

The Spiritualist

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 146.—(VOL. VI.—No. 24.)

LONDON: JUNE 11, 1875.

Published Weekly; Price Twopence.

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February, 1875.

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VOLUME SIX. NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JUNE 11th, 1875.

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SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

NO. XXXIV.

[I did not see that any good end could be served by reiterating objections which I was far from considering that Imperator had met. I regarded his reply as a piece of special pleading. I never denied the claims put forward by him, and he ignored utterly what seemed to me of the last importance. I considered that I had a complete right to require proof which should satisfy my own judgment as to identity, and which should establish in my mind a conviction that I was not the sport of my own fancy, or of a delusion, or of an organised attempt to deceive. So I simply stated again what my difficulty was, saying that it had not been met, and that a threat of withdrawal only made matters worse. I professed my readiness to wait, to review what had been said, and to hear and weigh anything that might be added. But I stated firmly that I could go no step further until my judgment was satisfied. I pointed out that vague denunciation was not with us considered to be reply, and that a frame of mind such as mine was not fairly described in terms that had been used. Moreover, I submitted that to tell me that Jesus Christ refused all tests save those of His own choosing—while undoubtedly a strong point—was perhaps a dangerous argument to advance. As to the threat of withdrawal, I said that it would only be to leave me in my present state of uncertainty, not to say of disbelief, and its result must be to cause me to throw over the whole matter as a tangled web which I could not unravel: which might be useful if one could disentangle it, but which might be useless and unprofitable, and which probably was not worth the trouble. The answer came at once:—]

Friend, we have weighed what you say, and we are disposed to recognise the cogency of your reply. We did not intend in the words which we felt constrained to employ to censure your desire for information, but rather the attitude of mind which seemed to prescribe to us conditions with which we felt ourselves unable to comply. And we intended to convey forcibly to your mind the impression which was made upon us by constant opposition, or at least by the perpetual presence in your mind of anxiety and mistrust. Such inharmonious conditions hamper us. We have a mission to

* 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 hand-writing peculiar to the communicating intelligence is always preserved and the individuality remains throughout the same.—Ed.

discharge, and we are not content to wait and waste precious time and opportunity. We have a work to do, and it must be done; if not through this circle of friends, then through others. And we did but state our intention of withdrawing from you because we accepted your own statement that it was impossible for you to go forward until we had complied with your conditions. We could not do so, and felt the necessity of withdrawal. We have no wish to break the connection we have formed, and to undo the work which has been so laboriously accomplished. It may be that in the future we may influence you more fully. It may be that rest and reflection may help us and you. We urge you to ponder and meditate, and to ask only at rare intervals for communications in circle. Only when an earnest desire for communion exists will we give it. We are not desirous indeed to add anything to what has already been given. The additions to our circle which you speak of are not desirable. Every such addition involves a change of conditions which causes much anxious care and trouble to us, which we do not grudge when there is prospect of advantage. In this case there is not, and we must discourage the scheme.

All attempts at physical experiment with yourself we absolutely forbid. You are certainly unable to bear the strain which such could involve; especially now, you set too much store by mere physical marvels. They are at best subsidiary. And you run risk of injury by sitting in strange circles. We discourage all such attempts. They do but retard progress, and will end in injury and disappointment. Such a course is never beneficial to you; and though we have not interfered to prevent you from joining other circles, we tell you that we must repress such attempts now. If we are to work with you, you must seclude yourself from other influences. This is essential. If you do not, you render yourself so far the worse for our work, and run grave risk of possession by intelligences whom you would avoid, did you know more of the risk you run, and with whom we could have no part. You err in supposing that your power is of value to other spirits in other circles. We prevent that; and you will gain no proofs in that way, nor be of service in helping other mediums; rather the reverse. We cannot allow you to be so used.

For the present we do not enter further into the points raised. Did we not know integrity and truth to govern your mind, we should long since have ceased to take pains which yield so little fruit. Ignorance has caused you to do much that you would not have done had you been wiser. And though our friends have not aided us as we hoped, we have desired to do all we can to benefit them and you. But there is a limit to our power and will in such matters, and we should act unwisely did we attempt to force on you that for which collectively you are not fit. Hereafter it may be done; now we see it is impossible to do more. We shall not attempt fresh efforts. We cannot spend further time and pains on that which, you have convinced us, is useless. Your arguments prove at any rate that your mind has not grasped the true nature of our work. We are not able, nor indeed are we willing, to comply with the suggested tests which you prescribe. It is not thus that conviction is assured, and God's messengers avouched. Compliance would but cause further demands; and conviction cannot be established by any such material means.

Meditate rather on what has been done. You have

put aside what we have laid before you. We do not blame you for honestly rejecting what does not commend itself to you. But this done, we have no alternative. The choice is of eternal import, and you appear to have made it; whether wisely, time will show you; and it may then be possible for you to undo some of the effects of your choice. We would even yet hope that a careful review of your position may induce you to retreat from it.

+ IMPERATOR.

[On the following day, Oct. 4, 1873, the writing was resumed. Some of it is so purely personal that I prefer not to print it. The gist of it all was the reiteration of the claims previously made, and the concession of some points which I had insisted on, especially that of the threatened withdrawal. On this point the reply shows such evidence of pure human reason, and is so typical of the logical method in which this intelligence has always dealt with my arguments, that I print it as it stands, though so personal in its nature. It was written with great clearness and rapidity, and entirely without knowledge on my part of what the substance was until it was complete.]

I, the servant of God, the minister of the Most High, and the guide and guardian of your spirit, implore upon you the divine benediction. The Holy and Loving Father bless you. May the influences, invisible but potent, by which you are surrounded be gracious and powerful for your good. It has been strongly urged on us that we should pause before we abandon all our efforts to act further upon you. This has especially been put forward by—[a friend recently dead, who had communicated with me very soon after his departure] whose knowledge of the conditions of belief which beset you is more fresh and vivid than our own. It has been urged that, while our work must be done through others if not through you, still that time should be given for consideration, and that no one who has received the mass of evidence which you have can in the end resist complete conviction of the truth. The point of view from which you see, the mists of prejudice which enshroud even a candid mind, the influences which the adversaries are able to throw around you, the difficulties which must beset attempts at spirit intercourse—all these are points which are to be borne in mind. And while we, knowing as we do the truth and sincerity of all that seems to you dubious, can scarcely grasp your position, we are still hopeful that the earnestness and reality of your doubts will be the measure of the strength of your conviction in the future.

So long as your frame of mind did not surround you with an atmosphere in which we were not able to act upon you, we confined ourselves to replying to your difficulties. But when the circle which we had gathered with such pains and care became so broken as to be useless, and so inharmonious that it was impossible for us to establish a control in most cases, our plans were frustrated, and we were forced to consider if any good could come of further efforts. The constant repetition of physical phenomena was far from our wish. It is not for such purpose that we are with you. And even if it were, we could not use your organism for that mode of manifestation. The daily demand which you make upon your vital power, and the peculiar nature of your bodily strength, constantly fluctuating, preclude any such attempts. It needs a ruder organism on which no other demands are made to safely carry out such experiments. We have indeed successfully communicated

to you in this way by writing much that we desired to say. But, after all, we found that a great part of our work was confined to answering your objections, and, as regards our circle, the great end we have in view remained unaccomplished.

It was while we were perplexed and troubled thus that you put forward a demand for certain tests which we found it impossible as well as undesirable to give. We felt that they would but be the prelude to more; and we knew that you had not sufficiently weighed the evidence already given. Moreover, we could, at our own opportunity, supply better proof than that which you ignorantly asked for. So we decided that if you were withdrawn from spirit communion, by the withdrawal of communications, your mind would probably recur to the past, and learn its lessons aright. But we have in view the alternative prospect, which is that we are unable to cut off the power which is in you, though we may refuse to use it; and so that you would run the risk of its being seized upon by others, and deceit and falsehood might find an entry, and our work be utterly set at naught. We dare not ignore this risk. Nor can we refuse to acknowledge that to leave you now might be to allow you to relapse into disbelief. From the habit of pure logical deduction which in you supersedes intuition to a great extent, it might result that you would cease to believe what had ceased to occur daily. Impressions would fade, and gradually die out.

It seems, then, that patient waiting is the only course that does not present difficulty. We are not able to prophesy results. But we know the two roads that lie before you, and that you will pursue whichever of them your reason chooses. We have no power, even if we had the wish, to force your choice. Its responsibility rests solely on yourself. You may choose well, and your spirit be put on the road to progress and enlightenment; or you may refuse the opportunity, and find that you have thereby consigned yourself to darkness and retrogression in the future. That rests with you. We abate not a jot of our claims: rather do we magnify them. You will know in the future more clearly what they are. For the present, earnest, prayerful and careful study is due to us, and what we have put before you. Go over the past: weigh its teachings, study its records, draw out in words your conclusions from it. Mark the progress made. Record with minute care the process by which what you admit to be a Divine Creed has been elaborated. And then carry on your mind to the future. Look down the vista of the ages yet to come. Reflect that you stand but on the very threshold; that much remains to be eradicated before your spirit can progress; that much has to be cleared away before the building can be raised; that eternity is before you, and that we proffer to you the key of knowledge.

Pause, we implore you, before you reject what comes a second time to none. Rejected it will be a curse that shall rest like a dark shadow on your soul through the ages. Accepted, it shall be a jewel that shall shine with increasing lustre, brighter and brighter yet through eternity.

Pray, rather pray to the Great Father that He will bless your work, and allow us to guide you still. Pray that your spirit may be raised from the cold, cheerless atmosphere of earth to commune with the bright intelligences that wait to instruct you. Few have been so tended, shall it be that few have so little benefited? Our prayers shall mingle with yours that such may not be, but that you may be protected from in-

fluences of ill, bodily and spiritual, and that you may be led on to higher fields of knowledge, and to clearer and more perfect trust.

