

The Spiritualist

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SOME REMARKS ON CERTAIN OBJECTIONS TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

BY J. M. GULLY, M.D.

If hard words and loud voices could utterly do away with the National Association of Spiritualists, it ought to be at this present in the land of past beings, for the fuller investigation of which it was instituted. But I have still the hope that, like the subject of Spiritualism itself, it will survive the stages of ridicule and abuse through which everything here below seems destined to pass; and it may even come out of the fire annealed and better able to bear knocks than ever. The objections made to its existence are divisible into those which bear upon its tendency to produce sectarian bigotry, and those which attach to the exclusion of the dogmas of the ordinary Christian faith as subjects for inquiry and discussion within it. As I am able to see it, these two classes of objections antagonise each other. If ever there was a subject more productive of sectarian bigotry and hatred than another, it is the whole body of Christian dogmas; and, with Mr. Howitt, I make the appeal to history for the truth of this position. That history tells us that so long as the early followers of Christ's teaching confined themselves to the endeavour to live the life that He pictured and led, abiding in community of goods and in community of prayer, they extracted from their pagan fellow-countrymen throughout the Roman empire the glorious exclamation, "See how these Christians love each other!" Remark that from the very commencement of the era these Christians lived in communities, and there is reliable historical evidence that they were very sufficiently organised communities. A convert from paganism did not spring up here and there and remain isolated, propagating his beliefs "through the press," as Mr. Atkinson suggests—through the *Medium* or *Spiritualist* of the day—or leaving the grand secret of good he had found to extend as it could, without co-operation on his part with any one else, as Mr. Howitt holds to be the true method of spreading a truth. No; for inter-sustainment, for the fulfilment of Christ's injunction to live for each other, for safety under persecution, when each could inform the other of coming peril, and for the uprising of the incense of prayer from many devoted souls at the same time, the early Christian associations required very considerable organisation. For the arrangement of places of meeting (constantly by stealth), for the equal distribution of the goods of all among all, for the times and places for confession to each other of their sins, and for the interchange of the holy love which their Master had bid them to make, these communities needed officers, and out of their body they chose such, and they were called *episcopoi*, overseers. In process of time these overseers took more upon themselves than they should have done, and as the simple, *practical* following of Christ's life gave them no opportunity of dominating, they began to teach, as matters of necessity for salva-

tion, dogmatic beliefs, mystical, inscrutable, but on that account the more certain to bind the members in intellectual slavery; whilst in the same process of time, borrowing from Jew and pagan alike, these managers of the affairs of the early Christians took on themselves the *priestly* office, and behold the descent of our modern *bishops*, apostolic succession, laying on of hands, and all that sort of thing!

Passing along the centuries of the era, the result of this second arrangement was the substitution of dogmas by authority for straitness of life, of wrangling and internecine persecution for the early bond of love, until, under the first Christian emperor of Rome, we find that his commencing duty in that character was to call a council for the sole purpose of dragging Arians and Athanasians (Christians?) from each others' throats by the awe of his imperial power. The picture differs somewhat from those night and stealthy meetings when Christianity was as yet a *life*, and not a branch of *theology*! Add to that picture the pagans standing by and sneeringly exclaiming, "See how these Christians *hate* each other!"

MR. HOWITT OBJECTS.

Mr. Howitt attributes the good which is to be found in civilised societies to the teaching of Jesus Christ—his teaching by deed as well as word. I heartily concur in this opinion; but I as strongly traverse his statement that the world is the scene of the redundant virtue which he so glowingly dwells upon; and it would not be a difficult task to show that the most shocking, sanguinary, awfully wicked crimes have, for more than fifteen hundred years, not only been connected with, but actually sprung from, the dogmatic Christianity as held by the different churches. I will say more: that, spite of this kind of Christianity, there is not a crime however hideous, a vice however brutal and beastly, which may not be found now in our Christian societies, as they were found in the old pagan communities. Belief in mystery has taken the place of volition over thought, word, and deed, exercised yearly, daily, hourly; yet he who holds the belief, and he who lives the life, alike claim to be Christians.

Mr. Howitt asserts that what happened in the early Christian societies (the Christians of life, not of beliefs and dogmas) will happen in our Spiritualist circles, if we organise for the investigation of the comforting facts which it has pleased God in these days to place before us regarding our life hereafter. He is right enough in his vaticination, on two conditions: first, if in our Association we permit the discussion of dogmas *at all*, or do anything but investigate *facts*; second, if we are weak enough to admit of the existence of a *leader* among us, be he ever so gifted, ever so brilliant, ever so loud professing of this, that, or the other *belief*, were he even Mr. Howitt himself! But our Association is made for facilitating the investigation of facts alone, of which, Heaven knows! we have as yet all too few on which to build the flimsiest card-house of creed or dogmatic mystery. Let any of the bug-a-boos of Southcottism and other follies, which we are told will be among us all at once, arise, I for one, and many another I could name, will shout him down, not permit him to speak, tell him our subject is Spiritualism and Spiritualism only, *and only its facts*. (By the way, will Mr. Howitt inform us of his authority for saying that Smith, Southcott, Turner, and the other insane people on whom he dwells so tediously were "all real

Spiritualists?") And does not Mr. Howitt perceive that but for the dogma of Mary bearing Jesus without an earthly father, Joanna Southcott, could never have been the victim of the mad idea that *she* was pregnant by the Holy Ghost? It is amid the jumble of church dogmatics that we must seek for sources of insane creeds of this kind, and impudent assumptions of other kinds, and not amid the practical searchings of the Association of Spiritualists. I hold, therefore, that that article of the Association which alluded to the teachings of Jesus as sympathetically good and true, but refused to discuss any other points of the Christianity of ordinary belief in the churches, ought never to have been expunged; and had I been present at the meeting at which it was removed, I should have protested against its removal. It simply said this: "We hold by the ethical teachings and the duty life of Christ, but we cannot admit discussions on the subject of Christianity beyond that;" to do otherwise would have been to make the Association a bear-garden, or a fiery furnace of uncharitable contest.

Though we might cry down or cast out some idiot who, we are promised, will surely come amongst us, it would not be so easy to get rid of a score of bigoted respectabilities, from Papists to Glassites, each having his peculiar notions of Christian orthodoxy, and combating and hating all the others who differed from him by a hair's breadth, like the *homousian* and *homoiousian* heroes of the earlier days of dogmatic Christianity; men like these would effectually prevent the experimental investigation for which alone the Association was suggested. There are abundant outlets for disputants of this kind and on these subjects, without opening to them our meetings, which were intended for other inquiries. I wonder how much of the facts of Spiritualism would occupy our meetings, if Messrs. Howitt, Jones, and Hall, with a free sprinkling of all sects known got possession of the floor? For the reason, therefore, of the primary and sole object which the Association had in view when it was formed, for the reason of the peaceful pursuit of that object, undisturbed by the intervention of opinions instead of facts, I can see nothing but wisdom in excluding all the matters which are embraced within the tumultuous and combative circle of dogmatic—that is, orthodox—Christian theology; there is abundance of the *SPIRIT OF CHRIST* in the world without *that*, and of that spirit I challenge Mr. Howitt and his fellow objectors to find a more devoted believer and worshipper than myself: it is the divinity brooding over the surface of society and ever striving to find entrance into the immortal spirits of men, to give them happiness in their shrouded state, and light and wisdom in the everlasting plains of the spirit land hereafter.

Well, then, these two sides of Christianity being thus exposed to view, there can be no doubt that the practice of Christ's spirit in duty and life is fixed, unmistakable, plainly before the world, as his own life and words were; nor is there less doubt that Christian theology is just as changeable, conflicting, flickering in colour and light as there are dogmas, opinions, sects, and "views," as they are called. Now, when a man loudly proclaims his Christianity and denounces all who do not think exactly as he may think on the many-sided subject, one is justified in putting him in the presence of others who are equally loud and denunciatory but with other "views," and require them to settle which is *the* Christian, and which is furthest from salvation.

As Mr. Howitt proclaims himself very loudly indeed a Christian, I would have him step over some fine day from the Pincian hill of Rome on which he resides, to the Vatican in which Pius IX. lives, and submit himself to an examination by that domineering person concerning his title to be a Christian. Or let him explain his opinions to his Grace of Canterbury, or to the Rev. Mr. Maconochie, and get from them each a verdict as to the quality of his Christianity. It might be well even to ask the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, and the President of the Wesleyan Conference what *they* think of his Christianity.

MR. JONES OBJECTS.

In like manner, Mr. Jones loudly proclaims his Christianity as an objection to the Association. I would like him to be examined by the above-named theological potentates, as to *his* claim to make so much assertion of his Christianity. Possibly he might fail to make them comprehend his "views," for his peculiar style of composition renders them most obscure to me. I only hear him say very often that he is "a Christian." And so am I, though I say less about it.

MR. S. C. HALL OBJECTS.

