietly round the table, waiting for results to come, or as Newton set his mind towards a subject, as he tells us, and waited for the ideas to arrive. But I have no wish to do more than solemnly protest against Mr. Cox's ignorant assertions, disproved by the whole range of the facts in question.

Nor is it true that I cured Miss Martineau by means of her servant. It was through the great kindness of a lady friend of remarkable mesmeric power, acting under my directions. It is easy to support theories if you invent or colour facts, and assume reasons.

Then see how Mr. Cox contradicts himself about the will to which he denies a physical source, and declares to be always suspended in sleep, and yet we have this statement: "Then the dream takes the painful form of some agony from which we try with maddening endeavour to escape, and cannot." It is quite untrue that we do not will in our dreams; what we want in most dreams, is the influence of the balance of the senses, just as it is with men who give themselves up to theorising or to abstract thought, to the neglect of observation and experience. But Mr. Cox has got his pet child, the psychic force, to put out in the world, and it suits his theory to assume that the will is a metaphysical attribute of a soul at his disposal to move tables, and to do the intelligence and table talk, and the rest of it. Yet strange to say, the best things

are done when the medium is in the trance, and the soul is asleep, and its consciousness and will suspended, at least to all appearance, whatever we may fancy.

The most important mistake, perhaps, that Mr. Cox has made, is in regard to the old question of the persistent sense of identity under the continual change of the substance of the body, advanced to prove the existence of a something that does not change—a difficulty fully explained by me twenty years ago in my letters to Miss Martineau, accepted by Dr. Maudsley, and referred to by Dr. Tyndall as the perpetual transfer of the old condition to the fresh particles, and having regard to the horse as well as to its rider, and having respect to plants and trees as well as to animals. Why Mr. Cox has not referred to my explanation he best knows. I have referred him to the passage in question, and I dare say we shall have his reply. This transference of conditions is one of the most profound questions of physiology, because it not only refers to the wonderful continuance of the sameness of physical and mental state, but to the investing of the countless germ cells with the nature of the whole being—that is, the innate ability to reproduce the species in all respects, even to matters or states that may pass over several generations and then appear again, than which nothing in Spiritualism can be more spiritual or more marvellous, putting to flight all those materialistic mechanical notions as in regard to the theories of Mr. Darwin and his followers, whether as to the so-called "natural selection" or the hypothesis of Pangenesis.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.

HENRY G. ATKINSON.

AN EXPLANATION.

SIR,—In reporting a portion of my utterances at Quebec Institution some two weeks ago, I regret to find your reporter in a muddle as to my meaning; so much so as to say I was "unscientific," and so wording the report as to really convey to the reader that impression. I desire to narrate the facts. They were, that as nature around us was divisional—as we see it in geology, mineralogy, botany, &c.—so in Spiritualism there are divisions, each would require much time to explain. That, as I was tied to a few minutes, I would only touch the assertion of materialists that mind cannot exist without the physical brain man is possessed of, by showing that mind, or spirit, being more ethereal than air, electricity, or magnetism—I call the substance magnetine—mind could, under suitable conditions, enter and remain in a modification of these substances as easily as it does in the modification of the more solid substances known as brain-matter.

To vivify the reality of the three elements I named, I desired the audience to give to each a colour, to air blue, electricity yellow, magnetine red; and, as the three powers were in vigorous action in the hall while I was speaking, I desired the audience to perceive their mode of action by means of the colours—air filling the hall; electricity, avoiding the air, but dashing, seething through the walls and along the floor, as if a river; and magnetine streaming through the air; and, as the action of the three was perceived by me, I exclaimed—"What a blessing that our eyes were so opaque that we could not see the play of, not only those three forces, but of others still more ethereal!"

It is miserable special pleading to assert that substances have no colour; that colour is something waveish acting on the substance, is to tell us that a rose has no colour; is, by language, to destroy all the distinctive marks we have in ordinary life to identify substances.*

To the foolish question put, what colour is truth? Because I had stated that all substances had colour, I on the spur of the moment said, "White symbolically." But truth being only a principle, not a substance, cannot have colour.

In the foregoing reiteration of my statement on the platform, I fail to see anything contrary to common sense and

* Mr. Jones's letter down to this point amply justifies the remark of our reporter, and proves that Mr. Jones should not attempt to deal with scientific subjects, in relation to which he has not had the advantage of having received any education. We say this with all respect to him for the work he has done for many years in Spiritualism; but, as he unfortunately claims the publication of this letter as a matter of right, there is no alternative but to enter our protest against its contents, and against giving space to the same. Mr. Jones is a very good and well informed writer on the relationship of modern Spiritualism, its phenomena and teachings, to the ancient facts of Spiritualism recorded in the Bible. We cannot give space to teaching anybody elementary physics in public, but incidentally mention that some night Mr. Jones should illuminate a room for a short time solely with monochromatic light, made by taking a pint of warm and strong spirits of wine, mixing it with two or three table-spoonfuls of common salt in a warm large dinner dish, and setting fire to it in the said dish; then let him discover where the red and blue colours of all the objects in the room have gone—the colour of his own lips, for instance.—ED.

current knowledge. One thing I state; I was not aware when I accepted the duty of speaking at the meeting, that I was to be cross questioned by the audience. Not being a member of the Association, I was ignorant of the programme for the guidance of the meeting, and was annoyed at being put in front as the first speaker, as I fully expected the true leaders of the Association would have been on the platform and given us information from which to carve a speech. Doubtless I was not in my place in fronting the audience, but my heart beats Spiritualism, and therefore gladly consented to help in the effort to make more public the principles we love so truly.

