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

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(2). By various means to offer facilities to investigators, and to induce others to give the matter careful inquiry, with a view to a better understanding of the phenomena and teachings of Spiritualism.

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The British National Association of Spiritualists was formed in the year 1873, at a national conference of Spiritualists held in Liverpool, at which all the great Societies of Spiritualists, and the Spiritualists of the chief towns in the United Kingdom, were represented. The amount of the annual subscription to the National Association is optional, with a minimum of five shillings a year. Each member has a single vote at the general meetings, and is eligible for election to all offices.

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February, 1875.

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VOLUME SIX. NUMBER NINETEEN.

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SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

NO. XXXIII.

During the time that I was in doubt as to the source from which these communications came, and after the arguments which have been before printed, my perplexity was increased by the fact that a spirit who came and communicated had spelt his name wrongly. The name (one well known to me) was written "directly," i.e., without human intervention, presumably by the communicating spirit, and was grossly misspelt. This made me more doubtful than before; and I put my objection strongly. It was not to be expected, I said, that I should believe in the identity of a spirit who gave a great and well-known name which it could not even spell. To this "Imperator" replied:—

We do not desire to argue out the question of identity, but the incident to which you refer is susceptible of a ready explanation. The identity of the spirit was avouched by me, and you have at least found my words to be accurate. The error was committed by the manifesting spirit who wrote. The intelligences who are able to compass the particular manifestation which you call direct writing, and for which you had on this particular occasion expressed a strong wish, are few. Most frequently the actual writing is done by one who is accustomed to manifest in that way, and who acts, as it were, as the amanuensis of the spirits who wish to communicate. In many cases several spirits are concerned. The error which arose in this way through inadvertence, was during the *seance* corrected in a communication given through the table; but it would seem to have escaped you. It is well that you inquire patiently into seeming errors and contradictions. Many, so inquired into, would be found susceptible of explanation, even as this.

The disturbed state of my mind now caused our sittings to be disturbed. Phenomena were evolved in a very erratic fashion, violently at times, and with great irregularity. It was said that "the instrument being out of tune, the notes extracted from it were jarring and discordant." Sometimes a sitting would soothe me, but sometimes it would work me up to a pitch of nervous tension, which was extremely painful. It was written on Sept. 30, 1873:—

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

Sometimes we are able to quiet and soothe, but not when every nerve is quivering, and the over-wrought system is strained to an extremity of tension. We have little power then, and at best can only save you from the risk you run of being seized upon by undeveloped spirits who are attracted by your state. We urge you not at such times to place yourself in communion with our world. Be wary of the future for many reasons. Your greater development, which is rapid and progressive, will render you more and more amenable to spiritual influence of all kinds. Such spirits will endeavour to approach you, and by sitting you facilitate their entry to the circle. You need fear no evil, but you may have disturbance. It is well for all highly-developed mediums to be chary of sitting in circles where influences other than those which surround them are gathered. Danger always attends such experiments, and your present tone and temper of mind lays you doubly open to assault. Try to bring to the circle a patient and a passive mind. Your evidence will be the more readily attained if you are content so to act.

I replied that I wished so to do, but that I must estimate everything according to my own reason. I put two or three points which seemed to me to be of crucial importance, far more than the communications given from spirits who had borne great names on earth; and who rather perplexed me than otherwise. I did not think it likely that the world's celebrities would come back for the purpose of giving me little bewildering messages. I asked for good and plentiful evidence of the return of a friend who had lately passed from among us, and who had been most deeply interested in our circle. That seemed to me to be an opportunity which might settle the identity question definitely. And I further asked very earnestly for clear and conclusive statements as to the origin, scope, and issue of the movement, specially as to spirit identity. Assuming the truth of statements already made, I pointed out that it was vitally important that the necessary proofs to withstand scoffing and sceptical criticism should be full and unmistakable. At present I had no shred of proof of anything beyond the existence of certain phenomena, and the presence of some external intelligence. I could not act on that. Even if I were willing I was not able to go on till doubts which I could not dispel were cleared from my mind.

An answer came to me Oct. 1, 1873:—

May the blessing of the Allwise rest upon you! If we do not follow you into all the points or discuss all the questions which you have mooted, you must attribute it to the impossibility of giving you complete evidence which shall be satisfactory to you in your present frame of mind. Though we are thankful to recognise in many particulars a fair and candid spirit in your objections, still we cannot fail to know that at the root of them lies mistrust of our statements and want of confidence in our claims. This is painful to us, and, as we feel, unjust. Doubt is sin in none. Intellectual inability to accept certain statements is not matter for blame. But refusal to weigh evidence fairly, and inclination to set up a personal standard of evidence which is fictitious and selfish, may end in grievous consequences, and this is the ground of our complaint. We respect your doubts, and shall rejoice with you when they are removed. But we blame and censure the attitude which makes it well-nigh impossible for us to remove them; which fences you in as with an icy barrier beyond which we cannot pass; which degrades a candid and progressive soul to a state of isolation and retrogression, and binds the spirit to the dark regions

of the nether earth. Such temper of mind is the baleful result of evil influence, and, if it be not checked, it may become a permanent bar to progress.

We have not deserved of you that you should receive us in such a spirit, or that all our attempts at communion should be viewed with jealous and suspicious eye. You are fond of comparing the state of the world and the favoured few in Judæa with that which now obtains. We will give you a parallel from the very mouth of Jesus in His answer to those who asked of Him a sign. You know that none was given save one which He Himself selected. We care not now as to the why and wherefore. Perhaps it was impossible: perhaps it was undesirable: perhaps the very attitude of mind precluded the possibility of granting the request. Such is precisely the case with you in this respect. The temper of mind which dictates such arguments as you have addressed to us makes it impossible for us to reply to them in terms pleasing to you. The reasons which presumably operated in the one case now operate in the other. And it should scarcely be necessary to remind you that it was not to the Pharisee, the Sadducee, or the wise in their own conceit, who came to Him seeking to entangle Him in His talk, that Jesus vouchsafed either His words of comfort or His miracles of mercy, but to the humble and the meek, to the poor in spirit, the faithful, earnest souls who were too careful to gather up the blessed truths, and to reap the precious fruit, to care very curiously to inquire in what form it came or under what conditions it was bestowed. It was so throughout His earthly career: and in so doing He did but act as the Father Himself deals with man. The proud, dogmatic, haughty man who informs Omnipotence of what he wants, and murmurs if it be not instantly bestowed, is not the recipient of Divine benediction, but the humble, trustful, prayerful soul, whose cry from the depths of an earnest and loving heart is, "Father, not my will but Thine be done."

This is the law which governs all Divine manifestations. We say nothing now of the identical law which operates amongst you. But we deal thus with you; and we complain that the positive tone of your mind, and the line of dogmatic argument which you have determined to follow, is one that is little fitting in your case. We are compelled, however unwillingly, to visit it with censure. Review the past. Let your mind recur to that phase of your life which you know to have been associated with us. Of the previous care of your guardians extending throughout your life you can have no knowledge yet. The watchful care which developed in you the struggling germ of progress; the tender care of those angel-guards whose watchful protection never failed; the preservations from evil; the guidance in difficulty; the direction in the onward path; the raising of your soul from ignorance and error to knowledge of the truth—this unseen working is to you unknown. But our efforts have not been entirely secret. During the immediate past we have been around and about you day by day. You have known our words and acts; you have received from us constant messages, records of which remain with you. Did a word of ours ever strike your mind as false? Did an act ever seem to you mean, or selfish, or unkind? Have we committed ourselves? Have we spoken to you words that were degrading or foolish? Have we influenced you by wiles which were earthy, by motives that were sordid? Have we led you to a course that is retrogressive? In short, by our fruits if we are judged, has the influence on you been for evil or for good? for God or for His foes? You yourself, are you better or worse

for it? more or less ignorant? more or less useful? more or less happy?

We dare any to say of us aught that may reasonably reflect on us, on our acts, or on our teaching. We assert in the face of all who hear that it is God-like, and that our mission is of and from Him.

Nor have we failed to justify our claims by signs following, even as Jesus did and said. We have placed before you a body of convincing evidence to which it would be difficult to add. We have not been chary of complying with your wishes for manifestations of power. Nay, we have even risked doing harm to you in our desire to gratify our friends by the exhibition of the more remarkable manifestations. We have cheerfully granted all requests made to us, when it was possible, and as we, in the exercise of wider wisdom, judged desirable to do so. When we have refused your requests it has been because you have asked impossibilities, or because in your ignorance you have wished for what would do you harm. It is necessary to remind you that we see from a clearer standpoint, and with a more piercing vision than man has yet attained; and we are frequently obliged to refuse requests made in ignorance and folly. But what has been refused, never without good reason, is as a speck to the mountain of evidence which has been given—evidence which is sufficient to prove over and over again the existence of a power external to earth, beneficent in its action, elevating in its operation, and blessed in its issue—a power which can come from none but God, since it is Divine in act and outcome. Yet that power, so proven, so known to you, you distrust, and seriously question the statements which we make to you as to our identity. It is to you, forsooth, a stumbling-block that names which you have exalted should stoop to concern themselves with a Divine Work, under the leadership of Divinely-sent messengers, and designed for the amelioration of man's destiny. And so you refuse credence, and, with daring ignorance, charge on us that we are, or at least may be, impostors, and that we are performing acts of beneficence with a lie in our mouths. This you do though you know that you can devise no reason why we should deceive, no source but God from which we can be derived, no errand but mercy on which we can be sent, no end but man's eternal benefit on which we can be employed.