Mr. Hall objects also on the Christian ground; but he tells us fairly in what his Christianity consists—viz., in belief of the miracles of the New Testament, and that he now believes them (not having credited them before), because he has seen the phenomena of modern Spiritualism at *seances*. There is little doubt where Pope, Patriarch, President and Pusey would place *this* shred of Christianity, and this rag of a reason for it! Granting all the miracles aforesaid to be authentic (including the eursing and withering of the fig-tree, because it bore no fruit out of its season), I, who hold by the grand teachings, and by the endeavour to act up to the life of Jesus as constituting *the* idea of Christianity, am utterly unable to see the connection between that teaching and life and the miracles recorded. His divine nature is proved to me by that teaching and life much more than by all the miracles that could be authenticated—at best, they are the most vulgar arguments for any kind of religion. A Roman Catholic missionary to India, once stated to me how, in striving to convert a Hindoo gentleman to his faith, he urged the miracles of the New Testament, as proofs of the divine origin of the Christian religion; to all which the Hindoo listened most respectfully, and then replied, "Oh, yes, I quite believe all you say might have been, but we have much greater miracles than those in our religion." I could not credit any one's charity, purity, honesty, high-mindedness, truthfulness, loving-kindness, pity, self-sacrifice, any divine virtue that shone in the life of Jesus, one iota more because he believed in the miracles; *the godlike is the life alone*: nay, I would say further, the miracles have nothing godlike in them: the Great God—omnipotent and omniscient—can, and, so far as investigation of His works teaches, *does* act by irrevocable law, and is not likely to have recourse to a *tour de force* such as the infraction of His own laws would be, when His spirit is ever there to teach the seeking spirit of man. Modern Spiritualism contains no miracles; it is the opening of another book of the divine laws which bind us to the Central Spirit of God, and shows us that, as our spirits are derived from His, so, like His, are they immortal, and destined to live for ever with Him. The laws of this bond are the subject-study of Spiritualists: and I, for one, have the strongest conviction that when

my spirit is in prayer it is communing with God's spirit, as a portion of Him, and deriving light and power from the communion; and this conviction I have, if Messrs. Howitt, Hall, and Jones will permit it as possible, spite of my opinion that it is better to keep theological controversy out of the practical inquiries of the Association. They may be sure there is a *law* at the bottom of Spiritualism: there never was a phenomenon yet without a law: we want to pry into that law, as in duty bound, and we don't want to be drawn aside by other questions. Yet we may be all as good Christians as our objectors for all that.

And here let me put a case. Let our three objectors go before the congregated churches and announce themselves as Christians *and Spiritualists*: they would soon find how speedily and entirely the latter character stripped them of the former in the opinion of their judges, and how soon they would be hissed out of sight as victims of Satan. And let Mr. Howitt remark that this was the denunciation of the churches long before there was any idea of an Association. *Sic vos non vobis* occurs to me at once; and the moral is Christ's—"judge not that you be not judged;" and the remark, "if adverse criticism is impossible, strive to criticize charitably."

TONE AND LANGUAGE OF THE OBJECTORS.

This brings me to remark on the tone and language in which two, at least, of our objectors have conveyed their objections. I will not use the word "coarse" to Mr. Howitt's words of animadversion, though they verge on that undesirable quality: but they are so vehement as to be violent, and they are so forcible as to be feeble. Mere invective converts and convinces only the weakest understandings, and that only by the process of terror. By the introduction of some of his readings in the dismal history of insanities growing out of Christian theology, he has overdone his case and not injured ours; he asserts as positive what has not yet taken place; and however I may respect his opinion on passing things, I am not prepared to acknowledge his prophetic gift. His protest is violent; but, though he lives near the Pope of Rome, he is not yet the Pope of Spiritualism; and I trust the Spiritualists will never, in all their history, allow popes or leaders in their midst. Fulmination of curses, excommunications, encyclicals, syllabuses, and such like amenities of the Roman curia, seated at the Vatican, may have filled the air in those regions with this infection of denunciation; but Mr. Howitt may rest assured that Englishmen living in their own land are not to be frightened by words of vituperation and injustice hurled from the land of anathemas, excommunications, and priestly tyranny. Kind, generous, *Christian* suggestions and expostulations, he may be sure, will do much more with educated minds than hard words, fiery accusations and prophecies of evil as if they were already fulfilled.

As for Mr. Jones's utterances against the Association, they are more funny than forcible; the mixture of jest and abuse exhibited in rather a rambling way cannot surely, at this intellectual date of the world, have injured us very much, although he claims to be our deadliest and most destructive foe, and speaks as if *his* "attack" was a fact to be dreaded above all things. I have some faith that we shall survive it; and meantime it is a pity that he presses so much upon the misfortunes of the Association meetings having interfered with those which he had planned, and at which he proposed to be

"the self-elected leader." It would also have been more graceful had he failed to lay so much stress on the small exchequer of the Association; which hopes to gain much more knowledge than pence, and at all events will not measure its character by its coin: it is formed for the search after spiritual facts, not for commercial profits. Poverty is no crime in the spirit world, though it is in Surrey. The Association must put on its armour—I don't say what it will be made of—in preparation for further "attacks" from the same source, *that* is all.

MR. ATKINSON OBJECTS.

Another objector, at the eleventh hour, appears in Mr. Atkinson; but he does not found his objection on the "Christian" argument; it would be wonderful if he did! In his adverse remarks he makes a confusion between the house and the subject that is to live in it. He says Spiritualism "has no end in view, and ought not to have." Indeed! I think if he will take the trouble to ask Spiritualists individually (as he desires they should exist), or collectively (as I think they should exist), he will receive the universal reply, "The end we have in view is to ascertain the nature and explanation of those phenomena which have recently opened upon our senses, and to find if there are means and ways for the development of further phenomena." Of course "no man can foresee" what the *upshot* of the inquiry may be, but since there are initiatory facts at hand, surely it is a reasonable *aim* and *end*, to inquire whether there are any more to be obtained in the same line of phenomena. The "nonsense," as Mr. Atkinson kindly calls it, which Mr. Morse uttered, amounted to this,—that whereas facts were lying about in all directions among spiritualistic inquirers, it would be well to gather them together and give facility for their collection by the formation of an edifice wherein they might all be lodged; the inquirers forming the house, and their facts being the contents of it, from which house these could be made known to all who were or were not curious about them. Mr. Atkinson says that this could be done better by droppings of individuals into the press, and that the Association would beget "cliques." But are there not "cliques" in the press already? Can he read the spiritualistic publications and not see the fact in every one of them? He accuses the Association of "starting with a fixed code or religion;" I defy him to find such anywhere in its archives; it is the very absence of such that brings Messrs. Howitt, Jones, and Hall down in anathema upon it. Even if the end of Association were only, as he says, "to give respectability or dignity" to the subjects it undertakes to inquire into, is there harm in that? He must further prove that "respectability and dignity" interfere with and prevent inquiry. He says "very little comes of the debates of scientific societies;" I had a belief, with very many others, that Newton's, Herschel's, and Davy's great discoveries had all been read and debated in some such societies; but, as he adds, "when men and women are bent on building a 'folly,' any argument (and it seems any statement) is acceptable," be it true or not. He says "it begins by causing a great division in the party." Oh! then there *was* a "party," and it was *not* "lecturers each taking his own course!" And if each did take his own course, is he not still at liberty to do so? The Association has no "code or religion," and still less has it the thunder of excommunication to hurl at those of

other persons and societies. All it offers is a medium by which the facts ascertained by each Spiritualist may find access to the knowledge of all, by constant communion with similar aggregations in the provinces, and by the friendly reunion of them all in personal meeting once or twice a year. What does Mr. Atkinson mean by "Spiritualism becoming popular enough?" I am aware that he has never publicly declared himself a Spiritualist, and it may very reasonably be doubted whether he is one; therefore it is possible the subject is as popular as it ought to be, in his opinion. But we, declared and sincere Spiritualists, do not think it is as popular as it ought to be; we know that if Mr. Atkinson would speak of Spiritualism to the next hundred persons he may meet, he would get a sneer, or vituperation from ninety-nine of them; and we don't think that marks it as "popular enough." In a short space Mr. Atkinson has brought together a number of untenable statements and unreasonable conclusions in a way which makes one think he has been prompted, and made to utter a matter to which *he* has not given examination and thought. I regret it the more, as my recollections go back to his bold utterances, many years ago, when he thought for himself and feared not to tell his thought after it had been well elaborated; in those days the world called his words "nonsense," even as he now calls another man's words "nonsense;" internally I cheered him on for his fearlessness and philosophy, and left the criticism of "nonsense" to the people of dulness and bad taste of that day.

MR. BURNS OBJECTS.

Mr. Burns has opposed the Association on the ground that it is not "spiritually" organised. I confess my ignorance how men still in the flesh could set about to organise otherwise than we have done. Shortcomings there must always be, so long as our spirits are mingled and weighted with our bodies, and possibly afterwards too. But with those spirits so mingled, and for the further investigation of the spirit's life, attributes, and communion, we associated as we have done; it may have been or may not have been "spiritually," but it occurs to me as the only way, being what we are—bodies and spirits. Although Mr. Burns admits Mr. Jones's "Christian" objections into his columns, he is far too sincere a man to join in them; every one knows that he accepts the life teaching, but not the mysterious dogmas of Christianity. For myself, I may say that I regret the opposition of Mr. Burns, because he is an energetic worker in the cause of Spiritualism, and has great mental activity and business-like qualities, such as would help any organisation which has in view the investigation and promulgation of facts. However, he is pursuing that investigation and extension in the columns of his own journal in the same manner in which the Association proposes to do it, viz., by the ascertaining of facts and the exclusion of polemics: and Spiritualists will thank him for his efforts, I have no doubt. He is evidently a good Christian without saying much about it, since he allows Mr. Jones to make his terrible "attacks" in the columns of the *Medium*, in spite of that gentleman not long ago having denounced the paper in public, and thrust it behind him, with the remark, "Don't let me see that thing."

SUMMARY.

