

The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

The Oldest Newspaper connected with Spiritualism in Great Britain.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper.

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SPIRITUALISTIC PROPAGANDA.

THE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, operating at the Athenaeum, Temple-street, Birmingham, purposes holding a small Bazaar, or Sale of Useful and Fancy Articles, at the Athenaeum, on Monday, January 24th, to open at Three o'clock p.m., and to conclude with a Concert and Miscellaneous Entertainment, commencing at Eight p.m. This Entertainment will be of a superior character, two or three professional singers having kindly promised their services.

The proceeds of the Bazaar and Entertainment are intended to form the nucleus of a fund for Building a Lecture Hall and Spiritual Lyceum; said fund to be increased by Entertainments, Seances, and otherwise, during the next two years.

Any contributions of money or goods for the Bazaar will be thankfully received by either of the following ladies:—Mrs. Groom, 106, St. Vincent-street; Mrs. Foley, 288, Icknield-street, West; Mrs. Harper, Soho-hill, Handsworth; Mrs. Sunderland, 67, Bull-street; Mrs. Hill, 224, Bristol-street; Mrs. Starling, 160, Lozells-road, Handsworth. Robert Harper (Soho-hill), Treasurer.

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The above work has just been issued in America, and copies may be had in a week or two, price 10s. 6d. each, at *The Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office*, 38, Great Russell-street, London, W.C.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF ENQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the next Ordinary Half-Yearly General Meeting of this Association will be held at the Association's Rooms on Thursday, the 27th January, 1876, at 8 o'clock in the evening precisely; when the Report of the Council and Balance-Sheet for the Half-Year ended 31st December, 1875, with a Resolution for authorising an application for admission of the Association into alliance with the "British National Association of Spiritualists," will be submitted to the Members for adoption; Officers for the current half-year will be elected; and motions, in respect of which notice in writing has been given to the undersigned on or before Thursday, 20th January, will be discussed.

THOMAS BLYTON,

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

Rooms—74, NAVARINO ROAD, DALSTON, E.

13th January, 1876.

ANNALI DELLO SPIRITISMO IN ITALIA.—Rivista Psicologica di Niseford Filaleto. Published on the 15th of every month, at Turin, Tip. Baglione, via Bogino, No. 23.

LE MESSENGER, a fortnightly Journal, published on the 1st and 15th of every month, at 36, Rue de la Cathédrale, Liège, Belgium. Price 2s., or 5 francs yearly.

THE SPIRITUAL SCIENTIST, of Boston, U.S., early in January, commenced the publication of a translation of the works of H. Cornelius Agrippa, and it is devoting considerable space to Occult Philosophy. Subscriptions, 13s. per annum, including postage, from America. Money orders to be made payable to J. Selwood, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

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BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS,

38, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.

AGENDA FOR JANUARY.

Monday,	3rd.	On-tees and Library Committee, at 6 p.m.
Wednesday,	5th.	Dalston Society's Soiree Dansante at Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street. The soiree of the B. N. A. S., usually held on the first Wednesday in the month, is therefore postponed till the second Wednesday.
Monday,	10th.	Lecture and Discussion Committee at 6 p.m.
Tuesday,	11th.	Price Essay Committee at 5.30.
"	"	Finance Committee at 6 p.m.
"	"	Council Meeting at 6.30 p.m.
Wednesday,	12th.	Soiree at 6.30 p.m. Music, Conversation and Refreshments. Open to Members and Friends; admission 1s.
Friday,	14th.	Seance for Enquirers at 7.30 p.m. Mr. C. E. Williams, Medium.
Monday,	17th.	Soiree Committee at 6 p.m.
Tuesday,	18th.	Seance Committee at 6 p.m.
"	"	Provincial Societies Committee at 7 p.m.
Monday,	24th.	Discussion Meeting at 8 p.m. Free to Members and Subscribers.

Members of Committees are requested to attend the meetings mentioned in the above list, without further notice. They will be further advised of any Special Meetings which it may be necessary to convene during the month.

BRIXTON PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

6, Loughborough Road North.
Tuesday, 4th.—Council Meeting at 8 p.m.
Wednesday, 12th.—Discussion Meeting at 8 p.m.

LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Friday, 14th.—Annual Soiree at the Assembly Rooms, Islington. Chair at 8 o'clock. Admission 1s.
Every Sunday.—Public Meetings at the Islington Assembly Rooms, at 3 and 7 p.m. Trance Mediums from all parts of England.

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WINTER MEETINGS.

A continuation of those meetings will be held at the Rooms of the Association for reading and discussing papers on Spiritualism and kindred topics. They will recommence on Monday, January 24th at 7.30 o'clock, and will be held fortnightly until the end of April. Friends having papers to communicate are requested to send them at an early date to the Secretary, at 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. W. H. HARRISON.

THE COMMITTEE has much pleasure in announcing that the PRESENTATION of the TESTIMONIAL to MR. W. H. HARRISON will take place at a public Soiree to be held in the Cavendish Rooms, 71, Mortimer Street, on Wednesday, February 2nd. Tickets to be had on application to Miss Kishlingbury, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C. price 1s. 6d. The chair will be taken by Mr. Martin R. Smith.

EAST LONDON SPIRITUAL MEETINGS.

LECTURES giving information about Spiritualism are delivered every Thursday evening at 8 p.m., at Mr. Cogman's Lecture Rooms, 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile-end. Inspirational addresses every Sunday evening, at Seven o'clock. Admission Free. Supported by voluntary contributions.

AS I am compiling a work of Psychological importance, I would be exceedingly grateful to any one who will furnish me with well attested Facts of Manifestation of any description arising from and distinctly traceable to Spiritualism. I also wish for written or printed cases of Imposition in connection with the same object as regards public or private mediums. In this momentous and most important undertaking, I ask the assistance of every honest Investigator and Truthseeker. In any instance where books or pamphlets treating this subject are forwarded to me, I will readily pay the market value of such. All letters, manuscripts, books or pamphlets, to be addressed to me, "D. D. Home, Nice, France, Poste Restante," till May 1st, and after this date to "Paris, France, Poste Restante." D. D. HOME, Nice, January 3rd, 1876.

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BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF SPIRITUALISTS.

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

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

Persons wishing to join the Association, and Local Societies wishing to become allied, are requested to communicate with Miss Kinslingbury, Resident Secretary, at the offices of the Association, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C., of whom copies of the Constitution and Rules may be had upon application. The entrance to the offices is in Woburn-street.

BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SPIRITUALISTS.THE READING ROOM & LIBRARY
38, GREAT RUSSELL-STREET, BLOOMSBURY.

ARE open to the public. Newspapers and periodicals connected with Spiritualism, from all parts of the world, and various high-class journals, are regularly supplied. The library contains, in addition to the best writings on Spiritualism, works on historical, speculative, and scientific subjects by the best authors.

Terms to members: One guinea a year, which also includes membership; Quarterly tickets, 5s.; Monthly tickets, 2s. 6d. To non-members, annual tickets, 30s.; Quarterly, 10s.; Monthly, 5s.

A Seance room can be engaged under special arrangements, to be learned from the Secretary. Open from 10.30 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. Close at 6 p.m. on Saturdays.

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February, 1876.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

VOLUME EIGHT. NUMBER THREE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JANUARY 21st, 1876.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

NO. XLVII.

[After a short rest, this addition was made to what had been said.]

We have told you of the operations of the adversaries, and of the danger to be apprehended from them. But others there are who, without being malignant foes, are nevertheless a cause of trouble to us. Many of those who are withdrawn from earth are not, as you know, very progressive, nor, on the contrary, very undeveloped. The majority of those who pass from the body are neither very evil nor very good in spirit. Such, indeed, as are so far progressive as to gravitate rapidly through the spheres nearest the earth, do not return unless called to a special mission. The earth-bound we have already told you of.

It remains to speak of the agency of a class of spirits who from mischievous design, or from pure sportive fun, or from love of mystification, frequent circles, counterfeit manifestations, assume names, and give erroneous or misleading information. Such are not evil, but unbalanced, spirits who lack even balance, and who delight in plaguing mediums and circles: in giving exaggerated tone to communications, in introducing false elements, or in personating friends and reading in the thought the answer which they give to a query. The work of such is that which causes you to say that Spiritual manifestations are frequently foolish or silly. It is due to the efforts of these spirits, who from fun or mischief counterfeit our work, and play on the feelings of those who trust them. These are they who personate relatives whose presence is desired and answer to their names. These are they who make true identification of friends in mixed circles impossible. Most of the stories current of such return of friends are due to the work of these spirits. These are they who infuse the comic or foolish element into communications. They have no true moral consciousness, and will pray readily, if asked, or will do anything for frolic or mischief. They have no aspiration beyond the present: no desire to injure, but only to amuse themselves.

These are they who allure to wrong paths, and suggest wrong desires and thoughts. They secretly influence mediums much, and prevent noble aspirations. They view with impatience noble and elevated aims, and suggest the material. They act as bars and clogs. They are greatly concerned with physical manifestations. They are usually shrewd and clever at such work, and they delight in presenting bewildering phenomena for the purpose of disturbing the mind. They victimise mediums in divers ways, and find a pleasure in the bewilderment of mind which they cause. Obsession and possession and the various forms of spiritual annoyance proceed very frequently from such. They are able to psychologise a mind over which they have gained influence. * * * These again are spirits who befool inquirers who have asked for personal information. They return plausible answers, and bewilder the deluded inquirers, or if a personal friend have once appeared, and given a good test, his or her place on the next occasion may be filled by one of these spirits, who takes the name and replies to queries, giving vague and unsatis-

factory replies, or telling false stories. It is always well to put the personal element as far from you as possible, lest you open the way to deceit.

* * * * * + IMPERATOR.

[I print this communication, written March 15th, 1874, because it refers to the elementary spirits of whose agency we have recently heard from Col. Olcott in America. Long before I had ever heard the name or had had any acquaintance with Occult literature or with any of the professors of Occultism, I had received warnings such as that printed above. They were more or less vague, and I did not attribute to them any special force. Nor did I grasp the fact that they referred to spirits other than those of the dead. I now know that the undeveloped, as they were always called—the term elementary was never once used—included within their ranks both those who had passed their incarnation without progress, and those properly called the elementaries by Occultists who were waiting for their incarnation and had not lived on this earth. Many communications lately written through my hand, and made in our circle, enlarge and explain the information given before; and I now read what was vague and obscure before, with a new light. Most of the personal warnings given me I have not printed because they are so distinctly private; but I have copied this one in order to show that what has caused such astonishment and opposition amongst Spiritualists is not a totally new and unknown doctrine emanating from a single source. On the contrary, while the personal element which is so rife in Spiritualism has been almost entirely absent from my experience, I date the first warning about these elementary spirits, vaguely put, but sufficient for its purpose, and abundantly intelligible in the light of after-teaching to the earliest days of my acquaintance with the subjects.]

[March 25th, 1874. A spirit communicated through the table, name and particulars both unknown to any member of the circle. I inquired on the following day about the circumstance.]

The spirit said truly that she was named Charlotte Buckworth. She has no special connection with us, but was permitted to speak as she chanced to be present, and for evidence to you. The conditions were unfavourable for our work; we were not able to harmonise the conditions, which were disturbed. It is always so after such a day as you passed. The different influences of those with whom you were thrown would introduce elements of disturbance which we could not harmonise.

[I had been with four persons all more or less mediumistic. I always am affected by being in the society of such.]

You do not know how much. You are sensitive to such influence. The spirit who came to you was one who has passed from among you now for more than a hundred years, having made a sudden and unprepared entrance into spirit-life in the year 1773. She passed at the house of a friend in Jermyn-street, whither she had gone on a party of pleasure. She will probably be able to say more to you; but we have no control over her.

[I asked that she should be fetched, but was told that the communicating spirit had no control over her. I then inquired if anything more were known about her.]

Yes. She was very anxious to say more, but the power was exhausted. She has been occupied in her special sphere of work after awaking from a long sleep, and has not been brought within the atmosphere of earth until lately. She is attracted to circles where harmony prevails, being herself of a loving nature. Her departure from your earth was instantaneous; for she dropped down at a party of pleasure, and at once passed from the body.

* In *The Spiritualist* of August 15th, 1873, an account was printed of some phenomena which occurred in a private circle held at the house of Dr. Stanhope Speer, 13, Alexandra-road, Finchley-road, N.W., through the mediumship of a gentleman who is known to Spiritualists under the nom de plume of "M.A. (Oxon)." A mass of evidence as to identity given up to that time has since been greatly increased, and in all cases where verification is possible, the statements made have been found to be literally accurate. This has been the case when extracts from rare works have been laboriously authenticated in the library of the British Museum. Evidence being so given of the independent action of spirit, and of the freedom of the messages from colour by the medium's thoughts, it has been thought well to print selections from a great mass of "Spirit Teachings" which have been thought well to print written out automatically through his hand. The communications so given extend over three years, and are principally concerned with the Religious Aspects of Spiritualism. They are the work of many spirits, each of whom preserves his individuality, even to the peculiarity of the writing used. The opinions are frequently the reverse of those held by the medium, and are written (as far as can be ascertained) without aid from his mind. The hand is automatically moved, even though the brain be occupied about other work. Great care has been taken to provide conditions under which reliable messages can be obtained.—[Ed.]

[*I inquired the cause of death.*]

Weakness of the heart, increased by violent dancing. She was but a thoughtless girl, though of a gentle and loving disposition.

