

REPORT  
ON  
SPIRITUALISM,  
OF  
THE COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
London Dialectical Society,  
TOGETHER WITH  
THE EVIDENCE,  
ORAL AND WRITTEN,  
AND  
A SELECTION FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE.

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*Fourth Thousand.*

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# HOW REVIEWERS AGREE ON SPIRITUALISM; AND HOW THEY CRITICISED THE DIALECTICAL REPORT.

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WITH a profound conviction that the gentlemen who profess to be public literary critics must, from the very fact of their undertaking the duty, be thoroughly competent to perform their work with due impartiality and judgment, and that, as a rule, they sometimes read the books which they review, the publisher of the popular reprint of the Dialectical Report respectfully submits to the public the following extracts from criticisms which appeared upon the first edition of this work.

## TIMES.

"In due process of time, the 'Report on Spiritualism by a Committee of the Dialectical Society' made its appearance, with Messrs. Longmans' name on the title-page, and turned out to be nothing more than a farrago of impotent conclusions, garnished by a mass of the most monstrous rubbish it has ever been our misfortune to sit in judgment upon."

Having further asserted that "this solemn and protracted inquiry came to nothing after all," the *Times* reviewer states how *he* investigated Spiritualism for himself. He details facts precisely similar in character to those reported by the Committee, and proceeds, with amusing egotism, to urge them upon the attention of scientists, on his own individual authority. He expects, in short, the scientific world to be more amenable to the call of a single anonymous reviewer than to the efforts of a body of well-known barristers, clergymen, literati, scientists, physicians, solicitors, and merchants, notwithstanding that *they* obtained phenomena *without* professional mediums, while he was obliged to rely upon professional help. This *Times* reviewer narrates *his* personal experiences in the following manner:—

"Before writing upon this subject we thought it our duty to see with our own eyes the actual development which Spiritualism has attained here in London. We accordingly attended four *séances*, each different

and each remarkable in its way. . . . . We searched and re-searched the room, but found nothing abnormal. The furniture now became quite lively—and this in broad daylight. A chair jumped three or four yards across the carpet, our hat fell at our feet, and numerous other phenomena occurred, but nothing so satisfactory as the chair in the dark, for then we had fast hold of the ‘mediums,’ whereas now they were moving about the room, and, somehow or other, everything seemed to occur just when we were not looking and one of them was somewhere behind us. But we must confess the chair in the dark fairly puzzled us, and we came away, very far indeed from being Spiritualists, but wishing we could spare time and trouble to come again and again till we had sifted the whole matter to the bottom.”

The third séance attended by this *Times* reviewer is thus described, the “John King” referred to being the spirit assumed to be in communication with the circle:—

“An alphabet of printed letters was now laid on the table, and we were desired to think of a name and to pass a pencil along the lines of letters. We thought of one, and moved the pencil over the paper. Knowing the eye of the medium was upon us, we tried our best to move it with the regularity of machinery, but ‘John King’ was too clever to be eluded; he rapped at the right letters, and spelt out the name. In this way we obtained several remarkable answers, but in each case the answer was known to ourself, and fixed in our mind, and, until some other solution is demonstrated, we must think that the sagacity of the lady had more to do with it than ‘John King.’ One crucial test was proposed by the medium herself. We were asked to think of a name, to fix it firmly in our mind, to place a pencil and paper under the table, and to see whether ‘John King’ would write it for us. We thought of a name the medium could not possibly know, and waited in all anxiety, for this was a test indeed—a test that, had it been successfully withstood, would have proved conclusively the existence of something in Spiritualism beyond the legerdemain of the medium. We heard the pencil scratching, we cast what downward eye we could towards the lady’s feet; they seemed perfectly still. The scratching ceased, and we picked up the paper. There was some writing on it, of about the length of the name we had thought of, and the first and last letters were correct. . . . .

“To give a detailed account of everything which occurred would need more space than we can now spare. Suffice it to say, that the table was made light and heavy at our wish, that it moved in every direction, that there were vibrations of the floor and of our chairs, that on Mr. Home holding the accordion under the table in his right hand, and by the end farthest from the keys, it played a distinct tune, Mr. Home’s left hand being on the table and his feet so raised as to be visible. All other



hands were on the table. At the same time, and under the same conditions, a small hand-bell was rung in different parts of the space beneath the table. The gas was now turned out, and the two spirit-lamps lit; these gave a fair light. The raps became louder, and, in the usual method, directed us to take a leaf out of the table. This was done, when the table appeared to float up about eight inches off the floor, settling down again in a gentle swaying manner. The thin wooden lath lying on the cloth was seen by the whole party to be in motion. It tilted up sideways and endways, and then seemed to float backwards and forwards. Holding our hand three inches, as near as we could guess, above the cloth, the lath rose three times; the last time it touched our hand, and directly afterwards the table jumped and shook violently, and loud raps seemed to come from all parts of it and of the floor. The spirit-lamps were now put out, and what light there was from a low fire only just enabled us to see white paper on the table and each other's positions. Presently, Mr. Home's and Miss Fox's hands and feet being in strict custody, we felt the accordion pressing against our knees. We put our hand under the table, when the instrument appeared to be moving round, till its wooden base was placed between our fingers. In that position we held it with its keys downwards; it seemed to be pushed up towards our hand, and played a few bars. It then stopped, and presently we felt the bell thrust between the fingers of the same hand. Almost immediately a flower or sprig was put into our fingers, but as we were already holding in one hand the accordion and the bell, the sprig was dropped. It was picked up and again put into our fingers, and as we received it we felt distinctly the touch of a large thumb and finger. We did not let it drop this time, and there was immediately a succession of raps of a loud and jubilant nature. They seemed to come from the table in our immediate vicinity. A match was now struck, and we drew our tired hand from under the table, displaying the accordion, the bell, and the sprig. This was the end of the *séance*, for the 'spirit' would do no more. In the account of it we have omitted several experiments about which we cannot speak decidedly. We tried every test we could think of. A subdued light, darkened as the evening went on, was one of the conditions we were obliged to comply with, and while the accordion was in our hand we were desired to sit passive, though, as we stated, the hands and feet of the 'mediums' were in strict custody. Mr. Home seemed to wish to conceal nothing, and gave us every opportunity, consistent with the above conditions, for satisfying our scepticism. Yet we need hardly say that we were unable to satisfy it. By his request we got under the table with a lamp a great many times, insisted always on seeing his hands and feet, or on having them as well as those of Miss Fox held firmly. As to the hand with which Mr. Home held the accordion under the table, all we know is that on one of our sub-mahogany expeditions with the spirit-lamp, we saw that

hand quite still, and saw the accordion moving up and down, and playing music. We heard the key-notes, but the position of the instrument prevented our seeing the keys moving, if they did move. There was nothing during the whole evening except the phenomena themselves to suggest imposture. We tried our best to detect it, but could find no trace of it. We searched Mr. Home, and found nothing whatever upon him but his clothes.

"Yet, even with all this, we are not a Spiritualist, and do not even believe in a 'Psychic Force.' We remember and lay to heart Mr. G. H. Lewes's admirable maxim, 'Distinguish between facts and inferences from facts.' We are certain that the table rose from the ground, that our hand received a sprig under the table from what felt like another hand, but how these things happened we do not know. The nature of the phenomena and of human nature are such as to force us to suspect imposture and legerdemain until we can satisfy ourselves of the true causes, whatever these may be."

But the most amusing part of this *Times* review is the fact that the reviewer, apparently unconscious of the result of his own investigations, cannot refrain, in criticising the Report, from "running a-muck" against *another* work\* upon the subject, and with respect to which he commits himself as follows:—

"A volume now lying before us may serve to show how this folly is spread throughout society. It was lent to us by a distinguished Spiritualist, under the solemn promise that we should not divulge a single name of those concerned. It consists of about 150 pages of reports of *séances*, and was privately printed by a noble Earl, who has lately passed beyond the House of Lords, beyond, also, we trust, the spirit-peopled chairs and tables which in his life-time he loved, not wisely, but too well. In this book things more marvellous than any we have set down are circumstantially related, in a natural way, just as though they were ordinary, everyday matters of fact. We shall not fatigue the reader by quoting any of the accounts given, and, no doubt, he will take our word when we say that they range through every species of 'manifestation,' from prophesyings downwards. What we more particularly wish to observe is that the attestation of fifty respectable witnesses is placed before the title-page. Among them are a Dowager Duchess and other ladies of rank, a Captain in the Guards, a nobleman, a Baronet, a Member of Parliament, several officers of our scientific and other corps, a barrister, a merchant, and a doctor. Upper and upper middle-class society is represented in all its grades, and by persons who,

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\* The work here alluded to is evidently "Experiences in Spiritualism, by Viscount Adare; with introductory remarks by the Earl of Dunraven."

to judge by the position they hold and the callings they follow, ought to be possessed of intelligence and ability. Certainly, it is time that a thorough and practical investigation cleared this cloud out of the intellectual sky, and the task need not be scouted by professors or other learned men, by Royal or other learned Societies."

#### PALL MALL GAZETTE.

"But for the solemnity of the witnesses, and their tediousness, their stories would read like chapters out of a handbook of natural magic. It is difficult to speak or think with anything else than contemptuous pain of proceedings such as those described in this Report."

#### DAILY TELEGRAPH.

"The evidence to which many witnesses set their seals is certainly extraordinary. We may be asked how we can explain all these things, and we simply reply that we cannot, and that it is not our business to do so. We are not in presence of a sphinx that will devour us if we do not solve its enigmas. The fact, too, that some men, respectable in intellect and conversant with science, have testified their faith in the reality of the phenomena, makes it worth our while to investigate the matter with keener eyes than if the believers were all impulsive and unscientific observers."

#### STANDARD.

"But, on the other hand, some of the sub-committees do, it must be admitted, put forward statements, which, if they could be unreservedly accepted, would establish the broad facts on which Spiritualism is based. Perhaps the most common mistake made by people who have no strong belief or disbelief in connection with this subject is that of saying vaguely that they do not believe in Spiritualism, but that there may be 'something in it.' If there is anything whatever in it beyond imposture and imbecility, there is the whole of another world in it."

#### MORNING POST.

"The Report which has been published is entirely worthless. Is it not time that this spirit-worship ceased? We put the question seriously. With its renunciation would be swept away a vast amount of, to say the least of it, self-deception."

#### DAILY NEWS.

"The whole forms one of the most curious volumes which have been published for many a day. Altogether, the book which we have thus hastily glanced over may be regarded as an important contribution to the literature of a subject which, some day or other, by the very number of its followers, will demand more extended investigation."



## SATURDAY REVIEW.

"Meanwhile we can only hope that this Report of the Dialectical Society will involuntarily lead, in spite of the accumulation of preposterous stories added to the Committee Reports, to discrediting a little further one of the most unequivocally degrading superstitions that have ever found currency amongst reasonable beings."

## SPECTATOR.

"The volume is an extremely curious one. Few, however, could read the mass of evidence collected in this volume, showing the firm faith in the reality of the alleged spiritual phenomena possessed by a number of individuals of honourable and upright character, without also agreeing with Mr. Jeffrey's opinion, that the remarkable phenomena witnessed, some of which had not been traced to imposture or delusion, and the gathered testimony of respectable witnesses, 'justify the recommendation of the subject to further cautious investigation.'"

## MEDICAL TIMES AND GAZETTE.

"The volume is a very curious one, and deserving of attention for several reasons."

## LONDON MEDICAL JOURNAL.

"This is a substantial volume, and will always be a mine of information on the subject with which it deals. It is one of the most interesting and curious books that have ever been published, and throws light upon both sides of many important psychological questions. It is by no means heavy reading, and some of the special papers by prominent persons are written with a vigour and dash that betray strong convictions."

## EXAMINER.

"It is a bulky volume, over which the Spiritualists will crow not a little."

## LITERARY WORLD.

"As regards the Report of the London Dialectical Society, we must say, in conclusion, that it is frank and overflowing with facts real or supposititious; but the grand question remains unanswered after all, and the problem of 'Spiritualism' is still unsolved."

## SPIRITUALIST.

"So the Report, when it was presented, was in favour of Spiritualism; at this unexpected result the Dialectical Society took fright. The council ran away and refused to publish it, leaving its Committee in the lurch."

## ECHO.

"We must say that the Committee of the Dialectical Society, in spite of their laborious investigation, seem to have left the whole question after all very much where they found it. We have very often a direct conflict of testimony as to what took place in their joint presence between persons whose word in any ordinary matter no man would ever dream of doubting. But on one point we have no doubt at all. If there is any truth in these phenomena—and in the teeth of the testimony of men like Mr. Wallace, the eminent naturalist, it seems rash and presumptuous to say peremptorily that there is none—the force that produces them, be it what it may, is as strictly a *natural* force as gravitation or electricity."

## MEDIUM.

"This well-abused Report, which, if it has not made converts by the score, has at least started hundreds upon the road of personal investigation."

## SPORTING TIMES.

"If I had my way, a few of the leading professional Spiritualists should be sent as rogues and vagabonds to the treadmill for a few weeks. It would do them good. They are a canting, deceitful, mischievous lot. Some of their dupes are contemptibly stupid—insane, I should say. There is one old gentleman who believes cold boiled cabbage and sago pudding to be the greatest gastronomical luxury possible. Of course he is a vegetarian. Indeed, most of the Spiritualists with whom I am acquainted are vegetarians, teetotallers, anti-smokers, anti-vaccinators, and I know not what also. Perhaps this fact may help to explain their otherwise inexplicable folly."

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS CHEAP EDITION (which is printed, by permission, from the original plates) is published to bring into more general notice the nature and result of the test experiments of the Committee, and to enable the public to estimate at their true value the criticisms upon the first edition of the work which from time to time have appeared in the newspaper press.

In these criticisms the *actual experiments* have been, as a rule, either wilfully suppressed or grossly misrepresented. But, as the tests in question formed the most significant portion of the work, and have since been corroborated in all essential particulars by many independent investigators—some, too, of recognised scientific attainments,—it is hoped that an edition so inexpensive as the present will enable the public to read and judge for themselves.

---

THE Report and Evidence, now made public, were presented to the Council of the LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY, on the 20th day of July, 1870, and were accepted in accordance with the following Resolutions passed by the Council on that occasion :—

- (1.) That the Report be received and entered upon the Minutes.
- (2.) That the thanks of the Council be given to the Committee for the indefatigable way in which they have discharged their duties.
- (3.) That the request of the Committee that the Report be printed under the authority of the Society, be not acceded to.

In consequence of the above decision, the Committee unanimously determined to publish the Report on their own responsibility, and it is now accordingly submitted to the public.

## APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE.

—o—

AT a Meeting of the LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY, held on Wednesday, the 6th of January, 1869, Mr. J. H. LEVY in the Chair, it was resolved:—

“That the Council be requested to appoint a Committee in conformity with Bye-law VII., to investigate the Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations, and to report thereon.”

*(Copy of the Minute of the Council.)*

“At a Meeting of the COUNCIL of the LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY, held on the 26th January, 1869, on the Motion of Dr. EDMUNDS, a Committee was appointed in conformity with Bye-law VII., ‘to investigate the Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations, and to report thereon.’ The Committee to consist of the following Members:—

H. G. Atkinson, Esq., F.G.S.  
G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.  
J. S. Bergheim, Esq., C.E.  
H. R. Fox Bourne, Esq.  
Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.  
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Horace S. Yeomans, Esq.

Professor Huxley and Mr. George Henry Lewes to be invited to co-operate.”

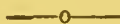
Drs. Chapman and Drysdale and Mr. Fox Bourne declined to sit, and the following names were subsequently added to the Committee.

George Cary, Esq., B.A.  
E. W. Cox, Esq., Serjeant-at-Law  
William B. Gower, Esq.  
H. D. Jencken, Esq., Barrister-at-Law

J. H. Levy, Esq.  
W. H. Swepstone, Esq., Solicitor  
Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.  
Josiah Webber, Esq.



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## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

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Gentlemen,

The Committee appointed by you to investigate the phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations, report thereon as follows:—

Your Committee have held fifteen meetings, at which they received evidence from thirty-three persons, who described phenomena which, they stated, had occurred within their own personal experience.

Your Committee have received written statements relating to the phenomena from thirty-one persons.

Your Committee invited the attendance and requested the co-operation and advice of scientific men who had publicly expressed opinions, favourable or adverse, to the genuineness of the phenomena.

Your Committee also specially invited the attendance of persons who had publicly ascribed the phenomena to imposture or delusion.

Your Committee, however, while successful in procuring the evidence of believers in the phenomena and in their supernatural origin, almost wholly failed to obtain evidence from those who attributed them to fraud or delusion.

As it appeared to your Committee to be of the greatest importance that they should investigate the phenomena in question by personal experiment and

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test, they resolved themselves into sub-committees as the best means of doing so.

Six Sub-committees were accordingly formed.

All of these have sent in reports, from which it appears that a large majority of the members of your Committee have become actual witnesses to several phases of the phenomena without the aid or presence of any professional medium, although the greater part of them commenced their investigations in an avowedly sceptical spirit.

These reports, hereto subjoined, substantially corroborate each other, and would appear to establish the following propositions:—

- 1.—That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.
- 2.—That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind or adequate exertion of muscular force by the persons present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.
- 3.—That these sounds and movements often occur at the times and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.

- 4.—That the answers and communications thus obtained are, for the most part, of a commonplace character; but facts are sometimes correctly given which are only known to one of the persons present.
- 5.—That the circumstances under which the phenomena occur are variable, the most prominent fact being, that the presence of certain persons seems necessary to their occurrence, and that of others generally adverse; but this difference does not appear to depend upon any belief or disbelief concerning the phenomena.
- 6.—That, nevertheless, the occurrence of the phenomena is not insured by the presence or absence of such persons respectively.

The oral and written evidence received by your Committee not only testifies to phenomena of the same nature as those witnessed by the sub-committees, but to others of a more varied and extraordinary character.

This evidence may be briefly summarized as follows:—

- 1.—Thirteen witnesses state that they have seen heavy bodies—in some instances men—rise slowly in the air and remain there for some time without visible or tangible support.
- 2.—Fourteen witnesses testify to having seen hands or figures, not appertaining to any human being, but life-like in appearance and mobility, which they have sometimes touched or even grasped,

and which they are therefore convinced were not the result of imposture or illusion.

- 3.—Five witnesses state that they have been touched, by some invisible agency, on various parts of the body, and often where requested, when the hands of all present were visible.
- 4.—Thirteen witnesses declare that they have heard musical pieces well played upon instruments not manipulated by any ascertainable agency.
- 5.—Five witnesses state that they have seen red-hot coals applied to the hands or heads of several persons without producing pain or scorching; and three witnesses state that they have had the same experiment made upon themselves with the like immunity.
- 6.—Eight witnesses state that they have received precise information through rappings, writings, and in other ways, the accuracy of which was unknown at the time to themselves or to any persons present, and which, on subsequent inquiry, was found to be correct.
- 7.—One witness declares that he has received a precise and detailed statement which, nevertheless, proved to be entirely erroneous.
- 8.—Three witnesses state that they have been present when drawings, both in pencil and colours, were produced in so short a time, and under such conditions, as to render human agency impossible.
- 9.—Six witnesses declare that they have received

information of future events, and that in some cases the hour and minute of their occurrence have been accurately foretold, days and even weeks before.

In addition to the above, evidence has been given of trance-speaking, of healing, of automatic writing, of the introduction of flowers and fruits into closed rooms, of voices in the air, of visions in crystals and glasses, and of the elongation of the human body.

Many of the witnesses have given their views as to the sources of these phenomena. Some attribute them to the agency of disembodied human beings, some to Satanic influence, some to psychological causes, and others to imposture or delusion.

The literature of the subject has also received the attention of your Committee, and a list of works is appended for the assistance of those who may wish to pursue the subject further.

In presenting their report, your Committee, taking into consideration the high character and great intelligence of many of the witnesses to the more extraordinary facts, the extent to which their testimony is supported by the reports of the sub-committees, and the absence of any proof of imposture or delusion as regards a large portion of the phenomena; and further, having regard to the exceptional character of the phenomena, the large number of persons in every grade of society and over the whole civilized world who are more or less influenced by a belief in their supernatural origin, and to the fact



that no philosophical explanation of them has yet been arrived at, deem it incumbent upon them to state their conviction that the subject is worthy of more serious attention and careful investigation than it has hitherto received.

Your Committee recommend that this Report and the Reports of the Sub-committees, together with the Evidence and Correspondence appended, be printed and published.





## REPORTS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL SUB-COMMITTEES.

*SUB-COMMITTEE No. 1.*

Since their appointment on the 16th of February, 1869, your Sub-committee have held *forty* meetings for the purpose of experiment and test.

All of these meetings were held at the private residences of members of the Committee, purposely to preclude the possibility of pre-arranged mechanism or contrivance.

The furniture of the room in which the experiments were conducted was on every occasion its accustomed furniture.

The tables were in all cases heavy dining tables, requiring a strong effort to move them. The smallest of them was 5ft. 9in. long by 4ft. wide, and the largest, 9ft. 3in. long and 4½ft. wide, and of proportionate weight.

The rooms, tables, and furniture generally were repeatedly subjected to careful examination before, during, and after the experiments, to ascertain that no concealed machinery, instrument, or other contrivance existed by means of which the sounds or movements hereinafter mentioned could be caused.

The experiments were conducted in the light of gas, except on the few occasions specially noted in the minutes.

Your Committee have avoided the employment of professional or paid mediums, the mediumship being that of members of your Sub-committee, persons of good social position and of unimpeachable integrity, having no pecuniary object to serve, and nothing to gain by deception.

Your Committee have held some meetings without the presence of a medium (it being understood that throughout this report the word "medium" is used simply to designate an individual without whose presence the phenomena described either do not occur at all, or with greatly diminished force and frequency), purposely to try if they could produce, by any efforts, effects similar to those witnessed when a medium was present. By no endeavours were they enabled to produce anything at all resembling the manifestations which took place in the presence of a medium.

Every test that the combined intelligence of your Committee could devise has been tried with patience and perseverance. The experiments were conducted under a great variety of conditions, and ingenuity has been exerted in devising plans by which your Committee might verify their observations and preclude the possibility of imposture or of delusion.

Your Committee have confined their report to *facts* witnessed by them in their collective capacity, which facts were *palpable to the senses, and their reality capable of demonstrative proof.*

Of the members of your Sub-committee about

*four-fifths* entered upon the investigation wholly sceptical as to the reality of the alleged phenomena, firmly believing them to be the result either of *imposture* or of *delusion*, or of *involuntary muscular action*. It was only by irresistible evidence, under conditions that precluded the possibility of either of these solutions, and after trial and test many times repeated, that the most sceptical of your Sub-committee were slowly and reluctantly convinced that the phenomena exhibited in the course of their protracted inquiry were veritable facts.

The result of their long-continued and carefully-conducted experiments, after trial by every detective test they could devise, has been to establish conclusively:

First: That under certain bodily or mental conditions of one or more of the persons present, a force is exhibited sufficient to set in motion heavy substances, without the employment of any muscular force, without contact or material connection of any kind between such substances and the body of any person present.

Second: That this force can cause sounds to proceed, distinctly audible to all present, from solid substances not in contact with, nor having any visible or material connection with, the body of any person present, and which sounds are proved to proceed from such substances by the vibrations which are distinctly felt when they are touched.

Third: That this force is frequently directed by intelligence.

At *thirty-four* out of the forty meetings of your Committee some of these phenomena occurred.

A description of one experiment, and the manner of conducting it, will best show the care and caution with which your Committee have pursued their investigations.

So long as there was contact, or even the possibility of contact, by the hands or feet, or even by the clothes of any person in the room, with the substance moved or sounded, there could be no perfect assurance that the motions and sounds were not produced by the person so in contact. The following experiment was therefore tried :

On an occasion when eleven members of your Subcommittee had been sitting round one of the dining-tables above described for forty minutes, and various motions and sounds had occurred, they, by way of test, turned the backs of their chairs to the table, at about nine inches from it. They all then knelt upon their chairs, placing their arms upon the backs thereof. In this position, their feet were, of course, turned away from the table, and by no possibility could be placed under it or touch the floor. The hands of each person were extended over the table at about four inches from the surface. Contact, therefore, with any part of the table could not take place without detection.

In less than a minute the table, untouched, moved *four* times ; at first about *five* inches to one side, then about *twelve* inches to the opposite side, and



then, in like manner, four inches and six inches respectively.

The hands of all present were next placed on the backs of their chairs, and about a foot from the table, which again moved, as before, *five* times, over spaces varying from four to six inches. Then all the chairs were removed twelve inches from the table, and each person knelt on his chair as before, this time, however, folding his hands behind his back, his body being thus about eighteen inches from the table, and having the back of the chair between himself and the table. The table again moved four times, in various directions. In the course of this conclusive experiment, and in less than half-an-hour, the table thus moved, without contact or possibility of contact with any person present, thirteen times, the movements being in different directions, and some of them according to the request of various members of your Sub-committee.

The table was then carefully examined, turned upside down and taken to pieces, but nothing was discovered to account for the phenomena. The experiment was conducted throughout in the full light of gas above the table.

Altogether, your Sub-committee have witnessed upwards of *fifty* similar motions without contact on *eight* different evenings, in the houses of members of your Sub-committee, the most careful tests being applied on each occasion.

In all similar experiments the possibility of

mechanical or other contrivance was further negatived by the fact that the movements were in various directions, now to one side, then to the other; now up the room, now down the room—motions that would have required the co-operation of many hands or feet; and these, from the great size and weight of the tables, could not have been so used without the visible exercise of muscular force. Every hand and foot was plainly to be seen, and could not have been moved without instant detection.

Delusion was out of the question. The motions were in various directions, and were witnessed simultaneously by all present. They were matters of measurement, and not of opinion or of fancy.

And they occurred so often, under so many and such various conditions, with such safeguards against error or deception, and with such invariable results, as to satisfy the members of your Sub-committee by whom the experiments were tried, wholly sceptical as most of them were when they entered upon the investigation, that *there is a force capable of moving heavy bodies without material contact, and which force is in some unknown manner dependent upon the presence of human beings.*

Your Sub-committee have not, collectively, obtained any evidence as to the nature and source of this force, but simply as to *the fact of its existence.*

There appears to your Committee to be no ground for the popular belief that the presence of sceptics



interferes in any manner with the production or action of the force.

In conclusion, your Committee express their unanimous opinion that the one important physical fact thus proved to exist, that *motion may be produced in solid bodies without material contact, by some hitherto unrecognised force operating within an undefined distance from the human organism, and beyond the range of muscular action*, should be subjected to further scientific examination, with a view to ascertain its true source, nature, and power.

The notes of the experiments made at each meeting of your Sub-committee are appended to this Report.—*Vide* p. 373.

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SUB-COMMITTEE No. 2.

TO THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE LONDON DIALECTICAL SOCIETY TO INVESTIGATE THE PHENOMENA ALLEGED TO BE SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

Gentlemen,—We, one of the Sub-committees appointed by you for the purpose of practically acquainting ourselves, if possible, with the above-mentioned phenomena, beg leave to report as follows:—

1.—That we have held numerous meetings at the

houses of Messrs. A—— and B——, members of your Sub-committee and of the Dialectical Society.

- 2.—That the said Messrs. A—— and B—— were entire strangers to the manifestations in question and sceptical of the phenomena generally, and that no meetings in connection with the subject had been previously held in either of their houses.
- 3.—That, in addition to the Members of your Sub-committee, the wives of Messrs. A—— and B—— took part at such meetings, as did also Mr. C——, a brother-in-law of one of your Sub-committee-men.
- 4.—That our meetings were held without the aid or presence of any professed mediums (so-called) and under circumstances that precluded the possibility of trick or deception.
- 5.—That, for the purpose of a *séance*, we always assembled in the evening, and seated ourselves around a dining-table, upon which we lightly placed our hands, engaging in conversation.
- 6.—That the rooms in which we so assembled were lighted by gas, and that we usually commenced with a full supply of light, which, if afterwards occasionally reduced, was always sufficient to enable us to read or write without difficulty.
- 7.—That the phenomena termed “rapping,” “table-rapping,” and “table-moving” occurred at our first, and at many subsequent meetings.
- 8.—That the table-moving referred to was in the

nature of heaving, oscillation, or tipping; the table often moving in any direction suggested.

- 9.—That, during such movements our hands were sometimes removed from the table altogether without abating the phenomena, and that at all times we were careful not to induce any movements by either muscular action or pressure.
- 10.—That “table-moving” ceased, or nearly ceased, after our first few meetings, apparently in favour of the rapping phenomena.
- 11.—That the rappings in question did not always proceed from the table, but sometimes from the floor, the walls, and the ceiling; frequently coming from parts of the room suggested by those present—but not always.
- 12.—That the raps had a sound distinctive and distinguishable, appearing to be in rather than on the substance from whence they proceeded; sometimes, however, they sounded like detonations in the air.
- 13.—That when we occasionally, by way of experiment, made series of raps in rhythmical order upon the table, and asked that the rhythms should be imitated, our requests were complied with by responsive raps exactly imitating the rhythms prescribed.
- 14.—That our experience in regard to the phenomena we witnessed appears generally to be corroborative of the statements of many of the witnesses examined by you upon the subject, to the extent

that such phenomena have, or appear to have, a basis of intelligence.

- 15.—That this intelligence was principally manifested (a) by replies more or less pertinent, and sometimes most unexpected in their character, to our spoken and audible questions, (b) by original communications made to us as hereinafter mentioned.
- 16.—That such replies and communications were made by means of raps given when the alphabet was pointed to, letter by letter, or spoken by one of the party—it having been previously understood that three raps should signify “yes,” two “doubtful,” and one “no.” This arrangement, however, was sometimes altered by way of test, but without disturbing the accuracy of the replies.
- 17.—That through the processes detailed in the foregoing clause we presumably established occasional communication with a number of spirits or intelligences, announced to be such by themselves, many of whom stated they were connected in various degrees of relationship to certain members of our party, for whom they professed a friendly regard.
- 18.—That such presumed spirits displayed distinct individualities, each having a manner peculiar to itself, and rapping delicately, emphatically, or deliberately, as the case might be, expressing, as it were, character, mood, and temper.

- 19.—That when we attempted to shorten the process of communication detailed in clause No. 16, by anticipating words or phrases which we thought were intended, we frequently found our anticipations emphatically negatived in favour of more appropriate expressions or of words of a different signification altogether. For illustrations upon this point we refer you to the *séances* reported in clause No. 39.
- 20.—That intelligence was further manifested by the occasional dictation to us of special conditions for our then observance, such, for instance, as requesting us to sit in a different order at the table; requiring one or more to sit away from it; asking for an increase or diminution of light, or for the appointment of some particular person to ask questions; directing us to link or unlink hands; to be more quiet in our conversation; to avoid disputation, &c.
- 21.—That on our compliance with such directions the manifestations were invariably intensified.
- 22.—That we are convinced of the objective character of the phenomena from finding that persons sceptical as to the existence thereof invariably confirmed our own experiences even when suddenly introduced during the progress of a *séance*. As a case in point, we instance that when one of our sittings was far advanced and the phenomena of table-moving and rapping were in full operation, we sent for a neigh-



bour to witness them. He came immediately, the manifestations continuing without break or interruption, and presenting to him the same aspect that they did to ourselves, notwithstanding that he at any rate must have been free from any antecedent influence, mesmeric or otherwise.