It is this that constitutes your fault, and we are bound to censure it in you. We tell you that it is in you sin, and that we will have no dealings with you on such terms. We will give no signs so demanded. We have reached the limits beyond which we will not go, and we warn you that it is at your own peril that you despise what has been placed before you. We charge you solemnly that you meditate on the past, that you ponder its lessons, weigh its evidence, and pause before you wilfully put aside such a body of teaching, and such a mass of evidence merely for an idea.

More we will not now give. We refuse to be judged as you would judge; and we appeal from yourself blind and foolish, to that calmer and truer self whom we chose originally as the recipient of our teaching. That appeal you must entertain according to the ability and honesty which is in you. By it we stand or fall as regards you. We wish you to decide fairly, and as in the sight of God—not hastily or rashly, but as one who knows the magnitude of the issues, and the vastness of the responsibility of decision.

Meantime seek not for further evidence; it will not

be given. We warn you to avoid mixing with other circles. At your risk do you seek communications thus. You will but perplex and bewilder yourself, and render our task more difficult. We will afford you information on points that may arise; and we do not absolutely forbid, though we discourage the meeting of our own circle. We can give no new evidence there, and, if you meet, it must be with a desire for explanation, and for the promotion of harmonious intercourse. We hinted to you long ago that rest and reflection are needful for you. We now enjoin them on you. If our circle will meet, we will join them occasionally under certain conditions, which we will tell you of. But we discourage any such meetings. You will not be left alone; rather you will be doubly guarded. We leave you with our blessing, and we guard you with our prayers. May the All-wise guide you! May He direct you, for you cannot direct yourself.

+ IMPERATOR.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SPIRITUALISM.

BY WILLIAM HITCHMAN, M.R.C.S. (ENG.)

WHATEVER may be said, sung, or written of the British National Association of Spiritualists, or the Psychological Society of Great Britain, not omitting that of Liverpool, the impartial observer of recent proceedings cannot fail to notice the striking analogy—rather, perhaps, identity—of certain natural phenomena, termed Psychology and Spiritualism, in the pages of *The Spiritualist* and elsewhere. Comparative anatomy does not lead to the invariable conclusion that the operations of mind are essentially associated with the convolutions of hemispherical ganglia, or nervous vesicles of brain and spinal cord, either as fine transparent cell-membrane, containing granular matter and a nucleus, within which are nucleoli, or other structural elements of grey and white organic substance, on the integrity of which, in all its atomic forms and molecular arrangements, depend sensibility, volition, instinct, reason, and, in mankind, spirituality of soul. The fibres are said to be tubular or white, and grey or gelatinous, and best seen in the brains of negroes and porpoises, though Spurzheim considered them most distinct in the brains of Englishmen, beyond all other races or tribes of animated nature, owing to their constant use of other animals, on whose flesh and blood they mainly subsist! Is nervous tissue the chief element of psychology and Spiritualism? and are both these latter branches of human inquiry resolvable into questions pertaining to fibres, cells, or vesicles? If so, organised beings descend from inorganic substances absolutely. Albumen is thus the *facile princeps* of human organisation, mentally and physically, with five parts of fatty constituents and eighty of water! Carbonic acid and ammonia, becoming dissolved in dew and rain of atmospheric changes, are then absorbed by living vegetables; under the operation of vital force, which is itself but “a mode of motion,” molecularly, carbonic acid, I say, so decomposed, oxygen given off pure to the air, and carbon, with the elements of water, forming the structure of each plant—the cycle is complete, from nebula to nebula, evermore. In a sense, it is obvious that, if Spiritualism be true, psychology, which repudiates or ignores it, is false, utterly. Lactantius says—“I have proved for myself that God sends angels to commune with the souls of men.” (*De orig. Error.* ii. 15.) The Hebrew bard sings thus—“He hath given his angels charge over thee, that they should keep thee in all thy ways.” “They shall bear thee up in their hands,” &c. (Psalm xci. 11.) And amongst a variety of other passages, David tells us—“Let the angel of the Lord chase them” (Psalm xxxv. 5); ay, persecute, or deliver from danger, according to the mood or mediumship of the shepherd-king, and his precise knowledge of psychology, or Spiritualism, in other words, truth or falsehood.

Psychologists, like anthropologists, have clearly been mistaken in viewing the brains of men and animals as the sole mechanical or molecular causative agents in all the intellectual, emotional, and other mental processes, merely from having found external demonstrative evidence that impressions and ideas of our spiritual nature require the temporary aid or co-operation of organic structure. Spiritualism is the higher psychology, since it proves conclusively, from in-

vincible facts and phenomena, now, as heretofore, that the soul of man, either in the flesh or out of it, is active rather than acted upon, when it reflects, reasons, deliberates, judges, pronounces respecting the true and the false, materially, the right and the wrong—morally, in its own world of spirituality of intelligence—not without arguments irrefragable and illustrations inexorable, concerning the distinct existence and future manifestations of that thinking principle which accompanies both matter and spirit. In A.D. 66, Plutarch was a pupil of the philosopher Ammonius, at Delphi, and he tells us (*De Gen. Socr.*) that, as soon as the great and good Athenian Spiritualist was born, Sophroniseus, his father, consulted the oracle, and was (by spirit-communion) advised to be no more solicitous about the welfare of his son, inasmuch as he possessed, within and without himself, the controlling guide of his life, which was better far for him than five hundred masters of the schools or doctors in philosophy. Facts connected with psychology and Spiritualism in 1875 have been recorded from the earliest periods of known history. The influence of the magnetic hand and heart over diseases of the mortal body, for example, is frequently mentioned by many Greek and Roman authors, and, from their times to our own, has constituted an effective branch of medical science in various and distant portions of the habitable globe. The wisdom of Solon, the Grecian lawgiver, was probably never more conspicuous than in the following verse:—

The smallest hurts sometimes increase and rage
More than all art of physic can assuage;
Sometimes the fury of the worst disease,
The hand, by gently stroking, will appease.

Asclepiades, moreover, acquired his great reputation as a physician at Rome, by healing the sick mesmerically, that is, continued gentle friction of the surface, until each sufferer fell into sweet sleep, and awoke cured. Tacitus, Suetonius, the Emperor Vespasian, at Alexandria, Chaldean priests, Indian Brahmins, the Persi, Jesuit missionaries, Van Helmont, Sir Kenelm Digby, and a host of learned philosophers in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, narrate examples of what are called animal magnetism, and mesmeric phenomena, interesting alike to the modern Spiritualist and recent psychologist. Socrates was a trance medium, to all intents and purposes. Eugubinus (*De perenn. Philos.*, 25, *et seq.*) confirms the saying of Plato, and others, to the effect that the great Athenian Spiritualist was guided, when apparently sleeping, by a good spirit, whereupon the ex-sculptor was wont to exclaim, "Now, if it please God, you shall learn much through me, and the spirit from heaven does not stay my tongue." I allege the universal consent of the best authors rather to the Spiritualism than the psychology of Socrates; that, in point of fact, he was a medium, and controlled by a visitor from the world of spirit. To believe otherwise, is to question the teaching of the noblest intellects during ten successive centuries of learning, to ignore the Spiritualism of ancient and modern times, of which psychology can never form the central figure, and last, but not least, is to join issue with the British National Association of Spiritualists, and, as a matter of course, the history of Neander, the philosophy of Marsilio Ficinus, Zenophon's *Memorabilia* and *Apology for the Spirit of Socrates*, Plato's *Dialogues*, &c., not to mention the admirable testimony of Gibbon and Grote, in their splendidly brilliant narrations of the most eventful periods of classic Greece and Rome. As a science or philosophy, unassailable facts in my possession psychology, fairly represented, can never reach, and Spiritualism alone can satisfy the rational impartial soul. Of what use is psychology without Spiritualism, in the explanation of the following facts? I locked Miss Parry, of 142, Spencer-street, Liverpool, in a scientific cabinet, of my own special construction, amid the closest possible scrutiny of intelligent sceptics; nevertheless, both in light and dark rooms, hands, figures of human forms, and splendid stars, have appeared, together with musical performances, movements of heavy bodies without mechanical aid or muscular force of any person in mortal coil; also, proper answers to philosophical questions, in different languages Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian, and German—(not a syllable of which is known to the medium herself), independently of trance-speaking, voices in the air, delicious fragrance of flowers, fruit, rappings, and writings. Even more marvellous is the mediumship of Miss Clark. In presence of Mr. T. Herbert Noyes, J.P., I have likewise been favoured by unseen intelligences, with accurate descriptions of the metal osmium, with chemical details of one of its oxides, its discovery in 1805 by Tennant, as well as its medicinal properties in various diseases.

In short, I could fill three octavo volumes of true, not false "facts," that find no solution in psychology, and belong only to that *higher* Spiritualism, which is the last and best gift of God to man, on earth and in heaven.

