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SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

NO. XVIII.

[I made no rejoinder to what was last said, but I thought over it, and was preparing to say somewhat, when I was imperiously stopped. The hand dashed off with violent speed, and the communication following was written without pause in an incredibly short space of time. So vehement was the effort that I was in a state of semi-trance until it was complete.]

Stay! stay! stay! Attempt not now to argue, but learn yet again of the truth. You are impatient, and it is in your mind to say foolish things. What matters it to you if what we say contradicts that which others have believed? Why shrink back at that? Does not all faith firmly grasped contradict some other faith? Nay, does not each faith contain within itself elements of contradiction? If you know not so much as that, then are you not fit to go forward. From those old creeds and faiths, venerable in their antiquity, but crude too frequently in development, men have derived comfort. They have found their utterances convenient and suitable for them. They have derived from them a satisfaction which they do not bring to you. Why? Because your spirit has outgrown those old, and to you lifeless, utterances. They benefit you not. They are powerless to stir your soul. They have no voice for your spirit: no remedy for your wants. They are but faint and far-off echoes of what to some was a living voice, but which to you is cold and meaningless.

Why, then, perplex yourself at that? Why linger, striving in vain to extract a meaning from that which to you has none? Why turn a deaf ear to the living voice which cries to your soul from the land beyond in accents which are living, burning, true? Why refuse to listen when the voice speaks of the true, the spiritual, the noble, of all that is real and actual in place of the dying or the dead? Why, for a fancy—from reverence for a lifeless past—cut yourself off from the living present, from the communion of spirits, from the society of those who can tell you noble truths of God and of your destiny?

Surely this is but madness, only the influence of spirits who would gladly hold back the soul and drag it down to earth. Were our revelation a blank con-

* In *The Spiritualist* of August 15th, 1873, an account was printed of some remarkable seances held at the house of Mr. Stanhope T. Speer, M.D., Douglas-house, Alexandra-road, St. John's-wood, through the mediumship of a gentleman in private life who does not wish his name to be published. It will be remembered that most of the spirits gave their names and proved their identity; also that the extracts they gave from their writings were found, after laborious search in the British Museum Library and elsewhere, to be true. Hence there is evidence that spirits can give teachings through this medium free, to a large extent, at all events, from colour from his own thoughts; consequently the "spirit teachings" printed above obtained through his mediumship, may be assumed to be to a considerable extent reliable. It is proper to state that these communications are selected in chronological order from a mass which has been given continuously for the past six months. Many of the originals are of such a personal nature that they are necessarily omitted, otherwise no change is made. The communicating spirits are many; each gives his name and details of his earth-life very fully. These facts, in all cases unknown to the medium previously, have been invariably found to be correct in every particular. The handwriting peculiar to the communicating intelligence is always preserved, and the individuality remains throughout the same.—Ed.

tradition of the old, what is that to you? Ours speaks in living accents to your spirit; you know it; you drink it in, and find it to be a blessed influence. The old is dead to you. Why linger round the lifeless form? Why embrace the mouldering corpse which was once a living being instinct with Divine truth?

Your sacred records tell you how, at the sepulchre of Jesus, the angel message to the sorrowing friends was one of aspiration. "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, He is risen." So, friend, we say to you. Why linger in the dead past, the sepulchre of buried truth, seeking, in fruitless sorrow, for that which is no longer there? It is not there, it is risen. It has left the body of dogmatic teaching which once for a restless age enshrined Divine truth. There remains but the dead casket. The jewel is gone. The spirit has risen, and lo! we proclaim to you sublime truth, a nobler creed, and a Diviner God.

The voice which in ages past has sounded in the ears of those to whom has been entrusted the Divine mission on their earth and to their generation, reaches ever to this age and to you. It has ever been so. God deals now in no other sort than he has ever dealt with men. He calls them up to fuller light, to higher truth. It is theirs to accept or to reject the heavenly message. Probably it has been to each aspiring soul a difficulty that the past, the familiar, the venerable faith has charms from which it is hard to sever. In the first blush of perplexity it seems to the bewildered spirit that all must go that is old and cherished, and the new and untried must be accepted. It seems to be a death; and man shrinks from death. Yes; but it is a death unto life. It is a passage through the tomb to a land of life and hope. Even as the spirit soars in freedom from the body of death from which it has been emancipated, so does the enfranchised spirit, set free from the trammels of the past, soar aloft in liberty, the liberty of the truth, which, Jesus said, alone can make man free. You know it not now; but you shall know it hereafter.

This, then, is our cry to you. Why turn your face to the dead past, when the living present and the bright future attract, and promise rich store of blessing? Were we in our mission the absolute contradiction of the old, what is that to you? The old words are spiritless, and you cannot infuse into them again the spirit that is gone. Leave them to those for whom they still have a voice and a meaning, and follow with unfaltering step the impulses of the Divine Spirit which lures you on to higher views of truth. Quit the dead past, though it be to journey through a new present to an unknown future.

But, friend, it is not so. The past casts a glamour over you, and you share the common idea that the new must utterly destroy the old. Did Jesus so say? Did He counsel the abolition of the Mosaic teaching? Yet, as we have before said, our teaching is no more startling development as compared with His than was His as compared with Moses. That which we present for your acceptance is the complement rather than the contradiction of the old; the growth to a fuller stature; the development of a wider knowledge.

If you meditate deeply on the state of the world when Jesus proclaimed to it His reformed faith, you will see many points of similarity to that which now obtains among men. It is not, we reiterate, more startling to read the gospel which we preach alongside of that which passes current among men for religion

than it was to put the gospel of Jesus in juxtaposition to the ritual of Pharisaism, or the sceptical indifferentism of Sadducee. The world then needed a new revelation, even as it does now; and that which it received was not less startling than is this to those who love the old and desire not to be stirred from the paths to which they are accustomed.

In those days, even as now, the revelation of God, which had been adapted to the special wants of a special people, had been overlaid with rubbish, until it had become a mass of ritual without a meaning and without life. For many long years the voice of God had not been heard, and man had begun to crave, as he craves now, for a renewal of the Divine message. The old had become dead, and he sought for a new and living voice. It came to him—this Divine utterance—in the voice of Jesus; from a source the most unlikely, as men think; from a quarter least calculated to command the respect of the educated Pharisee, or to carry conviction to the scoffing Sadducee. Yet that voice prevailed, and for 1800 years has animated the religious life of Christendom. The creed so originated has become debased, but the spirit of the Crucified is in it even now; and it needs but the vivifying touch to call it forth into new life. The old rags with which man has thought to clothe it may readily be thrown aside, and the truth shine all the brighter for their loss.

The source from which our revelation comes is not more strange than was the source of that power wielded by Him who was to His generation the despised carpenter of Nazareth. Men sneered at Him in the plenitude of their scorn; even as they have sneered at everything new; even as they sneer at us. They were ready to stare at His marvels; they would follow Him in hosts to marvel at the physical miracles which were wrought through Him; but they were not sufficiently spiritual to drink in His teachings. They are ready now to wonder at us and our mighty works, even as they wondered then. Even as then they sought for yet further and further tests—"Come down from the cross, and we will believe on thee"—so now there is even one more test which is necessary to ensure complete conviction. They called Him a deceiver, even as they cry out now. They hooted Him out of their society; they drove Him out of their midst, and they strove by their laws and by their influence to crush out the new doctrine from their land. New it was indeed, but the truth that it enshrined was old, old as the God who gave it, only new in form. Ours is new now, but the time shall come when men shall see that it is but the risen truth of ages past, rejuvenescent and eternal.

The Divine truth which we proclaim is not more strange to you than was the message of Jesus to His age—the age that sneeringly asked whether any educated person of position and respectability—"any of the Pharisees or the rulers"—had believed on him. Both were progressive developments of the same continuous stream of truth, suited to the wants and cravings of those to whom they were vouchsafed. Meditate on the mental condition of Nicodemus, and contrast it with that of many such in your own day. And be assured that the same power which availed to stir the dead faith of the Jew, and to reveal his God more clearly, is still able to infuse new life into the well-nigh lifeless body of Christian faith, and to restore it to energy and vitality.

May the All-wise guide bless and keep you.

+ I. S. D.

NOTES ON CHURCH OF ENGLAND DOCTRINES.*

NO. V.

BY ANONYMOUS CRITICS.

WE will ask you now to lay aside for a time your preconceived ideas and religious views, and to consider dispassionately what we have to tell you respecting the origin of sin, and the purpose which it appears to us to fulfil in the economy of God's beneficent laws.

We have shown you, as clearly as we have the power to do, that the teaching of your Church on the subject is irreconcilable with reason, and wholly inconsistent with the love and justice of the Creator.

We will now try to convey to you some adequate conception of our views; they are, indeed, widely divergent from the teachings of the Christian Church, and they lack the authority of any recognised revelation. We hope, however, that they will commend themselves to your judgment as being natural, reasonable, and just.

It would be difficult for you with your present civilization to realise how barbarous and little human were the forefathers of your race. They were removed above the animal world solely by inherent—albeit, for the most part, dormant—faculties, which the latter did not possess. Chief among these was the gift of speech.

Man, nevertheless, was Divine, for God had breathed into him the spiritual essence of His own eternal being, and endowed him with a capacity of moral and spiritual development. To these were added an intuitive perception of the existence of a Supreme Being, and of a future and higher existence. He was placed in a world beautiful beyond expression, fertile and grateful for the toil that he bestowed upon it, blessed indeed, by no means accursed, for his sake.

