

The Spiritualist

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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of it.
5. The unreliability of Spirit-communications, and how far this arises
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A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

VOLUME SEVEN. NUMBER TWELVE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th, 1873.

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A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, PRICE TWOPENCE.

ESTABLISHED IN 1869.

THE SPIRITUALIST, published weekly, is the oldest Newspaper connected with the movement in the United Kingdom, and is the recognised organ of educated Spiritualists in all the English-speaking countries throughout the Globe; it also has an influential body of readers on the Continent of Europe.

The Contributors to its pages comprise most of the leading and more experienced Spiritualists, including many eminent in the ranks of Literature, Art, Science, and the Peerage. Among those who have published their names in connection with their communications in its columns are Mr. C. F. Varley, C.E., F.R.S.; Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., Editor of the "Quarterly Journal of Science" (who admits the reality of the phenomena, but has, up to the present time expressed no decided opinion as to their cause); Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, the Naturalist; Prince Emile de Sayn-Wittgenstein (Wiesbaden); The Countess of Cathness; the Duke of Leuchtenberg; Mr. H. G. Adams, R.G.S.; Lord Lindsay; the Hon. Robert Dale Owen (New York); Mr. Eves Sargent (Boston, U.S.); Sir Charles Isham Bart.; Mrs. Ross-Clough (Florence Marzatti); Mrs. Makdougall Gregory; the Hon. Alex. Andre Aksakof, Russian Imperial Councillor, and Chevalier of the Order of St. Stanislas (St. Petersburg); the Baroness Adeline Vay (Austria); Mr. H. M. Dunphy, Barrister-at-Law; Mr. Stanhope Templeman Speer, M.D. (Edin.); Mr. J. C. Lummoore; Mr. John E. Pardon, M.B. (India); Mrs. Honeywood; Mr. Benjamin Coleman; Mr. Charles Blackburn; Mr. E. George W. Stock, B.A. (Oxon); Mr. James Vasson; Mr. N. Fabian Dancy; Herr Christian Reimers; Mr. Wm. White (author of the "Life of Swedenborg"); Mr. J. L. Gully, M.D.; the Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D., author of "Unorthodox London"; Mr. S. C. Hall, F.S.A.; Mr. H. D. Jenckes, M.R.I.; Barrister-at-Law; Mr. Algernon Joy; Mr. D. H. Wilson, M.A., LL.M.; Mr. C. Constant (Smyrna); Mrs. F. A. Newthorpe; Mr. William Oxley; Miss Kislingley; Miss A. Blackwell (Paris); Mrs. F. Showers; Mr. J. N. T. Martineau; Mr. J. M. Peebles (United States); Mr. W. Lindsay Richardson, M.D. (Australia); and many other ladies and gentlemen.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

NO. XLI.

[Jan. 18th, 1874.—From time to time changes in the band were made, and I was usually informed of what was being done. It seemed as though when one section of their educational work was complete, another was entered upon under other guides. On this occasion minute particulars (which I do not transcribe) were given, and a general retrospect of the past was added:—]

It may be well that we review the course of teaching by which we have endeavoured to influence your mind aright. We may at least urge you to go over in detail what has been said, and to survey the broad expanse of truth—such as is suited to your present needs—which we have mapped out for you. You will see that we have preached to you a nobler gospel revealing a diviner God than you had previously conceived. To your objections, again and again reiterated, demanding proofs and tests which it would have been vain to grant, we have replied step by step. And if we have not succeeded in effacing from your mind doubts that have lingered there, it is because the doubting habit of mind has become so natural that we have found only rare intervals during which we could penetrate through the fog. You have wrapped yourself in an impenetrable veil, and it is only now and then that it has been lifted.

We have dealt more successfully with other friends who have witnessed our dealings with you; and we thankfully look on that as proof of final success. We shall in the end prevail even over that sceptical frame of mind which is the hardest to approach. We are most hampered by the impossibility of bringing home evidence to the mind which, however honestly, is unable to accept the grounds on which we work: more especially since it is in almost all cases impossible for us to grant specified tests imposed by you with great force of will and in total ignorance of the conditions which beset us. This is a fact which you will do well to recognise and bear in mind. The spirit of mistrust and eager desire to entrap and ensnare us by a predetermined test is one which defeats its own end. If we be such as you suspect, it would be well that you

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

have nothing further to do with such emissaries of evil. If that be to you a position you would not assume, then we counsel you to put aside mistrust, and cultivate a feeling of frankness and receptivity. A brief time spent with such a temper would enable us to do far more than many years of such intercourse as your present frame of mind necessitates. It is not, as you imagine, that we will not, but that we cannot help you now. We treasure up, indeed, the reasonable requests of our friends, and if we cannot comply with them literally, we do so in substance at another time. The history of our intercourse with you throughout will attest this. It is indeed a general law of spirit-communication.

Moreover, when your demand for a prescribed test, on which your mind is strongly fixed, takes the form of a request for some special information, the answer, if given as you wish, would in most cases be imperfect and unreliable, from the admixture of your own mental action and that of the circle, so that in any case your end would be frustrated. But we have done so much as we could cheerfully. The question on which your mind has been set, that of the identity of spirits, has received more than one illustration of late, and you have been compelled to admit their strength.

We have not done more of late than we have always done, but we instance what has been done as an argument for the wisdom of our advice to you, that both in circle and in your private communion with us you seek to maintain an attitude of perfect passivity, accepting or rejecting what is offered according as reason dictates, and deferring to a convenient time your final judgment. Remember that there are degrees of proof, and that evidence very insignificant in itself may be vastly enhanced by preceding or succeeding facts or arguments.

That which seems to you vague now may be rendered precise by some further point long after; and many proofs extended over long time have a daily added weight. More especially is this the case when the general and special results show unvarying truthfulness in us who speak to you. At least you are not able to allege that we deceive you. Our influence is not for evil; our words are words of truth and soberness. We are the preachers of a Divine gospel, suited to your needs, and elevating to your mind.

It is for you, then, to accept the individual responsibility, from which none may relieve you, of deciding whether, being what we are, we are deceivers in matters of vital and eternal import. Such a conclusion, in the face of all evidence and fair inference, is one which none could accept save a perverted and unbalanced mind, least of all one who knows us as you now do. Ponder our words, and may the All Wise guide us and you.

— IMPERATOR.

[From this time forward repeated evidence of individuality perpetuated after bodily death was brought home to me. I do not interrupt the course of the teachings to detail them. Some were written communications, in which peculiarities of handwriting, spelling, and diction were accurately reproduced. Some were verbal communications made through my own guide. Some were laboriously rapped out in the circle. Some were corroborated by my clairvoyant vision. The ways used to convey the information were various, but all agreed in one particular. The facts given were invariably literally and exactly true. In most cases they related to persons not known to us except by name, sometimes not even so much as that. In other cases they related to friends and acquaintances. This

course of evidence continued for a long time; and collaterally I developed a power of clairvoyant vision which rapidly increased, until I was able to see and converse at length with my invisible friends. The inner faculties seemed to be opened, so that the information given received new confirmation from my clairvoyant sight. This power eventually developed to a very high degree. I had a number of extremely vivid visions in which my spirit appeared to act independently of the body. During some of them I was conscious of living and acting among scenes not of this earth; in others dramatic tableaux were enacted before me, the object evidently being to represent some spiritual truth or teaching to me. In two cases only was I able to satisfy myself by collateral evidence of the reality of my vision. I was in deep trance during each occasion, and could not distinguish between the subjective impressions of a dream and the real occurrence of what I so vividly saw before me, save that I could confirm in these two cases what I saw and heard in vision by what I afterwards discovered from external sources. The scene in these cases was real, and I do not doubt that it was so in all. This is not, however, the place to discuss such a point. I do but note these visions as a phase of the development of my spiritual education. It was always represented to me that what was shown to me had a real existence, and that my inner senses were opened for the purpose of instructing me and of confirming my faith in things unseen by the natural eye.

In the month of January, 1874, some communications were printed relative to spiritual influences which were round a son of Dr. Speer's, and which, I was told, influenced his musical powers. These were written out April 14th and Sept. 12th, 1873. Some question which I put on Feb. 1st, 1874, caused more information to be given on the same subject. After some personal information, it was written:—]

The conditions were bad last night for the music. You are yet to learn the conditions under which it may be had. Not until you hear the music of the spheres will you know the true poetry of sound. Music depends, far more than your wise men have dreamed, on these self-same spiritual conditions of which we say so much. The spiritual elements must be in harmonious arrangement before a good development of that which is attainable even on earth can be reached. Only then does the inspiration really flow in. The room in which the boy was rendering the thoughts of the Master was filled with an inharmonious atmosphere; hence we say that the result was inadequate. It is with the musician as with the orator. An harmonious rapport must exist with the audience before the words can make their mark. This the speaker feels, though frequently he knows not that his words fall dead because the spirit bond does not exist, and the inspiration cannot run on the mesmeric chain between the orator and his audience. The best results are had when the musician, the orator, is surrounded by a band of spirits who can so dispose his mind as to refine, harmonise, and spiritualise his thoughts, or the thoughts of which he is the interpreter.

Even as there is vast difference between a word coldly slurred or heartlessly spoken, and the same when it syllables the utterance of heart emotion, so is it with music. The body of sound may be there, but the soul may be absent. And, though you know not why, you mark the difference and feel the want. It is cold and trivial, and thin—mere sound; you shudder, and are not content. Again it is full, rich, the soul's voice of melody, speaking thoughts that are born in fairer

spheres and purer air than earth's-spirit uttering cry to spirit. The sounds are instinct with soul; they have a language for the most irresponsible. They breathe their message to the spirit, the while they subdue the bodily senses, and harmonise the discordant jarrings of the mind. The dead body of sound is animated with the soul of music. You hear, and are satisfied. It is the whole difference between the body of earth and the spirit that soars to heaven: the gap that separates the material and earthy from the heavenly and spiritual. Hence it is that conditions under which true music is evolved rarely occur, at least on occasions of great public gatherings. It is in more harmonious air that the inarticulate voice of spirit best unfolds its story.

[The communication was signed with the autographs (exact fac-similes) of two well-known composers, as well as by some other names known to me.]

THE PERSECUTION OF SPIRITUALISTS IN PARIS.