Father Eternal, Infinite, All-wise, we draw near to Thee, and lay before Thee our petitions, knowing that Thou dost hear us and wilt answer our prayers. Eternal God, remove from our path the base and clogs that hinder and hamper us. Loving Father, shed into the doubting heart a beam of light to illumine the dark corners, and to drive out the lurking foe. Mighty Master, bear down to us that consolation which we need in our labour. Great the labour, great must be the love. Great is the work, great must be the power. Grant it, Almighty Power! And to Thee will we render our praises. Before Thee we will testify of our grateful adoration, and to Thee will we bring the free-will offering of our loving homage. Glory and blessing and honour and praise be to Thee from angel and spirit through Thy universe! + IMPERATOR S. D.²

[The above communication was signed by a great number of names known to me as those who had influenced my hand on previous occasions. Eleven different signatures follow it; and it has been explained at different times that no communication comes solely from our spirit, though one (as in this case) was spokesman, and principally inspired its substance. I replied in effect that I was glad that my position was better understood; and I stated it thus: Had you simply said that what I asked could not be done, I should have been content, as I am now, to go on patiently and watchfully, until the fog lifts. This is the present position. You have not answered my arguments in any way. You have reiterated your claims, and have informed me that you are not able to give proof of what you advance. Instead of doing so, you revoke what I must call a hasty conclusion. You say rightly that if I ceased to believe in the reality and truthfulness of your statements, I should probably be unable to accept any others that I had not had the same means of testing. And so opponents would have the forcible argument of one who had proved the question to the root stating publicly his reasons for rejecting the claims made. The devil would get the credit of having wrecked one more soul. I am glad that you do not propose to deal such a blow to weak faith. I am content to wait, and when my reason and judgment are satisfied, I shall have no reason to say so, for you will know. Till then I can only watch and wait. I shall do so with all care, for I fully appreciate the importance of the issues at stake.]

No sooner had this concluded than tests of personal identity began to be given. Spirits were brought whom I never before heard of, who satisfied me as to their identity by careful detail of their lives—in all cases literally accurate. Some, too, whose names were known to me came and gave facts as to their lives, and in some cases extracts from their works. On Oct. 5 twenty-six lines from the works of one Norton, an old alchymist, were written out in a curious archaic hand. This I subsequently verified at the British Museum as correct. I do not detail these cases here, as they only bear incidentally on the Teachings. I mention Norton's case as typical. The book is scarce, and very little is known of Norton, even his date being uncertain. The next communication of importance was on Oct. 12, 1873.]

MR. ALGERNON JOY, honorary secretary to the National Association of Spiritualists, reached California safely, and a letter just received from him by Miss Kislingbury stated that he intended to remain there until about the end of May before leaving for the East coast.

SPIRITUALISM IN ST. PETERSBURG.

BY THE HON. ALEXANDRE AKSAKOF,
RUSSIAN IMPERIAL COUNCILLOR, AND CHEVALIER
OF THE ORDER OF ST. STANISLAS.

DURING the whole of this winter a French medium, M. Camille Bredif, has taken up his residence in Paris, so I made an arrangement with him to give me a *seance* once a week at my house. Our circle at the beginning had a limited number of sitters, consisting of M. Butlerow, M. Wagner (Professor of Zoology at St. Petersburg University), an ex-professor of physiology who does not desire his name to be published, my wife, and myself. We began by holding ten table *seances*; we obtained complete levitations of the table and movements of it without being touched, raps, imitations of sounds produced by moving objects over the surface of the table, and so on. The result of these *seances* has been an article by Professor Wagner on "Psychodynamic Phenomena," which he published in my German paper. Since that time we have begun another series of experiments by isolating the medium in partial darkness behind a screen; direct observation by eyesight being thus cut off by the screen, systems of tying the medium of a more and more complicated nature were gradually introduced, and we became convinced of the reality of the phenomena [produced under these conditions; we obtained direct writing and movement of objects without possible contact with the hands of the medium, and the appearance of hands of a different type to those of the medium. The result of the last series of experiments has been the publication of another article by Professor Wagner, but this one was published in Russia in the *Revue de l'Europe*, the best journal that we possess.

During the whole winter the Russian public has not ceased to take the most lively interest in Bredif's *seances*. Yielding to the pressure, we had to enlarge our circle by admitting some of our best literary and scientific men, whose presence I thought would be useful to our cause. The growing interest was increased a hundred-fold by the publication of the article by Professor Wagner, which is quite an epoch in the annals of Spiritualism in Russia, for it is the first article that the Russian press has printed in favour of this question, and it is one, moreover, which emanates from a scientific authority. But, on the other hand, the article raised a great deal of abuse, for it brought forth more than thirty others in various newspapers. It is scarcely necessary to say that the greater portion of the abuse has been directed against the professors who have had the boldness to bear witness to a truth which the world does not understand, and believes to be but absurd charlatanism. Although much of the abuse and raiillery has been directed at Professor Wagner, Professor Butlerow and myself have had to take our share; but the great result of all this agitation is that the Society of Physics attached to the University at St. Petersburg has unanimously accepted the proposition of one of our most distinguished scientific men, M. Mendelèef, Professor of Chemistry at the University, and a member of the Academy of Science, to nominate a committee for the investigation of medial phenomena.

Mrs. FAY, the celebrated medium, contemplates returning to America shortly.

Mr. MARTHEZE has been travelling in the north of England, observing the manifestations which take place in the presence of the Liverpool, Newcastle, and other mediums.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION LIBRARY.

THE following splendid additions, the gift of the Rev. W. Whitear, have been made to the library of the Association:—"Nature," eight complete volumes, bound; Duke of Argyll's "Reign of Law;" "Atlantic Monthly," two vols.; Bekker's "World Bewitched," published in 1695; Calmet's "Apparitions," published in 1759; Dr. W. B. Carpenter's "Lectures on the Functions of the Brain;" Chevalier's "Experiences of Spiritualism;" Miss Cobbe's "Religious Duty" and "Studies, Ethical and Social;" B. Coleman's "Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England;" George Combe's "Constitution of Man" and "Relation between Science and Religion;" "Report of Convention of Spiritualists at Darlington, in 1865 and 1866;" "Daybreak," 1868 and 1869; Mrs. De Morgan's "From Matter to Spirit;" Judge Edmond's "Spiritual Tracts;" "Glimpses of a Brighter Land;" Greg's "Creed of Christendom;" Bishop Hare's "Difficulty of the Scriptures;" Bishop Hind's "Nature and Origin of Evil;" "Human Nature" for 1872 and 1874; Hutcheson's "Essay concerning Witchcraft;" Rev. J. Jones's "Spiritualism the Work of Demons;" Laming's "Spirituality of Causation;" Laycock's "Mind and Brain;" "The Medium," 1872 and 1874; Mountford's "Miracles, Past and Present;" Oxlee's "Confutation of Diabolarchy;" "Pioneer of Progress," 1874; "Quarterly Journal of Science," 1871 and 1872; Rymer's "Spirit Manifestations;" "Recollections of Sir Walter Scott," reprinted from "Fraser's Magazine;" Dr. Sexton's "Reply to Professor Tyndall's Address;" "The History of Jenny Spinner, the Ghost of Knebworth;" Dr. Travis's "Moral Freedom and Causation;" Tyndall's "Address at Belfast;" Vindex's "Spiritualism v. Satanism;" Wallace's "Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural;" Welby's "Signs before Death;" Rev. J. Smith's "Coming Man;" Olcott's "People from the other World;" N. B. Wolfe's "Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism;" Lizzie Doten's "Poems of Progress;" Lee's "Animal Magnetism;" Didier's "Mesmerism;" the first seven volumes of "The Zoist," containing valuable articles by Dr. Elliotson, Dr. Ashburner, and other writers on Mesmerism; and various numbers of magazines containing accounts of ghosts or articles of interest to Spiritualists. Mr. Whitear has also lent the following:—Alabaster's "Modern Buddhist;" Atkinson and Martineau's "Letters on Man's Nature and Development;" Bray's "Education of the Feelings;" "On Force," and "Manual of Anthropology;" Campbell's "Gospel of the World's Divine Order;" Miss Cobbe's "Broken Lights," "Dawning Lights," and "Hopes of the Human Race;" Colenso "On the Pentateuch;" Dr. Combe's "Mental Derangement;" George Combe's "Life of Dr. Combe;" "Moral Philosophy," and "Notes on the United States;" Darwin's "Descent of Man;" Froude's "Address at St. Andrews;" Greg's "Why are Women Redundant?" Grove's "Correlation of the Physical Forces" and "Discourse on Continuity;" Hanson's "Jesus of History;" Herschel's "Familiar Lectures;" Hurlbut's "Human Rights;" Irons's "Bible and its Interpreters;" Jukes's "Letters;" Lecky's "History of Rationalism;" Lubbock's "Prehistoric Times;" Macnaught's "Doctrine of Inspiration;" J. S. Mill's "Inaugural Address at St. Andrew's" and "Utilitarianism;" Norton's "Pentateuch;" A Country Parson's "Via Catholica;" Samuelson's "Views of the Deity;" Seeley's "Ecce Homo;" Simpson's "Paris after Waterloo;" Duke of Somerset's "Christian Theology;" Strange's "The Bible—is it the Word of God?" Tyndall's "Hours of Exercise in the Alps;" Ward's "Tremaine; or, The Man of Refinement;" and Combe's "Phrenology" and "Principles of Criminal Legislation." A friend, per Mr. Martin Smith, has presented the following:—Epes Sargent's "Planchette" and "Proof Palpable;" L. Doten's "Poems from the Inner Life;" Kardec's "Book on Mediums;" Brevior's "Two Worlds;" Hardinge's "Modern American Spiritualism;" Howitt's "History of the Supernatural;" Crowell's "Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism;" White's "Life of Swedenborg;" Crookes's "Researches in Spiritualism;" "Report of the Dialectical Society;" Wallace's "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism;" Owen's "Debatable Land" and "Footfalls;" Mrs. De Morgan's "From Matter to Spirit;" and a complete set of the "Spiritual Magazine," 14 vols. Sir Charles Isham has presented:—"Biography of Mrs. Conant;" "Flashes of Light from the Spirit Land;" Emerson's "History of Magic;" "Mary Jane;" Ferguson's "Supramundane Facts;" and Evans's "Mental Cure." Mr. Thomas Shorter has presented:—"Memorials of Theophilus Trinal;" Davis's "Progressive Lyceum Manual;" Brevior's "Way-side Verses" and "What is Religion?" Doherty's "Organic Philosophy;" Dennys's "Alpha;" Davis's "Seer;"

"Spiritual Magazine" for 1874; "The Ghost in the Tower," from *Notes and Queries*; Owen's "Self-supporting Home Colonies;" Travis's "Free-will and Law;" "Quarterly Journal of Education;" and odd numbers of reviews and journals. Two copies of "Heaven Opened" have been presented by Miss Theobald; Wilkinson's "Spirit-Drawings," by Mrs. E. Corner; Count de Medina Pomar's "Honeymoon," by the Countess of Caithness; "Songs of the Spirit," by Miss Hunt; Murray Spear's "Educator" and Adin Ballou's "Modern Spirit Manifestations," by Mr. A. Leighton; Wilson's "Theological Lectures," Harris's "Sermons" and "Breath of God with Man," and Brotherton's "Spiritualism and the New Church," by Mrs. Thomas Robinson; and Guldenstube's "Morale Universelle," by Mr. A. J. Riko, of The Hague.