This home he was to inhabit for a short space of time, that he might there take his first lessons in the true knowledge of good and evil.

These were prepared for him by the passions and wants of his nature, which were imperious and insatiable, but which, in progress of time, he would learn by sad experience, must be subjected to restraint. To this end his world and his own moral and physical nature were subjected to laws infinitely wise, just, and comprehensive, and men destined to become, some day, ministers and angels of God, are learning in this rough school that misery must inevitably follow the disregard of these immutable laws.

Such an amount of personal "free will" as they could bear, and as was good for them, did they receive, but the Father's love was ever over them, to guide, warn, or restrain.

He has ever and anon raised up among them gifted and holy men, who by their example and the legacy of wise precepts have controlled and elevated their fellows. To others have been given high spiritual knowledge and perception of truth, and such men have been the founders of "religions."

Christians are too much in the habit of commenting on all religions other than their own in terms of pity or reprobation, forgetting in their zeal that, although they may have good grounds for preferring the Divine calm and holiness of Christ's teaching to all others, yet that God is the author of all religions.

From Him and Him alone is derived the relative moral superiority of one man over his fellows, which alone can give birth to a religion.

Thus in truth it becomes a Divine revelation, especially suited to the people among whom it is promulgated, and to the Divine purposes it is intended to forward.

Why weary your minds in seeking for the source of "original sin." A moment's reflection will tell you that all that is not perfection must partake more or less of the nature of evil. There is but one good, that is God, and all that is not God must necessarily be tainted with imperfection.

You, however, belie and dishonour the nature which God has given you by pronouncing it to be altogether evil and abominable. Man derives his being from a Divine source, and in his nature is implanted a tendency to righteousness in preference to evil. Does not your own experience prove to you that no man can be wholly bad, and that the worst natures are able to appreciate and to admire purity in others?

Your sins are often—we may say generally—the result of circumstances. We tell you that you are very low in the scale of creation, and your ignorance of spiritual and even of worldly matters is aggravated by the requirements of your animal nature. Why wonder that you are slow to learn that self-restraint and obedience are essential to happiness, and must be acquired, ere you can be fit to enjoy a higher state of existence.

To make men righteous by an exercise of Almighty power, would seem to form no part of the plan of the Creator;—had it so pleased Him, it was in His power, but where then would have been their experience? How could they appreciate good who have never known evil?

Do not conceive that in what we have written above, we would in any way deny that the world is groaning under the weight of sin, but we wish you to realise that although wisdom and righteousness have a weary task to perform, ere they establish their dominion over the earth, yet that it is not a hopeless one, seeing that they have a secret ally in the hearts of every one of you.

We wish you to form a rational conception of the sources of evil, and the purposes for which it is permitted, and thus to persuade you that the existence of a devil, a king of evil, is a baseless product of the human imagination. We will not here enlarge upon this subject, for it is one that will require separate consideration.

SPIRITUAL LECTURES IN GLASGOW.—Dr. Sexton was in Glasgow on Sunday last, and delivered a discourse on "Spiritual Philosophy versus Materialistic Science, with especial reference to the address of Professor Tyndall." The Trades' Hall was engaged for the occasion, and a very large audience assembled; all the listeners appeared to like the oration, which was of two hours' duration. As it was Sunday evening the proceedings took the form of a regular religious service.

FOREIGN SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.—Mr. William Oxley's description of a *seance* with Katie King, and Mr. Noyes' letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, have been reprinted from *The Spiritualist* in the *Progressive Spiritualist*, Australia. One of Mr. Thornton's descriptions of a divining rod *seance* has been published in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, Chicago, U.S., and the poem on M. Buguet's spirit photographs has been quoted from *The Spiritualist* in the *Banner of Light*, Boston, U.S. *Psychische Studien* (Leipzig) has republished from these pages articles by Mr. Crookes and Prince Wittgenstein about *seances* with Miss Cook, Mr. Webster Glynes' account of the *seance* at Buckingham Palace Hotel, our descriptions of *seances* with Miss Showers at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, and Mr. H. G. Atkinson's account of the position assumed by the late Dr. Hunt, president of the Anthropological Society, in relation to Spiritualism.

* Given through the mediumship of a gentleman who does not wish his name to be published.—Ed.

MR. BRADLAUGH, THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN, AND THE SPIRITS.

MR. HENRY MEESON, of Manchester, who is not a Spiritualist, but says that he knows from practical experience that there are plenty of spirits about, and most of them evil ones, has sent us a pamphlet full of correspondence, showing how he undertook the tough task of converting Mr. Bradlaugh to his opinions. Some of Mr. Bradlaugh's replies in the *National Reformer* are characteristic:—

Henry Meeson—While thanking you for your earnest letter, we fail to see how we are to distinguish between what you describe as the delusions "plentiful as blackberries, in lunatic asylums," and the special communications made to you day by day by spirits. (June 28th.)

H. Meeson—How are we to be assured that the revelation you urge on us is not your delusion? Swedenborg, Johanna Southcott, and Irving were as sincere as you. How are we to distinguish between your statement and that of Joseph Smith, the Mormon leader? On all but one point you write sanely enough; but so do many who are adjudged lunatics. You are not the only one submitting to us similar special communications; to be effective, they should be direct. (July 5th.)

H. Meeson, drawing our attention to the plant exhibited at the British Association by Dr. Hooker, which captured and digested flies, other insects, and flesh, asks: "Is this the result of a congregation of chance atoms, or the result of an intelligent power?" Chance is a word without meaning. The intelligent power which planned vegetable traps to catch insects, and stew them to death, would hardly be worth worshipping. (Aug. 30th.)

H. Meeson—We cannot trace the designs of infinite love in the perch worrying the minnow, the jack mangling the dace, the trout fiercely chasing the bleak. You think us unfair, we think you misled; you have the advantage of spirits to guide you, we have not. (Sept. 6th.)

H. Meeson—The question is not, does the trout like eating bleak, but does the bleak like being eaten? not is God good to provide bleak and minnows as food for trout, but is God good in providing trout, to chase, worry, mangle, and swallow bleak and minnows? You say that the "Almighty Power" has "provided for the wants of all living things." Yet some of all animals, not excluding men and women, die starved; some birds, hares, and rabbits, wounded by sportsmen, die a lingering death in their holes; some die horribly from thirst in the desert, some from cold in the north. When you ask us if we can weigh thought, you ask nonsense. We can weigh the organism without which you have no thought. You cannot weigh brightness; you can weigh the bright thing. You cannot weigh hardness; you can weigh the hard thing. You cannot weigh any characteristic; you can weigh the thing characterised. (Sept. 13th.)

Mr. Meeson has also published the following letter in leaflet form:—

To the Lord Bishop of Lincoln.

My Lord,—Your remarks yesterday about cremation (*Daily Telegraph*) are to me, and to the multitude of spirits who listened to my reading them, most perfectly absurd. "The body exists, a spiritual body, when it leaves the flesh,"—there is no resurrection of the mortal body at the last day.

When you look up into the sky, you look into, and through, an immense multitude of spiritual life, which can influence enormously the affairs of this earth for good or for evil.

We are surrounded on the face of the earth by infinite millions of evil spirits of various kinds, the great bulk idolatrous Christian sinners!—to me they speak;—they are more perfect in the spirit state than in the flesh; knowing, talking, and reasoning on the daily affairs of mankind.

All our thoughts are known to them, they see mankind as they are, not as they seem to be to each other.—Yours, &c.,

HENRY MEESON.

185, Radnor-street, Manchester, 6th July, 1874.

P.S.—I think it should be known, that none of the spirits connected with this earth have any conception of the personality of a God, but of an infinite power, pervading all things, incomprehensible, but ever present. The spirits themselves are personal individualities. All worshippers of the Trinity are idolatrous evil spirits—baptism is the first step in idolatry, put on the earth by the evil spirits after Jesus was crucified.—Matthew 28.

KATIE KING IN AMERICA.

MR. ROBERT DALE OWEN and others have written accounts of some marvellous manifestations they have witnessed in America, through the mediumship of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, under strict test conditions, which, in this case, were necessary, the mediums not being trustworthy persons. A spirit calling herself "Katie King" manifested, and claimed to be the same Katie King who recently made so great a sensation in this country. A careful examination of the different statements she makes tends to prove that this is not the case, or that the difficulties spirits have in communicating through mediums tend to destroy nearly all evidence of their own identity.

The American Katie is reported, in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Chicago) of June 6th, to have said to Dr. Childs in Philadelphia, "I think Professor Crookes is nonsense. He is an old maid. He has plagued my medium badly. Professor Crookes gets all the wires, and strings, and lamps, and everything about him. I don't like him. He is stupid." The truth is, that Mr. Crookes had his wires and strings about the Holmes's during some of their manifestations in London, and was not pleased with the results, though he, probably, knowing the peculiar conditions surrounding manifestations would not be disposed to draw hasty conclusions. Mr. Crookes did not plague Miss Cook badly, but proved himself one of her truest friends. Neither is Mr. Crookes an old maid, so far as the Royal Society knows. And why do American newspapers, as well as spirits, call Mr. Crookes a professor? He is not one. Generally speaking, a professor is a man who wears a dress fitting tightly to his skin, and with a band round his head; he turns head over heels on a small square piece of carpet at the corners of streets, brings three eggs out of a handkerchief, swings balls about at the ends of a long rope, and balances knives on the end of his nose. The immortal Katie further said, "Professor Crookes is a humbug; he will kill my medium if she don't come away. Write to Mr. Blackburn, care of Willie Harrison." The antagonistic feeling of the Holmes's to Mr. Crookes was fully expressed in the utterances of Katie.