[*I asked what house and where?*]

We cannot say. She will probably be able to say for herself.

[*Other subjects were then written about, and no more was said of this. In the afternoon of the same day a brief communication was made. Though I resisted the impression to write, being busy and not at home, I was compelled to allow the message to be given.*]

We have ascertained that it was at the house of one Doctor Baker that Lottie departed. The day was the fifth of December. We are not able to tell you more; but enough has been said.

RECTOR.

[*The verification of this statement was as unexpected as was the message itself. We had decided that no means of verification was open; and the matter passed from our minds. Some time after, Dr. S— had a friend at his house who was fond of old books. We three were talking in a room in which there were a number of books rarely used, arranged in shelves extending from floor to ceiling. Dr. S—'s friend, whom I will call Mr. A—, mounted a chair to get at the topmost row, which was composed entirely of volumes of the Annual Register. He took one down amid a cloud of dust, and commented on it as a valuable record of events from year to year. Almost anything, he said, could be found in it. As he said this the idea flashed into my mind at once most vividly that there was the place to verify the information that had been given about this death. It was one of these utterly unaccountable impressions, or rather communications, with which those who commune with spirits are familiar. It was as if a voice spoke to my inner sense. I hunted out the volume for 1773, and there I found among the notable deaths a record of this occurrence, which had apparently made a sensation, as occurring at a festivity in a fashionable house. The volume was thickly covered with dust, and had lain undisturbed in its place since it had been put there some five years before. I remember the books being arranged, and they had never been disturbed since; nor, but for Mr. A—'s antiquarian tastes, would it ever have occurred to any of us to pull them down.*]

The medium through whom these *Spirit Teachings* are given, says:—"I may add in this connexion that on March 29th, 1874, a communication was written out in my book, of which at first I could make nothing. The handwriting was like none I had seen before, very shaky and tremulous, like that of an extremely old and feeble person. Though a name was apparently signed I could not read it at all until it was deciphered for me by the friend who usually writes. The message was from a very old woman, of whom I had never before heard, who passed away at upwards of 90 years of age at a house not far from the place where our circle meets. For obvious reasons I am unable to print the name and address. I have neither authority nor wish to seek it from friends still living. But the name, place of residence, both in earlier years and at the time of death, age, and date of decease, were given with exact accuracy. The remarkable fact, for which (apparently) the message was given, was that the time of departure from earth was in the month of December, 1872, since which time, as was said, 'the spirit being full of years in its earth-life had rested from its earthly toil.' On awaking it had been attracted to its old home, and thence to the circle in the immediate neighbourhood.

"I believe that in this, as in all cases of identity, the information was brought at the instance of Imperator, and for the definite purpose of supplying to me evidence which I very much desired of spirit-identity, or rather of individuality perpetuated after bodily death. The cases were apparently selected according to a plan, and I have never been able to procure evidence suggested by myself, or to interfere successfully with an apparently pre-arranged plan."

DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.—The general meeting being fixed for Thursday evening next, the ordinary weekly séance on Tuesday will therefore not be held.

THOUGHTS ON THE MEDIUMSHIP OF INDIAN FAKIRS.*

BY DR. MAXIMILIAN PERTY, PROFESSOR OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, BERN.

JACOLLIOT'S assertions on this subject must appear to outsiders as incredible, fantastic, and impossible as anything that has been said and written about ancient and modern magicians, Christian ascetics and mystics, from the earliest centuries down to the present time. The readers of *Psychic Studies* are, I assume, already somewhat conversant with psychological phenomena, partly from historical sources, and partly from a certain amount of what may be called empirical knowledge; I have therefore felt no hesitation in placing before them Jacolliot's account of his Indian experiences.† It may be—is, indeed—highly probable that he has painted with somewhat lively colours, and that he has artificially grouped his facts in such a manner as to force conviction; that is to say, he may have arranged them in a certain progressive order, and not exactly as they occurred. But on examining the facts separately, we find them to agree in essential points with other mystic phenomena of various times and nations (allowance being made for the character of the people, their natural surroundings, and the scene of enactment), and I think they cannot be considered as more or less wonderful than those, especially than the latest experiences of Spiritualists. This agreement in the essential nature of things puts Jacolliot's facts on as credible a footing as many of the others named, and we find ourselves with regard to them face to face with the vexed question as to whether they are produced by magical forces in living men, or by unseen beings called spirits, who make use of the organisms of particular persons, called mediums, to produce certain effects. The contents of the foregoing pages prove that the Indians have held the latter opinion from the earliest ages, and that they consider their *pitris*, or spirits of their ancestors, to be the motive power. If they are right, we must conclude that these spirits have powers which do not come under the ordinary physical laws of nature, and that for the demonstration of the same they attach themselves to living persons, not so much for any benefit that will accrue to them, as to give proof of their own existence, and to bring their capabilities to some extent under the cognisance of men. But so far as the fakirs, sanyassis, nirvanys, and others are concerned, it is scarcely to be doubted that many who desire it cannot succeed in developing the magical power in themselves, therefore yield to the temptation to simulate, and to produce deceptive appearances, whereby they sink from magicians to conjurers. This would naturally increase, as in the case of Egyptian, Zend, and other worship, as Brahmanism degenerated, and of which very little now remains. Just so in the latter days of the Roman Republic, the augurs smiled on meeting one another, and when the Romans came to Egypt, the priests were only useful as masters of the ancient ceremonies.

The experience of all ages goes to prove that the practice of these things is attended with danger to the living, and can only occur at the cost of their fitness for their present stage of existence. In my *Mystic Phenomena*, vol. i., p. 92, it is mentioned, for instance, how dangerous it is to induce visionary or clairvoyant power by means of incense-burning, cases of which were cited, and the influence of which Jacolliot has himself witnessed. How much more deleterious are those continuous ascetic practices which lead in some to stigmatisations and general exhaustion of the system! If there is any comfort in such sacrifice, it can only consist in the fact that by this means revelations of the inner nature of man are obtained which cannot be procured in any other way; and if the opinion be correct that they are due to the operation or co-operation of those no longer in this earthly life, an empirical proof of personal continuity is gained, which is incalculably more valuable than any speculation. And from this point of view the mystics of all ages, though they may have failed to attain earthly success and even earthly happiness, have yet not lived and denied themselves in vain, but have performed, indirectly, a great service to mankind. This seems to me to be the point of view from which they should be honoured, and not from the supposed satisfaction rendered to the Deity by those who devote

* Translated from *Psychic Studies*.

† Published in the last Vol. of *The Spiritualist*.

themselves to the necessary conditions, or rather are overpowered by them.

It is almost necessary to assume a special working of Providence in all these things; therefore, also, in the so-called stigmatisations. They follow the same law of order and continuity that govern other events, so far as we perceive them, though in the present case much remains veiled in mystery. These phenomena are very wonderful, but they are not *miracles* in the popular sense of the word, though they have been unquestionably held as such by pious believers in all times. We cannot, however, argue with those who, in complete ignorance of the subject, think they can annihilate the facts with the terrible name "deception," and who prove to their own satisfaction, from natural laws which in no way affect the question, the "impossibility" of mystic phenomena, and who prefer the applause of the unjudging crowd to open and earnest investigation.

SPIRITUALISM AT HOME.

[MUCH more practical Spiritualism than is generally supposed is prevalent in private life, and haunted houses are by no means rare, though the owners do not draw public attention to them. The appended messages, which have been forwarded to us, were given at a private circle.]

The following communications were received from a spirit, who stated that her name was Mary Ann C., and that she was connected with our family in the reign of Queen Anne. They are extremely interesting, as a description of a spirit's progress out of darkness into God's marvellous light. The references she makes to her visits to her old home on earth are confirmed by facts well known to many persons. The old house in Scotland belonging to her family has been, until lately, the scene of unaccountable disturbances. Footfalls, voices, and the rustling of silk dresses have been heard in empty rooms, and the house was for a long time reported to be haunted. We had heard of these singular voices, but made no attempt to ascertain what caused them, until quite unexpectedly a spirit in communication with us said, "Why do you not inquire about the ghost at C.?" We then did so, and a spirit came some time afterwards, who declared that she was Dorothy C., the sister of the troubled spirit who roamed about her old home at C., and the following communication was made by Dorothy C. :—

"October 2nd, 1870.

"The dear earthly teachers told you that I wished to speak with you. Mary Ann, poor weary soul, must do her work of pain and remorse in prison. Pray for me. My poor sister joins her mother and sisters at C. I do not go there because my load is gone, and I am in higher and gentler spheres."

"November 20th, 1870.

To my daughter A—, who had been on a visit to C—, and had been disturbed by the noises above alluded to :—

"Dear A—, why were you frightened at me? I would not walk when I felt you were afraid of seeing me roaming in the same room you slept in. You must have done me good had you prayed for me, and talked to me without fear. Be sure I will not frighten those who believe in me.

"I am much obliged to you for letting me communicate with you. I have received good from being allowed to do so. You would be surprised if you knew how I feel since I have spoken to you. You will often hear from me, because I derive much benefit from being able to communicate. Have patience with me; I cannot be good all at once, but in time I will."

Question.—"Please tell us what you suffer."

"I am possessed with the idea that I am still on earth. You cannot think how weary I am with life. As I have had no wish to be better, I have had no power of improving. Dear friends, pray for me, though I cannot do so myself."

We said the Lord's Prayer, and begged her to join in it.

"I have heard and thank you. Will you try and think of me in your prayers, dear friends?"

"May 26th, 1871.

From Mary Anne C—.

Child of man, think seriously of life, it is not alone a scene of joy. You must try and sow good seed; or you will look back with sorrow on the past. Do remember to work while it is yet day; the night may come; it may find your work unfinished, and it will prove my words. Know that I reaped my harvest. I was proud and haughty on earth, and proved myself to be without the love of God in my heart. How do you think I felt when I came here, where I could not respect one spirit I was with? On earth I made myself hated for my unholy pride. Dear cousin A—, give E— my kindest words of friendship: I know she was never frightened at me. You know who I am. Dear messenger of rewards, my meaning is that I should be still roaming in one of the rooms at C—, if some kind friends had not kindly thought of the poor unhappy spirit and prayed for her. Dear E—, do you dislike to speak to me? Do you know how wicked I was? I am sorry to say my pride was not my worst sin. Fear not; I am more sensible of my sins now than I was before. When I came here I did not join with the others in cursing God, but everybody seemed to think that I was a poor, unprotected spirit among

those demons. I had persevered in my wickedness on earth, and no good spirit could penetrate to where I was. Christ loved some of the most wicked on earth, but he grieved over their sins. Our Lord knows our guilt, and shows us the same love he showed on earth. Christ is our Redeemer. He died for such as I, for the wretched; and only such as I know how wretched a spirit can be. Dear E., I have been positively saved as a brand from the burning fire of sin and suffering. Christ has made me whole. He has worked a change of heart in me, and taught me to love the only God; for I could not see the kind, loving spirits who came to meet me at the spirit circle, and who did not repulse the wretched spirit without the love of God. But I felt their kind thought of me, I felt a longing to communicate with some one on earth, and when A. was at C—, I communicated with her. I then felt better, and knew where I was in the spirit world. Dear E., don't think too much of my wickedness. I am happy now, and I praise God for His love and mercy to such a one as I. A little while ago I thought I could never be happy again, but now a ray of sunlight has penetrated to me, and I can count showers of lovely flowers, well refreshing to my darkened eyes. Do tell me if you or any of your family found me very shocking to you? I should be very sorry if I had been. I did not know what I was doing. I thought I was with my mother and my sisters. How sad that room was to me! Oh! if I had known how remorse would have torn me, I never would have sold myself to the powers of evil. Fill your minds with serious thoughts of life; do not resign yourselves to pleasure; sin will quickly take possession of the unrepenting heart. Fill your hearts with love to your God, and pray for the sorrowful spirit who loves you, and for her sake don't speak lightly of sin.

Question.—What sphere were you in?

I was in the sphere of those spirits who see not, neither do they hear aught but their howlings; and their pain was quite real, for it was the suffering of despair and remorse. I revere the good spirits who came to pour spiritual balm upon our pain, but we could neither hear nor see them.

Dear A., God bless you, and keep you in His love all the days of your life on earth, and when you leave it, may you enter the mansion prepared for you, meet for the child of God. Cease your life of frivolity and pleasure, and do work for God, and look to Him for help in all your difficulties. Good night, dear friends.

The above message was given in London to two young ladies, one of whom (E.) lives in the old house in Scotland, which had been haunted by the spirit of Mary Anne C. Two days afterwards the following message was received at Tunbridge Wells by myself and my daughter, without our having heard of the previous communication.

Whit Sunday, May 28th, 1871.

