

# The Spiritualist

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### SPECIAL NOTICE.

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"He (Mr. Morse) dealt with the various theories set up against Spiritualism, and sometimes he stated his argument so well and became so eloquent, as to provoke rounds of applause from the audience. . . . As the lecture proceeded these demonstrations on the part of the audience became more frequent and prolonged."—*Glasgow Herald*.

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TO THE READERS OF "THE MEDIUM." ANSWER to William Howitt's Letter on the BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS. By ALGERNON JOY ("Iota.") Published by E. W. Allen, Ave Maria-lane. Price One Penny.

## BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

### THE 1874 CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS

Will be held in London (Lawson's Rooms, 145, Gower-street), from the 4th to the 7th of August.

#### GENERAL PROGRAMME.

*Tuesday, August 4th.*—Opening Soiree, to be held at Beethoven Rooms, 27, Harley-street, Cavendish-square. Tea at 6 o'clock. Chairman's address at 8 o'clock, on detailed arrangements of conference.

*Wednesday, August 5th.*—First session of conference, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Second session 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. Subjects for consideration: "Organisation and the Physical Phenomena."

*Thursday, August 6th.*—Third and fourth sessions at same hours. Subjects: Direct Voice, Writing, and Painting; Inspirational and Trance Speaking; Spirit Photography; the Influence of Spiritualism on Humanity—Past, Present, and Future.

*Friday, August 7th.*—Public Meetings at 3 and 6.30 at some place to be announced hereafter.

Mr. C. E. Williams will receive members and persons visiting the Conference for seances on *Tuesday*, the 4th August, between the hours of 12 noon and 6 p.m., at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, Holborn, W.C. Terms:—2s. 6d. each person.

Mrs. Olive will receive sitters on *Thursday*, the 6th August, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., at 145, Gower-street, Euston-road, N.W. Private sitting, 6s.; parties not exceeding four persons, 7s. 6d.

*Terms of Admission:* Soiree—Members' tickets, 1s. each; non-members, 1s. 6d. Conference and Crystal Palace Meetings, members free upon presentation of their card of membership; non-members 1s. to each session, or to each public meeting, or by 2s. 6d. ticket to the entire course. Non-members purchasing two 2s. 6d. tickets will have the privilege of nominating a person to be a member of the Association until the end of the current year.

The Secretaries will be in attendance at the soiree for the purpose of recording the applications of persons properly introduced to become members of the Association. These, upon payment of the Members' subscription, will be entitled to admission to the Conference and Crystal Palace Meetings free.

Tickets to be had of Miss Kinslingbury, 93, Clarendon-road, Notting-hill, W., and of the Editor of the *Pioneer*, 4, Kingsgate-street, Holborn.

**P**ERSONS willing to CONTRIBUTE PAPERS on the following subjects are invited to send their names to A. Joy, Esq., 25, James-street, Buckingham Gate.

1. The best means to be employed by the Association in promoting the organisation of Spiritualists.
2. The philosophy and purpose of physical manifestations.
3. The best conditions (mental, physical and social), for evolving physical manifestations.
4. The "Direct" Voice, Writing, and Painting.
5. Inspirational and trance speaking.
6. On Spirit Photography.
7. The Influence of Spiritualism on Humanity, Past, Present, and Future.

The papers must be sent to A. JOY, Esq., not later than Friday, the 31st July. All accepted papers to remain the property of the Association, unless specially agreed otherwise. Non-members contributing accepted papers will be elected Honorary Members for the remainder of the current year. No paper to occupy more than 15 minutes in reading.

T. EVERITT, Chairman, Conference Committee.

The BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS is formed to unite Spiritualists of every variety of opinion for their mutual aid and benefit; to promote the study of Pneumatology and Psychology; to aid students and inquirers in their researches, by placing at their disposal the means of systematic investigation into the now recognised facts and phenomena, called Spiritual or Psychic; to make known the positive results arrived at by careful scientific research; and to direct attention to the beneficial influence which those results are calculated to exercise upon social relationships and individual conduct. It is intended to include Spiritualists of every class, whether members of Local and Provincial Societies or not, and all inquirers into psychological and kindred phenomena.

## BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

PERSONS wishing to join the Association, and local Societies wishing to become affiliated, are requested to communicate with the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Louis Freeman, York-hill Farm, Loughton, Essex, of whom copies of the Constitution and Rules may be had upon application.

**E**AST LONDON SPIRITUAL MEETINGS.—LECTURES giving information about Spiritualism are delivered every Wednesday evening at 8.30 p.m., at Mr. Cogman's Lecture Rooms, 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile-end. Inspirational addresses every Sunday evening, at Seven o'clock. Admission Free. Supported by voluntary contributions.

### THE MANCHESTER ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

**A MEETING** of the active members and friends of this Association was held on Sunday, the 26th day of October, 1873, to take into consideration the best means to adopt for the consolidation of the society. A provisional committee was appointed, from which a sub-committee was chosen, to draw up a prospectus.

*The Objects of this Association are:—*

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

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

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

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

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

RICHARD FITTON, *Secretary pro tem.*

### THE ST. JOHN'S ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

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

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

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

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

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VOLUME FIVE. NUMBER FIVE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JULY 31st, 1874.

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The Membership Subscription is 1s. per Quarter, which admits to full fellowship, including use of books from the Progressive Library. Seances are held weekly, to afford members an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Phenomena. Members are assisted in the formation of new circles. A public meeting is held every Wednesday evening at the Hall of Progress, 90, Church-street, Paddington, at 8 o'clock.

## Review.

*Mohammed and Mohammedanism.* By R. BOSWORTH SMITH, M.A., Oxford. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1874.

THIS book consists of lectures delivered at the Royal Institution by Mr. Bosworth Smith of Harrow School, short reports of which lectures were published in this journal directly after their delivery. Although the lectures were in no way connected with Spiritualism—a subject about which the speaker appeared to have no knowledge—their contents were of great interest to Spiritualists, because, from beginning to end, they were full of information about the life and teachings of the great trance and clairvoyant medium, Mohammed. The special value of the author's method of dealing with the subject consists in the absence of prejudice, which is the distinguishing characteristic of his work; he by no means seems to consider it his duty to revile Mahomet and his teachings, simply because he was the founder of another religion to that which prevails in Western Europe. Mr. Bosworth Smith says that he "believes that there is a unity over and above that unity of Christendom which, properly understood, all earnest Christians so much desire; a unity which rests upon the belief that children of one Father may worship Him under different names; that they may be influenced by one spirit, even though they know it not; that they may all have one hope, even if they have not one faith." His position in relation to sacred books and the various religions which influence the lives of different sections of the human race, is that which is now generally taken by scientific men, by the leading thinkers of the age, and by Professor Max Müller and those other students who are devoting their attention to the comparative study of religions. In the following passages Mr. Bosworth Smith not only expresses his own opinions, but very fairly represents the position of the philosophical thought of the age in relation to the leading religions influencing the minds of men all the world over; he, in short, lays down as his guiding principle, "for the purposes of scientific investigation, religions must be regarded as differing from one another in degree rather than in kind." In defining his standpoint more in detail, he says:—

### THE INFLUENCE OF SACRED BOOKS.

In religion, as in external nature, the human mind is, as Bacon says, an unequal mirror to the rays of things, mixing its own nature indissolubly with theirs. And this relative element once admitted into religion at all, it follows that to divide religions by an impassable barrier into true and false, natural and revealed, is like dividing music into sacred and secular, and history into sacred and profane. It is a division convenient enough for those—the majority of the human race—who are content with an artificial classification, and who care for no religion but their own; but, for scientific purposes, it is a cross division, it begs the question at issue, and is as unphilosophical as it is misleading.

Nor do Sacred Books, whatever be the theory of inspiration on which they rest, lend to the religion to which they belong any distinction of kind; they fix the phraseology of a religion, and we are apt to believe that they also fix the thought. They do not do so, however. The poetic and literary terms thrown out, to use Mr. Matthew Arnold's happy expression, by the highest minds at the highest objects of thought, as faint approximations only to the truth respecting them, become enshrined in the Sacred Canon. They are misunderstood, or half understood, even by those who hear them from the Psalmist's or the Prophet's own lips, and in a few years the misunderstanding grows till they become fixed and rigid. Poetic imagery is mistaken for scientific exactness, and dim outlines for exhaustive definitions. A virtue is attached to the words themselves, and the thought, which is the jewel, is hidden by the letter, which is only the casket. If it be true that man never knows how anthropomorphic he himself is, still less do sacred writers know the anthropomorphism and the materialism which will eventually be drawn even from their highest and most spiritual utterances. How little did the author of the prayer at the dedication of the temple of Solomon—the grandest assertion, perhaps, in the Old Testament of the infinite power and the infinite goodness of God, His nearness to us and His distance from us—imagine that the time would ever come when it would be held that in that temple alone, and by Jews alone, men could worship the Father!

Christians may and must rise from an impartial study of the religions of the world with their belief vastly deepened that their Sacred Books stand as a whole on a far higher level than other Sacred Books, and that the ideal life of Christianity, while it is capable of including the highest ideals of other creeds, cannot itself be attained by any one of them. But the value of this belief will be exactly proportioned to the extent to which they have been able, for the purposes of scientific study, to divest themselves of any arbitrary assumption in the matter; and they must also acknowledge that it is possible and natural for sincere Mohammedans or Buddhists to arrive at the same conclusions concerning their own faiths. It is not easy to be thoroughly convinced of this, or to act upon it; for intolerance is the "natural weed of the human bosom," and there is no religion which does not seem superstitious to those who do not believe in it.

With many interesting points in the book we cannot now deal; it contains much about the influence of Mohammedanism upon Pagan nations, how it improves and elevates them, how it appears to be suited to their needs in raising them a little higher in the scale of development, and how it meets the religious wants of some of these where Christianity fails, just as the latter meets the wants of other seekers after truth, to whom Mohammedanism would be comparatively valueless. The mental and religious food which is best for any one individual is not necessarily that which is the best for any other, any more than the physical food which is good for men of one nation and climate is necessarily the best for another race.

#### PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS CRITICISM.

The most interesting parts of the book to readers of these pages are of course the descriptions by our tolerably unbiassed author, of the development of the mediumship of Mohammed, and the circumstances under which he gave his revelations. And it is most striking to notice how an intelligent man like Mr. Bosworth Smith is hampered and unable to fully grasp all the bearings of his subject, because of his want of practical knowledge of psychological facts. By arguments drawn from external sources he proves conclusively that Mohammed was no impostor, but is quite unconscious how accurately he is describing the phenomena of clairvoyance and trance mediumship, so that any Spiritualist present would know absolutely, and much better than the lecturer, that Mohammed was no impostor, even had the speaker advanced no argument on the subject at all. Just as the modern astronomer can verify or reject as unreliable certain eclipses re-

corded in ancient Chinese manuscripts, so can the Spiritualist to a great extent separate the true from the false in ancient records of spiritualistic manifestations. The conditions of spiritual existence are so different from those appertaining to material life, that spirits have to communicate to a great extent by the aid of symbolism, as explained in the works of Mrs. De Morgan and others; uninformed mediums and listeners accept literally much that is only symbolical, hence there is not a little error in many ancient records of spiritual manifestations, written in all good faith. When spirits were by powerful mesmeric influence controlling as well as they were able such sensitives as Samuel of old, Swedenborg, and Mohammed, so that they each believed themselves to be under the direct inspiration of the Almighty, as some mediums have done in our own day, it is quite as great a mistake to ascribe such phenomena to "fits," which is Mr. Bosworth Smith's explanation, as it is to ascribe them to imposture, as do his opponents, or to ascribe them to the Deity as did the mediums themselves. Some of the spirits who communicate through modern mediums prove their identity most satisfactorily, like the departed relatives of the Countess of Caithness, who returned and were photographed as described by her in the last number of *The Spiritualist*, and a vast number of similarly good cases of spirit identity have been recorded in these pages; still, in the majority of instances, spirits have not that complete control of the medium which would give them the power to prove their identity. There are mediums now in London who believe themselves to be controlled by angels and archangels, and all kinds of high and mighty personages, who most frequently talk twaddle, and sometimes show very bad taste in the mortal instruments they select for reforming humanity; but putting aside much that is grotesque, floods of inspired utterances equal to anything which ever came from the lips of the prophets or trance speakers of any age or nation, have been given through the lips of modern trance mediums. The *Prophecy of Vala* given through the lips of Miss Lizzie Doten, taken down in shorthand at the time, and printed in one of the earlier numbers of *The Spiritualist*, was stated to have been inspired by the spirit of Edgar A. Poe; at all events, it was a finer poem than he ever wrote upon earth. Some of the poems given by Mr. T. L. Harris while in the trance state, were equally fine. Mr. J. J. Morse is a young man who has had scarcely any education, yet many of his trance lectures are equal in force of logic and elegance of diction to the average of Royal Institution lectures, though some fall below that standard; we printed a fair average specimen last week. The inspirational poem by Mrs. Tappan, beginning, "Oh, beautiful white mother Death," once published in these pages, was worthy of Shelley. Inferior utterances often come from the lips of the same mediums, and the *Spectator* once reprinted from some spiritualistic journal some rambling incoherencies of Mrs. Tappan, which it is to be hoped came from an incompetent reporter and not from the spirits of the mighty dead, nevertheless, if the best of the utterances of these mediums were separated from the rest, as Mr. Bosworth Smith has brought the best of Mohammed's revelations into prominence, a close parallel might be drawn between the utterances of the best mediums of old, and the best mediums of to-day. And as Mohammed's revelations were written on fragments of wood and

sometimes pieces of mutton-bone, the worst of them may have been consigned to oblivion by his friends, just as some good angel in mercy ought a few days ago to have visited York, and blotted out with his tears some spiritualistic revelations about the nature of comets.

Here is our author's description of the beginning of the psychological experiences of Mohammed:

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOHAMMED'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Up to the age of forty there is nothing to show that any serious scruple had occurred to him individually as to the worship of idols, and in particular of the Black Stone, of which his family were the hereditary guardians. The sacred month of Ramadhan, like other religious Arabs, he observed with punctilious devotion; and he would often retire to the caverns of Mount Hira for purposes of solitude, meditation, and prayer. He was melancholic in temperament, to begin with; he was also subject to epileptic fits, upon which Sprenger has laid great stress, and described most minutely, and which, whether under the name of the "sacred disease" among the Greeks, or "possession by the devil" among the Jews, has in most ages and countries been looked upon as something specially mysterious or supernatural. It is possible that his interviews with Nestorian monks, with Zeid, or with his wife's cousin Waraka, may have turned his thoughts into the precise direction they took. Dejection alternated with excitement; these gave place to ecstasy or dreams; and in a dream, or trance, or fit, he saw an angel in human form, but flooded with celestial light, and displaying a silver roll. "Read!" said the angel. "I cannot read," said Mohammed. The injunction and the answer were twice repeated. "Read," at last said the angel, "in the name of the Lord, who created man out of a clot of blood; read, in the name of the Most High, who taught man the use of the pen, who sheds on his soul the ray of knowledge, and teaches him what before he knew not." Upon this Mohammed felt the heavenly inspiration, and read the decrees of God, which he afterwards promulgated in the Koran. Then came the announcement, "O Mohammed, of a truth thou art the prophet of God, and I am his angel Gabriel."

This was the crisis of Mohammed's life. It was his call to renounce idolatry, and to take the office of Prophet. Like Isaiah, he could not at first believe that so unworthy an instrument could be chosen for such a purpose. "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;" but the live coal was not immediately taken from the altar and laid upon his, as upon Isaiah's lips. Trembling and agitated, Mohammed tottered to Kadijah, and told her his vision and his agony of mind. He had always hated and despised soothsayers, and now, in the irony of destiny, it would appear that he was to become a soothsayer himself. "Fear not, for joyful tidings dost thou bring," exclaimed Kadijah. "I will henceforth regard thee as the prophet of our nation. Rejoice," she added, seeing him still cast down; "Allah will not suffer thee to fall to shame. Hast thou not been loving to thy kinsfolk, kind to thy neighbours, charitable to the poor, faithful to thy word, and ever a defender of the truth?" First the life, and then the theology, in the individual as in the tribe and the nation.

But the assurances of the good Kadijah, and the conversions of Zeid and Waraka, did not bring the live coal from the altar. A long period of hesitation, doubt, preparation followed. At one time Mohammed even contemplated suicide, and he was only restrained by an unseen hand, as he might well call the bright vision of the future, pictured in one of the earliest Suras of the Koran, when the help of God should come and victory, when he "should see the people crowding into the one true Faith, and he, the Prophet, should celebrate the praise of his Lord, and ask pardon of Him, for He is forgiving." Three years, the period of the Fatrah, saw only fourteen proselytes attach themselves to him. His teaching seemed to make no way beyond the very limited circle of his earliest followers. His rising hopes were crushed. People pointed the finger of scorn at him as he passed by: "There goeth the son of Abdallah, who hath his converse with the heavens!" They called him a driveller, a star-gazer, a maniac-poet. His uncles sneered, and the main body of the citizens treated him with that contemptuous indifference, which must have been harder to him to bear than active persecution. Well might he, to take an illustration suggested by Sir W. Muir himself, like Elijah of old, go a day's journey into the wilderness, and request for himself that he might die, and say, "It is

enough, O Lord; now take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers:" or, again, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, because the people have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I, only am left, and they seek my life to take it away." At times his distress was insupportable:

"And had not his poor heart  
Spoken with That, which being everywhere  
Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem all alone,  
Surely the man had died of solitude."

But out of weakness came forth strength at last; out of doubt, certainty; out of humiliation, victory. Another vision in which he was commanded to preach publicly, followed; and now he called the Koreishites of the line of Hachim together, those who had most to lose and least to gain by his reform, and boldly announced his mission. They tried persuasion, entreaties, bribes, and threats. "Should they array against me the sun on my right hand, and the moon on my left," said Mohammed, "yet while God should command me, I would not renounce my purpose." These are not the words, nor this the course, of an impostor.

Ten more years passed away; his doctrine fought its way amidst the greatest discouragements and dangers by purely moral means, by its own inherent strength. Kadijah was dead; Abu Taleb, his uncle, and protector, died also. Most of Mohammed's disciples had taken refuge in Abyssinia, and at last Mohammed himself was driven to fly for his life with one companion, his early convert, Abu Bakr. For three days he lay concealed in a cavern, a league from Mecca. The Koreishite pursuers scoured the country, thirsting for his blood. They approached the cavern. "We are only two," said his trembling companion. "There is a third," said Mohammed; "it is God himself." The Koreishites reached the cave; a spider, we are told, had woven its web across the mouth, and a pigeon was sitting on its nest in seemingly undisturbed repose. The Koreishites retreated, for it was evident the solitude of the place was unviolated; and, by a sound instinct, one of the sublimest stories in all history has been made the era of Mohammedan chronology.

The weakest point of the whole of Mr. Bosworth Smith's book is, that he seeks to explain away all the psychological phenomena miscalled miracles, although undoubtedly a certain proportion of them are real, and governed by fixed laws not yet understood. He argues that most of the alleged miracles of Mohammed were thrust upon him in the narratives of his followers, that they were not admitted to be facts by himself, and did not really occur. Of miracles in general he says, "An age which is capable of producing or receiving a new religion throws a mystic halo of supernaturalism round the supreme objects of its reverence. Even if the founder himself disclaims the power of working miracles, they will be thrust upon him with the most perfect good faith by the warm imagination of his disciples." Had he given a good account of the few miracles ascribed to Mahomet by the more intelligent of his followers, his book would have been of much more interest to the readers of these pages, who could form a much more accurate estimate of the value of the records than Mr. Smith. For instance, the latter would probably try to explain away as mere tradition the narrative of the handwriting upon the wall at Belshazzar's feast, whereas those who know the production of materialised spirit hands to be a very common manifestation at seances, and who have seen them frequently, would see no reason for discrediting the account because it recorded what the unthinking populace believe to be unreal phenomena.