After these things had been published in America, Mrs. Conant went into a trance in Boston, and talked in the same strain, saying that people were forcing Miss Cook to sit too much, using up her vitality, and killing her generally, all this revelation professing to be a warning from Katie King herself. The truth is that Miss Cook wanted to sit more frequently than Mr. Crookes or anybody else desired; she only had three sittings a fortnight, and towards the close Katie herself, and no mortal, urged her to sit during two or three weeks more frequently than Miss Cook desired. Nobody could have been more careful of her health than her parents, Mr. Blackburn, and Mr. Crookes; the latter was a true friend in every way, even to the extent of testifying publicly to the truth of the very astounding manifestations, which for a man with a high scientific reputation to lose, was a very serious duty to do. Spiritualists should be very grateful to him for all he has done.

As a further point in connection with this vexed question of spirit identity, it may be mentioned that the original Katie communicates on rare occasions, though she does not show herself, and she emphatically denies that she is the spirit who communicated with Mr. Dale Owen in Philadelphia.

MEN FLOATING IN THE AIR AT SEANCES IN LEIGH.

THE *Leigh Chronicle*, of Sept. 26th, contains a long, well-written article about Spiritualism in South Lancashire, and says:—

For seventeen years (next October being the seventeenth anniversary) the Spiritualists have had a society of their own in Leigh, and have met for singing and investigation without let or hindrance, and without seeking to obtrude their peculiar doctrines upon their neighbours. They have kept together and followed their own inclination, despite some petty persecution—not, however, so grossly ridiculous as that experienced by their friends in Westhoughton, where notice to quit was given to the tenant of a house at which the meetings were held, on the original grounds that the landlord would not have “boggarts” brought into his property! The Spiritualists in Leigh now form, in numerical strength, a very respectable society, the meetings being held in one of the cottages at Mount Pleasant, Twist-lane. At one of these meetings, held on Sunday evening last, the writer was present, without any special invitation for that particular evening.

The “chapel,” in which the small congregation meets, was formerly a loom shop for two looms, in size about 12 ft. by 8 ft. 6 in. in width. The alterations and fittings were done, so the writer was informed, according to the instructions of a spirit calling himself “John King.” The spirits, who kindly acted as consulting architects, ordered the floor to be laid eight inches from the ground (a wise sanitary precaution), and displayed their puritanical tendencies as regards church architecture by proscribing paint and paper, and directing the walls and ceilings to be simply whitewashed, and the curtains to be either green, blue, or violet—most sober and economical colours. These instructions were carefully followed, and the plain whitewashed and green-curtained room was, and is still, simply furnished with a few chairs, an old piano or spinet, a bench, and an ordinary round table with three legs. Shortly before eight o’clock, about twelve or fifteen persons having assembled, the meeting was commenced. At the small table were seated eight persons, four of whom were subject to “spirit” influence, the other four including a little girl and the writer. A hymn, “Sow in the morn thy seed,” was then sung to a well-known tune, and during the singing one of the mediums violently agitated himself and gradually, so it was said, became “developed.” The light was then subdued by the curtain being drawn before it, and the medium, by signs, desired his feet to be tied, signifying that the writer was the sceptic for whose benefit this precaution against imposition was taken. During the singing of a hymn the table became violently agitated, and then danced in unison with the time of the singing. These eccentricities on the part of the “spirits” were displayed through the medium of the table whilst the hands of those sitting around it were raised, and those of the medium under “influence” were simply held over it. The table floated from the floor and actually danced to the music and singing without any physical assistance from those seated or standing around, so far as the writer could judge; and efforts on his part to prevent the movements of the table, or to press it down with his hand when tilted towards him, were unsuccessful, although, by using his feet at the same moment, it was manifest that the legs of the table were clear from the floor, and that the table floated in the air. The sensation experienced when trying to press down the table was precisely that felt when unsuccessfully endeavouring to thrust a floating body beneath, or to force it deeper into the water. After the table had proved to the faithful the presence of intelligent spirits, whose heavenly duties permitted them to unbend their thoughts to such trifling acts as a means of communicating with mortal men, the party sang the Sunday-school hymn, so great a favourite among the little ones—“Let us gather at the river.” The table was again violently sportive, and the medium requested a chair to be placed on the top. This was done, and whilst the music was played and sung very softly the writer was requested to seat himself upon the chair. Having at once taken a seat on this elevated position, those around the table stood with hands elevated, and, whilst the piano was played, the table and the writer, seated in the chair upon it, rose from the floor, and floated upwards several inches in spite of the efforts of the medium to drag it to the ground by hanging on the chair back. An effort by the writer, who was raised within a few inches of the ceiling, to push the table downwards by pressing against the ceiling joist was equally unsuccessful, and after floating and dancing about in

the air the table descended apparently of its own accord. The medium violently struck the table several times whilst it was suspended in the air at least nine or ten inches from the ground, but without moving it in the least by the blows. To illustrate the weakness of the will, and to disprove a theory based upon the supposed almost supernatural power of the mind over inert matter, the company were also asked to will that the table should move. Whether or not all present did mentally desire a repetition of the table’s previous behaviour is of course beyond the bounds of evidence, but the writer certainly willed a “big will,” but the table treated his silent wishes with contempt. A chair was again placed on the table, and when lifted by the medium the table followed it, and the two danced in a most eccentric manner to the music played on the piano, those around standing with their hands away from the table, and beating time with their feet. One of the Spiritualists—a heavy man of perhaps twelve stone weight—was then seated on the chair, and experienced the same honour as that granted by the spirits to the writer. The table with its human freight floated eight or nine inches from the floor, and whilst in the air the medium shook hands with the person seated in the chair, and made another ineffectual attempt to weigh the table down by hanging upon the chair back. During nearly the whole of the manifestations the company either sang or the musical instruments were played. It was then suggested that as the mediums were doubtless fatigued, and as the room was very close and warm, that it would be best to close the sitting. Some verses of the Evening Hymn (by no means limited to Spiritualist gatherings), “Father, breathe an evening blessing,” was accordingly sung, during which those in a trance or semi-trance state were restored to consciousness, and the congregation broke up, the sitting having been, so the writer was informed, only an ordinary one, and but very average manifestations having been given.

MR. ROBERT DALE OWEN will visit England in the spring of next year.

MR. SPURGEON ON SPIRITUALISM.—The following paragraph is from Mr. Spurgeon’s periodical, *The Sword and Trowel*, so-called, perhaps, because he treats his unfortunates with the sword, and smooths down his supporters with the trowel:—“We had aforesaid considered Spiritualism to be a mere humbug, to be best assailed by ridicule, and such we still believe it to be in most cases; but Mr. Pridham’s work puts a much more serious face upon the business, and certainly makes us think that the devil has a good deal more to do with it than we imagined.”

THE “PIONEER OF PROGRESS.”—In the last number of the *Pioneer of Progress* its editor says:—“On Sunday last, Sept. 27th, Mr. J. J. Morse occupied the platform of the Islington Assembly Rooms, Liverpool, afternoon and evening, the chair being taken by Mr. John Lamont. In the afternoon, Mr. Lamont made reference to the presence amongst them of the editor of the *Pioneer of Progress*, and spoke in commendatory terms of that journal, saying, that it had taken the place of a leading exponent of the spiritual philosophy in this country. He believed it would do much good by the judicious manner in which it presented Spiritualism to the public mind, and expressed his pleasure at the freedom of its columns from that unnecessary personal discussion and abuse which, unfortunately, too often characterised our other weeklies. He concluded by urging the friends to support Mr. Farmer in the arduous work he was carrying on. Dr. Hitchman then read a most pathetic incident of spirit-cure.”

MR. VENMAN’S PAMPHLET ON SPIRITUALISM.—The number of *London Society* published last week says:—“The pamphlet entitled *Spiritualism—the Modern Mystery*, is a reprint of two lectures delivered on that subject by Mr. H. Venman. The question is really viewed (as it professes to be) from a neutral standpoint, and will, therefore, appeal to many who neither believe nor disbelieve in the matter treated of. Byron said that ‘he was a fool who disbelieved what he could not disprove;’ and with regard to Spiritualism, there is no doubt that its strongest opposers find the task of proving its untruth more difficult than they imagined it would be. Mr. Venman’s pamphlet is worthy of notice, if only from the fact that it is neutral. It is refreshing in these days of wordy warfare to find one person capable of arguing a point without losing his temper or insisting on his view being the only correct one. We do not think Mr. Venman is favourably inclined towards Spiritualism; but he brings forward all the arguments for as well as against it, and never loses sight of the character he claims for himself.”

JOCULAR SPIRITS IN WALES.

To the Editor of the SOUTH WALES DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—I read in your paper of Wednesday an interesting account of a *seance* at Llanelly, at which some marvellous things were done. As every new discovery or manifestation contributes to the elucidation of Spiritualism, I hope that the facts I am about to relate will prove useful to the learned professors of the science who devote their time and talents to its development.