To H. AND HER MOTHER.—I am Mary Anne C. I will tell you what I have been doing since I spoke last to you. You will be much surprised to hear that I am much improved in spiritual learning. You know how sad my entrance into the spirit world was, which was into a very low sphere where all was dark and lonely. When in that desolate and wretched state, I longed to return to my old haunts of vanity and sin, and this was permitted, which was my dreadful punishment. So are the desires of the heart fulfilled, either for good or evil. This desire did not satisfy me, or give me any pleasure, so the desolation and wretchedness of my wicked heart cannot be imagined. I by degrees saw the folly of what I was doing, never approaching to the pleasure I desired, because it was earthly. I became aware that I could communicate with invisible spirits far away from me, some, like myself, out of the flesh, and some in the flesh. I then longed to speak to any who would not fear me, because I began then to know my own sinfulness. I began to wish to be better. Then I heard of you through some other spirits who are connected with us; these told me that I would be listened to, and I came. God in His great mercy listened to my desire to no longer return to those endless scenes of worldliness at my Scotch home. He permitted me to speak to you, and you were permitted to do a poor sinner good. Ever since I was taught how worthless I am I have been longing to be better, and I have risen, and now it is the delight of my soul to learn the manifold mercies of God. How unworthy I feel. Although I was wicked I have learned that my Saviour died for such as I, and though for ages I was in a state of rebellion towards him, he has saved me. Dear friends, I have to thank you in the name of Jesus Christ for leading my soul to the blessed light. You have been the humble means, and therefore I come to show my gratitude, but my thanksgivings are more heartfelt towards my God for all His wonderful loving kindness. You have had a lesson dear Mrs. L., never to be forgotten. You did not turn a deaf ear to one whom you thought lost. I could not pray, but you prayed for me, and read the holy Bible to me. Never say that the fervent prayer of a righteous man cannot save a soul alive. Your prayers are all heard. Your wishes, whether for good or evil, are ever going up to the ear of God. Never wilfully desire worldly gratification or aggrandisement, because—I do not say your prayer will not be answered, even to the letter—but your greatest trials and severest temptations may be sent in their form. Therefore, pray only for the good, and the amount of earthly pleasure which God sees fit to give you. I craved for my earthly pleasures even after I had left the world, and though my desire was granted I was in torment. Hell is the evil state of the soul ever desiring the sins and wickedness, which when given cannot even give the transient passing joy of earth, for our spiritual bodies have not the power of receiving the gratifications of the flesh, and still the desires of the flesh remain. Can you understand the horror of this state of being? Never give way to this earthly longing, but elevate your souls even now, by cultivating a desire for spiritual pleasures, this will not only purify your minds, but make your progress in the next sphere easier. O! had I

learned my lesson of submission, humility, love to God and to my fellow men, I would not have been left so long in my sphere of misery, and without God in my heart. My Saviour came and found me longing for a ray of light, and so weary of wandering that I longed to stay at peace. And I was sent teachers who seemed to unbind my fettered soul, to unbind my closed eyes, to loose my tongue, to wash me for a purer sphere. Then gradually my spirit drank in the blessed light of God's truth; my benumbed tongue could praise him, my limbs could walk in the wide expanse where all showed forth God's glory. You have had a wonderful description of my advance from spiritual darkness into the light of God's heavenly truth. I was in bondage to sin, and now I am free, enjoying God's love which had never ceased for me, but was only hidden from me by my own wilfulness. God bless you, and save you from such an entrance into the next sphere. Take example by what you learn, and never forget that you are at present given time and opportunity to make your spiritual home perfect. Neglect no opportunity for doing the little good you can; be humble, be patient, be lowly in your own eyes. Love God; live as if you were told that to-morrow you would enter the spirit world. Pray for God's help through His holy spirit, for strength to fight the many temptations which surround you. Never trust to your own power of resisting temptation, for the best of God's people are but weak, and He only is strong. He will never forsake you, never neglect you. He loves you. Are not you all His children? And if He seems to afflict you, it is merely to draw you closer to Himself; and if He takes what you love away, you will find the loved one again. He has told you that where the treasure is there the heart will be also. This world would not appear so welcome were it not the abode of those who are not dead but gone before. You have listened to me with great patience, and I thank God for permitting me to come again and talk to you. I hope to come some other day, if I can, in my humble capacity, do you any good. I see and feel your surprise that I, who so lately came to you for help and instruction, can come to you teaching you God's word of instruction and wisdom. I was permitted to tell you what I had learned. I longed to show you what a blessed state of mind I was in; therefore, what I feel so deeply I was obliged to impress on my dear cousins. Give my love to all those who are interested in my improvement, and I thank them. God bless you. Many dear ones would have spoken to you to-night, but they have allowed me, for which I am very grateful. Farewell.

Mary Anne C., to H— and her mother.

"July 23rd, 1871, Sunday Evening.

"Dear Friends,—I am Mary Ann C—. You are very good and patient in welcoming me. I want to tell you about the sphere I am now in. I am higher, and progressing in knowledge of spiritual truth. I have not desired to communicate with you for some time, because I have been receiving such high teaching from my heavenly guides. You were pleased to hear from me that I no longer wished to return to earth, and now I would not care to speak to you if I did not feel that you would rejoice at my joy and improvement. Such communications can do my spirit no harm, because you do not wish for my communication from mere curiosity, but to do me good, or to receive benefit from my spiritual experience. God has been very gracious to me; His compassion has been greater than I deserve. He sent you to my rescue. I mean your sincere wish and heartfelt prayer for my deliverance from the cruel bondage to sin enabled my spirit to crave for light, which was sent in the shape of a heavenly visitant who I told you made me free. Ever since that day have I received fresh proofs of God's love. I suffered because I remained in wilful blindness; my home was so dark, and now I see such light from the blessed truths I am daily taught. So many are willing to communicate that I will say no more at present, but return if I am permitted. I love to come; your spirit is very sympathizing; therefore I have less trouble in communicating.

July 30th, 1871.

MARY ANNE C.,—I am your friend Mary Anne C. I must come and tell you that I am so happy. I will make you understand how I have risen. You know already how I was delivered from the bondage of that most awful death of sin. I was taught my own unworthiness, and given the desire to be better; then as my spirit improved in its state, so did I leave behind me all those dreadful, miserable longings to return to earth and enjoy those earthly pleasures which gave me only wretched feelings of desolation. I now can appreciate the sweet sounds and sights which surround me, and to which my spirit was dead. My spiritual atmosphere is becoming purer as I desire for progress. My guardian angel has been so tender and patient with me, for at first I could not rise, or feel interested in anything beyond my poor miserable self. I had first to be taught to think of the wants and pleasures of others, then I found in so doing I derived joy. When self is forgotten, then the spirit is filled with the pleasure of heavenly love. In my low and dark sphere, where I was left so long, I only thought of my own misery. I only longed for my own gratification, and it was given to me in the very form I prayed for it. Now I have lost my selfish heart, and live to help and attend to those who need assistance. I cannot teach you, my dear friends, but I am permitted to warn you most earnestly to pray against the sin of selfishness, for though that may be in your eyes a very little sin, it is truly the root of all sin. Forget your own selfish pleasures and troubles, and you will derive both comfort and joy. I thank A. for writing what I have come to say, for I want you to feel the importance of my humble mission. I have not risen so high as your dear brother, but he has left, so that my sad experience may be a serious warning to those he loves. I was unwilling to interrupt him, but longing again to tell you how to live, so that hereafter you may not go where my spirit suffered such a time of purgatory, or purifying from the dross of sin, for as long as sin is indulged in, and the thought delightful, so long your spirit is enchained in its power. No sooner do you see it in its own hideous form, than it falls off like a mask. I have become much more humble, and feel my unworthiness in many ways. Before I prided myself in having belonged

to a good family, and I longed to live in the same style I did on earth. I hope to improve, but my spirit must go through much purification. You are tired; I will not keep you longer, dear friends, but will return if I am permitted. Farewell.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES.

A CORRESPONDENT, writing from the Continent, says:—

For the third time phenomena have occurred to me which I formerly should have put down to hallucination, and am still willing to do, but think the circumstances worth mentioning to you, on account of the strong resemblance they bear to certain Spiritualistic phenomena which I have witnessed in the presence of others, at *stances* with mediums in London.

For the first time on July 13th, for the second time on September 7th, and for the third time last night I suddenly awoke out of the midst of my dreams to the consciousness that my hands were seized and pressed by other hands. My consciousness increased; I knew exactly that I was in bed, remembered clearly where I left off my dream, felt the strange pressure on my hands still; wondered who could have got into my bedroom, the door having been locked by myself before going to bed, when suddenly the thought flashed through my mind the hands I felt pressing mine might be spirit hands. The idea struck me with a certain awe, but rather pleased than frightened me. The next thought was, "I will open my eyes suddenly; perhaps I may see a spirit, or some phenomenon." I opened my eyes accordingly, and at the same moment the pressure on my hands ceased, but two or three phosphorescent-looking sparks flashed about the room, forming lines of light. Most strange thing of all, towards the foot of the counterpane of my bed I beheld several mathematical figures, besides what looked like the profile of a human face of diminutive size, formed of small but distinct luminous sparks. I did not know what to make of it, and in order to see whether it was simply a visual hallucination I closed my eyes for a while, but when I opened them, lo! there were the same figures still, on the same spot; also some lights flashing about the room. I repeated the act of opening and closing my eyes, with the same result three or four times. I noticed distinctly the other objects in my room, the curtains included, shining forth in the morning light.

The second time, when similar phenomena were seen by me (Sept. 7th) in my present abode, it was with the difference that I awoke from sleep with the sensation of somebody breathing in my face and covering my brow, eyes, and cheek with kisses; at the same time I felt both my hands seized and pressed by a couple of hands. This time the pressure of the hands did not cease at the moment I awoke, but a little after. However, I did not perceive any sparks or lights this time. A nebulous form of a face seemed to vanish into the darkness in front of my eyes when I opened them, but that I could not swear to, though of the rest I felt so sure that I could make oath thereto, because when conscious I still felt, and even smelt, the warm breath in my face.

Last night I was not favoured by any kisses, but by the same pressure of three or four hands awaking me out of a sound sleep. This time I wondered and contemplated what sort of hands they might be. The hands were, judging from the feeling, decidedly male hands. Not wishing to break the charm at once, being perfectly conscious, though not perfectly awake all the time, I asked in a joyful lisp, "Are you really here, my spirit friends?" and I received the answer, "Yes, we are here!" This reply sounded as spoken close to my ear, and in a deep lisp. Anxious to catch sight of the speaker, I opened my eyes, but there was nothing there.

It may be well to observe, that each time that these phenomena presented themselves to me I had not partaken of any heavy suppers, nor of any wine, beer, or any similar beverages in the evening.

SPIRITUALISM is making sure but steady progress in the United States. One of the best signs is in the space now given to it by the secular newspapers. The *Sunday Herald* (Boston), a paper of very large circulation, devotes two columns to the subject regularly every week. Other papers, in New York, Chicago, and St. Louis treat the subject with liberality and respect.

CHEATING THE DEAD.—All progress, whether moral or social, is a source of regret to some classes in every community; to those, namely, who make a profit out of the superstition or ignorance of the rest. Thus the partial submission of the Chinese colonists in America to the sceptical spirit of the age has been very unlucky for the Redskins, who in some states used to get very pretty pickings out of the religious rites of the Celestial immigrants. The Chinaman, whilst still orthodox, used to leave plenty of eatables on the tombs of the dead, to which the Indians helped themselves, leaving the defrauded ghosts to take their own remedy; but when he became "broad" the good Asiatic took to a modification of his ancient practice, and now parades the food through the cemetery as before, but eats it at home. A Nevada paper, which cannot be accused of writing "Johnsonese," describes a "grave-yard blow-out," or "post-mortem collation by the Chinese at Carson, as having commenced by the formation of three distinct processions, each headed by a band beating gongs and cymbals. Roast hog, it seems, was abundant, and "the Washoes looked on in wistful sorrow," only too well informed that the good old days when the Chinaman left "great stacks of grub" upon the graves of departed fellow-Pagans for the noble Red man to devour, have passed away, and that he consumes his own votive offerings on his own festive board. So will it be when the intentions of the "pious founder" are all made subservient to modern requirements, the vanishing "stacks of grub" being watched to the very last by the wistful eyes of "Washoes" in the shape of disappointed jobbers.—*The Echo*.

Correspondence.

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

PRIVATE SEANCES IN MANCHESTER.

SIR,—I have to record two remarkable incidents which indicate steady development towards splendid future results, and show what may be expected from a circle, which faithfully observes conditions, and above all excludes all possible intrusion of villany, treachery, and spirit-graspers. After securing my medium perfectly in the stiff-net bag behind the curtain, I placed on another chair, near to her, a plate filled with flour, to try to obtain an impression of the spirit's hand. The form soon came distinctly to the aperture, and retired after a while, during which the thought came into my mind that, if the power of the hand were sufficient, the plate might be handed to me by the spirit itself, and curiously enough (was it thought-reading, or chance?) the plate came through the aperture. I took it to the lamp, and there was the impression of a small female hand, plain enough! Why shouldn't I get the same from the foot? and send it to the Hon. Robert Dale Owen as a compliment to his *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*. At the last sitting (same test conditions), a beautiful little hand only came into view, holding the velvet ribbon with the cross. I thrust my hand through the aperture, and I felt and saw the cross playfully touching my fingers. A voice whispered: "I won't give it back to you, mind!"

C. REIMERS.

Jan. 14th, 1876, 2, Ducie-avenue, Manchester.

ELEMENTARY SPIRITS.

SIR,—It seems to me that the whole subject of "elementary spirits" is, in great measure, anticipated, and put into a nutshell in Allan Kardec's *Spirits' Book*, questions 536 and 540 (1st ed.).

H. M.

Bath, Jan. 16th, 1876.

SPIRITUALISTIC WINTER MEETINGS.—EXPERIMENTS IN MESMERISM.

SIR,—I am requested by the committee which has charge of the arrangements for the above meetings, to inform you that next Monday, the 24th inst., will commence a series of investigations into the subject of Mesmerism, to open with some experiments on that evening by Professor Redman.