A SEANCE IN DALSTON.—The rooms of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, 74, Navarino-road, were crowded on Friday evening last, when a special seance was given by Mr. Charles E. Williams. Several applicants for admission had to be reluctantly refused, it being impossible to accommodate all. The back room was used as a cabinet, one of the folding-doors being open; a curtain, suspended as a screen, separated the two rooms. The circle table was placed against the curtain, in the front room, and some musical instruments, kindly lent for the occasion by Mrs. E. E. Corner, were placed upon the table. The sitters, twenty-eight in number, were arranged in rows immediately facing the doors, while Mr. T. Blyton was seated by the side of the table to the left of the curtain. Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen was appointed circle president. Several members were deputed to examine the cabinet before Mr. Williams entered it, and, on their return to the front room, he went in and seated himself upon the sofa. Soon afterwards the lights were put out. In a short time the various musical instruments were freely manipulated and carried about the room, touching the ceiling at times, and at others tapping the heads of various sitters. Bright star-like lights were observed, and a particularly luminous one accompanied the gyrations of the small hand-bell, which was evidently carried by a hand. Mr. Blyton states that while these various manifestations were proceeding he could distinctly hear Mr. Williams moaning behind the curtain. Several well-known hymns and anthems were sung, and eventually the form of John King, with his illuminating disc, was seen. At times the form was observed to rise upwards until the turbaned head touched the ceiling, and, in compliance with requests of several of the sitters, approached closely to them, and bowed in recognition. John King stated that there were too many present to favour good manifestations. Several members corroborated the statement as to hearing Mr. Williams moaning inside the cabinet while John King was visible to them. It was at last signalled that the power was exhausted, and the seance was brought to a close.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE UNITED STATES.—The *Boston Sunday Herald*, which is alleged to have a circulation of 106,000, says in its issue of April 4th: "There seems to be a tidal wave in spiritual circles. Adulteration, deception, and scepticism are as powerless to keep it back as the good Mrs. Partington with her mop and bucket in the case of the invasion of her domicile by the Atlantic ocean. From all points and quarters come crowding reports, seemingly well attested, of supermundane manifestations, and the brethren and sisters, strong in the faith of the new philosophy, are fain to believe that another pentecostal season is at hand. In Boston, meetings and circles of Spiritualists multiply, and are nightly crowded, while reliable test mediums find their time fully occupied by those seeking for a sign of life and identity beyond the vale. Those who suppose these inquirers to be restricted to the illiterate and ignorantly credulous, labour under a mistake; for while it is true that the faith in spirit intercourse largely prevails, as always heretofore, among the simple-minded and unsophisticated, it is scarcely less true of men and women of intelligence, education and discriminating judgment, who, however, are more reticent and less disposed to proclaim the faith which they entertain. Indeed, not a few firm believers in the phenomena studiously avoid revealing their belief for fear of losing social and religious caste, well knowing that they would hazard their positions as members of evangelical churches by a frank avowal of their convictions. If some of the good ministers and deacons of Boston could get a clairvoyant glimpse of the 'spook roosts' in nightly blast hereabouts, they would be astonished to see how some members of their folds spend their evenings. The London *Spiritualist* tells how the spirit of the sister of Prince Wittgenstein manifested to him while her body was in a trance; how the spirit of a mesmeric sensitive left her body and produced physical effects in a house at a distance, as authenticated by Mr. Fitzgerald, the electrician; how one sleeping person influenced another, and how the spirits of several entranced persons were photographed. Mr. Cooper, a pioneer English Spiritualist now in this country, has recently returned to Boston from a protracted visit to the Eddys, where he was more than confirmed in his belief of the wonderful powers of those mediums."

THE "COMING MAN."

THE late Rev. James Smith, who in his day did much in a quiet way to advance the cause of Spiritualism, wrote a book entitled *The Coming Man*,* consisting of brilliant essays, not so well known to Spiritualists as should be the case. As editor of *The Family Herald*, Mr. Smith kept his readers acquainted with all that was going on in mesmerism and clairvoyance. His articles and his famous "answers to correspondents" contained more or less every week concerning matters supramundane, ancient and modern. And when, after 1848, what is specially known as Spiritualism came to the front, he as systematically and persistently gave its facts and philosophy the advantage of publicity in his widely-read journal. And yet more. He was practically editor of *The Spiritual Herald*, a sixpenny monthly, published by Bailliere in 1856 at the cost of Mr. Theodore Fawcett. There was not then a public to support such a magazine, and only six or seven numbers appeared. Smith's advocacy of Spiritualism was by no means anonymous. Mr. Wm. White informs us that he remembers hearing him in 1856 relate his experiences with unflinching simplicity and courage before a sceptical audience assembled in the Mechanics' Institution, Southampton-buildings, Chancery-lane. Worn out with study, he died early in 1857, and we lost our earliest and most accomplished champion.

MRS. HARDY'S VISIT TO ENGLAND.

MRS. HARDY, a celebrated American medium, well recommended by the *Banner of Light*, will leave Boston to-morrow en route for England. At her seances a box, with an aperture in it, is placed over an opening in a table; a cloth is thrown over the whole and nailed to the floor, to give partial darkness under the table. Mrs. Hardy sits with the other spectators in the light, and materialised spirit hands and arms come out of the aperture in the box.

THE DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—The *Banner of Light* of April 17th, informs its readers of Mr. J. J. Morse having gratefully accepted the complimentary offer of honorary membership of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. The same paper adds that the Association has just added to the scope of its former labours a new section for the investigation of the claims and uses of mesmerism. At the ensuing ordinary monthly meeting of the Council of the Dalston Association, fixed for the 13th instant, the desirability of changing the day of the ordinary weekly meetings will be considered. Members are desired to express their views on this point, and communicate the same, in writing, to the honorary secretary, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, on or before the 12th instant.

THE BAZAAR.—The articles made or contributed by ladies and other friends to the coming bazaar of the National Association of Spiritualists will for the most part be useful in character and moderate in price. The *Banner of Light* (Boston, U.S.) of April 24th says:—"A bazaar is to be held in London on the 26th, 27th, and 28th of May, to partially clear the expenses of furnishing the public Reading-room, Council Chamber, and new premises of the British National Association of Spiritualists. The rooms of this great national organisation have been very handsomely and comfortably fitted up. We see by *The Spiritualist* newspaper that friends from all parts of the world are volunteering aid in the matter, the Baroness Adelma Vay having even sent contributions of money and goods from distant Austria. If celebrated American authors and mediums would present a few dozen copies each of their photographic portraits to the Bazaar Committee, they would doubtless be received with pleasure, and bought by many of the chief English Spiritualists who will attend."

* London: E. W. Allen, 11, Ave Maria-Lane.

MR. JOHN COLLIER, Spiritualistic lecturer of Birmingham, has accepted a permanent engagement at Springfield, Mass., U.S.

LARGE IMPORTATION OF AMERICAN BOOKS ON SPIRITUALISM.—We have entered into business relations with Messrs. Colby and Rich, of the *Banner of Light*, Boston, the result being that regular supplies of the chief American works on Spiritualism will be kept on sale at the Branch Office of *The Spiritualist* newspaper, 38, Great Russell-street, London, W.C. A great number of books has already reached Liverpool, and will be obtainable in London either to-morrow or on Monday. The titles and prices of a few of them will be found in our advertising columns, but a much longer list will be published next week. The arrivals include all the works of A. J. Davis, William Denton, and Hudson Tuttle, which can be had in complete sets if ordered at once. Colonel Oleott's *People from the Other World*, illustrated with sixty engravings of the seances and home of the Eddy brothers, and of the tests recently applied to Mrs. Holmes, is among the books in the list.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION LIBRARY.—The following additions have been made to the library during the past week:—*What am I? and Heredity and Hybridism*, presented by Mr. Serjeant Cox; *La Réalité des Esprits*: Guldenstubbé; and four copies of *Pensées d'outre Tombe*, presented by Mr. A. J. Riko, of the Hague; Wallace's *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, and Crookes' *Phenomena of Spiritualism*, presented by Mr. T. Slater; Emma Hardinge's *Modern American Spiritualism*, presented by Mr. B. Coleman. The following have been lent by Mr. S. Chinnery: D. D. Home's *Incidents in My Life*; Mrs. Crowe's *Ghost Stories*; A. R. Craig's *Book of the Hand*; Des Mousseaux's *Mœurs des Démons*; A. J. Davis' *Stellar Key*; S. Jackson's *Heinrich Stilling*; R. D. Owen's *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*; Levi's *Dogme de la haute Magie*; *La Magie noire*; Des Mousseaux's *La Magie au dix-neuvième Siècle*, and *Médiateurs de la haute Magie*; Edmonds' *Spiritualism and Sacred Circle*; Mrs. Crowe's *Night Side of Nature*; Beamish's *Psychonomy of the Hand*; Nichols' *Biography of the Brothers Davenport*; Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell*; Drayson's *Earth we Inhabit*; Emma Hardinge's *Modern American Spiritualism*; and F. Rowan's *Meditations on Death and Eternity*.

A SEANCE WITH MR. BASTIAN.—Mr. W. H. Harrison says:—Through the kindness of Mr. Ronalds and Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, last Tuesday evening I attended their private seance for the materialisation of full spirit forms, through the mediumship of Mr. Harry Bastian, at 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury, W.C. A bedroom was used as a cabinet, and a few of the spectators offered themselves as a committee to examine it, and to take precautions that no persons should enter by doors or windows while the seance was going on. Mr. Bastian was next left alone for a time in the room, after which the committee were asked in, and said they found him bound in an elaborate and secure manner to the bedstead. They then sealed some of the knots, after which they rejoined the other spectators. The amount of light was that given by a single gas burner, with the flame turned down till it was the size of a pea and of a bluish colour, surrounded by a glass gas globe. I tried to distinguish the figures on my watch by the light, and could not, and during the whole evening did not see any of the features of any of the spirits, except that once I thought I saw part of a nose. Four or five forms, differently draped, came out in the course of the evening, and in most cases said they were related to persons present; one young lady who was much excited, and who quickly passed into a trance, said that she recognised her grandmother, and that she had on gold spectacles. Mr. Bastian bears a very good name as a medium, and these are no doubt the incipient stages of a most interesting class of manifestations, which will grow stronger and bear more light, if carefully developed under favourable conditions. They are good enough to deserve presentation to the public under better tests, for since the visit of the Holmeses to this country, a general feeling has grown among experienced Spiritualists, that as a matter of duty to the cause and to the public, materialisation seances on the premises of professional mediums should not be endorsed by the movement, however honourable the medium, unless simple and properly constructed cabinets are used, instead of bedrooms. Mr. Crookes was present last week at a face seance with Mr. Bastian on the same premises, but has not published the results of his observations. Mr. Bastian gets interesting manifestations of various kinds, which apparently deserve more attention than they have received at the hands of London Spiritualists.