From what precedes, it will be seen that much indefiniteness hangs over the objections of the several objectors, and that on that account it would be difficult

to meet the requirements of them all. Before we could meet Mr. Howitt's, Mr. Hall's, and Mrs. Jones's requirements, we must learn from them what quality, phase, development and doctrines of Christianity should constitute the Christian character of the Association; and supposing it to be possible to please those three gentlemen on this point, we should have to frame conditions which would let in Christians of some other fifty different "views," for it is not reasonable, having squared our corporate laws to meet these three gentlemen, we should not square them to meet thirty other Spiritualists with as many "views." What would be the result of such a *rencontre* of "views," we may prognosticate from every-day experience of the oral and written utterances, to and of each other, of Papal, Catholic-Anglican, Evangelical-Anglican, Non-Con, Plymouth, *et id genus omne*, of Christian combatants: and very sorrowfully would the investigation of Spiritualism come off amid such a Babel of opinions, tongues, and pens. The only alternative was to exclude the subject altogether, whilst stating that we held the moral teachings of Jesus in honour and belief; there could not be much quarrelling about those. As for Turners, Smiths, Southcotts, and such like insane people, as they all went mad upon some theological points which the objectors in question maintain should not be excluded from our programme, it is possible that similar lunatics might spring up in our midst if we did what they desire us to do, include those points. The morality of Jesus Christ never drove any one mad yet; the theologies which His followers heaped on it have made millions of mad and wicked people. I never met a man who really believed and loved the moral teachings of Jesus who was otherwise than worthy and high-minded; but some of the meanest and most false scoundrels that have fallen in my pathway, have been creatures who hung with the greatest persistency upon orthodox theologies, and mouthed the most about Christ and Christianity.

The truth is, there is nothing in the Christianity of duty and life which wars with the examination of any subject of human interest whatever, least of all with the investigation of facts which confirm the reality of that life beyond the grave for which Christ himself told us our present life should be one constant preparation. From Him, too, we have the grand motive for goodness of life, viz., the love of God, of which the most potent proof was the love of our neighbour. But if under the name of "holy truths" man denounces man, for that each does not hold the *opinions* of the other, what becomes of this motive and the proof of its existence? Let a man live the life of Christ and he will find himself perfectly safe in the midst of our Association, the corns of his opinions untrodden upon, and the prospect of life beyond the grave certified and brightened to his pure and upright spirit. Spiritualism stands in the way of no pure and practical religion, however much it puzzles priests and priest-ridden people.

As the Association is formed, exists, and will continue to exist, the objections of Mr. Atkinson have a chance of being tested by time and experience, and as we advance in the investigation of our subject, we will inform him when we think it "popular enough." As for the objection of hard-working Mr. Burns, we can but strive against our bodies to do our work "spiritually." At all events it will be seen by the latest resolutions of the Council that we are "spiritual" enough not to run into material debt.

THE STORY OF A HAUNTED HOUSE.*

BY EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.

The following narration I received from the lips of the two witnesses to the occurrences, Mr. and Mrs. B——, with whom I am intimately acquainted, and for whose veracity I will vouch as I would for that of members of my own family. I know no more truthful persons: they are intelligent and well-informed, and up to the time these events transpired, had no faith whatever in ghosts or so-called supernatural agencies. I will here copy from my notes, taken about two years after the occurrence of the events, and at the time they were related to me by them.

In the year 1869, a gentleman and his wife, without children, who had but recently arrived in Brooklyn, N. Y., rented a house in the southern portion of the city, into which they moved. The building stood apart, with no other buildings on the same block, and was an old-fashioned country dwelling, and had been vacant for some time when Mr. B—— engaged it, without any knowledge of its previous history.

A portion of their furniture had been brought into the house, and Mrs. B—— in the afternoon was alone, engaged in arranging it, when she was startled by the sounds of voices in the basement, apparently of persons engaged in a dispute. These in a moment were followed by a sound as of something falling to the ground. She thought some person had entered with her husband by the basement door, and that he had been assaulted, and under this impression she rushed down the stairs, only to find the basement empty, and the doors securely fastened from the inside.

She was not in the least superstitious, but was bewildered by the strangeness of the occurrence, and upon the return of her husband related the circumstance to him. Mr. B—— smiled at the supposed hallucination of his wife, and nothing more was said about it until they sat down to their evening meal, when Mrs. B—— jestingly remarked, "If there are ghosts here, I hope they will not begrudge us our food." Instantly three loud raps were heard upon the door at the opposite side of the room, which opened to the basement stairs, followed by a gurgling, choking sound, which, commencing at the door, seemed to continue and approach the table where they were seated. Here it ceased. Their supper, as may be supposed, was a hurried and light one.

They had arranged their bed temporarily in a room on the main floor, and upon retiring, the door between their room and the next was left open, as also was the one opposite this, opening to the kitchen, and soon after the light was extinguished, all the covers to the stove openings appeared from the sounds to be dancing and jumping, while various other kitchen utensils were apparently thrown about the room. Mr. B—— arose and struck a light, and entered the kitchen, where every article was precisely as it had been placed by his wife. He returned to bed, but had not yet slept, when suddenly they were aroused by the sound of some heavy body falling upon the floor in the room above them. It seemed as if all the ceiling of that room had been thrown down at once. They both rushed upstairs, where they found all quiet, and the ceiling in perfect condition. No furniture nor anything moveable had yet been carried into these upper rooms, and nothing was visible but bare walls.

This ended the disturbances for that night, and the next day Mr. B. repaired to the house of a friend, to whom he related his experiences. It so happened that this friend had some knowledge of circles for spirit manifestations, and he proposed that he, with two other gentlemen, should come over in the evening, and that they, together with Mr. and Mrs. B——, should hold a *seance*, and see what would come of it. This proposal, after some hesitation on the part of Mr. B—— was agreed to, and in the evening the parties assembled and seated themselves around a table, with their hands resting upon it. Raps were soon heard, and after a few minutes, upon inquiring who it was that had made the disturbances the previous night, the answer was given: "Aunt Jane S—— made the noises." "Who is she?" was asked; when, at that moment Mr. B—— was seized with a sensation of choking, as if a handkerchief had been passed around his throat and tightly drawn, and the difficulty of breathing was so great that both he and the others were much alarmed for his safety, but it passed away as suddenly as it occurred, and then by the raps, it was communicated that Aunt Jane S—— (the name in full being given), formerly occupied that dwelling alone; that a Mr. J—— and his two sons had murdered her by choking her

* Extracted from Crowell's "Identity of Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism." London: Trubner & Co.

with a handkerchief; the object being to obtain her money; that it was the sons who performed the deed, while the father looked on; and that they had obtained all her money, excepting one deposit that had been made in a corner of the cellar, and if they would dig for that they could have it.

Upon this she was requested to move the table and to place it over the spot where the treasure was buried, supposing that by retaining their hands upon it she possibly might effect this, but great was their surprise when they saw the table arise in the air, free itself from their hands, and passing over a moderately-sized stove, descend upon the floor in one corner of the room. They then inquired further, and were told that the deposit was covered with short boards and some pieces of old cloth, and the whole with earth.

The parties now left—Mr. and Mrs. B—with them, as they had determined not to pass another night in the house—after appointing the afternoon of the ensuing day, as the time for exploration. When the hour arrived, provided with a spade, they all entered the cellar, and soon penetrated to the boards and old cloth at the spot designated. These they removed, and one of the gentlemen present forced the spade further into the earth, when at this moment a loud sepulchral groan fell upon their ears. The spade was dropped, and each gazed wildly at the other, fully impressed that this was more than they had bargained for, but nothing more then occurring they regained their courage, and Mr. B—took the spade, and in his turn vigorously forced it into the earth, but here another groan, if possible more unearthly than the former, fairly electrified them, while the effect upon Mrs. B—who held the lamp, was to cause her to drop it, and they were plunged into total darkness. They were

"Five minds with but a single thought;
Five hearts that beat as one,"

as they started for the stairs, leading from this abode of terror. There was no time for interchanging courtesies, and the only lady among them, Mrs. B—, was the last to make her exit.

Mrs. B—now made inquiries of the neighbours as to who had formerly inhabited the place, when he was informed that for many years the sole occupant had been a woman, whom they called Aunt Jane S—; that she was exceedingly penurious; that she died suddenly, no one being present; and that no cause could be assigned for her death; that after her decease, sums of money were found buried under almost every tree, of which there were a dozen or more upon the place.

Upon inquiring about the Mr. J—whom the spirit accused, Mr. B—found it was the name of the person from whom he had taken the premises; that he had two grown sons, and that his sudden accession to wealth shortly after the death of the old woman, had been a common topic of remark amongst his neighbours.

Noises and disturbances of one kind and another daily occurred while Mr. B—remained in possession of the house, but as they lodged elsewhere they escaped the nocturnal annoyances, and in about ten days they removed from the house altogether.

The question will arise in the mind of the reader, "Why did not Mr. B—take further steps to discover and appropriate the buried treasure?" This question arose in my own mind when Mr. and Mrs. B—related the story to me, and I made the inquiry, and the answer was, "We never believed in ghosts until then, and even then we saw nothing. All the evidence we had were the noises, movements of tables and other objects, and the rapping; but these, together with the suspicion that a murder had been committed, produced such a feeling of horror that we had but one desire, and that was to remove as soon and as far as possible from the place, and we have had no desire since to revisit the spot."

It may also be asked, "Why did not Mr. B—follow up the trail against Mr. J—and his sons?" The reply is, "Evidence like this is not admissible in a court of justice; he did not consider the investigation of this case particularly his duty; not being a Spiritualist, he neither had faith in nor understood the philosophy of these disturbances and revelations, and prudently, and naturally, being a stranger in Brooklyn, he desired to avoid all ridicule and trouble, and so abstained from action in the premises. There can be no doubt that when public opinion becomes more enlightened and will tolerate the narration of such occurrences in society, that the ends of justice will often be promoted through similar revelations."