You have so often called attention to the importance of this subject in its bearings upon Spiritualism, that I am sure you will give every publicity to this announcement, in order that the members of the National Association of Spiritualists may not fail to be apprised of it.

E. KISLINGBURY.

THE HARRISON TESTIMONIAL.

SIR,—Permit me to call attention to a notice which will be found in your advertisement columns, of the *soirée* to be held at the Cavendish Rooms on the night of Wednesday, the 2nd of February.

The Council of the National Association of Spiritualists has kindly permitted the committee of the Harrison Testimonial Fund to avail themselves of this opportunity of presenting the testimonial, and I trust that all friends interested in Spiritualism will show their appreciation of the services Mr. Harrison has rendered to the cause by their presence on the occasion.

MARTIN R. SMITH.

INDIAN JUGGLERS.

THE *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, of January 15th, gives the following:—

"Ernest Wells last week gave some extracts from the *Times* of some very clever tricks performed by Indian jugglers before the Prince of Wales. With the same laudable view of eliciting information as Mr. Wells, I append the following witnessed while in India some years ago:—One of these jugglers commenced before a numerous audience to display his abilities as a conjuror, producing a green cocoa-nut and a hatchet. Several of the audience were invited to split open the nut; all refused. At length an officer undertook the task of splitting it, when out sprang a small green serpent, about eight inches long, and said to be the most venomous of the tribe in India. While the animal was running frisking about, many of the audience were making tracks to a distance. The conjuror held it by the end of its tail, immediately over his mouth, dropped it down his throat, and swallowed it. His next trick was also a cocoa-nut, the audience being again requested to split it; all refused; then he accomplished it himself, when three ordinary pigeons made their appearance, flying to a distance, returning, and finally perching on his shoulders and head. After toying with and caressing them, he placed them on his left hand, and with his right hand dealt on the bodies of the poor birds a tremendous blow; they were immediately crushed; nothing was left. The man, being naked, except a thin muslin loin covering, next placed himself in the centre of the ring, and became rigid, while the heads of four serpents were beginning to show over the edge of his muslin dress. One by one he hauled these out, placing one round his body, another round his neck, the others in his hands. These disappeared as mysteriously as they were produced. He next produced three stones, the largest one being the size of a small egg, the other two gradually decreasing in size. Placing the largest stone in his mouth, he deliberately—and with some apparent difficulty—swallowed it, the second and third being sent after the first. After sundry grimaces and twitchings of the stomach, he attempted to vomit them. He succeeded in this by first producing the larger stone from his mouth and the others in succession in the same order as they had been swallowed. His last trick, the best of the series, was sitting on nothing. His attendant, taking three swords, which he stuck in the ground, placed on the top of them a round half-inch board, making what may

be termed a three-footed stool. On this stool the conjuror squatted like an Eastern potentate on his throne. In a short time he became perfectly motionless, in which position he sat for some minutes. His attendant slowly approached him and removed one sword, the juggler sitting on two. In a short time the attendant removed another sword, the juggler being perched on the remaining sword. Finally, the last sword was removed, the board fell on the grass, and the juggler was left sitting on—nothing. And there he remained some minutes. The Indian jugglers who perform this trick scrupulously maintain their secret, no inducement offered tempting them to divulge it. J. S., GATESHEAD."

SPIRITUALISM IN LEIGH.

ON Sunday evening last a private *seance* was held in Leigh at which some singular manifestations were given. The mediums were two boys—Joseph and Walter Bamford, of Macclesfield. The lads, who are at present at school, say that until a few months ago they were unaware of the power which they apparently possess. The lads were accompanied by their father, along with a well-known Leigh Spiritualist, and they visited Leigh at the request of the writer. When they were introduced into the room where the manifestations were afterwards given no preparations had been made, and a temporary "cabinet" had to be formed out of the window curtains. A small but heavy mahogany writing table was then removed to the centre of the room, covered with a cloth, and the preparations were completed.

An accordion was first held by Walter with one hand beneath the table, the keys being downwards, and under very strict tests, which need not be detailed. In a few seconds successive notes were sounded, and a strain of the "National Anthem" was played, followed by a ludicrous attempt by the "spirit" to play one of Mr. Sankey's popular airs. The tune being whistled, it was attempted to be imitated on the accordion, but after jerking out the first two lines "it" finished with a rapid improvised *finale* and became silent. So far as human judgment can decide, the keys of the accordion were not touched by the medium, and the instrument was only an ordinary one. It was afterwards taken to pieces and a "post mortem examination" made, with the satisfactory conclusion that those in the room could see through the accordion, though by no means through the singular fact that the instrument played without hands, and appeared to be under the control of some intelligent, not to say obstinate power. An attempt to obtain writing on paper was unsuccessful, but the unfinished words, "God save the" were written upon a slate held by the medium under the table, whilst his other hand was laid upon the top.

A calico bag was then produced and examined carefully, and after his coat sleeves had been stitched together and to the back of his jacket, and other precautions taken to prevent escape, the lad, Walter was lifted into the bag, which was tied round his neck, and he was then firmly secured to the back of a chair. The chair was then lifted behind the curtains, and Walter's feet placed upon a stool. The curtain was then closed and held by one of the sceptical gentlemen present, a small bell having been previously placed on the medium's lap. No sooner were the curtains closed than the bell was thrown down, the lad being upon examination "as he was." This was repeated several times, and also with a small lever call bell (not belonging to the medium), which was rapidly rung and turned over, not only when left on the medium's knees, but when held in that position by one of the gentlemen in the room, who, directly the bell struck, pressed down the knob, but without causing the ringing to cease. The bell was also placed upside down, but in a second or two it was righted and ringing as well as ever. Two similar bells, but of different tone, were then laid on the medium's knees and the curtains closed. The bells rang together. Every plan convenient at the time was adopted to detect the cause, but without success. The bell rang most certainly without anything material being in contact, except the hand of the person who held it in one instance. A slate laid on the medium's knees was scrawled over with the pencil laid upon it, but no direct writing was obtained, although the bell rung as usual when laid upon the slate. Four finger rings were then laid loosely on the lap of the medium, from which they were thrown, upon the curtains being closed. After this had been repeated several times two of the rings were successively placed upon one of the fingers of the medium (who was tied in the sack) in a few seconds of time. The last manifestations took place with the curtains open, and with a gaslight burning immediately in front of and above the medium, who was still seated in the sack and tied to the chair. Before all present in the room a book was repeatedly thrown off Walter's knees by no visible means, and the book back was slowly raised and lowered several times in the full view of all. The boy was then lifted out of the cabinet and untied, all the knots being apparently perfect, and none of the stitches connecting his coat sleeves together, and otherwise making movement all but impossible, were found broken. On one finger of his left hand were the two rings mysteriously removed from his lap earlier in the evening.—*Leigh Chronicle*.

MR. J. J. MORSE will give trance addresses in Newcastle on January 30th and 31st, and February 2nd, at the Freemasons' Old Hall, Wierscourt. On Thursday, February 3rd, there will be a social meeting.

MR. ERES SARGENT'S *Does Matter do it All?* a reply to Professor Tyndall's latest attack on Spiritualism, has been reprinted from the *New York Sun* in the form of a pamphlet.

Danger Signals, an Address on the Uses and Abuses of Modern Spiritualism, by Mary F. Davis, is an excellent little pamphlet on the above subject, and is written in plain, simple language.

MR. CROMWELL VARLEY, F.R.S., will attend at the presentation of the "Harrison Testimonial," and will address the meeting.

SYSTEMATIC APPEARANCE OF RECOGNISABLE SPIRITS.

From the contents of the following letter, it would appear that materialisation manifestations have developed to a greater extent in America than in this country. Mrs. Andrews is the first medium who began to sit regularly for them in the United States, so it is but natural that an advanced stage of development should have been reached:—

To the Editor of the "BANNER OF LIGHT."

At this Christmas time it is eminently proper for earnest Spiritualists to meet in private and public circles, and while communing with loved ones who have gone before, learn of them why the Christ could work His miracles, and whence came the power that has made Him a teacher and a guide for nearly two thousand years.

It would seem as if the spirit-world cherished a particular fondness for this portion of the year, as, in this section of the country at least, its denizens have come among us with renewed power, and have given us wonderful and convincing evidences of their presence and love. Since the first circle in November, at Cascade—the home of that true and faithful medium, Mary Andrews—the power of her spirit-band has seemed to augment and increase until it culminated last evening in one of the most remarkable, satisfactory and convincing *séances* it was ever my good fortune to attend.

Circles are now held regularly each day—at half-past nine a.m., and seven p.m.—and when conditions are right, and the circle harmonious, sceptics cease to be doubters, and believers are strengthened in their faith. The morning *séances* are of the nature of developing circles, and preparatory to the evening circle. They are held in the dark, at which time the controlling spirits speak, and give such directions for the guidance of the medium and the circle as may be necessary, while friends and relatives "gone before" give cheering words of recognition, and send messages of remembrance and love to the absent. The most convincing tests of identity, spoken from the materialised lips of those called dead, are given at nearly every one of these circles, while spirit-voices join in the singing, and spirit-lights keep time to the music, or answer the anxious questioner for knowledge.

The evening circle is held, not in a dimly-lighted room, but with sufficient light to enable all to distinguish clearly and distinctly forms and features. At these circles spirit-forms often materialise and vanish in plain sight of the spectators, and, standing in the doorway of the cabinet, holding the curtains wide apart, they are recognised by their friends, and, in turn, greet them with words of hope and cheer, then gradually fade from view, to be followed by others, male, female, and little children. On several occasions three spirit-forms have at the same time appeared at the door of this phantom closet. Last evening the writer saw a beautiful child, with waving, yellow hair, stand at the opening, while the mother, bending forward, revealed to us a radiant face, beaming with a smile of maternal affection, as she imprinted kisses upon the brow and lips of her darling, and encouraged it to meet our gaze and respond to our questionings. When the curtains were drawn back to give us this vision, the medium could be seen in her chair at the side of the cabinet. This remarkable and, as Professor Tyndall would say, unscientific occurrence, gave hope and belief to at least one materialistic sceptic present, and has started him on the way to learn of another and a better life than this, which he had supposed was the be-all and end-all of existence.

Earnest and candid seekers after truth will be at all times welcomed at Cascade. It is not necessary for a person to be a believer in order to gain admittance, nor are exacting and suspicious conditions necessary to insure the peace or safety of the medium. All, both believers and unbelievers, are welcome, and abundant opportunity is given them to investigate the phenomena and test their genuineness.

CHARLES A. WARDEN.

Auburn, N.Y., Dec. 24th, 1875.

Mr. REIMERS writes from Manchester that he has just held a materialisation *séance* in daylight, and a figure appeared of surprising beauty, with a glittering crown and a profusion of white drapery, the effect altogether being beyond his power of description.

THE DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.

OCCULT PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA.

The following consists of selections from the paper read on Tuesday, last week, before the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, by Dr. George Sexton:—

The subject of the paper announced for to-night is so wide and comprehensive, and includes within it a variety of topics of such thrilling interest and momentous importance, that it may seem almost presumptuous to attempt to deal with it in the short time at my disposal. The utmost, therefore, that I can do will be to glance summarily at a few facts connected with various phases of mental operation, of a somewhat occult character, and which, although by no means uncommon in their occurrence, have yet baffled philosophy to explain. Psychology is one of the most important and interesting branches of study, yet it is one which has been, and still is, terribly neglected. In the past, far more attention was paid to questions connected with the nature and operations of the human mind, than in these days of physical science and materialistic opinion. But even then the difficulties presenting themselves in the way of obtaining a thorough knowledge of the soul were felt to be so great, that nothing but the vaguest conjectures and the wildest speculations resulted from the inquiry. In all studies of this kind, there is one great difficulty which must always remain, which is that the mind is both the instrument employed for the investigation, and at the same time the subject of the investigation itself. As, however, in this paper, I simply intend to draw your attention to facts rather than make an attempt to hazard a philosophy by which they are to be explained, it is not necessary for me to enlarge upon the nature of mind itself, or the laws by which its operations are carried on. I assume for my own part that man is immortal, that he has a spiritual nature, and that consequently all the phenomena of mind lie outside the domain of his material existence. There may, however, be those present who take another view, one far more fashionable at the present day, and who hold that matter and its laws are all that we know of, and must be held to be competent to account for mental as well as physical phenomena. With such persons I have no dispute to-night, except to say that I think the facts which I shall bring before you will puzzle and perplex such philosophers beyond measure, and set their materialistic theories completely at defiance.

CASES OF TRANCE AND ABNORMAL SLEEP.

The classes of mental phenomena to which I shall refer are several, and I select them at random, without attempting to trace any relationship between them, since to do that would require a large volume rather than a short paper, which volume I shall probably some day give to the world, as I have a great number of facts, the result of many years accumulation.