- 23.—That as a further evidence of the objectivity of the phenomena, we report that manifestations have occurred to us spontaneously upon occasions when we had not assembled for the purpose of a *séance*, and were not seated around any table. We instance (1st) that one evening, when some of the members of your sub-committee were assembled at the house of Mr. A——, not, however, with any intention of then investigating the phenomena, the conversation turned upon a *séance* lately held by some of the members of your general committee, at which Mrs. Marshall had been present, and when raps had proceeded from the pianoforte. While we were discussing the genuineness of these raps, the strings of Mr. A——'s pianoforte suddenly and simultaneously vibrated, although no person was near the instrument. As these sounds were twice or thrice repeated, followed by raps, and were too sonorous to be accounted for by any vibration of the house or room, we immediately examined the instrument internally and externally with great care, but

without discovering any cause for the sounds produced; and even after such examination, raps proceeded from the instrument at intervals during the rest of the evening. This was the only occasion when phenomena other than “rapping” or “table-moving” occurred to your sub-committee, and we think it right to add that no circumstance of the kind had ever before or has since happened in Mr. A——’s house. (2nd.) That upon another occasion some time after we had concluded a *séance*, and while we were taking refreshment, the rappings returned with great vigour, proceeding simultaneously from various parts of the room. On asking the presumed intelligences their names, they informed us in reply that they were the spirits who had been in communication with us during the evening, and that they were in a happy and merry mood, and did not care to leave us. One of our party jocularly drank to their health, and asked them to respond, which they did by volleys of raps, indicative as they informed us of laughter and good fellowship. Each ultimately bade us good night by a succession of raps, so to speak, in perspective, being at the commencement loud and rapid, but gradually diminishing in force and increasing in interval until out of hearing. These raps, we should state, were more like detonations in the air than the result of percussion on any hard substance.

24.—That we instance as further evidence of the spontaneity of the phenomena, that frequently emphatic raps occurred by way of assent to, or dissent from, remarks made by your Sub-committee to each other. Thus, at a sitting during which the raps had been unusually sonorous and fluent, one of the party asked the presumed spirit then in communication to state when he died, but no answer was returned, notwithstanding the question was somewhat persistently repeated. This apparently abrupt termination to the most successful *séance* we had yet had, caused us much surprise, and we were conversing upon the subject, when it was remarked that as the presumed intelligences claimed to be spiritual, they probably rejected the application of such a term as “death” to themselves or their state of existence, it being likely that of whatever import death might be to the body, it would, as concerning the spirit, be the continuation of life under a new form. Scarcely had the speaker concluded, when loud raps again sounded from the table, such being given, as we were informed, by way of assent to the remarks just made. Arising out of this, a conversation of great interest took place between ourselves and the presumed intelligences. Death, we were informed was, so far as the body was concerned, of comparatively trivial import, but as regarded the spirit, it was a birth

into new experiences of existence; that spirit-life was in every respect human; that friendly intercourse and companionship were as common and as pleasurable in spirit-life as on earth; that although spirits took great interest in earthly affairs, they had no wish to return to their former state of existence; that communication with earthly friends was pleasurable, and desired by spirits, being intended as a proof to the former of the continuance of life, notwithstanding bodily dissolution; that spirits claimed no prophetic power. We were further informed that the two ladies in our party were mediums, and that others of our party were mediumistic, and might in time develop into mediums; that our *séances* would improve by being held periodically and frequently; that they could not state the result of *séances* with reference to health, or give us any information of invariable application as to conditions; that disputation amongst ourselves at a *séance* was a disturbing element, but that they liked joking and fun occasionally; that they knew the Dialectical Society, and were interested in its investigation of spiritualism, but that they did not know whether such investigation would have any good result.

- 25.—That the independence or objectivity of the intelligence regulating the phenomena appears to be evidenced by the fact that we have frequently received answers and communications



unexpected in their character. For instance, we once inquired by way of test where a lady of our acquaintance then was, she being at that time in Bolton. In reply, the word "in" was rapped out, and then the letter "b." This so far was satisfactory, but as the next letter given was "e," we regarded the answer as a failure. Going on, however, with the alphabet, "d" was our next letter, and this we were told completed the sentence. It being then past twelve o'clock at night, the appositeness of the reply "in bed" excited some merriment, which was responded to by a series of raps. We then gave the names of certain towns, and asked in which one of them the lady was staying. As each town was named, we got a single negative rap, until we gave Bolton, when we immediately received the three raps indicative of "Yes." It also happened at this *séance* that while we were sitting at a heavy dining-table with our hands linked (in compliance with a request made to us by one of the presumed spirits), one of us asked another spirit, then in communication, whether it had sufficient power to move the table. The alphabet was asked for, and the words spelt out were "unlink hands." We had scarcely obeyed this instruction when the table lurched round suddenly, and violently forced some of the party out of their chairs. This spirit claimed to be that of an acquaint-



ance who had lately lost his life by a railway accident in America, and who, when living, was of a sportive disposition, and fond of feats of strength. He first announced his presence at our *séances* by a somewhat unparliamentary term of badinage that he and his companions had been in the habit of using towards each other, and when asked to which of two friends of his then present he applied the term, answered "both." He objected to making original communications, but being urged for one, at last replied by giving the message, "Tell my brother J—— I have visited you," it being somewhat singular that the brother in question a few days previously had much ridiculed the phenomena.

- 26.—That we, your Sub-committee, did not succeed in ascertaining any specific conditions that would command the production of the phenomena—those that appeared to be necessary on one occasion seeming to be superfluous on another, while at many consecutive meetings the due observance by us of all the presumed conditions within our experience failed entirely. Upon this subject, however, we submit the following clauses by way of analysis.
- 27.—The phenomena were principally manifested under the conditions or circumstances specified in clauses Nos. 5, 6, and 20 of this Report, we having under such conditions obtained mani-

festations in various rooms of the houses in which we met and at several tables, three of the latter being dining-room tables of full size; the attendance upon such occasions varying from five to seven members. The manifestations appeared generally to be aided on our part—

(a.) By orderliness in the conduct of the *séances*.

(b.) By a quiet, but not particularly passive demeanour and conversation.

(c.) By quietude in the house in which we assembled, we failing sometimes to obtain phenomena early in the evening, but obtaining them later, when the servants had retired and domestic noises had ceased.

(d.) By a somewhat moderate supply of light.

On the other hand, we have occasionally had powerful manifestations—when seated away from the table—when observing no particular order or ceremony—when engaged in animated conversation—when indulging in laughter and merriment—when ordinary household business was in progress—and, with a full supply of light.

28.—That sometimes, without any perceivable change of conditions, the manifestations became faint and rapidly died away, apparently beyond re-

cal, thus closing our *séance*; while upon other occasions, without any particular regard by us to conditions, the manifestations continued strong and vigorous, we ourselves being obliged at last to break up the sittings, which usually lasted from one hour to two hours and a-half.

29.—That, as relating to the subject of conditions, we have noted the following facts:—

- (a.) That we invariably failed to obtain the phenomena in the dark.
- (b.) That at our few trials by daylight we invariably failed to obtain manifestations.
- (c.) That we invariably failed to obtain manifestations without the presence of the two ladies in our party.
- (d.) That our compliance with conditions dictated to us by the presumed spirits invariably intensified the manifestations at the time. (See clauses Nos. 20 and 21.)

30.—That we have not discovered any conditions identical with those ordinarily deemed necessary to the production of the so-called electro-biologic or mesmeric phenomena—but often the reverse. Thus we may state:—

- (a.) That intentness or desire for the manifestations (as preparatory processes) far more frequently prefaced failure than success, we commonly finding that those *séances* were the most successful at

which the phenomena occurred immediately, or almost immediately, we seated ourselves at the table.

- (b.) That, as detailed in clause No. 23, the phenomena sometimes occurred to us spontaneously and unsought.
- (c.) That no influences existed at our *séances* that impaired our powers of observation or discrimination, inasmuch as the remembrance of each person present thereat as to what had taken place invariably accorded with the experience of all the others, and was further corroborated by the notes taken at the time, as well as by independent testimony. (See clause No. 22.)

31.—That whatever might be the force or power employed in the manifestations, or whatever the conditions under which those manifestations took place, we frequently noted that there appeared to be a desire to conserve or economise such force or power ; for example :—

- (a.) We rarely obtained second replies to questions already answered, even when we inverted such questions for the purpose.
- (b.) The phraseology of communications was mostly succinct, redundant words or terms being seldom, if ever, employed.
- (c.) We seldom had superfluous or meaning-

less raps, the rapping that took place conveying either original communications or answers to our questions.

(d.) In order as it were to minimise the power or force referred to, the presumed intelligences sometimes preferred to give concise answers, rather than to make sustained communications. For instance, we once asked, somewhat persistently, for an original communication and received as such the words "will answer any question;" the same being a compliance with our request, clothed, however, in the form of a reply.

32.—That from such observation of the phenomena, we have occasionally found it desirable as a condition to success, not to stimulate or over-tax the rapping; while at other times no such precautions appeared to be necessary or were taken.

33.—That from Good Friday, in March, 1869, until the end of the following month of May, the manifestations presented themselves under the conditions assumed to be such throughout this Report at our various meetings, with but few instances of failure.

34.—That during the following months of June and July, we continued our meetings as before; but notwithstanding that we duly observed all the conditions assumed to be necessary, and that



the two ladies of our party were present, manifestations took place upon two occasions only, and then of a subdued and apparently weakened character.

35.—That failures and successes alike took place, under the same average condition of health, of weather, and of temperature.

36.—That from August, 1869, to February, 1870, inclusive, your Sub-committee held no meetings and witnessed no phenomena, but that on March 7th, 1870, the raps returned spontaneously, whilst two members of your Sub-committee and their wives were playing at whist, a third lady (a stranger to the phenomena) being present. At the conclusion of the rubber a *séance* was arranged, when a few questions were answered by the presumed spirit, but no original communications were made.

37.—That, as bearing upon the subject of conditions, we ought, perhaps, to state that a domestic event of what is generally termed an interesting nature, took place with respect to one of the ladies of our party in the month of February, 1870, inasmuch as this may possibly afford some clue to the failure of the manifestations during and after the previous month of June.

38.—As further illustrating the foregoing statements, your Committee think it advisable to give a short history of what took place at certain of

their sittings, names, however, being for obvious reasons omitted or altered, and the terms "spirit" or "intelligence" being used for the sake of brevity to signify the power or force through which the various phenomena were produced. Our first sitting took place on the evening of Good Friday, in 1869, there being six persons present, three of whom were members of the committee. After a time, the table at which we had seated ourselves (and which, we had, as a preliminary formality, carefully examined) began to move, at first slowly, but afterwards more quickly. During a pause, one of the party exclaimed, "What singular things the raps must be!" immediately upon which we heard, as if in response, two or three faint, but perfectly audible sounds, like the ticking of a clock, proceed from the centre of the table. The question was at once asked, "Was a spirit present?" Three raps. "Did three raps mean 'yes?'" Several raps, as if in acquiescence. "If the spirit meant to communicate with us, should three raps mean 'yes,' two 'doubtful,' and one 'no'?" "Yes." "Would the spirit tell us its name through the alphabet?" "Yes." The preliminaries being thus settled, one of the party was asked to speak aloud the letters. He did so. "A, B, C," up to "W," with which latter letter came one of the promised raps. The next letter was X, then L, and so on, until the

word "Walter" had been given. "Has the spirit any other name?" was asked. "Will it tell us what it is?" "Yes." The same method which had produced the name "Walter" now gave us the surname of a gentleman present. "Is the spirit in any way related to Mr. A——?" we inquired. "Yes." "Will it state in what degree?" "Yes." More alphabet work, letter by letter, and the result, "Infant grand." "Infant grandfather?" somebody suggested. The ludicrousness of the suggestion caused us to laugh, in which the spirit appeared to join by a number of raps of different degrees of intensity. On again with the alphabet to the completion of the sentence. "Infant granduncle." Several questions having been answered by this spirit, we asked it for an original communication. The raps continuing, we expected the letters now taken down would form the message we were to receive, but, instead of such being the case, the words given were, "a new spirit," and it transpired from what subsequently took place, that a new intelligence was in communication with us. This spirit also answered a number of questions as to its name, and the time when it was in the flesh, &c., as, in fact, did also other spirits upon subsequent occasions; but as these replies partook more or less of the same character, and did not present anything peculiarly worthy of note, we have

thought it better to confine our Report to a short statement of what took place at certain of our sittings where the most marked manifestations occurred, merely observing for your information, that at the sittings in question not less than two of your Committee were present with their wives, and that the whole party never consisted of less than five, or more than seven persons.

39.—At one of our sittings, organized without premeditation, at the close of a musical evening, on the 7th May, 1869, a spirit came, who in reply to our inquiry stated its name was Henry. As a lady present had lost a relative of that name, she became impressed with the idea that it was his spirit that had visited us, and this so affected her that we found it necessary to bring the sitting to a close. Two days afterwards we held a sitting in the dining-room of a member of the Dialectical Society, the party consisting of five persons. For a considerable time no manifestations took place, and we were about to break up the *séance* when two or three peculiarly sharp raps from the centre of the table induced us to continue the sitting. Upon this occasion our hostess was seated in her usual place at the head of the table, having her husband on her right, a lady and gentleman on her left, and a gentleman opposite to her. The latter gentleman, therefore, occupied the posi-



tion usually filled by the host at the foot of the table. The raps being heard, a question was asked whether the conditions were satisfactory. "No." "Does the spirit wish either of the party to change places?" "Yes." "Perhaps, the spirit will state who is to move?" "Yes." The gentleman at the foot of the table, who had been appointed director of this *séance*, now named and pointed at each person present in turn, commencing with his right-hand neighbour. A single rap was given at each name until the host's turn had arrived, when three raps were heard, and ultimately (acting under instructions from the spirit) the host and the gentleman at the foot of the table changed places, an arrangement which at once placed the former in the position he, as master of the house, ordinarily occupied. The effect this alteration had upon the conditions was at once apparent; the raps which had been remarkably clear and decided before, becoming now louder and vibrative, sounding as if the table, an ordinary dining one, had been struck with a small hammer. "Will the spirit tell us its name?" "Yes—H E N R Y." When this name was given, we at once assumed that the spirit which had visited us on the occasion mentioned above had come to us again, and as the lady who had caused the *séance* to be broken up then was present now, we feared lest this sitting also



might be abruptly terminated. This, however, did not turn out to be the case. All parties remained quiescent, and the spirit was asked to give the surname it had been known by on earth. It did so—"K——." We had all expected that the spirit would have announced itself as the relative of the lady referred to, but it did not do so, the name given being that of a step-brother of our hostess who had died abroad fourteen years previously. This spirit replied in the usual manner to questions put to it by the director (who had never before known or heard of the existence of Henry K——) stating truly the name of the place where and the year in which it had left the flesh, such replies being given sharply and unhesitatingly as if for the purpose of identification. It then, as if satisfied that it had done all that could be required in that direction, persistently declined to answer any more questions, but intimated that it had a communication to make. This communication carefully noted and taken down, letter by letter, was as follows:—"I love dear M—— (the christian name of our hostess) very much, although I NE." At this point our hostess, remembering, as she informed us, that her brother had been an irregular correspondent, suggested "never wrote." "No." "Perhaps the spirit will proceed," said the director. "Having 'N E' of the last word, we shall be

glad to receive the next letter." The interrupted sentence was resumed—"glected her when I was"—"Alive?" somebody suggested. "No." "Living?" "No." A rap clear and distinct, and strangely suggestive of annoyance being experienced by the spirit at the interruption of its communication. The director repeated the sentence as far as it had gone, and it was at once continued by the raps—"on earth. She ought to have had A L"—"A letter," suggested the hostess, her mind evidently dwelling on her brother's shortcomings as a correspondent. "No." The next letter rapped at was "L." "We already have L" said the director. "The sentence as I have it is, 'I love dear M—— very much, although I neglected her when I was on earth; she ought to have had A L.'" This interruption produced a series of sharp and petulant raps from the spirit, as if it were calling the speaker to order. "Then the spirit means double 'L,' and the sentence runs, 'She ought to have had all.'" "My property" was next spelt out. "It was money. X—— my executor has it." It can be understood that a message of this personal nature thus communicated surprised all present, the hostess in particular, who became agitated, but without losing her presence of mind. While the name (a peculiar one) of the executor was being

rapped out in a clear and decisive manner, letter by letter, she evidently strove to recal it to her memory, and in so doing hit upon one or two names somewhat similar to, but not quite the same as the name given by the spirit, and which latter name transpired, upon reference to certain letters in the possession of the hostess, to be the correct one. The following conversation then took place with the spirit, the host himself putting the questions:—"Why have you made this communication to us?" "As a proof of spiritual existence, and a token of my love for M——." "Do you wish any steps to be taken to recover the money?" "No; money does not give happiness." "Are you angry with X—— for what he has done?" "Animosity does not exist in spirit-land." The spirit now intimated to us that he was about to depart, and bade us good night in the usual manner, by a series of raps, loud at first, and gradually dying away into the distance.

- 40.—Your Committee have since ascertained that Henry K—— resided abroad at the place named to us, several years previously to his death, and that shortly after that event happened, Mr. X——, his executor, wrote to the trustees of certain funded property in England forming part of the estate of the deceased, requesting them to send him a portion thereof to enable him to pay certain liabilities, and author-

izing them to pay the balance to our hostess (then Miss ——) who was the residuary legatee, and who received the same, but nothing beyond; the statements of Mr. X—— upon the subject of the liabilities referred to passing unchallenged, and no account whatever having been rendered by him of his executorship. Such being the facts of the case, your Committee inquired whether any doubts had ever arisen in the minds of the lady or her husband as to the trustworthiness of Mr. X——; but they have been informed that so far from having any suspicion upon the subject, the lady was at the time so impressed with the honourable conduct of the gentleman referred to (whom, it appears, she never saw, and from whom she has not heard since), that she transmitted to him when the matter was settled a sum of money (above £50) wherewith to purchase on her behalf some acceptable article as a present from her to his wife and family. We are also assured by the host that when he first became acquainted with his wife, and she occasionally spoke of Mr. X——, she always did so with great respect, and that nothing whatever had transpired down to the time of the *séance* to cause her to alter her opinion; that with regard to himself he had been perfectly passive upon the subject throughout, and had long since forgotten the fact that such a person as



Mr. X—— had been in existence; that he had never, in any way, troubled himself about or investigated the position of his wife under her brother's will, the deceased having lived and died on the other side of the globe, and the whole matter having been entirely closed some considerable time previous to the marriage; and that it was only since the communication in question had been made that he had perused certain letters which were in his wife's possession, and which had not been looked at for many years, and ascertained from them the facts stated in this clause.

- 41.—At another *séance* held in the evening of the 2nd July last, six persons were present, four of whom were members of your Committee. During a considerable period no manifestation of any phenomena took place, and it was only after a long interval, and when one of the party had left, that some raps came of a character different to any we had previously heard. We several times asked this spirit whether it would tell us its name, and received in reply two dull thuds from the table, and it was only after much perseverance that we at last obtained an affirmative answer, followed up by heavy lumpish raps at the following letters. “J E M C L A R K E.” “Would Jem Clarke tell us why he has visited us?” we asked. “No.” “Would he make any communication to us?”



“No.” “Would he answer any questions?”  
“Doubtful.” We were discussing the question we should next put, when the lady in whose house we were assembled, exclaimed “Clarke! Clarke! why, that is the name of my housemaid, who is about to leave me. Perhaps the spirit is some relative of hers.” Three thuds from the table. “Have you come to see her?” “Yes.” “She appears unhappy. Do you know why she is going away?” No response. “Are you her guardian spirit?” “Yes.” “Perhaps an ancestor of hers?” Three more thuds, given as if with difficulty, and Mr. James Clarke had evidently left us.

42.—Before concluding this our Report, we deem it to be right to state for your information that when we commenced our investigation your Committee consisted of three members only, all of whom were totally unacquainted with the phenomena except by rumour, and that a fourth member was subsequently added who had had a previous acquaintance with the subject, but who did not join our party until the last of our successful meetings in May.

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*SUB-COMMITTEE No. 3.*

It was proposed and arranged by your Sub-committee that its members should meet regularly and

punctually from time to time, and try by the commonly-prescribed forms to educe what is called "medium power" from amongst themselves, or their intimate friends, who might be invited to attend with them.

It was determined that any unusual occurrence which might take place under such conditions should be thoroughly examined and tested, and the result carefully noted.

A primary condition of any possible success from this plan, so your Sub-committee were informed, was, that all the members should continue to attend a certain number of meetings with regularity. But this was found to be impracticable, chiefly in consequence of the locality chosen for the meetings being so far from the homes of a majority of the members. From this circumstance but ten meetings were held, and the results obtained were of less importance than were some of those which other Sub-committees, more favourably placed, have had opportunities of witnessing. Our members, however, have all had, at various times, the privilege of attending with one or more of the other Sub-committees, and have thus been placed in a position to form larger and more accurate opinions than could have been drawn from such elements merely as were obtained in the experiments of this Sub-committee.

The visitors who attended our meetings, on all occasions but one which is specified in the minutes, were well-known to one or more of our members.

Two were gentlemen and three ladies. Of the gentlemen, one is a clergyman of the Church of England, the other is a civil engineer. Each attended on two occasions. The ladies are near relatives of two of the members of the Committee.

We have therefore good grounds for assuming that everything which has been described as occurring took place in the presence of ladies and gentlemen of honest purposes, whose conduct throughout the experiments was guided by the most perfect good faith.

Owing, probably, to the small number of our sittings, the development of our "mediumistic" power did not proceed so far as to enable us to witness here such plain unquestionable evidence of the presence of strange forces as has been manifest to the members of some of the other Sub-committees—as in the movements of heavy tables repeatedly without contact of any kind. But we have made careful experiments in order to distinguish between the forces applied by such contact as was found to be necessary, and that which would be required to produce some of the actual movements witnessed, and we find that though the pressure exerted by a man's hands, as laid on the table at these *séances*, varies with every movement or change of position, and according to the proportion of arm-weight bearing on it—there are tolerably well-defined limits at which, in the various attitudes, conscious pressure or muscular effort begins. Taking a very extreme

and unusual case, in order to give the utmost extent of allowance for unconscious pressure, we will suppose that from fatigue or indolence a person assumes a listless attitude, sitting forward on the seat of his chair, and leaning heavily against the back of it, his hands and arms stretched nearly horizontally forward, and resting on the table to about the middle of the forearm, the muscles of the back and shoulders being entirely relaxed. The "dead-weight" thus thrown on the table will be nearly eight pounds. In this attitude, probably, the largest amount of involuntary force is applied. If these conditions be modified merely by sitting more upright, so that the arms are bent at the elbows to about right angles, the pressure then becomes about 4 to 5 lbs. If the muscles of the back and shoulders are kept in a certain degree of tension, and the arms drawn backwards until the wrists and hands only rest freely on the table, the pressure then becomes about 2 lbs. This is the attitude most commonly assumed, so that a pressure of 2 lbs. may be taken as the usual amount of force exerted by an attentive sitter, though, when some of the more active "manifestations" are in progress, the pressure which each person exerts generally ranges downwards from this to less than an ounce, or to the lightest touch possible.

These data apply to a man of ordinary size and weight. They will apply equally, or nearly so, to the force which a woman exerts under similar con-



ditions, if one third be deducted in all cases. Practically they give a sufficiently exact indication of the amount of force which may be unconsciously exerted in various ways by persons engaged in these *séances*.

By careful experiments with the smaller of the tables,\* we have found that the force necessary to tilt it when applied at the most favourable angle, viz.,  $90^{\circ}$  to the legs, is nearly twenty-one and a-half pounds. But in applying the force in this direction, some obstruction must be placed on the floor against the legs, otherwise it will slide and not tilt at all at this angle.

Even when the force is applied at  $45^{\circ}$  the tendency is to slide rather than to tilt or cant, to ensure which the angle must not much exceed  $30^{\circ}$ , at which the pressure necessary is about  $43\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. As will be seen, the force necessary to tilt it from one end is very much greater.

A man of ordinary strength standing at one side of the table, with his hands having the necessary cohesion with the smooth surface of the top, finds he can *push* it along the floor with tolerable ease. To drag it towards him is not so easy, and he finds great difficulty in moving it from right to left in the direction of its length. With his hands placed in a similar manner on the top surface at one end, he cannot on the smooth floor tilt up the opposite end.

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\* See Minutes, Sub-committee No. 3.



It was found that two men could do this; but the hand of a third laid lightly on the opposite end, made it impossible even for two to produce this tilting endwise. In the easiest of these imitative movements, if three other persons occupy the three remaining sides of the table as in the actual *séance*, the additional weight, though really very small, is so greatly multiplied by leverage that it is impossible for the one experimenter to produce some of the movements without great and evident exertion, whilst others he cannot do at all.

Yet, usually, during the *séances* this table moved in all directions—from side to side—from end to end—and round and round—over a large room with great ease and smooth regularity, as well as with a kind of rushing speed—halting suddenly, and as suddenly starting off again. The movements were often made with an ease and facility which indicated a large reserve of unexpended force. At other times, on the contrary, they were so weak as to be scarcely discernible.

In some of the movements of this table—which is without castors—a rattling sound was made as though its legs were rapidly “making and breaking contact” with the floor. An opinion was expressed that this was probably caused by unconscious pressure from the “mediums;” but our subsequent experiments showed that when a downward pushing pressure was applied by the hands, the table glided along noiselessly, and the rattling sound could be

exactly imitated when we lifted a considerable portion of the weight off the floor, and so dragged the table along, thus indicating that the forces which in the “*séance*” produced the noisy movements in question must have been applied *upwards* and *forwards*, whilst it was evident that the only forces which could have been applied by the “mediums” must have been directed *downwards* and *forwards*.

Probably the strongest exhibition of force through this table occurred when two ladies were sitting—one at one side, the other at one end, and a gentleman at the other end, the side opposite the first lady being vacant, except that Mr. Meyers sat there to watch the proceedings. Some of the tilts under these circumstances were very strong—even violent—as though, when one side had been tilted up to a certain height, a powerful spring became released, and the descent was so sharp, strong and sudden, that it shook the strong floor of the room, and could be heard all over and outside the house.

Mr. Meyers, in his Report, says:—“I noticed that the table invariably tilted towards No. 2, at times with so much force, that, in the position in which I was sitting, I was unable to prevent it rising, though I succeeded in modifying the vigour of the tilts.”—*Vide* p. 394.

The side No. 2 was occupied by one of the ladies. Mr. Meyers was seated at the opposite side.

As an example of the force exerted through the larger loo table, we may refer to the minutes of

April 8th. It would be difficult to estimate accurately the effort required to produce the rapid whirling movements described there. To cant up this table—which weighs more than 90 lbs.—until its top touches the floor, and it remains resting partly on the outer rim of this, and on the triangular foot-base, requires a considerable lift; but to raise it just beyond this point, and until it is poised on the rim alone—as was twice done on the evening referred to—requires on the smooth floor at the largest practicable angle, to prevent sliding—a force of about 85lbs.; though at right angles, and precaution taken to prevent sliding, 42 lbs. is sufficient.

In the imitative experiment it was found that, besides actual lifting force, a considerable force as well as great care, was necessary to preserve the balance on one point of the rim, and to prevent swinging or rolling in its ascent; but in the actual *séance* no swaying or tendency to lose balance was at any time felt.

To slide this table—which is on castors—takes a force of from 15 to 20 lbs., according to the *set* of the castors, or slight inequalities in the floor.

None of the experimenters were conscious of contributing in any appreciable degree, in the production of the force thus shown to be necessary to the effects witnessed. All hands being lightly kept on the top of the table throughout the movements.

Besides the evidence thus afforded of the presence of this not generally recognised force, we believe we

have had in these experiments evidence of an intelligence directing it—as in moving by request in a particular direction—tilting a certain number of times as required—and by tilts or taps spelling out words and sentences addressed to those present.

It will be observed that it was only when certain persons were present that any evidence of this force and intelligence was presented. Two friends were particularly noticed as indispensable. These were a clergyman and the wife of another clergyman, both of the Church of England.

The room in which we held our meetings has a smooth polished floor, and is 28 feet long by 22 feet wide.

These minute details we have felt to be necessary, in order that the Committee might be made as fully acquainted as possible with all the conditions and circumstances connected with the production of the occurrences described in the Minutes.—*Vide* p. 393.

In concluding our Report, we desire to express to the Committee our unanimous conviction that the phenomena we have witnessed in the course of these investigations, though comparatively unimportant, *do* nevertheless raise some most important questions in-science and philosophy, and deserve the fullest examination by capable and independent thinkers.

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SUB-COMMITTEE, No. 4.

Nothing occurred in presence of this Sub-committee worth recording.



## SUB-COMMITTEE No. 5.

The Committee appointed to meet Mr. Home for the purpose of investigating the alleged Spiritual phenomena produced through his agency, report thereon as follows:—

The first *séance* was held on the 2nd April, 1869. The entire Committee, consisting of Dr. Edmunds, Messrs. Bergheim, Bradlaugh, Dyte and Gannon, were present, as were also Lord Adare, the Master of (now Lord) Lindsay, General B—— and Mr. Jencken. Previous to the formation of the circle, Mr. Home begged permission to change his dress, for the purpose of demonstrating that he had no machinery of any kind concealed about his person. This was accordingly accomplished in the presence of Dr. Edmunds and Mr. Bergheim, the former reporting to the Committee, on his return, that Mr. Home possessed an extremely muscular and elastic frame. The *séance* was then held in the dining-room; a table of more than ordinary solidity and weight being used. At the request of Mr. Home, Mrs. Edmunds consented to assist at the *séances*, and attended all the subsequent meetings.

The *séance* occupied two hours and twenty minutes, and the manifestations were of the most trifling character, consisting of a few raps and slight movements of the table. The motion was of the usual swaying, irregular kind, and the raps were very feeble.

General B—— was slightly affected with convulsive



movements in his right arm, which he declared to be beyond the control of his will. A pencil was handed to him, and his hand wrote some irregular characters which could not be deciphered by any one present. At the close of the *séance*, and after the departure of Mr. Home and the visitors, Dr. Edmunds demonstrated that the dining-table, although large and massive, could be easily moved by slight muscular exertion.

On the 9th April the investigation was resumed, Mr. Home being again accompanied by Lord Adare and the Master of Lindsay. All the members of the Committee, with the exception of Dr. Edmunds, were present. Within half-an-hour after the commencement of the *séance*, a few slight raps were heard which seemed to come from the spot where Mr. Home was sitting. Messrs. Bradlaugh and Dyte, were under the impression that they proceeded from the leg of the table, and at the request of Mr. Home, the former gentleman seated himself on the floor to guard against the possibility of fraud. The table now moved slightly, in the same manner as before, and the raps continued; Mr. Bradlaugh asserting that they came from the leg of the table, and Messrs. Bergheim, Home and Jencken maintaining that they were produced upon its surface. In the course of the evening, Mr. Home seemed slightly affected; he started, exclaimed "ah!" and covered his face with his hands. A few minutes afterwards the Master of Lindsay stated that he was unable to move his left

arm, and that the muscles were quite rigid. It was examined by Mr. Dyte, but that gentleman was unable to discover any abnormal symptoms. The raps continued at intervals; but, although the sitting was prolonged until a quarter past ten o'clock, no further phenomena of any importance were observed.