A SKETCH IN DARK COLOURS.

A WASTE—a plain—interminable. Above brood clouds low and sullen, whose inky masses darken the scene and make the atmosphere dense and gloomy to a degree which I cannot describe, neither do I know how to impress you with the idea of a certain strange and solemn grandeur that dwells in the great masses and ranges of cloud. It is the only trace of grandeur in the scene, and perhaps it is thus enhanced. The degree of light varies through this veil, but nowhere do any full beams of blessed light find their way. Mandrakes—thistles—nettles—these form the vegetation. The nettles grow to trees, and stand in their place in the landscape; but their neighbourhood is death even to the dark miserable forms that people the plain, for they poison the air around them. What their touch is like is not known, for no one has survived the touch an instant who has unwittingly come against it. They are the living growth from the concentrated spite and hatred of the sphere beneath them.

Stagnant pools! Green, harsh waters that cannot slake the thirst. Yet round their brink hover shrouded figures, whose faces are half-hidden by their stooping attitude. They poke—they peer—they search—for there are black fish in this water which they eat. Loathsome food! but they are consumed with the unsatisfied pangs of hunger. Other forms wander aimlessly and shrinkingly over the rough stones.

Death! You may wonder at the word when I tell you that I am describing that world which is called spiritual. I say is called, because the word should not be used indiscriminately. There are other worlds besides the spiritual and the material. Many who leave your earth are clothed with the husks and outer emanations of their dead body—they have no spiritual body to be clothed in. They are not dressed in robes of light, nor do they stand in the rays of the spiritual sun. The spark of spiritual life which they possess forms for itself a semi-corporeal body which roams about, sometimes localised on the earth, sometimes wandering in a world, a scene of which I have endeavoured to describe,—a world which is not spiritual, for spirits find it as difficult to approach as they do the earth. I should like to tell you a great deal more about this scene, but my medium has not a brain for details.

Sometimes a glowworm light appears on the ground, and all that are within sight rush towards it: for light is so wonderful a thing to them that they cannot help craving for it, although they could not endure the light of the spiritual sun, untempered by the dark and gloomy clouds which screen their wretched world from the eyes of the angels.

Shall I try and explain this light to you? This is the strangest thing perhaps in all that I have to tell!

In your world there are spirits who are partially manifested in both worlds, and whom you call mediums. When one of these drifts into deep gloom of mind; lets evil passions darken his soul; lets cruel spite and bitter enmity oust peace and charity from his spirit: then is his spiritual spark seen to vanish from that spiritual sphere in which he lived, and it appears in this world of sin and sorrow.

And these forlorn creatures! There is an opening for life for them now! Can you wonder that they crowd around, and strive to force themselves into more distinct existence by taking possession of this spark, coercing it, terrifying it, and then using its physical life? Sometimes they force it entirely away from its physical life, and force it to wander, homeless, among the rocks and chill morasses of their dim world. Poor spirit! Pity it then!

But I am telling you facts, when I meant to draw a romantic picture.—*Through the Mediumship of Mrs. K. C.*

AN EXPERIMENTAL CIRCLE IN NEW YORK.

In the course of a private letter to Mr. W. H. Harrison, Colonel H. S. Olcott says:—

"I am just organising in this city an experimental circle, which I have named 'The Miracle Club,' for the purpose of conducting a series of scientific experiments, in the light, and without a 'cabinet.' Among its members will probably be a competent chemist, a mechanical engineer, an artist, a distinguished neurologist, an electrician, a judge, some lawyers, and some writers, thus insuring the intelligent investigation and analysis of any form of manifestation likely to occur. It is my desire to have substances analysed, force tested, dynamic power calculated, microscopic examinations of materialised substances made, the beating of the mediums' and spirits' hearts and their respective temperatures of body noted, and such important facts as may be communicated saved for future use by the help of the stenographer. We may only partially realise these results, perhaps our sittings may be wholly fruitless (although this I do not believe), but an honest attempt will at least be made to do for American science what your patient, brave Wallace, Crookes, and Varley have done for English science.

"Would it not be extremely important and fruitful of results, if similar 'clubs' were formed in Great Britain and on the Continent, to conduct, simultaneously with us, such experiments as might be mutually agreed upon? Take, for instance, the weighing of the materialised spirit-forms, which I successfully accomplished at the Eddy homestead and at Mr. Compton's house: how valuable a contribution to human knowledge might be made by the joint labours of these international co-operating clubs. If the plan meets with your approbation, will you not broach the idea to some gentleman of acknowledged ability, who would move in the matter at once?"

M. AKSAKOF has left St. Petersburg to visit his estates on the borders of Russia in Asia. He contemplates coming to London early in September to complete arrangements, if possible, with mediums to visit St. Petersburg for the purpose of giving *seances* to the scientific committee at the University there.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—The Mesmeric Committee of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism has commenced experimental work, several members have with their own consent been successfully sent into the mesmeric sleep, and other phases of mesmeric control have been observed. Captain James was present at a recent meeting of the committee, and witnessed a successful experiment. A notice has been issued by Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen, the honorary secretary to the committee, inviting the co-operation of other members of the Association who may desire to join in the work.—The Countess of Caithness has presented two copies of "The Honeymoon," by the Count Pomar, to the library of the Dalston Association.—The day of the ordinary weekly meetings has been altered from Thursday to Friday, the hour for assembling being 7.30 for 7.45 p.m., instead of 8 p.m. as heretofore. This alteration is only provisional, as it will be submitted for confirmation, or otherwise, at the next half-yearly general meeting of the members.

SPIRITUALISM IN RUSSIA.—The St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Journal des Débats* says that there is a great mania for Spiritualist manifestations in that city just now, and that the popularity of Home is far exceeded by that which a Frenchman named Brédiffe at present enjoys. Home was looked upon as something of a *dilettante*, for he only held his *seances* in those houses to which he was an invited guest, whereas M. Brédiffe is always ready to "manifest" at the rate of three roubles per head to a company not exceeding ten persons. As plenty of people are willing to pay three roubles on the chance of seeing spirits, he does a very flourishing trade. The correspondent of the *Débats* says that among the believers in M. Brédiffe are several professors of science, one of whom, M. Wagner, has published his profession of faith in the last number of the *European Messenger*. This declaration, appearing in a magazine which has so much influence in Russian society, created a great impression, but so far only two journals have made any effort to refute M. Wagner's statements. The correspondent adds that, ridiculous as the pretensions of the Spiritualists are, it is none the less to be regretted that their doctrines should find acceptance with men of intellect, for it happens that, at this very time, the Government is endeavouring to put down the fortune-tellers, and to root out the popular belief in wood demons, ghosts, ghouls, &c.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

ACTION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION IN RELATION TO THE PERSECUTION OF SPIRITUALISTS IN PARIS.

Last Tuesday night a meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held at 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, London, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder. The members present were Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Dr. Pearce, Mr. Keningale Cook, Mr. George Robert Tapp, Mr. Samuel Chinnery, Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Edward T. Bennett, Mr. Henry Withall, Miss Withall, Mrs. Everitt, Mrs. Maltby, Mr. E. Parkinson Ashton, Mr. Morell Theobald, Miss Houghton, and Mr. George King.

Mr. Samuel Chinnery said that he had received letters from M. Leymarie asking him to collect evidence in England, which would be of use to him at the trial. Could not Messrs. Crookes and Varley give such evidence? M. Leymarie also wanted evidence from those who had recognised portraits of departed friends taken through Buguet's mediumship; he also wanted any letters from Buguet in which the latter acknowledged himself to be a medium. Any certificates sent to Paris about this matter should be certified by the French consul in London. He (Mr. Chinnery) had written to M. Leymarie to say that he should attend in Paris from the 14th to the 16th of this month, to be cross-examined before the court as to what he knew about Mr. Firman and his mediumship. Mr. Crookes was well known in Paris as a scientific man, and a referee in connection with sewage works in operation there, so his evidence would in consequence have additional weight. M. Leymarie also wanted the evidence of Mr. Harrison, who perhaps would give it.

Mr. Harrison said that he should be glad to give the same evidence in a court of law that he had given in *The Spiritualist* about M. Buguet's mediumship, though he was not sure that it would do any good. He had only seen Buguet at his photographic operations once, and so far as he remembered his published testimony, it was to the effect that not much could be said about Buguet's mediumship after witnessing its results once only, but that he (Mr. Harrison) did not know how to produce the same results by artificial means under the same conditions.

Mr. Chinnery continued that Mr. Gladstones could give useful evidence in the case, and that he had written to him to return to Paris from Bordeaux to do so. Although Buguet had been let out of prison on £40 bail, £240 bail had been demanded for Firman, and it had been paid. Count de Bulet was looking after Mr. Firman. He hoped the National Association would do what it could. The objections to union among Spiritualists in England were fully answered now, for even in France they were appealing for the organised help which England could give. In times of danger, and in times of responsible action, the incalculable value of organisation was felt.* He would move that a deputation should be appointed by the Council to ask Mr. Crookes to accompany him (Mr. Chinnery) to Paris, to give evidence on the trial. The deputation should also be empowered to ask those who had obtained recognised spirit photographs to add their testimony.