Some months ago the disciples of the new science at this place were daily engaged in the practice of Spiritualism. Not a night passed without a *seance*, and the manifestations were of a most gratifying kind. One evening, however, the party were astonished at the name of the spirit that answered to the enquiry of the medium. The usual question was put, "Is it a spirit?" Answer, "Yes."—"What name?" The raps under the table gave distinctly the letters t, r, i, m—Trim. Every one was astonished, and the question was repeated. The same reply followed, but with greater distinctness than before. "Trim, Trim, what a funny name," was echoed by more than one of the company. "Why," said one of the party, "that was the name of Mr. Taylor's old dog. I wonder if it is his spirit?" "Put the question," said another to the medium. "Are you the spirit of a man?" A distinct "No" was the reply. "Then what are you?" The raps indicated the letters d, o, g—Dog. The astonishment of the party was indescribable, for it had never before been reported that the spirits of departed dogs had ever appeared to the most accomplished medium.

The party was on the point of breaking up when the medium, who is a courageous man, said, "Let us go on and see what Trim has to say. I knew Trim in his day, and he may have an important message to convey to us." The party assented. "Well, Trim," enquired the medium, "How are you?" "Happy," was the reply. "Any fighting now?" "No; peace prevails here." "Who killed you?" was the next question, to which the spirit of Trim answered, "My new master." "Why?" said the medium. "Because he would not pay the dog tax."

The excitement of the party by this time had been roused to such a pitch that, notwithstanding all the coolness of the medium, the answers became indistinct and confused, and the *seance* broke up in a condition better imagined than described.

Perhaps some of your correspondents have witnessed similar manifestations from the spirits of dogs or other kinds of dumb animals. If they have, they would, by reporting the same, confer a favour on many, besides

ONE WHO KNEW OLD TRIM IN THE FLESH.

Hirwain, South Wales, Sept. 30, 1874.

SPIRITUAL MEETINGS AT GOSWELL HALL.

SUNDAY lectures are given at the Goswell Hall, 86, Goswell-road, E.C., by Mrs. Bullock, a trance-medium. The admission is free. Last Sunday evening Mr. John W. Haxby presided.

Mr. Haxby first read a chapter from the Bible, then he asked any persons present who knew nothing about Spiritualism not to condemn it before investigating the matter, for thereby they would in ignorance make a great mistake, which hereafter they might be glad to repent; they should first consider how much wisdom they had stored up, and then ask themselves the question whether they had no room for more. They should get the manifestations for themselves, and after obtaining them ascertain whether they came from the spirit world or not; they might receive communications from relatives. They should search after spiritual truths while they had the opportunity, no matter at what labour, time, or cost, and they would discover what a glorious light had dawned upon mankind in modern Spiritualism: it shone upon rich and poor alike. He had much pleasure in introducing Mrs. Bullock to their notice; a spirit would entrance her, and through her organism deliver an address on "Death Destroyed, or Man's Eternal Career proved by Modern Spiritualism," unless the spirit did not like the subject and chose another.

The eyes of Mrs. Bullock, who was sitting on a chair on the platform, were then closed, and one of her hands rested upon her forehead; she sat thus quite still for about four minutes, and all the observers were very quiet. Then her head fell back and her arms were outstretched before her, but shortly afterwards she sat up, made a few passes with her hands over her throat and forehead, and asked Mr. Bullock to

lower the gas-lights immediately in front of her, and to close the door of the hall. A hymn was then sung, after which she stood up fully entranced, and uttered a prayer.

In the course of the lecture the communicating spirit said that he would change the title of it to "The Fear of Death Destroyed." How was it possible to destroy Death, who was himself the destroyer of all things which have to pass away? The flowers pass away in the autumn time, and in like manner did man lose his external form, but the spirit within was the real man; it never died, it only passed through a series of changes. Spiritualism demonstrated that there was no death for the spirit, which survived the death of the body, carrying its affections and intellect unchanged to another sphere of existence. Men feared death, because they had been taught that there was a bourne beyond the grave from which no traveller ever returned, and they dreaded the unknown future, but the demonstrations of Spiritualism entirely dissipated such errors, consequently took away all fear of death. The spirit continued:—"We now return to testify that there is no death. When a mother is lying upon her dying bed, leaving her darling child who she knows will be unprotected materially in this life, she says:—"Dearest I must leave you, I know that I am going to die." It seems to tear the heart-strings of the mother's bosom to part from her child, and nearly all the terror and trouble are caused by her knowing nothing of the life beyond. The child yearns for her departed mother, and gazing at the cold form cries in anguish, "Mother dear, speak to me only one word," and sits down laden with heavy trouble, looking upon death as a final separation. But what says the spirit:—"She is not dead! She stands by your side!" and the child says, "I feel as if she were near me." If only one hope could arise that the mother was not finally dead, what happiness it would bring to that child! And if the mother had left with the full knowledge that death was only a change of state, she would have said to the child, "My darling, I know I must leave you now; the material form has decayed, and I can use it no longer, but remember that my love for you will never cease, that you will be more than ever endeared to me, and I will manifest myself." And the child will reply, "Mother, I know that you will be able to guide my feet where'er I tread, to sustain me in my journey through life, and I will trust to you, mother dear." Think you not that with knowledge like this the fear of death is taken away? The child looks upon the cold form merely as an empty tabernacle, and says, "My loved mother does not need it now."

Yes, side by side, we will sit and talk
Of the days that are past and gone,
And feel that the tie is still loving and firm
Which has bound us together so long.

At the close of the lecture the chairman said that any of the listeners might put questions.

How can man, who is a sinner, be just before God?

Mrs. Bullock replied that it was generally supposed that men could be just before God, by shifting their sins on to the shoulders of an innocent and perfectly good man, but this was the height of injustice. The way to be just before God was for a man to get rid of his sins himself, to practise them no more, and to be true, and just, and loving in all the actions of his life.

Death is supposed to give pain both to mind and body. Is it so?

Mrs. Bullock replied that most of the pain was caused by the needless fear of death. Much of the apparent suffering of the dying was not due to physical pain; the separation of the spirit often caused convulsive but painless motions of the body.

The meeting then broke up.

MR. J. J. MORSE read a long, carefully considered paper at the late National Conference of Spiritualists, on the subject of "Inspirational Mediumship." It has just been published in pamphlet form at a cheap rate by Mr. Farmer, and is well worth reading.

SPIRITUALISM IN SWANSEA.—Captain Hudson writes from 16, St. Mary-street, Swansea, saying—"I am happy to state we have some wonderful *seances* here at our weekly meeting, as well as at the houses of some of our members. We are beginning to develop mediumship among ourselves, and we have had a visit from a very good medium from Shrewsbury; some strong manifestations have been obtained. Several Swansea people have been wishing to come to the *seances*—so many that we have told them to try to get manifestations in their own homes."

MESSRS. BASTIAN AND TAYLOR'S MEDIUMSHIP.

MESSRS. BASTIAN and TAYLOR, two very good professional mediums, who recently arrived in this country from America, have been and are at present giving *seances* at 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury, London, W.C., but they will leave in a few days on a temporary visit to Holland. Mr. Bastian is a physical, and Mr. Taylor a clairvoyant medium. At the dark *seances* of the former musical instruments fly about, spirit hands touch the sitters, direct spirit voices are heard, and all the phenomena common at such *seances* are obtained. Mr. Taylor describes the spirits he sees.

MATERIALIZED SPIRIT HANDS.

Their light *seances* for physical manifestations are of special interest, because they obtain materialisations under conditions differing somewhat from any hitherto observed in this country. Mr. Bastian invites one of the observers to sit alongside him in one of the corners of the room, and a shawl is pinned from wall to wall across the angle, at such a level that the bodies of the two persons are hidden from sight, but their heads and shoulders are in full view. Spirits then materialise hands and arms low down in the darkness caused by the shawl cutting off the light, and when they are fully formed they thrust them into view. Last Saturday we saw hands and arms project over the top of the shawl, and seize bells and other little objects which the sitters had placed in front for them to lay hold of. One of the hands looked like the hand of a lady, and had a sleeve on resembling black silk; the hands were palpably not those of either of the two persons in the corner, who sat quite motionless, whilst the materialised hands and arms occasionally came up in various directions, sometimes behind their backs; in fact, the manifestation is one which peculiarly settles the question of the temporary materialisation of living hands and arms. The materialisation of a spirit face was expected last Saturday, but it did not take place, the vitality of Mr. Bastian having been too much exhausted by the previous dark *seance*. One or two persons thought they saw a face beginning to form, but the other spectators did not.

HISTORY OF MR. HARRY BASTIAN'S MEDIUMSHIP.

"I am thirty years of age, and was born at North Boston, Erie County, U.S. My parents are of German origin, and my father has been a minister of the gospel, and a member of the Evangelical Alliance for thirty years. Mediumship is hereditary in my family, on my father's side; my grandfather was a native of Lorraine, and served as a soldier under Napoleon; he had a wonderful gift of healing diseases by laying on of hands, and cured so many people that his powers in this respect are remembered in the locality to the present day. My father has the same power in a lesser degree, but he never exercises it without prayer; he can cure complaints of a chronic description easier than others, and frequently heals the worst tumours and felons in about a week, by the laying on of hands three times during that period. He also can stop bleedings, when the sufferers are miles away, provided only that they have faith in his power; he can do nothing with persons in a state of mental antagonism.

"Spiritual manifestations began in my presence when I was about five years old, and living with my grandmother; my bed was pulled about at night, and noises were heard; these things were supposed to be produced by evil spirits, and my grandmother thought that I was bewitched, and prayed that the power of the witches might be driven away. When I was seven years of age, my father went as a missionary to Canada, taking me with him. There the manifestations grew stronger; things would move about the room, and sometimes a noise was heard like a pumpkin rolling downstairs and bumping against the door; when they opened the door there was nothing there. My father concluded that the house was haunted by evil spirits, just like John Wesley's; he never

liked the manifestations; he tried to exorcise the spirits, when they would sometimes stop the manifestations for several days.