On Friday, the 16th, Mr. Home again met the Committee, accompanied by the Master of Lindsay and Lord Adare. The "circle" was formed at half-past eight o'clock, and the raps and movements of the table were again repeated. The raps were very feeble, and resembled the sounds produced by the tapping of a finger-nail on the table. In reference to the movements, Dr. Edmunds explained that the table moved with remarkable ease on its castors, and could be pushed from its position by the exertion of a very slight force.

The fourth and last *séance* of the Committee afforded only the most feeble phenomena, and owing to the subsequent illness of Mr. Home, the investigation was not revived. During the inquiry, Mr. Home afforded every facility for examination, and appeared to be anxious to further the object which the Committee had in view. It is almost unnecessary to add that nothing occurred at any of the meetings which could be attributed to supernatural causes. The members had fully expected that they would have witnessed some of the alleged extraordinary levitations of Mr. Home, but he explained at the opening of the inquiry that the phenomena

produced through his agency were of uncertain manifestation and that he had no power whatever to produce them at will.

The *séances* were held in a fully lighted room.

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*SUB-COMMITTEE No. 6.*

This Committee met four times, but failed to obtain any phenomena that deserve to be recorded. On one occasion, a lady visitor brought with her two little girls aged apparently about eight and ten years respectively, whom she declared to be mediums. The children were placed at a small chess-table, which they proceeded deliberately to rock to and fro, to their own intense delight, and to the amusement of the company.

At no other meeting was there even the pretence of any spiritual phenomena.

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*Pages from 51 to 107 contain personal opinions of individual members of the Committee, and may be found in the original edition, published by Longmans and Co., price 15s.*

# MINUTES

## OF

# THE COMMITTEE.

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TUESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY, 1869.

This being the first meeting of the Committee, the business was chiefly preliminary. Dr. Edmunds was elected Chairman, and Mr. G. W. Bennett, Secretary. The letters from Professor Huxley and Mr. George Henry Lewes, signifying the inability of these gentlemen to attend the inquiry, were read to the Committee; and a Sub-committee was appointed to investigate the phenomena alleged to be produced in the presence of Mr. Home. It was resolved that a letter should be sent to the Daily Press, announcing the formation of the Committee, and requesting the co-operation of believers in Spiritualism.

The following is a copy of the letter that was actually sent:—

*To the Editor of the —.*

“Sir,—Will you allow me, through the medium of your paper, to inform those of your readers who are interested in the above question, that a committee has been appointed by the Council of the London Dialectical Society for the purpose of instituting a thorough and searching inquiry into the so-called Spiritual manifestations, with a view of obtaining a satisfactory elucidation of the phenomena.

“As the Committee have undertaken this task solely in the interests of science and free inquiry, it is hoped that many of the



believers in Spiritualism will recognise the advantages to be derived from a careful and honest investigation of the subject; and will be willing, either by personal attendance at the *séances*, or by forwarding any experiences or suggestions of their own, to assist the Committee in arriving at a sound and just conclusion.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"G. WHEATLEY BENNETT, Hon. Sec.

"32A, George Street, Hanover Square, W."

TUESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

This evening was devoted to the reading of correspondence, and to the appointment of Sub-committees for the purpose of practical investigation. The correspondence and the reports of the Sub-committees are given elsewhere.

TUESDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

The letters received since the last meeting, having been read by the Hon. Secretary, the Chairman at the suggestion of Dr. Cameron, requested Mrs. Hardinge, who was present, to make a short statement to the Committee. Mrs. Hardinge, complied with this request as follows :—She commenced by warning the Committee that the statement she was about to make would be a somewhat long one; she would however promise, at least, to be very candid. She understood that the Committee fully intended to investigate the subject publicly, and would be prepared to make a public report of the results of their investigation. She was of opinion that if the inquiry were properly conducted, they could come to but one conclusion, namely, a conviction of the reality and spirituality of the phenomena in question. There were, however, some serious difficulties in their way, not the least of which was the comparative scarceness in England of well-developed mediums. In the United States, where she had lived for many years, there was scarcely a single

town where spiritual circles had not been formed ; and the mediums might be reckoned by thousands. In London, though she knew several non-professional, she knew but two professional mediums. The services of these, however, might perhaps be enlisted on behalf of the Committee.

Her knowledge of the phenomena and character of Spiritualism had been derived partly from the statements of mediums and spirits, and partly from her own personal observation. The facts were simply these : For the last 21\* years spirits—disembodied men and women—had been endeavouring to communicate with their friends on earth, through the agency of what she might call “vital magnetism.” The spirits state that the principal difficulties they have had to encounter have arisen mainly from two causes: 1. The subtle and ill-understood nature of the magnetic fluid used to produce the phenomena. 2. The materialistic tendencies of the age, which operated to retard investigation and neutralize the demonstrations. As in every other science, it was absolutely necessary that the conditions requisite for the production of spiritual phenomena should be carefully studied and implicitly complied with: and until we were better acquainted with these conditions, we must be prepared for many disappointments. But it had sometimes been asked, “Why do not the spirits themselves state the conditions?” The reason was that there was so little analogy between material and spiritual laws, that it was extremely difficult to establish a scientific system of communion; and it was almost impossible to explain the many and various conditions under which the phenomena occurred. It appeared, however, that the communication was established somewhat on the principle of a galvanic battery, requiring for its operation *three* elements, namely:—(1). A person called a medium. (2). A spirit in magnetic *rapport* with the medium. (3). A certain condition of the atmosphere in which to produce the manifestations. It was believed that there were two kinds or qualities of vital mag-

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\* The 31st March, 1869, was the 21st anniversary of the Rochester rappings, which first, in modern times, drew attention to the subject of Spiritualism.

netism which might be termed positive and negative. The medium must be possessed of an excess of the vital fluid of a negative quality; the medium spirits (for there were medium and non-medium spirits as well as men) must give off an excess of vital magnetism of a positive quality; so that the medium and the spirit always stand related to each other as negative and positive; the spirit being always positive in order to be able to produce phenomena. Thus the two stand in relation to each other as the copper and zinc in a galvanic battery, whilst the atmosphere represents the solution.

The varieties of mediumship were very numerous, and even in the same mediums the power was liable to constant change. (1). Changes of the atmosphere and of climate, for instance, produced corresponding fluctuations in the medium power. Extremes of heat and cold were favourable to the manifestations; thus the inhabitants of arctic and tropic regions, as well as those who dwell in mountainous districts, were frequently observed to manifest medium power in a remarkable degree. Mrs. Hardinge herself had found her own medium powers considerably diminished in force since quitting America, and so liable to influence from change of scene and climate, that a visit to Scotland would have the effect of increasing them again. Snowy weather or thunder and lightning afforded favourable conditions; moist and damp weather invariably the contrary.

(2). The human magnetisms composing the spirit circle, above all other elements, exert the most considerable influence on the character of the manifestations; thus, a strongly antagonistic state of mind in any one of those forming the circle would probably, by developing a positive influence towards the spirit, neutralize the manifestation.

Mrs. Hardinge then proceeded to state some of her own personal experience. She said that for a long time she was sceptical of, and even hostile to the spiritual faith, notwithstanding that she had always possessed certain occult powers herself. She was induced to attend one of the *séances* of Miss Kate Fox; the raps occurred, but the questions put by the believers present were framed accord-

ing to so unscientific a method, and characterized by so great a want of precision and exactness that she could not help exclaiming, "Surely, this is all humbug and absurdity;" when, in this disposition of mind, she sat down to the table herself, the raps instantly ceased, and she retired from the *séance* even more persuaded of the imposture than before.

Her next *séance* was with Mr. Conklin, of New York; the result was exactly the same. At last she attended a *séance* with a medium who appeared to be entirely unaffected by the disposition of those present. The manifestations were very remarkable, and evidently denoted the presence of a conscious intelligence; in two hours she was thoroughly persuaded of the existence of some occult, invisible and intelligent agency, and though it was only after many months of persevering research that she became convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, her scepticism was shaken from that *séance*.

Professor Hare's experiences were somewhat similar; he had a strong opinion that the raps were produced by muscular action, and this impression served to neutralize the spirit power; for as soon as he sat down in a spirit circle, the raps, hitherto very loud, would immediately cease. He at last succeeded in divesting himself of this spirit of prejudice, after which the manifestations were in no degree interrupted by his presence.

Any strong emotion, Mrs. Hardinge considered, was also detrimental to the exercise of spiritual power. Mr. Conklin, of whom she had previously spoken, was invited to attend a number of *séances* at Washington with some five or six gentlemen, who were evidently desirous not to be known. The manifestations were very marked and decisive, until Mr. Conklin discovered that one of the gentlemen present was no other than President Lincoln; when his anxiety and surprise became so great as entirely to stop the manifestations, which were not again renewed till a mutual explanation had restored him to his normal state of mind. Thus, it would seem, that any very strong emotion had also the effect of rendering the magnetism positive, and neutralising the action of the spirits.



Doubtless, there were many other conditions which had not yet been discovered ; thus Judge Parker, of Massachusetts, though an enthusiastic believer in Spiritualism, brought to the spirit circle such a peculiar quality of magnetism as invariably to suspend the manifestations wherever he appeared. This continued until a short time before his death, when some change took place in his physical system, and the phenomena were produced in his presence with perfect freedom.

There was another difficulty in the way of such an investigation as was proposed by the Committee ; viz., the very fact of their being a Committee. Associated bodies who had entered upon this inquiry had almost invariably failed ; in fact, she knew of but one society, the New York Young Men's Christian Association, that had been successful. The reasons of their failure, she considered, were two : (1.) Their sense of responsibility, which, by producing positive magnetism, neutralised spiritual influence. (2.) The materialistic training of scientists ; the effect of a long-continued course of scientific study being to impel the belief that nothing can be true which may not be subjected to material tests, and measured by material gauges. These, Mrs. Hardinge proceeded to say, were not always applicable to spiritual phenomena ; she instanced the phenomena of clairvoyance and clairsaudience, in which the material notions of time and space appeared to be entirely set at naught. The laws of optics and acoustics offered no explanation for the phenomena of Spiritualism ; the formulæ of science, valuable as they were in the investigation of the laws of matter, were generally unavailable for an inquiry into the character of Spiritualism. The Committee must carefully guard itself against attempting to dictate to Nature, and should rather accept the conditions as dictated by Nature.

Mrs. Hardinge, in conclusion, advised the Committee to appoint a Sub-committee of about twelve members, who should be of receptive inquiring dispositions. She herself would be glad to indicate those who would be most suitable. (1.) Let them hold a series of *séances* with the various mediums obtainable, through a period of not less



than three months, each member preparing a separate report, and not comparing notes with the rest, until the end of the whole series. (2.) Let them also adopt the still better plan of forming private circles at home with their own friends, and holding *séances* independently of each other; if they will carry out these two suggestions, they cannot fail to be convinced that the phenomena are genuine, and the results of spiritual influence.

She would undertake to say that no seven persons would hold meetings regularly together without getting some decided manifestations. She considered that about one in every seven persons was possessed of medium power, and that the rest might develop it.

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TUESDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

The correspondence having been disposed of, Mrs. Hardinge made some further remarks in continuation of her statement of the preceding week, and concluded by expressing her willingness to reply to any questions that might be put to her by members of the Committee. The following questions were then asked and answered:—

I. *By* Mr. DYTE. “Can Mrs. Hardinge give us any suggestions as to the best means of detecting imposture on the part of the mediums?”

Mrs. Hardinge was unable to give any specific information on that point.

II. “Would manifestations probably appear at a *séance* of practical spiritualists, conducted before twenty or thirty spectators sitting apart from them, and, if necessary, in silence?”

*Ans.* “I think not.”

III. *By* Mr. BENNETT. “Does the experience of Mrs. Hardinge tend to confirm the statement of Lord Lytton that “spiritual manifestations” are more remarkable in proportion to the amount of electricity in the atmosphere?”

*Ans.* “Invariably.”

IV. “Can Mrs. Hardinge refer the Committee to any well-

authenticated instances of spirit communications having been made, which neither the medium herself, nor any other person present, could possibly know, independently of spiritual influence?

*Ans.* "There are a large number of such cases given in Allan Putnam's 'Magic and Witchcraft,' and Professor Hare's 'Spiritualism scientifically demonstrated?'"

V. *By* Mr. MEYERS. "Is it a fact that spirit arms and hands have been seen and felt?"

Mrs. Hardinge had herself seen a spirit hand and had felt it laid within her own. Spirits became visible by crystallising, as it were, the magnetic and other emanations from those present, around their own invisible spirit forms.

VI. *By* Mr. GANNON. "What is vital magnetism, and by what scientific tests has it been proved that human beings generated such a force?"

Mrs. Hardinge considered that science was scarcely sufficiently advanced to enable her to answer that question fully.

VII. *By* Mr. H. G. ATKINSON. "Why do you conclude that clairvoyance is essentially of a different character from every other phenomenon in nature—for instance, from the ordinary formative principle and the ordinary facts of mind and instinct?"

*Ans.* "Because it seems to annihilate what in other branches of knowledge are absolutely necessary conditions of thought, the notions of time and space."

A vote of thanks to Mrs. Hardinge closed the proceedings for the evening.

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TUESDAY, 13TH APRIL, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

Mr. H. D. Jencken, Barrister-at-law, M.R.I., read the following paper on "Spiritualism, its Phenomena, and the Laws that Regulate its Origin":—

"In dealing with the question of Spiritualism we have to combat several most difficult objections raised by those who oppose our views. Firstly, the facts are denied, and the dreadfully tedious pro-

ness of establishing these by instances, overburdens the lecturer until both his strength and the patience of the audience become exhausted. Secondly, where the facts are even allowed, the *cui bono* is thrust forward with unhesitating urgency, and the lecturer finds himself driven upon ground quite foreign to a scientific inquiry. If the facts exist, I care little for the *cui bono*; if true as a fact, depend on it, they have some use allowed them. I, for one, deny the antiquated theory, that whatever exists must be manifestly beneficial to us mortals, and for our special good, to warrant its continuance. The facts are present, and there I rest contented; if, however, I am asked to form an opinion, I would suggest that the study of the laws of differently constituted physical states that co-exist with this, to our senses, recognizable reality, is a vast subject for study, which study necessarily leads to the knowledge of profounder, deeper seated truths, and possibly to the more intimate recognition of our future state. I may, assuming this to be my view, urge that the study of Spiritualism has been beneficial to me individually and, I hope, may be so to my fellow-men. But, I repeat, I do not take this stand, my ground is one of fact and scientific inquiry. And to these I confine myself.

"I will not this evening tax your patience with an account of the history of the progress of Spiritualism from the days of the celebrated Rochester rappings, to the present hour; nor with a narrative of the spiritual teachings of the past; these, you will find recorded in William Howitt's excellent work on the History of the Supernatural; in De Morgan's work 'From Matter to Spirit,' or Spicer's book, entitled, 'Sight and Sounds,' the latter furnishing an account of the origin of the present movement. For those who require further information, I would recommend the works of Judge Edmonds, G. T. Dexter, Governor Talmadge, A. J. Davis, M. Hornung, late secretary of the Berlin Magnetic Association, or MM. Dupotet, Puységur, Deleuze, Billot, Kardec; all of which the student may consult with profit, and more especially the valuable work of Professor Hare. Suffice it then if I tell you, that upwards of 500 works have been published by different authors

upon Spiritualism and its phenomena, and that periodicals on the subject are being published in all known languages.

“ I repeat, I will not deal with these historical data, but propose to confine myself to an examination of the phenomena ; and having done this, will, with I avow, great diffidence on my part, state my own views. And thus premising I will give you a statement of facts ; in rendering these, I will endeavour to classify spiritual phenomena into different groups ; and firstly, the purely *physical phenomena*, such as the movement and raising *ponderable bodies* without visible contact, and to which class the *levitations* of the body of the medium belong. These levitations you will find recorded as having occurred as far back as the year 1347 :—(see *Spiritual Magazine*, November, 1868)—and another instance is cited as having taken place, in the year 1697. On the latter occasion, a certain Margaret Rule is described as having been raised to the ceiling of her room ; and Goethe refers to the wonderful fact of levitation in his life of Phillipinari. The levitations of Mr. Home are so well known, that I need not more than allude to them—upwards of one hundred levitations have taken place during his lifetime, of which perhaps the most remarkable was the carrying of his body out of one window of the third floor, at Ashley House, into an adjoining window ; and the lifting of his body raised 3 or 4 feet off the ground at Adare Manor for 20 or 30 yards. As regards the lifting of heavy objects, these I can testify to myself ; I have seen the semi-grand at my house raised horizontally 18 inches off the ground, and kept suspended in space two or three minutes. I have also witnessed a square table being lifted one foot off the ground, no one touching or near to it, at the time, a friend present seated on the carpet and watching the phenomena all the time. I have also seen a table lifted clear over head, 6 feet off the ground ; but what may appear more remarkable, I have witnessed an accordion suspended in space for 10 or 20 minutes, and played by an invisible agency. But I need not multiply the instances of the moving and carrying of bodies without visible contact, these I hold may be conceded as established facts.



“THE SECOND group of phenomena is that of the producing of Raps, or Knocks, to which no doubt the tradition of the Poltergeist owes its origin. These telegraphic signs, for such in truth they are, need no confirmation on my part; they are so common, that thousands even in this town have heard them, and have also received messages spelt out by these means:—The well-known alphabetical method being usually employed, I have known messages spelt out by the tilting of a semi-grand piano at my own house, accompanied by loud raps, no one at the time being in contact, or within several feet of the instrument. I have heard sentences spelt out by the strings of the piano being struck by invisible agencies.

“THE THIRD group of phenomena includes the uttering of words, sentences, *sounding of music, singing*, and the producing of sounds in *imitation of birds*; and these sounds produced without any visible agencies being present. The most remarkable instance of this kind I ever witnessed was at Great Malvern, at the house of Dr. Gully, on which occasion I heard, as far as I could make out, three voices chanting a hymn, accompanied by music played on an accordion suspended in space, eight or nine feet off the ground.

“At the passing away of an old servant of our household, a strain of solemn music, at about four in the morning, was, by the nurse and servants, heard in the room of the dying woman; the music lasting fully twenty minutes.

“THE FOURTH group of phenomena includes playing on *musical instruments*, the *drawing of flowers, figures*, and *writing*, by direct spiritual unseen *agency*. Of these facts innumerable instances are on record, and I mention the books of Mr. B. Coleman, and Baron Guldenstube as valuable publications upon this phase of spiritual phenomena. Instances have since multiplied beyond number, and within the last few days, at Mr. Child's, I am informed drawings have been made by invisible agencies.

“I have thus far given an account of the more usual phenomena, and will now proceed to describe others not less interesting, but of rarer occurrence—and firstly, the FIRE TEST. I have myself wit-



nessed the Fire test many times. I have seen Lord Adare hold in the palm of his hand a burning live coal, which Mr. Home had placed there, so hot, that the mere momentary contact with my finger caused a burn. At Mr. S. C. Hall's a large lump of burning coal was placed on his head by Mr. Home; and only within these last few days, a metal bell, heated to redness in the fire, was placed on a lady's hand without causing injury. At Mrs. Henning's house, Norwood, I have seen Mr. Home place his face into the flames of the grate, the flame points penetrating through his hair without causing injury. Respecting these truly marvellous Fire tests, I refer to the monthly journal 'Human Nature,' and to the 'Spiritual Magazine' (1868, November—December).

"The next class of phenomena are those extraordinary elongations of the medium's body, of which we read in the 'History of the Mystics,' but until witnessed could scarcely be credited. It has been my good fortune to witness the elongation and shortening of Mr. Home's person many times, and at Mr. S. C. Hall's, about three months ago, Mr. Home and a Miss Bertolacci were simultaneously elongated. The elongation usually takes place from the hip, a span wide, and on one occasion I measured an extreme elongation of the body of fully EIGHT inches. The shortening of the body is equally marvellous. I have witnessed Mr. Home shrinking down to about five feet: again, as described in 'Human Nature,' March, '69, I have measured the expansion and contraction of the hand, arm, and leg. Fortunately these expansions and contractions have been witnessed by fifty people at the very least, and are now placed beyond doubt.

"I will pass over the numerous phenomena of holding fluids in space, without vessels to contain them; extracting liquids from bottles—which I have witnessed; nor will I burden you with a description of the perfuming of water, or extracting the scent from flowers; or the alcohol from spirits of wine; but will pass to the appearance of *hands*, *arms*, and *spirit forms*, wholly or in part developed. Fortunately within the last few months instances have repeated themselves, so that I could name a score of wit-

nesses, within the circle of my own friends, who have seen spirit forms or appearances. As these facts go far towards establishing the truth of spiritualistic phenomena, I will with your permission dwell more upon these manifestations.

“SPIRIT HANDS are usually luminous, and appear and re-appear all but instantaneously. I have once been enabled to submit a spirit hand to pressure. The temperature was, as far as I could judge, the same as that of the room, and the spirit hand felt soft, velvety ; dissolving slowly under the greatest amount of pressure to which I could submit it. I have, however, been informed by friends that they have seen spirit hands break a stout piece of plank in two, and that the temperature of the hands, tested by a delicate thermometer, was usually equal to that of the room.

“SPIRIT FORMS.—They usually appear with the head and bust developed and very luminous, the outline rarely well defined, and generally the form seems to float, rather than to walk. These appearances, however, present very different aspects at different times. I have often urged upon my friends to get some facts to guide in ascertaining the physical property or character of these forms. At a friend's house, some short time ago, the spirit form cast a shadow and slightly obscured the light of the gas-burner : again, at Ashley House, Capt. Smith and others present, the form appeared quite opaque and solid. Only a few weeks ago, at Mr. S. C. Hall's, a spirit form, very luminous in appearance, was seen, but the outline ill-defined. The form remained visible for three or four minutes, and sufficiently long for two of those present to make a drawing of the same. I have seen a spirit form at a *séance* held at Dr. Gully's, September, 1867. The form appeared luminous—the top rounded off. I could not distinguish the features. The height was middle sized, and the form appeared to me like a luminous column or cloud. On passing to my left, and close to Dr. Gully, I noticed that the luminosity of the figure cast a glow of light upon my friend. The form, as it stood next to me, spoke several words, audible to all, and then walked to the fireplace at the end of the room ; the floor vibrating again to the heavy footstep.

“ On the evening I first attended a *séance* at the Dialectical, Mr. Home and some friends met later on at Ashley House; on this occasion I had more opportunity of investigating the phenomena of spiritual appearance. A figure draped, in what appeared like a transparent loose gauze, or veil, passed to and fro imaged on the wall, which had become luminous; the figures appeared to stand out in ill-defined relief. This phenomenon repeated itself over and over again, the figure disappearing whenever those present became too positive; of this Mr. Home, who was in a trance the whole time, warned us. When I say too positive, I mean ‘too intent.’ A figure also developed itself next to and above Mr. Home, as he stood half covered by the curtains against the light of the window; but the outline was so indistinct I could not well discern its form. These appearances, or spiritual forms, are far more usually witnessed at *séances* than is ordinarily supposed, and I could instance many more cases equally marked and characteristic as those related; for instance, the boy of Mrs. Cox, who passed away some few months ago, was seen by Lord Adare, and spoke to him. The housekeeper at Ashley House has seen spirit forms at Ashley House, and recognised the face and the voice. At my house, the Master of Lindsay observed the spirit form of Mr. Home’s late wife, clearly defined; and what is more remarkable, the Master of Lindsay tells me that the figure appeared to him in profile; whilst Mr. Home noticed that the figure stood in full *enface* as it bent over his bed.

“ But I must not multiply instances. The inward seeing of spirit forms which only mediums or seers have the power, is of great interest, and opens a wide field for inquiry. The description of these visions, or as I believe actual seeings, by the inward organ of sight, confirm in a measure, the form and appearance of the spirit forms visible to a number of people, and such as I have already described. The forms seen vary in appearance, though as a rule the seers described them as enveloped in a semi-luminous cloud, the head and shoulders are described as in clear outline; or the figures appear in shadowy outline, though perfectly solid, and to move about at will, but so transparent that objects are seen through



them. The forms vary from a white luminous transparency to a darkish tint of grey or brown. I have seen these shadowy figures, though only very exceptionally, and not under conditions that enabled me to institute a minuter investigation. In all these phenomena, it is of the utmost importance to determine what conditions favour, what conditions interrupt their appearance.

“I have now to treat of the Identity of Spirits, that is, the evidence that the spiritual beings present, either visible or communicating by the telegraphic raps, are those of soul beings—of some one having formerly resided on this earth. Numerous instances are given by different writers, but I prefer mentioning cases within my own knowledge, or those of my immediate friends. In the instance of the spirit form of the boy of Mrs. Cox, the voice and appearance was unmistakably that of the departed child. The spirit form seen by me at Malvern, I recognized by the voice, the words spoken, and the meaning of those words.

“At Mrs. Henning’s house, Norwood, at a *séance* at which Mr. Home was present, a communication was made, recalling an event which occurred at Dr. Elliotson’s, some thirty years ago. It appeared that Mrs. Hennings had attended with a clairvoyant child, Ellen Dawson, at Dr. Elliotson’s, who behaved very abruptly on that occasion. The incident had even escaped Mrs. Henning’s memory and only was recalled to her mind by the mentioning of the scene on that evening by Mr. Home in his trance state, and in which state he personified the late Dr. Elliotson.

“I have now given you data enough to enable you to follow me in the conclusions I have arrived at. I need not remind you that the great physical forces of nature, namely, light, heat, motion, electricity, chemical action, &c., are ascribed to unseen ether waves: a subtile, all-pervading cosmic ether is supposed to fill space, and the mere change of the nature of its vibration producing light, heat, electricity, mechanical motion, &c. I need, also, not remind you that the undulatory theory of Huyghens, of Young, has been combatted by Leonard Euler and Mr. Grove; and a molecular theory substituted, with change of polaric position of the final molecules,



which are supposed to be the ultimate form of matter, but which Grove conceives conducts us to dynamic agencies ; unless we accept Professor Huxley's protoplasm, or primary elementary fluids, for what else are his elements? and give to these an ever continuing permanency.

“ We have thus our great physicists driven to the accepting of theories by which they admit unseen agencies ; and Mr. Grove is quite right when he tells us that ultimately we are obliged to admit a dynamic force in light and its correlates. If time allowed, I would give you all that has been said on this subject. I must to-day content myself by presuming on your forbearance, and repeat with the great thinkers, that the physical forces are only comprehensible as the exponents of dynamic, unseen agencies. This reasoning takes me to ground further advanced in the direction I am pursuing. I ask, what are the causes of these dynamic physical forces ; those great agencies that uphold, in their all-potent grasp, this globe we live on and all other cosmic bodies ? I further ask, whence arise the vital organic powers that set the dead material of Professor Huxley's protoplasm in motion, and create forms of life ? The ephemeral existence of animal life itself induces the question, for what becomes of the vital powers of animals—the soul-beings of men ? their numbers must be reckoned by myriads upon myriads ; it matters not when, but the day of repletion must come ; this ever continuing creation of beings must ultimately require space, for space is, after all, a terminable quantity, and materialists pretend to teach us that the theory of extinction and absorption of soul-beings (with Hegel at their head) after death answers this question.

“ I have no time to combat their views, but I put it to them, whether they admit the permanency of the material ; if they do, this is my case : for, to admit the everlasting presence of the material, and deny that of the cause is a contradiction, self evident on its very face. What, then, will be asked is the view I have ventured to form for myself ? how is the mystery of birth, life and death to be explained ? what is the cause of the action of the

dynamical forces which physicists recognize? how do I explain vital action and those kindred phenomena of mesmerism? what do spiritual phenomena disclose? I will, in as few words as possible, explain to you my theory.

"The material physical world, the cosmic bodies—for the property of light, proves that all solar systems obey one common law of physical force—is sustained by a very few primary, elementary laws, represented by primary, elementary or basic substances.

"Why, I ask with Professor De Morgan, should the Creator have fashioned only 10 or 20 elements out of, say, one million of primary elements, and these few only to be operative? or in other words, am I asking you to admit too much, if I say that it is just possible many other elementary combinations may exist, creating a material state, absolutely independent of the ponderable, visible materiality that surrounds us? That such may be conceived as possible, Mr. Grove tells us in his work, 'Correlation of Physical Forces;' he says:—'Myriads of organised beings may exist imperceptible to our vision, even if we were among them, and we might be equally imperceptible to them' (p. 161). These different primary elementary states are conceivable by merely supposing primary elementary basic substances to exist of a different character to those that constitute the elementary basis of our materiality. Physicists, and I quote from Professor Huxley, will tell you that certain primary basic gaseous substances underlie all formations; that their number may be reduced to *four*. I take their reasoning one step further, and maintain that ultimately only two primary substances will be found to constitute the foundation of all materiality—these two substances constituting a dual state, in obedience to the law of polarity that exists at the base of all creation. The manifold combinations of these two primary basic elementary substances create the material, ponderable, visible world. But matter is only an exponent of a force—a dynamic action of a permanent law. I am borrowing from Faraday, Tyndall, Huxley, for they admit the ether wave in treating of light, electricity, &c. I thus reduce the physical world we live in, this Panstellar Paneosmic world to the

dominion, I contend, of only two primary polaric forces—conceivable as expansion and contraction, central and peripheral, manifested as light and gravitation, oxygen and carbon. If I dare venture to enter upon the ground taken up by Professor Huxley in dealing with primary gaseous substances,—the dualism repeating itself in what may be termed negative and positive, left and right, male and female,—all nature manifests in the never-ceasing systole and dyastole the great dual action of these primary polaric laws, that underlie the surface play of the phenomenal.

“These primary elementary substances correspond with other elementary primary substances, but which belong to a different state of materiality to that which has formed and fashioned the material world that pre-exists and co-exists with the, to us, visible and ponderable. But each dual group of primary elementary forces is so constituted that their action encompasses an infinitely extended world, in all its boundless expanse; or, in other words, series of primary dual forces, represented by primary dual substances, co-existing, intro-existing, co-operating, harmonizing one with the other, may be conceived to exist. I have thus distinctive grades of materialities, bordering one on the other, intro-existing each within each. And in the never ceasing progress from the primary dual source in the divine essence, from grade to grade, the vital power of the soul-being travels onwards, mediating in its ascent and change of condition in each elementary primary state by what, in the state we reside in, we recognize as the foetal development and final birth of the child. The soul-being of the child pre-exists, I maintain, but in a more primary unconscious condition; how constituted, and in what form we cannot with certainty tell, but thus much is certain, that each vital power has passed through earlier states of development, in an ether form previous to its obtaining its advanced condition, suitable to its sojourn on earth. Those lymbic preparatory states Dr. Doherty speaks of in his ‘Organic Philosophy,’ or the *urelement* of my father’s theory—the pre-existences of Leibnitz—are to my mind the only answer to the mystery of birth of animals, as the after existences are



the only answer to the ephemeral phase of life, the mystery of death.