FOR two or three months past many interesting letters by Mr. O'Sullivan, of Paris, have been published in these columns, setting forth how the police of Paris, after deservedly prosecuting a medial photographer named Buguet who had added imposture to genuine manifestations, have also sought to inculcate M. Leymarie, the editor of the *Revue Spirite*, who certainly had nothing to do with the matter. The police also attacked the medium, Mr. Firman, against whom there is no reliable evidence of complicity with Buguet. This onslaught upon Messrs. Leymarie and Firman has been founded solely upon the assertions of Buguet, who is proved by his own statements to be a thorough scoundrel, who will say anything to serve his purpose; and his assertion was that Messrs. Leymarie and Firman knew of his imposture all the time. M. Leymarie not only has letters from Buguet proving that he knew nothing of the tricks of the latter, but Buguet's assistants attended the recent trials to give evidence that when M. Leymarie was expected to visit the studio, all the implements of imposture were hastily hidden from sight. This evidence the higher courts to which M. Leymarie appealed refused to receive, and by excluding this vital evidence they were able, with a show of justice, to confirm the sentence passed by the lowest court. Thus the unfortunate victim has been hunted from one court to another, and saddled with heavy expenses under a legal system even worse than our own, admirably calculated to increase costs, and, by virtue of technical points, to defeat the ends of justice and of truth.

A strong impression prevails among Parisian Spiritualists that all this persecution has been set on foot by the Jesuits; indeed the opening attack was made in such a peculiar way as to rivet the attention of some of the London daily newspaper correspondents, who telegraphed to this country that the first trial was of an exceptional nature, because there was no individual prosecutor in the matter, and because the police of Paris had taken it up apparently upon their own responsibility. Whether the attack in the *Revue Spirite* upon the pastoral of the Archbishop of Toulouse against Spiritualism had anything to do with the action of the police is not known, but at all events, justly or unjustly, the idea is prevalent that a secret organisation more or less connected with the Roman Catholic Church is at the bottom of the whole business, and that with that organisation one or more of the judges who officiated in the later stages of the legal proceedings are believed to be connected.

The question arises, "What is to be done?" If the French legal system is such that Buguet's letters contradicting his verbal assertions upon which M. Leymarie was condemned cannot be read in evidence, and if the testimony of Buguet's assistants is also to be excluded, it is clear that there is a great miscarriage of justice which the ordinary processes of the French law are incompetent to put right. For this reason one of the best methods of procedure seems to us to be, that Spiritualists all over the world shall now bring the strong pressure of unanimous public opinion to bear upon the French Government. This may best be done if all the Spiritual societies of England, America, and Europe concurrently pass resolutions expressing their opinions of the case, and forward the same to the French Government, asking to have the

matter thoroughly investigated. Such memorials should also be accompanied by copies of the various Spiritual periodicals expressing opinions about the trial, so that the French authorities may know how extensively and keenly their proceedings in this matter are criticised. The said memorials should be very short, otherwise they will not be carefully read. Care should also be taken to state nothing in them which cannot be substantiated, and the points of the rejection of evidence of vital importance to Leymarie, and of the insufficient bail demanded of Buguet and of the case with which he made his escape when he ought to have been in prison, should be well driven home. Other points in relation to which there is no reliable evidence, but which ought to be investigated by the French Government should be put in the form of questions. The authorities might be asked who primarily induced the French police to take the first steps, and that if anybody outside the police force took such initial steps, the name of that person and all the facts relating thereto shall be published. If the Jesuits are at the root of the matter, it is desirable that the French Government should know that they are interfering with the actions of a portion of its executive, and the question ought to be raised whether France is to be governed by its nominal rulers or by a secret theological organisation. If any such concerted line of action as this should be adopted, it is necessary that Parisian Spiritualists should tell their friends in other countries what to do in the matter, and when to do it. They should also tell us what are the points that should be most strongly set forth in the memorials. Being on the spot, and more deeply interested than anybody else in those matters, they cannot expect the rest of us to be so fully versed in all the details, although Mr. O'Sullivan's letters have excited a great deal of interest both in this country and in other parts of the world. Is it desirable that any such international action as this should be taken before the next trial comes off? If not, when is it most desirable to set to work, and what is it most desirable that the workers should do? Information on these points should be sent in condensed form from Paris, after which it will be rapidly disseminated in England, Belgium, and in America, through the organisations and newspapers working in harmony with the British National Association of Spiritualists, which Association unfortunately has not yet concluded its arrangements for entering into alliance with Spiritual societies in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and other countries. Nevertheless Spiritualists everywhere can be rapidly reached through the press.

Much of the trouble now existing in the Spiritual movement in Paris is due in the first place to too much blind faith on the part of M. Leymarie, and in the second place to a lack of practical experience in journalism, a pursuit at which amateurs are as liable to make mistakes as they are in entering any other profession without the requisite training. Supposing a newspaper editor to be unacquainted with a technical subject such as photography, when photographic questions come up it is his duty to put an experienced photographer to deal with that particular question, and not to attempt to lead the public mind by writing upon a subject which he does not understand. And if, as in this case, a knowledge of Spiritualism is also necessary, because of the suspicious conditions which sometimes surround genuine manifestations, then a Spiritualist photographer ought to be selected to do this special literary work. Instead of so doing, the *Revue Spirite* in Paris, and the *Spiritual Magazine* in London, have exemplified the old saying of "the blind leading the blind," and both have fallen into the ditch. When M. Leymarie was informed that a man residing at Dreux appeared as a spirit in one of Buguet's photographs, it is a pity that his faith in Buguet prevented him from inquiring into the matter, and from ascertaining if the resident in Dreux had ever sat for a portrait in which his features are shown in exactly the same position as those of the ghost represented in one of Buguet's pictures.

There is no absolute evidence that the Jesuits are at the root of the persecution in Paris. This secret organisation was founded in 1840 by Ignatius Loyola, a military religious fanatic and medium, who believed himself to be under immediate inspiration from heaven. He applied to Pope Paul for authority to form the institution, and the latter at first refused, until Loyola said that the members of his society should take a vow of obedience to the Pope, binding themselves to go wherever he should command. Paul gave the society the most ample privileges, and in less than half a century the order had established branches in various countries that had deserted the Roman Catholic Church. The ordinary monk works in solitude; the Jesuits consider themselves formed for action in the world; they mix with society; practise no austerities; they study the disposition of persons of rank, cultivate their friendship, and in past

times had a secret and powerful influence in society. The function of an organisation is to give strength, but a secret organisation whose members are slavish devotees, working in blind obedience to their superior officers, must be a most dangerous and evil element in any nation. The Jesuitical system had some good points: under it good schools were established; the members of the order also took possession of the fertile province of Paraguay in America, which they governed with great ability, civilising the natives, teaching them various arts and manufactures, and making them subservient to law and order.

At last the evil effects of such a secret power became evident. The Emperor Charles I. checked the progress of the order in his dominions; it was expelled England by proclamation of James I. in 1604; Venice in 1606; Portugal in 1759; France in 1764; Spain and Sicily in 1767; and assumed to be totally suppressed and abolished by Pope Clement XIV. in 1773. But social usages are stronger than political edicts; so a great institution like this could no more be killed suddenly than a whale could be blotted out of existence in an instant. When large numbers of persons are accustomed to certain habits of life, each rotating in his own little orbit, habits thus acquired cannot be immediately suppressed by any law. Organisations have an organic growth of their own, and cannot be suddenly cut away without large numbers of persons suffering; many of those persons may not desire to exist to the injury of the rest of society, yet may not like to be despotically extinguished for the common good. The circumstance that associations have an organic life of their own, and that the sudden cutting away of even a bad organisation may endanger the life of all the rest of the tree, is not generally understood by violent reformers.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION SPIRIT-CIRCLES.

A SEANCE WITH MR. WILLIAMS.

LAST Friday evening the first of a series of Free Circles for Inquirers was held at the Rooms of the National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street. The idea of such circles was first suggested by Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester, and afterwards put into the present form by the *Seance Committee* appointed by the Council of the National Association for that purpose. The object for which the circles have been established is to provide inquirers with the means of attending well-regulated *seances* with first-class mediums, under conditions calculated to free their minds from every suspicion of trickery or collusion. The meetings are supported by subscriptions from members of the Association, who have the sole privilege of presenting tickets; on these the names of the recipient and the donor are both inscribed, and on the back some plain rules are printed, with which each visitor is politely requested to comply. The circles are conducted by two members of the *Seance Committee*, whose business it is to receive and place the sitters, introduce visitors to one another, and to provide for the general well-being and comfort both of the medium and sitters.

At the *seance* last Friday Mr. Williams was the medium, and as a large circle composed wholly of fresh inquirers would not be likely to induce successful results, because the medium then feels less at ease, there was among those present a fair sprinkling of experienced Spiritualists, such as Dr. Gully, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, Mr. and Mrs. Cook, Mr. Tapp, and Miss Kishlingbury; Mr. Tapp and Mr. Everitt were the conductors for the evening. The phenomena, though of an elementary nature, were decisive and satisfactory. The table, which is a heavy one, was raised several inches from the floor—some said as much as one foot—while all hands were upon it; it afterwards beat time to the tune played by the musical box. Musical instruments were heard playing as they were carried round the room, above the heads of all, while the hands of all the sitters were interlinked; and several persons were touched by spirit-hands.

Though the phenomena were only such as are in endless variation continually produced at physical *seances*, yet there were two points likely to arrest the attention of strangers, and to inspire them with confidence. First, there was nothing doubtful about the manifestations: they were decided—there was no mistake about them; secondly, in consequence of a well-considered system, previously arranged, the proceedings were conducted in an orderly manner throughout, without, at the same time, any one feeling under restraint. All experienced investigators will be ready to admit that at *seances* partaking of a public character some attempt of this kind has been often very much needed, and if the experiment should continue to be successful a valuable precedent will have been established, which will prove of advantage to the mediums and to the cause which they are instrumental in serving.

The next *seance* for inquirers will take place early in October, with Mr. Williams as medium.

MR. JOY'S EXPERIENCES IN AMERICA.

IN the course of a letter to the Secretary of the British National Association of Spiritualists, Mr. Algernon Joy, writing from Niagara Falls, says:—

SPIRITUALISM AMONG MORMON OFFSHOOTS.