In closing this brief notice of an interesting and ably-written book, the following passages about the poetical beauty of portions of the Koran may be quoted:—

#### THE INSPIRATION OF THE KORAN.

The vision of the last day, with which the eighty-first Sura, "the folding up," begins:—

"When the sun shall be folded up,  
 And when the stars shall fall,  
 And when the mountains shall be set in motion,  
 And when the she-camels with young shall be neglected,  
 And when the wild beasts shall be huddled together,  
 And when the seas shall boil,  
 And when souls shall be joined again to their bodies,  
 And when the female child that had been buried alive shall ask for  
 what crime she was put to death,  
 And when the leaves of the Book shall be unrolled,  
 And when the Heavens shall be stripped away like a skin,  
 And when Hell shall be made to blaze,  
 And when Paradise shall be brought near,  
 Every soul shall know what it has done."

Allusions to the monotony of the desert; the sun in its rising brightness; the moon in its splendour; are varied in the Koran by much more vivid mental visions of the Great Day when men shall be like moths scattered abroad, and the mountains shall become like carded wool of various colours, driven by the wind. No wonder that Labyd, the greatest poet of his time, forebore to enter the poetic lists with Mohammed, when he recited to him the description of the infidel in the second Sura.

"They are like one who kindleth a fire, and when it hath thrown its light on all around him, God taketh away the light and leaveth him in darkness, and they cannot see."

"Deaf, dumb, blind, therefore they shall not retrace their steps."

"They are like those who, when there cometh a storm-cloud out of heaven big with darkness, thunder and lightning, thrust their fingers into their ears because of the thunder-clap, for fear of death. God is round about the infidels."

"The lightning almost snatcheth away their eyes: so oft as it gleameth on them they walk on in it; but when darkness closeth upon them they stop; and, if God pleased, of their ears and of their eyes would he surely deprive them; verily God is almighty."

And at the end of the same Sura, which, it is to be remembered, appeared quite late in the Prophet's life, at a period when it might have been expected that the cares of government would dim the brightness of the Prophet's visions, we find the sublime description of Him whom it had been the mission of his life to proclaim, and which is still engraved on precious stones, and worn by devout Mussulmans.

"God! there is no God but He, the Living, the Eternal. Slumber doth not overtake him, neither sleep; to Him belongeth all that is in heaven and in earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His own permission? He knoweth that which is past and that which is to come unto them, and they shall not comprehend anything of His knowledge but so far as He pleaseth. His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the upholding of both is no burden unto Him. He is the lofty and the great."

Almost equally well, too, as a proof of his poetic inspiration, might have Mohammed quoted that other description of infidelity also produced late in his life, and pronounced by Sir William Muir and by Emanuel Deutsch to be one of the grandest in the whole Koran.

"As to the infidels, their works are like the Serab on the plain, which the thirsty traveller thinketh to be water, and then when he cometh thereto, he findeth it to be nothing; but he findeth God about him, and he will fully pay him his account; for swift in taking an account is God;

"Or as the darkness over a deep sea, billows riding upon billows below, and clouds above; one darkness on another darkness: when a man stretcheth forth his hand he is far from seeing it; he to whom God doth not grant light, no light at all hath he."

SOME time since, two lectures on Spiritualism were delivered by Mr. H. Venman, at the Pimlico Rooms, Warwick-street, Eccleston-square, and at the Grosvenor Working-men's Club, Buckingham Palace-road. These lectures, in which the author professes to view Spiritualism from a neutral standpoint, have just been published by Mr. Venman, in pamphlet form. His address is 20, Pimlico-road, London, S.W.

THERE is a physical medium at Castlemaine, Australia, who is known only to the public as "Mrs. P.," whose *seances* have often created lively interest both in Australia and England. The last news about her is in the *Harbinger of Light*, of May 1st, in which the recorder of one of her dark *seances* says:—"After sitting in silence for some little time, we were all startled by a loud crash on the table. Mr. P. struck a light, and there, to the surprise of all, was the iron wheel of a wheelbarrow; the wheel weighed some 16½ pounds, and before the *seance* it was lying in the yard at the end of the house."

## PREVISION.

MR. THOMAS R. HAZARD, of Vacluse, U.S., has sent us the following narrative:—

Herewith I send you a remarkable document, illustrative of the unusual gift of prophecy, which I have had in my possession for more than thirty years. As the seer, Joseph Hoag, was a widely known and greatly respected (not to say revered) preacher in the Society of Friends, there can be no doubt that the antiquity of the vision may be readily established by any one curious enough to seek for ancient copies among members of that religious body. It appeared in several journals in New England some time before the late cruel war, although I cannot point with certainty to any one in particular except the Providence (R. I.) *Herald and Post*, in both the daily and weekly editions of which I know it was published *verbatim* and in full, anterior to the year 1860, but how long before I am unable to say.

## "A VISION OF JOSEPH HOAG.

"About the year 1803, probably in the eighth or ninth month, I was one day alone in the field, and observed the sun shone clear, but a mist obscured its brightness. As I reflected upon the singularity of the event, my mind was brought into a silence the most solemn I ever remember to have witnessed, for my faculties were low, and brought into unusually deep silence. I said to myself, 'What can all this mean? I do not recollect ever to have been sensible of such feelings;' and I heard a voice from Heaven saying, 'This which thou seest which dims the brightness of the sun is a sign of present and coming times. I took the forefathers of this country from a land of oppression; I planted them among the people of the forest; I sustained them, and while they were humble I blessed them, and fed them, and they became a numerous people; but they have become proud and lifted up, and have forgotten one who nourished and protected them in the wilderness, and are running into every abomination and evil practice of which the old countries are guilty; and have taken quietude from the land, and have suffered a dividing spirit to come amongst them. Lift up thine eyes and behold.' And I saw them dividing in great heat. This division began in the Church on points of doctrine. It commenced in the Presbyterian Society and went through the various religious denominations, and in all its progress and close its effects were nearly the same. Those who dissented went off with light hearts and taunting language, and those who kept to their first sentiments appeared exercised and sorrowful; and when the dividing spirit entered the Society of Friends it raged in as high degree as any, and, as before, those who separated went off with a lofty look and censuring, taunting language, and those who kept their ancient principles retired by themselves.

"It next appeared in the lodges of the Freemasons, and broke out like a volcano until it set the whole country in an uproar for a length of time.

"Then it entered politics throughout the United States and produced a civil war, and abundance of human blood was shed in the combat. The southern states lost their power, and slavery was abolished. Then a monarchical power arose and took the government of the states, and established a national religion and made all societies tributary to its support. I saw men take property from friends to a great amount. I was amazed at all this, and heard a voice proclaim: 'This power shall not always stand, but with it I will chastise my Church, until they return to the faithfulness of their forefathers. Thou seest what is coming on thy native land for its iniquity and the blood of Africa, the remembrance of which has come up before me.'

"This vision is yet for many years, but it became such a burden that for my own relief I have written it.

"JOSEPH HOAG."

Admitting the authenticity of the entire record (of which I think there can be no doubt) the foregoing vision of Hoag probably furnishes as strong testimony in favour of man's possessing, under certain conditions, a gift of looking into the future further than his reasoning faculties have the power to trace cause and effect as almost any on record, not excepting Scripture. The details of the vision are set down not only exactly, and level with the simplest understanding, but so far have been fulfilled in exact order of time. There are thousands yet living who well remember when the first division in the churches "commenced in the Presbyterian Society," severing it in twain. Tens of thousands remember, too, when the Quaker or Friends' meeting was subjected to the same ordeal through

the preaching of Elias Hicks, the "dividing spirit" raging with such fury among the peaceable disciples of Fox that in some instances aged and venerable ministers and elders were torn from their high seats and hurled with violence upon the floor by opposing factionists.

Hundreds of thousands are now living who will remember the occurrence of the memorable event, long foreseen by Hoag, when, on the abduction of Morgan, the "dividing spirit" broke out like a volcano and set the whole country in an uproar of the wildest kind, arraying the two great political parties of the nation under the "Mason" and "Anti-Mason" banners.

Millions are now living who will remember when Hoag's "dividing spirit" first entered politics throughout the United States and produced a civil war."

Tens of millions of mourners for their slaughtered dead still survive to testify to the truth of the prophet's prediction, made more than half a century before the events were accomplished, in regard to the "abundance of human blood that was shed in the combat" through which "the southern states lost their power and slavery was abolished."

All these predictions have now become stereotyped history to the very letter, and are recorded in exact order of time. But yet the "people," so far from manifesting any signs of profiting by the severe inflictions, seem to be "running" with accelerated speed into every "abomination and evil practice" conceivable. God grant that Hoag's predicted woes in the future may not culminate in that worst of all forms of government, a priest-directed theocracy, towards which, I think, many signs of the times seem pointing.

Vaucluse, R. I., United States. THOMAS R. HAZARD.

#### PROFESSOR WILLIAM DENTON ARRESTED.

We learned recently from a paragraph in the San Francisco Cal., *Common Sense* newspaper, that Professor William Denton had been arrested in Sacramento "for giving an exhibition," and that "on the following day he was released on bail, and immediately left for the southern part of the State without paying the demand." The facts in the case—as we learn from a letter received in this city from a reliable source—are these:—Mr. Denton gave a course of geological lectures in Sacramento, charging the usual admittance fee. At the conclusion of the course, he was called upon to pay a license of 20 dols., which he declined, and consequently was placed under arrest, for—as the officer alleged—infringing one of the city ordinances, and incarcerated in prison. On appearing before a magistrate, Mr. Denton expressed a wish to see a copy of the city charter, which he carefully conned over, and then said to the astonished Judge that he (Denton) had been illegally imprisoned, as the charter did not contain a single word authorising the city to pass such an ordinance. Such being the fact, Mr. Denton was at once set at liberty, and left Sacramento to fill a lecturing engagement in another city.