THE WRITING MEDIUMSHIP OF A BABY.

BY HENRY D. JENCKEN, M.R.I., BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

I THINK it may interest you to be furnished with the particulars of the remarkable fact of writing by a medial child only nine days old. To me the corroborative evidence furnished by Baron Seymour Kirkup is of exceptional interest; for you may recollect that I published last year an account of what had happened in my own home, the writing medium being my little boy, then only five months and a few days old. The letter to me from Baron Kirkup, of Leghorn, furnishing the interesting information, is accompanied by photographs of the writing, the *procès verbal* of the witnesses, seven in number, and a very beautiful photograph of the spirit form of the baby's grandmother, the well-known "Regina." We have in this instance medial powers descending from mother to daughter and granddaughter—facts opposed to the theory which I ventured to suggest in the paper I read at the Dalston Institute of Spiritualists, that mediumship does not belong to families, that it comes and goes, governed by laws we as yet but little understand. The letter of Baron Kirkup, so far as it bears upon the facts I am dealing with, is as follows:—

"My daughter was a medium when two years old, and saw spirits; she is now twenty-one, and her daughter was a writing medium at nine days old. I have preserved her letter, and will send you a photograph. Four spirits had promised to make the infant write to enforce some advice they had given me. It was a seven-months' child, and smaller than usual. Her mother held it on a cushion on her arm, and in the other hand a large book, with a sheet of paper on it; a pencil was put into the child's hand by an invisible agent, and Valentina (the child) held it dagger-fashion. It first wrote the initials of the four spirits, viz., R. A. D. I., when the pencil was dropped, and I thought it was over. The spirits were Regina, Annias, Dante, and Isacco. My daughter Imogen (called Bibi) exclaimed "She has got the pencil again," and she wrote in a rambling manner over the former writing these words, '*Non mutare questa è buona prova fai cosa ti abbiamo detto addio.*' You will distinguish it all in the photograph. I likewise made a *procès verbal*, which I send you. The child went into the country the next day, by advice of the spirits, to nurse, but we sent for her back again to try for a photograph, as I knew a medium photographer. We went to him, and I tried to make the child take the pencil, but she threw it away, and I send you the portrait as it is, with the child not writing, but it contains the figure of the child's grandmother, the famous Regina, who died twenty years ago at the age of nineteen, a perfect likeness, but too dark, owing to transparency over a dark ground. Bibi is very like, and the infant too."

I cannot conceal that the particulars stated in the letter have given me unfeigned pleasure. Whenever new facts arise, startling in their nature, it is but natural that doubts should be suggested: the repetition only of them, under different circumstances, can lift an isolated fact into the nature of an accepted truth. Infantine writing is of so rare occurrence, that any well-authenticated record is of value. Apart, however, from the unusual character of these phenomena, they merit earnest attention. Certainly the brain cerebration and the psychic theories do not aid us in understanding the laws which regulate their production. The thoughts of a child nine days, or even five months,

old, could not be its thoughts, if possessed of faculties which only maturer age and a higher state of development can command. Who, then, influenced the hand of the baby child? No other theory, indeed, solves the difficulty save that of a spiritual, intelligent being operating through the instrumentality of the hand and nervous system of the child, controlling the motor nerves of the infant, and producing the writing. If through the instrumentality of your valuable journal public attention was drawn to the importance of other instances being known, I feel certain that valuable facts, corroborative of those I have not hesitated to place before the public, will be furnished to you.

PERSECUTION OF SPIRITUALISTS IN PARIS.

ARREST OF M. LEYMARIE, M. BUGUET, AND MR. FIRMAN.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—Great events have happened in Paris since my last letter. Leymarie, Buguet, and Firman were arrested last Thursday week, all on the same charge of swindling in photography. Firman has had nothing whatsoever to do with the photographic business. Leymarie has had a great deal to do with it as editor of the *Revue Spirite*; for every month there appeared in it a photograph, and something written in commendation of Buguet's mediumship. But if there has been any deception, M. Leymarie has been imposed upon in common with every one else. The worst of it is, that this imprisonment is not merely a temporary inconvenience for four-and-twenty hours, for it has already lasted more than a week, and I am told the preliminary examination demands many more days yet, during which time not even their wives will be allowed to visit them.

The result of this inquiry one would think and hope will be the discharge of the two innocent victims. I have spoken to the judge who has charge of the case. He tells me that Firman is evidently an accomplice of Buguet, because he sent people to him. A few days before the arrest an agent of police came to Firman's apartment, and requested him to photograph him with a spirit. Firman very naturally expressed surprise at his coming to him for that purpose, as he was not a photographer, and told him that he had better go to Buguet; and this is what is called "sending people to Buguet." The judge also informed me that, although the charge against Firman was with reference to the photography, the *expose* at Dr. Huguët's would be gone into. This is an utterly groundless and unjust accusation. To those who try the case, and nearly every one else in France, the fact of seizing and retaining material stuff is sufficient proof of imposture. Those who know anything about these materialisations know that it is no proof at all, as spirits who come in this manner have always a covering round them, which can at any time be snatched from them by any one so violently disposed.

This imprisonment is a most unfortunate occurrence, as it prevents the vindication *seances* we were about to give. We have had some very satisfactory instances of showing medium and spirit at the same time. Nothing short of that is of any use, and even seeing the two at once will not, I believe, carry conviction to the sceptical French mind. M. Chavée, a well-known and highly respected *savant*, has been giving a course of lectures on psychology. I thought that a gentleman who had made this subject his study for many years ought to have an opportunity of seeing a materialised spirit, especially as he affirmed there could be no such thing. I invited him to a *seance*, when he saw, handled, and conversed with Kibosh. The medium on this occasion went into the cabinet in his shirt sleeves; it so happened that, upon the disappearance of the spirit, the medium woke up and walked out, before ten seconds had elapsed. The cabinet was immediately searched, and no trace of Kibosh's extensive paraphernalia was discoverable. M. Chavée told me afterwards that he knew it was the medium dressed up, and finished his next lecture by lamenting that such bare-faced imposition should be tolerated. It so happens that there was no imposition at all in the matter, and M. Chavée has really seen what he says is impossible—a materialised spirit.

J. N. GLEDSTANES.

Paris, May 2nd, 1875.

Poetry.

THE DESTINY OF THE SOUL.

The brain is not the solitary throne
Of that transcendent mystery, the Soul!
Psychology in no uncertain tone
Declares that it must permeate the whole
Of this our mortal frame—since flesh and bone
Form but its vestment, which it casts away
When pallid death has snapt the golden zone
That links the spirit to the grosser clay.

The Soul is Self! and when we come to die,
We issue from the body, and shall know
That we are spirits—free to scale the sky
Or flash at will through boundless space; although
Our own identity will haunt us still,
And every ardent hope we cherished here,
And every bias for good or ill,
We shall transfer to that sublimer sphere.

There will be no forgetting! Clearly we
shall then recall our life below the skies;
And pre-existence (if such marvel be)
Will then unseal its shadowy mysteries.
Endued with rarer powers we shall gain
Fresh wisdom through the ages, till we see
The last bright link of that progressive chain,
And merge at length in perfect Deity!

F. B. DOVETON.

Correspondence.

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

CREDULITY AND INCREDULITY.

SIR,—Perhaps the following explanations of the various methods, whereby spiritualistic mediums are supposed to impose on the public, may instruct, amuse, or bewilder some of your readers.

Most of these explanations were given many years ago, not in joke, but in sober seriousness, as wise discoveries, when the wonders of Mr. Home's mediumship first came before the public.

These are to be found in the first volume of that gentleman's extremely interesting work, entitled *Incidents in my Life*. Some of the other explanations I have occasionally heard brought forward by people who are considered to possess more than average ability in their respective professions and pursuits, but who also illustrate how easily boasted incredulity may pass into a state of ludicrous credulity.

The following list contains, I think, nearly all the wise objections that have hitherto been advanced; but doubtless human ingenuity may be capable of startling us with still wiser discoveries.

1. A very popular idea is, or was, that the male medium carries in his pocket a trained monkey, and that the female medium conceals that intelligent animal under her dress.

2. Some think that the legs of most mediums are so formed as to be capable of elongation, and that their feet are like the hands of a baboon.

3. Many people suppose that when a medium is invited to a strange house the table has to be sent first, and that he takes with him wax or gutta percha hands and arms to show at the proper moment.

4. Some suppose that the medium mesmerises or biologises his audience, and that the latter only imagine they see what they see.

5. Some are supposed to carry lazy-tongs and a magic lantern.

6. When the medium is levitated and rises in the air, it is only a balloon filled with gas in the shape of a man.

7. Some say the phenomena are produced by "involuntary muscular action," or "unconscious cerebration," or "reflex action of the mind," or by psychic or od force, or by some other force,—a remarkably safe conclusion.*

8. A common explanation of certain phenomena is that they are to be attributed to ventriloquism, and that some mediums have electric batteries concealed about their persons.

9. Mechanical contrivances, attached to the lower extremities, were suggested by one of the first philosophers of the day, but I never heard of their being actually discovered.

10. The rappings are said to be produced in many ways,

* Only the force is well up in arithmetic, can make good puns, and talk bad science.—ED.

beginning low down with the snapping of the toe-joint, then getting up to the ankle, then to the knee or thigh-bones.

This rather uncomfortable idea—not a little suggestive of permanent dislocation—was, I believe, first broached by a distinguished American medical gentleman, and I much regret that my ignorance of osteology prevents my attempting to refute this very ingenious theory.

Unfortunately for No. 10, the rappings are frequently heard at a distance from the medium—from the walls, ceiling, and staircase; so we must suppose that the above-named several joints are endowed with some power analogous to "ventriloquism."