"Mr. William S. Godbe, of Salt Lake City, became a Mormon about thirty-two years ago, at the age of sixteen. He gradually found out the error of his ways, and originated a schism in the church, which ended in his being excommunicated about seven years ago, when about 500 members followed him, and all became Spiritualists. Besides this, numbers of those who remained in the church were holding *seances*, and were becoming enlightened and liberalised; and the heaven thus deposited has been working ever since, and has had an enormous influence on the young members, most of whom would doubtless apostatize to-morrow, if it were not for associations. Even the Mormons bow down to Mrs. Grundy.

"When Mr. Godbe left the church he still believed in an ideal Mermonism, in which polygamy and other curiosities would have no place; but he soon came out of that. He and one or two others started a Spiritualist Society in Salt Lake, and also a paper called the *Tribune*, which has since passed into other hands, in consequence of financial difficulties brought upon Mr. Godbe by his apostacy, and by his neglecting his business in his zeal for reform. The *Tribune* is no longer Spiritualistic, but is savagely anti-Mormon. Godbe and his friends also bestowed a free discussion hall upon the society.

"I need scarcely add that my sources of information are various and reliable.

SPIRITUALISM IN SAN FRANCISCO.

"I had not time to see much of Spiritualism at San Francisco, but I saw something of Mr. and Mrs. Slocum, a very attractive and amiable couple. Mrs. Slocum is the active manageress of a women's printing office, where, as far as possible, women do all the work. There is a Spiritualist society, numbering perhaps one hundred members, the more active of whom are 'free lovers,' or, as they style themselves, 'apostles of social freedom.' The natural consequence is that the majority of the Conservative Spiritualists (as they are called, though they would be Radicals with us) hold aloof. There seems to be a want of organising power and energy among these latter, but as the existing society provides good Sunday lectures at which free love is not even insinuated, the Conservatives are content to attend, and put their money in the plate. There have sometimes been four meetings on Sunday, in which case, of course, one at least treats of free love, generally in the way of discussion at the free debating hall. The average attendance is, I should say, about three hundred per meeting, though, when they have a lecturer a little above the common, I believe they reach eight hundred or more. This is pretty well for a town of 230,000 inhabitants, of whom a large proportion are Irish Roman Catholics. But the great mass of the *de facto* Spiritualists of the town, probably nine-tenths of them, seldom or never attend the Sunday meetings, but go to their own churches and chapels. Many of the pulpits, notably the Unitarians, and after them the Wesleyan Methodists, are leavened with Spiritualism, and hundreds of remarkable private *seances* are held nightly, of which no account is ever published. In the San Francisco directory, under the heading 'Clairvoyants, &c.,' there are twenty-six names, of which twenty-four are female, of mediums of different kinds.

"It is monstrous that free love, which has not the remotest connection with Spiritualism, should play the cuckoo, and shelter itself under our wing, thereby damaging our reputation; and I cannot understand the position assumed, not only by Mrs. Slocum, who is certainly no free lover, as the term is generally understood, but by the editor of the *Banner of Light* and of the *Chicago Spiritualist at Work*, when they say that they are bound to afford a free platform, and therefore must admit free love articles and letters. Suppose some eccentric mathematician found out that the binomial theorem was a blunder, and that the truth or welfare of Spiritualism depended on this fact being clearly understood, would these gentlemen feel bound to admit the plea? . . .

"I am going to rest for a season from my wanderings, in or near Boston. The Eddys have sickness in the house, and cannot receive me. Perhaps I may stay here two or three months yet."

Mrs. Hoxwood is travelling in Switzerland, and hopes to return to England in about a fortnight's time.

FAREWELL ADDRESS BY MRS. TAPPAN.

Mrs. CORA L. V. TAPPAN having suddenly resolved to return to the United States, in order to escape the severity of an English winter, returned to London a few days ago to deliver a farewell discourse last Sunday evening at Doughty Hall, Bedford-row. The hall, which will seat from 200 to 250 persons, was well filled. After a few words from Dr. Hallock and Mr. Burns, the latter of whom read a chapter from the Bible,

Mrs. Tappan rose and delivered the following inspirational prayer: Our Father who art in heaven, Thou divine light, Thou perfect soul, we remember Thy presence, always uplifting our hands to Thee in praise, and asking for Thy strength and love to be poured out upon us. At all times and in all places Thy spirit is near, wherever we may be, whatever may be our occupations or the thoughts of our minds. Whether sea or land divide Thy children, or whether we be divided by that greater sea of death, Thou dost bridge over all with the bright rainbow of hope, and faith, and love. Time to Thee is nought, for Thou art eternity; space to Thee is nought, for Thou art omnipresent; death to Thee is nought, for Thou art life. What is time to the soul? The soul robbed of its outer tenement is a living flame of light, that mounts upwards on the wings of thought, and abideth for ever. There is no death. Time changes the seed to the forest tree; the soul suffuses the outer frame and kindles the flame of life for a time, and Thy children are afterwards born in loftier forms. O Thou who hast raised up prophets in ancient days to reveal Thy truth, let us feel Thy presence here. Kindle Thou a flame of sacred fire; make an altar in every heart that nothing of earth can destroy. Wherever we may be, whether striving with the earth or with the errors of man, may we be made for evermore pure with the light of Thy presence through ministering angels, through teachers sent of Thee, and may we know that our own hearts abide with Thee for ever. Amen.

Mrs. Tappan, still in the trance state, went on to say that it was almost twenty-four months to a day since the first public utterances through her lips were made in England. No epoch since Spiritualism in its modern form had dawned upon the earth thirty years ago had presented so hopeful an appearance as the present; never before had there been so much candid inquiry, or such a longing desire to know the absolute truth about the origin and destiny of the human soul. In Spiritualism facts, philosophy, and religion were reconciled; for once in the history of the world the gap between science and religion—or that which under the name of theology was supposed to be religion—was bridged. There were facts enough in connection with Spiritualism to prove or disprove any material philosophy in the world; these facts had given evidence to persons of every form of thought of the reality of immortality, and this result showed how perfectly the world of spiritual beings had done its work—a work which was not of mortal mould. The spiritual world came knocking for the recognition of mortals at a time when there was scarcely a voice to bid the visitors to enter; yet they succeeded in making themselves heard, and in establishing the fact of immortality so that it could not be denied. How much they had done by the instrument through whom they were speaking they left the listeners to judge, and what the hearers had to do was to make known to mankind scientific facts combined with the sublime and religious system of spiritual truth which underlies the foundations of existence. If nature was not governed by intelligence, man, the outgrowth of nature, could not be governed by intelligence. The vast mechanical appliances of the earth, the ships upon the ocean freighted with the fruits of human toil, the electrical spark which performs the bidding of man, the printing press and all such material things, were but the appliances of the spirit in its work of directing matter to the unfoldment of itself; thus every work of science became a work of religion upon earth. The world of spirit was a world of law; spirit obeyed the laws of spiritual creation just as matter obeyed the laws of material creation. Behind the mask which men called life the man or woman sits controlling the mechanism which God has given to the soul, to be used to the glory and well-being of earth and of the spirit. The knowledge instead of the hope of immortality was such a blessing that the ages alone could bear testimony to its importance, and the angels alone could compass its wonderful meaning. That man should be sure of eternal existence was so important for time and for eternity, that if all the world had been engaged in the attempt to solve that one problem, a successful result would be more than an adequate recompense for all the means employed. If the theologian stands beside a grave and tells a weeping mother that there is no hope except in the little shred of creed which he holds in his hand, she can now reply, "I have heard the voice and seen

the form," and the world could not rob her of the knowledge of that truth. Knowledge of immortality applied a new charge of fervour and enthusiasm to altars which had been waning for a long time for the want of flame. What wonder if the expiring Church of Rome should gradually flicker into flame! What wonder if the Church of England, with all its discord, should now have within it a quiet body of workers who see hope for the spirit if not for the body of the Church! So interblended were the spheres of human life, that if there were misery in the outermost court of London city they should not pause or rest until every individual step had been taken to alleviate that misery; whilst one soul was in trouble or spiritual darkness, no angel in the highest heavens could rest until, through intermediate messengers from the world of light, a message had been sent to relieve that spirit in prison. On behalf of themselves—the twelve guides of the medium—on behalf of the friends above of the listeners present, on behalf of the truth, which though forms and mediums perished would still survive, they thanked the friends before them.

After a few remarks from Mr. Burns, Dr. Hallock, and Mr. Enmore Jones,

Mrs. Tappan (still in the trance state) said that in consequence of her sudden departure only one positive engagement to speak in the provinces had been suspended, and as to the other engagements which were in progress, they fully expected—indeed, could almost pledge—that she would return to fulfil them. Nothing but the nature of the climate compelled them to take their medium away in the midst of so much labour; but English Spiritualists would not be left without those who would carry on the work, for they expected the listeners to do it themselves.

Mr. Ward then sang, "My peace I leave with you," and accompanied himself on the harmonium, after which Mrs. Tappan extemporaneously delivered the following inspirational poem:—

Out of one day a golden hour
Was chosen once by a loving soul,
Wherein with potent and perfect power
Her life might show God's higher control;
And the golden hour grew to a sphere,
And gladdened the place with living light,
Until the surroundings far and near
Were radiant in that darksome night.

Out of the year a golden month
Was chosen to reap in the harvest time;
For, behold! the seed had all been sown
And ripened beneath the sunny clime.
And the golden month grew to a year,
And the harvest increased throughout the land;
And the perfect gold of the sun's bright sphere
Guarded and guided God's faithful band.
And the year increased into a life,
And the life expanded to an age,
And man with man forgot his strife,
And all the sorrows of life's page
Were changed into a song of joy,
And the gloom became gold without alloy.

A drop descended into the sea
As pure and bright as the stars above;
And the waves went out with wonderful glee,
And the water shone with resplendent love.
And the sea forgot its storms and winds,
And the voice above it was one of peace—
And no ships went down freighted with lives,
But only souls went up with release.
For the little drop was a crystal tear
That brightened the pure soul's atmosphere,
Because it was made of sympathy
Of the glorious light that is to be.

And the golden hour, and the golden month,
And the golden harvest of the year
Are those which all souls shall possess,
When throughout the world this atmosphere
Of peace and light and life shall dwell,
And no more strife or hate abide;
Only the golden ray of light—
Only pure water and its tide.

O Thou that guideth the winged orbs
With rays of light from sphere to sphere,
Until the space is bridged across
And distant suns become most near—
Span Thou all spaces which divide
Thy children from each kindred soul
Make them united far and wide,
By sympathy whose blest control
Shall make all hearts and nations one
Beneath Thy great and golden sun!