Another account of this disgraceful affair, in which bigotry played a prominent part, is given below, from the *Daily Record*:—

"The imprisonment of Mr. Denton, because he refused to pay a city license for delivering a course of lectures, assumes very much the character of an outrage, and though the city collector, who caused the thing to be done, may shelter himself behind the ordinance, he is not excusable for taking a course with Mr. Denton which has never before been taken with any other lecturer, and which ought not to have been taken at all. That a scientific man who comes to give a course of lectures on the most important subjects should, after a decidedly unremunerative week's labour be baited by a blundering official, arrested as though he were a vagrant, and compelled to pass a night in the station-house, because, as he justly puts it, he refused to be robbed, is deeply humiliating to all who value the reputation of the city, and all who respect science and her exponents. Nor are we at all disposed to admit that the city collector kept within the line of his duty. We know that other lecturers—notably Canon Kingsley—have spoken here, and have not been called on for a license. We know of other cases where a license fee has been refused, and the collector has concluded that it would not pay to try to collect it. Why, then, was this dead set made against Mr. Denton?"—*Banner of Light*, July 4th.

CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS.—The use of the Crystal Palace for Friday, August 7th, having been refused, the place of meeting will be announced on Tuesday at Lawson's Rooms, and also in the next number of *The Spiritualist*.

#### MR. A. R. WALLACE ON SPIRITUALISM.

The following is an extract from one of the interesting articles on Spiritualism, written by Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace, and published recently in the *Fortnightly Review*. It is to the credit of Mr. Morley, the editor of that *Review*, that he has given a fair hearing to both sides of the question:—

Professor Huxley, in a letter to the Committee of the Dialectical Society, says:—"But supposing the phenomena to be genuine, they do not interest me. If anybody would endow me with the faculty of listening to the chatter of old women and curates at the nearest cathedral town, I should decline the privilege, having better things to do. And if the folk in the spiritual world do not talk more wisely and sensibly than their friends report them to do, I put them in the same category." This passage, written with the caustic satire in which the kind-hearted Professor occasionally indulges, can hardly mean that if it were proved that men really continued to live after the death of the body, that fact would not interest him, merely because some of them talked twaddle? Many scientific men deny the spiritual source of the manifestations, on the ground that real, genuine spirits might reasonably be expected not to indulge in the commonplace trivialities which do undoubtedly form the staple of ordinary spiritual communications. But surely Professor Huxley, as a naturalist and philosopher, would not admit this to be a reasonable expectation. Does he not hold the doctrine that there can be no effect, mental or physical, without an adequate cause? and that mental states, faculties, and idiosyncrasies, that are the result of gradual development and lifelong—or even ancestral—habit, cannot be suddenly changed by any known or imaginable cause? And if (as the Professor would probably admit) a very large majority of those who daily depart this life are persons addicted to twaddle, persons who spend much of their time in low or trivial pursuits, persons whose pleasures are sensual rather than intellectual—whence is to come the transforming power which is suddenly, at the mere throwing off of the physical body, to change these into beings able to appreciate and delight in high and intellectual pursuits? The thing would be a miracle, the greatest of miracles, and surely Professor Huxley is the last man to contemplate innumerable miracles as part of the order of nature; and all for what? Merely to save these people from the necessary consequences of their misspent lives. For the essential teaching of Spiritualism is, that we are, all of us, in every act and thought, helping to build up a "mental fabric," which will be and constitute ourselves more completely after the death of the body than it does now. Just as this fabric is well or ill-built, so will our progress and happiness be aided or retarded. Just in proportion as we have developed our higher intellectual and moral nature, or starved it by disuse and by giving undue prominence to those faculties which secure us mere physical or selfish enjoyment, shall we be well or ill fitted for the new life we enter on. The noble teaching of Herbert Spencer, that men are best educated by being left to suffer the natural consequences of their actions, is the teaching of Spiritualism as regards the transition to another phase of life. There will be no imposed rewards or punishments; but every one will suffer the natural and inevitable consequences of a well or ill-spent life. The well-spent life is that in which

those faculties which regard our personal physical well-being are subordinated to those which regard our social and intellectual well-being, and the well-being of others; and that inherent feeling—which is so universal and so difficult to account for—that these latter constitute our higher nature, seems also to point to the conclusion that we are intended for a condition in which the former will be almost wholly unnecessary, and will gradually become rudimentary through disuse, while the latter will receive a corresponding development.

Although, therefore, the twaddle and triviality of so many of the communications is not one whit more interesting to sensible Spiritualists than it is to Professor Huxley, and is never voluntarily listened to, yet the fact that such poor stuff is talked (supposing it to come from spirits) is both a fact that might have been anticipated and a lesson of deep import. We must remember, too, the character of the *seances* at which these commonplace communications are received. A miscellaneous assemblance of believers of various grades and tastes, but mostly in search of an evening's amusement, and of sceptics who look upon all the others as either fools or knaves, is not likely to attract to itself the more elevated and refined denizens of the higher spheres, who may well be supposed to feel too much interest in their own new and grand intellectual existence to waste their energies on either class. If the fact is proved, that people continue to talk after they are dead with just as little sense as when alive, but that, being in a state in which sense, both common and uncommon, is of far greater importance to happiness than it is here (where fools pass very comfortable lives), they suffer the penalty of having neglected to cultivate their minds; and being so much out of their element in a world where all pleasures are mental, they endeavour to recall old times by gossiping with their former associates whenever they can find the means—Professor Huxley will not fail to see its vast importance as an incentive to that higher education which he is never weary of advocating. He would assuredly be interested in anything having a really practical bearing on the present as well as on the future condition of men; and it is evident that even these low and despised phenomena of Spiritualism, “if true,” have this bearing, and, combined with its higher teachings, constitute a great moral agency, which may yet regenerate the world. For the Spiritualist who, by daily experience, gets absolute knowledge of these facts regarding the future state—who knows that, just in proportion as he indulges in passion, or selfishness, or the exclusive pursuit of wealth, and neglects to cultivate the affections and the varied powers of his mind, so does he inevitably prepare for himself misery in a world in which there are no physical wants to be provided for, no sensual enjoyments except those directly associated with the affections and sympathies, no occupations but those having for their object social and intellectual progress—is impelled toward a pure, a sympathetic, and an intellectual life by motives far stronger than any which either religion or philosophy can supply. He dreads to give way to passion or to falsehood, to selfishness or to a life of luxurious physical enjoyment, because he knows that the natural and inevitable consequences of such habits are future misery, necessitating a long and arduous struggle in order to develop anew the faculties, whose exercise long disuse has rendered painful to him. He will be deterred from crime by the knowledge that its unforeseen conse-

quences may cause him ages of remorse; while the bad passions which it encourages will be a perpetual torment to himself in a state of being in which mental emotions cannot be laid aside or forgotten amid the fierce struggles and sensual pleasures of a physical existence. It must be remembered that these beliefs (unlike those of theology) will have a living efficacy, because they depend on *facts* occurring again and again in the family circle, constantly reiterating the same truths as the result of personal knowledge, and thus bringing home to the mind, even of the most obtuse, the absolute reality of that future existence in which our degree of happiness or misery will be directly dependent on the “mental fabric” we construct by our daily thoughts and words and actions here.

Contrast this system of natural and inevitable reward and retribution, dependent wholly on the proportionate development of our higher mental and moral nature, with the arbitrary system of rewards and punishments dependent on stated acts and beliefs only, as set forth by all dogmatic religions, and who can fail to see that the former is in harmony with the whole order of Nature—the latter opposed to it? Yet it is actually said that Spiritualism is altogether either imposture or delusion, and all its teachings but the product of “expectant attention” and “unconscious cerebration!” If none of the long series of demonstrative facts which have been here sketched out, existed, and its only product were this theory of a future state, that alone would negative such a supposition. And when it is considered that mediums of all grades, whether intelligent or ignorant, and having communications given through them in various direct and indirect ways, are absolutely in accord as to the main features of this theory, what becomes of the gross misstatement that nothing is given through mediums but what they know and believe themselves? The mediums have, almost all, been brought up in some of the usual Orthodox beliefs. How is it, then, that the usual Orthodox notions of heaven are *never* confirmed through them?

In the scores of volumes and pamphlets of spiritual literature I have read, I have found no statement of a spirit describing “winged angels,” or “golden harps,” or the “throne of God,” to which the humblest Orthodox Christian thinks he will be introduced if he goes to heaven at all. There is no more startling and radical opposition to be found between the most diverse religious creeds than that between the beliefs in which the majority of mediums have been brought up and the doctrines as to a future life that are delivered through them; there is nothing more marvellous in the history of the human mind than the fact that, whether in the backwoods of America, or in country towns in England, ignorant men and women, having almost all been brought up in the usual sectarian notions of heaven and hell, should, the moment they become seized by the strange power of mediumship, give forth teachings on this subject which are philosophical rather than religious, and which differ wholly from what had been so deeply ingrained into their minds. And this statement is not affected by the fact that communications purport to come from Catholic or Protestant, Mahometan or Hindoo spirits. Because, while such communications maintain special *dogmas* and *doctrines*, yet they confirm the *very facts* which really constitute the spiritual theory, and which in themselves contradict the theory of the sectarian spirits. The Roman Catholic spirit,

for instance, does not describe himself as being in either the orthodox purgatory, heaven, or hell; the Evangelical Dissenter, who died in the firm conviction that he should certainly "go to Jesus," never describes himself as being with Christ, or as ever having seen him; and so on throughout. Nothing is more common than for religious people at *seances* to ask questions about God and Christ. In reply they never get more than opinions, or more frequently the statement that they, the spirits, have no more actual knowledge of those subjects than they had while on earth. So that the facts are all harmonious; and the very circumstance of there being sectarian spirits bears witness in two ways to the truth of the spiritual theory—it shows that the mind, with its ingrained beliefs, is not suddenly changed at death; and it shows that the communications are not the reflection of the mind of the medium, who is often of the same religion as the communicating spirit, and, because he does not get his own ideas confirmed, is obliged to call in the aid of "Satanic influence" to account for the anomaly.