A letter from Newry, Ireland, says that there are only three or four Spiritualists there, most of them working men.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

LAST Monday night a special Council Meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held at Lawson's Rooms, Gower-street, London, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder. The other members present were Mr. Martin R. Smith, Mrs. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Webster Glynes, Mr. G. Nelson Strawbridge, Miss Anna Blackwell, Miss Kislingbury, Mr. Edmund D. Rogers, Mr. Keningale Cook, Mr. R. Harper, Mr. Edward T. Bennett, and Mr. Joseph Freeman. Miss Blackwell introduced a brother of Mr. Andrew Jackson Davis, of New York; the visitor, of course, took no part in the proceedings and did not vote.

OFFICES FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Before the regular proceedings began, the honorary secretary stated that none of the ordinary business of the Council could be transacted that evening, but only the business for which the meeting had been specially called.

The Chairman said that before the business began, Mr. Bennett would make a short statement as to what was doing in the matter of offices.

Mr. E. T. Bennett, secretary to the Offices Committee, said that various members of the committee had been to examine premises which had been offered to the Association; they consisted of all the upper part of a house, seven rooms in all, for £65 a year; it was close to Mudie's Library, above a dyer's shop, but had a separate and private entrance; the rooms had once been occupied by the Doric Club. Three or four of the rooms would do for the resident secretary. The largest room measured 21 feet by 11 feet, and a folding door could be made to enlarge it. Perhaps a lease could be obtained. Other premises had been offered, but not so suitable.*

Mr. Harper said that the terms were very moderate for the locality.

THE AVOIDANCE OF DEBT BY THE ASSOCIATION.

Mr. Webster Glynes said—I conceive that there is nothing more important to us as a Council or Association than to look after our finances, and see that they are well in hand. I have looked in vain through the rules for anything which will meet the particular objects which have lately been discussed by our Association, namely, the liability which will fall on members in respect to various responsibilities in taking offices; I therefore wish to propose rules which I think will make the Association safe. It cannot be a matter of small importance to see that we do not overstep the balance we have in hand; we ought to have stringent rules, to so bind us as to prevent the zealotness of officers, to pledge ourselves beyond the funds in hand to amounts which we could not get without litigation or trouble. The object is to provide that no debt or liability be incurred unless sanctioned by a majority of the members of the Council. Thus when the Association resolves to incur any expenditure, the Council will have the protection that they cannot be pledged to the outlay unless there is a sufficiently large actual balance in hand above all the liabilities; thus we can never get into debt, and shall have an inducement to exert ourselves to extend the Association. One of my rules provides that in case any gentlemen should in any way make the Council liable for a debt without authority, those gentlemen shall take upon themselves the responsibility. I think also that it would be a very wholesome rule that every month we shall have a financial statement of the position of the Association laid before us, especially as our contemplated expenses are heavy. I therefore move that these four rules be adopted:—

XXA.—That no debt or liability to pay any sum of money be incurred, nor any contract or engagement whatsoever be entered into, by or on behalf of the Association, or the Council thereof, unless the same shall first have been submitted to the Council at some monthly meeting, and sanctioned by a resolution of the majority of the members present thereat.

XXB.—That no such debt or liability, contract or engagement be sanctioned by the Council unless it shall appear from the statement of the Treasurer's account that, after making deduction for all liabilities then existing, a sufficient balance shall be actually in his hand to meet the expenditure proposed to be incurred.

XXC.—That if any debt or liability be incurred, or any contract or engagement entered into contrary to the foregoing rules, then the person

* Has there been a full consideration of the point whether this is the most suitable locality for offices, far from any railway station? Ought the Committee, before deciding, to be limited to the choice of one or two places offered it by chance, whereas by advertising once in two or three daily papers many offers might be made? Might not the neighbourhood of Charing-cross be more mutually accessible to West-end and East-end London Spiritualists?—Ed.

or persons so incurring or entering into the same, shall be personally liable for the discharge and satisfaction thereof.

XXD.—That a statement of the financial position of the Association be laid before the council at every monthly meeting.

The Chairman said that the rules should be taken separately.

Mr. Glynes accordingly moved that the first rule be adopted, and this was seconded by Mr. Martin Smith.

Mr. George King and Mr. E. D. Rogers thought the object in view in proposing the rules to be a good one, but that the words "nor any contract or engagement whatever be entered into," also the words "at some monthly meeting," should be struck out, otherwise every bill would have to be brought before the Council first, and a committee authorised by the Council to spend a certain sum, say in getting up a *soiree*, could do nothing.

A long discussion followed, in the course of which Mr. Martin Smith moved the adoption of an addition to the rule, in harmony with the ideas of Mr. Rogers.

Mr. Rogers said that as shortening it came to the same thing, he thought that the best course to adopt.

The Chairman thought the rule to be a good one; without it somebody might pledge the Association to a large amount, so that a man of substance, like Mr. Strawbridge, might wake up some fine morning and find people coming to "squeeze" him.

A division took place, in which seven voted for the amendment of Messrs. Rogers and King and five against it. The amendment was consequently carried.

Mr. Glynes then moved that the Rule XXb be adopted.

Mr. G. N. Strawbridge seconded the motion and said: I was the originator of the substance of the rules, on which I consulted my friend Mr. Glynes, and took advantage of his professional legal knowledge; I regret that the whole of them have not been put because I think that you cannot alter one without impairing the rest, and I was glad to see that the first was seconded by an able man of business like Mr. Martin Smith. I appeal to every man of business whether the rules do not speak for themselves, and ought not to be carried as they are? I have had only too much experience on the Stock Exchange how dangerous it is to belong to any Association where there is a possibility of the members incurring liability.

Mr. E. T. Bennett thoroughly approved of the principles enunciated by the mover and seconder, but thought that the rule in the form put would not be workable; for instance, under it they could not take the lease of premises at £100 a year for seven years, without having £700 actually in hand, although the annual income of the Association might be amply large enough to clear the rent. Could not the rule be modified to meet a case of that kind?

Mr. Martin Smith thought the rule would be a stone round the neck of the Association; it was too stringent, too hard and fast. They must trust a little to the good sense of the Council. He would move an amendment that the Council should call a special meeting before incurring any special liability; thus all the members would have notice of it, and time to think it over; the Council then could not be carried away by excess of zeal, nor in the warmth of the moment, urged by some good speaker, do something to be regretted next morning. He would move an amendment to that effect.

After some discussion the amendment was not pressed, but another adopted, namely, that Rule XXb be struck out altogether.

Rules XXc and XXd were then adopted unanimously.

Mr. George King pointed out that the Bye-Laws arranged that the balance in hand should be stated at each meeting, but Mr. Glynes remarked that that did not necessarily show the financial position of the Association.

The proceedings then closed.

THE Irish police, disguised and in uniform, have watched the haunted house at Cookstown inside and outside, by day and night, without success.

OBITUARY NOTICE.—"Passed to spirit life, November 19, at her residence, 85, Islington, Liverpool, Lucy Ann, the wife of Mr. Archibald Lamont." Mrs. Lamont's removal will be much lamented by a large circle of friends, not less on account of her social and domestic virtues, than of her mediumship, which was of a high order; she was a trance speaker, a healer, and a personating medium. The funeral took place at Toxteth Cemetery, on Sunday morning, at nine o'clock, and was largely attended by friends connected with Spiritualism, as well as others. A profusion of beautiful flowers was strewn on the coffin and in the grave by the friends of the departed one.

Review.

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Eugene Crowell, M.D. London: Trübner and Co. New York: G. W. Carlton and Co.

THIS book, published last week in London, is a splendid addition to the literature of Spiritualism, equal in quality to Mr. Dale Owen's *Debatable Land*, but differing in kind. It is more a scientific than a theological work, yet in every chapter the spiritual manifestations recorded in the Bible are paralleled by those taking place now. The religious standpoint taken by the author is broad and liberal, and the philosophical portion of the book deals ably with questions of great interest to Spiritualists, such as the difficulty particular spirits have in communicating at particular times, through particular media, hence the comparative scarcity of good instances of proof of spirit identity. The author seems to be strongly attached to locality, for he appears not to know of the most startling manifestations which have taken place recently in England, or the discoveries elicited thereby, tending to establish general principles; he, however, republishes in full from *The Spiritualist* how some furniture was haunted at the residence of Mrs. Nosworthy of Birkenhead. Dr. Crowell publishes evidence to show that Sir Walter Scott was a medium; he also gives a good case of a blind boy becoming clairvoyant, another example tending to illustrate an important subject mooted in these pages some time since by the Baroness Adelmá Vay. There is a rich and well-selected store of records of spiritual manifestations, many of which occurred beneath his own observation, and many have never before been published; one of these, about a haunted house, is quoted in the present number of *The Spiritualist* for the benefit of readers in Cookstown and the North of Ireland, who are now learning "sermons in stones," after a manner never contemplated by the poet, and who cannot do better than to study with all diligence the book now under notice, as well as Mr. Dale Owen's *Debatable Land* and *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, published by Trübner and Co.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DEFIED BY SPIRITS.

GREAT DISTURBANCES BY SPIRITS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND.