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION PRIZE ESSAYS.—Those competing for the prize medals offered by the National Association of Spiritualists, as advertised in another column, for the best essay "On the Probable Effect of Spiritualism on the Social, Moral, and Religious Condition of Society," are reminded that such essays should be forwarded not later than the first of next month (October) to the Secretary of the Association, 38, Great Russell-street.

TESTIMONIAL TO MRS. TAPPAN.

MRS. TAPPAN is about to leave our shores for the United States, and will carry away with her the good wishes of all English Spiritualists. Her trance addresses have been well received in this country, have made a favourable impression on the public, and have softened the previously aggressive tone of not a few provincial newspapers in dealing with Spiritualism. Her inspirational orations are far superior to ordinary sermons, being of a higher spiritual tone, though usually displaying less concentration of thought and close logical sequence than the educated ecclesiastical stylo. Her inspirational poems vary considerably in quality, but occasionally some of them have been equal to Shelley, notably the lines given under the title, "O Beautiful White Mother Death!" which made an enduring impression upon listeners of cultivated taste, and is often spoken of in general conversation to this day. Mrs. Tappan is a most excellent and useful speaker to deal with average audiences. During her stay in this country she has set a good example by serving solely the public interests of the movement, by keeping aloof from petty dissensions, and by displaying good-will to all. The good wishes of all English Spiritualists will follow her across the Atlantic.

Since the above paragraph was in type, we have received the following from Mr. Coleman:—"Please announce that a committee has been formed for the purpose of presenting Mrs. Tappan with a testimonial prior to her departure for America. Subscriptions to be forwarded to Mr. B. Coleman, 1, Bernard-villas, Upper Norwood."

STONE-THROWING SPIRITS AT KINGSTON.

(From Our Special Reporter.)

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES, Tuesday night.

A PARAGRAPH in yesterday's *Daily Telegraph* set forth that for a week past numbers of shop windows had been smashed at Hampton Wick by stones thrown by unseen agency, and that the police had been unable to detect the culprits. Also that at Kingston, on the opposite side of the Thames, and about a quarter of a mile off, the premises of Mr. Penhey, an oil and colour merchant, had been damaged in the same way. A startling case of stone-throwing by spirits recently defied all the acuteness of the Royal Irish Constabulary at Cookstown, in the north of Ireland, as recorded in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Belfast Daily News*; another example perplexed the police of Peckham a short time further back, and a large number of similar cases were once collected and published by Mr. William Howitt: consequently I visited Hampton Wick and Kingston today to inquire into the circumstances already mentioned.

At Hampton Wick I found several shops with smashed windows, and was informed that the stone-throwing had been going on for nearly a fortnight, but ceased last Saturday. It usually began after dark, except upon one occasion, and I saw that all the windows smashed were within a radius whosoe stones might have been thrown by a human arm from a single fixed point. Although the police were hit by the stones, and saw the windows smashed, they detected nobody; still, as it was clear that the damage might have been done either by the spirits or by evil disposed persons, and as there was no preponderance of evidence either on the one side or the other, I did not attempt to hastily unravel the mystery, but came on to Kingston.

Mr. Penhey has a flourishing business here in the Market Place; he is intelligent and courteous, has a taste for art, and is not at all pleased with the circumstances which have brought him and his premises into such undesired notoriety that sometimes several hundreds of persons congregated outside his door, and that when I arrived I found two policemen on guard. The popular idea here is that his house is thronged with affable ghosts, who every night float him about his bed-room, and the street boys venture to perpetrate a pun upon his name, and a hoax upon their kindred, by sending in their more innocent companions to ask—not for pigeon's milk—but for "A Penny Ghost." If Mr. Penhey tells the truth the incredulous listeners grin at him, so he says as little on the subject as possible. The following, he informed me, are the actual facts of the case:—

"I have lived in this house for five years, and have never witnessed anything abnormal. About six weeks ago builders began, under my instructions, to excavate under the rear of these premises in order to enlarge them, when several skeletons were dug up, as well as a quantity of loose human bones, also a few coins several centuries old. The house appears to be built upon the site of an ancient graveyard. Last Tuesday pieces of mortar and stones began to fall in the shop, usually in the

evening in bright gaslight, but on examining the ceiling no mortar was found to be dislodged. Afterwards, in the presence of witnesses, stones fell in some of the upper rooms of the house while the windows were closed, and the investigators standing by the doors. One night Mr. Turner, the jeweller, with my apprentice Mr. Martin, and myself, searched the house. A piece of brick fell upon the landing of the second floor while no windows were open. It felt warm when I picked it up. Search was then made at the top of the house, and as I stooped down in one of the small rooms to look under the bed, which was the only large piece of furniture in it, a stone fell on the floor near my head. I said to the two standing near the door, 'You threw that!' but they protested that they had not done so. Exaggerated rumours about those facts have spread all over the neighbourhood, and hundreds of people have congregated before my shop in the expectation of witnessing something awful. I cannot account for the facts. I know nothing about Spiritualism, and have always treated it with levity. The only conclusion I can come to is that these things are done to annoy me by some person or persons unknown, in order to injure my business. Up to the present time I have been unable to discover their true cause. I have never seen any intelligence connected with this stone-throwing, or heard any noises about the house at night except those caused by mice. The stones ceased to fall last Saturday, as at Hampton Wick."

To-night I proposed that we should sit together in subdued light, in the excavated portion of the premises, in which during the afternoon I saw a piece of mortar fall vertically from under the clean deal boarding of some stairs; Mr. Penhey heard the noise as the mortar struck the ground, but did not see the descent. By the screened light of a candle we sat in the haunted region for half an hour, in company with Mr. Turner, but nothing took place, though one would have thought that the ghosts had every chance. We twice heard a noise like a piece of mortar falling in the shop above, and Mr. Turner afterwards picked up a piece on the floor there; the said floor had been swept clean in the course of the day. Those in the shop, in which there was much bustle, had not heard anything fall.

I rather fancy that the excavations have little or nothing to do with the phenomena, but that mediumship has been developed in the apprentice, or Mr. Penhey, or somebody in the house, without their either knowing or desiring it; the argument against this is that the disturbances do not appear to follow them into other houses. In past times such disturbances have sometimes been found to accompany particular persons, who were cruelly persecuted in consequence; but in these days the spirit of fair investigation is rife, so that in Cookstown the only persecution Mr. Allen suffered was at the hands of undeveloped spirits, who sometimes cut the dresses of members of the family to shreds while they were upon their backs.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

LAST Tuesday night the Council of this Association met to transact its usual monthly business. The minutes of the last meeting, and letters from Dr. Wm. Pole, C.E., F.R.S., Mrs. Showers, and Mr. F. A. Downes, were read. Dr. W. Monck was elected a honorary member. The revised prospectus was submitted and approved. Mr. F. A. Downes was elected an ordinary member. Permission was granted for the sale of Mr. W. H. Harrison's recent publication, *Spirit People*, at the Rooms.

A GHOST AT HACKNEY WICK.

The following report was then read by Mr. Blyton to the Council:—

Ladies and Gentlemen,—Considerable excitement has recently prevailed in the neighbourhood of Hackney Wick, Victoria Park, London, in consequence of a startling report of a "ghost" to be seen on an evening, by the side of Duckett's Canal, in close proximity to the North London Railway bridge over the canal at Wick-lane.

Accompanied by Mr. Henry Cook, a member of the Association, I visited the scene of the alleged ghost's appearance on Saturday evening last, but was not fortunate enough to see the spectre. However, on making inquiries in the neighbourhood, it was alleged that a police-constable (117 KR) was the first person who saw the ghost. He was going off duty when, while passing under the railway bridge on the towing path of the canal, he perceived a white figure. On accosting it and obtaining no response he proceeded to lay his hand upon it, when he was astonished to find it vanish from his sight. Since this happened, about a fortnight ago, the canal bridge in Wick-lane has been

crowded each evening with persons wanting to see the ghost, and he, she, or it has obligingly appeared, if the various reports may be relied upon.

With the view of obtaining the most reliable information, a communication was officially addressed by me to the district police-sergeant at the Bow-road Police-station, as well as to the police-constable who first saw the ghost; but I regret to say that the police-superintendent gave instructions that no information whatever on the subject should be afforded, while the inspector who conveyed the reply to me was careful to express his doubts of the whole affair.

In the absence, then, of the principal witness, I have endeavoured to obtain evidence from several persons who state that they have seen the alleged ghost, and I now submit the statement of a witness who has consented to attend to repeat it this evening.

Mrs. E. M. Walkey, of Bower-road, Victoria-park, states that, accompanied by her son, three daughters, and son-in-law, she visited the scene on Saturday evening, 4th inst., and at about ten minutes to ten o'clock they all discerned an indistinct cloud-like figure, draped from the shoulders down to the knees, the legs being distinctly visible. The distance between them and the figure would be between 30 and 40 feet. It remained in view about two or three minutes, and disappeared suddenly in the open space. It first had a luminous, misty appearance, and gradually developed into a full life-sized form. Her son has since repeatedly seen it on different evenings.

THOMAS BLYTON, *Hon. Secretary.*

14th Sept., 1875.

The above report was accepted, and ordered to stand over until the next Council Meeting, in the meantime further evidence to be sought for.

The *Hackney Express* of Sept. 11th says:—"There are three or four policemen on the scene every night. The police-officer is now lying in the London Hospital suffering from the effects of fright. It is supposed that the ghost was the original possessor of a set of bones which had been carted into the shoot, and naturally, or supernaturally, resents the indignity."

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

LAST Tuesday evening a Council meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held at the rooms of the Association, 38, Great Russell-street, London, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder. The other members present were: Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mr. Martin R. Smith, Miss Houghton, Mr. G. R. Tapp, Mr. T. H. Edmonds, Mr. Thomas Everitt, Mrs. T. Everitt, Mrs. Maltby, Mr. H. Withall, Mr. Samuel Chinnery, Mr. R. Pearce, Mr. J. Freeman, Mr. E. Parkinson Ashton, and Mrs. E. D. Rogers.

NEW MEMBERS.

The following new members were elected: Mr. B. W. Pycock, Mr. T. Blinkhorn, of Walsall, and Mr. Cromwell F. Varley, F.R.S. The Comte de Bullet and Mr. O'Sullivan were elected honorary members of the Association, and the following letter from Mr. O'Sullivan was read:—

Paris, Aug. 30, 1875,
11, Avenue de la Grande Armée.