11. Some say the medium bribes the servants at the houses he visits, that they may aid him in concealing the machinery.

12. Others say that the mediums, even when they happen to be very young people—nay, even children—are accomplished ventriloquists, and gifted with conjuring talents that surpass the ingenuity of Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke, with all their practice and experience.

13. Then comes the wonderful piece of machinery which, I was once gravely told, explained how I was hoaxed, when a hand, either materialised or, as the sceptics say, composed of wax or gutta percha, unbuttoned my coat, extracted my spectacles and case from the side pocket, placed the spectacles on the nose of an astonished unbeliever sitting at the other side of the table, and finally deposited the case on the knee of another innocent investigator.

I now find that the machine theory has lately collapsed, mechanical contrivances, I presume, being found too cumbrous and expensive for most mediums.

14. The last—the most scientific and ingenious theory or explanation—was, according to Mr. Home, given by an old woman in America, who, when asked if she could account for what she had seen, replied, "Lor, sirs! it is easy enough: they only rubs themselves all over with a gold pencil case." One might reap considerable amusement by gravely urging a few of the above explanations on some of our sceptical friends, just to see what an enormous amount of credulity is sometimes hidden under the mask of incredulity.

Some sceptics are fond of charging Spiritualists, or believers in mesmerism and clairvoyance, with excessive credulity, not seeing that those believers have ample warrant for retorting the charge upon their opponents; and this, I think, will be evident to any impartial and candid observer who has ever listened to the arguments of certain sceptics and their curious explanations of phenomena, the causes of which may possibly never in this world be quite satisfactorily explained.

May I venture to suggest to such sceptics the two following questions for their consideration: "Which is the greater evil, excessive credulity or excessive incredulity?" and then, "What is the difference between the two?"

In conclusion, I would draw attention to the following remarks made and advice given by Archbishop Whately, taken from his annotations on "Bacon's Essays"—subject *Atheism*: "Bacon, in one of his essays, says, 'I had rather believe all the fables in the legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind.'"

The Archbishop's annotation on the above is as follows:—"It is evident from this that Bacon had seized the just view respecting credulity, seeing plainly that to disbelieve is to believe. If one man believes that there is a God, and another that there is no God, whichever holds the least reasonable of these two opinions is chargeable with credulity. For the only way to avoid credulity and incredulity, the two necessarily going together, is to listen to the best evidence, and to believe and disbelieve on good grounds."

J. J.

Tottenham.

INTERNAL RESPIRATION—NO. IV.

SIR,—In Nos. 81, 89, and 125 of *The Spiritualist* I have endeavoured to illustrate the above subject with regard to (1) its physical phenomena; (2) its spiritual phenomena; and (3) the Scriptural proofs thereof. In this, my final paper, I purpose to refute the attacks which have from time to time been made upon Harris and his work.

These charges I may divide into four headings—(1) Previous and present supposed or real failures; (2) Errors in his works which result either from misprints or from human fallibility; (3) False prophecies attributed to him; and (4) Misunderstandings of the meaning of his works.

I. Failures.—The first charge which I shall mention under this heading is that he formerly established a community at Mountain Cove which ended in failure; hence it has been

argued his present society may equally fail, which would show that he is not as he imagines under Divine guidance. But it must not be thought that a man is infallible because he has inner breathing, or that he cannot fail; and even if the Brocton Society came to grief it would only show that a sufficient number of men had not yet become perfected in internal breathing. But in fact the two cases are quite different. Harris acknowledges (*Ar. Chr.* i. 794) that he was once deceived by spirits, as many mediums are in the present day, and doubtless the Mountain Cove failure was a case in point. But it will be asked, "Where are we to draw the line? if deceived once, why not again?" I answer that inner breathing affords the line of demarcation. Now for the proof. An account of the Mountain Cove failure is given by Mrs. Hardinge in her *History of Modern American Spiritualism*. Any one who cares to wade through the dreary pages of that voluminous work will find the whole account at pp. 58-60, and 207-17; the latter pages having the sensational and truly Yankee but slightly incomprehensible heading of "How the Apostolic Brotherhood grew from a circumference back to a centre; how the centre burst and vanished into thin air; how it gathered itself up again and grew beyond its own centre and circumference, and soared away beyond itself; how Mr. Charles Partridge brought it back to earth again until it found its level." Whether this account (evidently an unfriendly one) is accurate or not, I neither know nor care; it is sufficient that it contains all the data I want. In this account we find that Harris joined the "Apostolic Brotherhood" about the commencement of 1850 (p. 59). In October, 1851, this brotherhood removed to Mountain Cove, under the guidance of Mr. Scott, not of Harris (p. 210). At p. 216, we read that the community broke up in about two years. This brings us to the beginning of 1852. Mr. Brotherton, in his pamphlet on *Spiritualism, Swedenborg, and the New Church*, published October, 1860, says (pp. 55, 56) that inner breathing commenced in Harris seven to eight years ago. Therefore, taking the fullest extent of eight years, Harris's inner breathing commenced about October, 1852, or some months after the Mountain Cove failure. In addition to this, we have only to look at the difference between the spiritual origins of the two movements, to see that they have no connection with each other. In the Mountain Cove business Harris blindly accepted the teachings of spirits given through mesmerised subjects, and hence was deceived easily by them; now he most emphatically protests against the practice of allowing oneself to be controlled or made a slave by spirits, and points out the danger of endeavouring to produce the mesmeric sleep for the purpose of clairvoyance (*Ar. Chr.* i., 480, 481). But it has also been urged that his present society has failed to effect much, and that it is only a form of monasticism. With regard to the first charge, it can only have originated from those who had never visited Brocton. I have now lying before me a letter from a medical friend who visited Brocton in 1873, and he says that "all was most prosperous, but peaceful and quiet; none of the boast or disturbing elements of ordinary society. Every one seemed kind and obliging, and truly loving and affectionate; none desirous of being before or after another, but all was harmonious." One of the brotherhood there also informed him that it had been a most excellent investment in a pecuniary sense. With regard to the charge of monasticism, it is nothing of the sort. A monastery is a place where people are secluded from the world, without the power to leave of their own free will, and they are intended to remain there all their lives. At Brocton all is freedom; any one who is dissatisfied may leave; a large portion of the Brotherhood of the New Life have never been, and possibly never will be there; others reside there only for a time. On this subject I will quote from two letters from Brocton, written some years ago. One says, "The open breathers at Wassaic (the seat of the society prior to removing to Brocton) number nineteen; many have left, and gone out into the world to perform their different uses." The other says,—"The home at Wassaic is regarded as a training school for open breathing, for those who need help and instruction, but not as a fixed abode, nor for those whose uses in the world preclude their living in that way."

II.—Errors in Harris's Writings Arising from Misprints or Human Fallibility.—The first passage to which exception has been taken was brought before my notice some years ago by a Swedenborgian minister, well known for his strong antipathy to Harris's writings. It is contained in *Ar. Chr.* i. 36, where we read that the Egyptian sorcerers "produced lice from the dust of the earth." On referring to the account in Exodus, however, we find that they were not able to do this. With

regard to this matter, my friend Mr. Thomas Robinson, of Manchester, says in a letter to me, dated October 17th, 1868, "I was present in 1859 when some friends put the question to Harris, and he said he did not know that it was as it is till friends in America pointed it out. 'But,' said he, 'I am glad it is there: it serves to show at what trifles people are disposed to catch,' or words to that effect. He added that it was a mistake of the compositor." So, after all, this awful mistake turns out not to have originated with Harris, but to have been one of the devices of the devil—the printer's devil I mean, of course. *Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus!* There are several other misprints in Harris's writings, which his enemies are quite welcome to make the most of. Thus in *Ar. Chr.* i. 259 the word *light* should evidently be *night*; in i. 807 the word *internal* should, I think, be *external*; in iii. 747 the word *Thyatira* is obviously a misprint for *Philadelphia*. It is, indeed, a wonder that Harris's opponents have not accused him of not understanding Latin, because in a conversation with an evil spirit (reported iii. 219) the ungrammatical phrase *contraria contrariis* occurs! But which of the "devils" made the mistake here, the printer's or the other one, I will leave them to find out. Another charge, which also emanated from a Swedenborgian source, is, that Harris has, when speaking in his own person, made mistakes. Thus in i. 182 he confounds the words *Mourir pour la patrie* with the Marseillaise, and in iii. 794 states that George Fox performed an action at Taunton which really occurred, I am told, at some other town—I think Lichfield. They might also have added that in iii. 431 the answer of Christ to the Sadducees is confounded with that to the women at the well. But what does all this prove? Nothing, save that Harris is only a man, and therefore fallible, and that what he says of himself must be carefully kept distinct from what he claims to have received by Divine inspiration.

III.—We now come to the charge of False Prophecies, which also proceeds from a Swedenborgian source. The minister to whom I have previously alluded says, in a letter dated June 24th, 1868, that Harris taught that the bodies of the wicked were to be burnt up about five years after the publication of the 1st vol. of *Ar. Chr.*, i.e., in 1863. In a subsequent letter he stated that he was certain that his statement was correct, and that it was in *Ar. Chr.* that the statement was made, and promised to refer to the work and verify his quotation. More than six years have now elapsed, but he has neither verified his quotation (for the excellent reason that it only existed in his own imagination), nor has he had the honesty to withdraw the charge. In 1871 I was engaged in a controversy about Harris in the *Intellectual Repository*, the chief Swedenborgian journal in England. In the Dec. number, pp. 599, 600, the editor winds up with some remarks, chiefly consisting of arguments which had been adduced and refuted in the controversy itself. But he also brings against Harris the same old charge of false prophecies on the same subject. I wrote to know the chapter and verse of this imaginary prediction, and, in reply, received the following answer:—"I do not know that the prediction is contained in any of Harris's published works. According to my information, it was uttered in a sermon he preached at Glasgow, a good many years ago, and which he then said would happen within two years." So, after all, this second version of the charge (which the reader will see does not agree in details with the first) rests only on hearsay evidence. I need scarcely say that Harris never uttered any such prophecy at all, either in his sermons or his published works.