"The fact of foetal development and birth, the growth of all forms of life from primary or living germinal matter, can only be explained by a preparatory pre-existence. Professor Huxley's theory, and the school of continental materialists, admit the indestructibility of the material, but deny the everlasting presence of its cause. Those primary centres of force M. Bascovitz rightly substitutes for the idea of a final molecule or primary fluid. The next question to consider is that of the presence of an ether state, following this state, bordering upon it, and into which we pass after death.

"The soul-being pre-developes its ether investiture during life, mediating its progress by the organism of our bodily existence; pre-developes until a second farther advanced central state of our soul becomes predominant, and then follow age, decay and final dissolution of the body. Our soul-being having expanded, in obedience to fixed laws of physical, intellectual, and moral development—for I contend that the latter are organically represented by a higher organism—becomes surrounded by a suitable investiture, bearing the stamp of a higher or lower development, in strict accordance with the advance gained; and the presence of a differently constituted physical state into which the soul-beings of men pass by what we designate death, answers the questions put by materialists, what becomes of the myriads of soul-beings that pass away, not only from this our planet, but from the countless suns that fill our cosmic heavens; for their analogous physical state justifies the conclusion that they too are inhabited. The presence of grades founded upon fundamental elementary and distinctive dual primary principals—corresponding with other states that precede and follow these, and into, and from out of which, the soul-being arises and passes is the only explanation of those most marvellous phenomena, birth and death. But progress is not only confined to the human soul-being; all nature progresses—constantly changes—and the only constant are the fundamental laws that govern each state of primary materiality.



"In the Lucide, the trance medium, the seer, spiritual sight is opened ; or, in other words, the soul-being, even during life, becomes self conscious of the next state upon which our present state borders, and the eyes see, and what are termed our spiritual senses function, and we become conscious that an actual reality surrounds us, independent of, and yet co-existing with the material physical conditions that govern this world.

"To recapitulate. The universe is not composed as usually conceived of only this pancosmic boundless stellar world, in which the megas and micros are, it is true, equally marvellous ; but this boundless, light indexed world constitutes only one of the endless grades and distinctive materialities in the plan of the universe. Each plane, or grade reducible to two primary fundamental laws ; the central and peripheral, expressed by two primary dual substances, out of which are created, in never ceasing change, those ever varying forms that surround us. And the soul-beings pass from one intro-state to another intro-state, in obedience to laws of their developement, in never ending progress ; mediating each state by an organism fit to function in each grade. What separates the soul-being from the surrounding material, or rather what constitutes the connecting link between it and the material, must be reserved for the discussion of some future day. This evening I have only time to allude to this question. I will now conclude what I have to tell you ; the subject is so vast ; I have had to sacrifice form to my wish to render all I could say within a short half-hour's reading, and if I have erred, I am sure you will be indulgent."

On the conclusion of Mr. Jencken's paper, the chairman suggested the advisability of waiving all discussion thereon, in order that the Committee might have an opportunity of hearing the evidence of some other distinguished spiritualists who were then present. As this recommendation was found to be in accordance with the general feeling of the Committee, it was at once adopted.

Mrs. Honywood, in answer to a request from the chair, stated that she had witnessed some remarkable phenomena at the residence

of Dr. Gully, "While sitting in a circle recently, the table rose, and the room vibrated to such a degree that an engineer who was present declared that nothing but the strongest machinery would have been sufficient to account for it. An accordion was played in the air, Mr. Home holding it by one strap, and not touching it in any other way. The room was fully lighted. Three or four persons, unknown to Mr. Home, mentally wished for particular tunes and they were played."

The Hon. Mrs. — gave evidence in the following words:—"The most remarkable manifestations I have seen, were those of last Sunday evening at my house. We were seated in a partially darkened room. We first heard raps and then saw a human figure at the window. It entered and several other figures came trooping in after it. One of them waived its hands. The atmosphere became fearfully cold. A figure which I recognised as that of a deceased relative, came behind my chair, leaned over me, and brushed my hair lightly with its hand. It seemed about eight feet high. Then approaching the Master of Lindsay it passed right through him, causing him to shiver with cold. But the most extraordinary thing of all was the laughter. One of us said something and all the spirits laughed with joy. The sound was indescribably strange, and it appeared to us as if it came from the ground. This was the first time we heard spirit voices."

In answer to questions from members of the Committee Mrs. — said:—"Mr. Home *was* present on this occasion, but I have seen things when Mr. Home was not present. We sat in a circle at first, and were seven in number. Five of the seven saw just what I have described, and the others saw something, but not so distinctly. Mr. Home said there were nineteen spirits in the room at one time. I could see their eyes—peculiarly brilliant ones—looking at us. Mr. Home said to me, 'Don't be frightened, there is a spirit coming to you,' and in a few minutes I saw the bright eyes of the figure looking at me. The figure was that of a man, and well defined. I could not distinguish the clothes, but there was a peculiar rustle like that of silk. The faces were not very distinct,

but Mr. Home said that he could see them. Mr. Home was then in a trance condition. He walked about the room during the manifestations.

In answer to Mr. Geary, it was stated that Mr. Home had no previous access to the room beyond having dined there.

Mr. T. M. Simkiss, who was the next witness called, gave evidence as follows :—

“I have been a Spiritualist for nearly sixteen years, and have examined the various phases of mediumship, with all the critical research of which I am capable.

“I am not myself a medium in the common acceptation of the term, though I have tried hard to become one. I have tried in a variety of ways to see, hear, or feel spirits myself; by sitting frequently in circles as passively as possible, by submitting myself to repeated mesmeric manipulations, and by sitting alone in the dead of night for many hours in a room that was used for some years exclusively for the purposes of spirits and mediums, and might be considered to be thoroughly permeated with spiritual magnetism; but all with no apparent effect.

“I have never been able to witness any independent physical manifestations, (*i.e.* without contact of the medium,) which would admit of efficient testing; so that I am generally sceptical as to the reality of this branch of Spiritualism. Though I have not seen any reliable physical manifestations, I have witnessed a great number of neurologic spiritual manifestations; and after deducting the greatest possible percentage for mesmerism, for imposture, and for hallucination, there remains for me no possible alternative but to acknowledge that some persons who are physically dead, have still a conscious existence, and can, by operating through the nervous systems of certain sensitive individuals called mediums, give unmistakeable evidence of their identity.

“I will quote a few marked instances out of a great number, of which I have had personal experience :—Sixteen years ago, being in the city of Philadelphia, in America, sceptical as to future existence, and quite unacquainted with Spiritualism, except by report



as the last American humbug, I went to see Henry Gordon, a noted medium. The instant I entered his room he became entranced, and his body appeared to be controlled by some intelligent power other than himself. He immediately extended his hand to me, saying quickly—‘Tom, how are you? I am glad to see you here; I am your old friend Michael C——.’ After a pause, ‘I and others have influenced you to come here, so as to give you proof of immortality, which you have given over believing in.’ Michael C—— was a college friend of mine who had been dead more than three years. I had then been in America only six days, and was a complete stranger to all around me; I had never mentioned the name of Michael C—— to any one in America, nor had I thought of him for some weeks before that time. On subsequent occasions, through Henry Gordon, Michael C—— related many incidents of a private nature which completely established his personality in my mind.

“On the next day after my visit to Henry Gordon, I went to see a lady who was not a public medium, Mrs. Chase, the wife of Dr. Chase, one of the Professors of the Eclectic Medical College of Philadelphia, and who was said to see spirits. On my entering her drawing-room she said—‘Oh! Doctor, there are several spirits come in with this gentleman; one is a tall, thin, young man, with brown hair, and only a little whiskers by his ears; he stoops and coughs very much, and died of consumption; but he has already communicated through some other medium.’ This I recognised as being a correct description of Michael C——. Mrs. Chase then continued—‘On the other side of him there is a young girl, apparently about sixteen or seventeen years old, with very white skin; her hair appears to be nearly black and hangs in ringlets; she has a broad square forehead and square shoulders; you knew her very well when alive.’ I could not recollect any one answering to that description. ‘She is very merry and rather fond of teasing, and is amused at your not recollecting her, as you used to know her so well.’ I was still perplexed, and began to think that Mrs. Chase was playing with my imagination. After a few more tantalizing



remarks I began to get tired of the affair, when Mrs. Chase said—‘She is now going to say something by which you will know who she is.’ After a pause she continued—‘You bore me to the grave.’ This remark, originated by the spirit herself as a sign of recognition, was a perfect test to me. I had never in my life, up to that time, been present at the funeral of any young girl except at that of the one of whom Mrs. Chase had just given me such a perfect description, both as to her appearance and playfully teasing manner, all of which this test brought fully back to my mind, though I had not thought of her for at least two years previous to that time. She had then been dead nine or ten years.

“For the past three years my wife has been a medium. Constitutionally she is quite healthy, rather wiry and energetic than actually strong, with a quick circulation, strong nerved, never been subject to fits or fainting, almost insensible to fear, and of a sceptical turn of mind. She was first entranced almost immediately on her sitting in a circle of Spiritualists, to which she went out of curiosity. Afterwards she was frequently in the unconscious or trance state, and easily possessed by spirits, who could have full control of her organisation for their own peculiar modes of speech and gesticulation, and were apparently as much at home as if in their own bodies. One spirit who at this time very frequently possessed her was that of a Scotchman, who invariably spoke broad Scotch through her, which she is quite unable to do in her normal condition.

“This trance state, unsurpassed as it may be for test purposes, is detrimental to the nervous system if much persisted in. In the case of my wife it appears to have been a transition stage that she passed through as means of developing her interior senses, so as to enable her to see and converse with spirits, without the closing of any of her external senses. She is now as wide-a-awake and fully conscious when seeing spirits as any person with whom she is in company. She not only sees them, but occasionally gives the full names, both christian and surnames, of total strangers, and by this means has convinced many persons of the truth of Spiritualism and immortality, about which they were previously doubtful.

"One evening, in the midst of a general conversation, my wife suddenly said to me 'Here is a spirit who says his name is Father F——;' she went on giving me a correct description of his personal appearance, and told me where and under what circumstances we were previously acquainted with each other. A week afterwards I took an opportunity of testing her with regard to this spirit. Seeing his photograph in a shop where I was making some other purchases, I bought one; my wife not being with me. I afterwards caused her to see it in an accidental manner, without her having any suspicion of intention on my part, by showing it to another person. She looked to see what I was showing my friend, and said, 'Who is that? I have seen that face before.' 'Don't you know?' said I. She replied 'Oh! it's that spirit that I saw last week; it's Father F——, what a good likeness it is.'

"On another occasion we went by invitation to visit some persons who were strangers to us; during the evening my wife described a spirit, a deceased relative of theirs, which description they said was accurate; and he gave his name as 'Tommy.' To this I was paying but little attention, not being acquainted with their family connections, when my wife said to me 'Tommy says he used to know you very well.' I then inquired of the lady of the house as to the former residence and business of her uncle, (the spirit Tommy) and found that he was quite correct; I was officially connected with him when alive, and knew him well, but never had any idea that he was any relation to the persons whom we were then visiting. Some six months afterwards she saw an oil portrait of this person at a house in another part of the country, and instantly recognised it as 'Tommy,' whom she had seen on the evening above mentioned.

"My wife has given me the names of spirits of historical personages, many of whom I am quite certain that she had never heard of, and in several cases that I had never heard or read of until I searched various Encyclopædias to find if such persons had ever existed. One instance. That of 'Annibale Carracci,' who she said was an Italian artist. Not being given to artistic pursuits or

literature, I did not know of such a person ; but on looking out for him in the Encyclopædia I found his name and profession rightly given. She has correctly described the details of dress of many ancient Grecian and Roman spirits, such as the tunic, toga, sandals, &c., of which she was previously quite ignorant.

“Into the various ontological theories and speculations, which inevitably grow up in the philosophical mind from the consideration of metaphysical subjects, or into the theological paraphernalia with which ecclesiastical dogmatism and superstition have invested and well nigh smothered the pure form of ‘MAN THE SPIRIT,’ I think it useless at present to enter, as the chief object of this investigation is to elicit well authenticated facts, and thoroughly to sift them, to see if they can be accounted for in any other manner than by the agency of departed human beings.

“In my experience I have met not only with success, but with very many disappointments ; and now rarely waste much time upon the spirits, vainly waiting for them to communicate ; for I know that if they choose to withhold themselves, they will not come when we do call, whilst on the other hand, they will sometimes manifest themselves at times and in places the most unexpected.

“Beyond solving the important question ‘If a man die shall he live again?’—by the very fact of spirits communicating and proving their identity, there is to me little that is consistent or reliable in what is revealed through different mediums. And perhaps this is very wise. For if man were led to rely much upon spirits for advice, his own judgment and energy would be in danger of being weakened thereby.”

In reply to Mr. D. H. Dyte, Mr. Simkiss stated that his wife was a strong, wiry woman, never subject to fits or faintings, and possessed of strong nerves, and almost insensible to fear. The only peculiarity about her that he could think of, was that her circulation was unusually rapid.

Mr. Edward Laman Blanchard was the next witness. As he has since committed to paper the substance of his statement, it has been thought best to give his evidence in his exact words as written :—

“The deponent states that for nearly thirty years he has given his attention to certain occurrences which would seem to be only satisfactorily explained by admitting the influence of those agencies usually,—and as the writer believes, improperly,—called ‘Supernatural.’

“That he has a personal knowledge of facts which have compelled his acceptance of the belief in a possibility of communications from the unseen world ; and that he has been an eyewitness of most of the remarkable physical manifestations which have been observed by so many other persons in this country, during the last fifteen years.

“That between the years 1858 and 1863 the deponent was frequently present at ‘Circles’ formed for the purpose of investigating ‘Spiritualism,’ and that he has always subjected the evidence adduced to the most rigid scrutiny, and tested in every instance the truthfulness of the so-called ‘Mediums’ by every expedient that common sense could suggest.

“That amongst other places, he pursued his inquiries at the rooms of Mrs. Marshall, and that on these occasions he has seen tables rise from the ground without the slightest possibility of human agency ; that he has heard guitars played and bells rung without the least chance of feet, fingers, machinery or electricity being employed to produce the effect. That he has repeatedly seen ‘The Spirit Hand’ under circumstances which rendered deception impossible, and that he has frequently received at those ‘Circles’ written communications which could not have been given by any person present in the flesh. Some of these communications bear the signature of a departed friend, and these signatures, when compared with the autograph of that individual written before his departure from earth, have been by competent witnesses declared to be singularly identical. On one occasion the deponent has found himself raised in a chair at least six inches from the ground without such levitation being due to mechanical forces. Handkerchiefs knotted in a minute, heavy slates raised by the ‘Spirit Hand,’ and placed on the table, and instantaneous



writing on whitened glass, slates, and note paper are among his familiar experiences.

“On January 11th, 1862, the deponent in company with Mr. Cornelius Pearson the artist, and Mr. Thomas Spencer the well-known analytical chemist, visited a ‘Medium’ named Foster, at 14, Bryanstone Street. Names previously written on slips of paper and rolled up into pellets were brought by each person, and these names were quickly and correctly given by ‘Raps,’ without the possibility of ‘The medium’ acquiring a knowledge of the contents of the paper slips beforehand. On the arm of ‘The medium’ appeared in red letters ‘William Blanchard,’ the name of the deponent’s father, and immediately afterwards appeared on the palm of the medium’s hand, the numbers ‘27’ indicating in answer to a question put, the exact number of years which had elapsed since the said William Blanchard had ceased to exist on earth. All this was done very rapidly, the deponent and his friends being utterly unknown to the ‘Medium,’ and the letters and numbers disappearing in the sight of those present, without the arm of the medium being withdrawn.

“The deponent further states that he has had the gratification of attending circles when Mr. D. D. Home was the medium, and that he has become perfectly convinced of the genuine nature of the phenomena, occurring on those occasions. Referring to a brief paper entitled ‘A Rap on the Knuckles,’ in the Spiritual Magazine of September 1860, for a further account of the experiences he has had, the deponent would here only record in addition that he has not detected trickery in one instance, although he has reason to believe himself peculiarly qualified for such discoveries, and that whatever agencies may be employed in these ‘Manifestations’ they are not to be explained by referring them to imposture on the one side, or hallucination on the other.

“E. L. BLANCHARD.

“*April 15th, 1869.*”

The Chairman next called upon Mr. J. Murray Spear, who spoke as follows :—

“Mr. Chairman. When I first heard of Modern Spiritualism I resolved I would have nothing whatever to do with it, for I had been active in promoting temperance, peace, freedom, women’s rights, and other moral, social and religious movements, and they had all cost me much time, money and reputation; I feared it might be so if I undertook to look into Spiritualism. Nevertheless, I was persuaded to seat myself at a table, and then, by the alphabet, the name of my brother’s wife, who had not long before passed into the spirit world, was given. Her name was *Frances*. None present knew her, much less did they know her name. I was greatly perplexed to know how that name got there, and I ventured to examine the subject a little further.

“In March, 1852, my own hand was moved to write thus:— ‘We wish you to go to Abington and see David Vining.’ I did not know that a person of that name lived in that town. Abington was twenty miles from Boston, my native city, where the message was written. No person was with me at the time of the writing.

“I went to Abington as directed, found a person there bearing the name I had written, and more, that he was sick and had not slept for nearly ten days and nights. My hand was moved towards him. I pointed at him, but did not touch him: the pain was all driven from his system, and he soon sank into a quiet sleep. I now perceived two points that claimed my attention. 1st. This power, whatever it might be, exhibited intelligence, for it gave me the name of a person of whom I previously had no knowledge, and it directed me to the place where he lived. 2nd. It exhibited beneficence; for it sent me to do the person good.

“From that time I was sent to many other persons and places to do similar acts of mercy. One lady had been struck by lightning. I was the instrument in the hands of this power of removing all her pain in a very short time. Evidences numerous and various crowded upon me, and I became a believer in Modern Spiritualism. Guided by this power, I have travelled many hundred thousand miles—have been sent into twenty of the thirty-six of the United States of America, have crossed the Atlantic Ocean three times,

have visited many portions of England, Scotland, Wales, and have been repeatedly sent on to the Continent.

"I may also state that I was sent by this power to Hamilton College to give a course of twelve lectures on geology, a subject about which I then knew almost nothing. Assisted and encouraged by a distinguished professor of that institution, the discourses were given, and on being questioned as to their value, the professor affirmed that I took up the subject just where the books stopped; that I did not contradict them, and he declared he should teach his pupils some things I had taught.

"Besides the discourses on geology, I have delivered many on health, electricity, agriculture, magnetism, ether, education, commerce, astronomy, government, physiology, &c., &c., and with all the above-named subjects I had but slight acquaintance. A volume containing nearly seven hundred pages has been published, and many thousand pages are now in manuscript.

"I was also set at work to build a machine with a view of developing a new motive power by collecting elements directly from the atmosphere. Motion was secured corresponding to early embryonic life.

"I have many times imitated with marked exactness the autographs of persons. This power aids me to describe disease of body or mind, to prescribe for the sick, and to delineate the characters of persons by holding their hand-writing, or a lock of hair, or by photograph, and very many persons have been healed, assisted and comforted by this power."

The meeting was then adjourned.

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TUESDAY, 27TH APRIL, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

Mr. Benjamin Coleman, of Upper Norwood, gave evidence this evening in the following words:—

"At the first *séance* which I attended there were fourteen persons in the room, seated round a long dinner table. Mr. Home, who was the medium, sat at one end, and I at the other. Through

the rapping sounds several messages were given to different individuals of the party. One purported to be from the spirit of an aunt of mine, who gave me her name as Elizabeth, and another spirit, also an aunt of mine, gave the name of Hannah. I did not recognize the names—I had never known of any aunts of those names; but subsequently I wrote to my mother and asked whether she recognised them as family names, and she then told what was quite new to me, that two sisters of my father were named Elizabeth and Hannah, who died before I was born.

“A new accordion, which had been bought that day, was lying upon the table before Mr. Home, and he asked the spirits if they would play upon it. The answer, by three raps, was “yes.” He then pulled it out to its full tension, and taking hold of the blank end, rested his hand upon his knee below the surface of the table, and placed his left hand *upon* the table; which (together with the hands of all present) was visible. There was a bright gas-light above our heads. I then asked the spirits to play an air for me, and I selected “Home, sweet home,” which was instantly played upon the accordion in the most beautiful style imaginable.

“I was greatly surprised at this, and I asked Mr. Home how he was holding the instrument, and he told me to take a candle and look for myself. I did so, and found that he was holding the accordion exactly as I have described.

“I was, however, disappointed at finding that the instrument did not continue to play whilst I was looking at it; and after some conversation with those present upon the manifestations we had all witnessed, I asked Mr. Home if he thought the instrument would play in my own hand. He asked the spirits, “Will you play for Mr. Coleman?” The reply, by three *decided* raps, was “yes.” I immediately rose from my seat to take the accordion, but Mr. Home told me to remain seated, and said he would ask the spirits to bring it to me. He shortly afterwards said “they have taken it from me!” He then placed his *right* hand upon the table. In a minute or so, the accordion was pressed against my knee. I pushed my chair back to make room for it, when the



accordion steadily rose up above the table, and I took it in my hand. I then did as Mr. Home had done, rested it upon my knee, requesting that it might play for me "Angels ever bright and fair." Immediately I felt that it was strongly tugged; and after being successively elongated and compressed, the required melody flowed forth with variations, whilst the instrument remained in my hand. This astounding fact awakened my mind to a thorough conviction that a mysterious something, wholly external to Mr. Home, was concerned in the production of the phenomenon. I was not, however, then prepared to believe that it was a spirit that produced it; but from that moment I was led on to investigate the subject, and from the variety and multiplicity of evidence presented for my observation within the next few weeks, through Mr. Home and others, I became thoroughly convinced of the fact of spirit communion.

"The *séance* above alluded to took place at the house of a neighbour of mine, where Mr. Home was then staying on a visit, about fifteen years ago; and in the same house, on different occasions, I witnessed a great variety of phenomena. The most striking amongst them was at the second *séance* I attended, which took place in quite an unexpected and casual manner, and happened thus:—I was walking round my neighbour's garden one fine summer evening, when the full moon was above the horizon; and Mr. Home, who was present, suggested that we should have a 'sitting,' as he felt impressed (he said) that something remarkable would occur. He had been playing with the children in the garden, who had made for him a wreath of flowers, and placed it upon his head. The drawing room to which we retired was level with the garden; the centre table (a circular one) was cleared of books and cover, and seven persons, myself included, sat round three parts of it, leaving the fourth part blank opposite to the window. There was light enough from the moon to enable us to see each other, as well as every object between us and the window. I then asked Mr. Home to place both his hands in mine, which he did, and I continued to hold them thus throughout the *séance* which followed.

After a variety of the usual incidents, Mr. Home suddenly exclaimed, 'See, they are taking the wreath off my head!' and we then all saw the wreath floating slowly round, without any visible support. It came up to me; I took it, placed it on my own head, and retained possession of it for many weeks afterwards. The table then gradually rose from the ground, and it became necessary for us all to stand up; it continued to ascend until it touched the ceiling, quite out of the reach of all excepting myself, the tallest of the party. It then as gradually descended and resumed its original position, with no more sound than if it had been a snow flake. A hand-bell was then placed upon the table, and a hand and arm of feminine proportions were observed to rise from beneath the blank side of the table—and, which, reaching towards the bell, took it up, rang it, and carried it from our sight. In an instant afterwards, I felt a hand patting my knee; I put my hand down, received the bell and placed it upon the table.

"I then asked to be allowed to feel the hand, and putting my own hand open beneath the table, I felt a soft feminine hand placed in my own, which was again slowly withdrawn. It was of a velvety softness, neither warm nor cold. The arm was draped, as we all of us saw and remarked upon, in a gauze-like sleeve, through which the full form of the arm was distinctly visible.

"Three or four of the party had rings on their fingers, and one of them said, 'My ring has been taken off my finger by some one.' Another said, 'so has mine;' and four rings in all were thus taken away. Presently, a hand presented itself, exhibiting the four rings upon its fingers, and then, inverting itself, the rings were scattered upon the table.

"On another occasion, in the same house, I witnessed the following *when Mr. Home was absent*. I saw the long dinner-table rise up, supported only by its two end legs, and remain steadily poised at an angle of forty or fifty degrees. The gentleman of the house then said to me, 'I will show you my confidence in the spirit's intelligence and power.' He then placed his hand flat upon the floor and said, 'Now, spirits, I know you will not hurt me. Bring the

table gently down upon my hand.' This was done, and his hand, though pinned fast to the floor by the weight of the table, was not in the least hurt. The table was then slightly eased, and he removed his hand.

"Some years subsequently to the events above narrated, I was staying at Malvern with my wife and daughter. We had apartments at the house of Mr. Willmore, who had a wife and daughter likewise in the house; the daughter, a young woman about twenty-three years of age. There were also in the house two visitors, Miss Lee, of Worcester, and Mr. Moore, of Halifax. In consequence of the statements made by me respecting the phenomena I had witnessed, the visitors at Dr. Wilson's Establishment subscribed to bring to Malvern the Marshalls from London (mediums); and two or three *séances* were given at Malvern with them with more or less satisfaction. Willmore, who had been a Bath man with Dr. Gully, asked me if I would be good enough to let him see something of Spiritualism before the mediums left the town. I accordingly requested the Marshalls to spend an hour or two on the following day (Sunday) with Willmore's family, who invited some of their neighbours to form a circle. I and my family spent the day out, and returned home between ten and eleven o'clock at night; when my wife and daughter retired to bed and left me in our sitting-room. Shortly afterwards, Willmore, in great excitement came to me, and begged that I would come down stairs immediately for he did not know what to do; he said, his wife, his daughter, and Miss Lee were all in hysterics. I followed him at once, and upon entering the room, a small three-legged table met me at the door, *no one touching it*, and made me a graceful bow as if to say, "How do you do?" One of the females was on the sofa screaming, and the others in different parts of the room throwing themselves about in a state of great distress. I went up to the other end of the room to Miss Lee, the table following me and standing by my side whilst I endeavoured to calm her. I had nearly succeeded in doing so, when the table made a jump at her and threw her again into violent hysterics; her screams were re-

sponded to by the other females. Matters looked so serious that I felt it necessary to take a decided part with the table, and seizing it with both hands, I lifted it into the centre of the room, and said, 'Now spirits, you have done quite enough, I command you to leave this place in God's name.' They appeared to obey my injunction, for nothing further took place. When the party had calmed down, they told me that they had had a very interesting *séance* in the afternoon, at which it was said, through the table, that both Willmore and his daughter were mediums, which induced them after supper, and long after the Marshalls had left, to try whether they really had any power of mediumship; when to their great surprise the table responded, gave truthful answers to many questions on family matters, and at length became so active as to frighten them all, and they assured me that this had been going on about half an hour, chasing them into different corners of the room, creating great confusion, and causing Mr. Willmore to rush to me for assistance.

"I went the first thing next morning to Dr. Gully, and told him all the strange occurrences of the previous night with Willmore and his daughter. At Dr. Gully's request I invited the Willmores to my rooms in the evening, when we had some very remarkable messages through the table; and I believe I am right in saying that this was the first direct evidence Dr. Gully had ever had of spirit communion. He is now, as is well known, a firm believer, which he boldly and undisguisedly avows. Dr. Wilson, of Malvern, also investigated the phenomena about the same period, and became a convert in consequence. Both were previously avowed materialists.

"A similar conversion was made by me of Mr. Wason, an old friend of mine, who called upon me to express his surprise that a man of my practical experience should give in to such a delusion as Spiritualism.

"This was in London, where Mr. C——, an engineer by profession, was temporarily residing. He was I knew a good medium, and Mr. Wason, with a friend of his, a well-known London



barrister, accompanied me to Mr. C——'s rooms. During our sitting, a message came to Mr. Wason purporting to be from an old friend of his. I conducted the inquiry, knowing nothing whatever of the man or the circumstances.

"The spirit gave his name (a very uncommon one), said he lived in Bristol, died in London, and had held the situation of cashier in a bank; and then, in very earnest and well chosen language, exhorted his old friend to abandon his materialistic views. Mr. Wason, who was affected to tears, recognised the man, admitted the truth of every statement, and said that the tone of the message was precisely such as his friend had been accustomed to address to him when they resided together at Bristol, twenty-five years before.

"From that evening Mr. Wason changed his views, and is now a confirmed Spiritualist.

"I have in my possession several coloured drawings, done through the hands of ladies, who, I have every reason to believe, have no knowledge whatever of the art. Two of these were drawn through Mrs. Mapes, the wife of Professor Mapes, the well known chemist of New York. One is an Iris, and the other, a collection of autumnal leaves.

"Good artists in water colours declare they are both very perfect drawings, and could not be copied in an ordinary way in less than two days. They were presented to me by Professor Mapes, who assured me that both of these pictures were commenced and finished in little more than one hour. I have also a number of drawings in pencil and colours, of birds and flowers, which were done in my presence in New York, without any human agency whatever, and the time occupied in their production varied from ten to fifteen *seconds*!

"Judge Edmonds, Professor Lyman, Dr. Gervais and others were present with me when these drawings were made, and they have certified by their signatures endorsed upon two of the pictures the time and conditions as stated above."

On the conclusion of Mr. Coleman's statement, Mr. D. H. Dyke

rose to ask him if he could give the Committee any instances of spirit communications having been made, conveying information not previously in the possession of any one present at the time.

Mr. Coleman replied that he was unable at the moment to recollect any instances of the kind.

Mr. Serjeant Cox remarked, that he had heard of a woman who could make people believe that they were tormented by a wasp, that they could smell flowers, &c., by the mere exercise of her will. He wished to ask Mr. Coleman how he could be certain he was not biologised at the time, and merely imagining these things.

Mr. Coleman said that biology might explain some of the phenomena, but there were others which it could not possibly account for; such, for example, as spirit drawings. He had been present at the production of several elaborate crayon drawings in spaces of time, varying from seven to ten seconds. He had himself previously marked the paper so as to enable him with certainty to identify it. These drawings were still in his possession, and he would be glad to exhibit them to the Committee. The *modus operandi* in the production of these spirit drawings was very remarkable. Clean pieces of paper, with crayons, &c., were placed under a table cloth; a rapid scratching of the paper was then heard, and in a few moments the crayons were heard to fall and the drawing was complete. He would like to know how biology would account for this.

Mr. Childs, another witness, stated that he had repeatedly heard voices, sometimes in broad daylight, which could not possibly have proceeded from any living being. He had also frequently heard musical instruments exquisitely played, when no human being capable of such performance was present in the room. He had witnessed many such phenomena, and could vouch for their genuineness. His evidence was corroborated with regard to one occasion, by Mr. J. S. Bergheim, a member of the Committee.