DEAR MISS KISLINGBURY,—The Comte de Bullet and I have received the notices in which you inform us that the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists has done us the honour of proposing to elect us as honorary corresponding members of the Association. We beg you to communicate to the Council our grateful acceptance of the honour thus kindly tendered to us, and the assurance of our hope that we may hereafter better deserve it by our efforts in promoting the propagation among men of the knowledge of Spiritualism, which, to both of us, is simply a revival of the primitive Christianity.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

* Mr. I. B. Rieh, of the *Banner of Light*, Dr. Grünhut, vice-president of the Spiritual Society at Buda-Pesth, and Mr. W. S. Godbe, of Salt Lake City, were also elected honorary members.

Mr. J. W. Day, of Boston, was invited to become a corresponding member.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Mr. Martin Smith read the Finance Committee's Report to August 20th, which showed a balance in hand of £106 5s. 9d., and recommended bills for payment to the amount of £39 16s. 2d.; it estimated the outstanding liabilities of the Association at £5.

LENDING LIBRARY.

The Secretary stated that several members had expressed the wish that a lending library might be formed in connection with the reading room. The Association already possessed some of the most interesting books in duplicate, and from these a selection might be made to form the nucleus of a lending library. Some of the books were rare and valuable, and could of course never be allowed to go off the premises. The suggestion had been made that friends in various districts might unite to purchase any book which they desired to read, and that the book-clubs so formed should present their books when done with to the Association library for further circulation. These were only suggestions, but the secretary requested that the Offices Committee might be also appointed a Library Committee for the further consideration of these ideas.

The Offices Committee was then constituted a Library Committee.

The Secretary reported a letter received from Mr. Joy, extracts from which appear in another column.

FREE SEANCES.

Mr. Tapp reported that the first free *seance* for inquirers had been held on Friday last, and that it was a marked success. He also reported the resolution of the Committee, that any surplus remaining after the expenses were paid, should be further devoted to the promotion of *seances* of a like character.

VISIT OF M. AKSAKOF TO LONDON.

The Secretary announced that M. Aksakof was expected to arrive in London about the 24th of this month. As the Council was desirous of giving M. Aksakof a reception at the rooms of the Association as early as it would suit him after his arrival, the secretary was instructed to communicate with M. Aksakof, and, as soon as the day was fixed, to make it known to the members of the Association.

RECEPTION TO MR. MORSE.

Mr. Morse being expected to arrive at Liverpool about the 16th of next month, it was proposed that the meeting at which he was to be received in London should be held about the 27th October.

Mr. Rogers called attention to the fact that this date was only a week prior to that of the Conference, which was also to be opened by a *soirée*. In order that one might not interfere with the other, Mr. Rogers moved that the two be combined in one.

Mrs. Maltby said that it had been usual to give Mr. Morse a benefit meeting once a year, and perhaps this might be a fitting occasion to observe the custom.

It was therefore resolved that the Conference be opened by a *soirée* on the 3rd November, at the Cavendish Rooms, the profits on which should be for the benefit of Mr. Morse. Higher prices of admission would consequently be necessary, and would be fixed by the Conference Committee.

LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS.

The report of the Committee on this subject was to the effect that meetings for reading papers and for discussion be held on the fourth Wednesday of every month, beginning from the end of November; the meetings to be held at 38, Great Russell-street. Admission free to members, who would be at liberty to introduce friends.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

Mr. Tapp moved that no person should be elected a member of the Council until he had been an ordinary member for a period of not less than three months. He said that as there were not now many vacancies on the Council it was important that they should be filled by the best persons the Council could appoint, and that it was only fair to test the stability of their adherence to the Association; he did not think that three months was too long a trial.

Mr. Rogers seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

The proceedings then closed.

THE *Spiritual Scientist* of Boston says that Mrs. A. E. Fay will shortly return to England.

Mrs. SCHLETTER and Miss Pauline Schletter are at Marienbad, Austria.

A PRESUMPTUOUS scepticism is just as dangerous as too great credulity. Both prevent correct observation.—A. V. HUMBOLDT.

Poetry.

IMMORTALITY.

THY massive beauties, O Yosemite! shall fade;
 Thy granite mountains crumble into dust;
 Thy wondrous glories cease, and be no more;
 But never shall their memory depart
 From us who have beheld them. *They shall live*
In our souls for ages. Aye! for evermore.
 I thank God I have seen Yosemite.

A. JOY.

Written at Yosemite, 24th July, 1875.

Correspondence.

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

DIRECT SPIRIT-WRITING IN GLASGOW.

SIR,—I had the pleasure of being present at a select sitting with Mr. David Duguid, the painting medium of Glasgow, last Tuesday evening, at his house, for the purpose of receiving from the spirits (who are writing through Mr. Duguid the book now almost finished, entitled *Hafted the Persian*) in direct writing a list of names of ancient kings of the Persians. Very simply, yet marvellously, we received it, like numerous other messages through the same medium, upon a card numbered and signed by three witnesses, but otherwise unwritten upon. This was laid upon the table, and the gas turned out. The latter circumstance certainly, at first, does not improve the appearance of things, but in the light of knowledge of spiritual phenomena it is easily understood. Shortly the kneels told us to light up; the card was gone, and the medium found tied to his chair by the arms, legs, and hands, as at the beginning of the *seance*. Nowhere was the card to be seen. We had all held each other's hands, and no one moved. We talked for a time, and waited in darkness again for the signal from Stein, the controlling spirit. Shortly the signal came to light the gas, and we found what we feel certain is the same card with the signatures, but having one side literally filled with a list of names, and descriptions partly in English, accompanying them. Meanwhile, the medium was bound, and—we cannot doubt who know him well—asleep, in the unconscious trance.

These writings will have to be translated, as they come in Greek and Hebrew. Through Mr. Nisbet's great patience and care, a considerable volume of such collected writings is nearly completed, as I dare say you are well aware. It cannot but be interesting, as neither medium nor witnesses are capable of writing some of the languages in which the messages are received. We were favoured with numerous spirit-lights and touches, far from the medium, and with the floating over our heads of a large musical-box, playing away. At the close we held hands on the table, and the table was lifted up a foot at a time, and floated at that height.

JAMES SIMPSON.

141, Elderslie-street, Glasgow, Sept. 9, 1875.

MARGUERITE MARIE ALACOQUE OF PARAY-LE-MONIAL, AND MRS. GIRLING OF THE NEW FOREST.

SIR,—The student of Spiritualism learns to regard as possible, even probable, much that seems abnormal to the general tenor of English thought. For instance, he may believe in the Spiritual source of the ecstasies as well as that of the bodily and mental tortures which were endured by the medium Marguerite Marie Alacoque, of Paray-le-Monial, to whose shrine so many devout Roman Catholics are in the habit of making pilgrimages, although he may entirely decline to accept the alleged identity of the spirit who manifested to her, and, indeed, by whom he may believe that she was most cruelly obsessed—for that obsessed she was her own confession abundantly proves. So, too, may he recognise the exercises of the Shakers in the New Forest as really spiritual impulsions, although at the same time he demurs equally—as in the case of Alacoque—to admit the alleged identity of the spirit who inspires their leaders, that alleged spirit being the very same spirit by whom Marguerite Alacoque also believed herself to be directly and physically influenced. The student of Spiritualism, generally speaking, is led by an axiom entirely in accord with reason and common sense, which teaches that spiritual manifestations, like other things, must stand on their own merits. A tree is known by its fruit. Figs do not grow on thistles. The strongest assertions of a spirit's identity by the spirit himself is no *proof* of his identity in itself as a general rule; while the habit which the student of Spiritualism has of judging spirits by their words and works, and his belief that good spirits have no one, teach him to deny

in its entirety the assumption that any beneficent spirit can be the instrument either of cruelty or deceit in any way whatever. And he further learns that a deceptive spirit, however clever and however great his power of deception, is sooner or later sure to betray his real character under the crucible of unbiassed honest scrutiny and perseverance, while sometimes his real character floats on the surface of his every utterance and act. The *Daily Telegraph* of August 30th, 1873, and the same journal of August 23rd, 1875, gives us—the former in the case of Margaret Alacoque and the latter in the case of Mrs. Girling—so much that is parallel and so much that is divergent respecting two persons, both of whom allege themselves to be under an identical direct influence, with intimate communion with the same, and both more or less gaining converts, that they necessarily present an interesting study together or apart. What occurred to Marguerite Alacoque is told in her own words. I here copy from the *Daily Telegraph* of August 30th, 1873, extracts from two only of what she called her especial "Visitations," which will probably suffice to give an idea of the character of the so-called "Miracle of the Sacred Heart":—

"One time, being before the Holy Sacrament, I found myself invested with the Divine presence so powerfully that I forgot myself and the place where I stood, and abandoned myself to the Divine Spirit, delivering myself over to the force of His love. He made me repose for a long time on His Divine breast, where He disclosed to me the marvels of His love, and the inexpressible secrets of His sacred heart. . . . After this He asked me for my heart, which I begged Him to take. He took it and put it within His adorable own, in which I saw it like an atom consuming in an ardent furnace. Presently He took it out again a burning flame in the shape of a heart, and putting it back in the place whence he had originally taken it, He said: 'There, my well-beloved, is a precious gauge of my love, which encloses in your side a little spark of its most vivid flame. And to prove that the great gift I have just made you is not a freak of imagination, and that it is the foundation of *all the rest I have yet to endure from without*, it shall come to pass that though I have closed up the wound in your side, the *pain will rest always with you*.' . . . I lay for several days in a state of burning elation, and so far beside myself that I could not utter a word without doing myself violence, and the effort to eat was so great that I was nearly wearied out. I could not sleep; for this wound, of which the pain is to me so precious, *caused me an agony that consumed me and burnt me alive*."

Again, she writes thus circumstantially, "Jesus Christ, my sweet master, presented Himself to me in a blaze of glory, with His five wounds sparkling like five stars." And these are the words of comfort which she received on this occasion: "Every Thursday and Friday I will make you participate in that mortal sadness which I felt in the Garden of Olives—a sadness which will reduce you, without your being able to comprehend it, to a condition of agony harder to support than death itself." In order to accompany me in the humble prayer which I then offer to my Father, you shall rise every night between eleven o'clock and midnight, and prostrate yourself *with me*, your face upon the earth. This you will do as much to appease the Divine anger against sinners as to soften in some measure the bitterness I felt in being abandoned by my apostles, who were not able to watch even one hour with me."