IV.—We now come to the last charges made against Harris, viz., those made through misunderstanding of his teachings and work. I do not intend to enter into the scandalous accusations which have been from time to time brought against his conduct, such as the charge that he appropriates to his own use the property of the other members of the society; that he sent away his wife, having formed an attachment to another lady; that it was not safe for an unprotected female to reside at Brocton, &c. These and similar charges have been made against him, and, though refuted, have been [raked up again; for venomous reptiles are generally tenacious of life. Those who care to read them will find complete refutations of these charges in the *Spiritual Magazine*, 1869, p. 282; the *New Church Independent*, 1869, p. 56; Robinson's *Recipient*, vol. ii. pp. 510 and 556, and vol. iii. p. 325; and in a letter by myself at p. 120 of vol. iii. of the *Christian Spiritualist*. I do not care to waste time in refuting them again; suffice it to say that I know that they are false; and I also know that one source of these calumnies was a person who was dismissed from the society, and another was the family of a young man

whom Harris openly reproved for gross immorality. Leaving these charges, then, I will proceed to the examination of misunderstood passages in Harris's writings. In the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1868, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, we find three articles on Harris's writings, which there receive a considerable amount of abuse, and Harris himself is called (p. 74) a "poetical and religious maniac, with brief lucid intervals." These are supplemented by a paper of a similar nature in the January number for 1869. Any one who wishes to see all that can be said against Harris will find it in these volumes; but if they turn out to be all based on error, all readers who are not poetical and religious, or even Spiritualistic maniacs, can arrive at but one conclusion. The first charge is at p. 5 of the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1868, where the writer says—"Harris's poems, the *Lyric of the Golden Age* and *Lyric of the Morning Land*, were, according to his own statements, dictated by the spirits of Byron, Shelley, Keats, Pollok, &c. Now every one of these spirits, according to Mr. Harris's present belief, and, indeed, a belief which he held when he visited and lectured in London in 1861, are devils and impudent deceivers." The critic proceeds to say that, in spite of this belief, Harris allowed the sale to go on at the doors of his own lecture-room just the same. In answer to this I reply (1) that the *Lyric of the Morning Land* was not dictated by the spirits of Byron, &c., and these poets are not even mentioned in it; this statement, therefore, only shows the ignorance of the reviewer; (2) that Harris never said that these poems were dictated by devils, nor has he ever withdrawn or repudiated them; on the contrary, he says in his greatest work, the *Arcana of Christianity*, that this work was received from the lyrical Heaven; (3) in 1870 he stated his intention to reprint these works when the time came, and correct the various typographical errors. The only part which he repudiates is the preface to these works, which was written by a Spiritualist, and prefixed to the work by the publishers to whom the work was sold during Harris's absence from New York. (The letter itself is given in No. 89 of *The Spiritualist*, where also I have entered more fully into this question.) The next charge in this *Magazine* is that the poems given by Harris in the *Song of Satan* are blasphemous. Indeed he says: "In no work that has come under our observation is the practice of every sensuality and every blasphemy inculcated with more Satanic recklessness than in this volume." But what does this mean? If it means that Harris inculcates blasphemy and sensuality, then the assertion is the foulest libel that was ever penned against him; but if it only means that the evil spirits taught these doctrines, what then? Did the reviewer expect them to talk like clergymen on the subject? The work is a valuable one, for it shows the devils as they are at home; and if it contains their evil utterances, it also contains their own confessions of the fearful sufferings into which their evils lead them. On this subject I will quote from p. 9 of this work, where Harris says: "This spirit who sings the glories of progression, and pours contempt upon the Word, is also the same who, as his true interior character more and more develops itself, stands out in naked, bold malignity. His sufferings, by his own confession, are fearful to endure, and terrible to narrate, while he takes an insane delight in painting to uninstructed minds [query—the mediums of the present day?] the exalted joys and the divine felicities of the spiritual existence which he possesses." I would advise every medium to read this work with care, that he may know the true state of evil spirits, and ask himself what test he has for discriminating between good spirits and devils clothed as angels of light.

Following on the review, we find at p. 15 of the *Magazine* another proof of the ignorance of the critic. He tells us, "As Swedenborg chiefly took in hand Genesis, Harris has undertaken the Revelations." I should have thought that any one who presumed to write about Harris or Swedenborg would have known that the latter wrote on Exodus also, and that both have written on Genesis and the Apocalypse. This error again shows the reviewer's unfitness for the task he has taken upon himself.

A third extraordinary blunder now comes before us. The reviewer says of internal breathing—"We hold it to be a universal and inalienable function of every living soul, not the capriciously bestowed boon which Harris represents. We are persuaded that no living spirit could continue to live without spiritual breath, any more than an animated physical body can exist without breathing physical air, &c." To this the answer is obvious. Harris speaks of a certain spiritual breathing, which only a certain number at present possess; hence, whatever spiritual breathing all may possess, that of

which Harris writes is something different and additional. The difference between the two I have mentioned in my first paper, in No. 81 of *The Spiritualist*; and all this might have been found out even by the reviewer, had he read the chapters from the *Ar. Chr.* published in *The Herald of Light*, vol. v. Suffice it to say that people in general do not present the phenomena of inner breathing recorded in my first paper, which alone is a proof that the critic is wrong, and does not understand the subject on which he is writing.

The February number of the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1868 contains a review of *The Great Republic*, containing a great many sneering remarks about Harris, which are too silly and palpably erroneous to be seriously refuted. In the March number, however, we find a third attack on Harris. We here find again the utterly erroneous statement that the *Lyric of the Morning Land* was dictated by Byron and others, to which I have already referred. Then follow some extracts from the preface to the *Lyric of the Golden Age*, which the reviewer says was "written by the friends already alluded to, and under the immediate inspection and sanction of Mr. Harris himself." I will again say that this preface was not "written under the immediate inspection and sanction" of Harris, but was printed with the work during Harris's absence. Harris repudiates the preface altogether, and requested Mr. John Thomson, the publisher of his works in Great Britain, not to bind it up with his reprint of the work, as it was calculated to misrepresent his teaching. Next we come to a beautiful spiritual vision which Harris had of the death of his first wife, which occurred about 1856. The reviewer actually asks us to believe that Harris now believes that even this vision was from hell. It is utterly untrue. Harris never said anything of the sort. He acknowledges that he was deceived by demons once, but he has never said he was so in this case, or indeed, since he received inner breathing in 1852-3.

The last series of charges to which I need refer are to be found in the *Spiritual Magazine* for January, 1869, in a paper written by a clergyman of the Church of England. I need not refute them at length: some of them I have answered before in this paper; others need no answer. I will only quote three assertions to prove how recklessly assertions are made without the slightest proof, and how little real knowledge of Harris's works his would-be critics possess. 1. The writer says of Harris's *Great Republic*, "It takes a false and exaggerated account of human evil. No human being is or can be so thoroughly and abominably wicked as the Jews are described to be." To this I answer that the Jews are not mentioned at all in the above work. 2. The writer says, "There is a great deal of revolting sensualism in the book. Subjects of delicacy are treated in a manner at once unseemly and shocking." This is untrue. There is not a single passage in the *Great Republic* that the critic himself would hesitate to read aloud to the most prudish old maid amongst his acquaintances, not even if they should include the celebrated lady who fainted because the preacher spoke of the "naked truth." When Harris does speak in his other works on "subjects of delicacy," he does it in a way that can be understood by those who need such advice. I am sure that a great deal of the immorality which prevails among the young is due to the fact that their parents are ashamed to explain to their offspring the laws of life, allowing them to grow up in ignorance, till they learn these subjects, not as sacred purities, but mixed up with all kinds of loathsome perversions. To the pure all things are pure. 3. The critic accuses Harris of having taught "the stoppage of the earth in its rotation, when it is to be struck with a devouring comet, whirled out of its orbit, purified by fire, and afterwards brought back again into its position to serve as the hallowed habitation of redeemed men." All this is a mere fiction, evolved by the writer out of his own inner consciousness: Harris never said anything of the sort.

With this letter I bring this series of papers in *The Spiritualist* to an end. Since I have begun them I have had further proofs of the truth of Harris's statements of a most remarkable kind. Internal respiration is a great fact. It is coming to the world, and in time will so demonstrate its presence that there will be no need of argument; for it will be its own proof. In the meantime I have considered it my duty to write these brief notes on the subject, feeling that they might be of help to some. My belief has already been realised, and I now leave them to produce such fruit as the Divine Master, the Lord Jesus, shall, in His infinite wisdom, decree.

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.B. (Lond.)

4, Highbury New Park, N.

ALLEGED NEGLECT OF WORKERS IN SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—I have always mixed but very slightly with Spiritualists, in their gatherings and other public displays which they make. But I am a constant and attentive student of our literature, and take the greatest interest in the different ways in which Spiritualism in England is developing itself. I "read, mark, learn, and as I inwardly digest," I am often constrained to ask myself the question, Whither are we tending? At each successive moment of existence, whether of the individual or of communities, we are going somewhere, and it may be well for us to ask ourselves, now and again, in what direction?