SOME violent disturbances, evidently produced by a spirit or spirits, have been going on for a long time at the house of Mr. Allen, grocer, Cookstown, Ireland, and the power at work appears to be malicious. The following account of the occurrences is taken from the *Belfast News Letter* of Nov. 16th. The *News Letter* is the oldest and most important journal in the north of Ireland, and the property of the Mayor, Mr. J. A. Henderson. The report may therefore be considered to be reliable. Moreover, the narrative fits in with others of a like nature; only a few weeks ago we recorded some similar occurrences in America, and Mr. William Howitt once published a pamphlet full of authenticated cases of stone-throwing by spirits. Two or three years ago, we printed an account of stone-throwing by spirits at Peckham, in which case windows were broken over and over again, in broad daylight, under the eyes of the police:—

THE COOKSTOWN GHOST.

Cookstown has lately been singled out for the attention of a visitor whose freaks and doings have caused no little wonderment and curiosity. Were the time a little further advanced, the narrative of the manifestations which have so completely upset the ordinary tranquillity of the community might be

embodied in a fairly exciting Christmas story. It would abound with mystery and weirdness and incomprehensibility. The story, however, would lack the orthodox moral; it would be wanting in an end; the inexplicable would remain unexplained, for the simple reason that at present it admits not of solution. The stranger has not as yet made himself visible to any eye, but his presence is too obtrusively indicated by uncanny acts, to be either unnoticed or uncared for. The absolute identity of the unseen is, therefore, a matter of grave conjecture, public opinion being strongly divided as to whether he is a ghost, a spirit, or simply an atom of depraved humanity indulging in a fanciful and certainly much-to-be-condemned form of amusement. According to all preconceived notions of ghostdom, a form from that land of shades should assume a spectral, faintly-illuminated, human aspect, having a peculiar predilection for the witching hour of midnight, "when churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead." Such is not the case in this instance, for in no shape or entity is our unquiet friend ever observable, while neither cock-crow, the sun at noonday, nor the hush of twilight, exercises controlling power over his actions. If a ghost then he be, he has undoubtedly got a dispensation freeing him from all the thralldom of his kindred genus. By some, who have sufficient nerve and courage to become facetious on the subject, it is asserted that a spirit has broken loose from the mystic store-room of Mrs. Guppy—one which disdains the further confinement of dark *seances* and the undignified monotony of table-rapping. There are others again who are quite incredulous, and hem and haw, and hint and declare, that the thing is not so ghost-like or mysterious as it seems; that, in fact, if they just had their way Cookstown would soon resume its wonted serenity, and be no more troubled with this paradoxical, invisible apparition. Whatever the agent may be though, certain it is that the household selected for its scene of operations, has been put to infinite pain and annoyance. And not all the sympathy, and kindness, and assistance, of friends and neighbours are at all able to relieve them from their unwelcome guest, or prevent them from suffering unpleasantnesses which, seemingly trivial in themselves, are yet perfectly torturing in their recurrence and strangeness. The unknown is of the most evil and malign disposition, with a well-developed tendency to destroy and to revel in mischief pure and simple. If it be a ghost, or a spirit, at liberty to wander "fancy free," an unaccountable partiality is shown for one habitation, and a very petty, perverse propensity for interfering with the delf, the cooking and other domestic matters. In fact the spirit seems most at home in the kitchen, as if it were the shade of some departed scullery-maid, whom "habit's iron law" had compelled to return to earth, but whose sole remembered capacity was the smashing of the crockery-ware.

STONE-THROWING BY SPIRITS—A SHUTTER TAKEN DOWN BY INVISIBLE POWER UNDER THE EYES OF ARMED MEN.

The haunted house is situate on Old Town Hill, and is occupied by a Mr. Allen, who carries on a respectable business as a grocer. If not exactly in the sere and yellow leaf, Mr. Allen is somewhat stricken in years. Intelligent and candid in his walk of life, he has gained the esteem of all who know him; and the fact that he should be the object of such bewildering occurrences as have and are almost daily taking place, creates all the more commiseration, and a feeling very much akin to indignation, in the town. The manifestations of something unusual and untoward, first became noticeable some eighteen months ago. The phenomena were then mainly confined to breaking the windows. It may be thought there was nothing very extraordinary and ghostlike in such a procedure, but there was. When several panes were broken, and the how and means escaped attention, a strict watch was put upon the windows, but all was useless; the cause was still undiscoverable. Sometimes stones were used as the *media*, but by whom or what nobody could see; and more frequently again the glass broke, apparently of its own accord. Even the frames began at last to get abused, more especially at the rear of the house, and the strictest and most constant guard could make nothing of it. The house, by the way, is a small two-story building, with three windows behind, and the ordinary shop and front windows before. The yard is small, and surrounded by a wall ten feet high, from whence extend the open fields. All the glass at the back of the premises having been repeatedly broken, and every effort at protection avoided, one of the windows was barricaded with a shutter, to which was affixed a bell, in such a position that if the shutter were moved, the bell must ring. Men were also placed at each window with loaded guns, so that it was impossible for any individual to

approach without being at once observed and in their power. Notwithstanding this, the shutter was taken down, the bell simply noting the fact when it was accomplished, and that in such a gentle, tinkling monotone as to be almost unheard. In the front of the premises glass was broken with the same security and freedom from observation.

HEAVY STONES ROLLING ABOUT THE HOUSE—MOVEMENTS OF DOMESTIC ARTICLES.

Fear now commenced to grow into serious alarm, which in no way decreased, as other incidents, equally, if not more bewildering in their character, became of daily occurrence. Bowls took a fancy to rotate, with various degrees of swiftness, upon the tables, and then, as if smitten with the same idea of self-martyrdom, shot off at a tangent, ending sharply and for ever their symmetrical usefulness upon the floor. Coats, which formerly hung with all staidness and propriety upon their respective pins, now shivered and fluttered, as if seized with an ague, and again expanded in all their proportions, as if each were enveloping an invisible Falstaff or an aspiring Claimant. Hats took unto themselves wings, and bodily flew away. In sooth, the natural order of affairs in the house was completely deranged, and the more agitated became the inanimate articles, the more excited became, naturally enough, the members of the family. Every conceivable project that could be devised for elucidating these mysteries failed utterly in pointing out a cause which could be understood. Even the potatoes boiling in a pot on the fire became mashed, and leaped behind the fire. And when ten or twelve were entered for boiling, a tot up in a few minutes revealed the startling fact that several had altogether and unaccountably disappeared, though many pairs of straining eyes were watching with almost painful eagerness every motion of the immovable pot. Latterly, also, large stones, weighing on an average about three pounds or three pounds and a half, have rolled slowly down the stairs, bobbing with leisurely ease from step to step. These have been sometimes damp and wet with clay, as if just removed from a ditch or roadway, and at other times dry and clean, as if preserved from the weather for a considerable space of time.

ATTEMPTS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DISTURBANCES.

The following portion of the report shows that some have thought that the disturbances are greatest when one member of the family is present: possibly one or more members of the family may have medium power without knowing it, in which case the manifestations would be stronger when they are near:—

No persons have been in the upper portion of the house where such events have happened, and not the vaguest shadow upon which to found a belief in the collusion or complicity of any parties in the causing of them has been at all afforded. These manifestations will serve to show the cruel and persistent manner in which Mr. Allen and his family have been afflicted, [although they are far from exhausting the minor details of a system of persecution as vexatious and hard to be borne, as it is strange and unexplainable both in cause and result. The family consist of Mr. and Mrs. Allen, two sons, and a daughter. One of the male branches, a young man of twenty-two or thereabouts, resides constantly with his father, and is said to be an apt student of the art of legerdemain. Rumour will insist on mixing him up with the occurrences, but they have been known to take place when he was away working on the farm. Mr. Allen has ceased to accept, or even to listen to any interpretation or explanation of the facts. He is not by any means a nervous man, nor superstitious in his way of thinking; but, having seen these things occur, and being utterly unable to assert a reason for them, he would at the present moment be an easily manipulated disciple of the most ardent Spiritualist. The whole affair in its recital might seem quite a ludicrous matter, were it not for the very great pain suffered by those most concerned. That the people of the town are much excited by it, and anxiously awaiting its *denouement*, is unquestionable. The usual morning salute in meeting a friend is now invariably accompanied by the query, "Anything new from the ghost?" "Is all quiet at Allen's?" And not alone in Cookstown, but in all the district for miles round, the doings of the ghost are canvassed and criticised with the greatest interest. It has been shrewdly suggested that a Belfast detective might soon purge the premises of the spirit, but Mr. Allen scouts the possibility of such aid as not only useless, but absurd. Perhaps he is right, but in all human probability I think he is wrong. This being the

market day, the great topic was, of course, actively discussed, and theories beyond number asserted each as the true and particular explanation of the whole business. Meanwhile the ghost is not yet laid, but more of him anon.

THE SPIRIT WILL NOT SHOW HIMSELF—CHURCHWARDENS AND CLERGYMEN CALLED IN—THE INVESTIGATORS AT FAULT.

In the *News Letter* of Nov. 19th is a later account of the disturbances, in which the reporter complains of the invisibility of the spirit, not knowing that such seldom show themselves except at *seances* with a materialisation medium. A fortnight ago, Mr. Henry M. Dunphy, a gentleman well known in Irish as well as London literary circles, published an article in these pages about a spirit in Dublin, who was invisible to all but one clairvoyant.