#### THE 1874 CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE second National Annual Conference will be held next week in London, under the auspices of the British National Association of Spiritualists, and as announced last week, the proceedings will commence with a *soirée*, to be held next Tuesday evening, at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley-street, Cavendish-square, W., the scene of many an interesting gathering of Spiritualists in years gone by. As one of the chief objects of the *soirée* is to make London and provincial Spiritualists acquainted with each other, there will be little speech-making, but there will be some singing and music by performers of acknowledged ability, who have kindly volunteered their assistance. Mr. Benjamin Coleman will preside, and from his large experience of the early history of Spiritualism, culminating in the formation of the present powerful and exceedingly useful organisation, an interesting address may be expected, should his health permit; we regret to state that of late Mr. Coleman has not been so strong as formerly, and at first he did not accept the invitation to preside, on account of the state of his health.

Regrets have been expressed that the Conference should be held at a time of year when many London Spiritualists are absent from town. The reason the Conference Committee selected the present time is, we are informed, because many provincial Spiritualists choose this month for visiting the metropolis, and as a large number of the members of the National Association reside in the country, it was thought but right that some effort should be made to meet their convenience, and it is to be hoped that all will avail themselves largely of the advantages offered.

Probably the committee will discover that it will not be able to do much in the way of arranging *seances* in connection with the Conference. All the leading non-professional mediums have constantly far more demand for *seances* with them than they can meet, and the more powerful professional mediums are not only few in number, but have their time fully engaged at their current rates. Public *seances* with second-rate mediums, always disappoint those who attend, and bring down plenty of newspaper ridicule, as long experience has invariably proved; Spiritualists in Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and other towns, have found this to

be the case. Mr. Williams, who is a good physical medium, when in strong health and not tired can get two or even three good *seances* in one day, if he takes a long and complete rest between each sitting; next Tuesday morning and afternoon he will give *seances* at reduced rates to members of the National Association. In the evening of that day, everybody may look forward to a most enjoyable meeting at the Beethoven Rooms; indeed, the last *soirée* under the auspices of the National Association was the best assemblage of Spiritualists which had met in London for years, and the meeting having been convened by a disinterested body of leading workers, bound together by their love for the great cause, Spiritualists of all grades, and sections, and varieties of opinion, were glad of the opportunity to meet together in harmony. If the National Association could see its way to establish monthly *soirées* at moderate rates of admission, say one shilling each, they would be exceedingly popular, especially if more of a social than of a business character.

Many of the arrangements for the Conference will be announced from the platform at the *soirée* at the Beethoven Rooms.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

A FEW days ago a great capitalist told us that he had under consideration a project of bringing the Eddy family to England, if they could be induced to come, for the purpose of investigating the nature of their mediumship. But what would be the use of it? The alleged phenomena through the two chief mediums in the family are so astounding that if they proved to be true the said mediums would be persecuted in every possible way, and so would the witnesses who told the truth about them; if, on the other hand, the manifestations proved to be false, or the American descriptions of them exaggerations, the result would be eminently unsatisfactory. If any truth is brought before the world before the public mind is in a fit condition to receive the same, persecution is the inevitable result, and has been so since the world began; education has not yet reached the high level of enforcing on its recipients the duty of examining all new truths, and welcoming new facts of nature as blessings sent for man's benefit by the God who made them. This want of faith in the Almighty is the distinguishing characteristic of theological sects in these days, the various sects, for instance, having attempted to crush the truths of geology and astronomy in their infancy. The scientific world perhaps is more ready to observe and accept the divine truths of nature than other sections of English society; it has the perfect faith in God and His works which casteth out all fear, and is not afraid to follow wherever the truth may lead. Its inferior men have their creeds and dogmas, which prevent them from observing and accepting facts, Dr. Carpenter being an example in point as regards his dealings with Spiritualism; still, the shortcomings of particular individuals do not invalidate the truth of the principles under which they profess to act, and science claims to be founded upon indisputable facts and undeniable conclusions deduced from those facts.

The same moral laws are acting inside as well as outside the Spiritual movement. If manifestations much in advance of the average are developed before their time, the medium and the witnesses suffer. Even

in America, where the manifestations are so much in advance of those in England, some Spiritualists are abusing the *Banner of Light* for not venturing to print more about the Eddy manifestations, whilst others, who have not seen the manifestations, are censuring the journal for giving any credence to the narratives at all; hence, the unfortunate editor is between two fires, through no fault of his own. If this is the case in America, what would it be in England, where the general experience of advanced phenomena is less, and the persecution of mediums more bitter? A deeper spirit of kindness and charity prevails in general society in America than in England, perhaps in consequence of our land and law laws drawing nearly all the means of subsistence into the hands of a very few people, leaving the great bulk of the nation in a state of comparative destitution, thereby engendering a fierce spirit of competition, in which every man's hand is raised against his neighbour, and the land filled with an unhappy moral atmosphere, inflicting injury alike upon rich and poor. Material wealth is *not* the greatest source of individual happiness, as those who have had opportunities of observing the inner lives of persons in all sections of society can testify; but young people, influenced by the practical examples surrounding them on all sides, start in life on the unconscious assumption that the accumulation of wealth is the be-all and end-all of existence, although nine out of every ten now on the verge of the grave can bear witness, from experience, that the assumption is false. Happiness is much more evenly divided among all the ranks in the social scale than is generally supposed, although, in consequence of unnatural artificial laws having interfered enormously with the natural distribution of the means of subsistence which would have taken place under normal conditions, the whole nation suffers.

The conditions governing the rapid development of good spiritual manifestations are now well known, chiefly in consequence of investigations which have been carried on in connection with this journal. A good and truthful medium, known to possess great power, should hold *seances* regularly with five or six warm friends, all advanced Spiritualists, who by long experience understand conditions. Sight-seers and mere wonder-hunters should not be admitted, neither should inquirers, who ought to get over their early difficulties with less advanced mediums, whose time is of less value. The medium and members of the circle should be people who are bound together spiritually by the affections, who know that they do not cheat each other, and who do not worry the medium by wanting any physical tests of their own imposing, though an opposite course may be good with inferior mediums and inferior circles. Take the common case of the holding of hands at a dark *séance*, what does the fact mean? Either that the medium is an impostor, or that some persons sitting in the circle suspect an innocent person of imposture; in either case spiritual impurity is there, and in such a circle it is utterly impossible that the highest results can be had. There is another alternative, that the said test is imposed for the benefit of outsiders not present; in such case it betrays moral weakness, and an undue fear of the opinions of Mrs. Grundy. Let inquirers into Spiritualism work out the truth for themselves, and let not *seances* be deteriorated for the benefit of unknown persons not present; there are plenty of public mediums who can be tied, and sealed, and tested to meet the requirements of outsiders.

Manifestations like those in which the departed wife of Mr. Livermore returned to him in heavenly beauty at *seances* week after week, and wrote message after message to him in her own handwriting, and in which everything degrading and low in connection with powerful physical manifestations was absent, we hope for the sake of the religious development of Spiritualists cannot be had in any circle where the taint of spiritual rottenness we have described is to be found. A sceptic may say to the member of the superior circle, "How then do you know the medium did not cheat you?" The questioner need not be informed that the manifestations were far above the power of mortal man to produce, and infinitely superior in their physical test results to those ever obtained in the presence of the best public test mediums; he might simply be told—"Because this circle is wholly composed of persons who are incapable of deception, and the best results cannot be obtained under other conditions." This will give the inquirer something to think about; whether he believes it or not will be his own business, and need not trouble his informant.

These ideas embody what may be called the religious aspect of physical manifestations, and help to show that Spiritualism is not a low form of materialism, as some observers have argued not without some slight show of reason. The persons who hunger and thirst in their hearts for nothing but physical tests, can penetrate only a little way into the spiritual movement. Some such are utterly destitute of spirituality. If told of the Transfiguration described in the New Testament, they would at once think witnesses great fools that they did not tie the hands of the Medium with their girdles, mark his face with burnt cork, and throw a bottle of lavender-water over Moses and Elias to see whether His dress was perfumed afterwards. Had a witness of this nature been present, a high manifestation would not have taken place, nor shall we ever obtain the highest manifestations, without the formation of high-class circles.

The impossibility of reducing spiritual manifestations to nothing but physics and mechanics, is one of the best circumstances connected with them; there was a time when we thought differently, and wished to take Mrs. Mary Marshall to the Royal Institution, to cause Professor Tyndall's lanterns, and pans, and magnets to walk about before the audience whether he liked it or not. But, from long experience, having seen how the want of precision and the mental conditions governing spiritual phenomena lead on inquirers, teach them to test the spiritual integrity of each other, and pass them through a practical religious education of a high order, we are now glad that the revelation is kept only for those who patiently and arduously work for it, and are not infinitely superior in judgment to their neighbours in their own estimation.

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AMONG the papers to be read at the Conference next week will be one by the Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D., on "Spiritualism and the Church of England."

MRS. TAPPAN IN NEWCASTLE.—On Tuesday evening, last week, Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan delivered a trance lecture in the Lecture Room, Nelson-street, Newcastle, on the Origin of Evil. Mr. T. P. Barkas presided. The substance of the lecture was that most of the moral evils in the world were due to ignorance, and that not a few physical evils, such as diseases, were due to want of cleanliness and proper sanitary arrangements, so were also caused by ignorance. A somewhat lively discussion followed the delivery of the lecture.