The Chairman asked whether anybody knew the position of Mr. Crookes in relation to spirit photographs.

Mr. Harrison said that in every conversation he had had with Mr. Crookes on the subject of spirit photographs, Mr. Crookes had invariably expressed the opinion that all he had seen had been produced by imposture. As regarded Buguet's pictures, he (Mr. Crookes) had once watched the manipulations throughout without being able to discover trickery; still, from the general appearance of the results, he thought that some unusually clever imposture was at the root of the matter. He supposed that Mr. Crookes came to this conclusion because most of M. Buguet's spirits seemed to be photographed from drawings upon flat surfaces. He repeated these statements without permission, but believed that Mr. Crookes had no objection to their publication.

Mr. Rogers remarked that if Mr. Crookes could not give evidence about spirit photographs, he could do so about materialisations.

* In dealing with the Board of Trade much more could have been done had it not been for the results of the work of those who have been sowing dissension among Spiritualists, and opposing free institutions and elected representatives inside the movement. Had all the local societies worked in harmony with the national body, they could each have made an outcry for Government recognition and the right of incorporation under the Companies Act; but, being disunited, we Spiritualists, as a body, have not had influence enough to secure the rights of Englishmen in this matter.—Ed.

Mr. Chinnery said that was why he wished Mr. Crookes to give evidence at the trial. It would do much good to Mr. Firman if Mr. Crookes would give the evidence about the reality of materialisations which he had published in various journals.

The proposed deputation was then appointed, and it consisted of Mr. Chinnery, Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, and Mr. Harrison.

Other business was transacted by the Council, and it will be published next week.

LAST WEEK'S SOIREE—THE CASE OF M. LEYMARIE AND MR. FIRMAN—THE NEW GALVANOMETRIC APPARATUS FOR TESTING MEDIUMS DURING MATERIALISATION SEANCES.

On Wednesday evening last week the usual monthly *soirée* of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held at 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C. Among the friends present were Baron von Holmfeld, Mr. Charles Blackburn, Mr. Samuel Chinnery, Mr. Alexander Calder, Mr. Martin R. Smith, Mrs. and Miss Showers, Major S. R. I. Owen, Mr. Ivimey, Miss F. J. Theobald, Mr. N. Fabyan Dawe, Mr. Frederick Varley, Miss Varley, Mr. Coffin, Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Miss Fitz-Gerald, Miss Malvina Claxton, Miss Clarke, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, Mrs. and Miss Kislingbury, Mr. G. R. Tapp, Mr. and Mrs. Keningale Cook, Mrs. H. Cook and Miss Edith Cook, the Misses Corner, Mrs. Parkes, Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Rogers, Miss Rogers and Mr. Rogers, jun., Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan, Mrs. Elgie Corner (Florence Cook), Mrs. Olive, Mr. E. Parkinson Ashton, Mr. Frederick Collingwood (Secretary to the Anthropological Institute), the Misses Withall, Mrs. Burke, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Maltby, Mr. Potts, Miss Houghton, and Mr. and Mrs. Regan.

A very pleasant evening was spent, most of the time after tea being occupied in friendly conversation. In the course of the evening the new galvanometer for testing mediums, presented to the Association by Mr. Charles Blackburn, was fitted up by Mr. F. Varley and Mr. Harrison, and exhibited at work. It consists of an astatic magnetic needle mounted upon a vertical steel axis, the points of which axis are exceedingly fine, and rest in jewelled holes. On the upper part of the axis a small mirror of silvered mica, about the size of a shilling, is mounted. Parallel with the upper needle of the astatic combination, a small permanent magnet of steel wire is fixed in such a way that it repels both ends of the movable needle which is thus kept at zero, except when an electric current deflects it in opposition to the repulsive forces. In consequence of the needle being astatic and being promptly brought to zero in the way just described, the apparatus requires no adjustment before use, but can be set down in any position and be immediately ready to work. A dark lantern, fitted with a condenser made of a pair of meniscus lenses, with a vertical wire fixed a few inches in front of them, throws a strong light upon the mirror of the galvanometer, which reflects the rays to the side of the room, where consequently a circle of light about a foot in diameter—crossed by a dark vertical line formed by the shadow of the wire—passes to and fro when the instrument is in use, and can be seen by all the company. Two brass handles, covered with calico soaked in salt and water, were attached to a board and to the wires of the galvanometer, so that when any one seized the handles a current passed through his body, and the circle of light from the mirror of the galvanometer took up a particular position on the wall of the room. If the person holding the handles unclasped one or both of them for an instant, the circle of light on the wall moved backwards four or five feet, showing that he had ceased to grasp the handles. In like manner had a medium been sitting in a cabinet while spirit hands were being shown through the orifice, and had he ceased to grasp the handles with his own hands, even for an instant, the galvanometer would have shown it to everybody outside. Many of the spectators tried the apparatus during the evening, and Mr. Coffin did a somewhat clever thing with it. Before unclasping his hand from one of the handles, he took the handle in his mouth, so as to keep up the current by means of his lips and tongue; thus he freed one of his hands without allowing the disc of light on the wall to return to its normal position. By practice and by keeping his eye on the disc of light, he could free one hand without disturbing the indications of the instrument; but it was absolutely necessary that all the time he should be able to see the disc of light on the wall, in order to regulate the amount of contact thereby. A medium inside a cabinet could not do this; moreover, with his head fixed to one handle, and one of his hands to the

other, he would be so confined that he could not do much with his free hand.

In the course of the evening Mr. Martin Smith delivered the following address:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I have a few scraps of information to give you this evening, and the first I mention with a regret which I am sure you will all share, viz., that it has been decided to suspend these social meetings for a few months. You will all agree with me, I hope, that they have been to us a source both of pleasure and profit, a means of mutual introduction and of mutual encouragement. I have observed, however, with a little regret that the names of some of our most influential adherents (from a social point of view) have been conspicuous by their absence from these meetings. I say that I regret this, for so long as the world is constituted as it is, no struggling movement can afford to disregard the support that is conferred upon it by the adhesion of persons of position and influence. There are many such in the ranks of Spiritualism, and although they have doubtless duties and engagements which may render it difficult for them to spare the requisite time, I do most earnestly urge upon all such to give us the moral support of their occasional presence at our social meetings. I cannot but think that it is a duty they owe to their "belief" to give it in this way some public expression. It is intended to renew these meetings during the autumn or early winter months.

You will have heard that it has seemed good to the Board of Trade to decline our application to be incorporated under the Limited Liability Act. While I regret I confess that I am not surprised at their decision. The public are accustomed to place Spiritualists into two great classes—the fools and the knaves. I think it very natural that the official mind should accept without hesitation so simple a classification, and should conceive it their duty to refuse by any act of theirs to pander to the credulity of the one class, or to afford the smallest countenance to the rascality of the other. We can afford to be magnanimous, and to bear our disappointment without an angry feeling. If Spiritualism teaches us anything, it is patience. Patience under misapprehension, patience under contempt, and hereafter doubtless will teach the same lesson under the circumstances of success and appreciation. Till then we can afford to wait. The recognition of Government officials will neither make nor mar the movement.

I am glad to be able to inform you that on the whole the Bazaar has been a success; we have in hand a net profit therefrom of nearly £100, no mean addition to our resources. I say "on the whole," for there may be some here who are a little disappointed by the results. But I would point out that this was a first attempt, and that we had experience to learn on every imaginable point. If any similar attempts hereafter made the experience we have gained will enable us greatly to decrease our expenses, which on this occasion have been very heavy. I profess myself well satisfied with the result, and grateful to those upon whom the burden and heat of the day has fallen. There are, of course, some articles left unsold, which will be dealt with hereafter. I feel that the cessation of these monthly meetings is to a certain extent like the prorogation of our small Parliament, and that during the recess your Government, *i.e.*, your Council, will sadly miss the advantage of the advice and encouragement which they have received at your "sittings."

Do not be disappointed with us if we undertake no especially heroic enterprises, if we think it right to maintain a policy of wise and watchful inaction. We are in our corporate body—as we are individually—creatures of circumstance. If circumstances arise calling for energetic action I hope we shall be found equal to the occasion. We cannot, however, make opportunities for ourselves.

I congratulate the Association on the success which has attended our establishment in this house. It is most gratifying to mark the rapid increase of members, and I think I am not taking a too sanguine view when I say that if we progress in the future as we have hitherto done our financial position will soon be secured.

You will observe a great change in the appearance of our bookshelves. We have met with a most generous response to our appeal for assistance under this head. Loans and presents of books are being continually made to the Association, and I see no reason to doubt that ere the year is out we shall have a library of books on the subject of Spiritualism amply sufficient for all our wants.

In reference to the imprisonment of M. Leymarie and Mr. Firman in Paris, I do not wish to say anything about the conduct of Buguet. The papers of Leymarie have all been seized,

including the testimony of the witnesses who have recognised certain of Buguet's photographs, consequently M. Leymarie is left without the necessary evidence to prove his case. He is anxious that those who have obtained recognised spirit photographs through the agency of Buguet in England, should forward their attestation of the fact to Paris without delay. He wishes that the said attestations should be posted without envelopes, as a kind of guarantee that the papers come from England, and that they have not been fabricated in Paris.

Mr. Calder said that he would suggest that instead of letters being written, that all who obtained such pictures should join collectively in an affidavit. Letters might be fabricated.