Mr. John Jones, of Enmore Park, Norwood, then related what he had witnessed last autumn at Stockton House, Fleetpond, where he was on a visit with three of his family. The night was dark,

as the moon had not risen, but as there was a conservatory at the side of the drawing-room, in which some eight persons sat round the loo table, and a window in front, he could see all in the room distinctly. As it was unusual for Mr. Home to sit in a dark room for physical phenomena, he (Mr. Jones) mentally determined to play the seepie. A sofa behind him moved away from the wall and passed in the rear of his and Mr. Home's chairs, no one being near them. By the sounds and raps it was said, "Mrs. —, rest on the sofa." She got up and did so. He (Mr. Jones) then saw the vacant chair rise in the air, float over the lady, pass in front of Mr. Home (whose hands were on the table) and ascend till vertically over his (Mr. Jones's) head; then the chair descended, and the under portion of the seat rested on his head. On mentally declaring himself satisfied, the chair arose again, floated in the air, and descended on to the loo table. Mr. Jones also stated that at his house, Enmore Park, in a well-lighted, large room, at a circle of only his own family and the medium (all hands on the loo table), he and all his family saw his aged mother and the chair she sat on, rise in the air, till her knees were on a level with the rim of the table. He had, at a previous sitting, seen Mr. Home rise in the air, and held his hands while he was rising.

The hour being late, the meeting was then adjourned.

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TUESDAY, 11TH MAY, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

Mr. Jones continued his evidence in the following words:—

" 'We have done all we can to convince you that we live, and that God is love.' Such was the message collected from the telegraphic knocks, between eight and nine o'clock last evening, at my house, on a breakfast table, in a large room, sixteen feet by thirty-four; the blinds being drawn down, and the gas full lighted. It was in the presenee of the Norwood Committee, who were formed to investigate the phenomena. The Committee consisted of two editors of district newspapers and four other gentlemen of good standing, who had hitherto laughed and joked at Spiritualism. They frankly

owned they were astonished at the results, though to me the manifestations had appeared but of a trifling nature.

“ Perhaps, if I mention two or three other instances they may be interesting, especially as they are those best adapted for showing the intelligence of the spiritual power. One is the playing of the accordion. I may state I have heard various instruments played upon by spiritual beings. I was speaking at the meeting of what I had seen and heard years ago—that I had seen the accordion play, and had heard the most exquisite music played and repeated over and over again, and being very fond of music, I was more than delighted. On one occasion Mr. Home had taken the accordion by the rim, so that every one could see that there was no communication made with the keys, which perceptibly moved, and the most exquisite music was produced. In order to show that Mr. Home was not imitating the music, and producing the sounds himself, a lady’s hand was placed over his mouth. While I was so speaking, last evening, sounds came out of my own accordion—one I myself bought in Cheapside—and the editor of one of the papers felt the keys of the accordion working on the top of his foot, and the music was played while no visible agency touched the keys. I never was biologized. I have biologized others, and I have mesmerized others. I therefore feel that what I saw, I saw, and what I heard, I heard, really and truly ; and if you say I was biologized, the friends I see before me do not exist, and the scene before me is biological. Such were the facts that took place in a very large room, between the hours of 8 and not later than 9.30. I do not care a farthing for the phenomenon unless I can find with it intelligence, and I think I obtained it in this case.

“ And now I will proceed to put the matter more systematically. What is the object of this Committee? I suppose it is to ascertain if the alleged phenomena be true, and if so, whether they are produced by persons in the flesh, under conditions not yet known, or by persons out of the flesh called spirits or ghosts. If the first be found true, there is the natural, if the second, there is the super-



natural ; and then the acts registered in the New Testament and classical history are no longer impossible.

“ I now ask myself a second question : What is a supernatural being ?—A person, in form, dimensions and intellect, but not in the proportion of gaseous substances in his composition, like men in the flesh.

“ I ask myself a third question : What is a miracle ?—An act done by supernatural beings, that could not be done by men in the flesh.

“ For twelve years before I became aware of the action of supernatural beings, I was engaged on the examination of the emanations from men, stone, &c., and from these examinations I obtained startling results. These emanations were as real as the bodies they came from—as real as the air we breathe, and which we cannot see.

“ Since 1855 I have studied Spiritualism, having attended *séances* and circles by the score ; and bringing my previous knowledge to bear, I have had much more enjoyment than those who merely went to see the results, and I have concluded that supernatural beings exist around us, but that under ordinary circumstances we are not qualified to see them. This is all I have to say in connection with the principle. Now I come to the phenomena themselves. I have to put the question, what are spiritual manifestations ? The answer is, evidences of unseen life having especial influence over us for good or evil.

“ Having seen the whole of the phenomena, I can give illustrations—facts of my own personal knowledge—on each of the different phases. The instances that I will now state transpired at my own house, and an account of them has been printed and sent round to some 5,000 clergymen throughout the country.

“ It was on Friday, July 17th, 1868, about 10 p.m.

“ Picture to yourself my drawing-room, 16 feet by 34 feet, without a break or chandelier. A heavy loo table,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet in diameter, round which were ten chairs : seven of them occupied, by Mr. Home, my mother (83 years old), three grown-up daughters, one son, and me. The other three chairs were *vacant*, to represent my

late wife, my late daughter Marion, and son Walter. I had placed on my wife's chair her last silk dress, bonnet, and black lace scarf; on my daughter's chair, the flannel robe she wore the day before her passing away; and on my son's chair, his neck-tie and New Testament.

"1st Incident.—My accordion having made sounds which read off were 'Hymn of Praise;' a mellow, joyous, jubilant voluntary of praise was brilliantly played, exciting in us wonder, joy and thankfulness. No human hand touched the keys, but like stars were seen moving up and down on the keys during the hymn of praise.

"2nd.—The accordion, shortly after, when placed on the table, gently rose in the air about four inches, and floated about three feet round the table.

"3rd.—The family sang the hymn 'What are these arrayed in white?' and then, my mother with the chair she was sitting on, gently *rose bodily in the air* three times, the last time her knees were level with the rim of the table; her hands were crossed on her breast.

"4th.—My late wife's bonnet was raised from the vacant chair, and carried opposite, to my youngest daughter Edith.

"5th.—My late wife's chair, with the dress on it, then *rose in the air*, bent towards and leaned on my mother's breast. The chair returned or rather floated back to its place.

"6th.—The dress on the chair began to move. It rose horizontally like a living substance, moved over to, and on my mother's knees, in the sight of us all: it then passed to the rear of Mr. Home's chair.

"7th.—My late daughter's chair, next mine, having on it the flannel robe extended on the back and seat of the chair, then moved up closer to the table; but there not being room, vigorously pushed my chair and removed it a little to one side, and so was ranged with the other sitters. We all then sang a part of her favourite hymn,

" Give to the winds your fears,  
Hope and be undismayed, &c."

"8th.—My spirit daughter's chair then quietly glided away from the table, passed round the rear of mine, came to my left side (Mr. Home and chair being carried to the rear of the room), took the vacant place at the table; and then, with an undulating motion, floated up off the ground to a level with the rim of the loo table; the accordion at the same time playing a sweet gentle strain of music.

"9th.—The accordion commenced and continued playing the air well known to teetotallers, 'Taste not the cup;' my family, knowing the air and the words, chimed in. We were wondering why such a song should be played—my son Arthur said—"It is an answer to my mental question: 'Shall I give up teetotalism, and do as others?' After this advice I will not take the cup."

"Other phenomena took place, and at last the sounds gave out, 'God bless you all.' We said 'Amen—may God bless you.' Then, a jubilant gush of sounds came on the table and all ceased.

"We as a family then sang, 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow,' and the sitting closed."

Mr. Jones observed that in addition to seeing human beings rise from the floor into the air, he had on one occasion seen a large loo table tremble like a leaf, rise gradually up, up, up, till it ascended as high as the ceiling, and then gradually descend, and that in the presence of six or seven leading individuals in London, whose names, if mentioned, would command universal respect.

The Chairman then observed that he understood a lady was present who had seen the apparition of a departed friend.

Mrs. Rowcroft, the lady referred to, then said:—

"I saw, in July, 1860, the apparition of my husband. I was lying on the sofa, between six and seven in the evening, at the hotel where I was staying at Cincinnati. I was perfectly awake, and not thinking of my husband in the least, when I heard three knocks at the door. I said 'come in,' thinking it was one of the waiters, and my husband, who had been dead five years, entered, dressed in the morning dress prescribed for British consuls—a blue coat with Victoria buttons, a straw-coloured waistcoat,—and a white

hat which he always wore in the summer. He had also a walking stick with a chamois horn handle. I jumped up and advanced to the middle of the room, and he went into the one adjoining. As soon as I recovered myself I went in also but saw nothing."

In reply to a question put by Mr. Jeffery as to how long the apparition was visible, Mrs. Roweroft said she was too much surprised to have any idea. Further questions elicited that she had every reason to believe her husband was poisoned on board ship; that the door actually opened when she said 'come in,' and that the door was not open when the apparition had disappeared.

Mr. Borthwick, now Lord Borthwick, in reply to a question put from the Chair regarding some spirit drawings that had been produced in his presenee, said :—

"I was present when these drawings were produced. I did not hear any explanation of them. There were about twelve or thirteen people present. A table was placed in the middle of the room, and we sat around it—a shawl was drawn around it and tied—the paper was put into form by Professor L—— and handed to me, and I marked it. I was then asked to place the paper under the table; on this being done, we heard sounds like the scribbling of a pencil or brush upon paper; a stop-watch, in the possession of some one present, indicated that about seven or nine seconds elapsed from the time when it was placed under the table until it was brought out, wet with the paint upon it, and handed to me. Mr. Coleman retained some of the papers. I have no opinion myself as to how they were done."

The Chairman then remarked to Mr. Jones that he believed his daughter was present, who could give them an account of what she saw at Stockton when Mr. Home was there.

Miss Aliee Jones then said :—

"I was at Stockton at a *séance* which took place about eight o'clock in the evening, when Mr. Home was present with others. He seemed very ill, and said the spirits were in him and did not understand him, and he must go out and get rid of them. He went out and walked up and down the verandah, and we saw a



bright light issue from him, upwards, of a conical shape ; it reached about half his own length ; it looked very much like phosphorous. All the time he was away there were perfumes in the room—each had a different perfume—one eau-de-cologne, &c. He went out again, and was carried across the lawn, a distance of over 100 feet, to a rhododendron bed ; and, when he returned, all said there was a light down by the bed ; and he said, ‘ Yes, it is a spirit I have left there.’ Although it was raining, there was no rain on his coat, neither were his feet wet. He floated over the verandah, which was about ten feet from the lawn, in an upright position, and his body seemed elongated. He observed, as he went out, that we should all have perfumes, and we did. We heard him walking on the gravel path, and yet his feet were perfectly dry.

During this *séance* I felt and pressed the hand of the spirit who was producing the phenomena.

The Chairman then called upon Mr. Burns, who said that the mediums with which he had chiefly sat were his wife and her sister. He was away when their mediumship was first developed, and they wrote and told him of the fact. Being rather sceptical as to their newly-found power, he wrote, asking them to give him a proof of it, and they told him that a certain young lady had lived in Carlisle, with her father and mother, and as he was shortly after in Carlisle, he made inquiries from the tax-gatherer and found that their statement was correct.

Several questions were put to Mr. Burns, but they failed to elicit any information beyond the above fact, Mr. Burns stating that no one in the family had hitherto known anything relative to this young lady ; it was quite by chance he was near Carlisle ; he could not tell the exact information contained in the letter, but he would try and produce it.

He further observed that if Mrs. Burns and her sister were in a dark room with others, they would see light issuing from the various heads, they could see flashes passing from the brain of one to that of another, and could tell those who were congenial to one another. His wife’s sister sometimes went into a trance, and

described accurately things at a great distance which she had never seen. They developed automatic writing too; these writings came from the spirits, and were in different styles of handwriting, some similar to that in use on the continent and other places. Sometimes when Mrs. Burns was observing what was going on around, she would sketch out a little flower; she had done a great many of these, although she had never even heard the names of the materials usually employed to produce drawings. Her sister wrote out the names of the materials, where she could get them, and what they would cost, and they were obtained. Mrs. Burns drew flowers of various kinds in crayon, water colours, and oil. Sometimes she wished to alter the sketch, but found herself unable to do so, and a message came to her sister that the spirits knew best, and she must only allow herself to be used as an instrument in the matter. Mrs. Burns was ill upstairs, and it crossed her mind as to whether the spirits could help her. The sister, in another room, was influenced to write a prescription which gave instant relief. Since that first instance the medium has written a number of medical prescriptions. Thus on two occasions, when my wife has been ill, the spirits have prescribed remedies which cured her as soon as they were applied.

One night we were at Mrs. Marshall's; I have been there twice, with Mrs. Burns; we sat next to Mr. Jencken; Mrs. Burns, in the dark, saw a hand approaching her, but she could see nothing in the hand, when a voice called her by name and told her to put out her hand, she did so, and in it was placed a peach, which she gave to me. Mr. Jencken held out a small tambourine, but the spirits could not take it away. Mrs. Burns saw them throwing their influence over the part where the tambourine was, but there was something coming from Mr. Jencken which neutralized their influence.

The Chairman then asked Mr. Burns whether he had any theory as to whether the spirits were matter or not? to which Mr Burns replied that he did not know what matter was.

Mr. Thomas Sherratt then produced some spirit writings, and

remarked, concerning them, that they were dono in his presence at a *séance* at Mrs. Marshall's, at Bayswater, in a fully lighted room; the paper was placed under the table, with a pencil and during the time the writing was going on, they could hear the pencil moving over the paper; it was a peculiar kind of paper, brought by himself, viz., lithographing paper.

Miss Houghton then produced some very interesting drawings, done by spiritualistic agency, and made the following statement:—

“On the 20th of April, 1867, we held a *séance* for my birthday; Mrs. General Ramsay, Mrs. Gregory, Mrs. Cromwell Varley, Mrs. Flinders Pearson, Miss Nockolds, Miss Wallace, and Miss Nicholl (now Mrs. Guppy) being present in addition to Mamma and myself. The doors and windows were all closed, and we were in complete darkness, which is indispensable for some kinds of manifestations; and at the *séances* at our house, we are always particularly quiet, and as still as possible. We had at first some few messages, but after a time, I (who had been seated between Mrs. Ramsay and Mrs. Gregory) was impressed to rise from my chair, and place my hand on Mrs. Ramsay's shoulder, so that I was quite out of the reach of any one in the circle. Suddenly I felt something on my head, but I said nothing about it, and Miss Nicholl exclaimed, ‘Oh! there is something so bright on Miss Houghton's head; do you not all see how it glitters?’ Well, some could see it, and some could not; so we asked and obtained permission to have a light, when we found that the spirits had brought me as a birthday present a lovely wreath of everlasting flowers, with which they had crowned me. I have since had a case made for the wreath, which remains in my possession.

“On the 3rd of October, 1867, I went to a dark *séance* at Miss Nicholl's own house, on which occasion there were eighteen ladies and gentlemen present, with all of whom I am acquainted. The table was small, therefore only six sat at it, the others being seated round the room. I sat on one side of Miss Nicholl at the table, with her father on the other, and Mrs. Cromwell Varley beyond him. By raps the spirits desired me to wish for a fruit, and I

chose a banana, which they promised me, and then said, 'Now all may wish,' which they did, for various fruits, sometimes having their wishes negatived, but in most instances, agreed to. The fruits were then brought in the order in which they had been wished for. One lady said, 'Why do you not ask for vegetables ; an onion, for instance?' and even as she said it, the onion came into her lap. I will give you a list of the various things brought : a banana, two oranges, a bunch of white grapes, a bunch of black grapes, a cluster of filberts, three walnuts, about a dozen damsons, a slice of candied pine apple, three figs, two apples, an onion, a peach, some almonds, four very large grapes, three dates, a potato, two large pears, a pomegranate, two crystallised greengages, a pile of dried currants, a lemon, and a large bunch of beautiful raisins, which, as well as the figs and dates, were quite plump, as if they had never been packed, but had been brought straight from the drying ground.

"I have been present at many *séances* with similar characteristics, but from these being so strongly defined, I have selected them ; and the special wonder of the second, is, that so many persons should have been present ; but Mrs. Guppy's mediumship is so very powerful, and I regret very much that she should now be in Italy, so that you cannot have the advantage of being at any of her *séances*.

"I will now give some account of how the drawings were done, of which I have brought the tracings. They are what is termed *direct* drawings, *i. e.*, done by the spirits themselves, without the agency of the human hand.

"Miss Nicholl held a *séance* at her own house, on the 5th of December, 1867, at which about two dozen persons were present. There were on the table two sheets of drawing paper, a lead pencil, a sable-hair pencil, some water, and a tube of water-colour, madder brown, some of which Miss Nicholl squeezed into a saucer. After the gas had been extinguished, we heard the sheets of paper (which from an accident had been drenched with water), being fluttered about the room. Presently, one was brought to



me, and laid between my hands, and we heard it being patted for some time, as if to dry it. The spirits then made me hold it lengthwise before me, with the finger and thumb of each hand. We then heard the brush dipped into the saucer of colour, and then applied to the paper, the movements being very rapid. The paper was laid, for a little while, flat on the table, and I feared the moist colour would be smeared; however, it was lifted up and again worked upon. A light was then demanded, and we saw the sketch of 'the guardian angel,' which was still moist. To my surprise, I found that the drawing had been done on the side of the paper next to me, as if the spirit executing it had occupied my place, or been, as it were, within me; so that when laid upon the table, it must have had the wet colour upwards, instead of running the risk of being spoiled, as I had feared. There was but one colour on the table, but a second was employed in the drawing, so that our spirit friends must have themselves supplied it.

"At Mrs. Guppy's *séance*, March 4th, 1868, the first message that was given (by the alphabet) was, 'You must undergo a process of purification before I can draw. I will draw the emblem of Spiritualism.' Mrs. Guppy and I were then lavishly sprinkled with perfume, after which we were all desired to sing. Pens and ink were then demanded, and on a sheet of letter-paper, the corner of which was placed under my hand, a drawing was executed of a dove, hovering over the world, and holding in its claws a palm branch, and an olive branch, while rays flow down from it, as if to enlighten the world. A message was then given; 'This *séance* is the first of a series of illustrations of passing through death into life. I will try to solve and explain by drawing the poetry of spirit life.'

"On the next occasion, April 6th, 1868, paper and pencils were on the table, and we soon heard our invisible friends at work. Then was rapped out 'Read Dying Christian to his soul!' The question now arose as to whence we should obtain the book from which to read the poem. Mrs. Guppy said that her father had Pope's Poems in his studio, on the ground floor, (the *séance* was

held on the third floor,) and that she had the work at Hampton Wick. We suggested that Mr. Nicholl should fetch his volume, but the answer was in the negative. I then felt a book softly placed in my hands, and 'light' was spelled. The book was Mr. Nicholl's, brought from the studio, and the corner of the page was turned down at the ode, which I then read as desired, the drawing being marvellously illustrative of the poem itself, as it represents the spirits rising with rapture in its eyes from the earthly body, now discarded as having been rendered useless by death.

"The following picture represents the same spirit leaving the earth, and being greeted and welcomed by loving relatives in the spirit world, and under it is written, by the same power that drew it,

'Lend, lend your wings, I mount, I fly :

O grave, where is your victory ? O death, where is your sting ?'

"All these statements are simply external manifestations to prove the fact of the spirits being around us, to work in any way that they may see will be the most convincing ; but I could cite numberless instances of their beneficence, and care of us in the daily course of life, most especially in aiding the sick ; as, in my own case, during the last five years of mamma's life, they prescribed for her through me, at any hour of the day or night, either allopathically or homœopathically, as might be most suitable at the moment. But to enter upon all that, would take up too much of your time. I will, however, mention a slight circumstance, as proof of the identity of the spirits, which is of course a subject of vital importance.

"On the 8th of December last, I went into the city on business, and, while in the town, inquired which of my spirit friends were accompanying me, and I found that besides two of my brothers were two cousins. Now, my cousins in the spirit world are exceedingly numerous, so I had to make several inquiries before I learned which they really were ; one was a business-man, so I thought he was with me to aid in the transaction ; the other was a sister-in-law as well as cousin. Soon after my return home, the widow and two daughters of the one cousin came to call upon me,

so that accounted for his having been drawn towards me on that day ; and when, later in the afternoon, I looked into my book of birthdays, I found it was that of a niece, and for that reason her mother had been with me."

The Committee then adjourned.

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TUESDAY, 25th MAY, 1869.

Chairman, Mr. Henry Jeffery.

Mr. Cromwell F. Varley gave evidence this evening in the following words :—

"I came here under the impression that I would be put in the witness-box and cross-examined ; and I, therefore, did not prepare any statement beforehand. I mention this in order to explain any want of order or consecutiveness in what I state. To begin, then, I was a sceptic when these matters first came under my notice about the year 1850. That was the time when table-rapping and table-moving were set down as the results of electrical force. I investigated that hypothesis, and demonstrated that it was altogether unfounded—no electrical force could have been thus applied, no electricity could be evolved from the hands of uninsulated human beings, capable of moving one-thousandth part of the weight of the tables moved. I may mention that I was possessed of mesmeric healing power. Three years after these experiments I came to London and made the acquaintance of the lady who has since become Mrs. Varley. She was subject to nervous headaches, and I got the consent of her parents to mesmerise her, with the view of effecting a cure. She was only temporarily relieved ; and one day, while she was entranced on the couch, I was thinking whether I could permanently cure her. She answered my thought. I considered this very strange, and I asked her—still mentally—whether she was answering my thought ; she replied, "Yes." I then asked her whether there were any means by which a permanent cure could be effected. She replied "Yes ; if you bring on the fit out of its proper course you will disturb its harmony, and I shall be cured." I did so—by the

exercise of will—and by bringing on the fits at intermediate periods, she was cured permanently. Whenever entranced, she had a strong objection to being aroused out of that state.

To ascertain whether the influence could be exerted through solid substances, I made transverse passes through folding doors; she ran out and caught my hands to stop me. Another time I made passes through a brick wall; she was instantly conscious of it. I relate these matters because they may help us to a clue in relation to some of the phenomena called spiritual. A wall, it will be seen was transparent to what passed from my hand or mind. Some three or four years after, a chest disease of my wife's became much aggravated; she became very thin, and was supposed to be suffering from consumption. She could not inspire more than seven-eighths of a pint of air, and it was stated that she would not live more than three months.

“One night she addressed me in the third person, and said, ‘If you are not careful you will lose her.’ I asked who? She replied, ‘Her, your wife!’ I said, ‘Who is now speaking!’ The reply was, in substance, ‘We are spirits; not one, but several. We can cure her, if you will observe what we tell you. Three ulcers will form on the chest. The first will break in ten days at thirty-six minutes past five o'clock. It will be necessary that you shall have such and such remedies at hand. No one is to be with you; their presence will excite her too much, and you must not inform her of these communications, for the shock would kill her.’ On the tenth day I went home early. I had set my watch by Greenwich time. Exactly at 5.36 she screamed; that happened which had been predicted, and she was relieved. The second crisis was foretold three weeks, and the third a fortnight before it actually occurred. The latter was predicted for the day of the annular eclipse, which was visible from Peterborough. I had promised to take her to Peterborough, but I found that the ulcer was to break at a time when she would be in the train. The spirits, however, said that it would not do to disappoint her, and she went, I taking the remedies in



my pocket. Half an hour before the appointed time she became ill, and precisely at the hour named the ulcer broke. I produced the remedies, much to her surprise, for she knew nothing of the prediction. These were my first spiritual experiences. It was not my wife, but the spirits who told me what to do, and by acting on their instructions she was so restored that in nine months her inspiration was increased from a pint to nearly a gallon, and she became quite stout. Later, after the birth of my first son, I was aroused one night by three tremendous raps. I thought there were thieves in the house, and I searched everywhere, but found nothing. I then thought, 'Can this be what is called Spiritualism?' The raps answered 'Yes; go into the next room!' I did so, and found the nurse intoxicated and Mrs. Varley rigid, cataleptic. I made cross passes and restored her.

"These things made me very anxious, and I resolved to see if there was any truth in what was related of Mr. Home. I called upon him, and told him what I had experienced. He made an appointment, and I went to him with Mrs. Varley; Mrs. Milner Gibson, and some two or three others were there. Mrs. Milner Gibson said that her son, who was dead, was there. He gave raps. She wore a white stomacher, I think it is called, and it suddenly became inflated by, as she said, her spirit child. The child was asked to touch me; he said he was afraid, but later in the evening he said that he was no longer afraid, and my hands were touched under the table, and my coat was pulled three times. I said to myself, 'This is not satisfactory, for it is all under the table.' Immediately afterwards, in answer to a mental wish, the lappel of my coat was lifted three times on the right side and then three times on the left. I was then, in answer to a mental wish, touched on the knee and on the shoulder quite distinctly the desired number of times."

A Member of the Committee: "Was this in the light?"

Mr. Varley: "Yes, in the light of five gas burners. Mrs. Milner Gibson and Mr. Home requested me to make a thorough investigation, and to get under the table and apply any test. In the course of the evening, very many phenomena presented themselves;

the table was repeatedly lifted off the floor, and while so suspended in the air, it instantly moved in any direction I wished it to go.

"Mrs. Varley made similar experiments, and when I was observing under the table, she observed above.

"These were the first physical phenomena I saw, and they impressed me, but still I was too much astonished to be able to feel satisfied. Fortunately, when I got home, a circumstance occurred which got rid of the element of doubt. While alone in the drawing room, thinking intently on what I had witnessed, there were raps. The next morning I received a letter from Mr. Home, in which he said 'When alone in your room last night you heard sounds. I am so pleased!' He stated that the spirits had told him they followed me, and were enabled to produce sounds. I have the letter in my possession now to show that imagination had nothing to do with the matter. The eye is treacherous and may deceive; therefore the testimony of a single individual is never conclusive. It is only when there is corroborative evidence that we can be safe. The fact that I had heard the raps was confirmed by the letter of Home. I shall confine my instances to cases in which there was corroborative evidence.

"In the winter of 1864-5 I was busy with the Atlantic cable. I left a gentleman at Birmingham to test the iron wire. He had seen something of Spiritualism but he did not believe in it. He had had a brother whom I had never seen in life. One night in my room there were a great number of loud raps. When at length I sat up in bed I saw a man in the air—a spirit—in military dress. I could see the pattern of the paper on the wall through him. Mrs. Varley did not see it. She was in a peculiar state and became entranced. The spirit spoke to me through her."

A gentleman asked how that was supposed to be done?

Mr. Varley—"While the person is in a trance the spirit controls the body and speaks and acts through the muscles and organs. He told me his name, and said that he had seen his brother in Birmingham, but that what he had to communicate was not

understood. He asked me to write a message to his brother, which I did, and received an answer from Birmingham, 'Yes, I know my brother has seen you, for he came to me and was able to make known as much.' The gentleman, as I said, was at Birmingham, and I was at Beckenham.

"This spirit informed me that when at school in France he was stabbed. This fact was only known to his eldest surviving brother and his mother. It had been concealed from his father on account of the state of the latter's health.

"When I narrated this to the survivor, he turned very pale, and confirmed it.

"In a second case, my sister-in-law had heart disease. Mrs. Varley and I went into the country to see her, as we feared for the last time. I had a night-mare, and could not move a muscle. While in this state, I saw the spirit of my sister-in-law in the room. I knew that she was confined to her bedroom. She said, 'If you do not move, you will die,' but I could not move, and she said, 'If you submit yourself to me, I will frighten you, and you will then be able to move. At first I objected, wishing to ascertain more about her spirit presence. When at last I consented, my heart had ceased beating. I think at first her efforts to terrify me did not succeed, but when she suddenly exclaimed, 'Oh, Cromwell, I am dying,' that frightened me exceedingly, and threw me out of the torpid state, and I awoke in the ordinary way. My shouting had aroused Mrs. Varley; we examined the door, and it was still locked and bolted, and I told my wife what had happened, having noted the hour, 3.45 a.m., and cautioned her not to mention the matter to anybody, but to hear what was her sister's version if she alluded to the subject. In the morning she told us that she had passed a dreadful night, that she had been in our room and greatly troubled on my account; and that I had been nearly dying. It was between half-past three and four A.M., when she saw I was in danger. She only succeeded in arousing me by exclaiming, 'Oh, Cromwell, I am dying.' I appeared to her to be in a state which otherwise would have

ended fatally. This was the second case in which there were more witnesses than one, and I think it may be considered a second case attended with reliable evidence. There is in addition this peculiarity that we were neither of us dead.

A third case I have, which is remarkable; it occurred in 1867, in New York. I had an agreement with the Atlantic Telegraph Company relating to an instrument of my invention, and as the time came for some payments to fall due, the arrangement was repudiated. I was in ignorance, however, of this determination. I happened to be unwell, and consulted three mediums to see whether they would agree. They did in the main. One was a Mrs. Manchester; amongst other things, she informed me I was to have some trouble about law proceedings, and in fact, she said there were papers of importance relative to the matter then on their way by the mail. This was on Monday, and the following Wednesday the mail arrived, and I received a packet of law papers and an explanatory letter from my lawyers, stating that they would proceed to file a bill in Chancery in consequence of the proceedings of the company, unless I sent other instructions through the cable. It was impossible for Mrs. Manchester to have known anything about this, and for my part, nothing was farther from my thoughts than a Chancery suit. I was an entire stranger to these three mediums, and at that time knew no Spiritualists in America.

“I have a fourth case in which I was the principal performer. I had been experimenting with earthenware and was attacked with spasms in the throat from the fumes of fluorie acid, which I had been using largely. I was very ill indeed, and used to wake up with contraction of the throat, and I was recommended to have some sulphuric ether beside me to breathe, which would procure instant relief. I used this six or eight times, but its smell was so unpleasant that I eventually used chloroform; I kept it by my bed side, and when I had to take it, leant over it in such a manner that when insensibility supervened, I fell back and the sponge dropped down. One night, however, I rolled on my back retaining the sponge, which remained on my mouth. Mrs. Varley was in the room above



nursing a sick child. After a little time I became conscious ; I saw my wife upstairs, and I saw myself on my back with the sponge to my mouth, but was utterly powerless to cause my body to move. I made by my will a distinct impression on her brain that I was in danger. Thus aroused, she came down and immediately removed the sponge, and was greatly alarmed. I then used my body to speak to her, and I said, ‘I shall forget all about it and how this came to pass unless you remind me in the morning, but be sure to tell me what made you come down and I shall then be able to recall the circumstance.’ The following morning she did so, but I could not remember anything about it ; I tried hard all day, however, and at length I succeeded in remembering first a part and ultimately the whole. My spirit was in the room with Mrs. Varley when I made her conscious of my danger. That case helped me to understand how spirits communicate : what my spirit wished she saw, and Mrs. Varley has had similar experiences. On one occasion she told me whilst in a trance, ‘It is not the spirits that now speak, it is myself ; I make use of my body the same as spirits do when they speak through me.’