## NATIONAL ORGANISATION.

ALTHOUGH much in connection with the subject of organisation has been well considered in the course of the formation of the National Association of Spiritualists, there is one fresh point well worthy of notice. The Spiritual movement is gradually becoming a very large one, and instead of its phenomena being confined almost entirely to private families and the home fireside, Spiritualism is just beginning to present commercial aspects, so that more temptation is presented to charlatans and impostors to try to ally themselves with it than was once the case. Without a central organisation there is no check whatever on such people; the public look to the Spiritual journals for information, but it is not the province of newspapers to investigate their doings, to take action against them, or to establish a police department on behalf of Spiritualists.

For example, some time since when we exposed the fact that sham ghost pictures were being mixed with the real ones taken at Holloway; that the pictures were printed from negatives some of which had been elaborately worked upon by hand with cutting instruments, and which had originally been taken by a double exposure of the plate in the camera, persons published letters saying we should also have exposed all the accomplices who stood as sham ghosts, and were photographed. Why was it our duty to undertake all this legal and moral responsibility on behalf of Spiritualists? Had the National Association been in existence then, Spiritualists all over the country would have felt it to have been a great safeguard. As it was, this journal was abused for printing the truth about the sham ghost pictures. The editors of the *Spiritual Magazine* and the *Medium* "wrote up" the pictures as genuine, although they knew nothing whatever about photography, had never seen some of the manufactured pictures, and had never sent any competent or incompetent person to examine them on their behalf. Both of the said editors made speeches at public meetings in favour of their genuineness, and the editor of the *Spiritual Magazine* especially gave the photographer his warmest support by pen, press, and tongue. His argument was that nobody could tell what appearances spirits might put upon the negatives. Very true, but those particular negatives were never taken by one exposure in any camera, and had been mechanically worked upon with cutting instruments, so for a man ignorant of photography, who had not seen them, to print that they were genuine, was equivalent to a New Zealand savage who could not read, arguing that a copy of the *Daily Telegraph*, which he had never seen, was a specimen of spirit writing, although any competent person would know at once that it was printing and not writing. A national organisation would not only have nipped this discreditably unnecessary photographic contention in the bud, by investigating and certifying the facts, but would probably have exposed most of the accomplices.

These remarks are not intended to throw any stigma upon the *Spiritual Magazine*, which erred in the matter merely from incompetence, and to this day, the editor, who is a good and true worker in the cause of Spiritualism, believes he was right. Did he know the proof of another kind which his friend, Mr. Slater, holds about the manufacture of sham ghost pictures, he would print it at once, and not for a moment knowingly leave his readers in the position of recipients of false information disseminated through his agency. Another intimate friend of his recently published in the *Medium* not only that the pictures were shams, but that the photographer had been tempted to begin their manufacture by a "serpent." This interesting piece of news was not reprinted in the *Spiritual Magazine*, which abused us very much in a paragraph on its cover, for printing only two or three lines, saying that the accomplices who took part in the imposture ought to be publicly exposed,—a remark of ours with which all honest people will agree.

One word more. It has been published that this journal has been very hard upon the photographer for not keeping silence about him after having exposed the imposition, since he was tempted to do wrong whilst in depth of poverty, surrounded by great family troubles, so that he might have been allowed to retrace his steps. But it was the *Spiritual Magazine* which kept the matter alive; it wrote article after article, bringing against us the foul charge of traducing the character of an innocent man; we scarcely noticed more than one article out of two, and then usually only gave a short paragraph, as will be seen on reference to the back numbers of the two periodicals, so the *Spiritual Magazine* has

been entirely responsible for the prolonged references to the subject. Nay more, this journal alone has pointed out how the public may have a reliable guarantee as to the genuineness of the pictures produced in future by the mediumship of the photographer; he was recommended to ally himself with some respectable man in the same business, who would certify the genuineness of all the negatives taken. Further, Mr. Gilbert Tate, a very respectable photographer, of Cheapside, has published, that if any medium can get spirit pictures in his studio, he will guarantee the absence of trickery in the matter. Further still, the exposure of the "serpent" said to be at the root of the imposture, coupled with the remembrance of the unhappy circumstances of the photographer at the time, would cause a strong revulsion of feeling in favour of the latter, and bring under public notice the deeds of persons who have hitherto escaped altogether, leaving him to bear the whole brunt of the exposure. Unless forced, we are not likely to refer to this subject again, and it has only been brought up on the present occasion in consequence of frequent misrepresentations.

The National Association, composed of disinterested and independent Spiritualists, will be a great safeguard to the whole movement and to honest workers, but will be specially disliked by charlatans and impostors, who will sympathise with all attempts to retard its present very satisfactory progress.

## A SOMERSETSHIRE MEDIUM IN AMERICA.

An article by Mr. F. H. Richards, published in the *Banner of Light* of July 11th, gives the following particulars about the mediumship of Mrs. Clara V. Dole:—

The subject of our sketch is the daughter of Samuel Blasdale and Ann Parr, and the fifth in a family of eight children, six of whom are now living. She was born at Chard, Somersetshire, England, Feb. 21st, 1848, and came with the family to America when about seven years of age, since which time the family home has been at Chicopee, Mass. She was married to Joseph D. Dole, May 22nd, 1862, and lived at Chicopee most of the time until 1869, when they removed to New Britain, Conn., where they now reside.

As with most well-developed mediums, spiritual experiences, though not always recognised as such at the time, have been common to her from her early years; but it is only about two years since she was first used as a medium, as that word is generally understood.

When the auspicious moment arrived to commence work through their chosen instrument, Prof. I. G. Stearns, the well-known psychologist, was directed by his guides to visit New Britain, and, without knowing a person in this vicinity, or wherefore he was to come, he obeyed their directions, and early in April, 1872, found himself, by invitation, in a small society of Spiritualists convened at the residence of one of their members for conversation and social enjoyment. Mrs. Dole, though but little interested in the subject of Spiritualism, as generally understood, requested Professor Stearns to try to mesmerise her, as he had been exercising his powers upon others. In a short time she was completely under his control, but he was soon alarmed, for the moment, to find he had as completely lost his control, she still being unconscious. Seeing her hand move reassured him all was well, and, placing a pencil therein, a communication was written from the medium's mother, who passed to spirit-life some time before; and before the professor left the place he assured the friends she would be an excellent medium, and that, in his long experience, he had never known one developed so perfectly in so short a time.

From this time (April 14th, 1872), the ability of the

spirits to use her hand constantly improved; but in a few months they discontinued that method of communication, and began giving messages orally; at first with difficulty, finally with perfect facility. For nearly a year circles were held regularly two or three times a week, and occasionally since that time, at which messages were received from various members of the spirit-circle and occasionally from a stranger spirit. Besides the regular members no person attended these circles except by special permission. Soon after becoming able to speak freely they began taking her, in spirit, to various localities; she described places, persons and events, past, present, and future, on the earth proper and in the spirit-world, and, so far as investigated, these descriptions have always proved correct. Upon many occasions, names, dates, etc., have been given and afterwards verified, but no tests have been given merely to satisfy the curiosity of any person.

When her father reached England, in June, 1873, the arrival there of the steamer was reported in advance of cable dispatches; and when he returned, the time he would arrive was accurately given two days before. His journeyings while in England were often reported the same day, and sometimes his conversation with certain persons also given, and verified on his return. Events transpiring in the houses of friends in Chicopee, Boston and other places, have been accurately described at the moment they were taking place, and verified by personal visits soon after.

Although physical manifestations, generally speaking, have rarely been given through her mediumship, the ease with which they can be thus given has been abundantly demonstrated. The raps, which are familiar sounds and of certain well-defined kinds, partake more of the nature of detonations than in ordinary manifestations.

Her descriptions of spirits, whether given in an unconscious trance, or in a semi-trance scarcely distinguishable from her normal state, are particularly accurate, including all classes and nationalities, ancient and modern.

Until recently very little opportunity has been given the public to avail themselves of the benefits of her mediumship, yet none have been denied if willing to be tried by the unseen workers and not found wanting. And, probably, no better opportunity has been afforded spirits in this earthly tabernacle than through her mediumship to study profoundly the "inner mystery" of spiritual existence and spirit control.

The learned author of *Bible Marvel Workers* has discoursed wisely of the means employed by spirits to use earthly conditions to enable them to properly develop mediums, and to advance them from one degree of development to another. In the present instance, Professor Stearns was used to make earthly conditions suitable for Mrs. Dole's development, and to enable a certain class of spirits to control, among whom were no Indians or ancient ones. The spirits who first controlled were mediums for a more advanced hand, and to enable those advanced ones to control directly, it became necessary to develop the medium one degree higher. For this purpose she was caused to visit Boston in September, 1872, and while in the *Banner of Light* Circle Room, in the presence of Mr. White, was overshadowed by an influence she could not resist, and on reaching her room fell into an unconscious state lasting several hours, during which

time Mrs. Frank Campbell, 616, Washington-street, was sent for and used as one of the instruments to make earthly conditions right for the desired change in her development. After one day she was controlled by an Indian chief, soon after by others, who have, by many practical illustrations, demonstrated their ability to control at the times and in the manner they deem good.

At the proper times other conditions have been obtained, and still further changes have followed in their turn. The illiterate and the learned have come to express their thoughts and act their feelings through her organism; and the child of a few summers comes close to the august presence of the ancient priest.

At a circle held on Sunday evening, April 12th, 1874, in Odd Fellows' Hall, New Britain, Conn., present about forty persons, Mrs. Dole, medium, being entranced, a spirit said substantially as follows:—"I am a stranger to all here, and you may not care to hear from me, but I wish to say a few words to you. My name was Temperance Fenner, and I lived in Cold-Brook, New York. I was a medium when here, but did not like to be, for I thought they had a hard time. I now know they get their reward on the other side. I was sixty-nine years two months and twelve days old. I died on the 16th, and was buried on the 18th of July, 1873. My husband's name is James Gordon Fenner, and we used to have circles at our house." [Here followed remarks of a general nature not taken down by those present, after which the dates were given a second time.]