Here we have before us a spirit still under suffering, and a cruelly obsessed medium. Obsessed mediums often suffer from the heart. Both spirit and medium are evidence, we do not doubt, of no high type of Spiritualism; we would say of a low type, but still objects of Spiritualism. Note, the spirit betrays himself by confessing himself as still suffering and having yet to suffer; for he speaks of "all the rest he has yet to endure from without," and he calls on his poor victim to endure then "a condition of agony harder to support than death itself," and to join him (the spirit) in nightly prostration "as much to appease the divine anger against sinners as to soften then in some measure the bitterness he felt." When? Sixteen hundred years before the alleged manifestation?

"It may seem to be a horrid thing," wrote Sir Garnet Wolseley, when comparing Dahomey with Coomassie, "that a human being should be destroyed to propitiate an idol, or merely to bear some foolish message from a living to a dead savage." But surely the mysteries of Dahomey, where human victims are still slaughtered to appease angry gods, or to bear foolish messages from the living to the dead, are better than the living agonies of Marguerite Alacoque! for the former victims are soon put out of their misery, while the wretched Marguerite's suffering was confessedly "a condition of agony harder to support than death itself."

Surely "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty;" and surely the alleged bitterness of eighteen hundred years ago, that needed softening by a poor woman's agony sixteen hundred years afterwards, must be an *enduring* bitterness incompatible with the bliss and dignity of a perfect spirit! A suffering spirit—not to say a cruel spirit—must, as a spirit, needs be an imperfect spirit. But an imperfect spirit who proves himself to be also a deceptive spirit, by assuming to be that which he cannot be because he is an imperfect spirit, must be of necessity an evil spirit.

"I tell you," said Mrs. Girling, according to the reporter of the *Daily Telegraph*—"I tell you the gospel dispensation closes with myself. Christ commissioned me, and after me He will come to reign on earth. I know it. I am sure of it. So don't make a mistake any of you. . . . I am perfect; so are you if you are God's children. You know me; you see me—the mad woman, the fanatic Mrs. Girling. Well, just as you know me, and see me, so have I known and seen the Lord Christ." And when asked if she anticipated His speedy coming, she answered: "From day to day." In this case, then, the "coming" must be speedy, or Mrs. Girling is controlled by a deceptive spirit.

Mrs. Girling, moreover, propounded another paradox quite as startling as the last. She said, "There is no death, even of the body, for the Lord's people. Christ has told me this; and surely I may believe Him! I may believe Him, mayn't I?"

To those who cannot believe with Mrs. Girling, but who believe in the power of spirits to control mediums, these last words are most touching and pitiful. And we fear that our remarks concerning the deceit of the spirit who controlled Marguerite Alacoque are only too applicable also in the present instance. And what could Mrs. Girling do with her body of flesh in the spheres, if she could get it there? What an assumption!

CAYE.

THE UPROOTING OF PRIESTCRAFT BY SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA OF AN ELEVATED CHARACTER.

SIR,—We hear, and are likely to hear for some time to come, much for and against Ritualistic—so called—practices, and much has been said about Dr. Döllinger's efforts to reunite Episcopalians in the English, Greek, and Roman Churches; whilst Canon Liddon lately, in the *Times*, wrote that Christian men and women if left on an island without a priest ordained by a bishop could not rightly celebrate the Lord's Supper or partake of celestial benefits therein, but that God would probably make some special arrangement as to the future of the souls placed in bodies thus deprived of sacerdotal aid. It is a question for the educated laity to answer *practically*, whether they will in any shape whatever tolerate priestcraft. Can anything be more lamentably absurd than that men most kind of heart, self-sacrificing in their lives, having an earnest desire to serve God and to benefit their fellow-creatures (for undoubtedly English High Church priests possess these qualities in abundance), shall daily, in the pulpit and in the press, set forth claims to the possession by themselves of Divine power conferred upon them by imposition of the hands of a bishop, whilst they are quite unable to show such "signs" as we are told should "follow" them that have the faith—those signs being abundantly manifested throughout the ranks of the laity? It is of no use whatever for High Church priests to say the age of miracles is over whilst they daily arrogate to themselves the exclusive power of working stupendous miracles. Let them heal the sick, at any rate, before they claim such powers; let them give some proof that they are mediums between God and man. The strong common sense of Englishmen is revolted by such arrogant claims—so utterly contrary to Christ's teaching—as are set forth by Canon Liddon and others like him, although they may be charmed with his eloquence and be quite convinced that he sincerely, if not humbly, desires the good of all. This is a point on which nearly all Spiritualists will agree with the majority of careful thinkers throughout England and Scotland; and it is an inevitable question which has to be and will be decided by the laity, "What is the value of Apostolical succession without Apostolical works?"

HOPEFUL.

STRANGE SPECULATIONS.

SIR,—The following considerations are the most powerful I am acquainted with bearing upon reincarnation:—

1. The Kardec theory is a direct contradiction of the *fact*, better proved probably than any other scientific fact spiritual investigation has established, that the human spirit is created, *i.e.*, individualised, through parentage. Clairvoyance demonstrates that every quality of the human entity, physical, intellectual, and moral, is concentrated in it at and before birth.

The same fact is universally illustrated on the physical plane of observation by the great general similarity of children to their parents, externally and internally. That there are many exceptions to such similarity I admit and will account for later.

2. Proof of the most palpable kind is, however, forthcoming, by means of the testimony of many spirits who are sufficiently intelligent to account for all the facts of the French reincarnationists upon another and better hypothesis. The whole thing becomes intelligible at once when the simple fact of compound consciousness is borne in mind; without the knowledge of this fact vast numbers of spirits suppose that their sensations and experiences are exclusively their own; whereas it is thoroughly established by the most astute investigators on the spiritual side, and illustrated by thousands of inspirationalists on the physical side (and other sensitives of all kinds), that every phase of consciousness, *including memory*, is mutualised, shared, with greater or less degrees of perfection, by two, three, or three hundred distinct personalities. This is one of the many illustrations of the vast economy of force, by which the great drama of individual unfoldment is carried on.

3. The proof which the writer most relies upon, however, is the confluent testimony of very advanced spirits, supported by the physical facts called "moles," with which nearly every human child is born. Roger Bacon, Zude, a Greek physician of about 2,000 years ago, several German spirits of great penetration, and our own George Combe, have concurrently informed the writer that reincarnation *does* occur on the following principles:—Many spirits desire to renew their capacity to sympathise with and to alleviate human sorrows, and promote human advancement by higher unfoldment. These choose their guardians from among their closest friends, previously to descending to the physical sphere, to live again an incarnate life; not exclusively incarnate, however, but conjointly with their life in the spirit, to which they constantly return during the sleep of the physical body which they share as a habitation during some sixteen hours out of the twenty-four as an average.

Having chosen their guardians, they next look out for a pair of parents whose quality is sufficiently elevated to suit their purpose. They sometimes spend a century or two in the preparation of conditions, through three or six generations, for their advent. They next attach themselves to the egg ripening in the ovary of the human mother: the point of their contact is distinctly visible to the educated clairvoyant eye. They follow the fortunes of the egg through all the stages of its embryology. The child is born with one, two, or it may be ten small brown spots or moles on the upper part of the body; these mark the point of contact of the different individualities who have thus attached themselves to the newly-created personality for the term of physical life, and often for long afterwards.

In corroboration of this theory of moles I have two facts to offer: 1. Being accidentally in the presence of an astrologer who had never seen me before, and who had no physical means of knowing anything of my private history, he asked me the date of my birth; having told him, he within five minutes gave me the history of a chain of events which have occurred in my most private life, and which I had not told to any physical being. When I said to him that the facts were so, he then said I ought to have certain moles on the body, whose position he described, and which upon examination I found to be correct. The other fact is as follows: I know a young girl who, when about fifteen years of age, had a cluster—eight or ten—of these brown moles developed upon the forearm near the wrist. They were at first only just visible, but gradually became deeper coloured, and now, at twenty years of age, are of a red brown colour, and quite indelible. This girl's mediumship commenced about the same age, and has intensified ever since. Occasionally she is levitated while entranced, and on these occasions there appear upon the inner side of the arms from one hundred to two hundred of these faint round specks, which gradually recede and disappear when the trance is over.*

These facts seem to me to strongly support the testimony of the spirits above named touching reincarnation. They speak also of low gross spirits, who in like manner attach themselves to the children of gross animal parents—and not to these alone; but not with the motive of their improvement, but for the sake of getting strong *rapport* with the physical sphere, in which the grosser vitalities chiefly abound.

Cases of the latter kind form the best explanation I know of those instances of deep depravity and exaggerated criminality which so frequently make our newspapers unfit for family reading.

* During trances there is often a determination of blood to the surface of the skin, bringing out into bolder relief spots and markings previously present. This may often be noticed when public trance mediums are quitting the platform.—ED.

This theory of reincarnation is further supported by a great number of facts of children being different in form and in mentality from either of the parents and from any possible combination of the two. I mention two notable instances of this—Robert Owen and George Stephenson. The parentage of both was organically favourable to the actual development of both; but the other children of the same parents were entirely deficient in the great development which happened to these, in spite of the worst external conditions. R. H. HARPER.

Birmingham.

[According to the custom of allowing much freedom of speech, we publish this letter, but it is needless to say that infinitely more evidence than is given in it is necessary to draw serious attention to this speculation about moles.—Ed.]

METEMPSYCHOSIS.

SIR,—The theory of reincarnation seems like a revival of the doctrine of Pythagoras. In the Pythagorean doctrine of *Palinnesia* souls went from one body into another, first having drunk of the water of Lethe, "*epotâ prius Lethes undâ.*" The theory also partakes somewhat of Plato's doctrine of reminiscence of a former existence—"The second burden of a former child;" and again in the Shakespeare sonnet:—

"No! Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change.
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but dressings of a former sight."