“I have had another case in 1860 ; I went to find the first Atlantic Cable ; when I arrived at Halifax my name was telegraphed to New York. Mr. Cyrus Field telegraphed the fact to St. John’s and then to Harbour Grace ; so that when I arrived I was very cordially received at each place, and at Harbour Grace found there was a supper prepared. Some speeches followed and we sat up late. I had to catch the steamer that went early the next morning and was fearful of not waking in time, but I employed a plan which had often proved successful before, viz., that of willing strongly that I should wake at the proper time. Morning came and I saw myself in bed fast asleep ; I tried to wake myself but could not. After a while I found myself hunting about for some means of more power, when I saw a yard in which was a large stack of timber and two men approaching ; they ascended the stack of timber and lifted a heavy plank. It occurred to me to make my body dream that there was a bomb shell thrown

in front of me which was fizzing at the touch-hole, and when the men threw the plank down I made my body dream that the bomb had burst and cut open my face. It woke me, but with a clear recollection of the two actions—one, the intelligent mind acting upon the brain in the body, which could be made to believe any ridiculous impression that the former produced by *will power*. I did not allow a second to elapse before I leapt out of bed, opened the window, and there were the yard, the timber, and the two men, just as my spirit had seen them. I had no previous knowledge at all of the locality; it was dark the previous evening when I entered the town, and I did not even know there was a yard there at all. It was evident I had seen these things while my body lay asleep. I could not see the timber until the window had been opened. These are the leading points I have to confirm my belief in Spiritualism. I have received communications about my children. My youngest child who was very nervous and precocious was taken ill, and the doctor advised us to give him no meat, but he did not get any better. Shortly after, Mrs. Varley was entranced, and a spirit instructed us not to alter the child's original diet, to discontinue the treatment adopted towards him, and to send for a mesmerist. This was done, and the child quickly recovered under his passes. I myself once had an operation performed on a boil in my face, and I suffered some weeks afterwards from neuralgia. One night I was informed that the spirits were going to put me to rest, and that they were now beginning; as I lay in bed I suddenly became very hot and burst out into a perspiration and enjoyed a good night's rest. It was about 15 seconds after it had been said 'they are now beginning' that I burst out into a glow. The neuralgia was gone when I awoke next morning.

"At New York I found several excellent mediums and also some very clear-headed men who were investigating the subject, Dr. Gray, Mr. C. F. Livermore the banker, Dale Owen the author of 'Footfalls on the Boundary of another World,' and others, including Judge Edmonds.

"From these people I obtained valuable information, and com-

menced a series of experiments with electricity and magnetism. The medium was Miss Catherine Fox.

“It is now more than twelve years since I first became acquainted with spiritual phenomena, and for a long time I endeavoured to ascertain something definite about the laws governing the production of physical manifestations, but up to this time my evidence is almost entirely negative. In the absence of positive evidence, negative is useful, in limiting the ground over which one has to search, in a measure, in the dark.

“The spirit who was to co-operate with me was stated to be Dr. Franklin.

“When I appeared the first time with the apparatus at the minute appointed, I was received with a chorus of raps such as 50 hammers, all striking rapidly, could hardly produce.

“I have scarcely ever been able to induce mediums, through whom the physical phenomena occur, to consent to sit for accurate investigation. In 1867, Miss Kate Fox, the well-known American medium, agreed to sit with me in New York during a series of investigations into the relations between the known physical forces and the spiritual. Miss Fox, you are doubtless aware, is the medium through whom the modern spiritual manifestations were first produced in the United States, and through her mediumship the most striking physical phenomena I have ever heard of, were witnessed by my friends Dr. Gray, a leading physician in New York, and by Mr. C. F. Livermore, the banker, both of them shrewd, clear-headed men.

“During my investigations, Mr. Livermore and Mr. and Mrs. Townsend sat with us; Mr. Townsend is a New York solicitor, at whose house the meetings of the circle were held. A Grove’s battery of four cells, a helix eighteen inches in diameter, electromagnets, and other descriptions of apparatus were procured by me. The plan of action was as follows:—I was to go through a series of experiments, and the intelligences or ‘spirits’—as they are usually, and I think properly called—were to narrate what they saw, and if possible to explain the analogies existing between the



forces I was dealing with, and those which they employ. We sat eight or nine times for this purpose, but although great efforts seemed to be made by the spirits present to convey to my mind what they saw, it was unintelligible to me. The only positive results obtained were the following:—As we sat in the dark, and the manifestations were sometimes violent, I had taken the precaution to place the battery and keys on a side table, and led the wires from the “keys” or commutators, to the apparatus on the tables round which we sat, so that I could, in the dark, perform the various experiments I had arranged to try. Whenever, by accident, my hands came in contact with one of the wires, without my being aware which wire it was, I put these questions:—‘Is a current flowing through it?’ and if they said ‘Yes,’ I asked ‘In which direction does it flow through my hand?’ This experiment was repeated, if my memory serves me rightly, not less than ten times. Each time, directly after being informed of the direction of the current, a light was struck, and in every instance I found we had been correctly advised, if we assume that the current flows from the positive to the negative pole.

“The experiments with the helix were of two kinds:—First, ‘What action had the electrified helix upon me when placed over my head?’ Secondly, ‘When a piece of iron, or a compass needle, was placed inside it, could the spirits effect the magnetic action of the helix upon the iron or compass?’ Repeatedly during the investigations, and while we were in the dark, I seized the opportunity of placing the magnetized helix over my head, and immediately, on each occasion, the spirits requested me not to do it as it hurt me; nevertheless, I could feel no pain or sensible action myself. As no one but myself was aware that I intended to, or was placing, this helix over my head, it is perfectly clear that the fact was made known by some means inexplicable as yet by orthodox science.

“The result of my investigations in this direction lead me to infer that there are probably other powers accompanying electric and magnetic streams, which other powers are seen by the spirits,



and are by them mistaken for the forces which we call electricity and magnetism. This is an hypothesis not hastily arrived at. Whenever a current flowed through the helix, the spirits declared that they did augment and diminish the power of the magnetic field at will. My apparatus showed no such variation of power. They persisted in the correctness of their statement night after night, and time after time. I insisted on the contrary, that no action visible to me was produced. One evening, when carefully repeating the experiments (my apparatus was not very sensitive) the idea occurred to me to replace the little compass needle with a quartz crystal. The spirits described the crystal as a fine magnet, and declared that they altered its magnetism at will.

"Mrs. Varley can often see similar light issuing alike from steel magnets, rock crystals, and human beings, though in the latter case the luminosity varies in intensity. Putting all these things together, I think the spirits see around magnets this light (which Baron Reichenbach has named Od force) and not the magnetic rays themselves.

"About the existence of the 'flames of Od' from magnets, crystals, and human beings, I have had abundant and conclusive evidence from experiments with Mrs. Varley.

"I have used the word 'spirits,' well-knowing that the world at large does not believe that we have any warranty for assuming that our friends are able to communicate with us, after the dissolution of the material body. My authority for asserting that the spirits of kindred beings *do* visit us is :—1. I have on several occasions distinctly seen them. 2. On several occasions things known only to myself and to the deceased person purporting to communicate with me, have been correctly stated while the medium was unaware of any of the circumstances. 3. On several occasions things known only to our two selves, and which I had entirely forgotten, have been recalled to my mind by the communicating spirit, therefore this could not be a case of mere thought-reading. 4. On some occasions, when these communications have been made to me, I have put my questions mentally, while the medium—a

private lady in independent circumstances—has written out the answers, she being quite unconscious of the meaning of the communications. 5. The time and nature of coming events, unanticipated and unknown both to myself and the medium, have, on more than one occasion, been accurately made known to me several days in advance. As my invisible informants told the truth regarding the coming events, and also stated that they were spirits, and as no mortals in the room had any knowledge of some of the facts they communicated, I see no reason to disbelieve them. Mrs. Varley very frequently sees and recognises spirits; especially is this the case when she is entranced. She is a very good trance medium, but I have little power over the occurrence of these trances; there is consequently nearly as much difficulty in investigating through her mediumship, as there is investigating that extraordinary, unexplained natural phenomenon—ball-lightning—which occurs in times and places unexpected, and beyond human control.

“My early religious education was received from that very narrow-minded sect, the Sandimanians; their teachings wholly failed to satisfy my anxiety about the future. It was while endeavouring to get some information regarding the relations between man and the Deity, from some spirits who were evidently more advanced than myself, that I received, unexpectedly, a communication upon another subject which had puzzled me much, namely, ‘Why have not the more intelligent spirits given us some scientific information in advance of any yet possessed by man?’ As I think the explanation to be sound and logical, I mention it here, not asking you to accept it, but to prepare you when the same question occurs to your own mind.

“They told me that I myself had often experienced how imperfect words were as a means of communicating new ideas; that spirits in advance of the great intelligences upon earth do not use words in communicating with each other, because they have the power of instantly communicating the actual idea as it exists in their own thought, to the other spirit; that when they telegraph to mortals,

even through clairvoyant and trance mediums, who form by far the best channel for messages of high intelligence, they put the thought into the mind of the medium, for that mind to translate into words, through the mechanism of the brain and mouth ; consequently, what we usually get is a bad interpretation of a subject which the translator does not comprehend.

“The physical manifestations, wonderful and useful though they be, are generally believed by experienced Spiritualists, to be chiefly produced by spirits of a less advanced nature than the average men of civilised countries ; of the general truth of this I entertain no doubt.

“I have failed at present to find a medium acquainted with science, and therefore capable of translating into intelligible language ideas of a scientific nature. This is not to be wondered at, when we remember that there are thirty millions of British subjects, while there are probably not more than a hundred known mediums in the whole kingdom, and very few of these are well developed ; this gives us one publicly known medium to every 300,000 persons. Out of the thirty millions, I do not suppose there are as many as one thousand well acquainted with natural philosophy, and accustomed to reason thereon. If, then, but one in thirty thousand is a scientific investigator, while there is only one medium to 300,000 persons, we can only expect one scientific medium for each ten generations. Even if we assumed that there are 10,000 clear-headed natural philosophers in Great Britain, that would still only give us one good scientific medium to a generation. When it is further considered that the majority of our mediums are females, who, from the mis-education of English ladies, are rarely accustomed to accurate investigation, it is still less to be wondered at that so little advance has been made in the scientific branch of the subject.

“I have now told you about as much as I am able ; what I have stated is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It is a very difficult subject. One has almost no clue to the nature of any of these forces. What we want is a systematic combined

effort to investigate the matter. I think there is only a small minority suitably educated to investigate such subjects. I have been most careful to believe nothing, until unbelief became impossible."

On the conclusion of Mr. Varley's speech the Chairman, Mr. Jeffery, rose to thank him for his valuable statement.

Mr. Coleman said that he would like to know whether Mr. Varley considered himself a spirit rapper?

Mr. Varley did not consider himself a spirit rapper; he could not produce raps, and did not know the real meaning of the term as used by Mr. Coleman.

Mr. JEFFERY: "Does Mr. Varley accept the spiritual theory?"

Mr. VARLEY: "I firmly believe from the facts I have alluded to, that we are not our bodies; that when we die we exist just as much as before, and that under certain conditions we are able to hold communication with those on earth; but I also believe that many of the phenomena are often caused by the spirits of those whose bodies are present. The phenomena can neither be accounted for by magnetism nor electricity. These forces have nothing to do with the phenomena I have alluded to. It is unfortunate that the terms electricity and magnetism should have been applied to these unknown forces. As to our future existence I do not think any of us know much about its details after death, nearly all Spiritualists concur in believing, that the thinking part of man forms in the next life the body; that we are thought beings, and that those ideas which we originate in this life, are permanent realities in the next. With regard to electricity, I believe that electricity is one of the components of matter, and that there is an actual transmission through the wire. It has no applicable weight, no gravitation. Light is the vibration of cosmical ether. As to the nature of magnetism, I do not know what it is; I haven't the ghost of an idea.

"I remember a case a short time since at my own house, when a large ottoman pushed us all up in a corner without any visible means of locomotion. Mr. Home was the medium, and while we



were sitting round a table Mr. Home began to shiver. I looked over his shoulder and there was a side table coming slowly up towards us. At another time, at New York, a party of friends had been sitting at a table for some time when suddenly Miss Catherine Fox got up and went towards the door. Mr. Livermore went and stood by her and distinctly saw a hand, and we all saw a blue light come from under her dress. I have often seen these lights in her presence."

MR. BRADLAUGH: "While the most interesting part of your experience took place you were in an abnormal state?"

MR. VARLEY: "No, calm and clear. I believe the mesmeric trance and the spiritual trance are produced by similar means, and I believe the mesmeric and the spiritual force to be the same. They are both the action of a spirit, and the difference between the spiritual trance and the mesmeric trance is, I believe, this:—In the mesmeric trance, the will that overpowers or entrances the patient is in a human body. In the spiritual trance, that will which overpowers the patient is not in a human body. I have given much time to the question of the identification of spirits, and in one case, a medium, a lady in our own locality, (whom we had never previously known,) sent to say that a spirit wished to communicate, through me, to his father, and desired that I should go to his father, who was a materialist. This spirit was most anxious that his father should know that he was not annihilated—that there was a 'future life.' I had known this person while in the body, and he was a very genial fellow, but so very untruthful that no dependence could be placed on what he said. I therefore told him that in life he was such a liar that he must now convince me that he was the same person by relating some incidents of our lives which I had forgotten. He could not think of any at the time, and I made an appointment to meet him in a few days. He afterwards narrated to me the incidents of a boating excursion we had had on the Thames, repeating various expressions I had used, and detailing the circumstances attending them. He added that he was so bad on earth that he had not the confidence of his father, and that

he could not convince him of his identity as he had me. Most of the answers were written by the lady before alluded to, my question being put mentally."

MR. BRADLAUGH: "I think you have seen the colour of the clothes of a spirit as distinctly as the features."

MR. VARLEY: "Yes. I think I see the drift of that question, I was very much astonished when I saw a spirit in a dress. I explain it in this way; all known powers have to be treated as solids, in regard to something; a man finds air not solid at all. He can move through it as though it did not exist, but when he comes to an ironclad ship he is stopped, he cannot pass through the iron. Well, electricity finds air the most solid substance possible; it cannot pass through it, but it passes through the ironclad ship as though it were not in existence. An iron wire is to an electrician simply a hole bored through a solid rock of air so that the electricity may pass freely. Glass is opaque to electricity, but transparent to magnetism. Thence we may infer that everything is solid in respect to something, and that nothing is solid in respect to all things, and therefore thought, which is power, may be in some sort solid, so that if you take an old English farmer, for instance, he would be ashamed to be seen without his top boots, his coat with the buttons, and his hat. They are part of his identity, he cannot think of himself without them; they form part of his nature, and the moment he leaves the body and becomes a thought man, the thought boots, the thought coat and the thought hat form part of his individuality."

A vote of thanks to Mr. Varley closed the proceedings, and the meeting adjourned.

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TUESDAY 8TH JUNE, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

Mr. Thomas Shorter was examined this evening and the following is the substance of the statement he made:—

"My investigations into Spiritualism have extended over a period of about fifteen years; of late years, however, my inquiries

have been directed to its bearings on questions of history, philosophy and religion, rather than to its phenomena, as to the genuineness and spiritual origin of which I have long since satisfied myself. As, however, it is the facts of Spiritualism with which, I understand this committee is at present chiefly concerned I shall confine my statements to these so far as they have come under my own observation, and shall do so in the briefest terms possible. Some of the results of my earlier investigations into Spiritualism were published in the Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph of 1856 and 1857, and re-published in a separate volume entitled "*Confessions of a Truth Seeker*;"—I believe the first extended narrative of personal investigations into the subject in this country. I have since witnessed many facts of a kindred character to those there related, as well as others, but as I have not always noted these with the rigid scrutiny at first employed when investigating their nature and cause, I shall speak almost exclusively of the facts of my earlier experience; and as I wish to state them with the utmost accuracy, I think it will be better, instead of speaking from recollection if the Committee will allow me, to quote from my published narrative, written while the events were still fresh and vivid in my mind, and aided by memoranda taken at the time. After detailing many remarkable incidents witnessed in the course of my investigations, I proceed to condense the results of many observations and experiments into the following paragraphs.

"I have repeatedly seen a table incline forward to an angle of 45 degrees, or more; the candle-lamp, water-bottle, inkstand, pencils, &c., remaining on the table as if they were a part of it. At other times, I have seen the table rise *perpendicularly* from the floor, our hands all resting on the *top* of the table. I have seen the table-cover drawn from under our fingers, and thrown upon the floor. Once, as the table was moving, one person only lightly resting his fingers on it, I jumped on the top, and, by this novel mode of locomotion, was carried round the room. I have seen a table, with the medium (a delicate female) lightly touching it with the tips of her fingers, rise off the floor, and answers telegraphed

by its movements, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of two strong men to hold it down. I have received responses to questions by the table, no one placing their hands upon it but a child about four years of age. I have more than once seen the table move without human touch or contact. At the close of one of our meetings it was telegraphed by the table, without any of us being in contact with it, that we were to sing the doxology; and as soon as we had sung the first note, the table rose without any of our hands upon it, and commenced beating time like a *baton* in the hands of a music-master—keeping time to the end much more correctly than we did. I have known the names and ages of persons, the dates of events of a private and family nature, the time and place of the mortal decease of the communicating spirit, and many other particulars of a like kind, correctly given by table-tippings. I do not pretend that such particulars were uniformly correct; but I know that they were frequently so; and that, when neither medium nor circle were previously cognizant of the facts so communicated.

“At one of the sittings of our family circle, a gentleman was present, who had recently arrived in this country from New Orleans. In reply to his questions, he was told, through the table-tippings, the number of years he had lived there, and the number of weeks he had been in England—facts known only to himself. The spirit communicating with him purported to be an old friend of his. He gave the initials of his name, and said, that he died in New Orleans, ten years and a-half since; all which particulars our friend from New Orleans certified to be correct.

“I have repeatedly seen mental questions appropriately answered by the table; on one occasion, at which about a dozen persons were present, as a relative or friend was mentally asked for by one and another, the table darted from side to side, towards the questioner—as if to assure him or her of the reality of the spirit's presence; then a number of movements would be made, corresponding to the age of the deceased, the time of his or her death, or other mental question; none but questioner and correspondent knowing the question until after the answer was given.”



“ Concerning these facts I would remark—First, that they were witnessed in the light, either by day-light or gas-light, in ordinary well-lighted rooms. Secondly, that these facts were witnessed by all present, who testified to seeing them at the same time and in the same way. Thirdly, that no professional or public medium was employed ; the investigations were carried on by myself and friends for our own personal satisfaction, sometimes at their homes, sometimes at my own, and with different mediums. Whatever may be the value or significance of the phenomena, these circumstances should, I think, preclude suspicion as to their genuineness. With regard to one of these phenomena, in which, I think, the Committee will be particularly interested—the movements of the table without contact—allow me to relate an incident which occurred subsequent to the experiences related, and which is still fresh in my recollection. We had been holding a *séance* in the drawing-room of Dr. Dixon, 25, Bedford Row, and had thought the *séance* was ended ; after a little conversation, the doctor began playing his concertina. On the first note being played the table rose from the floor and kept up a rhythmical motion as the tune went on, corresponding to the music, and which continued as long as the air was played.

“ I have given only a fraction of my experience in Spiritualism and have thought it best to confine my evidence to the more rudimentary phases of the subject ; but even with these physical manifestations of spirit agency, that which seems to me most noteworthy, and to which I would specially call attention, is the evident intelligence, foreign to ourselves, associated with the phenomena. Before sitting down, I feel it a duty to protest against the phrase ‘ Spirit-rapping ’ which has to-night been used as synonymous with Spiritualism, and for which a defence has been attempted. What is thus called, is only one of the least of the phenomena of Spiritualism ; and these phenomena are, as it were, only the fringe of the subject,—*its accidents, not its essence*,—they belong to its evidences, they are not Spiritualism itself. Spiritualism is the recognition of man as a spiritual being, who, even while on

earth can, under certain conditions, hold communion with spirits who have left the mortal form. It is therefore concerned with all facts which tend to establish or confirm the belief in man's spiritual nature and continued life after the death of the body. It embraces all studies which may throw light on the nature, forces, and laws of the spirit-world, and its connection with the natural world ; and on the interests, duties, and responsibilities of man as a spiritual and immortal being, related to both worlds. To characterise this by such terms as 'table-turning' and 'spirit-rapping,' as if these were either the adequate enumeration of its evidences or the fair expression of its spirit, or anything but newspaper slang, is either ignorance or impertinence, and is wholly unworthy of a serious inquiry into the subject, such as that in which I understand this Committee to be engaged. It is as insulting and offensive and, I may add, as silly as it would be to describe Christianity as 'bread-breaking' and 'water-dipping.' Object to Spiritualism if you will, but at least respect our right to designate it by that term which we feel alone expresses its true character and aim."

In reply to questions from members of the Committee, Mr. Shorter said, "The table at Dr. Dixon's, rose from four to six inches from the floor, and continued in motion several minutes, in fact, until the music ceased ; it was on a clear light summer evening ; there were seven persons present, and the movements of the table were distinctly seen by all of them, the table being at least three feet distant from each of the company. I have known mental questions answered through the hand of a medium by automatic writing, as well as telegraphed by sounds and movements. On one occasion, at Dr. Dixon's, eight or ten persons being present (myself being one) each one received in writing an answer to a mental question, and each testified to the answer being appropriate and correct. I believe that such facts as these I have witnessed are produced by spirits, that is, beings differing from ourselves only in being divested of mortal bodies, beings substantial but not material. I am aware that various theories and hypotheses have been put forward to explain these facts as the result of

physical and mundane causes. I have most carefully examined these, and have satisfied myself of their insufficiency. I have in my book related several instances of the communication of intelligence not known to the medium, or to any one present at the circle. I have related the instance of a friend who was about to emigrate, and from information received from the emigration authorities, expected to sail in a week. It was telegraphed through the table-movements that he would not sail for 31 days, unforeseen circumstances delayed his departure, and he sailed just 31 days from that time. On another occasion, I inquired concerning a friend in Australia of a spirit relative of his who purported to be present, and received sundry information concerning him, which subsequently proved to be correct. Among other things, I, as a test, inquired how long it was since my friend left England, and was told three years and a-half. I maintained it could not be more than three years, but the spirit insisted that it was three years and a-half. On inquiry, I found it was three years and seven months less one week; no one present but myself knew of the circumstances referred to. Other evidence bearing upon this point will be given by my friend Mr. Manuel Eyre, and it was with a view of getting his evidence placed before the Committee rather than of reproducing my own, that I have attended this evening."

The following questions were then asked:—

Mr. JEFFERY: "To what do you attribute these phenomena?"

Mr. SHORTER: "I believe them to be caused by beings *substantial* but not *material*. Those who are acquainted with German philosophy will understand my meaning."

Mr. DYTE: "Can you give us an instance of an answer having been given that was not in the mind of any person present?"

Mr. SHORTER: "The incident I have mentioned is such a one. The gentleman was about to leave the country, and asked how long it would be before he did so. The table signified thirty-one days. He laughed at this, for it was his intention to leave that very week. It turned out, however, to be the truth; some circumstances arose unexpectedly, and he was detained exactly the



time named. Another time, I asked how long a friend had been away, and received an intelligible answer which eventually proved correct."

Mr. GANNON: "Did the table rise bodily or only on one leg?"

Mr. SHORTER: "The table rose completely, four or six inches from the ground, and there was no one near?"

Mr. Manuel Eyre was the next witness, and spoke as under:—

"My experience has extended over some sixteen to seventeen years. My attention was first attracted, so as to create an interest in Spiritualism by a lady, a friend of ours, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States. She was an educated lady of ability and position—sister-in-law of the Attorney-General—but she was not a believer in either a God or a future existence, and was really unhappy in her non-belief. I, with a few intimate friends, met her at this time, not having seen her for several months, in Washington. We noticed in her a lighter, brighter expression, and a seemingly happier tone of mind. We spoke of it after her visit the next day. She called again, and then brought up the subject of Spiritualism. We all began to turn it and her into ridicule, and treated the subject as low and vulgar. Her reply was—I remember it as well as if it were only yesterday—'*Ridicule is no argument, and it is not in keeping with your usual good sense.*' She then went on to say, 'You know what my belief was, and that I was really miserable in that belief. I have investigated Spiritualism and not only believe in it, but it has made me perfectly happy in the belief of a future existence; and my daughter, whom, you know, I was training in my former unbelief, is a changed girl, and instead of being the wilful, irritable child she was, is happy in the thought of the future, is kind, attentive and considerate in her actions towards myself and others.' I had no answer to such facts; but my attention being thus drawn to the subject, I have lost no opportunity of investigating it. I have seen it in nearly all its phases, not only in many different parts of America, but also in this country. I will relate only a few instances out of the many I have witnessed, and I may say, most of these manifestations, and



generally the best of them, have been in private circles. During a visit to Buffalo, New York, whilst at the house of a private gentleman, during a conversation with his wife, a piano (a large square one) standing in the middle of the drawing room, no one within fifteen feet of it, commenced moving up and down, was raised entirely off the floor, coming down with a force you would think sufficient to break it, and at the same time music coming from the piano as if some competent performer was playing on it. This, Mrs. C—— afterwards told me, occurred so often that she was afraid her piano would be injured, and therefore begged the spirits to desist, which they did.

“I will now relate a fact which, I think, shows an intelligence foreign to that of the persons present at the circle where it occurred. One object of my visit to this country was to obtain if possible the register of the baptism of a person born in England, and who died in America a century ago. From information given me, I was led to believe I would get this in Yorkshire or Cambridgeshire. I spent over three months and took a great deal of trouble but all to no purpose. I had received from America a spirit communication that I would be able to get the information of where this baptismal register was to be found through a medium in this country. I tried through several mediums but got nothing satisfactory but the assurance I would get it. I at last received a communication from a spirit directing me to go to Mrs. Marshall. Being mistrustful of public mediums I determined to use extreme caution in pursuing my investigation. I went to Mrs. Marshall in the winter of 1862. I did not tell who I was or what I wanted—sat down in one corner of the large room—Mrs. Marshall was sitting in the other,—this was near the window. I was conversing with Mrs. Marshall when the table, a large, heavy round table, came jumping across from the opposite side of the room and turned over into my lap; there was no one near the table and it was in broad day-light. We then had some communications by the alphabet through the movement of the table. I said nothing about the information I wanted, but when

leaving said I would come again. I did so in a few days. Before leaving home I wrote out and numbered about a dozen questions—among them was the question, ‘Where can I find the register of the baptism I am searching for?’ The paper with the questions I had folded and placed in a stout envelope and closed it. When we sat down to the table I asked, after some other questions, if the spirits would answer the questions I had written and had in my pocket—the answer, by raps, was ‘yes.’ I asked if I should lay the paper with the questions on folded as it was and in the envelope on the table, and the answer was ‘yes.’ I took the envelope containing these questions out of my pocket, and without opening it, laid it on the table. I then took a piece of paper and, as the questions were answered,—No. 1, 2, and so on,—I wrote down the answers. When we came to the question where I could get the register of this baptism, the table telegraphed ‘Stepney Church,’ and at the same time Mrs. Marshall, sen., in her peculiar manner, blurted out ‘Stepney.’ Being at that time a stranger in London, I did not know there was such a place. I went on with the questions I had prepared and got correct answers to all of them. A few day afterwards I went to Stepney Church and after spending some days in searching I there found the register of the baptism as I had been told.

“A somewhat similar instance, combined with a perception of future incidents, occurred some ten years ago in Cleveland, Ohio. We were at a private circle of friends; after the raps and a number of physical manifestations, the question was asked by Mrs. Macready, the well-known dramatic reader, and a lady, whom I shall style Mrs. N——, ‘Whether they would ever meet again?’ The answer, by a spirit giving the name of Queenah, was ‘*Yes, you will meet in England and under very trying and heart-rending circumstances, and Mrs. N—— will then be a widow.*’ The whole matter had passed from the minds of Mrs. Macready and myself, and was entirely forgotten; but when Mrs. Macready was at the Camberwell Lunatic Asylum, giving an entertainment to the patients, one of the first questions the physician asked Mrs. Macready

was, 'Do you know Mrs. N——? she says she knew you in America, and has talked about you ever since she heard you were coming.' Mrs. Macready answered, 'No, it is only one of her fancies.' After the entertainment was over the doctor again said to Mrs. Macready, 'Mrs. N—— insists upon it that you do know her and requests me to say to you 'Queenah'—'Cleveland.' The meeting of ten years before flashed on Mrs. Macready's mind, and as she was greeting the patients, Mrs. N——, bathed in tears, rushed up to Mrs. Macready exclaiming, 'Don't you remember me,' and repeating over and over, 'Queenah,'—'Cleveland.' Mrs. N—— had lost her husband; they had suffered great reverses of fortune, and she had in consequence become insane, and this was the meeting that had been predicted.

"Another class of spirit manifestation I have witnessed and which I think worthy of your attention is that of writing on the skin; the following is an instance—I was at Wankeegan, a village near Chicago, and whilst there visited a medium, a Mrs. Seymour. She was a poor woman, a trance-speaking medium, and during the time she was speaking under trance she would hold out one arm, and with the forefinger of the other hand make a rapid motion as if writing, the movement of the finger being in the air about a foot from the arm; a few minutes after and during the time she was still in trance she stripped up her sleeve, a loose hanging sleeve, and there on her arm, so distinctly written that it could be read across the room, was the *peculiar signature* of the spirit giving the communication. In this instance it was that of a near relative of a lady who accompanied me; the lady and myself were strangers in the town and utterly unknown to the medium. During the time I was in the neighbourhood this medium, and especially this class of phenomena of which she was the subject, became so notorious that a committee, consisting of the mayor, some physicians, and a number of leading citizens of the neighbouring town of Milwaukee, was appointed to investigate it. Mrs. Seymour appeared before them several times, but the committee could not come to any conclusion as to the cause of the phenomena and broke up without making a report."

The following questions were asked relative to the above statement of Mr. Eyre.

MR. GEARY : "Are you aware of any cases of imposture in connection with Spiritualism."

MR. EYRE : "Yes, I am aware of cases of imposture."

MR. GEARY : "Are there any means by which outsiders can distinguish between the phenomena produced by imposture and those produced by the spirits."

MR. EYRE : "Yes, they can except in cases of dark *séances*. When manifestations are given in the light, most people can find it out. In the first place the table tipping by spiritual influence is different and in cases of imposture a jerk will be given by the medium very different from the undulating motion of real Spiritualism. In one case a woman, who was called a 'squatter,' became a medium; she moved into another village farther west, and her class of mediumship was this,—she used to have written on her arm the names of the spirits who communicated with her. Mrs. Macready, myself, and a party of friends went to see her, and we found her at the wash tub; presently she was thrown into a trance and held out her arm and went on speaking and directly she stripped up her arm and there was the name of Mrs. Macready's husband in red letters, his own peculiar signature. There was a committee formed at the place to investigate it, and the mayor took the chair, but they finally came to the conclusion that they could make nothing of it. She was a great talker while in this trance and was most peculiar in this one respect, that the marks remained on her arm for five or ten minutes. The letters were raised as in stripes, and signatures of persons that she had never even heard of were so written."

Captain Webber said that he had known letters to be written on the arm and breast by natural means.

MR. EYRE : "In this case the medium did not touch her arm which was covered by a sleeve while the writing was being produced."

Mrs. HONYWOOD : "With regard to this writing on the skin, if



done by spiritual influences, it generally disappears in about ten minutes, but if done by some pointed instrument it will last much longer."

Mr. WALLACE: "Have you ever known an impostor who has practised on anyone for a year and then been discovered."

Mr. EYRE: "I have never known an imposture last for that time."

Mr. Levy said that he had heard that writing on the flesh in the manner described had been a common occurrence during the revival in the north of Ireland.