The majority of English Spiritualists appear to be unfriendly to Christianity, and the conclusion I am compelled to draw from the evidence before me is that when a man becomes a Spiritualist, it is not insisted upon, certainly, but it seems to be expected of him that he shall cast aside every form of Christianity, even the Christianity of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. You may be an atheist, a pantheist, a deist, or almost anything you like, and your theological opinions will not be used to your disadvantage; but if you are so unfortunate as to be a Christian, and say so, if you tell the Spiritualist body that you believe in Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life, and the Teacher from whose verdict there lies, and can lie, no right of appeal, it is true you are not excommunicated, the fact that you are a Spiritualist is still admitted, but you are looked upon with eyes more or less unfriendly, and a wonder is expressed how, believing in Spiritualism, you can at the same time be a Christian. No doubt, logically speaking, Spiritualism does not necessarily imply Christianity, as the two are easily separable. But some of us Christian Spiritualists have been brought to Christianity by Spiritualism, while others of us have had our faith in Christianity deepened and purified by this very influence; and it does seem rather hard that we should not meet from our brother Spiritualists the same heartiness of recognition which is accorded to those who are non-Christian. To observe such an attitude towards us is a blunder, as well as a wrong. Surely it is better that a Christian should be a Spiritualist than that he should not be one, or that he should be opposed to spiritualism; and if in the exercise of his private judgment he can reconcile absolute fidelity to Christ with the belief in Spiritualistic phenomena, and all that is essential to an intelligent belief in Spiritualism, it must be so much the better for him, and for the movement also; and so far from his Christianity being a stumbling-block in his way, he ought rather to be congratulated on his ability to effect a reconciliation of belief, which comparatively few Christians can effect. I cannot, of course, expect non-Christians to say that they are Christians, but I do think non-Christian Spiritualists might with advantage to the cause manifest a little more generosity of feeling and treatment towards those of us who, being Christian Spiritualists, are not perhaps quite so enlightened as they are, but equally sincere, self-sacrificing, and liberal in the best sense of the term.

Take the case of Dr. Sexton. I am not merely grieved, I am ashamed at the impediments thrown in his way; and when these are not placed there, the degree in which he is practically and so largely ignored. Here is a man, a ripe scholar, a good scientist, a thorough philosopher, a keen and exact logician, an admirable platform speaker, and a splendid debater, but chiefly, as I take it, because he is not merely a Christian, but a "pronounced" one, and refuses to ignore his Christian belief while expounding or pleading for Spiritualism, he is allowed to struggle as few others would have permitted themselves to do, and seldom employed unless in cases where societies are glad of his advocacy, but want it given to them *gratis*. When Dr. Sexton avowed himself a Spiritualist, he broke the ties of half a lifetime, and flung himself into the new movement into which his reason and conscience had precipitated him with all the energy and singleness of mind which have invariably characterised him as a public man. And what has been the result? For a little while he was the rage; but from the time he avowed himself on the Christian side, and told the world that it was Spiritualism itself which had brought him back to Christianity, his engagements to lecture have become "small by degrees and beautifully less," and the pecuniary support which Spiritualists ought to have afforded him has been rendered only in the most meagre degree. Men have been put forward into the front of whom it may be said with perfect truth that he has forgotten more than they will ever know, and this preference has been shown because Dr. Sexton is a Christian, and they are not Christians. I do not know how these facts may strike you and your readers, but, if this is the

genuine outcome of what is called "liberalism," then may God shield me from being a liberal; for liberalism of this kind seems to sum up its creed in saying, "You are free to believe as we do, and if you don't we'll make you, or try to do so by starving you into compliance."

I write these words without Dr. Sexton's knowledge, without any suggestion from him, and, very likely, did he know of my writing them, without his approval. But one friend may surely act contrary to the wishes of another in a case of this kind, especially when not to do so would seem to be a betrayal of the very friendship professed. The neglect Dr. Sexton has experienced at the hands of Spiritualists for a long time past is a simple disgrace, and when the history of this movement comes to be written in the future, it will occupy a sad and dishonourable page in it. In saying all this I beg of you to understand, most fully and distinctly, that I am not pleading, directly or indirectly, for myself, and that I have no conceivable selfish or personal motive to serve. I am a Spiritualist, and cannot help being one, and I never conceal the fact, although, if I had followed the suggestions of mere worldly prudence, I should have kept my belief to myself, and so not have lost friends, or involved myself in countless sacrifices and almost any amount of unpardonable slander. No, sir, this is not a personal plea, but a few words wrung out of me in consideration of one my friendship with whom has ranged over two-and-twenty years, and who is entitled to far better treatment than he has ever yet received. Dr. Sexton knows quite well the money value of his talents and attainments; and had mere money been his object, and he had been willing to sell himself to the highest bidder, wealth itself would have flowed into his coffers. But he has chosen, in this as in every other crisis of his life, to be simply honest to the present truth and the present duty, with what results, as far as the Spiritualist movement is concerned, let the Spiritualists answer, and blush as they do so.

I trust to your sense of fairness to insert this letter, even though you may not sympathise with its contents. I most willingly bear witness that hitherto your spirit of fair play has been one of deed and truth, and not of name only, and I will not believe that in this instance you will depart from it.

FREDERICK ROWLAND YOUNG.

Rose Cottage, Swindon, May 1, 1875.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.

SIR,—For the information of many of our readers residing in Dalston, Hackney, Clapton, Kingsland, Stoke Newington, and surrounding neighbourhoods, I desire an opportunity of briefly pointing out, through the medium of your columns, the advantages offered to intending applicants for membership of the Dalston Association. In the first place, an opportunity is offered for social intercourse, enabling inquirers and Spiritualists to compare their experiences, and to obtain advice on disputed points. An experimental *seance* is held weekly, affording means for obtaining a knowledge of the incipient phases of the phenomena, which many, desirous of investigating Spiritualism, are prevented from gaining at home through various objections raised by their relatives or friends. On the last public evening in each month special arrangements are made to provide *seances* with fully developed mediums, through whom may be observed some of the more marked phenomena of Spiritualism. In addition, papers upon various topics connected with Spiritualism are read at these meetings, and discussions invited thereon. Lectures are also delivered from time to time as opportunity may offer. Members likewise have the privilege of borrowing books from the library, which contains many of the best works on Spiritualism yet published; and they can peruse, at the rooms, all the current English Spiritualist newspapers and magazines. Through the liberal concessions recently made by Mrs. Woodforde, Mr. C. E. Williams, and Mr. F. M. Parkes, sittings can be had by members with them at reduced fees. In conclusion, I may state that all communications, addressed to the Association, will receive every attention.

THOMAS BLYTON,

Hon. Sec. and Treasurer.

74, Navarino-road, Dalston, London, E.
21st April, 1875.

THE BAZAAR.

SIR,—The letters which you have printed the last two or three weeks, evince the interest felt in different parts of the country, in reference to the coming bazaar. There is one feature I am very desirous of seeing well carried out, and which I intend bringing specially before the next meeting of the

Bazaar Committee, and that is, that we should endeavour to obtain the loan of spiritual paintings, drawings, photographs, specimens of direct writing, or spiritual curiosities of any kind; so that we shall be able, in fact, to invite the public to a small exhibition of spiritual art.

For a single evening, or a *soiree*, the labour involved in moving and fixing a number of articles of this kind, especially where possession of the room has to be given up the same evening, seems hardly worth the effort. In such a case as the bazaar, however, the risk of damage is far less, and the useful purpose likely to be answered, far greater.

I would, therefore, on behalf of the committee, ask those who possess works of spiritual art to be willing to lend them, as a valuable means of spreading a knowledge of the subject. Anything sent to the rooms of the Association, 38, Great Russell-street, would be taken every care of.

If a few thousand handbills of an inexpensive character were distributed at some of the large meetings, which would be held in usual course during the week previous to the bazaar, they might bring a number of additional visitors. These handbills should include the mention of an exhibition of Spiritual works of art.

If the exertions now being made are continued, the success of the bazaar as to contributions seems assured. But we must remember that its final success depends on purchasers, and that for an unpopular subject special means must be used to attract them.

EDWARD T. BENNETT.

Betchworth, May 3rd.

CONTINENTAL MEDIUMS.

SIR,—The following is an extract from a letter from the Baroness von Vay, which she requests that you will kindly publish in your next number.

"Now I must tell you bad news. Warned by my guides, we made the sad discovery that Mrs. Pucher cheated us. You will remember the accounts of manifestations in the cabinet which were published a short time back. In the beginning, when the full form and the arms appeared, she would not, could not, deceive us; but later, when we had full confidence in her, she became possessed by bad spirits, and began to cheat. My guides told me one evening, that she was imitating the spirit light, simply by means of a white handkerchief. We immediately tried it; the room was half dark, and lo, there was the same effect, but no arms and no figure, only the light beckoning and nodding. We invited the woman to our house, telling her nothing. First, we put her into a closed bag; nothing occurred; we then tried without a bag, and this light came. My cousin, Count G. Wurmbrand grasped the light, and held Mrs. Pucher's handkerchief in his hand. It is very sad that the first medium for physical phenomena was so misled by bad spirits. When she began to cheat, the good spirits left her, and bad ones possessed her. These bad spirits cannot produce the physical phenomena; they can do nothing, so they instigate their mediums to practice deception.

"There is a committee consisting of the first gentlemen and professors in Vienna, who would like to see good physical phenomena. We wish very much that Mr. Williams could come to us; we are in strong need of such *seances* as his."

I cannot refrain from remarking that this incident, in conjunction with others which have occurred lately, appears to me to open up the very serious question of the responsibility of mediums, exposed as they are to seemingly irresistible influences, both from the spiritual and the material side. They are the sport of the sitters, as well as the spirits, and are besides susceptible to atmospheric and hygienic conditions. Even the best guides appear not always to have power to shield their mediums from evil influences.

What is the power of prayer under such circumstances? Does it always avail?

EMILY KISLINGBURY.

38, Great Russell-street.

SIR,—In my last letter I find a line omitted by the printer which leaves a sentence unintelligible. After "both are right from their point of view," it should continue: "If Mad. Huguet had exposed or explained the first part of the *seance*, she would indeed have been very clever."