Mr. S. Chinnery said that the Spiritualist Society at Paris would pay the expenses in a reasoned manner of any witnesses who had obtained recognised spirit photographs through Buguet's mediumship and would go to Paris to bear witness to the same. M. Leymarie wished for an account of the history of Mumler's trial in New York, which perhaps he should be able to get from Mr. Coleman. He (Mr. Chinnery) would be willing to do all he could for M. Leymarie and to go over to Paris to help him. He was convinced that Buguet's work was only in part a fraud, for one gentleman, as Mr. Gledstones had attested, had been photographed in Paris while his body was asleep in London. Once he (Mr. Chinnery) took his own camera and lenses to Buguet's rooms and obtained a portrait of Livingstone upon the plate, and he had been promised by the spirits that that portrait should come, before he went to Buguet's. Doubtless when Buguet found he could not get enough genuine spirit photographs, he set to work to manufacture the rest. Many Spiritualists in Paris were taking care of Mr. Firman, so the most urgent case at the present moment was that of M. Leymarie.

Mr. Harrison said that he had a letter from Miss Blackwell, saying that Buguet asserted that M. Leymarie had no share in the profits of the photographs, but his false charge against M. Leymarie was that he knew them to be spurious. With reference to the suggestion that all the witnesses to Buguet's genuine photographs should give their evidence in one affidavit, supposing one of the witnesses were to make a mistake and it should be proved that he had recognised one of the wooden heads of Buguet's mannikin, such testimony might tend to vitiate the whole document, whereas, if the attestations were sent in separately, would not the majority of them be likely to hold good, even supposing one of the others to be founded upon a mistake?

The conversation then dropped.

SEANCES WITH MISS SHOWERS.

On Monday evening last a private *seance* was held at the residence of Mrs. Showers, 103, Seymour-place, Bryanston-square, London, at which some remarkable test manifestations were witnessed, free from all dubious conditions. The head of Miss Showers was secured to a staple fixed in the wall of the room, a tape being tied round her neck for the purpose, and the knots sealed by Dr. Gully. A curtain was then suspended in front of her, leaving her hands and knees in sight of the spectators. Under these conditions, in the partial darkness behind the curtain, the spirits tied pieces of tape in bow-knots round her neck; gave her a glass of water to drink, so that the glass, which had been filled, was found nearly empty; and presented several other manifestations which could only have been produced by abnormal power. The spirits also tied both her wrists firmly together, there being a mass of hard double knots between the wrists. They then bound her hands to the top rail of a chair, the ends of the rope being passed downwards and fixed to a lower rail. These pieces of rope were afterwards untied by the spectators, who could consequently testify to there being no mere twists or slip-knots, and that the hands of the medium had been so firmly secured that she could not use them. While her hands were thus fastened together, a tambourine ring was threaded upon one of her arms in a moment of time, so also was the back of a light chair, and they were taken off with equal facility. Among the spectators were Dr. Gully, Lady Shelley, Miss Kissingbury, Mr. Tapp, Mr. Harrison, and other friends. A somewhat similar *seance* took place on the previous Saturday. Some materialisation phenomena were observed on both occasions.

MR. COGMAN'S quarterly tea-meeting will take place next Sunday week.

REPLY TO THE ATTACK UPON SPIRITUALISM BY
THE ARCHBISHOP OF TOULOUSE.

The following are extracts from M. Fournier's answer to the late pastoral against Spiritualism by the Archbishop of Toulouse, translated from the *Revue Spirite* of April, 1875, and it may be mentioned that the irritation inflicted on the clerical mind by this article, is surmised to be at the root of the present persecution of Spiritualists at Paris:—

I can but imagine that, on account of your being disabled by your numerous occupations from making the researches necessary for the treatment of this subject, you have charged some person about you to do it for you, and that your pamphlet must have been drawn up from notes furnished to you by that person. This interpretation, I am convinced, is the true one, and I hold to it. Nothing in the world would convince me that a man of your character could have fulminated such a terrible anathema against peaceable people, men seeking religious truth in all honesty, if he had not been led into error concerning them. . . .

Why then am I so bold as to dare to address you thus, and say: "Take care, my lord, you have been deceived, and you have involuntarily led your flock into error"? Whence comes my assurance? From the conviction which I hold that a man, of however small account he may be, is bound in duty to warn his neighbour when he wanders from the right path, in whatsoever condition of life he may be, high or low, be he archbishop or coalheaver, king or mendicant. Do not the Holy Scriptures say: "The Lord gave every man commandment concerning his neighbour" (Eccles. xvii. 14)?

You will then, I trust, excuse my presumption, my lord, and will consent that we should examine together your quadragesimal mandate.

It is divided into two principal parts. In the first, by way of introduction, you proclaim the alarming progress that Spiritism has made in your diocese; you explain its origin, and you endue it with the character of being either Satanic or jugglery. Under the second head you regard it in its doctrinal light, in its practice, and as a religious movement, and you finish by demanding that, "like all institutions productive of evil, it should be put under active supervision, and be subject to rigorous repression."

According to your views, it is at those epochs when a man "frees himself from the true faith," and gives up his belief in God, that he fills up the void thus made in the depths of his nature with superstitions; and these superstitions, in the present instance, are the practices of Spiritism, call them by what name you will—magic, sorcery, or Gnosticism. And you, my lord, fortify your opinion by the following citation from a thinker, Charles Bonnet, whose belief, as a whole, most assuredly you would not adopt, and who was far from participating in your horror of the doctrine of anterior existence. "People," Mr. Bonnet remarks, "require to be believers in order not to be credulous; we must proffer sound food for the people to put faith in, if we would not have them feed themselves on poison."

I agree with you, my lord, and with Charles Bonnet also. Like you, I believe that when a man gives up religion, and ceases to believe in God, Spiritist practices, call them what you will, increase. Only, I do not assign the same cause as you do to this fact. I perceive in this an act of Providence urging the invisible world to the invasion of our world, with the object of preserving us, by such revelation, from evils that materialistic beliefs could not fail to produce through generalising and consolidation. Such was also the way of thinking as regards such intervention of one who ought to have some authority in your eyes, Father Lacondaire. He wrote June 20th, 1853, to Madame Swetchine, concerning the movements of tables: "Perhaps also by this revelation God wills that the development of spiritual forces should be in proportion to the development of material forces, so that man, in the presence of the marvels of mechanics, should not forget that there are two worlds, one included in the other; the world of bodies and the world of spirits." Such an opinion appears to have been yours at one time, my lord, when you said: "Certainly, if evocations of Spiritism are not *seances* for conjuring, we must acknowledge that they are an unquestionable denial cast by Satan himself in the face of contemporary materialism." Yet what interest, in reality, could Satan have—he, the father of all artifice—in combating materialism by manifesting himself, if he were not constrained to it by God Himself? Like Charles Bonnet, I think we should give wholesome aliment to the masses if we would save them from swallowing poison. And

this is just the reason why Spiritism "takes upon itself to purify a religion of vain ceremonies," while retaining for every mode of worship that which forms the very essence of homage to "the divinity," as you well say.

That was the work which, eighteen centuries ago, Christ and His disciples undertook—a work in the accomplishment of which they were seconded by the incessant manifestation of spirits. Was not Christ constantly declaring, as detailed in the Gospels, that it was not He who spoke, but the Spirit? Was not St. Paul always under the guidance of the spirit of Jesus? In every Christian group, as nowadays in every Spiritist group, was not evocation their custom? Had not they speaking mediums, healers, physical mediums, inspired mediums, and mediums for divers languages, as we find set forth in chap. xii. of the Epistle to the Corinthians?

And this work is necessary now as then, my lord, because now, as then, sound food is not presented for the faith of the masses. So overcharged is religion with vain ceremonies, puerile practices, and with dogmas useless, absurd, and dangerous, that reason, no longer able to recognise her under this disguise, throws itself into the arms of nihilism.

It is the priest who is aggrandised to such a point that he has ended by concealing that which it was his mission to declare to men; it is the ordinance of the Church which, according to the saying of Christ, has made of none effect the ordinance of God. And, after this, surprise is expressed because God urges the inhabitants of the invisible world to manifest themselves, and to teach us that He is still in existence! No, my lord, deign to reflect on this, forgetting for the moment that you are an archbishop, and you will recognise, as I do; that the contrary alone could give ground for surprise.

So much for the first section of our subject. Now let us consider the second.

At the commencement of your pastoral I read: "As regards doctrine, Spiritism teaches that communication with the dead exists naturally; that, 'in virtue of certain forms and certain acts, we force' the souls of the other world to return to this earth, and enter into communication with us; in fact, that when interrogated by us, they give responses that are 'the infallible expression of truth. Such is the fundamental dogma of Spiritism,' not to speak of other errors which we shall afterwards expose." Well, my lord, with the exception of your assertion at the commencement regarding commerce with the dead, everything else that you affirm is precisely the contrary of the truth, and the only errors you expose in your pastoral are those that you yourself have been led into committing. Spiritists believe that the souls of the other world have the benefit of their free will, absolutely the same as have the dwellers upon earth, and that neither formulas nor acts have any power to constrain them to communicate if they are disinclined. They believe, moreover, that these souls are generally on this earth, and most frequently near those souls in the flesh whom they love—who do not trouble them by calling them, but, on the contrary, fill them with joy—the mother, for example, nears the child who bewails her, and reciprocally. As for their answers, Spiritists make it a law never to accept them as truths, until after having undergone the vigorous criticism of reason, they have all the appearance of truth. Spiritists accord infallibility to God alone; they would consider they were committing an impiety were they to attribute infallibility to a creature, let him be whom he may, man or spirit. They are fully aware that there are some spirits, like some men, who show themselves disposed to put themselves forward, and to dogmatise in exact proportion to the measure of their levity and ignorance.

Spiritualists are, my lord, before all other things, free thinkers, rationalists, that is to say, Christians. "Those men who make use of reason (*λογος*) for the guidance of their lives are Christians; strong and courageous beings are they," said Saint Justin Martyr. Spiritualists do not recognise the right in any person to impose on them any doctrine which does not appear to them reasonable. Thus much to show you that there is no such thing as Spiritist orthodoxy. Nevertheless, I will rest my assertions principally upon citations borrowed from the works of Allan Kardec, because he is the true founder of what you call our sect; because his ideas are generally adopted by us, and because it is from *The Spirits' Book* and from *The Mediums' Book* that your secretary audaciously pretends to have drawn the *exposé* which he has supplied you with of spiritist doctrine.