The reporter makes a wild attempt to connect the disturbances with Dr. Tyndall, a gentleman of whose dealings with Spiritualism and general characteristics the *News Letter* displayed a remarkably accurate knowledge in leading articles during the late visit of the British Association to Belfast. At all events its readers have now good evidence of the neglect of duty of men of science (with a few honourable exceptions) in not investigating such facts:—

To say that we have a ghost amongst us, I think, not strictly correct, as nothing, not even any of those shadowy forms, flitting along through dark corridors, and disappearing in a solid wall, or sinking suddenly into the ground, which is the stereotyped programme of all respectable ghosts, nor any other approved "appearance," through the medium of which such unwelcome visitors are supposed to show themselves to mortals, has as yet been seen by anybody; but we are aware that an unseen agency is at work in our midst which defies all our efforts to unravel. We cannot even get a glimpse of a retiring figure in white; we hear no unearthly sounds, no blood-freezing noises; not even the rustle of an unseen garment; in fact, nothing that is said to indicate or designate the presence of a spirit from the world of the "departed dead." Some think it is not a ghost at all, but a conglomeration of atoms which became unmanageable in the hands of Dr. Tyndall during some of his experiments in Belfast; but that solution of the matter is considered doubtful.

Clergymen, doctors, elders, churchwardens, and business men, of all grades and degrees of ability, have tried their hand at lifting the veil, but all with the same result, leaving the matter as mysterious as they found it.

The general impression just now seems to be that the manifestations, as we have them, are the work of a satanic agency, evoked by some person or persons unknown; that the agent has now the whip hand of his employer, and that things are to go on as at present *ad infinitum*, or till a more practised hand reduces him to obedience. That this notion is gaining ground is not to be wondered at, inasmuch as, of the hundreds of mysterious things which have happened, not the most remote clue has been found to connect a single one of them with any human being; and the supposition that these were the result of human agency has long ago been discarded by the sufferers, and is fast dying out in the minds of the public generally.

When any one suggests that a clever trickster might, by a skilful manipulation, execute all that has been done and escape detection, that possibly a detective might be able to throw light on the mystery, or perhaps refuses to believe the possible intervention of Satan in such petty household matters, some of our wisacres look grave, make quotations from Scripture, not forgetting the witch of Endor, and instance multitudes of cases of a similar kind, as either coming within their own experience, or as related by their fathers or grandfathers, all corroborative of the possibility of these things occurring through supernatural agencies.

THE MALICIOUS NATURE OF THE DISTURBANCES—AMOUNT OF PROPERTY DESTROYED—A TEST MANIFESTATION WITH A SAUCEPAN AND POTATOES.

Be this as it may, during a period of nearly eighteen months the most unaccountable proceedings have been going on, and at the present time we seem to be no nearer a solution of them than at the commencement. During this time an immense quantity of wearing apparel has been cut up into fragments, said to be value for upwards of £60—in one particular case to the amount of £4 10s. One time a new hat would be cut

round and round, and found lying out in the street a few minutes after having been used, without the apparent possibility of any person having done it. Coats, trousers, vests, blankets, shawls similarly destroyed without a shadow of suspicion resting on any person. This continued at intervals till within the last two months, when the work of destruction assumed another form, which brought it into public notice. The window smashing then commenced—first the front windows were demolished, not all at once, but leisurely, generally one pane at a time. At first it was thought some miscreants were at work, but the premises were so closely watched that this idea was dismissed, and especially as the glass was frequently broken under the eyes of the watchers, when it would have been utterly impossible for the perpetrator to escape instant detection. Shutters were then put on, and the work of demolition immediately commenced in the rear of the house, and continued till nothing but the bare sashes remained. Several plans were tried to discover the supposed actors in these scenes; but, despite the presence of a watcher at each window, and the protection of shutters on the outside, the glass-breaking went on, and no clue obtained. Not even the prints of a foot or mark of any description could be discovered within a reasonable distance; in fact, the whole circumstances were of the most inexplicable description, and completely excluded the whole work from the bounds of human possibility. It is worthy of notice, at the same time, that the ghosts took exactly the same means to break the windows that an ordinary mortal would adopt—namely, by flinging a stone through it; but with this striking difference in the result—as a rule the fragments of glass were found on the outside, and the stone in the inside; in a few instances both in the inside, and in fewer cases still no stone could be discovered. This phenomenon, I think, would baffle the sagacity of even a Belfast detective to comprehend. Meanwhile, if possible, a darker mystery enveloped the proceedings inside. Of course the house was searched again and again—every corner minutely examined from roof to floor, but without the slightest discovery of a suspicious character being made. And, notwithstanding that the upper part of the house was thoroughly secured, and no means of communication with the outside practicable, sounds as of weighty bodies falling on the floor above have frequently been heard when all the inmates of the house were positively known to be downstairs, and when the place was examined with the view of discovering the cause, no signs of anything unusual could be seen. Stones, varying in size from a small paving-stone to one weighing twelve pounds, came downstairs at intervals, and at various times of the day, without apparently any greater impetus than what would be acquired by their own weight; and sometimes several have been found on the topmost step, piled up one on top of the other, so delicately balanced that the slightest touch would cause them to topple over. Where these came from is the mystery. About the stones themselves there is nothing remarkable. They are invariably such as might be found at any time convenient to the house, or in any old ditch in the fields adjoining. Eleven potatoes are counted into a pot, the lid tied down, and intently watched; but, behold, when the contents are examined, a few minutes after, only six are to be found. A crock of cream of its own free will and accord splits open without being handled, and the contents run out.

EXCEPTIONAL DIFFICULTIES IN INVESTIGATING.

It is said a spirit-charmer, when on the premises a few days ago, had a very important part of his pants cut away, and the back part of one of his boots lopped off in a twinkling. For some time the shop was free from the intrusion of this troublesome visitor, but now no corner is free from some disaster. Only a few days ago, a churn filled with milk was, for safety, locked up in the shop, and the keys taken by one of the members of the family to her bedroom. In the morning, however, the churn was found standing bottom upwards, and the floor covered with its contents. About the same time, a quantity of new cloth was cut up, so as to completely destroy it. The cuts had the appearance of having been done by a keen, long-bladed knife, forming clean wavy lines, passing through several folds at the same time. Scores of transactions of this kind might be enumerated, but the outline just given will afford some idea of the perplexing nature of the proceedings, and, so far, the perfect impossibility of elucidating them.

I need not say that these astonishing things are regarded with the utmost concern by the people of Cookstown, or that the universal feeling abroad is one of sincere sympathy with Mr. Allen and his family; for, however one may be inclined

to dispute the cause, the results are the same, and these undeniably point to an agency of some kind as malignant in design and execution as the parties concerned are powerless to understand or prevent its operations. One thing is certain. If these proceedings are being inflicted on a man who has the respect and esteem of all who know him, by human agency, it is a reproach on the town that the perpetrators have not been unmasked; and if by supernatural means, who will undertake to explain it? And now that the matter is fairly made public, it is possible some person may be able to advise us how to exorcise the Cookstown ghost, as we are heartily tired of its pranks, and would willingly make a present of it to Moneymore or any other neighbouring town which feels inclined for the attentions of such a visitor.

It is pleasing to see that the narrative speaks well of Mr. Allen and his family, for plenty of similar disturbances are on record, and in ignorant communities unjust suspicions against the chief sufferers have sometimes taken root; only a few weeks ago we published how similar disturbances took place in the presence of a poor scared child, who chanced to be a medium; consequently, the poor little girl, to escape persecution, threw herself into the river in the attempt to drown herself. Sometimes these manifestations are attached to places rather than to persons; the place is then said to be "haunted," and in several cases on inquiring into the history of the immediate locality, it has been discovered that a crime has been committed on the spot. See Mrs. De Morgan's *From Matter to Spirit* (Longmans.) We would not advise anybody to form a spirit-circle in the house, since a person possessing incipient mediumship might be injured by developing it near low influences. It might or might not be safe for fully developed mediums to go there; their own spirit guides should first be consulted as to whether they would be able to protect them from the power in the house. The simplest plan for Mr. Allen to adopt is, when they are rolling stones about, to ask them to give one knock for "No," three for "Yes," or to give raps at particular letters when he calls over the alphabet. Then ask them who they are and what they want. They should be dealt with kindly, and the investigation be carried on in a most serious and not a flippant spirit, for communion between the two worlds is a very serious thing.

Among experienced Spiritualists it is very generally believed to be a law that "the lower the spirit the greater is its power over common matter;" the lowest spirits sometimes use their power mischievously at their own idle pleasure, and sometimes use it for good purposes, under the guidance and instruction of higher and better spirits, by which good work they gradually raise themselves, and by working off their sins take a higher place in spirit-life, in accordance with the universal law of eternal progression.

THE LATEST NEWS FROM COOKSTOWN.

The Belfast News Letter of last Monday says:—

THE far-famed unknown continues to hold its revels in the same scenes, and from its activity, shows no symptoms of removing to greener fields or newer pastures, but bids fair to hold its present *locale* strictly in accordance with the terms of its first announcement—namely, for the space of a year and a day. By the way, this notice was affixed to the door of its habitation for the time being, and consisted of a slip of paper on which the handwriting bore an unmistakable resemblance to the calligraphy ordinarily done by an expert human hand. A wearing coat and a pair of boots were locked up for the night to make certain of their perfect safety for the next day's use, as far as lock and key could guarantee it. When produced in the morning, and examined, no marks of their having been tampered with were apparent. The owner, as any other person would do, I presume, thoughtlessly laid one of his boots by his side on the floor while he drew the other on; but lo! when he lifted it again, the upper part was cut away. The coat had been thrown on a chair to wait its turn, but when taken up was found to be minus a sleeve. The inference from this is, that so long as anything is well secured

it is out of danger, or when it is out of the reach of human hands the ghost does not hurt it. But most people reason about it in this way. Any clumsy ghost could perform the mutilation at its leisure in a room by itself, and secured against intrusion, but to cut and hack in broad daylight, and in the twinkling of an eye, shows the exalted grade of the unearthly visitor. This is no skulking, cowardly ghost, that is only fitted for a paltry hole and corner business, but a chief among his fellows, a master in his line, who could cut off an eyebrow and you looking at him without knowing that anything has happened.