Mr. Lowenthal, the next witness gave evidence as follows:—

"I am not in any way a professional spiritualist but a merchant. I have my offices in Fenchurch-street, but I must object to my name appearing in the papers. On one occasion I entered a room in a hydropathic establishment and a gentleman followed me, and I was compelled to walk up to him and speak to him. I immediately felt all sorts of ailments. I at once told him to sit down, and commenced walking round him making all sorts of passes. I put a number of questions to him and he told me he felt greatly relieved."

A MEMBER: "That was mesmerism."

Mr. LOWENTHAL: "It had nothing to do with mesmerism; all these actions were involuntary, and were entirely spiritual. I did not make mesmeric passes at all. My exertions were so great that persons thought I must fall down. I am frequently made to speak the language of another nation. I believe it to be an Indian language. My mouth utters sounds that I do not understand and which have no meaning to me. I think it is the language of some North American tribe. It is a soliloquy, and I get an impression on the brain, an idea that it means so and so. A voice articulate but not audible conveys a meaning to me. I have been among the Indians a great deal, and it sounds to me like their language."

Mr. Serjeant Cox: "The language may have been impressed on your mind."

Mr. LOWENTHAL: "Oh, not at all. I speak it with great fluency,

But I cannot say I have ever spoken a language I have never heard. These communications convey information in the shape of impressions on the mind. I feel quite joyous while uttering them, as if under a pleasant influence. Sometimes information comes but the idea always comes in my own language. The words my mouth utters come involuntarily. I have seen people of standing in society, and most refined, act in as free and unrestrained a manner as wild Indians in the wood, imitating the camp life and the war dance, and speaking in strange languages. This was done, I believe, to take the starch out of them, so that they might receive spiritual knowledge. On one occasion I was with a man and fell on his lap and addressed him in the most endearing language; when I recovered, he explained that I had given him great gratification in personifying his dear sister, then in the spirit land, who, he was sure, had controlled me at the time to manifest her presence and speak to him as though she were still here."

Mr. Hockley, the next witness, spoke as follows:—

"I have been a spiritualist for 45 years, and have had considerable experience. This is a crystal encircled with a silver ring, as a proper crystal should be. It was formerly the custom to engrave the four names of God in Hebrew on this ring. I knew a lady who was an admirable seeress, and obtained some splendid answers by means of crystals. The person who has the power of seeing, notices first a kind of mist in the centre of the crystal and then the message or answer appears in a kind of printed character. There was no hesitation, and she spoke it all off as though she was reading a book, and as soon as she had uttered the words she saw, they melted away and fresh ones took their place. I have 30 volumes, containing upwards of 12,000 answers received in this way, which I keep carefully under lock and key. A crystal, if properly used, should be dedicated to a spirit. Some time ago I was introduced to Lieutenant Burton by Earl Stanhope, and he wished me to get him a crystal, with a spirit attached. I also gave him a black mirror as well, and he used that in the same manner as you would a crystal. You invoke the person whom you wish

to appear, and the seer looks in and describes all, and puts questions and receives answers. Lieutenant Burton was greatly pleased and went away. One day my seeress called him into the mirror. She plainly recognized him, although dressed as an Arab and sunburnt, and described what he was doing. He was quarrelling with a party of Bedouins in Arabia, and speaking energetically to them in Arabic. An old man at last pulled out his dagger and the Lieutenant his revolver, when up rode a horseman and separated them. A long time afterwards Lieutenant Burton came to me, and I told him what she had seen, and read the particulars. He assured me it was correct in every particular and attached his name to the account I had written down at the time, to certify that it was true. These books are locked up and nobody can see them ; and sometimes, if I repeat some previous question which has escaped my memory, I am referred to the book in which it has been previously answered. The seers are generally of the female sex, and it is impossible to tell by their personal appearance whether they have the gift or not. I once knew a seeress that weighed 19 stone. The only way to tell whether a person is a seer is by trying. Two persons occasionally see the same thing at the same time. On one occasion a lady was looking into the crystal, and when the mist divided she saw her husband in conversation with a lady, a friend of hers, and then a boy made his appearance. A friend looked over her shoulder as she had put it down to rest her eyes and saw precisely the same thing. Although I have had a crystal since 1824, I have never seen anything myself. My seeress was perfectly in a normal condition, and in full exercise of all her faculties, and used to give answers to metaphysical and other difficult questions, which she could not possibly understand. I have nearly 1000 volumes on occult sciences. I do not think it has anything to do with mesmerism. I put a crystal in the hands of a spiritualist, and she became quite rigid, and I had to make a pass before she could see. Some ladies would look five minutes, others ten minutes, and others fifteen, before they saw anything, but if it appeared to them foggy it has merely to be developed. The words appear on the mirror the

same as they do in a crystal. The girl sits in front and you ask a question. The answer appears on the glass more in printing than writing, and as she repeats the words they disappear. Only the girl sees the writing on the mirror. Gentlemen come to me and say, 'I want to see my guardian spirit.' The girl sees and describes the appearance. It appears in the same form as in life. I have sometimes come in the mirror in spite of myself—my double I should call it,—to my annoyance. She would say, 'You are in the glass now,' I would say, 'How am I dressed,' and she would reply, 'As you are now,' or 'As you were last week,' as the case might be; and then would follow a dialogue, my spirit or double talking to the seeress, while it has also been in the glass. White's Life of Swedenborg embodies my views as to this."

A MEMBER: "This is surely something more than a double, there would then be three. I do not understand this."

MR. HOCKLEY: "There is a great deal more in this than you can understand. I do not believe that I have two spirits, but one soul, a body and an atmospheric spirit apart from my body, and that my spirit is not in me now but with my soul, and that it will form the covering of my soul in the future state, but that it may even now occasionally be visible to others. On one occasion a man appeared in the small crystal with a book before him, and she saw it was splendidly done but too small to read. I gave her a powerful reading glass and she could then read it, for the glass increased the size."

MR. SERJEANT COX: "Are you of opinion that this is in any way connected with spirits?"

MR. HOCKLEY: "Yes."

MR. SERJEANT COX: "You think the spirits appear in the glass."

MR. HOCKLEY: "I have no means of telling whether the spirits are there. I believe it is a spiritual manifestation, because I receive answers to questions which the seeress could not fabricate."

MR. SERJEANT COX: "Is there any evidence that the things seen are objective and not subjective?"



Mr. HOCKLEY: "Yes, the book I alluded to, which was too small to read; when I got the glass the seeress could read it."

Mr. ATKINSON: "A book was seen; was it a real book, or do you suppose it was the spirit of the book in the glass?"

Mr. HOCKLEY: "Yes, I suppose it was; why shouldn't I believe there is a spirit to everything? I believe that if I, or any human being, had forged a man's cheque and then burnt that cheque, it could have been seen by my seeress."

Mr. Serjeant Cox: "Supposing she had never heard anything about it?"

Mr. HOCKLEY: "It would have been the same."

Mr. Serjeant Cox: "Do you think the spirit is in the glass, or in the mind of the seer?"

Mr. HOCKLEY: "I have no means of forming an opinion."

Mr. Serjeant Cox: "Then why do you believe that spirits have anything to do with the matter?"

Mr. HOCKLEY: "Because she speaks Hebrew and languages of which she knows nothing, and because, moreover, events that are taking place at the very hour can be brought up and the circumstances of their occurrence accurately described."

Dr. EDMUNDS: "You believe it is spiritual, because nothing else will account for it; if I had a cheque in my pocket now, could a seer read it?"

Mr. HOCKLEY: "No."

Mr. ATKINSON: "It could be done."

Mr. HOCKLEY: "Cruikshank and others have had a wrangle about the spirits clothes; did anybody read in Scripture of a spirit appearing without clothes? It is no good twisting words into fantastical notions, if you want to get at truth."

Books and Crystals, &c., were produced and the proceedings terminated.

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TUESDAY, 22ND JUNE, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

Mr. D. D. Home, in answer to a call from the chair, said that he

did not come prepared to give evidence; that would be better done by those who had seen the phenomena, many of which had occurred when he was unconscious. But he would be very glad to answer any questions that might be put to him.

The CHAIRMAN: "Can you state the conditions under which manifestations take place?"

Mr. HOME: "You never can tell. I have frequently sat with persons and no phenomena have occurred; but when not expecting it, when in another room, or even sleeping in the house, the manifestations took place. I am, I may say, extremely nervous, and suffer much from ill-health. I am Scotch, and second sight was early developed in me. I am not imaginative; I am sceptical, and doubt things that take place in my own presence. I try to forget all about these things, for the mind would become partly diseased if it were suffered to dwell on them. I therefore go to theatres and to concerts for change of attention."

The CHAIRMAN: "Will you give us some information relative to external physical manifestations, such as the lifting of tables or persons? Do you go into a trance?"

Mr. HOME: "Certain things only occur when I am in a trance. But the trance is not necessary for all the phenomena, the only thing necessary is that the people about should be harmonious. At times I have been awake at night by a presence in the room, and then the spirits would dictate what was being done in another room. I wrote it down, and found it always correct."

Mr. BENNETT: "What are your sensations when in a trance?"

Mr. HOME: "I feel for two or three minutes in a dreamy state, then I become quite dizzy, and then I lose all consciousness. When I awake I find my feet and limbs cold, and it is difficult to restore the circulation. When told of what has taken place during the trance it is quite unpleasant to me, and I ask those present not to tell me at once when I awake. I myself doubt what they tell me. I have no knowledge on my own part of what occurs during the trance. The 'harmonious' feeling is simply that which you get on going into a room and finding all the people present such that you

feel at home at once. Manifestations occur at all times—during a thunderstorm, when I am feverish or ill, or even suffering from hemorrhage of the lungs. Scepticism is not a hindrance, but an unsympathetic person is. Sex has not any influence. As for mediums they are generally very nervous. Since I was born I was never expected to live, but I found the manifestations beneficial if not overdone. It is calming. At the age of six I was not able to walk. I have been given over by Dr. Louis, of Paris. The spirits told me I should get better. At the time of the law suit with Mrs. Lyon I had congestion of the brain. I was paralysed ; my memory left me. They told me I would get well again, and I have done so."

Mr. Atkinson asked witness the difference between manifestations in and out of trance.

Mr. HOME : "In a trance I see spirits connected with persons present. Those spirits take possession of me ; my voice is like theirs. I have a particularly mobile face, as you may see, and I sometimes take a sort of identity with the spirits who are in communication through me. I attribute the mobility of my face, which is not natural, to the spirits. I am most frequently in the air when I am awake. When I am in a trance I frequently take a live coal in my hand. I was sceptical on that point, and on taking one in my hand when awake I raised a blister. I have never been mesmerised, and cannot mesmerise. I have an exceedingly soothing power, an exceedingly gentle way of approaching any one, whether well or ill, and they like to have me near them. I may say I am exceedingly sick after elongations. While in Paris I saw the figure of my brother, then in the North Sea. I saw his fingers and toes fall off. Six months afterwards tidings came of his having been found dead on the ice, his fingers and toes having fallen off through the effects of scurvy."

Mr. COLEMAN : "Does Mr. Home remember any circumstance happening in the presence of Mrs. Trollope?"

Mr. HOME : "I stayed in Mrs. Trollope's house at Florence."

Mr. COLEMAN : "No ; I mean at Ealing?"

Mr. HOME : "I do not remember."

Mr. COLEMAN said he had read a letter from Mrs. Trollope, in which she said she received almost daily evidence of the presence of the spirits of her family, more particularly of her children. He also remembered seeing Mr. Home, while at his house, lifted from his seat, carried into an adjoining room, brought back again, and laid on the table. Mr. Home knew he was so, because he asked for a pencil and wrote on the ceiling.

Mr. HOME : " Yes, I recollect that perfectly. In the houses of several people I remember constantly being lifted. On one occasion I was staying at the chateau of M. Ducosse, the Minister of Marine. I was then lifted half a foot in the air. The movement was so gentle that I had not observed it in the least. I moved back from the table to see if it would occur when I was standing. It did occur. The room was longer than this, and I was carried to the end of the room. The Count de Bourmont, one of the senators, was staying there. I had evening dress shoes on. He took hold of the shoes when I was in the air ; they remained in his hand, and I was carried up. One Sunday evening Lord Adare was told to put flowers outside a window ; we saw the flowers brought into the room where we were. The Master of Lindsay was present as well as Lord Adare. Instead of my body being lifted, the flowers were taken from one window to another. I do not remember being taken out at one window and in another, for I was unconscious, but numbers witnessed it. Once I was elongated eight inches. A man was standing holding my feet. In one case I was laid on the floor, and Lord Adare had hold of my head, and the Master of Lindsay of my feet. The elongations were not confined to my legs, for I seemed to grow very much from the waist. I have seen a table lifted into the air with eight men standing on it, when there were only two or three other persons in the room. I have seen the window open and shut at a distance of seven or eight feet, and curtains drawn aside, and, in some cases, objects carried over our heads. In the house of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, a table went up so high in the air that we could not touch it. I have seen a pencil lifted by a hand to a paper and write, in the presence of



the Emperor Napoleon. We were in a large room—the Salon Louis Quinze. The Empress sat here, the Emperor there. The table was moved to an angle of more than forty-five degrees. Then a hand was seen to come. It was a very beautifully formed hand. There were pencils on the table. It lifted, not the one next it, but one on the far side. We heard the sound of writing, and saw it writing on note paper. The hand passed before me, and went to the Emperor, and he kissed the hand. It went to the Empress; she withdrew from its touch, and the hand followed her. The Emperor said, ‘Do not be frightened, kiss it;’ and she then kissed it. It was disappearing. I said I would like to kiss it. The hand seemed to be like that of a person thinking, and as if it were saying, ‘Shall I?’ It came back to me, and I kissed it. The sensation of touch and pressure was that of a natural hand. It was as much a material hand seemingly as my hand is now. The writing was an autograph of the Emperor Napoleon I. The hand was his hand, small and beautiful as it is known to have been. In the house of Mr. Bergheim a smelling-bottle on the table began to tremble, as if some one with a very shaky hand had taken hold of it, and then it began to spin round on the table; it span a minute at least. There were three witnesses who saw that. I went into a trance immediately afterwards, and told them that a spirit named James was present. I learnt afterwards that Mr. James had a very shaky hand. The Emperor of Russia, as well as the Emperor Napoleon, have seen hands, and have taken hold of them, when they seemed to float away into thin air. I have never seen material substances brought into a room when the doors and windows were closed. Flowers have been brought in from a parterre, but the spirits always asked for the window to be open. When other witnesses were present they have seen heads. One witness will testify to having seen heads in her lap at night. They were luminous; there was quite a glow from them.”

Mr. MEYERS: “Do you know of any communication from the Emperor Napoleon I. to the present Emperor?”

Mr. HOME: “That I should decline to answer. The hand was

like alabaster. I have not seen the hand from the box of the Davenport Brothers, and cannot say how these hands were formed."

Mr. Jeffery asked if Mr. Home could give any information as to the state and condition of departed human beings?

Mr. Home said that his information led him to the opinion that precisely as we go to sleep here so we awake in the other world—Wesleyans were Wesleyans, Swedenborgians were Swedenborgians, Mahometans were Mahometans. The spirit of a certain pacha who once appeared was strongly Mahometan.

Mr. DYTE: "As to future rewards and punishments?"

Mr. Home said that bad spirits see the continuous results of the wrong they have done, and in some cases have endeavoured to repair it by declaring where concealed papers were. Spirits retained or showed special marks of identity, scars, &c.

The CHAIRMAN: "Suppose a man dies after coming out of prison, will his hair still be what is vulgarly called 'cropped'?"

Mr. HOME: "I have never seen a gaol bird. But when the Henry Clay was burnt in America there was a case in point. I saw Jackson Downing standing before me with a deep scar on his forehead. I said, 'Jackson Downing is lost!' 'No,' said Dr. —, 'he is saved; he swam on shore with Mrs. Downing.' Mrs. Downing was at the hotel, but she became uneasy when she found that her husband did not appear. She said she had seen him on shore after he swam with her. It was then found that he had swam out again to assist some one, and a mast falling overboard split his skull, just as I saw it. The spirits obey a law of progress; some do not appear now that once did."

The CHAIRMAN: "Do they always retain a ghastly wound like that you have just described?"

Mr. HOME: "No; it is merely shown as proof of identity just as the blue coat and brass buttons are shown in other cases."

Mr. GANNON: "Do you ever see the spirits of persons who are living? Mr. Varley speaks of such."

Mr. HOME: "No; that pertains to second sight, quite a distinct thing. Then I see the individual himself, and not his spirit. A

deadly tremor comes over me, and there is a film on my eyes, and I not only see persons, but hear conversations taking place at a distance."

THE CHAIRMAN : "Have spirits hair, and eyes, and nose, and so forth?"

MR. HOME : "Yes."

THE CHAIRMAN : "Are the hair and eyes of the same material, if I may use the term?"

MR. HOME : "I do not know; I never dissected them."

THE CHAIRMAN : "Are the spirits male and female?"

MR. HOME : "Yes."

THE CHAIRMAN : "Have they passions and affections?"

MR. HOME : "They have."

DR. ROBERTS : "Have they children?"

MR. HOME : "I think not."

MR. BENNETT : "Is the human form the usual form of the spirits?"

MR. HOME : "Yes."

MR. LEVY : "Have you seen the spirit of a lower animal—the spirit of a dog for instance?"

MR. HOME : "No, but I have seen something which might have been, but I could not tell whether it was the result of imagination. In my opinion there is another stage of animal life, but that is only a theory. I have seen birds."

THE CHAIRMAN : "And fishes?"

MR. HOME : "No, not fishes."

THE CHAIRMAN : "Have you seen the apparition of an inanimate object—such as an inkstand?"

MR. HOME : "No, the power is limited to living things. I have seen a flower, it disappeared."

THE CHAIRMAN : "Then if there be an apparition of a flower, may there be one of a coarser vegetable—a potato for example?"

MR. HOME : "I have not seen one. Now I recollect having seen a bottle appear, I think it was a water-bottle."

MR. HOME said that Spiritualism was either a gigantic imposture or a matter worthy of the deepest inquiry, and he hoped that the

investigation would be conducted without any attempt to throw ridicule on the affair. As for himself he gave readings for his living ; he was only a poor man, and his only object was to place before the Society the results of his experience.

Mr. VOLCKMAN : " Have you effected cures ? "

Mr. HOME : " I would prefer that those who were cured should answer that question. "

Mrs. Cox, of Jermyn-street, was then called, and she stated that she had seen levitations. She saw Mr. Home rise gradually in the air, and make a cross on the ceiling with a pencil. She saw him carried out into the garden, as described by Miss Jones at a former meeting. She had seen a card-table lifted on to a table, and then removed to a couch, no person touching it. That was at her own house in Jermyn-street. She had felt the spirit form of her baby, and could believe she was still nursing it in the flesh. She corroborated Mr. Home as to the existence of spirit hands and forms. She was cured by a spirit touch. Thirteen years ago, she had a constant pain in her side ; a spirit-hand was placed on the spot, and then went to Mr. Home for more power. She then used a decoction of hops by direction of the spirits, and she was completely cured. She had seen the accordion played, and the piano when locked was played by the spirit of her child. There was a very elevated tone in the instruction of the spirits, and she believed she was a better person under their influence.

Signor G. Damiani, then gave evidence as follows :—

" I am, comparatively, a novice in Spiritualism, having been engaged, altogether, only four years in the investigation of its phenomena and the study of its literature. I am not a medium, nor have I sought to be developed into one ; but I have come in contact with more than one hundred of that class (of whom only three were professional, or paid mediums), and have assisted at more than two hundred *séances* in England, France, and Italy. I am personally acquainted with many of the leading spiritualists of Europe, of whom I here make bold to say that, as a class, they are certainly not inferior in intellectual calibre to any other body of



scientists whom I have yet been privileged to encounter. Amongst the many phenomena which I might lay before you, I will content myself with the relation of a few only, as being sufficient to effectually dispose of all the theories of 'unconscious cerebration,' 'mental aberration,' 'collective delusion,' and other woeful epidemics, propounded by the advanced philosophers of the day in order to account for, and explain away, matters which even *they* admit to be somewhat abnormal in their nature.

"Now for facts. In the spring of 1865 I was induced by a friend to attend my first *séance*. This I remember, took place at No. 13, Victoria Place, Clifton, the medium being Mrs. Marshall. I had been, up to that moment, an utter sceptic in spiritual matters; chokeful of positivism, I conceived man to be but a very acute monkey (*simia gigantis stupenda*, to be scientific), and recognised in life only a brief and somewhat unsatisfactory farce. I was however, at the same time open to conviction,—which perhaps was foolish in me. I found assembled at this *séance* some forty gentlemen, lawyers, physicians, clergymen, and journalists, besides a fair sprinkling of ladies. A medical man, well known in the neighbourhood of Bristol, Dr. Davey of Norwood, filled the chair. At first, I refused to sit at the large table whereat the manifestations were to take place, for being what I have now ceased to be, an unqualified believer in the candour and truthfulness of the newspaper press, I made up my mind (certain journalistic comments being fresh in my recollection) to keep a sharp look-out upon the medium's movements. I was thus occupied (*intentaque ora tenebat*) when sounds altogether unlike anything in my experience, were distinctly heard by me to proceed from the ceiling, some four yards as I should judge, above the medium. These sounds, travelling down the wall, along the floor, and up the claws and pillar of the large round table, came resounding in its very centre. This ought to have convinced me at once that the medium's toes, at least, had nothing to do with the phenomenon; but prejudiced incredulity is so strong a cuirass against the sword of truth, that I remained still watching the feet of the medium under the table, as

a cat does its prey. The Chairman was the first to commence conversation with our (supposed) spiritual visitors. Shortly afterwards it came my turn to talk with the spirits. 'Who is there?' 'Sister,' was rapped out in reply. 'What sister?' 'Marietta.' 'Don't know you; that is not a family name;—are you not mistaken?' 'No; I am your sister.' This was too much: I left the table in disgust. Still, those knocks proceeding from the ceiling had puzzled me, and excited my curiosity; therefore, when the company dispersed I remained behind, to discover, if I could, the *modus operandi*. I invited myself (the assurance of sceptics is proverbial) to take tea with Mrs. Marshall and her hostess, after which I begged to have a private *séance*. 'Now I shall catch you,' I thought. Sure enough the raps came again, distinct and sonorous as before. 'Who are you?' 'Marietta.' 'Again! Why does not a sister whom I can remember come?' 'I will bring one;' and the raps were now heard to recede, becoming faint and fainter until lost in the distance. In a few seconds a *double knock*, like the trot of a horse, was heard approaching, striking the ceiling, the floor, and lastly the table. 'Who is there?' 'Your sister Antonietta.' 'That is a good guess,' thought I. 'Where did you pass away?' 'Chieti.' 'When?'—Thirty-four loud distinct raps succeeded. Strange—my sister so named had certainly died at Chieti just thirty-four years before. 'How many brothers and sisters had you then? Can you give me their names?' Five names (the real ones) all correctly spelt in Italian were given. Numerous other tests produced equally remarkable results. I then felt I was in the presence of my sister.

"'If that is not in truth my sister,' I thought, 'then there exists in nature something more wondrous and mysterious even than the soul and its immortality.' What had taken place at this, my first *séance*, produced such an effect upon my mind that I determined to continue the investigation until I could come finally to a rational conclusion upon the subject. During the fortnight of Mrs. Marshall's stay in Clifton, I frequented the *séances* daily, and on an average for four hours a day. Spirit after spirit I

evoked, who one and all established their identity through the most searching tests. Having been thus uniformly successful, I felt somewhat perplexed about Marietta. Had I been mystified in her case, and in hers alone? Finally, I wrote to my mother, then living in Sicily, inquiring whether, among the nine children she had borne and buried, there had been one named Marietta. By return of post, my brother, Joseph Damiani, architect, now residing at Palermo, wrote as follows:—‘In reply to your inquiry, mother wishes me to tell you that on October 2nd, 1821, she gave birth, at the town of Messina, to a female child, who came into the world in so weakly a condition, that the midwife, using her prerogative in such emergencies, gave her baptism. Six hours after birth the child died, when the midwife disclosed the fact of her having baptised the infant under the name of Maria (the endearing diminutive of which is Marietta). The birth and death of this sister I have verified by reference to the family register.’ You must admit, gentlemen, that in the above case ‘unconscious cerebration’ has not one leg to stand upon.

“To proceed with my testimony. I have been present at *séances* when a sheet of blank paper and a pencil have been placed under the table, and a few seconds afterwards, these things being picked up, sentences have been found written on the paper. How do I know that it was not the medium’s toes did this? you may ask. Well, I can only reply that in such case the medium must indeed have possessed most extraordinary toes.

“Whilst in Sicily, quite recently, a most telling poem, two hundred lines long, in the Sicilian dialect, besides communications in German, French, Latin, and English, have been received in my presence, the medium in this case being a singularly illiterate person of the artisan class.

“I have met in Clifton with a boy medium, between ten and eleven years of age, who would write long essays on spiritual philosophy the matter and manner of these essays being such as would have been accepted from any accomplished writer of mature age who was conversant with the subject. I took the well-known

Alessandro Gavazzi to a *séance* with this youthful medium. The acute polemist put various abstruse metaphysical and theological questions to the medium, or rather to the medium's controlling spirit, and received replies so deep and learned as to convince him that it was no mere case of 'clever boy.' This young medium—whose writings now extant would fill a dozen volumes—exhibited a different handwriting for every controlling spirit by whom he was directed, and wrote occasionally in several of the dead languages.

"I know another medium, aged fifteen, also resident at Clifton, who, when under spirit influence, will give answers written in rhyme, so exceeding good, both as to matter and style, as to preclude any possible question in the minds of those who know him as to their being his own unassisted composition.

"While in Paris a few weeks ago, I was at several *séances* with the 'healing medium,' Jacob, the ex-Zouave. I have seen patients who entered the room upon crutches, walk out of it perfectly cured. On touching his patients, Jacob invariably enumerates (to their great amazement) all the drugs they have been taking. '*Vous vous êtes fait empoisonner avec de l'opium et de l'aconite, et vous vous êtes nourri de porc salé et de viandes saignantes,*' I heard him say on one occasion. '*Oui, monsieur,*' the sufferer ejaculated. '*Tenez vous, je n' ai pas besoin que vous me le dites, puisque je le sens,*' was the curt rejoinder.

"When present at *séances*, I have heard instruments sounding and playing in good time and with correct enharmonic accompaniments, whilst, to my own knowledge, no one in the room, with the exception of myself, knew anything about music, and it certainly was not *I* that played on these occasions.

"I have heard noises, as of sledge-hammers, on the walls of a private house in Clifton, making the whole building shake to its foundations. The sound of footsteps moving about from one part of the room to another, I have repeatedly heard in open daylight, upon occasions when no one was present in the room with me, except a seated medium. I have seen a heavy table rise bodily



from the floor when only the medium's fingers and my own were resting lightly on it, and rising in such a manner, and to such a height, as to render *toe leverage* a matter of physical impossibility. I have often, when seated, been shifted, together with the chair on which I have been sitting, a foot or more from the table during a *séance*.

"I have seen a lady raised in her chair at least a clear foot from the ground, and sustained in that position for several seconds, whilst no hands were touching her or her chair—the medium, moreover, being a considerable distance off.

"I have frequently held spirit hands (at all events, hands not attached to any corresponding body) in my grasp. The touch of these hands differed so much from that of human hands, that I can bring nothing like analogy or comparison to bear upon it. They were not so warm as human hands, and ordinarily (though not invariably) were softer in texture. Their contact has generally sent a thrill through my frame, somewhat resembling a slight electric shock. These hands would melt away and dissolve in mine. I have often *seen* the hands. They are generally beautiful in form, with tapering fingers, such as those Canova gives to his ideal nymphs and goddesses. Sometimes they present a whitish and opaque appearance, at other times I have seen them pink and transparent.

"I have assisted at several *séances* with the Davenport Brothers—those men of all living (except, perhaps, Daniel D. Home) the best abused. On their last visit to England in 1868, I happened to be selected as one of the persons who were to tie them to their seats in that well known cabinet of theirs. Immediately after they were thus secured, five pink transparent hands appeared ranged perpendicularly behind the door. Subsequently I placed my hand in the small window of the cabinet, when I felt each of my five digits tightly grasped by a distinct hand, and while my own was thus held down, five or six other hands protruded from the hole above my wrist. On withdrawing my hand from the aperture, an arm came out therefrom—an arm of such enormous proportions that,

had it been composed of flesh and bone, it would, I verily believe, have turned the scale (being weighed) against the whole corporeal substance of the smaller Davenport. At the *séance* I have just mentioned, there were present, amongst others, Mr. Goolden Perrin, of Westmoreland Place, Camberwell; Mr. Robert Cooper, of The Terrace, Eastbourne, Sussex; also a celebrated mesmeric doctor, whose name has for the moment escaped my recollection.

"I have assisted at *séances* where, the windows being closed and the doors locked, *fresh* flowers have been showered on the company just previously to their departure. It was at Baron Guldenstubbé's, in London, in the year 1867, that I first remember having witnessed this. The flowers would have filled a large basket, and the fact of their being *perfectly fresh* and besprinkled with dew—the medium, Mrs. Guppy, *née* Nichol, having been with us continuously for at least two hours before the *séance* commenced—in itself, and apart from the lady's great respectability, precludes any, the faintest, suspicion of 'erinoline mystification,' or sleight of hand. I must not omit mentioning that, on examining the flowers, some of which still remain in my possession, we perceived that the ends of the stems presented a blackened and burnt appearance. On our asking the invisible intelligences the reason of this, we were told that electricity had been the potent 'nipper' employed.

"In the year 1866, at a dark *séance* held at the Spiritual Lyceum in London, I distinctly saw Miss Nichol raised on her chair from the ground by some unseen agency, and placed on the table round which I and many others were sitting. A gap in a folding door, through which the light flickered, enabled me from where I sat to distinctly see her carried aloft through the air with extreme swiftness.

"Another interesting series of phenomena coming under my personal observation has been the 'voice *séances*,' whereat I have heard and conversed with spirit voices. Having attended at several of these *séances* with different mediums, and in the presence of numerous investigators, I have for hours together conversed with voices which could not on either of these occasions have proceeded

from any living person in the room wherein, for the time being, we were assembled. The voices vary in pitch, from the firm, vigorous, declamatory tone of the stage to the most shadowy whisper. How could I be certain, it may be asked, that this was not ventriloquism? I will give my reasons for the faith that is in me in this behalf *seriatim* :—

“1st.—Because three of these voice mediums are personal acquaintances of my own, move in respectable society, and running imminent risk of detection, would have all to lose and nothing to gain by the stupid trick of imitating ‘sperrits.’

“2nd.—Because the voices that have greeted me at the houses of these unpaid mediums have also subsequently conversed with me at private *séances* at Mrs. Marshall’s and have there exhibited the same peculiarities as to tone, expression, pitch, volume and pronunciation, as upon the former occasions.

“3rd.—Because these voices have conversed with me upon matters known to me alone, and of a nature so personal and private that I am perfectly certain that no one present at any of the *séances* except myself could by any possibility have been cognisant of them.

“4th.—Because the voices have often foretold events about to happen, which events have invariably come to pass.

“These dark *séances* of which I have spoken, generally ended with the appearance of blue or red lights over the spectators’ heads, and with the copious sprinkling of delicious perfumes. ‘On me, even on me, who now speak, descended violet odours.’