"When I was twelve years of age, we returned to the old homestead in North Boston, in the State of New York, where we lived on the farm until I was eighteen years old. Then I went to Buffalo, where I met a Spiritualist of the name of Williams, who boarded in the same house, and was the first to tell me anything about Spiritualism. He asked me to come to a *seance* at the house of Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Wortman; there the four of us sat round a table, and in twenty minutes I was entranced for the first time; when I woke up they told me that a child of Mrs. Wortman's had controlled me and given them messages. I made sport of what they said, and did not believe that spirits had anything to do with the matter, but the circumstance worked on my mind considerably. I went there again, and the result was the same. I then sat by myself for manifestations, and raps began at once. After a few sittings, I also saw spirits, among whom was a sister of mine. I was boarding with my aunt, and the family were very sceptical. One night I was telling her and the children what I had seen at one of the *seances* of the Eddy mediums, when a sharp whistle sounded over my head, and while the startled listeners were speculating where it came from, it sounded again, when they grew nervously excited and came to the conclusion that the devil had seized me for his own purposes.

"In 1869 I was a clerk on board the passenger boat between Buffalo and Chicago, and sometimes, in the fall of the year, when the passengers were few, and I was alone in the cabin, I would become conscious of the presence of spirits about me; once I felt as if a bouquet of flowers had been presented me; I smelt their perfume most distinctly. Soon after I heard of a medium of the name of Miss Rice, and wrote, asking her to give me a *seance* on my return home. This she did, and for the first time I saw a medium in the trance state. She did not give me any particular test, except that she told me I would become a professional medium and visit Europe, which was far from my thoughts at the time; and I left her in a rather sceptical state of mind as to the truth of Spiritualism. Then I began reading books on the subject, more especially those by Mr. Robert Dale Owen and Judge Edmonds.

"During the next season I had manifestations on board the boat, and in the course of the year 1870 first had an opportunity of meeting generally with Spiritualists. I went to one of their meetings at Collins's Hemlock Hall, which once belonged to the Quakers, but is now used for Spiritualistic purposes. From 2,000 to 3,000 persons were present, and I was there a stranger among strangers. There I became acquainted with Dr. Dunn, who recently visited England with Mr. Peebles; I there also first met Mr. and Mrs. O'Friel, and at a *seance* in the evening, at the house where we were stopping, I was entranced by their little child. A few weeks after, at a *seance*, raps spelt out his name, "Margery," and told them how a nephew of theirs, supposed to have been murdered, was then alive and well in California. On writing there, they discovered this to be true. They took a great interest in me, and, after corresponding with me for about a year, I went to Brooklyn to live with them; and it was at their home I became fully developed. At our first *seances* a spirit who gave the name of George Fox—not the Quaker of that name—used to entrance me; he is the same who now speaks with the direct voice at my *seances*. About the beginning of 1871, at their house, the spirits first commenced playing musical instruments in my presence, and after that the power gradually grew stronger, and that year I began to give public *seances* in New York with much success, but soon I took a dislike to mediumship, and made up my mind to give it up; so I went to learn photography at Syracuse, New York State, in order to get rid of the power, and did not sit for two months; the spirits then forced manifestations, and compelled me to give *seances* again. I next went, by invitation to Watertown, N.Y., and there met another medium, with whom I started out travelling, doing so for six months. I then became acquainted with Mr. Davenport, the father of the Davenport Brothers, at the house of Mr. S. S. Jones, in Chicago, and travelled through the Western States of America with him, giving *seances*, until the September of the same year, when I first met my present partner, Mr. Malcolm Taylor.

"My sensations during the production of the different manifestations are very strange. Although I am perfectly conscious, a peculiar numbness comes over me, and I feel as if

some force were leaving me until after the *seance*, when I am completely exhausted. Whatever part of the spirit is materialised, there seems to be a something drawn from a corresponding part of my system. When a spirit talks my lungs feel oppressed, and I have to sigh or draw a long breath occasionally."

HISTORY OF MR. MALCOLM TAYLOR'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Mr. Taylor, the mental medium, is robust and stout in build, light complexioned, and gives the following story of his development:—

"I was born in the year 1850, in Dundee, Scotland; my father was a native of the city of Glasgow; my mother, of Edinburgh. As with many other clairvoyant mediums, the gift of second sight is natural to me; since birth I have possessed that strange power of spiritual perception so common among the Scotch people. From childhood up, I have been subject to strange moody spells, in which I would sit alone and dream, as it were, and often in those states I saw things at a distance and in the future, which afterwards time and investigation would prove to be true. In all the years of my boyhood I was also conscious of seeing—not in the natural way, but apparently with other eyes, out of my forehead—large cloud-like substances, which approximated to the form of human beings, but so vague and indistinct where they, that I thought them freaks of my imagination.

"Brought up in the strictest orthodox manner, my father being precentor of one of the established churches in Dundee, I lived there until eleven years of age, when our family moved to America, and my father went into business in New York city. I was then sent to school. The power of spirit perception continued with me for the following six years in the same imperfect form, until my mother passed away from earth, and I entered business life in a large commercial house in New York, where, while at work at the desk, the faculty of discerning spirits fully developed itself, and the forms which heretofore I had seen but vaguely, became so plain and palpable, that I could no longer doubt my seeing them, although I could not account for my doing so.

"One day while engaged at the books I saw some one standing at my side, but supposing it to be one of my fellow-clerks, I took no notice of the person, until, chancing to look, I beheld a female the exact resemblance of my mother. Filled with amazement, I watched the form for a few minutes as it glided away, when, expecting of course that others had also seen her, I asked my companions who the lady was who had stood by me, and received the reply that 'no lady had been in the office, and if I had seen one I must have been asleep and dreaming.'

"After that, as time went on, I often saw the same, as well as other forms in the same and at other places, and keeping the thing secret grow quite used to it. Then a new feature of mediumship added itself—that of a sense of hearing voices and sounds unheard by others.

"Thus, with my strange faculties, I lived for more than a year as if in two worlds, the spiritual and material, until hearing from a friend of some queer things he had witnessed while investigating the subject of Spiritualism, I told him my peculiar power, and went with him to a developing circle then meeting in the city. There, to my surprise, I met others who had the same faculty, and on describing the forms I saw, at the request of the sitters, I found on their being recognised that they were veritable spirits.

"After that, intensely interested, I continued to attend various circles and *seances*, using my gift in describing spirits, giving wonderful tests of identity, &c., until, undergoing development, I got so that I would be entranced and controlled by different spirits to speak and write; some spirits influenced me to give private communications, and often improvised passable verses of poetry.

"Finding, after a while, it was impossible for me to give proper attention to my duties with influences controlling me during business hours, by the advice of my spirit guides, and to the great displeasure of my friends in the form, I gave up my situation, and entered the field as a professional medium. I took rooms in New York, and gave private sittings with splendid success for some time, until meeting Mr. Bastian we entered into partnership, and since then have travelled as companions and co-workers in the cause of spirit communion."

IRON RING MANIFESTATIONS.

The *New York Sun* (Oct., 1869) in the course of a report of a *seance* with Mr. Bastian and Mr. Hough, says:

There lay on the table four solid iron rings, about a quarter of an inch thick, and in diameter respectively 2½, 5, 5½, and 6¼ inches. The young men were as thoroughly tied as a committee of gentlemen could tie them, hands and feet, and the light having been extinguished, the three larger rings were passed over the tied wrists and arms, one after another, and pushed up over the elbows. The smaller ring which could not possibly pass over the hand of the young man, was in one minute by a process not well understood, placed upon his wrist. His hand measured 3½ inches across. The young man's wrists were again tied with cotton cloth, which was also sewed to his shirt sleeves in such a manner as to make a loop over each wrist, beside the loop that united both hands. The small ring was again passed over the left hand and wrist without interfering with the sewing or tying. One of two things was absolutely required to accomplish this feat—either the expansion of the solid ring an inch and a half, or the elongation or reduction in size by some process of the medium's hand. The latter could hardly have been done, and the spirits informed *The Sun's* reporter that the feat was done by "chemical expansion and contraction."

MR. BASTIAN PLACED IN A CAGE DURING A SEANCE.

Mr. H. B. Storer, in the course of a letter to the *Banner of Light* said:—

Desiring to test the claims of this gentleman that the manifestations produced in his presence are not caused by himself, but by spirits, a company of about twenty persons assembled in the ante room of Eliot Hall, in this city, on Thursday evening, July 13th, 1871. Mr. Bastian having previously signified his willingness to submit to any reasonable methods of testing his mediumship which might be suggested by others, a cabinet was devised and constructed by Mr. E. S. Wheeler, consisting of a light framework of bed-slats and laths, two and one-half feet square and about ten feet high, over which, forming the top and the four walls, was drawn a mosquito netting, lapped and nailed so closely to the framework as to prevent any fingers or hands from being thrust through. Mr. Bastian being seated in a chair, this extinguisher of scepticism was then lifted and shut down over him, forming an enclosure that would effectually prevent him from handling any of the instruments which were placed upon a table drawn closely to the right side of the cabinet. The theory advanced by the voices which are heard at Mr. Bastian's *seances* (viz., that the spirits use the vital emanations of the medium with which to accomplish their feats, and that these emanations decrease in force and capacity of use inversely with the square of the distance from him) was so far respected by the investigators as to allow the medium's elbow to rest, through the gauze wall, upon the edge of the table. Two tambourines, two bells, two harmonicons, a guitar and a tin horn were placed upon the table, the nearest instrument being fourteen inches from the medium. The light being extinguished, not more than two minutes elapsed before the horn was heard to move, and the voice known as George Fox bade "good evening" to the party. It was done in a hurried manner, nothing more said, and the horn was heard to drop. Under the same conditions, the guitar was thrown from the table upon the floor. The gas being lit, no change in the position of the medium or the cabinet was discovered by the audience; and the certainty that the cabinet did not move was further guaranteed by Mr. Wheeler, who affixed to the top of the cabinet one end of a piece of tape, the other end of which he held, while seated within four or five feet of the cabinet, as an indicator of any movement or jar that might occur to that frail structure by the movement of the medium. Two pieces of tape were afterwards affixed to the side of the cabinet next the medium, and between him and the instruments, and held by two gentlemen, both of whom affirm that no jar whatever of the cabinet occurred, although several instruments were swept from the table to the floor while they held the indicators.