So then, if you condescend to open the *Mediums' Book*, you will find there, chap. x., No. 133, the following lines: "If we are fully penetrated according to the *Spiritist Ladder* (the *Spirits' Book* No. 100) with the infinite variety that exists among spirits

under the double classification of intelligence and morality, we must plainly perceive the difference that can but exist in their communications; such must necessarily reflect the elevation or the baseness of their ideas, their knowledge and their ignorance, their vices and their virtues; in one word, there is no reason why they should resemble each other any more than men, from the savage to the most enlightened European. All the shades that they present may be classed under four principal categories. Judging them by their most salient characteristics, they may be classed as: the gross, the frivolous, the serious, and the instructive."

And further on, in the same chapter, No. 136: "Serious spirits are not all equally enlightened; there are many things of which they are ignorant and concerning which they may deceive themselves with the best possible intentions. This is the reason why really superior spirits recommend us unceasingly to submit all communications to the crucible of reason and to the severest logic."

So much for the infallibility of spirits. You commence, my lord, do you not, to gain some idea of the integrity of him who has had the unmerited honour of being chosen as your coadjutor.

THE PERSECUTION OF SPIRITUALISTS IN PARIS.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—My promise to Mr. Gledstones, who is absent, imposes on me the duty of keeping you still, weekly, advised of the course of the matter properly indicated by the above heading. You will do well to substitute it for that of "The fiasco in Paris." The only "fiasco" in Paris has been that the unquestionably powerful and extraordinary photographic medium, Buguet, having been caught in supplementing reality with fraud (for the sake of money-making) has thereupon adopted, for his theory of defence, that of apostatising from his real and true mediumship; of denying that he ever pretended to mediumship; of declaring the whole thing to be humbug and fraud; of disavowing Spiritualism altogether; and even of accusing two honest and innocent persons, Leymarie and Firman, of having had cognisance of his fraud, and of having been accomplices therein. What have been his inducements to this astonishing course I do not pretend to say. Some assume bribery by the Jesuits, others the desire to flatter the known prejudice and hostility of his judges and the general public, and so earn immediate liberation and ulterior indulgence, and a future title to favour and patronage in his regular profession as an ordinary photographer. Others suppose a desire to diminish his own burthen of disgrace by distributing it over two other respectable pairs of shoulders (those of M. Leymarie and Firman). The Buguet "fiasco" is the only one thus far existing. With regard to the conscientious and devoted editor of the *Revue Spirite*, and to W. Firman, *persecution* is the proper term.* In my letter of last week I told you that the *instruction* was finished or about closing; also that the *judge d'instruction* had refused to admit Firman to bail at any figure, though he had admitted the other two parties accused to bail in the mere sum of £40; also that I meant to make a further effort to insist upon it, with the aid of the intervention, if necessary, of the American Minister. That two Frenchmen should be released on bail of £40, and a foreigner, for the mere reason of not being a Frenchman (a fair ground for raising reasonably the figure of the bail) should be refused it altogether, in a matter of which the gravity *per se* was measured by the mere £40 bail of the Frenchman, was simply what Americans and an American Minister, or Englishmen and a British Minister, were not likely to submit to without serious remonstrance. The upshot of it has been that Firman (the American citizen, unfortunately for himself, a medium, and a real and honest one) has at last been released, after six weeks of solitary confinement, on a bail, deposited by his friends in money, of just six times the figure required for the Frenchmen, of whom the one is a perfectly innocent and honourable man—Leymarie; the other, Buguet, a self-avowed scoundrel. Unfortunately, physical mediumship is not incompatible with a weakness of moral fibre, and sometimes with great moral perverseness, just as the strings of a passive lute will yield their sounds as well to the fingers of a bad as to those of a good man, of a demon or of an angel. And that is

* If Mr. O'Sullivan will refer to this journal during the past few weeks, he will see that "persecution" is the term that has been used, so he is writing under the influence of some mistake. The word "fiasco" was employed some weeks ago in describing the *seance* at Madame Huguet's.—Ed.

the only "extenuating circumstance" I can imagine for Buguet. These mediums employed money-making for mere physical manifestations seem to be at times easier victims than other men to evil influences, as at other times and as a general rule they are the instruments of good ones.

The trial of all three is appointed for the 16th and 17th inst. We know beforehand that the *animus* of the authority of the Palais de Justice (as it is called) is strong and bitter against all Spiritualism. We have seen what was the action of the *judge d'instruction* in the matter of Firman's bail; he refused it in the teeth of all reason and justice, though told that he was thus seriously hampering the necessary means of defence of the accused, and that any required amount of bail would be put up. And though his action has been overruled and reversed by the Court to which the case was sent (a fact without a precedent), it has only been through extraordinary and energetic intervention, made on grounds which could not be plausibly resisted. The same judge received from Madame Leymarie a copy of an excellent work by M. Bonamy, a judge himself, entitled *La Raison de Spiritualism*, published in 1868. He sent her back a message to take the book back, as he would not allow it in his house. By the way, M. Bonamy was removed from the magistrature on account of that book, which, though admirably reasoned, as I am assured, was regarded as an evidence that he must be insane, so that the rights and interests of parties ought not to be trusted to him. The prosecution intends to force on the trial in ten days, and has notified to the counsel for the defence that no extension of time will be granted—an extraordinary course, and in this case very detrimental to the defence, and unsatisfactory to the defendants and their counsel, who had expected at least the chance of another fortnight to inform themselves about a novel and very complicated subject, and to master the mass of papers which have been accumulated in an instruction running through six weeks. Firman intends to try to get some *seances*, in which the reality of his materialisations will be proved (as they have already been four times) by the appearance of the materialised spirit visibly distinct from himself; and to invite the judges and lawyers, and the signers of the *procès verbal* of Madame Huguet's evening, to witness them under test conditions; but it is very doubtful whether he can recover his normal condition, so as to have any assurance of success within the short time now allowed. He was only released yesterday evening, and is considerably knocked up by his six weeks of solitary confinement, notwithstanding the company which he says the spirits kept him. He says that when disposed to succumb to depression, they would come round him with copious raps, and tell him not to be dismayed, for that all would turn out gloriously in the end. But when the glorious end will come is the question. It may not be till after an indefinite interval of further persecution and suffering. I greatly fear that the case is decided in the minds of the judges in advance of the trial. M. Leymarie is collecting attestations of genuine spirit photographs obtained through Buguet, and, with a little more time, would have an immense array of them, supported with plentiful oral testimony. It will be a curious trial, in which Buguet will be proved to be a genuine photographic medium, notwithstanding his own present repudiation of that character, and (what is far worse) his false and treacherous imputation against honest and innocent men of complicity with him in his now falsely-confessed imposture. He will be *le medium malgré lui*. M. Leymarie intends to have the trial reported by a stenographer, and published in a volume.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

A LIST of members of the new Council of the National Association of Spiritualists will be found in our advertising columns.

MR. MORSE'S RETURN.—In the course of a private letter to Mr. Harrison, Mr. J. J. Morse, the well-known medium, says that he intends starting from New York by the White Star Line on Saturday, October 9th, arriving at Liverpool on or about the 19th. He intends to remain in Liverpool during the week, and to reach London by about the 26th. His career in the United States has been of a highly successful nature; he has been warmly welcomed by Spiritualists in every town which he has visited, and his stay in that country will have been about twelve months by the time he starts for England. At the meeting last Tuesday of the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists, a resolution was passed to give him a public reception on his return to London, and to invite him to narrate thereat his experiences anent Spiritualism and Spiritualists in America.

Correspondence.

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

SPIRITUALISM IN BARROW-IN-FURNESS.

SIR,—We have had two visits from Mrs. Scattergood. No more appropriate name could have been chosen for her, for she scatters her beautiful spiritual good things unsparingly, or rather her spirit friends do so through her, and we should fail in our duty if we did not express our pleasure by means of the press. Her first visit was on Sunday the 16th, the second on Friday 21st May, as she was staying for the benefit of her health at Grange, a pretty little watering-place on the Furness Railway, and the shore of Morecambe Bay.

On the Sunday evening her spirit teachers gave us a magnificent discourse on the words "And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This was followed by another short one, comparing time with eternity. On Friday the subject was chosen, as her guides desired, by a non-Spiritualist present, a Methodist, "What shall I do to be saved?" upon which all-important theme she spoke, with more than mortal eloquence for three-quarters of an hour, afterwards answering a few questions put by our orthodox visitors, who could not fall in with these explanations of old truths. But our invisible preachers added for these sceptical visitors a shorter discourse upon "Spiritualism," drawing their proofs from the Old and New Testaments. All the teachings are pre-eminently Christian, but a Christianity that differs from the old dead creeds, and thus, we fear, our Methodist friends went away doubting, or perhaps they think it was all "diabolism," although the opposite to this had been very plainly shown by Mrs. Scattergood's guides. These beautiful truths seem hard to be apprehended by people at first sight, but unfortunately so many condemn them after little hearing. If they, as the "controls" urged, would only test for themselves at home, they must be convinced that the Spiritualistic movement is of and from God, not from some rival of His, of equal or greater power, named the Devil.

On Sunday night two of our local mediums also gave us further proofs of the great truths of Spiritualism. These mediums weekly give us earnest, impressive, scriptural addresses—and not only so, but in their family circles, at their own firesides, and at the firesides of others. I must add, too, that Mrs. Scattergood in private with us was influenced to give us much good advice and counsel; even on the sea beach her heaven-given gifts were used for our benefit.

W. R. THORNTON.

Barrow-in-Furness, May 24th.

THE REV. DR. VAUGHAN ON SPIRIT INTERCOURSE.

SIR,—Will you kindly find room for a few sentences extracted from a sermon preached by Dr. Vaughan in the Temple Church in 1871, and published in *Good Words* in 1872. The text was—"And to the spirits of just men made perfect," Heb. xii. 23.