I. *The state of profound and prolonged sleep simulating death, denominated trance.*—This is a phenomenon which has always excited a large amount of attention. By many it has been viewed as an actual separation of the soul from the body, and has been consequently looked upon with a considerable amount of awe. In a physical point of view the appearances presented are very nearly the same as in dissolution, while of the mind its condition is various. Sometimes it remembers everything that occurs in connection with the material body from which it was supposed to have departed; sometimes it brings back descriptions of regions which with its material organisation it had never visited; and at other times it remembers nothing, and may therefore have been unconscious, if mind can ever be unconscious, which is questionable. This state of trance probably bears some relation, though we scarcely know what, to the hybernation of the lower animals. True hybernation, however, can only occur, in connection with cold-blooded animals, for reasons which will be obvious to the physiologist. These cases of trance have sometimes given rise to most serious results, premature interment having not unfrequently taken place. In the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, there is a case given of one Mary Lyall, who fell asleep on the 20th of June, and slept until the 30th; then fell asleep again on the 1st of July, and slept until the 8th of August. On the occasion of this second sleep she was blistered and bled, and placed in a warm bath for the purpose of arousing her, but all without effect. For the first week no kind of motion was observed, and no food taken. At the end of that time she moved her left hand, and pointed to her mouth, thus signifying a desire for food. This being administered to her, she took whatever was given, without moving any other part of her body. After she awoke she remained deaf for four days. Dr. Binns mentions the case of a woman who slept for forty days, and of another one—Elizabeth Perkins—who in 1788 fell into a deep sleep from which nothing could rouse her, and in which she remained for eleven days, when she awoke spontaneously and went about her business as usual. Dr. Oliver mentions the case of one Samuel Chilton, of Tinsbury, near Bath, who had several attacks of this kind, going to sleep on one occasion, when the barley was being sown, and not awaking until it was being cut. On one of these occasions, during a prolonged sleep, a number of very cruel experiments were tried upon him—such as bleeding, cupping, the application of hartshorn, and other stimulating substances to the nose, and the thrusting of pins under his finger nails—but he neither moved nor spoke, nor gave any sign of suffering. Dr. Binns also relates a somewhat analogous case of one Phineas Adams, a private in the Somersetshire Militia, where almost unheard-of torture was resorted to for the purpose of awaking him, by men who, like the sceptics of to-day, can believe nothing but what is of ordinary occurrence. This poor wretch was—in an abnormal state—"blistered, bled, punctured, drenched with drastic purges," had "pins thrust under his finger nails, and, to complete the process of the surgical Inquisitor, the scalp was divided, dissected off, and the skull scraped with a

scalpel." It is recorded by Pliny, Diogenes Laertius, Valerius Maximus, Suidas, and other writers, that Epimenides, the Cretan philosopher, when young, going in search of sheep, fell asleep in a cave, and did not wake for fifty or fifty-seven years (both periods being mentioned), which case beats Rip Van Winkle hollow. Under ordinary circumstances, to take fifty years out of a man's life for sleeping at a spell would be to make a considerable reduction from the time allotted to his existence on earth. In the case of Epimenides, however, he lived to the age of a hundred and fifty-seven years, and, therefore, had a pretty long life after all.

THE BURNING OF AN ENTRANCED PERSON.

In many cases the condition of sleep has approximated so nearly in appearance to death that premature interment has taken place. Pliny informs us that Aulus Aviola, having fallen into a trance, was supposed to be dead. Preparations were made for the obsequies; he was carried to the funeral pile and the fire lighted, though he was all the time conscious, but unable to move or speak. At length the agony of the anticipation of death, or perhaps the acute pain of burning, broke the spell in which the voluntary organs were bound, and he called aloud to those around the pile. But, alas! it was too late to save him. The flames had taken uncontrollable possession of the inflammable pyre, which, fed by the oils copiously heaped upon it, blazed with great fury; and thus the temporary disenchantment of his voice served only to inform his friends that they had burned him alive. The Praetor Lamio met with the same fate, but Talero, who had also been Praetor, was more fortunate; he alarmed his friends just in time for them to snatch him from the greedy flames.

DANGER OF PREMATURE INTERMENT OF ENTRANCED INDIVIDUALS.

A case is related in the *Psychological Magazine*, in which a young woman, who for a long time had been confined with a nervous derangement, gradually failed, until at last it was supposed by her attendants that she was dead, but, in fact, she had only fallen into a trance, from which she recovered when the burial service was nearly completed, and the coffin lid was about to be nailed down. During the whole period she was cognisant of her condition by the senses of hearing and touch. It seemed to her, she said, as if she were in a dream, and that she was really dead, yet she was perfectly conscious of all that happened around her in this dreadful state. She distinctly heard her friends speaking and lamenting her death at the side of her coffin; she felt them pull on her dead-clothes and lay her in it. This feeling produced a mental anxiety, which was indescribable. She tried to cry, but her soul was without the power, and could not act in her body. She had the contradictory feeling, as if she were in the body and not in it at the same time. It was equally impossible for her to stretch out her arm or to open her eyes or to cry, although she continually endeavoured to do so. The internal anguish of her mind was, however, at its utmost height when the funeral hymns were begun to be sung, and when the lid of the coffin was about to be nailed on. The thought that she was to be buried alive was the one that gave activity to the soul, and caused it to operate on her corporeal frame.

Dr. Duncan, of Edinburgh, relates the case of a "female who was about to be interred alive. She heard the conversation of the persons present, endured the horrors of seeing her own body prepared for the grave, of being laid out and the toes tied together, and the chias and jaws enveloped in a bandage, but when her agony reached a certain point the spell was broken, she shouted and was saved." Dr. Duncan considered this a case of catalepsy, but Dr. Binns more correctly thinks it one of trance.

In these two extraordinary cases it is evident that the several senses were keenly alive to external impressions.

In the following instance the patient was, so far as can be determined, unconscious of all about her. "Mrs. Godfrey, sister to the great Duke of Marlborough, had been for a long time ill, in consequence of anxiety brought on by the recent death of the Duke, but one Sunday, fancying herself better than usual, determined to rise and go to chapel. Probably from unaccustomed exertion, or absolute debility, as she was dressing for that purpose she fell down, and to all appearance, expired. The screams of her attendant, and a lady who was in the room with her, brought Colonel Godfrey to their assistance, who probably having seen persons similarly attacked, directed that she should be immediately put to bed, and that two persons should sit up constantly with her till positive symptoms appeared of dissolution. The opinion of the physician was that life was extinct, and his friends entreated Colonel Godfrey to allow her to be interred, but he resisted all their persuasions, continuing firmly to adhere to his first resolution until the Sunday following, when exactly at the same hour as the syncope, asphyxia, or trance had attacked her on the preceding Sunday, signs of returning animation were perceived in the body, and she awoke just as the church bell was ringing for service, which so perfectly eradicated, says the authoress, every trace from her memory of her insensibility, that she blamed her attendants for not waking her in time to go to church, as she had proposed to do. Colonel Godfrey, taking advantage of her unconsciousness of what had occurred, gave orders that she should by no means be made acquainted with what had happened, lest it should make a melancholy impression on her mind, and it is supposed that to the day of her death she remained ignorant of the infiction."

At Athens, in order to meet cases of this kind, the law required that no person should be buried until the third day after death, and in most of the cities of Greece a funeral did not take place until the sixth or seventh. This would hardly, however, be sufficient to meet the case of such instances as those I have named. The Romans appointed officers to visit the dead, in order to see that life was really extinct.

VOLUNTARY TRANCES.

One of the most singular facts which has ever happened in connection with trance, is the power possessed by certain persons, voluntarily to

bring on a condition approximating so nearly to death, as to render it difficult to tell whether dissolution has not really taken place. The case of Colonel Townsend is perhaps one of the most remarkable that we have on record, as taking place in this country, at all events. This man possessed the power of stopping completely the action of the heart, and thus simulating death, a power which one gentleman with whom I am personally acquainted says he possesses, but which it is only fair to say I have never seen him exercise. Colonel Townsend's case is recorded as follows by the late Dr. Cheyne, of Dublin, and when we take into consideration the deservedly high estimation in which Dr. Cheyne was held as a practical physician, possessed of high talents and scientific attainments, and the high character he bore as a Christian man and a gentleman, it is impossible to have had the Colonel's interesting and uncommon case attested and recorded more satisfactorily. Dr. Cheyne narrates the case as follows:—"He could die or expire when he pleased, and yet by an effort or somehow he could come to life again. He insisted so much upon us seeing the trial made, that we were at last forced to comply. We all three felt his pulse first, it was distinct, though small and thready, and his heart had its usual beating. He composed himself on his back, and lay in a still posture for some time; while I held his right hand, Dr. Baynard laid his hand on his heart, and Mr. Skreine held a clean looking-glass to his mouth. I found his pulse sink gradually, till at last I could not feel any by the most exact and nice touch. Dr. Baynard could not feel the least motion in the heart, nor Mr. Skreine perceive the least soil of breath on the bright mirror he held to his mouth. Then each of us by turns examined his arm, heart, and breath, but could not by the nicest scrutiny discover the least symptom of life in him. We reasoned a long time about this odd appearance, as well as we could, and finding he still continued in that condition, we began to conclude that he had indeed carried the experiment too far, and at last we were satisfied that he was actually dead and were just ready to leave him. This continued about half an hour. By nine in the morning in autumn, as we were going away, we observed some motion about the body, and upon examination found his pulse, and the motion of his heart gradually returning. He began to breathe heavily and speak softly. We were all astonished to the last degree at this unexpected change, and after some further conversation with him and among ourselves went away fully satisfied as to all the particulars of this fact, but confounded and puzzled and not able to form any rational scheme that might account for it."

THE TEMPORARY INTERMENT OF ENTRANCED INDIAN FAKIRS.

The most remarkable cases on record of this character and those of the fakirs of India, who seem to possess the power of simulating death so perfectly that they actually consent to be buried and to remain entombed for a considerable period. The tales told of these men are so extraordinary, that they would seem perfectly fabulous did we not know from strong and conclusive evidence that they are based upon fact. The late Mr. Braid, of Manchester, took a great deal of trouble in investigating the cases, and published a little volume containing conclusive evidence of their truth. I should have been glad to have made some lengthy extracts from this little book, had my time permitted; but I intend hereafter to reprint the entire volume, probably in the *Spiritual Magazine*. The following case occurred under the eye of Lieutenant A. Boilleau, a British officer, and is recorded in his *Narrative of a Journey in Rajawarra, in 1835*, and is that referred to above by Sir C. E. Trevelyan. "Just before our arrival at Jesulmer, the Rawul had adopted a most singular expedient to obtain an heir to his throne, and the circumstances of the case are altogether so extraordinary that we should hardly have given them credence, had they not occurred so immediately under our notice. We were told soon after our coming that a man had been buried alive of his own free will, at the back of the tank close to our tents, and that he was to remain under ground for a whole month before the process of exhumation should take place. The prescribed period elapsed on the 1st of April, 1835, and in the forenoon of that day he was dug out alive, in the presence of Goshur Lal, one of the ministers who had also superintended his interment. The place in which he was buried is a small building of stone, about twelve feet long and eight feet broad, built on the west edge of the large tank called Gurrassie, so often mentioned. In the floor of the house was a hole about three feet long, two and a half broad, and the same depth, or perhaps a yard deep, in which he was placed in a sitting posture, sewed up in a linen shroud, with his knees doubled up towards the chin, his feet turned inward towards the stomach, and his hands also pointed inward towards the chest. The cell or grave was lined with masonry, and floored with many folds of woollen and other cloth, that the white ant and such insects should be the less able to molest him. Two heavy slabs of stone, five or six feet long, several inches thick, and broad enough to cover the mouth of the grave, were then placed over him, so that he could not escape; and I believe a little earth was plastered over the hole so as to make the surface of the ground smooth and compact. The door of the house was also built up, and people placed outside to mount guard during the whole month, so that no tricks might be played or deception practised. . . . Lieutenant Trevelyan and I set off together to see what might remain to be seen. The outer wall of the house door had been broken up, the covering of the grave removed, and the covering lifted out in the presence of Goshur Lal. The moonshee arrived in time to see the opening of the shroud as above mentioned, and stated that he was taken out in a perfectly senseless state, with his eyes closed, his hands cramped and powerless, his stomach very much shrunken, and his teeth joined so fast together that the bystanders were obliged to force open his mouth with an iron instrument in order to pour a little water down his throat. Under this treatment he gradually recovered his senses, and was restored to the use of his limbs. . . . He conversed with us in a low gentle tone of voice, as if his animal functions were still in a very feeble state; but so far from appearing distressed in mind by the long interment from which

he had just been released, he said that we might bury him again for a twelvemonth if we pleased."

THE CONDITION OF THE MIND DURING ENTRANCEMENT.

Now the condition of the mind during the period that the trance has continued in these cases is, as I have already remarked, various. In the majority of cases, I believe, the person on coming out of the trance has no recollection whatever of anything that has occurred during the time that it has continued, and would therefore be said to have been in a state of perfect unconsciousness. For my own part, however, I do not believe that the mind is ever unconscious, but simply has in these cases, as in some others, the bridge of memory broken down. We know that dreams frequently escape us altogether on waking, except as to the merest outline of that which was most vivid at the time they occurred, and we know that sometimes a dream has gone altogether, leaving no trace behind, until some unusual circumstance has brought it to mind. The balance of evidence is, therefore, in favour of the supposition that in sleep we always dream, and that with the mind consciousness never altogether ceases. In some cases of trance the person so affected has had a most distinct recollection on awaking of everything that had transpired around his material organisation during the whole period. And in other cases the spirit has evidently gone to roam in other regions, and has brought back with it distinct recollections of its experiences. There are innumerable cases on record illustrating this fact, which will be familiar to everyone who takes an interest in topics of this kind.

PSYCHOMETRY.