APPEARANCE OF MATERIALISED SPIRITS.

The *Portland Monitor* of May 6th 1872, says:—

The company then seated themselves in front of a doorway leading to a small room, across which was tacked a piece of black cambric, in which was cut a hole about a foot in diameter. Behind this sat Mr. Bastian; for it is said that only in close proximity to the medium do materialisations occur. A gas jet in the adjoining parlour admitted light to the room in which the company were seated. While a favourite air was being sung, there appeared at the aperture

in the cambric, upon which all eyes were resting, a shadowy mist, and then growing denser and more material, presented the features of a human face, but barely upon being comprehended, faded away. The face was not entirely recognised, and a gentleman requested it to appear again. It did so more positively, and was recognised as that of a deceased lady cousin to the gentleman who requested it to reappear. A child's small hand loomed up, and pointed to one of the ladies; she asked "Who is it?" and presently a pretty little boy's round, bright face appeared. The hand of a lady, draped with a flowing lace trimmed sleeve appeared, and was quickly drawn away. A large left hand, with a plain gold ring on the little finger, was plainly seen.

TWO SPIRITS APPEAR AT THE SAME TIME AND ARE RECOGNISED.

At a subsequent sitting, described in the *Auburn Advertiser*, the power was stronger. Mr. Babbit writes to that journal:—

My two daughters, Josephine and Fanny, as well as Eugene, my son, all presented themselves, one by one, several times, so unmistakably as to be recognised at once by all in the circle who were acquainted with them while living.

Two little boys manifested their presence. The first one was recognised by its mother as her son Willie; the other his cousin Freddy, who was also recognised by his mother. Twice these boys presented themselves at the same time, side by side, both being about the same age. I have witnessed very many spiritual manifestations, but this double presentation most certainly exceeded by far all others that I ever seen.

FIVE SPIRITS RECOGNISED.

Mr. E. S. Crampton, of Collins Centre, writes to the *Banner of Light*, of Oct 26th, 1872, as follows:—

Improvising a cabinet out of an adjoining bedroom, by tacking in the doorway a piece of black cambric, with a diamond-shaped opening cut out near the top, the medium sat behind in the darkness, while the company, in the mellowed light of a lamp, sat before the veil that soon revealed to view the dear ones gone before. After a little singing, behind the aperture there appeared what seemed a filmy cloud of haze, which, growing denser, soon assumed the form and features of an old lady's face. All acquainted with her saw at once it was my wife's mother, Mrs. Hawkins, attired in the very habiliments her body had but lately been buried in.

Next came that of a little boy, the brother of a young lady present, who at once exclaimed, "Willie!" in reply to which the spirit waved his hand.

Then appeared the full round girl's face of a cousin to the same lady who, not recognising it at first, asked it to come a little plainer, which it did satisfactorily.

Then was shown the beaming infant face of a son of our neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Pierce, who, wishing to see how their boy had progressed, were gratified to see a manly face with whiskers and moustache, that every one who saw it said bore a great family resemblance.

Next came Eliza Pierce, a relative of the above-named gentleman, whose face, familiar to all, was, without doubt, identified.

The last face shown, that of the grandfather of a young man present, who before had doubted the truth of immortality, came so distinctly, that he was convinced of the fact at once, and acknowledged with overcome feelings.

Between the showing of the faces, hands of various shapes and sizes were presented, some holding flowers; and to conclude, the guide gave us some advice and consolation in the direct voice, and bade us good night. Every one of the faces came repeatedly in palpable perfection, more or less plain as the spirit had power, and were all recognised.

CONVERSATIONS WITH MATERIALISED SPIRITS.

The Enterprise, of Michigan City, Feb. 7th, 1873, says:—

SAMUEL BOOTH.—A figure appeared at the aperture, showing a bearded face, neck, and upper portion of the chest. Dr. Bentley, "That is father Booth;" and Mrs. Deming, a daughter, spoke, "If you are my father, put out your bony hand." A long, bony arm and hand was instantly thrust through the aperture, the lips moved and the words spoken, "God bless you! God bless you!" He was recognised by all in the circle who had known him. After saying, "You are

all immortal," the figure vanished; then reappeared again and said, "I live in the summer land." Dr. Bentley, who had always been his physician, asked the question, "Mr. Booth, you told me, before your death, that you wished to die that you might be at rest. How is it with you now?"

The figure, which had its face turned toward the daughter, changed position, and looking at the questioner, replied, "I am resting now."

Again it vanished, reappeared, and saying, "I have no more strength," disappeared.

SARAH WASSON.—In the dark circle.—Mr. Taylor says, "Mr. Eddy, there is an old lady before you. She says her name is Aunt Sarah; is about ninety years of age."

A voice is heard, "I am ninety-five, and tell Mr. Monroe's folks that I was here;" and gave her name as Sarah Wasson. The next evening Mr. Taylor described her again, saying, "The same old lady is there." She immediately said, "Tell Mrs. Eddy I have met little Hetty in heaven." Afterwards, in light circle, appeared, was recognised, and spoke. The tones of her voice were distinctly recognised by Dr. Church, who had been intimately acquainted with her. Dr. Bentley also recognised a characteristic movement of the form. She had said, in the dark circle, "Be sure and tell Mr. Monroe's folks that I was here."

A GERMAN FACE.—A face, with strongly marked German features, appeared. Mrs. C. Kimball thought it to be her husband's cousin, but having some doubt, said, "If that bees you, show your right hand," which was instantly done, *minus the third finger*. Mrs. K. exclaimed, "Mein Gott in himmell I'd know that hand anywhere." She then explained, that when fifteen years old, in Germany, the cousin had that finger shot off. The circle that evening was composed mostly of Germans. Mr. K.'s father, and his wife's father also, appeared, spoke in German, and were recognised. The conversations were all in German.

WILLIAM MARTIN.—Not recognised at first. It then spoke, "We don't get much game over here."

Mr. Benham says, "If that is you, William, will you give three raps."

They were given.

Q.—"Are you happy?"

A.—"Yes."

Q.—"How do you like the new sphere you are in?"

A.—"It don't make any difference whether you like it or not; we have to take things as they come over here."

Q.—"Are you round among us much, now days, Bill?"

A.—"Casionally—casionally. Pretty tough work, this coming back. I ain't used to this kind of business."

DR. PAIGE.—Was recognised by all but Mr. Bouchard, who was not satisfied until the figure put in an appearance for the eighth time, when the face and beard being apparently too large, the beard was thrust outside, the face filling the aperture. In reply to questions the figure said, after bidding the circle good evening, that his method of appearance was a novel one, and that he was satisfied with his condition. In the dark circle, when described by Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Bouchard said, "If this is you, Dr. Paige, will you shake hands with an old schoolmate?" and immediately after felt two hands clasp her right hand.

WM. DAWSON.—In dark circle.—Mr. Taylor described a figure standing before Mr. Eddy. It came four successive evenings before recognition; said death ensued from drowning. "How were you drowned?" asked Mr. Taylor. "I drowned myself," was the reply. Afternoon, showed face in light circle; was recognised by all, and said to Mr. Eddy: "I am sorry, Sam, for what I did; but I was not myself when I did it. It was a sorry day when I jumped in the river." Mr. D. was drowned at Minneapolis about a year since.

DANIEL MARSH, who died on the Friday night previous, was described in dark circle, the next evening by Mr. Taylor; said he would come again Tuesday evening. He came, as stated, in both circles; was recognised by his brothers and others. The shawl of Mrs. M.—this in dark circle—was put around herself and husband, Mr. Taylor stating that he heard the words, "I let my mantle fall on you."

There were other appearances, recognitions, and voices. An uncle of Walter Leeds; the father of Mr. L. S. Hart—face shown *minus an eye*, and so recognised; Dr. Hale, a friend of Mrs. Ostrander, who reminded her of a joint ride from Cohoes to Waterford, New York, years ago; Mr. Boothroyd and others might be instanced, but want of space and time forbid. Of the sixteen who appeared and spoke at the aperture, the lips were seen to move, the voices were distinct from each other in tone, and proofs of identity varied and numerous.

A REMARKABLE TEST.