"These are days in which speculation is busy and curiosity strong; and many are saying—Lo, here is marvel, or there; here is rest, here is truth, here is Christ, or there. One form of this characteristic restlessness is intrusion into the world of spirits. Strange things are told of this intercourse. We neither accept nor deny them. Let them alone, and if they be of men they will come to nought; some newer fancy will displace them. But one thing we seem to gather from such evidence as reaches us concerning this commerce with spirits—that it never brings near to us spirits of the perfected righteous. These communications, these visits, these voices, seldom reveal anything that even philosophy, much less religion, can count important; are generally concerned with earth's most earthly interests, seldom tell of heaven, never speak of Christ; seldom warn of sin, seldom persuade to holiness, never point to such joys above as any man of piety could accept as his hereafter. It is the inference of many, that the spirits capable of this kind of intercourse are not the loftier, or nobler, or holier, but rather those which (as Greek philosophy dreams) are detained by their earthliness in earth's atmosphere, detached only in point of enjoyment from those baser joys which were once their all."

It is possible that even in 1875 Dr. Vaughan may still think as he preached in 1871. Perhaps some of his fellow clergymen will communicate to him their own experiences, showing that good spirits (we will not say "perfected righteous") have and often do "tell of heaven," "speak of Christ," "warn of

sin," "persuade to holiness." Other clergymen are of opinion that they have had ample personal evidence that poor earth-bound spirits, still human, have derived spiritual aid and comfort when they have been welcomed into circles where manly piety is not wanting. Gross-minded men in the Church, as elsewhere, may deny spirit intercourse; and some may, for sacerdotal objects, denounce it as unmitigated "diabolism," or else necromancy, and may characterise as dangerous men, men to be avoided, those who patiently, during years of observation, consider spiritual phenomena; but, as I know from personal experience and from numerous letters, there are many noble-minded clergymen studying these matters carefully; and I know that you, Sir, are both wise enough and charitable enough to feel that if scientific men have characters to lose, it is still more the case, with clergymen, if rash judgment is formed and acted upon.

HOPEFUL.

SUNDAY LECTURES BY DR. SEXTON.

SIR,—I wish you to make known in the next issue of *The Spiritualist* that a small fund is now being subscribed and collected by myself and a few others, earnest workers in the cause, to enable that brilliant and eloquent exponent of Spiritualism, Dr. Sexton, to give a course of Sunday evening orations at the Co-operative Institute, formerly Princess's Concert Rooms, Castle-street, Oxford-street. The series of services will commence, and the first oration be delivered, on Sunday evening, June 27th inst., and terminate Sunday evening, August 22nd, subject to further extension. The fund is being subscribed and collected for the sole purpose of guaranteeing the working expenses incurred in giving such course of services free to the public, and relieving Dr. Sexton from all responsibility whatever. Tickets for the course of lectures:—Front seats, 2s.; Back seats, 10s. 6d., paid at time of purchasing tickets. Subscriptions obtained and collected by my own individual efforts within the past week:—Martin R. Smith, Esq., £2 2s.; Alexander Calder, Esq., £1 1s.; Joseph Cottrell, Esq., £1 1s.; James Regan, Esq., £1 1s. Further subscriptions have been promised me, which will be made known on receipt of the same. I have not as yet heard the amount of the other subscriptions obtained and collected by my co-workers, but doubtless in due time they will be published. Subscriptions to Dr. Sexton's Sunday evening services, Co-operative Institute, commencing June 27th instant, will be thankfully received by me at my residence, 4, Stanley-villas, Northcote-road, New Wandsworth, S.W., made payable to J. Regan, Post Office, St. John's-hill, New Wandsworth, London: also, Mr. and Mrs. Parkes, Spirit Photographers, 6, Gaynes-park-terrace, Grove-road, Bow, E.; and Dr. Sexton, 17, Trafalgar-road, Old Kent-road, S.E. J. REGAN.

4, Stanley Villas, Northcote-road, New Wandsworth,
4th June, 1875.

MORAL INFLUENCES AT SEANCES.

SIR,—I write to express my disapprobation of the moral principle laid down by Mr. George Blyton in a letter which he recently contributed to your paper. He suggested deception and imposture on the part of the sitters, as if two wrongs could make a right, or as if it were justifiable to do evil that good may come. As some of the spirits who come to circles have a deceiving nature, there is no doubt that if deception and trickery on the part of the sitters should be superadded—into the atmosphere of such an assemblage, no good beings from the other world could enter. Further, it is not at all certain that when a sensitive medium is brought into such a moral atmosphere, that any tricks he may play may not be due to the influences of the sitters. If low spirits come from the other side, the least we can do is to set them an example, and to receive them with honour and truth this side. P.

A CURIOUS PHASE OF WITCHCRAFT.

SIR,—Rather curiously, a recent number of the *Athenæum* (15th May, 1875) contains a notice of a poem by Michael Lermontoff, the foremost living Russian poet, entitled *The Demon*,* built upon the idea of supernatural connection which I mooted in a recent article. The poem is described as one of which Russia is justly proud, and its denouement has a further interest as bearing upon certain Spiritualistic speculations lately propounded concerning the work and offices of

* *The Demon: a Poem.* By Michael Lermontoff. Translated from the Russian by Alexander Condie Stephen. Trübner and Co.

the spirit world. The leader of the rebel angels is described as flying, weary and sullen, over the Caucasus, when he beholds and is stricken with a lovely Georgian maiden, Tamara, to whom his admiration proves fatal. Her betrothed, a Georgian prince, falls a victim to an Ossetine bullet, and she retires into a convent. But even within its hallowed walls strange thoughts, due to the evil spirit's instigation, at first flit through her mind, and then make it their abode, until at length a strange longing fills her heart, a mysterious fever possesses all her frame. At last the Demon seeks her within her cell, puts to flight her guardian angel, and by honeyed words prevails upon her to yield herself to him. After this, there is nothing left for her but to die. An angel is bearing her soul aloft to heaven, when suddenly "the ghastly prince of hell" strikes across their path, and claims her spirit as his due. But the angel disdainfully rejects his claim, declaring that Tamara's soul is now free from his power, being no longer clothed in clay. Then directing on the tempter's face "a shaft of stern and dazzling light," the good spirit bears the saved soul triumphantly aloft, while the baffled Demon is left as before, "unpitied and alone in space." X.

SPIRITUALISM AND CONJURORS.

SIR,—I am doubtful whether you will think it worth your while to publish a brief narrative of my experience with Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke, at the Egyptian Hall; but as many of your readers no doubt take an interest in the matter, particularly all those who, like myself, have witnessed the performance of what these jugglers call in their programme an "exposition of Spiritualism," I hope you will open your columns to an exposition of the humbug exhibited under the above title.

Before entering upon the main point, permit me briefly to state that, after having heard a great deal about Spiritualism, I at last resolved to investigate the matter, and to use all honest means in my power to get at the bottom of the truth, and to detect any trickery that might be mixed up with the phenomena.

I had two *seances* with Mr. Williams, one private, in which besides Mr. Reimers and myself, only two friends of mine, both keen observers and sceptics like myself, took part; the other was public, about twenty-five persons being present. This experience convinced me that I had to do with facts—most strange and inexplicable—still facts which could not be accounted for in any way as mere products of art and trickery. For in the private *seance* I myself sat on the left of the medium, holding his left hand tightly, and keeping my right foot firmly resting on his left foot, whilst my friend who was sitting at the right of the medium did the same with the right hand and foot of Mr. Williams, without even a moment's interruption as long as the *seance* lasted. The phenomena being generally known, and I suppose often described, by others, I shall not speak of them now. Suffice it to say that the manifestations at the private *seance* alone were such that—contrary to our expectation—hardly a shadow of doubt remained in the mind of my friends and myself that what we had perceived with three of our best senses, *i.e.*, what we had seen, heard, and felt, was no deception nor joint hallucination, nor the product of art and jugglery.

Being told that Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke could produce all the phenomena of Spiritualism and expose the whole matter as trickery, I went to the Egyptian Hall, anxious to become enlightened and undeceived in case I should have been misled. I desired earnestly to find where and to what degree trickery was possible, and of course expected that they would put me on the right track.

I cannot describe how thoroughly I was disappointed in my expectations, but you can imagine it from the fact that my indignation and disgust at the clumsy piece of jugglery performed before my eyes were roused to such a degree, that I got up towards the end of the performance, and declared with loud voice, "How can you call this an exposition of Spiritualism? It is no exposition at all, but the poorest piece of humbug that ever I have witnessed."

The effect of this unexpected *improviso* was a single cheer, innumerable hisses, and a voice from the galleries, "No foreigners allowed to speak here." From Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke I received a momentary stare, but they evidently thought discretion the best part of valour in this case, and disappeared behind the curtains.

I do not at all want to injure the interest of those gentlemen, though they evidently did not hesitate to grossly attack the character of Mrs. and Mr. Fay, and all other mediums,

by declaring that all the manifestations at their *seances* consisted of nothing but imposition. The key to the whole secret, according to Mr. Maskelyne's explanation, was to be found in the circumstance that during the *seance* the medium manages to get one hand free; if both hands were fixed the tricks were done by means of the medium's feet, and when both hands and feet were secured the medium took up and rang the bell with his or her teeth; the rest was done by some accomplice present at the *seance*. These poor arguments were accompanied by still poorer experiments, which, however, created some laughter and cheers among the audience.