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we were present at the time and place above named, and that the above names and dates were given as stated, and that we had no previous knowledge of them.

(Signed) GEO. H. ELLERY, HENRY RICHARDS, MRS. HENRY RICHARDS, J. L. DOLE, L. H. BURNEAM, GEO. E. JONES, WILLIAM THORNTON, A. D. DUFENDORF, Y. J. STEARNS, S. H. STEARNS, MRS. E. A. BASCOM, MRS. SAMUEL P. CAPEN, WM. H. JARVIS, MRS. SUSAN JARVIS.

The dates and names being sent to the address given, in due time the following letter was received:—

"Cold-Brook, May 3rd, 1874.

"MR. RICHARDS—Dear Sir: yours of April 23rd was duly received. You will please forgive my delay in answering your request. Every item is correct as to age, dates, &c. She was a medium ever since December, 1852, and ever active in the cause. She told me she would communicate among strangers if it was possible, that we might know it was her. Therefore I and my spiritual friends are much pleased to hear from her, and render many thanks to your medium and the circle. . . .

"(Signed) J. G. FENNER."

Next Sunday evening, and on the three following Sundays, Dr. George Sexton will lecture on Spiritualism at the Music Hall, High-street, Marylebone, under the auspices of the Marylebone Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. The Society will be glad of any assistance in the way of a guarantee fund, and should the lectures be successful they will be continued.

In a long advertisement upon another page, some particulars will be found about the energetic action which Spiritualists at Sowerby Bridge are taking to establish regular Spiritual meetings there in a building of their own. Mrs. Tappan has generously given £5 towards the fund for carrying on the work, and if richer *Spiritualists* subscribed in like proportion to their means, good work would be done towards the promotion of Spiritualism in Yorkshire.

Correspondence.

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

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Sir,—Please kindly publish the enclosed letter, which I have sent to the Editor of the *Medium*. A. JOY.  
25, James-street, Buckingham-gate, London, S.W.,  
July 26th, 1874.

BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

To the Editor of the "*Medium*."

SIR,—In your Epistolary "fragments" this week, you say you "have not received a single defence of this party." The reason is obvious. You have hitherto always refused to publish, or take any notice of, except by some abusive remarks of your own, every communication you have received on our behalf, even as advertisements, and they have been many.

You also say that we have "repeatedly" announced that "a newspaper is to be established, and Burns left high and dry in a few months." Of course I cannot swear that no member of our Council ever used these words, but I certainly never heard them, nor anything like them, except so far that some have vaguely suggested a newspaper, without any reference to you. The only sentiment I have heard expressed about you has been one of pity that your vanity and ambition should make you oppose every effort in the cause of Spiritualism which you think may interfere with your autocracy. And I think I may safely say that I know the opinions of most, if not all, of our more active members on this subject.

Mr. Enmore Jones's opposition is easy to understand. He also wants to have everything his own way, and therefore naturally criticises and opposes an association whose platform is equal freedom of thought, speech, and action for all. A. JOY.

Sir,—Will you please publish the following letters, which I have sent to the *Medium* :—

To the Editor of "*The Medium*."

SIR,—I have seen in the *Medium* the short notice you take of my letter, and I am much disappointed at the tone you adopt. Had you printed in full what I wrote, I would not have objected to your making any remarks you pleased, as the public would have had an opportunity of judging for themselves of my conduct in joining the Association, and of working with those who possibly differ from me somewhat in opinion. Or had you ignored my letter altogether, I could have had no cause to complain. But your own sense of right must tell you that to make a very brief extract, and comment upon it adversely when it is severed from its context, is not fair to me, and is not likely to enable your readers to arrive at a truthful view of facts. You have succeeded, I am sure unintentionally, in completely obscuring my meaning, and I think it would be only just for you now to publish my letter *in extenso*, with this second one as a preface. GEO. KING.  
Bayswater, 26th July, 1874.

To the Editor of "*The Medium*."

SIR,—It is sad that greater harmony does not prevail among the pioneers of the spiritual movement, and that even the attempts at union seem only to lead to further and more embittered divisions. Especially is it sad to see those who have given so much of their time and strength to the cause, now throwing obstacles in the way of comrades whose only aim is to seek the good of all, and hasten by every legitimate means the advance of truth and righteousness.

These remarks are called forth by the letter of Mr. J. Enmore Jones, which appeared in your last number, and I trust you will allow them space in your paper. Your impartiality will doubtless induce you to let both sides of the question be placed before your readers, and it is with this confidence in you that, solely on my own responsibility, I pen these few lines to correct some of the mistakes into which Mr. Jones has fallen.

He seems to assume that the British National Association is opposed to, or at any rate is unfriendly towards Christianity, and he professes himself to be a "Christian Spiritualist," in contrast with what he supposes the creed of those who are or who will become members of the Association. In this he is in error. The Association, as I understand it, expresses no opinion as to the person or mission of Jesus Christ, but leaves every one free to hold his own views on this point, as well as on every other; and, so far from those connected with the Association being of necessity unfriendly to Christianity, I am sure that many members of the Council would, in their private capacity, prove as earnest as even Mr. Jones himself could be, in claiming with him the appellation of "Christian Spiritualists." But the very fact of our being Christians should make us the more ready to co-operate with all who will help us to good ends, though perhaps their creeds and ours do not harmonize. We should in practice acknowledge that those who are not against

us are on our side. It is this feeling that has induced me to join the Association. There are many points in the "Declaration of Principles and Purposes," among them the clause on which Mr. Jones comments, to which I would take exception did I see that it would tend to useful results to do so; and in fact, for my own part, I would like to have the whole of this portion of the prospectus erased. But it is there as a compromise, and it seems necessary that it be in the meantime retained to enable some brethren to work with us. Therefore let it remain. It is better to join in valiant work than to separate in quarrels over words. So much for the prospectus; next, and briefly, as to the objects of the Association.

It seems ridiculous to have to assert that there is no intention to lord it over any one. Each is at liberty to join and at liberty to retire, just as it suits his own free-will; and when such varied elements are brought together, dogmatism is impossible. Some strange hallucination must be troubling Mr. Jones. Can he not trust those members, at any rate, of the Council whom he pointedly refers to in his letter as old and tried Spiritualists? Will he not join the Council himself, and help to keep us in the right path? We desire all the assistance we can get. I speak without authority, but I feel sure I am not wrong in saying that every one would be glad to welcome him. He would then from personal experience judge how solicitous we are to do only what is right, and in every way to further the cause which he and we have so deeply at heart.

If I understand Mr. Jones aright he thinks that the Association means to ignore all that others have done and are doing, and to build up for itself a religion from its own researches. When expressed in this way the idea is very absurd, and I can hardly attribute it to Mr. Jones, yet his letter seems to bear this construction. Fearing, however, I may be misunderstanding him, I will not attempt to confute a statement so preposterous.

In conclusion, let me urge Mr. Jones and those who share his views, if they will not actively co-operate with us, at any rate not to increase divisions in the world by bitterly fighting against us. Each can usefully pursue his own way and help the others, though for a time we may not be walking visibly together. Mr. Jones is strong in himself, and feels he can go on alone: we think that we and others are benefited by mutual assistance and sympathy. This is the whole difference between us, and it surely does not necessitate us to become enemies. GEO. KING.

One of the Members of the Council.

Bayswater, 19th July, 1874.

[The Association was founded for purely useful business purposes; it should ignore theological matters altogether, since they will only cause dissension and waste of time, and it should keep to practical work.—Ed. of *Spiritualist*.]

To Mr. Enmore Jones.

SIR,—I will not dwell on the various false statements, made in ignorance, no doubt, in your letter in last week's *Medium*, nor on the abusive and malicious tone which characterises it, nor on the singular unfairness of your sending such a letter to the editor of the *Medium*, who, you know, will not permit any answer to appear in his columns, nor on the unsound reasoning and unwholesome dogmatism you indulge in.

I only write to inform you that "the absurd persons" who inserted the clause you object to as insulting to Christianity, did so at the instance of the *Christian Spiritualists*, of whom there are a large number on our Council.

ALGERNON JOY, Hon. Sec.

E. Jones, Esq., Enmore-park, July 19th, 1874.

THE ANALOGY OF KNOWLEDGE.

SIR,—There is much that we can only understand, or trace out, or illustrate, through the analogy of knowledge; for instance, the knowledge of the action of sounds by the air, leading to the knowledge of the action of light by an ethereal medium throughout space. And may we not find some analogy of the intermingling of this likeness of the spirit and the medium, in materialised spirit forms, with the ordinary double resemblance of the child to its parents? The germ being as the spirit, and the mother supplying it with the material when under development, sometimes the resemblance is more to the mother by some animal magnetic influence, in other cases a resemblance is to the father, and in other cases a mingling of a resemblance to both parents. Often, a mere mental affection with the mother, will be physically impressed upon the child. Of course, the building up of a child is a

very slow process, but with some creatures the process is a very rapid one indeed, and rapid action must be as easy, so to speak, to nature as the slower development. See the rapidity with which frost will complete those beautiful fern-like forms upon our window panes, and see the rapidity with which a poison will flood the whole nervous system; and in the explosion of gunpowder, how instantaneous the motion from particle to particle through the whole mass. With some insects the quickness of the change is quite marvellous. The rapidity of spirit doings need not then surprise us, as coming under the head of what Bacon terms "magical instances;" anyhow we have our lesson to learn, and not the law to lay down. We may say what is contrary to the law of the land, but not what is contrary to the law of nature, living on this little speck of earth in a corner of the universe, infinitely less in proportion than a grain of sand to the entire globe. Every age produces its novelties, its wonders, and seeming impossibilities, yet men, proclaiming their pure love of truth, are prejudging at every turn, with an hypothesis ready for all occasions.