The following account is from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, March 21st, 1874. The lady mentioned in the narrative was doubtless a medium herself, though she did not know it:—

A popular clergyman and his wife, with two of their friends—all of Chicago—visited the *seance* room, *incog.* During the *seance*, the minister's wife had a valuable diamond ring taken from her finger by a spirit. She plainly felt it taken from her finger. She felt a little anxiety about it, and so expressed herself. She was told to have no fear for its safety, as the spirits always returned everything of the kind. In these *seances*, knives, pencils, watches, rings, &c., &c., are often carried by the spirits from one to another, by request.

Just before the close of the *seance* the lady had a slip of folded paper slipped between her lips, which she held fast until the close of the circle, and the lighting of the gas. On taking it from her lips, she found written on the paper in pencil, "You will find your ring under the pillow of your bed on returning home." This intelligence was revealed to no one present but the clergyman and two friends. To them she showed the writing.

From the astonishing manifestations they had witnessed, although members of a popular church, they were prepared to believe it might be all true. They knew there was no opportunity for deception in the circle, as test conditions had been maintained all through the *seance*, and no mortal could have written and put the slip of paper between her lips.

The clergyman, not wishing to "grieve the spirit" by misrepresenting the facts (as did the Rev. Moses Sherman, of New Hampshire, about the cure of his wife through a spirit medium, he saying it was a miracle of Jesus Christ), but wishing to have abundance of evidence of the fact, if a fact it should prove to be, gave the key of his house to his friends to open the door and lead in advance, to see if the spirit statement should prove true. All moved in line and went to the bed, raised the pillow, and there, to the astonishment of all of them, lay the lost ring. We should not omit to say that the residence of the clergyman is about three miles from the *seance* room. The possibility of imposition is simply out of question. The clergyman, his wife and friends deny any such possibility, and yet they "would not have their names mentioned for the world."

SPIRITUALISM IN MARYLEBONE.

LAST Monday night the quarterly meeting of the Marylebone Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism was held at 6, Blandford-street, Baker-street, Portman-square, London. Mr. Whitley was voted into the chair.

The Chairman said that a great conflict was going on between Spiritualism and materialism; according to the tenets of the latter nothing existed which could not be cut, handled, or analysed, and it was the duty and privilege of Spiritualists to uplift their teachings against such doctrines, because they could prove them not to be true. Spiritualism proved that not only was there another life, but much connected with man that could not be comprehended; it proved that they could see, feel, touch, and talk to spirit people, who can return and cover themselves for the time being with a material substance; it was therefore their bounden duty to disseminate such truths among those who desired to receive information. The public might say that there was no good in Spiritualism, but the members of that society were aware that it had a strong moral effect, and that it made them think twice before taking any important steps in life. They should cultivate deeply religious and very liberal feelings, and carry them out in everyday life; for if Spiritualism did not make them better men and women, it ought to be thrown to the cats and dogs, for it would be of no use to them or to anybody else. They should live in such a manner as to set an example to mankind at large. (Applause.)

Mr. Charles Hunt, the secretary, then read the quarterly report; it set forth that the society was a very little in debt, instead of having a balance in hand, as on the last occasion. As secretary, he wanted more support and sympathy; there was less enthusiasm and energy among the members than when the Association was first started, and they did not exert themselves as they should do to attend the meetings.

Mr. Swinburne suggested that the annual subscription of members should be doubled, to enable the Association to work more efficiently.

Mr. White said that such a resolution could not be passed without previous notice of it being given to all the members. If it were passed he should resign, on principle, because some of the members could not afford more than they paid at present.

Mr. Swinburne said that he did not wish to turn anybody out of the society, so in consequence of what Mr. White had said he would withdraw his motion, though he could not see that any principle was involved in the matter.

Mr. Hunt said that from his experience as secretary he was against raising the subscriptions, for some of the members could not afford the present payment. Could not some of the richer members volunteer to pay more?

Mr. Tilby said that would not do. It would destroy equality.*

Shortly afterwards the proceedings closed.

THE EVILS OF UNCHECKED MATERIALISM.

IN the course of a letter to the *Peterborough Advertiser* of last Saturday, Mr. John T. Markley makes the following sensible remarks on the tendency of the materialism of the age:—

The Philadelphia correspondent of the *Times*, as many of your readers remember, called attention the other day to the fearful increase of crimes of violence in the United States. Our own daily law reports painfully supplement the very serious transatlantic facts in the matter of extraordinary crime. Especially is this the case in our larger towns, not to mention the notorious district where the *Daily Telegraph* told us that "Brummy" and "Physic" aired their combativeness after a style more impassioned than polite. In this nineteenth century, and under the shadow of earnest exemplary churches, men continue to drink with recklessness; to swear with vulgarity of eloquence; to thrash their wives with mathematical regularity; and, in a thousand ways, defy and outrage the common laws of humanity by an emboldened but an unjustifiable illustration of repulsive animalism. The morning papers invariably smell of blood. The habitual unrighteousness of the badly organised "criminal classes" finds a startling, if less intense reproduction, in more respectable quarters, and the results speak badly for our boasted civilisation. But in the face of such—almost international—misfortunes I, for one, believe in the ultimate and universal triumph of the race over the almost unavoidable animalism of human nature. The regenerating influences of an uncramped faith in the deity must make men wise in time; and through the developing process of popular education, the force of an elevating literature, and the broad acknowledgment by the State of the common people's political aspirations, this beautiful England of ours cannot possibly decay beyond redemption. Our chief danger I think lies in materialism—the flesh and blood religion of the age. I am not sneering at Professor Tyndall's fine Belfast address. Such occasional masterpieces of scientific oratory—despite their influential evil effect upon the traditionary opinions of society—tend to modify the narrow-groove enthusiasm of the grandfatherly theologians, who only "watch and pray" when they should carefully examine the mysteries and sectarian speculations of the faith by which they swear. But I maintain that the age is dangerously inclined to the harsh negations of positivism. The savants stifle the

* Why do not Messrs. White and Tilby resign "on principle" for the sake of those outcasts mentioned by Mr. Hunt, who cannot pay the present subscription? Like the Conservative barber who would not shave coal-heavers, perhaps they find they must destroy equality, and "must draw the line somewhere."—Ed.

poetry of the emotions, and thus contradict, or but partly develop, the mind's natural spirit-cheering eccentricities. Following suit, the restless money-making multitude catch up the intellectual, non-spiritual scorn of the learned doctors; and a combination of materialistic influences effectually damns all the tender passions, all delicate arts, all obedience to the language of flowers; repudiates the agony of poor Bill Sykes, the penitent prodigal, and mocks the soothing chime of the vesper bells. Small wonder, then, that we almost begin to tolerate the pretensions of the Spiritualists; those people who, with all their faults, have at least an impassioned faith in the immortality of the soul. This tendency to vulgar animalism and crimes of violence will remain unchecked whilst men overfeed, worship half-crowns, and respect the mere physical side of mortal being. Ultra-acquisitiveness of disposition is fatal to the perpetuation of that healthy sentiment which justifies imagination as an ennobling faculty of the soul. As Tennyson says:—

“It is the little rift within the lute
That by and bye will make the music mute,
And, ever widening, slowly silence all.”

But why introduce the Laureate, and his *confrères* of the muse? The versemen fail to touch the heart in this age of doubt, carnality, and mutton-chops; or if they accidentally popularise the assumptions of Apollo, it is among their invariable charmed audience of ladies. The masculines live, move, and have their being in a denser atmosphere of cold-blooded feeling, if we except the clergy of the varying faiths, who dare not question the consoling probabilities of the law and the prophets. But the world moves hopefully after all, and if men are chiefly materialistic, and scepticism is set to music by the leading philosophers of the day, excess of crime must ere long produce a reaction of spirituality.

SPIRITUALISM IN AUSTRALIA.

DIRECT SPIRIT WRITING UNDER NEW CONDITIONS.

THE Australian mail which arrived last Wednesday, brought advices from Melbourne to August 1st. *The Harbinger of Light* contains the following account of the production of direct spirit writing at Sandhurst:—

Recently, two gentlemen, very sceptical, and not connected with any circle, proposed to seal up a slip of paper without giving any of us any information of what was on it. This was done accordingly, and by direction of our spirit-guides I gave the sealed packet into the possession of the male medium last Sunday night, at the close of the *seance*. The seal could not be tampered with without those who sealed it knowing it. This evening (Friday), one of the gentlemen who sealed the packet attended to see it opened. Much interest was evinced by all present, some fourteen in number, but before the letter was opened, the gentleman and every member of the circle, thirteen in number, carefully examined the seal, and found it intact. A small knife was then got, the envelope cut on one side and two ends, and the slip taken out. I must now inform you that the medium, while entranced, told us that the paper was letter paper, that it was printed on, and also had the initials “T. C. S.” written at the top of it. This proved true to the letter. I, in the light, and in the presence of all, opened the paper, and there sure enough was three separate and distinct hand writings, that of George Abell being even smaller than on the previous one. There were also several small drawings on it. The paper was an ordinary sheet of note paper, with two names printed on it; and the spirits John Robinson and Alfred Longmore had written on the inside page. The two gentlemen who had sealed the packet had unknown to any one placed two hairs inside it, the one laid lightly on the note paper, and the other beneath the seal, so that if the note paper had been taken out or the seal broken, the hairs unknown or unnoticed would have fallen out. Both the hairs, however, were found in their places, and the one

on the note paper was found fastened to it by a small black speck of some adhesive matter. I need scarcely say that this crucial test caused unbounded astonishment and gratification to every one of us, the gentleman who sealed the packet declaring openly his firm conviction that no one in the flesh had in any way interfered with the seal or paper.

Poetry.

ANGEL-GUARDED.