A very simple but, as it turned out, not efficacious plan was suggested by an old woman, a few days ago, to prevent the stones from making a promenade of the stairs. To effect this desirable object she affirmed that it was only necessary to reverse the operation—namely, by throwing one of them up again, when she hoped it would vanish into thin air at the top of the stairs—a preliminary incantation, of course, preceding the performance. Some party, however, who disbelieved in the virtue of the charm prepared warm work for her by heating the stone, and the instant she touched it she declared it was not five minutes out of the pit. The rest of the work remains unfinished.

Meanwhile, up to the time I write, the work of destruction proceeds as vigorously as ever, setting at complete defiance all efforts to discover the cause. A slight rustle is heard in the sitting-room, and it is discovered that a pair of window curtains is destroyed, as if a handful had been torn from the middle of each. A hat is laid down, and in a few minutes it is found with the brim cut through to the band, and torn away on each side. A pair of boots is missing, and discovered in the garden hacked into pieces. The natural consequence of the continuance of this miserable business is that people seem to be relapsing into old superstitious notions of a hundred years ago. Old ghost stories that used to entertain our grandfathers when they were children are revived and circulated, and children run from the deepening gloom of the evening and take up their stations in the chimney corner. Only a short time ago such books as "Cornelius Agrippa" were supposed to have become completely obsolete, and, indeed, when mentioned at all, their existence at any time was by many considered extremely doubtful; but now it is somewhat astonishing to see the numbers of hard-featured, squint-eyed old fellows who appear in town, and not only admit that they have seen the book and read it, but even profess to know by means of it how the ghost might be laid by the heels. They confidently say it is evidently some person very young in the science of spirit-rapping, who, though successful in evoking the spirit, has not sufficient experience to compel its return to the precincts of its own dominions.

The small party who still stick to the opinion that other than ghostly agencies are at work are getting into disrepute, and the feeling is strengthening that it is unsafe to jest about so serious a matter, or to make any remarks derogatory to the character of a depraved spirit. In the face of this, nevertheless, the chairman of a meeting, consisting of nearly one thousand individuals, a few nights ago, had the temerity to state publicly that if he had possession of the house for one week, he would undertake to purge it of its present visitor. Yet the manifestations are so confounding on the one hand, and the disposition to shrink from the belief that any wicked man may carry out a scheme of revenge by raising up a spirit from the land from whose bourne, it is said, no traveller returns, that another section of the community are just on the balance, ready to renounce their former cherished opinions, or to see them confirmed beyond dispute. Hence the great interest felt in the issue of the present unparalleled proceedings in this part of the country.

LECTURE BY MRS. JACKSON.—Last Sunday night Mrs. Jackson lectured at Doughty Hall, Bedford-row, Holborn, on "The Origin of Evil." She argued that evil was a negative force, tending to spur mankind to exertion, the result being the gradual amelioration of the condition of society. She argued that, as St. Michael once slew the dragon, the representative of the principle of evil, in like manner would evil be finally overcome. She reviewed the present position of English society, of the war between capital and labour, arguing that society had entered upon a revolutionary stage, upon a time of suffering, and that revolutions were not likely to be extinguished by rose-water. Mr. Whitley presided. Lectures in connection with Spiritualism are given at the Doughty Hall every Sunday evening at seven o'clock, admission free.

THE INVESTIGATION OF THE COOKSTOWN SPIRITUAL DISTURBANCES.

DURING the last visit of the British Association to Belfast, it was published that Professor Tyndall and Mr. Herbert Spencer contemplated taking steps to form a psychological society, but the plan was not carried out. However, Dr. McCann read a paper before the Anthropological Department, recommending the establishment of a Psychological Sub-section, on the ground that at present sufficient opportunity was not granted for the consideration of psychological subjects; the general feeling, however, was that such a step was not necessary. When Mr. F. W. Rudler reported this decision to the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland a few days ago, the verdict of the Belfast Department was applauded. Further, Professor Tyndall, in his opening address at Belfast, told the audience that he knew what Spiritualism was, by summing it up in a statement to which he stands fully committed as a scientific man, especially as it was uttered in the most responsible hour of his life. Seeing, then, that the most eminent scientific men of the day know all about it, the mayor of Cookstown and its inhabitants, in public meeting assembled, should call upon them for a categorical explanation of all the facts. If the philosophers require to see them, well and good. Let a committee be appointed. It might consist, say, of Professor Tyndall, who claims to have produced artificial spiritual manifestations by means of his whiskers and a wine-glass; Dr. Carpenter also might act, since he is noted for his modesty, and the accurate way in which he describes experiments to Chelsea audiences. Professor Clerk Maxwell has deeply studied the question why the wind does not blow through the thousands of minute holes in all woven fabrics, so he might be thrust into the house first by his colleagues, to face the invisible cloth-cutter, whilst the others observe through telescopes what takes place, and record the readings by the aid of cathetometers and chronometers. Professor Busk should not be forgotten, since he is president of the Anthropological Institute, and, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, once made, in his official capacity, a violent attack on "the people called Spiritualists;" Colonel Lane Fox should be added, since he has confessed that he could not account for the raps made through Mrs. Bassett's mediumship at the house of Lady Paulett; he likewise once candidly confessed to a Belfast audience that he did not mind admitting that "Christianity is not a kettle of fish," so he understands things theological. Professor Herschel and Professor Everett should not be forgotten, for the one has studied the meteoric hot stones of the heavens above, and the latter the hot stones of the earth below, so that it is to be hoped they will find ready to their hands the hot stones of the old woman of Cookstown. Professor Andrews should be added to the list, since he is the principal of Queen's College, Belfast; he is of scientific eminence, chiefly in consequence of having proved himself cleverer than anybody else in checking the levity of spirits by compressing them in tubes; his testimony will be well received in the locality, for all his orations are constantly interrupted by rounds of applause, according to all records of the *Belfast News Letter* reporters, who not being clairaudient mediums, take down only sounds which reach the ears of Belfast people, whilst these ears are in their normal condition. There is nothing to be said against this Committee, since

several of the proposed members have given the most authoritative public decisions on psychological subjects, and not one of them is a Spiritualist. Mr. Henderson, the Mayor of Belfast might be added, to bring common sense to the investigation; if the old woman of Cookstown pointed out a hot stone to any of the others, they might perchance be hampered by scientific theories; they might question whether the stone were actually before their eyes, or—like Bishop Berkeley and Professor Huxley—whether a series of impressions were reaching the consciousness of each in a certain order, so that no material stone might really be there at all. While they were thus "scientifically investigating," as it is humorously called—and the term has an awe-striking effect on the populace—the Mayor would put the stone in his coat-tail pocket, and look out for more. Evidently, the people of Cookstown cannot do better than to call upon the Professors at Queen's College and elsewhere, for an explanation of the phenomena; and what their report may lack in clearness, may possibly be compensated for by the learned words it will contain, the confusion as to the nature of the Cookstown disturbances it will produce in the minds of the vulgar, and the idea it will give to the general public of the immense learning of its authors, which, after all, is the great point to be achieved.

PRIVATE SPIRIT CIRCLES.—A correspondent writes from a large provincial town:—"I find private mediums and circles are getting very 'chary,' and it is now very difficult to get an entrance into any circle, even if you are well known as a friend." This is the case everywhere, and is the natural effect of the persecution of several non-professional mediums, who neither in their own homes nor out of them have found themselves safe from the onslaughts of outsiders on whom they conferred benefits out of kindness. A great deal in the shape of remarkable spiritual manifestations is going on in strict privacy. It does not do to let the phenomena develop too fast in public, but time must be allowed to permit the general public to grow up to and verify the stages already attained.

MRS. TAPPAN'S LECTURES.—Mrs. Tappan's inspirational lectures at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, Regent-street, every Sunday evening, at seven o'clock, are deeply interesting. She is under spirit control, and when all the conditions are good, Mrs. Tappan bursts into torrents of eloquence, and utters impromptu poems worthy of Shelley; take, for instance, the poem, "Beautiful White Mother Death," reported some time ago in these pages; or the depth of thought in the poem, "Creation," printed a fortnight ago. The lecture committee has done good service to the cause of Spiritualism by engaging Mrs. Tappan, who otherwise would have returned to America, and it should be well supported in its efforts. The judicious and pleasing nature of Mrs. Tappan's lectures renders them the best to be brought under the notice of inquirers who have seen nothing of public trance speaking, as they always make a pleasing impression.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION SOIREE.—Next Thursday the *soiree* of the British National Association of Spiritualists will be held at the Co-operative Hall, Castle-street, Oxford-street, and particulars relating to it are given in the advertisement on the front page. Its object is to afford Spiritualists an opportunity of uniting in social harmony, for the promotion of friendly feeling, so nothing much will be done in the way of business; the fault of *soirees*, hitherto, having been that there has been by far too much platform speaking. Dr. Gully will deliver an address, and as he seldom speaks in public, and has always something to say worth hearing, many will doubtless attend on that account. Perhaps one or more other speakers may address the meeting. The rates of admission are very cheap, to suit everybody, and there will be no evening dress. Some good music has been volunteered, and there will be long intervals between the various pieces, for conversation. Some objects of interest will probably be exhibited, but it is not yet exactly known of what nature. Mr. Harrison will probably exhibit some beautiful specimens of work, by artists who will take part in illustrating the proposed new spiritual periodical.