HENRY G. ATKINSON, F.G.S.

Boulogne-sur-Mer.

#### MATERIALIZED SPIRIT FORMS.

Sir,—In your last impression Mr. Dawe speaks of the resemblance that John King bears to the medium Mr. Williams. In the month of January last I saw him (the spirit) twice, and on the second occasion pretty well; I then thought the likeness to Mr. Williams very strong, and said at the time that it was the medium entranced and dressed up. But within the last few weeks I have had several opportunities of seeing him at private *seances*, held at a friend's house, and on one evening, when his face was frequently well illuminated with his lamp, it bore no resemblance to the medium in features, and was dark as the face of an Oriental; the eyes were black, and that which we call the white of the eye was of a blue shade; his beard full and black. When he lit up his face, I observed that his eyes were always fixed on me as if inviting attention from me, and in the apparition before me, on this occasion, I certainly saw a native of the East, and not a European. It is now about two years since I first saw John King, and can see no resemblance in feature in the John King of that period and the John King of to-day. His complexion was then lighter, his forehead larger, and general appearance nobler than it is now. If it is the same spirit that materialises, he—in my experience—does not present the same facial aspect always. I have not seen other materialisations, and cannot speak of their resemblance to their mediums.

JOSEPH SWINBURNE.

July 20th, 1874.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. Francois Gimet, Toulouse.—It is impossible to say anything about your book, without first seeing it.

T.—James Clark is the same youth who left Mr. Guppy's house to strike lights at the Holmes's *seance*; he returned the same evening, and delivered his report to Mrs. Guppy. As regards Mrs. Bassett, James Clark asserted that his deed was not planned; nevertheless, he had been hard at work previously for a long time in Mr. Guppy's house, altering the cabinet, whereby he was enabled to commit the act; Mrs. Bassett had nothing in her hands, which were tied together, nor on her face; the things were found afterwards in another room; there were other persons in and out of that room. Mr. Volkman has been a guest at several of Mrs. Guppy's *seances* since the outrage at Mr. Cook's, as well as before. Immediately after the publication of the occurrence in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Guppy, the Dalston Association invited Mrs. Bassett to give *seances* in their rooms, and passed a unanimous vote of confidence in her; Mr. Bassett has very properly, and by invitation, been unanimously elected a member of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists. Mr. and Mrs. Bassett have worked for years in Spiritualism without fee or reward. Sometimes the richer Spiritualists were glad to pay Mrs. Bassett's travelling expenses, but usually she accepted nothing, and kept open house free for inquirers. We were present once when she travelled miles to give a *seance* to an eminent F.R.S., and steadily refused to take even travelling expenses, in order to remove all possible obstacles to his acceptance of a new truth which she had been the instrument of bringing under his notice.

M. Gustave de Voh, Rigi-Kaltbad.—We have sent a letter to your Parisian address, and you do not mention on what date you leave Switzerland.

W., Sawbridgeworth, Herts.—The address of Mr. Crookes is 20, Mornington-road, London, N.W.

The publication of several letters is postponed till next week.

Books by Dr. Simms, Mrs. Fowler, A. Wallbridge, Dr. Ackworth, and others, received, and will be noticed shortly.

DR. J. M. GULLY will preside at the Conference meetings on Wednesday next at Lawson's Rooms, Gower-street.

M. GUSTAVE DE VEH is mountain-climbing in Switzerland, and will shortly visit Dresden. Mr. N. F. Dawe, treasurer to the National Association of Spiritualists, is at Lucerne for the benefit of his health. Mr. William Tebb is on the Continent. Mrs. Makkougall Gregory will leave England for Germany in a day or two. Mrs. Honeywood is at Marienbad, Bohemia, and Sir Charles Isham is about to leave England for Marienbad. Mr. Charles Blackburn was in Devonshire last week, and gave a portion of his time to the observation of manifestations through the mediumship of Miss Showers. Mr. J. N. T. Martheze is about to visit the Lake district in Westmoreland. Lady Caithness has left London for Westmoreland *en route* for the North of Scotland. Prince George de Solms Braunsfels is in London, but will return to the Continent in a day or two.

ROYAL NORMAL COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND.—The Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind at Upper Norwood, was founded in 1872, to afford a thorough general and musical education to the youthful blind, of both sexes and of all classes, who possess the requisite talent, so as to qualify them to become self-supporting, useful members of society. Pupils are received from all parts of the kingdom, and are instructed according to the improved methods, which, during late years, have been employed so successfully in France and America, that large numbers of the blind in those countries have been enabled to fully maintain themselves by various pursuits, especially as skilled organists, pianists, teachers of music, and pianoforte tuners. A few days ago the pupils visited Windsor Castle, and had the honour of playing and singing before the Queen, Princess Beatrice, Prince Leopold, and other members of the royal family, in St. George's Hall. Sir Rutherford Alcock, Treasurer of the Society, acted on behalf of the Duke of Westminster, the President, who was unavoidably absent, and Major Cavendish Fitzroy, Mr. C. A. Miner, and Mr. H. Sewell, Honorary Secretaries, were present. The performances were conducted by Mr. F. J. Campbell, the Principal of the College, who accompanied the pupils on the pianoforte. He also gave an explanation of the methods by which the blind are taught to read and write, and are instructed in geography and mathematics; as well as an exhibition of the practice with dumb bells accurately timed by music. The following was the programme:—"Message of Spring" (Choir), Gade; "Invitation à la Valse" (for eight hands), Weber; exhibition of methods of instruction; "Angel Trio," Mendelssohn; "146th Psalm," Strachauer (Professor of Composition in the College); Gymnastic Class (with musical accompaniment); part song, "Sweet and Low," Barnby; "National Anthem." After the National Anthem had been sung, the Queen spoke to several of the blind, and also expressed her satisfaction with the performance in a few words which all the pupils could hear. The whole party left Windsor at 5.30 for Norwood, and the pleasure which the visit gave was abundantly evidenced by the bright and happy faces of the pupils. At the meeting which had been held at the Mansion House previously, it was forcibly pointed out by the Duke of Westminster and other leading supporters of the Normal College, that one of the chief objects of the institution is not simply to instruct the blind in music, but to give them so good a general education as to enable them to earn their own maintenance. The College is situated in Westow-street, Upper Norwood, near the Crystal Palace High Level Station, and is open to inspection, on application to the hon. secretaries or the principal. Donations and annual subscriptions will be thankfully received by the bankers, Messrs. Barclay, Bevan, and Co., 51, Lombard-street, E.C., and Messrs. Ransom, Bonverie, and Co., 1, Pall-mall East, S.W.; also by the hon. treasurer, or the hon. secretaries, at the offices, 28, Mount-street, Grosvenor-square, London. Cheques and post-office orders should be crossed, and may be drawn in favour of the hon. treasurer, Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B.

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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

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

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

“H. G. Atkinson, Esq., F.G.S., G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.; J. S. Berghelm, Esq., C.E.; H. R. Fox Bourne, Esq.; Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.; G. Fenton Cameron, Esq., M.D.; John Chapman, Esq., M.D.; Rev. O. 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 cooperate. 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—lot 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.

THE LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

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THE object of this Association is the discovery of truth in connection with Psychology.

The Society seeks to attain its object by the following measures, or such of them as from time to time are found to be practicable.

1.—By frequent meetings of its members for conference, inquiry, instruction, mental improvement, spiritual culture, social intercourse, and healthful recreation.

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

3.—By the dissemination of knowledge by means of public instruction lectures, reading-rooms, the press, and spirit communion.

January 9th, 1874.

AN APPEAL TO SPIRITUALISTS AND FRIENDS.

THE Spiritualists of Sowerby Bridge have, up to the

present time, held their meetings in a cottage at Causeway Head. This has now been found inadequate, and in order to carry out more progressive principles, a new Lyceum has been built to seat about 300 persons in Hollin's-lane Sowerby-bridge, along with eight dwellings which are intended to endow the Lyceum at some future time, when they can be freed from mortgage. The Building when complete, will cost about £1,500 of which £1,000 has been obtained on mortgage at the rate of 5 per cent, per annum, which leaves a debt of over £400. An Appeal to the friends of Spiritualism is proposed. It is desired that 300 friends will kindly give £1 each; the remainder will probably be raised at home. Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan has kindly consented to open the New Hall, and she heads the list with a donation of £5. Several friends in the out-district have already promised £1 each. The Bradford friends are arranging for a benefit of two Orations to be given by Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, some time in the month of August.

This is earnestly put before the friends of the movement, as it is impossible to borrow money on a School, or Lyceum, owing to the actions of the School Board. And as this is the first building in the kingdom of Great Britain, belonging solely to Spiritualism, and as the money will shortly be due to the various contractors, it is hoped that those who can do something for the cause will do so. The projectors are all working men, and this is one of the boldest attempts to carry out the true religion or science of Spiritualism. It is intended to open the new Lyceum on Sunday, August 2nd, 1874.

To those who are not in a position to give the amount, smaller sums may be sent, and to those who cannot give money, tracts, books, spiritual periodicals, and back numbers of the London Spiritual papers will be thankfully received. As a library is connected with the Institution, those who can help with books will do good in many ways. The friends are thankful for the support and encouragement that have already been given, and kindly solicit further favour and support.

Donations for this great object can be forwarded to the Secretary, HENRY LORD, Union street, Beach, Sowerby-bridge, Yorkshire.

July 14th.

List already promised.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan ... ..	5	0	0
Twelve other friends £1 each... ..	12	0	0
A Friend at Oldham ... ..	1	0	0
A Ditto at Manchester ... ..	1	0	0

P.S.—The amounts and other gifts will be acknowledged in the London Spiritualist periodicals.

£1,000 REWARD.—MASKELYNE & COOKE.

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