MOTHER, will the angels keep me
Through the long, dark hours of night?
Will their sweet and loving presence
Guard me till the morning light?
If I waken, shall I see them?
By the light the moonbeams shed?
Shall I see them, loving, patient,
Watching o'er my little bed?
Gently slumber, child of mine,
Innocent, and sweet, and fair;
Slumber softly through the night,
Angels hold thee in their care.

When my little prayer is ended,
And my evening hymn I sing,
Then I wish some bright-winged angels
Little golden harps would bring;
And, while I am lying quiet,
Thinking of my mother dear,
In the dark and lonely midnight
Sweetest music I should hear.

Gently slumber, child of mine,
Innocent, and sweet, and fair;
Slumber softly through the night,
Angels have thee in their care.

Mother, when the night is over,
And the day begins to dawn,
When the gloomy tints of sunrise
Hail another welcome morn,—
Mother, will the angels linger,
Just to see how fair and bright
Is the early morning sunshine
After all the lonely night?

Heaven is brighter, child of mine,
Brighter than the sunrise light;
But the holy angels guard thee—
Ever guard thee, day and night.

From “Common-Sense” (San Francisco).

Correspondence.

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

SPIRIT DRAWINGS.

SIR,—I have purchased a number of the first series of “Drawings descriptive of spirit life and progress, by a child of twelve years of age,” issued by Dr. Gully; and I am so deeply interested in these, that I long to see the rest of them, for there are 248 in all. I have shown them to all our visitors, Spiritualist or otherwise, and every one has expressed surprise and interest, therefore I think that these drawings are calculated to bring Spiritualism before the uninitiated in a very pleasing form; and I earnestly hope that they may be extensively purchased, in order to induce Dr. Gully to continue the issue of the whole of the series. He says in the introduction, “After giving the spirit's history in its passage hence, the subjects run upon the highest and holiest conditions of the spirit, both in, and when freed from the body, its conditions of love, faith and charity, the mode of influence from above to those on earth, the communion of spirits among themselves, &c., all with a wondrous meaning, wondrously illustrated by a child twelve years old. Should the present issue find favour with, and interest the public, much more curious subjects, and deeper meaning emblems will follow in future numbers.”
Brixton Rise, Oct. 3rd, 1874. E. D. PONDER.

SIR,—I have been greatly interested in the curious drawings produced through the agency of a little girl twelve years of age. Can you inform me if the second series of drawings is published, or likely to be? Dr. Gully tells us there are 248 of these drawings in all, and it would indeed be a great pity if the work should be discontinued, as all the friends who have seen them express great surprise and interest at the method of their production, as well as at the drawings themselves. I feel we are greatly indebted to Dr. Gully for bringing them before the public in the able manner he has done.

11, Hayter-road, S.W., Oct. 1st, 1874.

H. K. R.

A NICE SPIRIT.

SIR,—I have just read Mr. W. Howitt's letter in the *Spiritual Magazine*. If that letter is written in a Christian spirit, defend me from such spirit; and from that kind of Christianity, good Lord deliver us! Amen! HOPE.
Brixton, October 2nd, 1874.

SIR,—It is surely something to the credit of the National Association to have been the means of harmonising two such discordant elements as Mr. Burns and Mr. Howitt, and of healing the breach which has existed between those two champions of Spiritualism for so many years; for there can be no doubt that Mr. Burns has forgiven Mr. Howitt, inasmuch as he has quoted him at full length in *The Medium* of the 13th Feb. last, and extolled him as a true "prophet;" nor can there be any doubt either that the Association has been the means of bringing about this most holy alliance.

Yet, as it is just possible that Mr. Burns may forget to quote, or refer to, Mr. Howitt's last effusion in favour of the Association, I venture to call the attention of his readers, through your columns (as those of the *Medium* are closed against me) to the article in the October number of the *Spiritual Magazine*, in which it is difficult to say whether most to admire the Christian temper and charity, the strict adherence to facts, or the cogency of the reasoning of the venerable author.

I hope, however, to be allowed to make a few comments on it in the next number of the *Spiritual Magazine*.

ALGERNON JOY.

25, James-street, Buckingham-gate, S.W.,
Oct. 5, 1874.

[These two letters refer to an article by Mr. William Howitt, in which he speaks of the members of the British National Association of Spiritualists as follows:—"They have no right to give their fellow Spiritualists by implication, that is, by assuming the national name and style, the disgraceful appellation of heathens and infidels." His primary and fundamental object said one of their speakers, "is to form a bond of union between all Spiritualists of every shade of opinion." I, for one, declare that I will have nothing to do with any such a Noah's Ark. There can be no real bond of union betwixt good and evil, wisdom and folly, between clean and unclean—it is not in nature. Let Spiritualists of every shade go their own ways. However they may try at it, there can be no permanent union betwixt such incongruous elements. I myself have but one way, and that is the way of truth, righteousness, and sound sense, as they are taught in Jesus Christ. I am a man, and because I am a man, I am not obliged to share the opinions, or the deeds, or the absurdities of men of all shades of opinion. With the murderer, the adulterer, the swindler, the blasphemer, or the drunkard, I have nothing to do." It is not necessary to make any comment on language such as this. We print the foregoing letters only because information has reached Mr. Joy, who, as Honorary Secretary, is the official representative of the National Association, that the editor of the *Spiritual Magazine* will not allow him to make any reply in the next number of that journal, although Mr. Joy primarily, and all the other persons abused secondarily, have the moral right of prompt reply therein. We decline to print any more letters on this inharmonious subject in this journal; the persons attacked have the right of reply in the periodical which has thought fit to print such language. We long for more peace and good-will, and object to this subject being transferred from another journal into these pages.—ED.]

"FIGARO" ON SPIRITUALISM.—"If human testimony," says the *Figaro*, "counts for much, these people have got hold of certain truths which, based upon phenomena so far supernatural as that they transcend all natural laws with which as yet we are acquainted, are not likely to yield. Indeed, if anything can be proven by weight of testimony, we must concede them to have made out their case; and in making this concession we need not count too much upon the qualifying fact that the existence of ghosts has in its support an equally heavy balance of evidence, for it has yet to be shown that there are no ghosts—whatever these may be pleased to be. But the truth is, that human testimony, of whatever cumulative weight, can prove nothing; we count it proof in default of better evidence, but it convinces no one but him who offers it and him in accordance with whose mental bias it is offered. But if only one part in a thousand is true of what is asserted by men whose word could put a rope about the neck of a fellow-man in any court of England, the Spiritualists have ascertained a fact beside which all other facts are idle lumber—have demonstrated what all the religious and philosophical systems of the world have only surmised—namely, that the dead live. For our part, we do not believe they have made any such momentous discovery; but they do, and one in every ten of them has better qualified himself to give an opinion in the matter than one in every ten thousand of those who believe as we do. Anyhow, he who discusses without examination should have the grace to deliver judgment without malice."

DR. WILLIAM HITCHMAN is doing much good to the cause of Spiritualism at Liverpool, by working actively with the Psychological Society there.

MR. THOMAS GALES FOSTER, an experienced American Spiritualist, and one of the best lecturers on the subject, will shortly visit England in company with Mrs. Foster.

COLONEY, H. S. OLCOTT, who wrote the account of the Eddy manifestations published by us a fortnight ago, is a well-known New York journalist.

MESSRS. BASTIAN AND TAYLOR had engaged berths to sail with Mr. Morse to the United States, but have since resolved to stay in England a little longer.

MATERIALISATION MANIFESTATIONS.—Mr. Epes Sargent is publishing a series of articles in the *Banner of Light*, summarising the chief materialisation phenomena which have been observed in this country and in America, and the *Pioneer of Progress* has begun to reprint the articles in England. They are exceedingly interesting, but rather disjointed, and interspersed with philosophical comments which had better have been postponed until the close, when the author would have more fully grasped the general bearing of the facts. Nevertheless, in newspaper literature it is not always easy to work out a subject in the same way as when writing a book. Mr. Sargent's valuable work will be fully appreciated by readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Editor of *Common-Sense*, San Francisco.—We have been sending you *The Spiritualist* for some months past; do you get it?

Letters which reach us not later than Monday stand a better chance than those which arrive later, of insertion in the following Friday's paper.

Several friends have kindly sent us items of provincial news, some of them containing long strings of laudatory remarks about individuals. Such remarks are of no interest to the public, and ought to be objectionable to the persons praised.

A.—The title of your last communication was interesting, and perhaps by giving the necessary time the remainder could be puzzled out as usual, and re-written for the compositors who refuse to set type from your illegible MS. It is not possible to get the leisure to do this.

FRONNE.—Your letter consists entirely of a string of laudatory remarks, and is anonymous: of what value, then, would its publication be to the cause of Spiritualism or to the cause of science? Why not give some definite information, and authenticate the same?

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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

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

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

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

"Professor Huxley and Mr. George Henry Lewes, to be invited to cooperate. Drs. Chapman and Drysdale and Mr. Fox Bourne were deputed to sit, and the following names were subsequently added to the Committee:—"George Cary, Esq., B.A.; Edward W. Cox, Esq., Serjeant-at-law; William B. Gower, Esq.; H. D. Jencken, Esq., Barrister-at-law; J. H. Levy, Esq.; W. H. Swepston, Esq., Solicitor; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.; Josiah Webber, Esq."

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

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

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

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

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

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

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

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

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

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

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

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

5. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle gives the higher spirits more power to come to the circle, and makes it more difficult for the lower spirits to get near.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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