SPIRITUALISM IN HOLLAND.

MR. MALCOLM TAYLOR writes to us from Amsterdam, of the progress of Mr. Bastian and himself on the Continent:—

"We have met with splendid success here among the Dutch, and, finding a wide field, have sown to the best of our abilities the good seed that will no doubt in time bring forth a harvest.

"We have given *seances* almost every evening at some one or other of the largest cities, and find the minds of the people very much interested in the philosophy and phenomena of Spiritualism. The believers (or knowers, I should say) of its truth are also many, some having been acquainted with the workings of the spirit for forty years back.

"We find the literature of Spiritualism, especially the publications in French and German, read and circulated extensively; the English not so much, Mr. Riko being the only one we know of who takes the English periodicals.

"They have a great many mediums developing in their midst, writing and healing ones principally, with two or three possessing physical powers, and who get tangible demonstration. The friends we find very hospitable and kind-hearted to us, and zealous in the furthering, by their efforts, the good cause. We remain here a week longer, then return to our head quarters, the Hague, and finish up there.

"We shall go thence to Arnheim, and will stop there a week or two, and shall give a *seance* or two in the neighbourhood, then go to Brussels, where we expect to remain about a week.

"We shall then go on our intended trip up the Rhine, stopping, perhaps, but not for certain, at Wiesbaden, Prince Wittgenstein, to whom we had written, having answered that he would be away.* We shall return, *via* Paris (stopping there a day or two), then back to London. We have had many wonderful manifestations at our *seances*, which we desire others to speak about, as we understand they intend to do.

"We are both enjoying the strange sights which come before us in our travels, and with the exception of Mr. Bastian being weak with the exhaustion of constant sitting, we keep good health."

LAST Monday night Dr. George Sexton gave an intellectual and interesting lecture in Brighton on the subject of Spiritualism.

DR. MONCK writes:—"I have, in response to the advice of friends, decided to settle in London, and have rooms where I can hold *seances* at any time." He intends giving daylight *seances*, in addition to accepting evening engagements.

THE ILLUSTRATED SPIRITUAL PERIODICAL.—"I have received many letters from Spiritualists, unanimously and strongly expressing the opinion that the proposed periodical is a desirable thing, and for the good of the movement. During the last three days, orders for it have been coming in steadily, the general demand being for quantities of one, two, or three each person. Several English friends are now incurring very heavy and necessary expenses in establishing a permanent place of meeting in London for Spiritualists, and it is not desired that they should incur more over the proposed magazine, therefore it is to be hoped the general public at home and abroad will take up the matter; the periodical will not be wholly devoted to home purposes, but will attempt also to meet the wants of Spiritualists residing on the Continent, in America, in Australia, and other parts of the world, so these are requested to remember the expenses our home capitalists are now incurring, from which they will receive benefit through the records given in *The Spiritualist*. Messrs. Chapman and Lamont, after careful consultation, have decided that the idea is good, and have resolved to work among the Spiritualists of Liverpool to help to carry out the plan. I have many particulars of interest to give, as well as a list of subscribers, but *The Spiritualist* has such pressure on its space this week, that these must be deferred till the next number. In the mean time the public are requested to respond by sending in all the orders possible.—WILLIAM H. HARRISON, 11, Ave Maria-lane, London, E.C."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MANY letters are kept over for want of space this week.

ALL the letters received for publication on the subject of the article we recently imprudently printed without comment, have been given in these pages. There was, however, one private one from Miss Hay in favour of the article, which she said might be published if we liked.

* Prince Wittgenstein is now in Switzerland.—Ed.

A SPIRITUALISTIC FUNERAL.

MR. WILLIAM BONE, a visitor to Brighton, and a member of the Spiritualistic body, died on the 18th inst., in the 40th year of his age, and was yesterday buried in the Brighton extra-mural cemetery. The deceased's body was conveyed to the cemetery in a gothic funeral car. Upon this car was the black coffin, covered with a velvet pall, upon which a crimson cross was placed. The car was followed by two mourning coaches, in which were Messrs. Gill, Bray, Dexter, Dr. Stowell, the Rev. Dr. Monck, Mrs. Bone (widow of the deceased), and Mrs. Bray. The gentlemen who took part in the ceremony wore as mourning white gloves and violet neckties, and the hatbands worn by the bearers were also white. At the cemetery several other well-known Spiritualists fell in at the rear of the carriages. A chapter from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians was read, a hymn was sung, and Dr. Monck read a long address. The procession was then reformed, and proceeded to the grave, where the coffin was at once lowered, and, after the Lord's Prayer, the gentleman who was conducting the service committed the body, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." In a trance state, a further address was then delivered by Dr. Monck. The mourners present having cast chaplets of flowers upon the grave, the ceremony ended with the benediction. The inscription upon the coffin was as follows:—

In Memoriam.—William Bone, Brighton, passed away to the Spirit-world, November 18th, 1874, aged 40 years.

"There is no death—what seems so—is transition!

This life of mortal breath

Is but a suburb of the life alysium,
Whose portal we call death."

LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On Sunday last, November 22nd, Dr. William Hitchman again performed the duties of platform speaker at the Liverpool Society, both afternoon and evening, to large and respectable audiences, especially on the latter occasion. The subject of the first discourse was "On the Relations of Spirit and Matter," and the second was called "Man—whence, where, whither?" The afternoon visitors, it is hoped, received some not unexpected accessions to their previous knowledge of atoms, molecules, matter, force, protoplasmic energy, rhythmic vibrations of brain, and electricity of the nervous system, together with animal magnetism. The subsequent assembly of auditors was treated to a philosophical demonstration of the *potential* of our very selves—without atomic weights—here and elsewhere, brought within human ken, scientifically, by the facts and phenomena of Spiritualism. Dr. Hitchman has now given more than one hundred lectures on spiritual science, or philosophy, without fee or reward.

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REVUE SPIRITE, Journal d'études psychologiques, fondé par Allan Kardec, appears on the 1st of every month. Price, 1 franc. Published by the Société Anonyme, 7, Rue de Lille, Paris. Post Office orders payable to M. Leymarie.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND, by BENJAMIN COLEMAN. The author gives some important facts connected with the early movement in this country which he was identified, and an account of some of the most remarkable of his personal experiences. E. W. Allen, Ave Maria-lane; George Farmer, 4, Kingsgate-street, Holborn. Price One Shilling.

TO SPIRITUALISTS, BOOKSELLERS, AND NEWSAGENTS.

J. C. ASTON, WHOLESALE AND RETAIL BOOKSELLER, STATIONER AND PUBLISHER, Agent for the Sale of *The Spiritualist*, 39, Smallbrook-street, Birmingham, supplies the Town and Country Trade, on London Terms, with Periodicals, Stationery, and all Goods connected with the Trade. The largest Stock of Periodicals, &c., out of London. Agencies accepted for any Publications. Established 1842.

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MISS LOTTIE FOWLER, the GREAT AMERICAN SOMNAMBULIST AND CLAIRVOYANTE, whose reputation is well known throughout Europe and America, can be consulted on either Medical or Business Affairs connected with the Living and Dead. Hours 12 to 8 (Sundays excepted.) Terms, One Guinea. Address, 21, Princes-street, Hanover-square, two doors from Regent-street.

MR. CHARLES E. WILLIAMS, Medium, is at home daily, to give Private Seances, from 12 to 5 p.m. Private Seances attended at the houses of investigators. Public Seances at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, on Monday evenings, admission 2s. 6d.; Thursday evenings 5s.; and Saturday evenings, for Spiritualists only, 5s.; at 8 o'clock each evening. Address as above.

MRS. WOODFORDE, TRANCE MEDIUM & MEDICAL MESMERIST, will give Sittings for Development under Spirit Control in Writing, Drawing, Clairvoyance, or any form of Mediumship. Disorderly Influences removed. French spoken. At home Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Private Seances attended. Address, 41, Bernard-street, Russell-square, W.C.

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J. V. MANSFIELD, TEST MEDIUM, answers Sealed Letters, at 361, Sixth Av., New York. Terms, Five Dollars and Four Three-cent Stamps. REGISTER YOUR LETTERS.

MR. J. J. MORSE, INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER, is now on a Lecturing tour in the United States. He will return in or about the month of June next. All letters sent to the following address will be forwarded to him in due course:—Warwick-cottage, Old Ford-road, Bow, London, E.

DR. McLEOD AND SIBYL—MAGNETIC HEALING AND CLAIRVOYANCE—Are prepared to receive engagements as above. References kindly permitted to patients and others who have been benefited. By letters only, under cover, to W. N. Armfield, Esq., 15, Lower Belgrave-street, Piccadilly, S.W. Dr. McLeod is also prepared to receive engagements to lecture. Terms 2 guineas.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC COPIES OF THE ILLUMINATED ADDRESS recently presented by the Spiritualists of Great Britain to Judge Edmonds, of New York, may be obtained of Messrs. Negretti and Zambra, Crystal Palace, Sydenham. Price—Large size, 3s.; small size, 1s.

THE PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALIST AND FREE THOUGHT ADVOCATE, a Monthly Journal. Edited by J. TYERMAN. Price Threepence. To be had of W. H. Terry, 96, Russell-street, Melbourne, and all Australian Booksellers.

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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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