II.—*Psychometry.* This is a power of which I have had no experience myself, and which is based upon far weaker evidence, perhaps, than the facts which I have related respecting trance, but yet which unquestionably does exist. It is extremely probable that every block of stone or petrified fossil may contain within it, written in spiritual characters, which persons endowed with a certain kind of seership can read, a tolerably accurate history, both of itself and of its surroundings, during the long ages of the past. You will find an account of the display of this marvellous phenomenon in a work with which you are most of you probably familiar, entitled, *Nature's Secrets*, by Professor Denton. Many other cases, however, are on record of a similar kind. As far back as 1842 Dr. Joseph R. Buchanan, one of the most eminent philosophical writers in America, gave a course of public lectures on Anthropology, in which this subject was taken up at some length. The power is perhaps after all not very common, but still it does exist, and there are persons living who can read you through and through, nay, more, tell all your past history by looking into your face, or, perhaps, even by having placed in their hands any article with which you may have been much in contact. Professor Brittan, in his magnificent work *Man and his Relations*, remarks, "With the aid of a simple autograph, the soul-measurer lifts the moral visor, strikes down the glittering shield and reveals the naked falsehood that lurked behind. As the subject does not appear to call for a statement of illustrative facts and experiments recorded at length, the circumstantial details may be omitted. A brief reference to the following examples will suffice to show that not only the general character and habits of thought are revealed by the psychometrical process, but the temporary moods of the mind, the existing thoughts, and the present action, are liable to cast their shadows over the sensitive soul. While Mrs. Mettler was holding a sealed letter from Dr. Buchanan, who was at that time editing the *Journal of Man*, she declared that the chief study of the writer was 'Man in his whole nature.' When an envelope enclosing some stanzas, written by a convict, was placed in her hands, she observed that the author had a double character; the sphere was unpleasant, but that the person could 'write poetry tolerably well.' A letter written by Kossuth immediately after the delivery of a powerful speech in St. Louis, caused her to gesticulate as if she were addressing a multitude, and this was followed by a feeling of extreme exhaustion. The letter of an insane man who had killed his own child occasioned sympathetic delirium and convulsions. Some irregular pencil lines and scratches, traced by the hand of an infant child, gave no impression. A very delicate picture on silk, painted by Miss Thomas, of Edwardsburg, Mich., and presented to the writer, was handed to Mrs. M. under the cover of a sealed envelope, whereupon she affirmed that the author of the contents of the envelope had painted her idea instead of expressing it in words." A number of similar cases of this kind are given in Dr. Brittan's admirable work, and probably the power described would be more common than it is did we live higher and more spiritual lives.

The following case will show that Zschokke possessed some such power. "In company with two young student foresters, I entered the Vine-inn at Waldshut. We supped with a numerous company at the *table d'hôte*, where the guests were making merry with the peculiarities of the Swiss, with Mesmer's "Magnetism," Lavater's "Physiognomy," etc. One of my companions, whose national pride was wounded, begged me to make some reply, particularly to a handsome young man opposite to me, and who allowed himself extraordinary license. This man's life was at that moment presented to my mind. I asked him whether he would answer me candidly if I related to him some of the most secret passages of his life, I knowing as little of him personally as he did of me? That would be going a little further than Lavater did with his physiognomy. He promised, if I were correct, to admit it frankly. I then related what my vision had shown, and the whole company were made acquainted with the private history of the young merchant, his school years, his youthful errors, and, lastly, with a fault committed in reference to the strong box of his principal. I described to him the uninhabited room with whitened walls, where, to the right of the brown door, on a table, stood a black money-box, etc. A dead silence prevailed during the narrative, which I alone occasionally interrupted by inquiring whether I spoke the truth. The young man confirmed every particular. Touched by his candour, I shook hands with him, and said no more."

PREVISION.

The next two subjects taken up by Dr. Sexton in the paper were somnambulism and clairvoyance, and under these heads he quoted a great number of cases of an astounding character. He then went on to the subject of—

V. *Prevision.*—Of this faculty there are innumerable cases on record. Wordsworth seems to have referred to this power in his preface to *The Excursion*, where he thus invokes the presence of the spirit:—

Descend prophetic spirit! that inspirest
The human soul of universal earth,
Dreaming of things to come; and dost possess
A metropolitan temple in the hearts
Of mighty poets; upon me bestow
A gift of genuine insight.

The same power is also referred to by Campbell, in which he makes the Seer exclaim, in defence of the prediction he has just uttered:—

For dark and despairing my sight I may seal,
But man cannot cover what God would reveal.
'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.

The whole scene of the Pretender and his legions flying from the bloody fields of Culloden are present to the mind of the seer. Among the German peasantry the power of prescience seems to have been very common. A collection of prophecies obtained from this source was published in *Blackwood's Magazine* for 1850, from which I select the following: "A Westphalian shepherd, by the name of Jaspers, a sincere and devout man, predicted in 1830, before the construction of the first English railway, that just before his death a great road would be carried through the country from west to east, which will be passed through the forest of Bodelschwing. On this road carriages will run without horses, and cause a dreadful noise. At the commencement of this work great scarcity will prevail. . . . Before this road is quite completed a frightful war will break out, in which a small Northern power will be conqueror."

Almost all great events in history, and frequently small ones, have been predicted by some gifted seer. The whole future life of Joan of Arc lay clear before her in vision in her early years—a fact which is paralleled hundreds of times in history. There is a marvellous prophecy on record by Friar Bacon, six hundred years old, which I will read to you. "Bridges unsupported by arches will be made to span the foaming current. Man shall descend to the bottom of the ocean, safely breathing, and treading with firm step on the golden sands, never brightened by the light of day. Call but the sacred powers of Sol and Luna into action, and behold a single steersman sitting at the helm guiding the vessel, which divides the waves with greater rapidity than if she had been fitted with a crew of mariners toiling at the oars; and the loaded chariot no longer encumbered by the panting steeds shall dart on its course with resistless force and rapidity. Let the simple elements do the labour, bind the eternal forces and yoke them to the plough." Here you perceive we have a clear prophecy of the future discovery of the suspension bridge, the diving bell, steam navigation, the railroad, and the steam plough.

After quoting several other very interesting cases of Prevision, Dr. Sexton concluded as follows:—

Classical scholars will recollect the dream of Hecuba, in the first month of her pregnancy with Paris, that she had brought into the world a burning torch, which had destroyed her husband's palace, and reduced the city of Troy to ashes; how the soothsayers explained the dream as applying to the child not yet born; how to avert the calamity this infant was ordered to be destroyed as soon as it came into the world, but was afterwards exposed on Mount Ida, suckled by a she-bear, found by shepherds, and brought up amongst peasants; and how, after all, the prophetic dream was fulfilled literally, according to the interpretation of the soothsayers. Not less to the point is the dream of Calphurnia, the wife of Julius Caesar, who, the night before her husband's murder, dreamed that the roof of the house had fallen in, and that he had been stabbed in her arms; in consequence of which dream she vainly endeavoured to detain him at home. The literature of all times, and of every country, abounds with cases of this kind. Hence the great truth expressed by Cicero—" *Multa oraculis declarantur, multa vaticinationibus, multa somniis.*"

Such is the country over whose existence
The brooding shades of mortal doubt are cast;
Such is the realm, that, dim with night and distance
Lies unexplored and vast.

But, when the morning comes, the spell is broken,
And like a dream the wondrous record seems;
And memory holds the solitary token
Of the dim land of dreams.

SPIRITUALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA.—The Cape Town newspapers have contained much of late about Spiritualism. The *Daily Standard and Mail* of December 14th last contains two columns on the subject, more especially in relation to a £100 challenge, the winning or losing of which by one or other of the anonymous disputants was to depend upon the occurrence or non-occurrence of manifestations. The anti-Spiritualist stipulated that he should impose at the *séance* whatever conditions he pleased. Of course, for a man ignorant of experiments to say that they shall be carried out in his own way, instead of by compliance with the conditions demanded by the laws of nature, displays little sense. Secondly, he assumes a tone of authority, and seems to think that the spirits are bound to try to convert him; they sometimes say that they have withheld manifestations when they were able to produce them in the presence of self-important people, because spirits are not the servants of every upstart.

MORAL DIVISIONS AMONG AMERICAN SPIRITUALISTS.*

BY EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.

SPIRITUALISM, as misrepresented in the lives, sentiments, and language of some people, is as humiliated as Christianity is by others, and, like the latter, it is capable of being used as a cloak for excesses which are abhorrent to just and virtuous minds, and also, like Christianity, it has its Judases to betray it, its Peters to deny it, and from outside its Sauls to persecute it. There is nothing so exalted or so pure that it is secure against simulation and misrepresentation. Vice affects virtue; ambition and pride ape humility; the rogue affects honesty; demagogues claim to be patriots; politicians to be statesmen; there are usurpers as well as legitimate kings; the mock sun strives to share the glories of the true; Christ had His antichrists, and even God Himself is counterfeited by a host of false gods.

When we consider that it costs less to cover our sins with the cloak of religion than with the mantle of charity, we cease to wonder at the free use which has been made of this means of concealment, both in the churches and by some Spiritualists. The desire for gain prompts some to assume the garb of the devotee, and when they perceive no other avenue open to them, these rush into Spiritualism. There were many like these in the time of Jesus, and He understood them well, and to these He addressed the words:—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled."

These are the hangers-on of Spiritualism, those who prey upon it, and are one of the objectionable elements that must sometimes be encountered.

For men to avail themselves of the benefits flowing from the knowledge of spiritual truths, they must educate themselves in spiritual knowledge, or they must be educated by others. The first class of minds—those who can educate and improve themselves without direct teaching—is in the minority; and hence it follows that the majority, in order to gain any considerable advantage from their belief, must be taught and directed by those who are competent to teach them.

At present, as it always has been in the past, the majority of professed believers in all faiths, from lack of original mental capacity, or from deficient or defective education, are unable to comprehend the essential principles of the faith they profess. This applies to Spiritualists, as well as to believers in other systems; and hence we observe all grades of mental and moral character among Spiritualists.

Spiritualism is no more responsible for the vagaries of the fanatic, who on the housetop proclaims his absurd conceptions of Spiritualism, than the Church is for the old-fashioned camp-meeting antics of this fanatic's grandfather, from whom, perhaps, he has inherited his disordered mind. This man, and thousands like him, have invaded the field of modern Spiritualism with the influx of pioneers, and are displaying all the unrestrained impulses of their enthusiastic natures; but they are steadily subsiding under the psychologising influence of stronger and better balanced minds. Minds like theirs constitute the fermenting principle in all new systems of religion, and in many reformatory movements in their early stages, and serve a wise and useful purpose; but after a system becomes established, their weak mentality invariably becomes absorbed in the mass, and they lose their noisy pre-eminence.

"The attempts," says Epes Sargent, "to make Spiritualism responsible for the heresies and vagaries of certain persons calling themselves Spiritualists are manifestly unjust. Accusations are often brought that Spiritualism teaches free-love, pantheism, socialism, etc. As well say that the Newtonian philosophy teaches these things. Spiritualism is no more responsible for nominal Spiritualists than Christianity is for nominal Christians, among which last may be counted Free-love Anabaptists, Mormons, and the brigands of Italy."

Hudson Tuttle, the inspired author of some of the ablest works on Spiritualism, in reference to this subject, very truly says:

"Too often the ignorant accept the vague utterance received from a moving table, answering they know not by

what force, or of a medium, as infallible authority, and henceforth their lives are tinged by its influence. They gain the self-conceit of being specially ordained for missions; they ventilate their insanities from the rostrum; they crowd the press with their drivelling vagaries, they put their conceits into their lives, and become insufferable nuisances.

"Hence flows the flood of 'communications' from the 'great departed' which would disgrace a country school-boy as compositions. Their bad grammar and rude style might be referred to imperfect 'control,' but they have a singular want of common sense and ideas, and the sceptic pertinently inquires if Washington, Webster, Clap, and Parker have become drivelling idiots. If any cause be capable of bringing these worthy individuals to earth, one would think the 'communications' to which their names have been affixed were sufficient. It is not to be supposed for a moment that those worthies dictated such messages. Possibly they may communicate; but if they do they assuredly will stamp their individuality on their sentences, and not content themselves with the stereotyped trance rigmorole, with here and there an old platitude glittering in comparison with the surrounding verbiage.

Such minds are not in harmony with wisdom, and can no more appreciate true words and sentiments than an ear out of key with the melody of one of Beethoven's sonatas can appreciate its beauty. They are often so ignorant, conceited, and deluded, that they cannot understand that any attention their inane productions attract, only serves to show their folly in a stronger light. It was to such that Paul said:

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither now are ye able. (1 Cor. iii. 2.)

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (Heb. v. 14.)

There are in most cities, and in some towns and villages in this country and Great Britain, halls hired and paid for by a few believers, where all who desire to do so can attend, no questions being asked as to the faith of any, so that any person can profess to be a Spiritualist, and no man, or association of men, is authorized to question such profession. Is it then in any way surprising that some who are fanatical, ignorant, and even depraved, should claim to be Spiritualists? But as no authority admitted such persons, and as the great majority of Spiritualists condemn their sentiments and conduct, Spiritualism should not in any way be held responsible for them, nor for the mischief they effect. To condemn Spiritualism and its teachings, because a few like these, through their ignorance and grossness, attract evil influences, and misrepresent it, is as irrational as to condemn preaching because some preachers degrade it, and some hearers pervert it.

Because a person witnesses some experiments in chemistry, or hears or reads a lecture upon that branch of science, we do not regard him as a chemist, nor hold chemistry responsible for anything he may say or do in its name. We claim for Spiritualism similar immunity from responsibility for the sayings and doings of those half-witted, deluded, or knavish persons who thrust their crude and visionary ideas upon the notice of the public, regardless of knowledge and discretion, and sometimes even of decency. It should be understood that simple belief in Spiritualism makes a man neither better nor worse; something more is required to either improve or vitiate him.