And there seems to be a shadow of this doctrine of reminiscence in Mr. Herbert Spencer, and in Mr. Wallace's fancy about mind and instinct being built up in a measure from inherited experience. As far as I know, my inheritance of that kind has been very small indeed—inherited capacity, perhaps, but not really the experiences. But this reincarnation theory is a most curious fancy. The freedom of the spirit and reimprisonment in a body; to forget all and begin afresh in the baby life of another being—another individuality; to be born again, and to be no better off. Why not go back and be the soul of some animal, as was the thought of the ancients? And I think Messrs. Darwin and Wallace's "natural selection" admits of a going back; for instance, in cultivated pigeons and in the wild stock of the rocks. However, I would not limit men's fancies; theories can only be accepted when verified by fact, but to verify the fact of reincarnation would be difficult. The difficulty I think insurmountable, and the rational improbability immense. Indeed, the theory seems utterly at variance with the known facts of Spiritualism as they stand accepted before us.

AN INDUCTIVE PHILOSOPHER.

SPIRITUALISTS IN ALGIERS.

SIR,—I should be glad to correspond with Spiritualists, or others interested in Spiritualism, residing at or near Algiers. Letters to me after the 28th instant should be addressed *Poste Restante, Algiers*. DAVID HENRY WILSON.

Lavender Hill, S.W., Sept. 12th, 1875.

TESTS SUGGESTED BY DR. ROBERT S. WYLD.

SIR,—I am glad to see a letter from my excellent friend Dr. Robert S. Wyld, of Edinburgh, whose admirable works on force have excited very general attention, not only on account of the learning, originality, and scientific attainments displayed, but on account of the very ingenious illustration by experiment; indeed, he has been lately honoured by the University in consequence, so that any suggestion of his in regard to experiments such as would convince him, and which ought, he thinks, to convince all sceptics, must be worthy of attention. But I fear that what he suggests would not be more convincing to unbelievers than the hundred other experiments and tests exhibited daily. The pencil placed under the wire gauze cover might easily be supposed to be arranged if there was ingenuity and the purpose to deceive, but then comes the all-important question, "Whence this universal ingenuity and practised ability?" To be a good conjurer requires that a man should have attained very special information and should have laboured for years before he can deceive the eye and puzzle the understanding by performing what he does. If, then, so many ignorant and untrained persons are able to perform such marvellous tricks, it really becomes a question of inspiration, and the existence of some superhuman influence—and this is the very matter in dispute. There may be illusion, and we know there has been collusion and deception, but in at least nine cases out of ten I believe the result *must* be perfectly reliable and genuine. Scepticism has its difficulties as well as credulity. The other experiment suggested by Dr. Wyld was made and with satisfactory results before Spiritualism

was heard of, and I hold the proof in my possession. It is a question of clairvoyance, and offers two explanations—either that the words are perceived by a direct emanation or influence from the words themselves to or with the spirit so to speak of the seer, much as in ordinary perception by the eye, or that it arises from thought-reading or brain sympathy. The second theory would be the more readily accepted, as falling in with a very general class of facts in respect to sympathetic action, and especially those exhibited in mesmeric phenomena, some of which are related this week by Dr. Gully, and to which I could add many of a similar kind. As Dr. Wyld is now staying in the highlands of Scotland, I hope he may fall in with a case of second-sight, for it is facts we want in all directions, and in the end theories are sure to come all right—theories about the nature of force included. HENRY G. ATKINSON.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, August, 1875.

HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—If not too late for this week's *Spiritualist*, would you oblige me by bringing before your many readers the great healing power of Dr. Mack, who has set apart the Tuesday and Friday of each week as free healing days, and through whose skill I have derived such great benefit. I quite regret having to leave here so soon for my distant home.

CHARLOTTE ANDERSON.

9, Woodland Villas, New Southgate, Sept. 14th, 1875.

MRS. POWELL IN AMERICA.

SIR,—I feel sure that all who knew Mrs. J. H. Powell will be glad to have good news of her. In a recent letter she says: "You are getting much better manifestations in London than we are here. I am still in the background, but am promised by-and-by to come to the front. I saw Mrs. Conant's remains last Sunday; she looked quite natural. How are you getting on with the spirits? How I should like to come and have a sitting; perhaps I shall some day; at all events I hope so, though I am very happy, and have not a care or even the shadow of sorrow, but I do so love to see old familiar friends."

Truly may Mrs. Powell feel thus, without a care or regret for the past, for if ever woman did her duty in a patient, devoted, self-donating spirit, she did hers to her poor long-suffering husband during the tedious and terrible illness that preceded his departure to the spirit's home. Mrs. Powell was a good and most truthful medium. I remember once she personated a most excellent servant of ours (we shall not look upon her like again) who was remarkably clean and much given to scrubbing, and all the time she was influencing Mrs. Powell the latter had to kneel and imitate scrubbing. "Silver Arrow," an Indian spirit, would perform a most wonderful dance through her, and also heal the sick; and the one constant cry of both medium and spirit was: "I want to do good! I want to do good!" Mrs. Powell is not only a medium, but a true and zealous Spiritualist; she and her husband were amongst the earliest workers in the cause. Her affectionate, grateful nature never allows her to forget those friends who helped her in her time of trouble; but I will say no more, lest I wound the gentle, modest spirit of one so unconscious of any personal merit in aught that she has done.

The Chinese have a proverb to this effect: "The man of small virtue boasts of his virtue; the man of large virtue is unconscious of it." E. D. P.

Brixton Rise.

TRANSFIGURATION OF A MEDIUM.

SIR,—Mrs. Crocker, a highly respectable medium of Chicago, related the following circumstances to me a few days ago. I made a note of them at the time. Under directions from her spirit-guides she began some months ago a series of *seances* for developing a new phase of mediumship. These *seances* were confined to her own family. One night when there was a bright fire in the room, and the moon was also shining into it, so that she thinks it would have been just possible to read ordinary newspaper type, she was transfigured; her face entirely changed its form, size, and character. A heavy dark beard came upon it. All who were at the table saw the same thing. Her son-in-law, who sat next to her, on her turning her face towards him, said, "Why! it's my father himself," and afterwards declared that it had been identically his father's face: his father had passed away. Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Crocker was turned into an old woman with silver hair. She herself is middle-aged, and has dark hair. These changes occurred gradually, and while the witnesses were watching her face.

I never heard of this kind of manifestation before, and it seems

to me that it may throw a new light on the Hugnet-Firman affair, and tend to show that perhaps Mmo. Hugnet spoke the truth when she said that there was only one figure in the cabinet. It may also partially explain what occurred at Serjeant Cox's some months ago.

But if so, why do not these spirits tell us the truth about these things beforehand, instead of getting their confiding mediums into undeserved scrapes?

Mrs. Crocker was perfectly conscious the whole time. She experienced a very vivid tingling sensation all through her body, exactly as though she had been holding the poles of a strong galvanic battery.

A. Joy.

Clifton Hotel, Niagara Falls, 27th August, 1875.

THE REINCARNATION CONTROVERSY.

SIR,—An Algerian correspondent of mine thus explains the "divergence" of the views of Spiritualists and Spiritists:—

"Spirits of a superior order have the wisdom to avoid exciting the prejudices of those whom they wish to instruct. How would a noble lord be disposed towards a doctrine which told him that he may have been a cobbler or a light porter, and that he may return one day to that mean position? His ancestral pride would revolt at such a monstrous thought, and he would reject the whole doctrine on these grounds alone. In the United States prejudices of colour would have the same effect. But in France and other countries of Europe such prejudices do not exist, at least in the same degree, and therefore spirits do not fear to teach the doctrine of reincarnation as one of the fundamental ideas of Spiritism or Spiritualism. It is in regard to this doctrine, in particular, that it differs from ancient religions, all of which teach that after death the wicked will be punished and the good rewarded. But such teaching is insufficient, for even by the faithful the joys and sufferings of that other world are but vaguely believed in, whereas in reincarnation you have the actual punishment of the guilty before your bodily eyes, and you may even be enduring it yourself for the sins of former incarnations. Such visible effects influence the feelings and actions of men far more powerfully than all the theories, which cannot be realised by the material sense.

"I am ignorant of the reasons which cause some to reject this salutary doctrine. My studies have taught me that the doctrine of reincarnation is founded on such abundant and convincing evidence that to hesitate to admit it would be folly. Take, for instance, the following:—

"1. The mediums to whom similar revelations have been made, agreeing in the minutest details, are found in considerable numbers in different parts of the globe.

"2. These revelations are often based on accounts so varied and numerous that it is impossible to attribute them to the imagination of the mediums.

"3. Certain spirits do not confine themselves to giving accounts of their past existences, but, when put to the test as to whether they have been certain alleged personages, have not failed to prove their identity.

"4. The destiny of man in each terrestrial life is regulated by certain laws of justice and logic which it is important to study and to understand. Thus the man who has misused power and authority becomes in another life the victim of the tyranny of others. The drunken husband who beats his wife becomes in his turn the beaten wife of a drunken husband. It is the application of the saying of Christ: 'He who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword.'

"Allow me to cite one fact in proof of reincarnation. My wife, some years ago, was a remarkable medium. She had lost a brother and the daughter of this brother. The brother manifested habitually at our spirit circles, but suddenly these manifestations ceased. After some months, being troubled at his silence, my wife said to her niece: 'What has become of your father that he now never gives signs of his presence?' 'Papa is no longer in the spirit-world; he will soon be among you.' . . . (After some hesitation) 'He will be born not far from you, as a boy.' (After further hesitation the spirit gave the name of the future mother of her father.) All came to pass; but my wife, who is sceptical, was not convinced. After the child was born, she evoked his spirit during the sleep of his body, and the spirit of the new-born child manifested at several seances. My wife put a number of questions to him, in order to test his identity, both with regard to his present and his former incarnation. The answers given were correct; but she was still not satisfied, saying that the spirit might possibly have read her thoughts, the answers being already known to her. 'I will question him on matters unknown to me, which may be verified in the future.' Trial was made accordingly,

and proved in the end successful, so that there was no longer any room for doubt. I could relate many other facts. Spiritualism will doubtless work a complete change in human life; it will affect religion, morals, and all family and social institutions. . . . Selfishness, that source of so many evils, will gradually disappear, and with it war, misery, prostitutions, and the insufficiency of institutions for public safety, therefore fires, inundations, shipwrecks, and railway accidents.

"But if differences exist on some questions in Spiritualism, all its followers have one aim in common, that of the religious, moral, and social progress of humanity. Let us be united in this work. Let each study it from whatever point may recommend itself to his mind; we shall probably all agree in the end."

X.

SIR,—As reincarnation is a subject at the present moment engaging the attention of Spiritualists generally, I should be glad with your permission to ask how it is that a question of such importance as this is involved in so much doubt and uncertainty.