"M.A." in his excellent letter, seems strongly inclined towards the theory of evil spirits, using mediums as tools for malicious devices, and asked for more facts bearing on this now so important and even pressing question. Last year we had a *seance* here with a powerful medium, who had gone previously through such convincing tests that their present application seemed almost superfluous. But, for truth's sake, and to meet objections from outsiders, he was well secured;

that is, he could not leave his chair without interfering with his bonds. We were, after some preliminary weak, doubtful manifestations, waiting for the "form," when our host suddenly shouted out, "We are humbugged: it is disgraceful," and he struck a light, pushed away the screen, and there sat the medium apparently in a deep trance, minus boots, and with the sleeves of his coat pulled back. Judgment and condemnation with most dramatic vigour followed quickly, and I confess the *tableau* looked ghastly suspicious, the screen disclosure in the *School for Scandal* being a tame affair in comparison. Bearing in mind that the imagination of a sceptic is far more creative than that of a believer, the boots seemed at once a pair of portmanteaus, containing sets of apparatus; besides, they showed the possibility of stealing away noiselessly. This seemed ugly enough, but I venture to state simply, that if the solemnly-enforced conditions had been observed, the medium would have been found exactly in the same position as at first, and the test all right, but the test, in the awful confusion, had been disturbed or forgotten altogether. The impression was decisive, and Spiritualism *in toto* was condemned in the same strain of indignation. This, to my mind, turned the catastrophe into a farce. After some time, when further crucial tests left no doubt about the genuineness of this medium, the judgment was modified to this form, that the medium was, in this instance at least, a cheat. Considering that his fee was promised, even in case of failure, such an assumption seemed to me bordering on the miraculous, as the medium would betray an amount of stupidity which would make a prize-ass in the agricultural show to blush, therefore the theory of influence of evil, diabolical spirits, gained in favour, although I perceived at once the danger of general acceptance of it. Even phrenology admitted into a court of justice might cause some trouble. A thief, condemned to seven years, might step forward, point to his skull, and say, "If yer feel my terrible bump of thieving, sir, yer would give me only seven days, and praise me for my moderation." If evil spirits can get admittance to the stage of life, the culprit, after boldly confessing his black deed, would side with the judge in condemning his invisible scoundrel, and deplore that he shows no inclination to materialise for immediate execution.

But is not the interference of extenuating circumstances in the present system of law a step towards similar views? The responsibility of the medium must be the same, nevertheless; he knows that punishment must follow transgression, and it is his duty and business to guard himself against evil control, and he should be struck from the list of professional mediums when found out; but when the "genuine" is found by merciless severity, the dishonesty should only be proclaimed after persevering sounding, guided by charity.

C. REIMERS.

9, Eastern-terrace, Brighton.

SIR,—Please publish the following short note about a person of great interest to Spiritualists here, he being one of the few public physical media who work out of England.

Since some time Mr. and Mrs. Firman, at Paris, were attacked by several parties, some of them sceptics and some of them "undeveloped Spiritualists." This was the case also in our country, where Mr. Firman gave some *seances* at Amsterdam.

Allow me, in the interests of truth, to tell in a few lines what I know and what I heard about those persons; perhaps this will influence people's judgment a little, as I am known as an old investigator, one of the first in this country. At Amsterdam I saw in the light the spirit Kibosh, besides other faces, while Mr. Firman sat entranced in the cabinet, and Mrs. Firman quite still with us at the table. The musical box (a very heavy one) floated, and, while floating, stopped or played fast and slow as desired. In what I witnessed there was not a shadow of deception, either in the dark *seance* or in the light. In the former Mr. Firman was bound with cords to his neighbours, while I sat near Mrs. Firman.

Afterwards I received letters from Amsterdam stating that Mr. Firman had submitted to be undressed, and had put on the entire dress of another gentleman, yet the spirit showed himself just as well as usual. On other occasions witnesses wrote to me that they saw the faces form themselves; that a kind of white fluidic veil was seen over Mr. Firman before the full forms developed. Added to this, Mr. Firman was searched several times. At the last *seance* at Amsterdam Mr. Firman was accused of floating the musical box with his teeth, and of stopping the spring with his tongue. The proof was, that they pretend to have found marks of teeth on the box, Mr. Firman saying simply that he knew nothing about it, as is

quite reasonable to suppose. At once some people forgot all the remarkable phenomena they witnessed, because of the foolish suggestions of others; for such alone, and *no positive proofs*, were on that occasion brought forward in accusation of the Firmans. We regretted sincerely that they did not visit the Hague.

Now I hear that at Paris a sceptical lady pretends to have exposed them also. After inquiry, I may remark—1. That to conceal herself secretly in order to play the spy is, to use a mild term, very unfashionable. 2. The piece of drapery which the spirit Kibosh, who was seized, left in the lady's hand, is no proof of deception; so know all *connoisseurs* (it is too long to repeat here the explanation). 3. They pretend that Mr. Firman used a mask and black gloves, but *nothing of this kind was ever found*. 4. Recently I saw a letter from a good investigator at Paris, a countryman of yours, who stated that Kibosh (the spirit) managed to show himself with the medium together in the light, and had succeeded already to some extent. I hope he will send you details.

A. J. RIKO.

The Hague, Holland, April 28th.

SIR,—Though Spiritualists should be the first to expose any attempt at imposture on the part of any medium, it is, on the other hand, our bounden duty, both to God and man, to see that mediums are not unfairly dealt with by a very sceptical and hostile public. The late Firman case at Paris offers a strong illustration of this principle. In weighing reasonable arguments or probabilities in reference to the charge made against Mr. Firman by Madame Huguet, to which assent has been given by several sceptical investigators present, his antecedents in connection with investigations and experiments made in company with such excellent and highly intelligent men as the Count de Bullet and Mr. Gledstaness should be accepted as one extremely strong plea in his favour, two others being the excessive ignorance and rancorous hostility usually exhibited by the public at large, in France particularly, as to all modern spiritual phenomena, and, lastly, the extreme self-stultification involved in all such attempts at shamming, when genuine mediumship, as in this case, is known to exist.

But, leaving all these considerations aside for the moment, may I briefly point out one oversight, likely to prove a fatal one, which his accusers have made in framing their heavy charge against him. I contend that they failed to show at the time he was seized anything approaching to a *sufficiency of wearing apparel for disguise*, in proximity to his person, without which any attempt at a sham would be simply incredible. For no man, not an idiot, would attempt such a thing, unless able to secrete the requisite paraphernalia. I think that eventually, what is termed a *fasco*, may be shown to have been on the side of his accusers. That Mr. Firman should have been on his knees when seized was natural enough; a little later he might have been found quite entranced and on the floor, as mediums for materialisation have been repeatedly found; and if the spirit materialising was the Indian said to be of only four feet in height, the fact of Mr. Firman being on his knees may assume some extra significance. After all, the well-attested phenomena of permanently materialised drapery and flowers, the "white stuff" seized, if a torn-off piece, could be easily accounted for, but in the state of our present knowledge, a scarf entire, if it was entire, would present a serious difficulty, but certainly not one leading to conclusive evidence against the medium. The absence of other requisite articles would still have to be accounted for, and his accusers cannot be permitted to amend their accusation to suit circumstances. Another difficulty to my mind is this. If Madame Huguet had determined beforehand—as she must have done—to test violently the medium's integrity, she could have done so as effectually by insisting, previous to his entering the cabinet, or at the precise moment of his doing so, upon a search being made of the cabinet and of his person; and Mr. Firman must have felt, owing to the hostile scepticism he must have previously been aware of, that such a search was possible or even probable. The spirits, too, must have well perceived her determination, but, as probably she had intended to watch some time before intervening, and was induced from her cramped position in the press to act hastily, their possible expectation that she would find the medium entranced was not quite realised. If an entire scarf was really found, the spirits should be invited, on Mr. Firman's recovery, to materialise permanently a scarf of similar texture.

C.

AMBIGUOUS PHRASES IN SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—It has often struck me how ambiguously the words "soul" and "spiritual" are used, in discussions among Spiritualists especially. From acceptance, the words are employed to denote the immaterial part of our being, on the hypothesis that in our total nature some distinction between that and our so-called material existence actually obtains. In this sense *soul* means the bare existence of *soul*, supposed or believed. In another sense these words are taken to mean the attributes commonly imputed to soul and things spiritual, these attributes usually being of a "lofty" and complimentary description. But used in this sense the words signify something neither included nor implied in the other. Thus I have heard in conversation the idea put forth that the souls of people who lead low and earthly lives might leave their bodies in disgust, without awaiting the process of death. Such fancies owe their plausibility to the ambiguity in question.

B. H.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C.—We do not desire to publish anonymous letters about manifestations which may occur in the presence of professional mediums.

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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 28th 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. C. Maurice Davies, D.D.; Charles R. Drysdale, Esq., M.D. D. H. Dyte, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Mrs. D. H. Dyte; James Edmunds, Esq., M.D.; Mrs. Edmunds, James Gannon, Esq.; Gratian Geary, Esq.; Robert Hannah, Esq., F.G.S.; Jenner Gale Hillier, Esq.; Mrs. J. G. Hillier; Henry Jeffery, Esq.; Albert Kisch, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Joseph Maurice, Esq.; Isaac L. Meyers, Esq.; B. M. Moss, Esq.; Robert Quelch, Esq., C.E.; Thomas Reed, Esq.; C. Russell Roberts, Esq., Ph.D.; William Volckman, Esq.; Horace S. Yeomans, Esq."

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

"George Cary, Esq., B.A.; Edward W. Cox, Esq., Sergeant-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 or 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tilts 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 "Ycs," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three signals be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

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

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

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

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

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