Then again, many professed Spiritualists, having been educated in the churches to denounce all who differ from them in belief, have, in embracing Spiritualism, left their Church dogmas behind, but not the illiberal habits of thought originating in their education, and they are now turning against the old fortress the instruments of warfare with which they were originally armed for its defence. They are, unconsciously to themselves, living up to the illiberal teachings instilled into their minds by sectarianism, and in their methods of viewing and treating the faith they have abandoned are to be seen the legitimate fruits of the uncharitable spirit inculcated in their youth. They mistake the spirit of our faith as they formerly did that of the Christianity they professed. They believe Spiritualism to be revolutionary, while it is only reformatory.

* From Crowell's *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*, Vol. II.

All good in this life is associated with evil, and if it be a necessity inherent in its nature that Spiritualism shall be free and unrestricted in the field of its operation, with no walls of exclusion, no conditions for acceptance, it is to be expected that many "vain talkers and deceivers, . . . who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake, . . . who profess that they know God, but in works deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate," should creep in and become stumbling-blocks to many right-minded men. Thus it was in the times of the Apostles, and thus it always has been, even when rigid rule and precept ostensibly determined what should constitute the qualifications of members of the fold.

The temple of Spiritualism is capacious enough to shelter all who enter its portals, and all the different planes of humanity are represented by its votaries, so that those whose highly-developed moral and spiritual natures demand association with others of like development, can always find congenial souls with whom to associate, and those who are sufficiently advanced in love and wisdom to find their highest enjoyment in efforts to elevate those less fortunate than themselves, will here find a vast and spiritually profitable field for the exercise of their highest faculties and powers.

We claim for Spiritualists no greater average merit than we accord to ordinary Christians; but we claim superiority in this, that while the restrictions of church organisations suppress but do not eradicate evil, the unrestricted freedom of Spiritualism permits the evil which it cannot suppress to work to the surface, and to properly appear in all its deformity, thus exciting a repugnance to it in honest but uncultivated minds, and arraying against it all that is virtuous and correct in others.

The state of affairs in the primitive Church does not impress us that the mere *profession* of Christianity, even by those who enjoyed the privilege of partaking of the truth so near its source, necessarily endowed the professors with all the cardinal virtues. Paul found among the professed Christians of Crete unruly members, vain talkers, those who deceived, subverters of family peace, teachers of wrong doctrines for sake of gain, and one of their own prophets declared them habitual liars, and Paul emphatically endorses the accusation. Their lives were false professions, they were disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. So much for some of the Cretan Christians.

Even the personal influence and association of Jesus Himself was not sufficient to restrain Judas from the accomplishment of his treachery, nor Peter from blasphemously denying Him; how then can we expect that all the converts made by the teachings of His Apostles should arise above the gross plane upon which so many of them—probably the great majority of them—had always existed. A change of profession has no necessary connection with a change of heart. We read this lesson in the past, it is equally to be read in the present, and as a truth we have reason to believe that it will have existence continuous with the earthly existence of man.

Modern Spiritualism resembles early Methodism in active spiritual influence being recognised in each, as well as in the fact that both, in the early period of their existence, drew their support chiefly from the substantial, but uneducated classes of society, so that many of the extravagances which drew upon the Methodists the ridicule and censure of their enemies, have been repeated by the same class of persons among Spiritualists, and as it was with the former, so it has been with the latter, the prudent and thoughtful among them have found themselves unable to restrain the exaggerated views and actions of the imprudent and thoughtless. Wesley personally came into contact with many of this class. Southey, in his *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 184, tells us: "But Wesley's course of life brought him into contact with persons under every disease of mind, and in all the intermediate stages between madness and roguery. Crazy people indeed found their way to him as commonly as they used to do to court, though with less mischievous intention. They generally went in a spirit of pure kindness to enlighten him and correct his errors."

Charges, generally unfounded, and similar to those in

some quarters now made against Spiritualists, were then made against Methodists. Wesley, in replying to a letter of the Rev. Mr. G——, says: "You therein say: I know numbers who call themselves Methodists, and assert their assurance of salvation, at the very time they wallow in sins of the deepest dye." Wesley replies: "Permit me, sir, to speak freely. I do not doubt the fact; but those who are connected with *me* do not call themselves Methodists."—*Tyerman's Life of Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 400. Wesley thus thrusts aside the imputation, leaving it to rest upon the followers, probably, of Whitefield and others labouring in the same field.

Wesley, in the same volume, p. 362, is reported as saying of the Bristol Society: "As many of them increase in worldly goods, the great danger I apprehend now is their relapsing into the spirit of the world, and then their religion is but a dream."

They were not exempt from the infirmities of human nature any more than Spiritualists now are, and these infirmities often triumphed over their faith and carried them back to carnal things. At Launceston he (Wesley) found "the small remains of a dead, scattered society, and at Camelford he found another such society, but their deadness was owing to bitterness against each other." At St. Agnes he was "surprised and grieved to find that out of ninety-eight members all but three or four had forsaken the Lord's table." At St. Just, at one of his meetings, an "abundance of backsliders were present, ten of whom he rejoined to the society." "He found the society at Plymouth reduced from seventy members to thirty-four, and even these were as 'dead as stones.'"—*Same*, p. 361. And on pages 141 and 142 of the same work it is said, "It does not appear that any of his preachers withdrew from him on this account; the question was not one upon which at that time a discontented man could hope to divide the society, and if they did not assent to Mr. Wesley's arguments, they acquiesced in his will. Secessions, however, and expulsions from other causes not unfrequently took place, and once he found it necessary to institute an examination of his preachers, because of certain scandals which had arisen. The person with whom the offence began was one James Wheatley. At first he made himself remarkable by introducing a luscious manner of preaching, which, as it was new among the Methodists, and at once stimulant and flattering, soon became popular, and obtained imitators. They who adopted it, assumed to themselves the appellation of Gospel preachers, and called their brethren, in contempt, legalists, legal wretches, and doctors in divinity. . . . Wheatley was a quack in physic, as well as in divinity, and he was soon detected in fouler practices. Complaint being at length made of his infamous licentiousness, the two brothers inquired into it, and obtained complete proof of his guilt. . . . They were not aware at the time of the extent of this hypocrite's criminality, but enough was soon discovered to make it necessary for them to disclaim him by public advertisement. The matter became so notorious at Norwich that the affidavits of the women whom he had endeavoured to corrupt were printed and hawked about the streets. The people were ready to tear him to pieces, as he deserved, and the cry against the Methodists was such, in consequence, that Charles Wesley said Satan or his apostles could not have done more to shut the door against the Gospel in that place for ever. . . . On another occasion he remarks that Cudworth, Rely, and their associates abhorred him as much as they did the pope, and ten times more than they did the devil."

Here was the revival in the ranks of the Methodists of the free-love doctrines and practices of some of those who professed and disgraced Christianity in its early history, and it seems to have been the common fate of three of the most important spiritual movements in the history of the world—namely, those of primitive Christianity, Methodism, and modern Spiritualism, to be soiled with an outcropping of these free-love practices; but the heavenly hosts who under God have guided and are guiding these movements, triumph in primitive Christianity and Methodism, and will equally triumph in Spiritualism; for while the vile and sensual of earth can only receive the support of low and depraved spirits, truth

and purity are protected and fostered by the angelic world, the glorious beings of which are linked in one continuous chain extending from man to Deity.

"There were times when Wesley perceived and acknowledged how little real reformation had been effected in the great body of his followers. 'Might I not have expected,' said he, 'a general increase of faith, and love of righteousness and true holiness; yea, and of the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, fidelity, goodness, temperance? Truly, when I saw what God had done among this people between forty and fifty years ago—when I saw them, warm in their first love, magnifying the Lord and rejoicing in God their Saviour, I could expect no less than that all these would have lived like angels here below; that they would have walked as continually seeing Him that is invisible, having constant communion with the Father and the Son, living in eternity, and walking in eternity. I looked to see "a chosen people," in the whole tenor of their conversation, "showing forth His praise who had called them into His marvellous light." But instead of this it brought forth error in ten thousand shapes. *It brought forth enthusiasm, imaginary inspiration, ascribing to the all-wise God all the wild, absurd, self-inconsistent dreams of a heated imagination.* It brought forth pride. It brought forth prejudice, evil surmising, censoriousness, judging and condemning one another, all totally subversive of that brotherly love which is the very badge of the Christian profession, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before God. It brought forth anger, hatred, malice, revenge, and every evil word and work, all direful fruits, not of the Holy Spirit, but of the bottomless pit.' . . . And he repeated from the pulpit a remark which had been made upon the Methodists by one whom he calls a holy man, that 'never was there before a people in the Christian Church who had so much of the power of God among them, with so little self-denial.'"—Southey's *Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 237.

This is a severe, and no doubt truthful, arraignment of some of his followers by Wesley, and when we occasionally find an immoral person professing to be a Spiritualist, we can exonerate Spiritualism from responsibility for his acts, by reference to like fallibility of some among primitive and modern Christians. The fault is not in the system, it attaches alone to the individual, and so every honest, liberal mind must regard it. To think otherwise would be like smiting the pure waters of the fountain, because some who drink from it are morally unclean.

Enough has been said on this subject; for what does all this evidence relating to the heresies and dissensions in the primitive Church, and in the modern Church, and in the ranks of the Spiritualists establish? Nothing but the simple truth that human nature asserts its supremacy in defiance of forms of faith, that the ever-active spirit in man is constantly striving for the attainment of higher purposes, and, though his efforts in a majority of instances are ill-directed, and end in strife and discord, yet out of this inharmony are eliminated those concrete ideas which become jewels of truth and knowledge, and which, sooner or later, are estimated at their real value by mankind, and their influence upon the welfare of the race becomes permanent.

Judge Edmonds forcibly remarked: "All new truths, when just born, have to go through such trials, which, like thunder-storms, though uncomfortable, and sometimes affrighting, are yet necessary, and in the end beneficial."

Stagnant waters are ever impure. When we purpose to purify them we agitate them, and add some element which increases the disturbance, expecting that from the fermentation thus induced there will arise to the surface, and be expelled, the impurities that have rendered them turbid and offensive. After the subsidence of this disturbance, we expect to find the waters purified and refreshing. So it is with the gross material elements in mankind that have the ascendancy in religious, social, and moral life. The majority of mankind are in a state of stagnation, and it is this stagnant religious, moral, and social condition that breeds ignorance and depravity, and, were it not for the disturbance of this condition through the agency of those vigorous reformatory measures that are occasionally applied, the world would be stifled in its own moral and social impurities.

These antagonisms and bickerings are inseparable from human association; they are the perverted expression of the universal desire for, and tendency to progression, and it is better that this form of expression should exist, than that apathy and blind obedience to self-constituted religious authority should universally prevail.

Provincial News.

LIVERPOOL.

ANNUAL SOIREE OF THE LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE annual concert and *soirée* of the above society took place in the Society's Rooms, Islington, Liverpool, last Friday evening at eight o'clock. The chair acquitted itself well, Miss Warren, Mrs. Winter, and Miss Chatham giving the benefit of their vocal ability. The "Belmont Vocalists" did the best that lay in their power; but their best singers were absent through misunderstanding and indisposition. Mr. Casson ably occupied the chair, and, at request, gave some eloquent recitations. Mr. J. J. Morse was among the friends present.

SUNDAY SERVICES.

On Sunday afternoon and evening the platform of the Liverpool Psychological Society was occupied by Dr. Hitchman, Mr. Ainsworth, and Mr. J. J. Morse. After the usual service and address by Dr. Hitchman, Mr. Morse was controlled by his spirit-guide, and delivered an impressive invocation, after which he observed:—It is commonly said that this is a practical age, that all subjects, whether physical or spiritual, physiological or psychological, are investigated with one prominent object in view; that is, What practical purpose in the economy of well-being will they serve? Of this he (the controlling spirit) was rather glad than otherwise; he welcomed this tendency as an indication of the dawn of that brighter day of knowledge that will overcome ignorance and its half-sister vice, and relegate them to the oblivion of darkness from whence they came. For the solving of this problem, he would invite their attention for a few moments to a simple question, which would be the title of the subject under consideration, namely, "For what is life?" The question was undoubtedly easy to put, and had received a variety of answers more or less unsatisfactory, all in accord, however, with the conceptions of the different promulgators, whatever their class, school, or creed; but underlying all these answers was one prominent thought—to make the individual happy. Ask the religionist and he will answer, the purpose of life is for the glory of God, whereby certain individuals, by godliness of purpose, adherence to certain phases of belief, popular and orthodox, may receive the blessing of God here, and eternal happiness hereafter. The materialist asserts that the purpose of life is that we may learn from nature her secrets, and by applying them to the welfare of humanity, enlighten and uplift our fellow-man. By increasing knowledge and perfecting wisdom each one should labour to leave the world a little better than he found it. When the materialist was asked, How about a future life? the answer was that the future life does not concern us; we know nothing about it; our care is with this life to make the best of it, whereby the greatest happiness may accrue to the greatest number here. The philosopher and the poet had also furnished answers in which the silver thread of "happiness" could be observed. Thus all these thinkers were agreed that true happiness was the object and aim of life. He would call their attention to the reverse of the picture presented by nature herself. She appeared totally oblivious to the happiness of man, or any of her creatures. The disastrous tornado swept over the ocean, regardless of human life, and amidst heaving billows and boisterous waves vessels and their struggling crews sank from sight; the volcano had its myriad victims, and nature by earthquake swallowed cities with their teeming thousands, heedless of the pain and suffering entailed thereby. Again, human laws seemed to be devised by man's ingenuity for the very purpose of crushing, enslaving, and making miserable, instead of promoting happiness as the true object of life. Religious tenets also, as part and parcel of modern theology, only seemed to aim at making a certain select few happy, at the expense of damned thousands; and individuals that could be happy under such circumstances must be peculiarly constituted. Thus the force of nature, society, and religion seemed combined to render man unhappy. Notwithstanding all this, men possessed such happiness as their spiritual or intellectual nature permitted. Carlyle had stated that he considered the object of life to be "blessedness," which he and the lecturer considered to be superior to happiness, for doubtless all persons possessed more or less happiness, but he conceived that blessedness arose from the awakening of the inner consciousness to the grand purposes of life, enabling the man to see a Providence in every misfortune, a blessing in every difficulty; nothing left to blind chance, but a wise ordering and perfect harmony in the fitness of things, and in the relation man bears to the universe that evolves, claims, and stamps him her child.