Now came the actual performance and sham *seance*, which loses all claim to ingenuity, which at first sight it assumes, through the simple fact that one hand of the individual imitating a medium was left free from the beginning, though to all appearance fixed behind his back to the wall of the cabinet. His feet were left untied from the beginning also. That the tying of his hands was a sham from the beginning every observer could see. This simple fact being, moreover, perfectly in agreement with the argument advanced by Mr. Maskelyne of how all the tricks or phenomena of the mediums were to be accounted for, explains everything. Besides, his argument that accomplices played an important rôle in sham *seances* was quite confirmed in this instance, for the very same two individuals who had exhibited themselves on the stage before and played the game of whist with "Psycho" re-appeared on the stage to examine the cabinet and to tie the sham medium. One of those two individuals showed pretty clearly by his feigned stupidity in the handling of needle and thread—thereby exciting the laughter of the audience—that he was doing a part in the performance. His companion, on the other hand, appeared still more accustomed to the thing and to the stage; he did not even take the trouble to tie the other hand of the medium, but left the task to Mr. Maskelyne, who of course did it in the way most suitable to his purpose. And the audience? Well, the audience appeared quite contented when Mr. Maskelyne announced that the two individuals mentioned above had examined the screen behind the cabinet, to which the imitation medium was considered to be fastened, and was satisfied. After the first feat he made the same declaration, though the two persons only went behind the cabinet, and neither they nor anybody else examined the hands of the fellow inside, to see whether the bandage was still intact. To me it was quite clear from the feats which he performed that *both* hands of the man, after the first trials, were as free as were his feet. Consequently it was easy enough for him to push away the box which enclosed him, do any amount of tricks, and draw it back again as if he had never moved before the curtain rose again.

During the so-called dark *seance* the net, of course, was untied by accomplices in waiting behind the curtain.

So far, however, the performance kept a certain appearance of ingenuity, even to those who, like myself, looked through the tricks—to many simple people no doubt it appeared marvellous. But the rest of the performance spoiled the whole effect, for instead of being an ingenious imitation of Spiritualistic phenomena, it was the poorest and clumsiest piece of jugglery that ever I have witnessed. After the clever feats of "Psycho" (worked most likely by means of an air pump) and the amusing performance of the facial artist, the least that I expected from Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke was a clever imitation of Spiritualistic phenomena; but what did I behold? First, the incessant ringing of a bell which before the light was turned out had been fastened in the centre of a rope fixed to the legs of two individuals on the stage, then the sudden appearance of tambourines above our heads out of the reach of our arms, but keeping almost a straight front line within a certain distance from the stage, and betraying by their dull sound that they were not floating in the air, nor even suspended by strings, but simply attached to long sticks of the same sort as the one with which they lit the gas chandelier from the stage immediately after the close of the miserable performance. The edges of these tambourines were evidently besmeared with phosphorus, emitting all the while perceptible to every eye the well-known clouds of white vapour peculiar to phosphorus, but never displayed the much more intense electric light which sometimes makes its appearance in Spiritualistic *seances*. There was no floating about in the air of guitars or any other instrument that required the touch of a human hand to produce tunes, no touching by instrument or hands, no appearance of any spirit-like form—not even one of Pepper's illustrious ghosts. In short, it was such a clumsy attempt at imitation that I did not know whether the impudence of the conjurers or the silliness of the majority of the audience who applauded was most

surprising. How any man of common sense who ever witnessed the phenomena at a *seance* with a genuine medium can be deceived and be at a loss to detect the clumsy tricks of those conjurers at the Egyptian Hall I cannot understand. Why do not Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke try their hands at the imitation of a spirit form like that of "John King?" At the present stage they have to learn much from the Spiritualists whom they describe as impostors. If mediums like Mr. Williams are impostors, and produce the marvellous phenomena at their public and private *seances* by tricks, Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke ought to go and take lessons from Mr. Williams, who evidently is their master in every respect as far as Spiritualistic manifestations are concerned. If Mr. Williams produces the phenomena by tricks, well, then, it is clear that Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke have not yet reached the degree of cleverness in imitating him that apprentice boys have in comparison with their master. However, they act upon the adage "*Mundus vult decipi*," and they deceive the world successfully. Perhaps they will not thank me for calling their attention to a misprint in their programme which they really ought to correct, namely, instead of "Exposition of Spiritualism (so called)" they ought to put "Exposition (so called) of Spiritualism." The latter reading alone would be in strict accordance with the truth.

In conclusion, permit me to say that I have no ambition to become a champion of Spiritualism, at least not for the present. I am still a novice in the territory of Spiritualism, which, besides, runs so entirely contrary to the system of ideas which I had hitherto built up in my mind, that I have not as yet been able to reconcile my thoughts with the unexpected facts. It is only in honour of truth that I felt obliged to expose the impudence of those conjurers who pretend to expose Spiritualism, whilst in point of fact they only exhibit their own ignorance and inability to properly *imitate* even the most primitive phases of genuine Spiritualistic phenomena.

G. W. P. WIESE, A.R.C.

Royal Hotel, London, May 27th, 1875.

PUBLICATION OF TRANCE MESSAGES GIVEN THROUGH MR. DUGUID'S MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me a short space in your columns to inform your numerous readers that I have subscription books, sent by Mr. Nisbet, of Glasgow, in which to enter the names of those who would like to have copies of the work he is about publishing, namely, *Earth-Life and Spirit-Life Experiences of Hafed, Prince of Persia*, communicated in trance through Mr. Duguid's mediumship, notices of which have already appeared in the *Spiritual Magazine* and *Human Nature*.

I have already a long list of names, but having such a large circle of friends I cannot write to them personally, therefore take this means of asking them to send me their names, and those of as many of their acquaintances as they can influence to take copies of this most interesting and invaluable work.

Knowing the reliability and worth of Mr. Duguid so well, I am most anxious to get him as many subscribers as possible; at the same time, I sincerely thank those friends who have already so freely given me their names for the work.

M. A. EVERITT.

Lilian-villa, Holder's-hill, Hendon, N.W.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—A special *seance* with Mrs. Bassett was held on Monday evening last, in the rooms of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, London, when an excellent sitting resulted. The circle consisted of Mrs. Bassett, Captain James, of Tottenham, Mr. John Rous, Miss Corner, Mr. A. Ferguson Black, Mrs. M. Theresa Wood, Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen, Mr. Thomas Blyton, Mrs. Bassett, Mrs. Blyton, and Mr. W. Harris. Captain James opened the *seance* in the customary manner by reading a portion of Scripture, after which a hymn was sung. Raps followed, and a slight alteration was directed to be made in the order of the circle. All hands were then joined, and the lamp extinguished. Captain James and Mr. Harris, who were seated to the right and left hand of Mrs. Bassett respectively, were palpably patted with hands, the sound of which was distinctly audible to the whole of the circle; both Captain James and Mr. Harris stated that they each retained their hold of Mrs. Bassett's hands; the same condition was likewise observed by the other members of the circle. Mr. Blyton had his repeater watch taken from his hand, and it was carried about over Captain James's head, striking the hours in its progress. The hands were also distinctly felt by several members of the circle, the touch being

gentle and life-like. The Spirits "James Lombard" and "Robinson" spoke with the direct voice in the course of the sitting, and some phosphorescent lights were observed. The *seance* was at last closed, the lamp was relit, and Captain James rose and proposed a cordial vote of thanks to Mrs. Bassett, which was carried unanimously. Mrs. Bassett replied in a few words, and Mr. Blyton explained that Mrs. Bassett had generously given the two special *seances* for the benefit of the Association, which therefore was deeply indebted to her for her kindness.

ANOTHER large supply of American books on Spiritualism will reach Mr. Harrison's new publishing office in a week or two. Soon all the books on Spiritualism published in America will be regularly on sale at 38, Great Russell-street.

MESMERIC HEALING.—A recent number of the *Liverpool Mercury* quotes the following statement by Dr. Wm. Hitchman. "Metals influence the human system very wonderfully, as may be tested at the bedside of the sick. For example, again and again have I failed to relieve various forms of intractable disease by means of iron and silver rings, whereas eight minutes of 'passes' by a vegetarian, teetotaler, and non-smoker, with a standard gold ring, have speedily cured severe attacks of epilepsy and other convulsive maladies, alike in children or adults, and quite independently of gender."

LECTURE BY MRS. CORA L. V. TAPPAN.—On Thursday evening last week, a meeting was held at the Doughty Hall, Bedford-row, under the presidency of Mrs. Burke, in order to consider the position of "unfortunate women." Mrs. Burke opened the proceedings by stating the object of the meeting, and reading a communication from the lady at whose instigation it had been called, setting forth how she had been instructed by spirits to take up the cause of unfortunate women, and to do what she could to alleviate their condition. Mrs. Tappan then rose, and after a dissertation upon the position of women in all ages and nations, she said that social influence ought to be brought to bear against the compeers in crime of fallen women, and that women in all grades of society ought to take care not to perpetuate an invidious wrong against their own sex by admitting men of a certain stamp into their society, without admitting their equals among women also. If they excluded the one class, they ought to exclude the other; as matters stood at present, there was a wrong somewhere, a lack of that redeeming power, of that exalted faith, which are supposed to make up the standard of Christian civilisation. Women should remember that any reproach or wrong put upon one of their own sex was a reproach cast upon all, upon every wife and daughter in Christendom. Any reproach cast upon women should be cast upon their equals among men, and she urged them to let the evil doer stand without the gate, even if he belonged to their own household; they could not kill the upas tree by cutting off the branches, but ought to go to the root of the matter, permitting every right and every wrong to take its proper place. The judgments of the spirit world were different from those of the earth; there should be no cesspool of despair in the world, no position where there was no hope, and where human pleadings could not be heard. The legislature should make it possible for young women to obtain an honourable and decent livelihood, and society everywhere should do what it could to promote the freedom of women, and raise the standard of woman's labour, for upon these reforms the solution of nine-tenths of the whole problem rested.

MR. COGMAN'S QUARTERLY TEA MEETING will be held on Sunday, the 20th inst., at 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile-end-road, E. Tickets, 1s. each.

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"Such a work will be warmly welcomed by all Spiritualists, and especially by those who seek and find in Spiritualism a firm basis for moral and religious teaching."—*Spiritualist*, March 25th 1875.
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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

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

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

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

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

"George Cary, Esq., B.A.; Edward W. Cox, Esq., Serjeant-at-law; William B. Gower, Esq.; H. D. Joncken, Esq., Barrister-at-law; J. H. Levy, Esq.; W. H. Swebston, 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 tiltings or raps.

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

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

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

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

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

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Printed for the Proprietor by BEVERIDGE & Co., at the Holborn Printing Works, Fullwood's Rents, High Holborn, in the Parish of St. Andrew-above-Bar and St. George the Martyr, London, and published by E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane London E.C.