To close, I state that during the last fifty years I have heard the most crude theories put forth, and for a time those theories were believed in by so-called scientific circles, and then flung aside. One of those theory epochs we are passing through now, and unless we dance polka to it, reporters delight to jabber the easy said word—unscientific.

Enmore-park, Norwood.

J. ENMORE JONES.

MR. MONCURE D. CONWAY ON SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—In your publication of May 29th you have a letter from a subscriber headed as above, in which the following sentence appears:—"We had thought that the mimeries of Spiritualism by Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke had been thoroughly and satisfactorily exposed in the lectures of Dr. George Sexton." Allow me not only to correct your subscriber but many others who have read the lectures merely, and not witnessed the doings of Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke in their *expose* of the tricks of professed and paid media. Dr. George Sexton has never exposed the feats of Maskelyne and Cooke, and has now, I believe, given up even an attempt to do so. Maskelyne and Cooke allow themselves to be held hands and feet by strangers, and never fail to accomplish all the remarkable feats which the Spiritualists have attributed to supernatural agency. The professional spirit media, as well as others well skilled in rope tying, are challenged every day at the Egyptian Hall to secure the performers in a manner that would stop the manifestations, and although some hundreds have tried their ability to the very utmost, none up to the present moment have succeeded. If I could bring my mind to the belief that spirits would do such unspiritual things as are attributed to them, I should certainly say Maskelyne and Cooke are very powerful media, simply because their feats are beyond my comprehension, and the trickery employed has never been detected. When I speak of the feats, I mean those which comprise the main portion of the entertainment, and not the minor incidents which simply go to fill up the programme and may be explained even by the uninitiated.

W. MORTON, *Manager*.

Egyptian Hall, June 1st.

[The method whereby all the tricks of Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke were performed at their entertainment at the Crystal Palace, were published with sectional drawings in No. 48 and No. 51 of *The Spiritualist*. Since then, Dr. Sexton made apparatus on the principle therein described, and reproduced their tricks himself, before public audiences. A mirror was fitted against the roof of their cabinet, and when it was let down at an angle of 45 degs., the cabinet appeared to spectators in front to be empty, but what they thought to be the back of the cabinet was the roof reflected by the inclined mirror; the actor, who was supposed to have escaped from the cabinet, was lying under the mirror. Since then Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke have got up a new and infinitely superior performance in the shape of a dark *seance*, in which no reflecting mirror in the cabinet is necessary, and it is an inimitable entertainment of its kind, which it is to be hoped Dr. Sexton will reproduce without delay, as he has made this work his special province. Mr. Morton writes to ask "will we insert an advertisement about their performance?" Yes, provided it be not of bad character, and contain no offensive remarks about Spiritualists; this is a public journal, and conducted on the same principles in the advertising department as daily newspapers.—ED.]

SPIRIT MESSAGES ON SELFISHNESS.

Translated from the "Revue Spirite," April, 1874.

SELFISHNESS is not a perversity of spirit, it is only a low moral condition so long as it is unpremeditated, and is only caused by self-love, and not by the desire to injure others. Under these conditions the selfish man is an imperfect, but not a very guilty being. During his life-time the selfish man has isolated himself by remaining impassive to the sufferings of others, therefore in the other world he finds himself quite alone, gifted with perceptive faculties, but plunged in total darkness, as the following communications teach:—

Spirit—I am a soul lost in space, I am dead, and I cannot find any of my earthly possessions, my house, my wife, or anything. I am not suffering physically, and I can perceive other spirits like myself, some are wandering even as I am,

others seem occupied, but I know not what their mission may be. I see these spirits, but I do not converse with them, for they can none of them give me that of which I am in search. I do not see that I deserved this punishment, I was an honest man, never returning evil for evil. I molested no one, and lived in my own home, never interfering with anybody.

Medium.—Your condition is perhaps the result of having cut yourself off too entirely from the world; have you not neglected to practise that charity which is every man's duty to his neighbour? You must pray and repent your selfishness.

Spirit.—It may be so; yes, I believe it is. I have concentrated all my thoughts on one point, and have allowed my perceptive faculties of exterior matters to die away. I will pray, and do pray for me.

Medium.—Who are you?

Second Spirit.—I am a suffering spirit; I am in total darkness, I was not so on earth; I can hear the spirits, and I have no physical sufferings except blindness. I have come to ask you why I suffer thus. Some spirits told me that you could tell me, and give me some advice.

Medium.—It must be the consequence of some faults committed during your earth-life.

Second Spirit.—It is true I committed faults. I was a coward, and unfaithful.

The Spirit Guide of the Medium.—This spirit's case is somewhat analogous to that of the last spirit, only this one was selfish to the last degree. He only thought of himself, and lost his perceptive faculties, just as a man who remains always seated will lose the use of his legs. There are many men like the first spirit, who live for themselves alone. Like a rat shut up in a cheese, there is no outer world to them. Once dead he has lost sight of his beloved little home, and goes wandering through space regretfully seeking it. We learn from this that it is wrong to shut oneself up in one's own small, puny circle, without caring for the rest of the world. It is not sufficient to be inoffensive to deserve happiness, one should share the troubles of others, and endeavour to minister to them. Charity need not necessarily take the form of pecuniary aid, which, however, generally involving some personal sacrifice, is highly meritorious; but a kind deed, a gentle word even, a thought of commiseration for the suffering, are fulfilments of the duty of charity.

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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:—

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“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., Solicitor-at-law; William B. Cower, 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, and 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 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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