BIRMINGHAM.

A SCENE AT THE ATHENÆUM.

RECENTLY the Birmingham press, in consequence of the progress Spiritualism is making in the town, has commenced an onslaught on Spiritualists by means of disparaging paragraphs, culminating in a leading article in the *Birmingham Daily Mail*. Mr. Mahoney, a recent convert from secularism, determined, single-handed, to publicly take up the subject, and answer the editor of the *Mail*, which he did in a most effectual manner, on the evening of Mon-

day, last week, at the Athenæum Hall, Temple-row. The Hall was crowded to excess, hundreds not being able to get in. There was a rowdy element, the result being that three benches and one of the tables were broken into atoms. So great was the interest manifested by the packed mass of people present, that it was determined to hold another meeting the following week in a larger hall. As Mr. Mahoney is a good speaker, and well known among his old associates, the secularists, he generally draws large audiences, not only in Birmingham, but other towns.

The following report of the meeting at the Athenæum is abridged from the *Birmingham Daily Mail*:—

A meeting was held at the Athenæum Rooms, Temple-street, last night, to hear a lecture from Mr. J. N. Mahoney, purporting to be "A Reply to the Editor of the *Birmingham Daily Mail*, or Spiritualism, is it a Delusion?" The room was crowded, there being a large number of the Spiritualistic element present, and an equally strong number of non-believers, who had been specially invited to attend. On the platform were Messrs. R. Harper, Perks, Guy, Groom, and Fob. Mr. Harper was voted to the chair, and, in opening the proceedings, he explained that Mr. Aaron Franklin, of Lee Bank-road, who, it had been stated, would preside, had written refusing to do so for reasons which he set forth in a letter as follows:—"In declining to take the chair at your meeting on Monday, do not for a moment suppose that I am any the less a Spiritualist, although I choose to withdraw from any public movement. But as I hold both the *Daily Mail* and its editor in the utmost contempt, I certainly do not feel inclined to waste time upon either him or his scurrilous articles. If you take the advice of an old Spiritualist, you will avoid this one thing, and that is taking any notice whatever of his challenge "to show phenomena," as we can well spare him from our ranks, when we can number such men amongst us as Cromwell F. Varley, Wallace, the eminent naturalist, and others too numerous to mention. I would suggest to him that he take up Damiani's challenge, which has been open for years, and not one of these scurrilous editors has had the courage to do so. Gentlemen who are courteous enough to give others credit for honesty are not so swallowed up in their own conceits as to suppose that they know everything and all the rest are fools. But you have doubtless found ere this that it is the common practice of little minds to sneer at things they have neither the comprehension or inclination to fathom." The letter occasioned considerable laughter, and some applause. The chairman then proceeded to read the leading article headed "Credulity in Birmingham," which appeared in the *Daily Mail* of December 30th. He was interrupted several times by shouts of disapproval from the benches immediately surrounding the platform, and cheers from the centre and far end of the room.

Mr. Mahoney, who met with a medley of applause and shouts of derision, then delivered his lecture. He argued that even if the editor of the *Daily Mail* or any other representatives of newspapers were thoroughly satisfied in their own minds as to the genuineness of the whole thing they dare not advocate it in the columns of their journals. (Hear, hear, cries of "No, no," and disorder.) He contended that it was not in the power of the press to back up any question until it received the credit and the support of the outside public. (Applause and hisses.) The editor of the *Daily Mail* dare no more do such a thing than he dared hang himself. (Laughter, and "Oh, oh.") The only organs of enlightenment—the organs which advocated popular questions—were those organs which were supported purposely with that object. We had two in this country—one called *The Spiritualist*—(Laughter)—published at 2d., and the other called *The Medium*, issued at 1d. (Hear and laughter.) He was much surprised at the remarks which the editor of the *Mail* made upon the general aspects of the question. For instance, he said "It rests upon nothing." This seemed very strange, and it would indeed be a wonderful thing if true, considering that Spiritualism had existed for twenty-seven years and numbered upwards of five million adherents. The lecturer said it was one of the greatest mistakes made to suppose that Spiritualism consisted entirely in the rapping of a table, or the moving of some piece of furniture. It was the educated and the educated alone, amongst whom the truth of its existence spread fastest. Those who were supposed to be ignorant and deluded were the last to take it. It was not true that persons could summon spirits up—the spirits could rather summon them up. (Laughter.) In 1869, the Dialectical Society in London thought the subject of Spiritualism of sufficient importance to elect a committee of thirty gentlemen to investigate the phenomena. Sub-committees were appointed, and sittings were held which extended over eighteen months, during which time some startling manifestations took place, which could not be accounted for by any known laws of science or three-fourths of the sceptics present. Ultimately, finding how matters had gone, the society who had promoted the investigation actually refused to publish the results of the eighteen months' research. This only proved that the Dialectical Society, in common with the press, only desired not to put down authoritatively what the bulk of the people were not convinced of. He considered it an act of gross injustice. The lecturer concluded by advising all present to make experiments at their own homes, and they would probably be much the wiser. He would not give them the result of his own experience, as many in the room would no doubt disbelieve all he said. (Laughter.)

The Chairman having made a few strong observations in support of Spiritualism, a person at the farther end of the room suggested that Mr. Mahoney should recount a few facts which he himself had met with, so that they might all go away instructed upon the subject. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Mahoney, responding, said he was at a *séance* in Liverpool, at the house of Mr. Coates, Queen's-road, a short time ago, at which the medium Mrs. Hardy, of America, was present. About thirty highly respectable people sat round a table eight feet by four feet, in the centre

of which was a slit. They all joined hands, including the medium, and after about a quarter of an hour's waiting, and in open daylight, a hand—sensible to sight as was his own to that meeting—came "bobbing up and down." (Loud laughter.) They might laugh, and he had told them that they might not credit what he said, nevertheless it was true, the manifestation he had alluded to being the result of materialisation. Mental questions were propounded and answered by knocks upon the table, and he (Mr. Mahoney) himself was drawn by the spirit hand with the strength of a 40, 50, or 60lb. weight. The people in the room were moreover at liberty to look underneath the table whenever they desired to do so, so that there could be no mechanical contrivances or conjuring about the matter, and nothing but a true exhibition of spiritual phenomena. ("Rubbish," and "Hear, hear.")

Mr. Rhodes rose to oppose the principles of Spiritualism. He urged that no one science could possibly be opposed to another, yet Spiritualism was thoroughly opposed to all known sciences. He ridiculed what were called the wonderful orations of spiritualistic mediums.

Mr. Mahoney said darkness was quite unnecessary for the holding of a *séance*, and he advised all to make experiments at home in open daylight.

Here a gentleman rose and remarked that some time ago a visitor to Birmingham undertook to show the people what Spiritualism was. He engaged Curzon Hall, and in an entertainment introduced a table which knocked when required, and produced marvellous "manifestations." The exhibitor, however, explained very carefully that the whole thing was accomplished solely by the aid of electricity. (Laughter, and Hear, hear.)

In reply to a question, the chairman said he could undertake to say that no Spiritualist had ever objected to a certain number of gentlemen making thorough investigations in the dark rooms at *séances*. In proof of this, he might say that there were at least ten persons present at that meeting who, in a dark room in this town, had—some of them forty times at the lowest computation—felt the touch and heard the continued existing personality of Mr. Benjamin Hawkes, of New-street. (Loud laughter.) They were all of them spirits, whether they liked it or not—(Laughter)—and were liable to be developed into mediumship in some direction or other.

Mr. T. H. Aston, a freemason, challenged the chairman, or any person in the room who had been present at such *séances*, to come forward and give the "grip" to him.

After some slight disturbance, in the course of which it was humorously suggested that a sitting should be held on the ground by the whole of the company, Mr. Mahoney announced that the chairman was quite willing to meet Mr. King at any appointed time. As far as he (Mr. Mahoney) was concerned, he had only been a Spiritualist 18 months, but he had seen sufficient in three months to convince him of the truth of the thing. ("Give us some proof.") If they wanted proof they would have to search and investigate for it, as he had done.

It was then decided that Mr. Harper and Mr. King should meet and fully discuss the subject at an early date, and the meeting shortly afterwards separated amidst some disorder.

MR. J. H. GLEDSTANES is now in London.

THE *Newcastle Critic* contains an impartial article on Spiritualism.

MR. COGMAN writes that he has received the following contributions towards his work in East London; Mr. R. C., 10s. 6d., Mr. W., 10s. 6d., Mr. Y., 10s. 6d., and Mr. P., 10s. 6d.

WE have been requested by the honorary secretary of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, to call the attention of the members of that society to the circumstance that important business will have to be considered at its half-yearly general meeting next Thursday, as set forth in an advertisement on another page.

MR. JOHN CARR, of 3, Grange-terrace, Leyton, Essex, writes to say that a young man at the east end of London, named Raby, has been announcing himself as a medium, and has recently been detected in the presence of about a dozen witnesses, including Mr. Carr, acting the part of a sham ghost. On detection he made no defence, but asked not to be exposed. Mr. Carr writes that towards the close of last month he sent full particulars of the exposure of imposture to the *Medium* newspaper for publication.

AN AMIABLE FIEND.—The special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* in India says of the Kandys, a savage hill tribe:—"Living in huts which can be built in an hour, and making their cooking utensils mainly from the leaves of trees, the household arrangements of the Veddahs are not such as to call for any serious preparation. When a young man falls in love with a maiden he first of all obtains her consent, then waits upon her parents, who only demand that he shall present their daughter with a piece of cloth. He assents, the cloth is produced, the lovers become husband and wife at once, and remain so. There is no religious ceremony, for of religion the Veddah has no idea. The only supernatural being of which he has any notion is a devil, which, by the way, is a very respectable sort of fiend indeed, and not at all so implacable and bad as our Western Beelzebub. The Veddah's demon is really only a misguided person, who is fond of mischief; and when, therefore, anybody falls ill, his friends get some jaggery or native sugar, a little piece of cocoa-nut, and any other luxury which circumstances permit of, and, placing it on a leaf, dance round it till they think the Satanic anger is appeased."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. W. BALDWIN, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S.A.—The paper of which you speak has not come to hand.

WE have received *Hull's Crucible* (Boston) of January 1st.

BOOKS ON SPIRITUALISM, PSYCHOLOGY, MESMERISM, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND BIOLOGY,

ON SALE AT THE
BRANCH OFFICE OF "THE SPIRITUALIST"
NEWSPAPER,
38, GREAT RUSSELL-STREET, BLOOMSBURY,
LONDON, W.C.
(Entrance in Woburn-street).
ALL LETTERS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE MANAGER.

THE DEBATABLE LAND, by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, formerly American Minister at the Court of Naples. A standard work containing interesting and well-authenticated facts, proving the reality of spirit communion. It also contains an elaborate essay defining the author's views of the relationship of Spiritualism to the Christian Church. 7s. 6d.

FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD, by Robert Dale Owen. An excellent book of absorbing interest, replete with well-authenticated narratives, describing manifestations produced by spirits. 7s. 6d.

REPORT ON SPIRITUALISM, by the Committee of the Dialectical Society. This committee consisted of literary, scientific, and other professional men who investigated Spiritualism for two years without engaging the services of any professional medium, after which they published the report. Original edition, 18s.; moderately abridged edition, 6s.

RESEARCHES IN THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM, by William Crookes, F.R.S. The best work ever published to scientifically demonstrate the reality of some of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. 5s.

MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Alfred Russell Wallace, F.R.G.S. This book contains a masterly argument in reply to Hume's "Essay on Miracles." It also records a large number of interesting spiritual manifestations, and contains some of the personal experiences of Mr. Wallace. 6s.

PLANCHETTE; OR, THE DESPAIR OF SCIENCE, by Epes Sargent. A book rich in descriptions of well-authenticated spiritual phenomena. Information about the relationship of Spiritualism to Religion and Science is also given. 5s.

CONCERNING SPIRITUALISM, by Gerald Massey. A brilliant well written little essay on Spiritualism. Neatly bound, with gilt edges. 2s.

LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM, by the late J. W. Edmonds, Judge of the Supreme Court, New York, U.S. This book consists of essays on the Social, Moral, and Scientific aspects of Spiritualism. 3s. 6d.

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