Surely if Spiritualism is true it ought to settle the matter. If it is possible that disembodied spirits can communicate with man in the thousand different ways they are supposed to do, even controlling his body and speaking by the hour together with ease and fluency, they ought to be able, if the thing is true, to give us absolute proof of that fact—of the time, place, and conditions in which they before existed. This would be just as easy for the majority of them to do (if they had any knowledge of the fact) as it would for ninety-nine men out of a hundred to prove they were born and reared in London, if such had been the case. All the sentimental talk about good and bad spirits differing on the subject is mere nonsense; it is not a question of quality at all, but of fact.

I speak from experience, living as I do and have done for the last five years face to face with the great fact of mediumship presenting itself in a thousand different ways. We have learnt to place the utmost confidence in our spirit friends and companions, because they have proved their individuality and ability by work actually done of the greatest material benefit to many who have sought their assistance.

Those spirits have often declared that reincarnation is nothing but imaginary nonsense, on a par with that which is trying to make Spiritualism a religion by preaching and praying about it, instead of using all our power and opportunities to investigate it as a scientific problem, in order that we may be able to lay the bare facts before the whole world.

JOHN ROUSE.

80, George-street, Sloane-square.

Provincial News.

BLACKBURN.

SPIRITUALISM IN BLACKBURN.—There is a sure and steady work going on here, quiet and genuine, taking no great public stand as in Liverpool, London, and elsewhere. Although nearly every one connected with the movement is tolerably well known as a Spiritualist, it is probable that in a town like this, especially where the people when they advocate anything political or religious do so with a whole heart, before Spiritualism takes this decided stand, a battle, a long and tedious one, must be fought with prejudice, theology, and in some instances with a sort of stupid Secularism, which is strongly averse to Spiritualists coming boldly to the front with facts demanding attention to the subject of spirit-communication, life beyond the grave.

SUNDAY SERVICES.—Last Sunday evening many friends met to listen to an address from Mr. Coates, of Liverpool, and also to interchange ideas one with another. A gentleman commenced the proceedings by giving out the hymn, "Gather at the river," at the conclusion of which Mr. Coates arose and delivered an impressive invocation under spirit influence. Another hymn was then sung, and an address was delivered on the text, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The address dealt more especially with the evidences of the reality of spirit-power and presence that Paul had in his day, and those who laboured with him; also the possibility of obtaining as certain evidence in this our day. The address was listened to with attention throughout, and seemed to give satisfaction. Mr. Stone, a gentleman of position and an avowed Spiritualist, related to the meeting some interesting experiences that had occurred during an investigation of several years, including his earlier experiences in mesmerism, his present experience with healing mediumship, and the satisfactory sitting he had with Mr. Walter

Isaac, of the Psychopathic Institute, Liverpool. He did not believe in mesmerism until he was thoroughly convinced by facts, and even then he could not see any possible relationship between it and this absurdity called Spiritualism. But its facts staggered him, and could not be got over. He could now see the relationship. Mesmerism was undoubtedly a stepping-stone to things spiritual. Mr. Pemberton then related some of his experiences of the reality of spirit existence. He said he had frequently held communion with his dear departed wife and with other spirits. This gentleman's remarks secured special attention, he being so well known and respected. Mr. Pemberton, jun., a local medium, evidently controlled by intelligences of no mean order—the medium himself being a thoughtful, intelligent man—for three-quarters of an hour gave an able address on the moral philosophy of Spiritualism, the controlling spirit afterwards inviting questions: some were put and ably answered. Some of the friends stated the benefits they had received from Mr. Coates as a healer, and said they were pleased to hear that he intended to remain in the town two or three weeks longer. It was regretted Mr. Meredith was not present, but he had to be in Liverpool. A collection was made; the proceeds were handed over to Mr. Coates towards the support of the Psychopathic Institute, this being the first public acknowledgment of the kind of the work carried on there. An invocation by the guide of Mr. Pemberton closed this interesting meeting, which lasted three hours and a half.

CHESTER-LE-STREET.

SPIRITUALISM IN CHESTER-LE-STREET.—This town is situated on the Durham-road, midway between Newcastle and the cathedral city; it has a population of about 5,000, and is a business centre for the colliery districts by which it is surrounded. It is a clean old English town, pleasantly situated. Twelve months ago Spiritualism was practically unknown here, since which time Mr. W. H. Robinson, a well-known resident and an earnest Methodist, having become convinced of the truthfulness of Spiritualism by contact with the Newcastle friends, has fearlessly introduced the subject, first privately and now publicly. A short time since a report was published in *The Spiritualist* of a seance held in the Chester-le-Street Liberal, since which time Mr. Robinson has also engaged other mediums, viz., Mr. Sadler, of Cardiff, and Mr. Brown, of Howden-le-Wear; in addition several members of his own circle are developing trance and other forms of mediumship, so that the subject forms no small share of conversation in a place where every one is known to every one else. Organisation has already begun among those in the locality who are newly acquainted with Spiritualism, and the result is that the Chester-le-Street District Association announced two addresses in the High School, Middle Chare, on Sunday last. In the afternoon Mr. T. P. Fawcett, of Bishop Auckland, gave an address to about a hundred persons, the subject chosen by the audience being, "What is Modern Spiritualism?" The discourse was ably rendered, several questions were put by the audience, and the meeting ended in a satisfactory manner. This is the first time the medium has spoken in public as a trance speaker. Mr. J. T. Rhodes occupied the chair, and made a few remarks on "Mediums and Mediumship." In the evening Mr. T. Brown, of Howden, gave an address in the trance, Mr. W. H. Robinson in the chair. The meeting numbered about 120, all that the room would hold, and the subject chosen was, "What is Man's Experience in the Spirit-World?" At the close of the address he answered several sensible questions, and the audience on the whole was orderly, especially as the medium in his address trod very much on orthodox notions of heaven and hell. Mr. Brown is a man who at a glance it is easy to perceive belongs to the working class. He is plain in appearance, and while under influence speaks with much force and some amount of gesticulation. He has not the calm philosophical manner of Mr. Morse, but on the other hand a style that has great effect on north country Methodists. Such a man is enabled to bring home spirit teachings to their feelings as well as their intellects in such a manner as to induce them to cry, "Amen!" but might not be so suitable for a polished audience. Mr. Brown has been a Spiritualist about three years, and a medium a little less; he is respected as an earnest man whose he is known. He has various phases of mediumship, but he has of late developed into a trance speaker and a test medium. His health is rather delicate at present, apparently from over-work and care, as during a missionary tour in the north lately he lost his work at Howden-le-Wear, and it is only lately that Mr. Brown has appeared as a public speaker. There are several private circles here, and many mediums under development. The Rev. R. Abercrombie preached against Spiritualism on Thursday

week, using the "Devil Theory," and the various sects are up in arms.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

A SEANCE AT WEIR'S COURT.—On Thursday evening a seance took place at Weir's Court, at the Society's Rooms: Misses Wood and Fairlamb were the mediums. There were also present in the circle Mr. Crawford, Mr. and Mrs. Petty, and their two sons, so that the medial power was strong. The light was no sooner put out than the musical instruments were floated about, and the manifestations were of a rapid and miscellaneous character. Three mediums also were entranced at one time, all of them talking to the circle of sitters, which numbered about five-and-twenty. Thus it was difficult to tell what was going on except in the immediate vicinity of each sitter. At the close of the seance the two lady mediums were found strapped up, and on the floor was a pocket-book with three pages of writing upon it, purporting to have been written by "Cissy."

FOUSTON.

This place is situated near Chester-le-Street, and in it there are several circles and mediums, who have only lately begun to investigate. A young lady at the house of Mr. Joseph Batie especially bids fair to become a reliable trance medium. A sermon is announced to be delivered here against Spiritualism.

SOUTHPORT.

A VISION.—A meeting was held last Sunday afternoon in Trinity Chapel, Duke-street, under the auspices of the Wesleyan Juvenile Missionary Society, at which the Rev. E. E. Jenkins, M.A., stated that a native who wrote to him a few days ago, and who was called Soondram, he once received into his house against the protest of his family; and for that man's sake he nearly lost his life, and would have lost it, if the Lord had not been very near to save. That man's father and friends pursued him (Mr. Jenkins) as if he had been a wild beast; but the Lord was very gracious and took charge of him and his brother. However, that young man was taken from him; but he afterwards escaped from his father's house, and, returning to the Mission, became a convert to God. He would never forget his conversion as long as he lived. When they were going home together one night, he said to the youth: "Somo, have you found Christ yet?" The youth replied that he had not. He (Mr. Jenkins) then said to him: "Do you remember what Jacob said to the angel on one occasion?" The youth replied: "He said, 'I will not let you go except you bless me.'" He then told the youth to follow the example of Jacob, and advised him when he saw the angel to lay hold of the skirts of his robe, and hold him till he got a blessing. That seemed to fix itself upon his mind, and next morning he came to him (Mr. Jenkins) with a smiling face and said: "I saw the angel last night, and I held him by faith, and said, I will not let thee go unless you bless me; and he blessed me there." The youth entered the missionaries' college, where he was trained for the ministry, and for some years past he had been a faithful and devoted and eloquent minister.

Mr. D. D. HOME is at Geneva, where he has been suffering from diphtheria and neuralgia.

Miss LOTTIE FOWLER is at present in Hungary, at the house of Dr. Grünhut, Vice-President of the Spiritist Society at Budapest, of which the Baron von Vay is the president.

Mrs. C. L. V. TAPPAN paid a farewell visit to the Secretary of the National Association of Spiritualists, at 38, Great Russell-street, on Saturday last.

DR. W. LOCANDER, of Bleacher-street, New York, and of Rue Monge, Paris, has paid a short visit to London. He was present at the late Spiritist trial in Paris, and speaks in the highest terms of M. Leymarie.

A LADY PRESIDENT OF A SPIRIT-CIRCLE.—The spirit-circle, *St. Vincent de Paul*, at Brussels, is presided over by a lady—Mme. de Bassompierre. "But," says a correspondent, "it is more in her character as head of the household than as a president in the ordinary sense." Spiritualists in England and on the Continent have happily never made a difficulty of the "woman question," but have tacitly and practically acknowledged the right of woman to do whatever work or to fill whatever position she has shown herself to be fitted for.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. R. Y., Swindon.—The letter is so purely personal and theological in character as not to be suitable for these pages.

E. W. C.—No sensitive was present during the experiments with magnets.

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