“A few more facts and I have done. On Wednesday, June 23rd, 1869, having accidentally met with Mr. Gardner (a spiritualist, and contributor to a spiritual magazine called ‘Human Nature,’) he proposed introducing me to a trance medium, Mr. F. Herne, of Great Coram Street, Russell Square. I assenting, we went thither together, and having been left alone with the medium, I had a *tête-à-tête séance* with him. Mr. Herne fell into a trance, and whilst in this state five voices spoke through him to me. Three of these were unknown to me, but the other two I recognized immediately,

as if they had spoken to me in the flesh. One of them was the voice of the dearest friend and relation I ever possessed. She spoke to me of family matters, so intimate and, I may say, sacred in their character, that the supposition that Mr. Herne (a man I had never even seen before) or anybody else, could by any possibility have known of them, would be an insult to my common sense to entertain for one moment. On awakening from the trance, Mr. Herne complained of great pain in his back, and observed that the spirit who had just quitted him must have so suffered during life. This was perfectly true; the dear friend to whom (I am firmly assured) I had even then been speaking, did, from the cradle to the grave, suffer acute pain in the three upper vertebræ of her spinal column.

“I know a lady in Bristol who was so short-sighted that even with powerful glasses, she had great difficulty in reading the largest print. Four years ago, she (having then developed into a writing medium) was impelled, as she says, by her mother’s spirit, to write to this effect, ‘Discard spectacles, have faith, and you will soon recover your sight.’ She did so, and the effect followed almost immediately. I have seen her frequently since engaged, by candle-light, in delicate and minute embroidery. This same lady had her front upper teeth nearly forty-five degrees out of the perpendicular. In the course of a few days after receiving a message purporting to come from the same spirit, her teeth became perfectly straight, without the intervention of a dentist. I have begged this lady to allow me to use her name in connection with these facts, but she has objected, assigning as a reason the ridiculous nature of the last phenomenon. I will not be so ungallant as to disobey her, but I will give the names of two or three gentlemen who are, like myself, personally cognisant of the facts I have above narrated:—I will mention Messrs. Watson, Blackwell, and John Beattie, all of Bristol or Clifton.

“These facts are only a handful compared with those which I have experienced during four years of persistent investigation. After such evidence, brought home to me in so extraordinary a manner,



I should deserve to fall from man's estate and dwindle into '*simia gigantis formosa*,' nay into '*gorilla liliputiana stupidissima*,' if I still allowed a doubt to enter my mind as to the causes producing these effects. With regard to the philosophy of Spiritualism—a new philosophy indeed, but boasting a vast polyglot literature which for profundity and variety of thought has no parallel—I would refer the Committee to the list of books supplied to them by Mr. William Howitt.

"I would earnestly entreat of the Committee, to become as much as possible acquainted with the philosophy of Spiritualism, before compiling and publishing their report. As to those fatally clever men who, approaching the subject with a jaunty indifference, after half an hour's examination pronounce it 'a delusion,' and denounce those who believe in it as 'credulous,'—let me remind these gentlemen that the worst form of credulity is a persistent belief in the non-existence of things which do exist. In all their diatribes and philippics against Spiritualism, these persons have, in sooth, themselves shown an amount of credulity painful to consider."

Signor Damiani then, in answer to a series of questions, said that he had learned from the spirits that there was no distinction of rank in the other world. It was a regular republic—a democracy. The longer we lived here the riper were we for the next; and after we left the body we began to progress for ever. Bad men have to go through an atonement, suffering mentally and repenting, but there was no physical suffering. The spirits were themselves studying the question of the Deity. In the next life painters will paint, sculptors will make statues. They would not fashion the spirit of marble, but (as he understood) spirit marble. He had not seen spirit-horses, but he had heard of them. Dogs were immortal as well as men. No created living forms ever perished—not even trees.

Mr. VOLCKMAN: "As spirits eat, is there ever starvation amongst them?"

Signor DAMIANI: "Everything is there so ordered that it is im-

possible—or it is not like the disorder here. I have had spirit hands placed in my own. They differ from ours in not being so warm, but some are beautiful—pink—transparent. A man is much more beautiful in the spirit. The lady I spoke of in Clifton,—whose teeth came out almost horizontally,—could not close her lips; yet the spirits in the course of a single night put them straight and rendered them more beautiful in substance. That fact is known to several, and I can give the secretary the name in confidence.”

Mr. MEYERS : “Are there any wicked spirits?”

Signor DAMIANI : “Yes, and lying spirits. I know a remarkable case in point connected with Dr. Livingstone. You will remember that for a period of some two years it was supposed that Dr. Livingstone was dead. I went to a *séance* at Mrs. Marshall’s and I asked, ‘Is the spirit of Dr. Livingstone here?’ A spirit answered, ‘Yes, I am Dr. Livingstone!’ I then asked him how he had been killed, and he related all the particulars. He said that a native had crept up behind him, and given him a blow of a club on the back of the head, and killed him outright at once. I asked what happened then, and the spirit said that the savages boiled his body and ate it. I said, ‘That was horrible! You must have been greatly horrified by your body being boiled and eaten.’ He said, ‘No; I was not horrified at it, for we must all be eaten.’ Well, as you may imagine, I was greatly struck by this. I wrote out an account of Livingstone’s death, and of his body being boiled and eaten, and I enclosed it in a paper, and gave it to a gentleman, with injunctions that he should keep it, and only open it when I should tell him, on the discovery of the fact of the doctor’s fate. But we all know that Livingstone was not killed at all, and that the spirit was simply lying.”

The CHAIRMAN : “How can you distinguish between a medium who is an impostor and a spirit that is a liar?”

Signor DAMIANI : “You cannot distinguish, but in that case it was the spirit that was lying. Mrs. Marshall would have had no object in telling me an absurd story about Livingstone being killed and boiled and eaten. And the explanation the spirits gave

was this—‘You came here,’ they said, ‘out of curiosity, and you found an impertinent spirit, who amused himself at your expense.’ It was simply the trick of a ragamuffin spirit.”

Mr. Glover then described various phenomena which he had witnessed in the presence of Mr. Home. He had seen an accordion played, a table made so light that it could be lifted without effort, and then made so heavy that lifting was impossible, &c. His arm was banged so furiously on the table that it ached. He took up a pencil, and the spirit wrote the name of his grandfather. He also wrote a verse of a hymn to God, to the tune of ‘God save the Prince of Wales.’ Once, when the air of ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ was being played, he said that he thought the spirits ought not to play a profane air, and immediately a most magnificent hymn tune, which he had never heard before, was played. He had made a study of the time of the coming of the Lord, and he was informed that the Lord would come in August. The spirits also pointed to texts in the Bible. He made a cross in a circle, and asked, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, if the communications were of God, and the answer was ‘No!’ He then asked if they were of the devil, and the answer was, ‘Yes!’ He believed Satan did it all to deceive men.”

MR. COLEMAN: “If Spiritualism brings sceptics to believe in a hereafter, would you still think it to be demoniacal?”

MR. GLOVER: “Yes. For the object of the devil is to get you to deny the Atonement. The teaching is contrary to the Gospel, and therefore it must be from Satan.”

Mr. Levy then drew the attention of the Committee to three propositions contained in Mr. Varley’s letter to the “Eastern Post,” and said that the spiritualists might usefully address themselves to the possibility of establishing them. The propositions were briefly—1st, that those who have died still exist, and can make themselves manifest to those on earth; 2nd, that the next stage of existence is one of progress; and 3rd, that in the next world a man is unable to conceal his true nature.

The meeting was then adjourned.

TUESDAY, 29TH JUNE, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

This being simply a business meeting, no evidence whatever was received.

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TUESDAY, 6TH JULY, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

The acting Honorary Secretary, Mr. I. L. Meyers, read the following paper from the Master of Lindsay :—

“ I first met Mr. Home at the house of a friend of his and mine, Mrs. G—— ; and when we left the party, I asked him to come into my rooms, in Grosvenor Square, to smoke a cigar, &c. As he came into the room I heard a shower of raps run along a beam that crosses the ceiling. It sounded like the feet of a flock of sheep being driven over boards. This was the first thing of the sort I had ever heard and, naturally, I was interested and wished for more, but in vain ; nothing more happened, and soon he went away.

“ On the Sunday after, I was asked by Mr. Jencken to come to his house in Norwood to dine, and after to have a *séance*. I went, and while we were at dinner, in the full day-light, a chair came up to the table with a rush, from about twelve feet distance. Home was very much startled by this, and he was so much discomposed that he had to leave the room. On his return, and during his absence, we heard faint raps. We went on eating our dinner, when suddenly the table began to vibrate strongly, and then suddenly rose in the air till the top of the table became level with my nose as I sat. I should think that would give an elevation of fourteen or fifteen inches. It remained suspended for about thirty seconds, and slowly sank. The table is, I think, mahogany, and about four feet square. During the whole time there were knocks in all parts of the room.

“ Another time, at Mr. Jencken's house, I saw a crystal ball, placed on Mr. Home's head, emit flashes of coloured light, following the order of the spectrum. The crystal was spherical, so that



it could not have given prismatic colours. After this it changed, and we all saw a view of the sea, as if we were looking down at it from the top of a high cliff. It seemed to be the evening as the sun was setting like a globe of fire, lighting up a broad path over the little waves. The moon was faintly visible in the south, and as the sun set, her power increased. We saw also a few stars; and suddenly the whole thing vanished, like shutting the slide of a magic lantern; and the crystal was dead. This whole appearance lasted about ten minutes and pleased us very much, both on account of the curious nature of the vision, if it may be called such, and from the really beautiful effects of light, &c., that we had seen.

"There were two candles and a bright fire burning in the room. We noticed that the flame of these candles was depressed occasionally as if some gas had been poured over them, and again at other times they would gain in brilliancy.

"I saw a grand pianoforte raised in the air about four inches, without any noise; and subsequently the notes were struck, although it was locked and the key taken away.

"On another occasion I saw Mr. Home, in a trance, elongated eleven inches. I measured him standing up against the wall, and marked the place; not being satisfied with that, I put him in the middle of the room and placed a candle in front of him, so as to throw a shadow on the wall, which I also marked. When he awoke I measured him again in his natural size, both directly and by the shadow, and the results were equal. I can swear that he was not off the ground or standing on tiptoe, as I had full view of his feet, and moreover, a gentleman present had one of his feet placed over Home's insteps, one hand on his shoulder, and the other on his side where the false ribs come near the hip-bone.

"That evening I missed the last train at the Crystal Palace, and had to stay at Norwood, and I got a shakedown on a sofa in Home's room. I was just going to sleep, when I was roused by feeling my pillow slipping from under my head; and I could also feel, what seemed to be a fist, or hand, under it, which was pulling it away; soon after it ceased. Then I saw at the foot of my sofa,

a female figure, standing *en profile* to me. I asked Home if he saw anything, and he answered, 'a woman, looking at me.' Our beds were at right angles to one another, and about twelve feet apart. I saw the features perfectly, and impressed them upon my memory. She seemed to be dressed in a long wrap, going down from the shoulders, and not gathered in at the waist. Home then said, 'it is my wife; she often comes to me.' And then she seemed to fade away. Shortly after, I saw on my knee a flame of fire about nine inches high; I passed my hand through it, but it burnt on, above and below it. Home turned in his bed, and I looked at him, and saw that his eyes were glowing with light. It had a most disagreeable appearance. The only time since that I have seen that occur, a lady was very much frightened by it; indeed, I felt uncomfortable myself at it. The flame which had been flitting about me, now left me, and crossed the room about four feet from the ground, and reached the curtains of Home's bed; these proved no obstruction, for the light went right through them, settled on his head, and then went out; and then we went to sleep. There were no shutters, blinds, or curtains over the windows; and there was snow on the ground, and a bright moon. It was as lovely a night as ever I saw. I have several times since seen Mr. Home elongated, but never, I think, to such an extent as that night. The next morning, before I went to London, I was looking at some photographs, and I recognized the face I had seen in the room upstairs overnight. I asked Mrs. Jencken who it was, and she said it was Home's wife. I have frequently seen Home, when in a trance, go to the fire and take out large red-hot coals, and carry them about in his hands, put them inside his shirt, &c. Eight times, I myself have held a red-hot coal in my hands without injury, when it scorched my face on raising my hand. Once, I wished to see if they really would burn, and I said so, and touched a coal with the middle finger of my right hand, and I got a blister as large as a sixpence; I instantly asked him to give me the coal, and I held the part that burnt me, in the middle of my hand, for three or four minutes, without the least inconvenience.

"A few weeks ago, I was at a *séance* with eight others. Of these, seven held a red-hot coal without pain, and the two others could not bear the approach of it; of the seven, four were ladies. That same evening, Home went to the piano and began playing upon it. He called to us to come and stand round him and it. I was next to him. I had one hand on his chair, and the other on the piano; and while he played, both his chair and the piano rose about three inches and then settled down again.

"I have not offered any theory to account for these phenomena, as I believe the Committee only wish to be furnished with facts which have come under my personal notice."

In reply to Dr. Edmunds, Mrs. Honynwood said she had never seen Home give a live coal to anyone. He had in her presence carried one in a hand bell, and had then placed the coal upon his hand on a piece of paper. He afterwards handed it to Mrs. Hall and another lady; the paper was not injured in any way.

Miss Douglass, the next witness, corroborated the statement of the Master of Lindsay. She also had seen the elongations and the handling of live coals; this was at Mr. Home's own house at Ashley Place.

MR. SWEPSTONE: "In reference to the elongations, how could you be certain that Mr. Home was not standing on tiptoe?"

MISS DOUGLASS: "He stood in the middle of the room where all could see."

Captain WEBBER: "From what part of the body did the elongations take place?"

MISS DOUGLASS: "I cannot tell you."

DR. KING CHAMBERS (physician to the Prince of Wales): "Were the clothes elongated as well as the body?"

A gentleman said a space was visible between the waistcoat and trousers.

Miss DOUGLASS continued: "Mr. Home held the hot coals a long time in his hand, till they were nearly black. He then placed them between his shirt and coat, and they did not singe either. I then touched them, at first they scorched me, but immediately after, they felt cold like marble."

In answer to Mr. Wallace, Miss Douglass said she had no preparation on her hands when she touched the coals.

Mr. Rowcroft next gave evidence; he said he had seen a hand playing upon an accordion and apparently suspended in space. This was at Mr. Jones's house, where he met Mr. Home. Mr. Jones, with himself, a friend and Mr. Home sat at a table, and in ten minutes raps came. The raps were to the effect that witness was a medium, and that if he remained that night "they" would develop his power for him. The initials A. E. R., were then given, and on further questioning the spirits, the name Albert Edward Rowcroft was given in full. Mr. Home then held the accordion, and it played most beautiful music. When the music ceased, the accordion left Mr. Home's hand and came under the table. I said, "I see a hand;" the instrument then went round the table and came back to Mr. Home. Witness considers the agency on this occasion was spiritual, since no one present could have produced the phenomenon. He continued: "That was the first *séance* I had ever witnessed, but I have since had some further experience, and with regard to messages conveying information, I may say I have a sister who was coming from America; I did not know when she would come, but I asked the table and the answer was, the first week in July; at the time I asked the table, she had not then started; the prediction was quite true."

In answer to Mr. Gannon, witness said he knew July was a favourable month for crossing the Atlantic.

Mr. WALLACE: "With reference to the accordion, was there sufficient light to enable you to see clearly?"

Mr. ROWCROFT: "There was plenty of light; six gas burners were lighted. I saw the hand for about a minute; it accompanied the instrument round the chairs. I was the only person who saw the phenomenon, and there were *nine* persons present. When Mr. Home held the accordion, I saw it open and shut, and he frequently exclaimed, 'they are pulling,' and he was obliged to exert considerable force against the unseen player. Mr. Home's disengaged hand was resting on the table; all present saw the accordion



floating in space. At Mr. Jones's suggestion we sang a hymn, the accordion gave the key note, and after a pause it accompanied us. On the same evening I saw something like a hand creep between the cloth and the table; I felt the fingers distinctly; my friend saw the shape also, and every one present touched it."

With respect to apparitions, witness said, "I once saw a form at the foot of my bed; a beautiful form—a spirit."

MR. GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE: "Why do you call it a spirit?"

WITNESS: "Because I can think of it as nothing else; no other person was in the room, and the door was locked. It was opaque; I could not see through it."

MR. HOLYOAKE: "Did it stay long?"

WITNESS: "About two or three minutes."

MR. HOLYOAKE: "Did you uncover the hand which crept between the table and the cloth?"

WITNESS: "No."

MR. HOLYOAKE: "Why not?"

WITNESS: "I cannot tell; I was perfectly sceptical when I went to Mr. Jones's only the night before; I was ridiculing his son for believing in the phenomena."

Mr. Jones, who was next called, corroborated the statement of the last witness about the accordion. He said, "I pitched the key-note of the hymn but the spirits corrected me, I was half a note under." He continued, "I once saw a spirit hand at a *séance* which was held in the house of a cabinet minister; several persons of note were present. The hand came between the dress of a lady who was seated with us, and her black lace fall. It was clear and distinct. The lady seemed to recognise the hand, for tears trickled down from her eyes; she said it was that of her late nephew. The room was well lighted. I have frequently seen forms like hands under the table-cloth; I have felt them and, when pressed, they always seemed to dissolve. I have frequently been touched; the touch is peculiar, like that of a glove filled with air. On one occasion I laid my handkerchief over my hand, it was then pulled, and on looking I found that a minute

knot had been tied in the corner. When I have such phenomena as these, coupled with intelligent and trustworthy answers, I cannot but believe them to be spiritual.

"I have seen Mr. Home's levitations. I saw him rise and float horizontally across the window. We all saw him clearly. He passed right across just as a person might float upon the water. At my request he was floated back again. The window blinds were then moved up and down without any one touching them; this seemed to be done to tone the light. I may add that all this took place at the house of Mr. Milner Gibson."

Mr. Jones then produced a handkerchief which had been tied in a knot by the "spirits." He said, "The handkerchief was folded when I took it from my wife's drawer; at the *séance* that evening I laid it down at my feet. Shortly after I looked down and found the handkerchief gone. It was under the centre of the table. I took it up and found that it was tied in a 'country girl's knot.'"

In continuation witness said: "I heard the music Mr. Rowcroft referred to, and I know no human hand touched the accordion. I did not see the spirit hand. I don't remember seeing the accordion, but I heard the music. I understand Mr. Rowcroft saw it, but I did not."

Dr. EDMUNDS (to Mr. Rowcroft): "Was the accordion in such a position that others could see it?"

Mr. Rowcroft then described the position of the instrument, from which it appeared that it was on a level with the table. Witness said, in continuation of his evidence: "My friend, Mr. Milne, did not see the hand though he sat next me. It was above the accordion and therefore higher than the table."

Mr. HOLYOAKE: "If the instrument travelled round the table all must have seen it?"

WITNESS: "Certainly."

Mr. HOLYOAKE: "But not the hand?"

WITNESS: "No."

Mr. Jones was then recalled. He said: "After exquisite music had been played, some one suggested 'God save the Queen.' It

(that is, the spirit) said 'yes,' but added, 'you sing,' referring to me. I then sang, and it accompanied me exquisitely. The instrument, on this occasion, was in Mr. Home's hand close to the ground, and I and others saw it swaying up and down.

"Home was obliged to keep a vigorous hold on account of the power exercised by the spirits; his disengaged hand was on the table. The accordion belonged to Mr. Milner Gibson."

MR. VOLCKMAN: "Did any person see Mr. Home's feet?"

MR. JONES: "I cannot say."

DR. ELLIS: "Does Mr. Home believe all this is done under spiritual influence?"

WITNESS: "Yes."

Mr. Jones then said: "I paid five guineas to obtain a special sitting with the Davenports. I thought they were impostors and did my best to discover the trick. We had a dark sitting. I helped to tie the young men and I placed paper under their feet and marked the shape of the feet with a pencil. On the table was a pile of musical instruments. I had provided myself with some phosphorised oil which I poured over them; my party then held hands. The oil flared, and the instruments flew up and round the room; the light from the oil was sufficient for us to see all persons present. I asked, mentally, to be struck on the head and was struck by a guitar very powerfully. So far as my experience went I did not discover any imposture. The young men's feet had not stirred a hair's breadth."

Mr. Swepstone addressing the Master of Lindsay, asked whether the elongations referred to in his paper were in the trunk or legs of the subject?

The Master of LINDSAY: "The top of the hip bone and the short ribs separate. In Home, they are unusually close together. There was no separation of the vertebræ of the spine; nor were the elongations at all like those resulting from expanding the chest with air; the shoulders did not move. Home looked as if he was pulled up by the neck; the muscles seemed in a state of tension. He stood firmly upright in the middle of the room, and

before the elongation commenced, I placed my foot on his instep. I will swear he never moved his heels from the ground. When Home was elongated against the wall, Lord Adare placed his foot on Home's instep, and I marked the place on the wall. I once saw him elongated horizontally on the ground. Lord Adare was present. Home seemed to grow at both ends, and pushed myself and Adare away.

"I have seen the levitations, but not in a brilliant light. Home on one occasion was sitting next me; in a few minutes he said, 'keep quiet, I am going up;' his foot then came and touched my shoulder; I then felt something like velvet touch my cheek, and on looking up, was surprised to find that he had carried with him an arm chair, which he held out in his hand and then floated round the room, pushing the pictures out of their places as he passed along the walls. They were far beyond the reach of a person standing on the ground. The light was sufficient to enable me to see clearly. I saw the levitations in Victoria Street, when Home floated out of the window; he first went into a trance and walked about uneasily; he then went into the hall; while he was away, I heard a voice whisper in my ear, 'He will go out of one window and in at another.' I was alarmed and shocked at the idea of so dangerous an experiment. I told the company what I had heard, and we then waited for Home's return. Shortly after he entered the room, I heard the window go up, but I could not see it, for I sat with my back to it. I, however, saw his shadow on the opposite wall; he went out of the window in a horizontal position, and I saw him outside the other window (that in the next room) floating in the air. It was eighty-five feet from the ground. There was no balcony along the windows, merely a strong course an inch and a-half wide; each window had a small plant stand, but there was no connection between them. I have no theory to explain these things. I have tried to find out how they are done, but the more I studied them, the more satisfied was I that they could not be explained by mere mechanical trick. I have had the fullest opportunity for investigation. I once saw Home



in *full light* standing in the air seventeen inches from the ground."

Dr. EDMUNDS: "Have you ever obtained any information which could not have been known to the medium or to any one present? I may say I have received scores of letters from people who are utter strangers to me, asking the Committee if our spiritual friends can assist them in finding lost wills, and registers of birth and baptism; do you know of any facts of that kind?"

The Master of LINDSAY: "I know of one such fact, which I can relate to you. A friend of mine was very anxious to find the will of his grandmother, who had been dead forty years, but could not even find the certificate of her death. I went with him to the Marshall's, and we had a *séance*; we sat at a table, and soon the raps came; my friend then asked his questions *mentally*; he went over the alphabet himself, or sometimes I did so, not knowing the question. We were told the will had been drawn by a man named William Walker, who lived in Whitechapel; the name of the street, and the number of the house were given. We went to Whitechapel, found the man, and subsequently, through his aid, obtained a copy of the draft; he was quite unknown to us, and had not always lived in that locality, for he had once seen better days. The medium could not possibly have known anything about the matter, and even if she had, her knowledge would have been of no avail, as all the questions were mental ones.

Dr. EDMUNDS: "Have you ever seen any apparitions of deceased persons?"

The Master of LINDSAY: "When I first saw Home, we had a *séance*. I was late for the train, and stayed the night with him, he gave me a shake-down on the sofa in his room. There were no curtains to the windows, and the ground was covered with snow, the reflection from which made objects in the room distinctly visible. After I had been in bed twenty minutes, I heard raps, and my pillow went up and down in a curious manner. That might have been the result of imagination; a few minutes after, I saw an apparition which seemed like a column of vapour or an indistinct shadow, which grew gradually into a definite shape, and

I then saw the form of a woman standing *en profile* to me. She stood between me and Home, I saw the features plainly, and should have recognised them again anywhere. She seemed to be attired in a long flowing gown which hung without belt from the shoulders. The figure seemed quite solid, I could not see through it. I spoke to Home, he said he saw her distinctly, and that it was the apparition of his late wife; she often came to him. She moved and stood by his side. She then walked to the right of the bed and rather behind it, but not out of my sight, and then slowly faded away like a column of vapour. The next morning I found an album, and on looking over the pictures carelessly, I saw a photograph exactly like the figure I had seen. Mrs. Jencken said it was the likeness of the late Mrs. Home."

Dr. EDMUNDS: "Have you ever seen the apparitions of the lower animals or of trees?"

The Master of LINDSAY: "Never. I was once subject to a singular optical illusion. I used to see the spectre of a black dog. It seemed to glide along; I never saw it walking. I often went up to it, and sometimes passed a stick through it. It was the result of over-work; I was at that time studying for the army, and reading sixteen hours a day."

Dr. KING CHAMBERS: "Are your family subject to 'second sight?'"

The Master of LINDSAY: "Yes, such things have been in our family."

Dr. EDMUNDS: "What do you define 'second sight' to be?"

The Master of LINDSAY: "Second sight is an intuitive knowledge of an event which is going on at the same moment in another place; and also of events which will happen. I will give you an illustration, for the authenticity of which I can vouch. A lady of my acquaintance married an officer in the army, who went out to India before the mutiny. One night in the drawing room she screamed and fainted; on recovering, she said she saw her husband shot. The time was noted, and intelligence arrived that he had been shot at the precise moment when she saw the vision. I

did not know of this at the time, but a number of people are acquainted with the fact, and I am perfectly satisfied of its truth.

"I have never seen the apparition of a tree or flower. I once saw Home place a vase of flowers on the window sill and then move away, and the flowers were cast into the room."

Dr. Chambers said his object in asking the question about second sight was with the view of discovering whether the mediums were such persons.

Dr. EDMUNDS (to Dr. Chambers): "Have you ever seen any instances of 'second sight?'"

Dr. CHAMBERS: "I had an uncle who used to see figures frequently; and once when my eousin was staying with him, he (the cousin) said he saw a strange figure, a man in the dress of the time of Charles II., but in top boots. His father, miles away, saw the same thing at the same instant. That is the most remarkable case of second sight with which I am acquainted. I have no personal knowledge of such cases as those mentioned by the Master of Lindsay."

Master of LINDSAY re-called: "I can give no facts of prophetic second sight."

Mr. Perrin stated that when his sister died, a clergyman, twenty-four miles away, saw her apparition at the precise moment of her decease."

The meeting then adjourned.

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TUESDAY, 20TH JULY, 1869.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

Mr. Chevalier, who was the first witness called, stated that he had had seventeen years' experience of Spiritualism, but it was not till 1866 that he commenced experimenting on tables. He obtained the usual phenomena, such as raps and tiltings and answers to questions. On one occasion, the answer which was given being obviously untrue, the witness peremptorily inquired why a correct answer had not been given, and the spirit in reply said, "Because I am Beelzebub."

Mr. Chevalier, in continuation, said, "I continued my experiments until I heard of the Spiritual Athenæum. About that time I lost a child, and heard my wife say she had been in communication with its spirit. I cautioned her, and yet was anxious to communicate also. I placed one finger on the table; it moved, and the name of the child was given. It was a French name. I told a friend of mine what had happened, but was laughed at by him; he however came, sceptic as he was, and placed one hand on the table, asking mental questions, which were all answered. He then asked where my child went to school, not knowing himself, and the answer 'Fenton' was given; this also was correct. Frequently after this, I obtained manifestations in French and English, and messages as a child could send to a parent. At my meals, I constantly rested my hand on a small table, and it seemed to join in the conversation. One day the table turned at right angles, and went into the corner of the room. I asked, 'Are you my child?' but obtained no answer. I then said, 'Are you from God?' but the table was still silent. I then said, 'In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I command you to answer, are you from God?' One loud rap, a negative, was then given. 'Do you believe,' said I, "that Christ died to save us from sin?" The answer was 'No!' 'Accursed spirit,' said I, 'leave the room.' The table then walked across the room, entered the adjoining one, and quickened its steps. It was a small tripod table. It walked with a side-long walk. It went to the door, shook the handle, and I opened it. The table then walked into the passage, and I repeated the adjuration, receiving the same answer. Fully convinced that I was dealing with an accursed spirit, I opened the street-door, and the table was immediately silent; no movement or rap was heard. I returned alone to the drawing-room, and asked if there were any spirits present. Immediately I heard steps like those of a little child outside the door. I opened it, and the small table went into the corner as before, just as my child did when I reproved it for a fault. These manifestations continued until I used the adjuration, and I always found that they changed or



ceased when the name of God was mentioned. One night, when sitting alone in my drawing-room, I heard a noise at the top of the house; a servant who had heard it, came into the room frightened. I went to the nursery, and found that the sounds came from a spot near the bed. I pronounced the adjuration and they instantly ceased. The same sounds were afterwards heard in the kitchen, and I succeeded in restoring quiet as before.

“Reflecting on these singular facts, I determined to inquire further and really satisfy myself that the manifestations were what I suspected them to be. I went to Mrs. Marshall, and took with me three clever men, who were not at all likely to be deceived. I was quite unknown; we sat at a table, and had a *séance*; Mrs. Marshall told me the name of my child. I asked the spirit some questions, and then pronounced the adjuration. We all heard steps, which sounded as if some one was mounting the wall; in a few seconds the sounds ceased, and although Mrs. Marshall challenged again and again, the spirits did not answer, and she said she could not account for the phenomenon. In this case, I pronounced the adjuration mentally; no person knew what I had done. At a *séance*, held at the house of a friend of mine, at which I was present, manifestations were obtained, and as I was known to be hostile I was entreated not to interfere. I sat for two hours a passive spectator. I then asked the name of the spirit, and it gave that of my child. ‘In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,’ said I, ‘are you the spirit of my child?’ It answered ‘No!’ and the word ‘Devil’ was spelled out.”

Dr. EDMUNDS: “How were the names spelled out?”

Mr. CHEVALIER: “The legs rapped when the alphabet was called over. Mrs. Marshall used the alphabet herself, and the table rapped when her pencil came to the letters. My opinion of these phenomena is that the intelligence which is put in communication with us is a fallen one. It is of the devil, the prince of the power of the air. I believe we commit the crime of necromancy when we take part in these spiritual *séances*.”

Dr. EDMUNDS: "Who called the alphabet when the answer 'Beelzebub' was given?"

Mr. CHEVALIER: "I did."

Mr. BERGHEIM: "It is your belief in Christianity that makes you believe these manifestations are of the devil?"

Mr. CHEVALIER: "At the Spiritual Athenæum I saw written up as a motto the words 'Try the spirits.' I remembered the text and did so, and found that they were not from God. Of course I believe in the New Testament. Any spirit which denies the atonement or does not believe in the Trinity cannot be from God. When we pronounce the name of God we must mean what Saint John meant, the three persons in one."

By Dr. CHARLES MAURICE DAVIES: "I have sometimes refused to pronounce the adjuration to banish the spirits and end the manifestations, because it was not clear that the manifestations in question were really due to spirits."

By Mr. GANNON: "I have never stopped them by an effort of the will alone. I never used the adjuration without stopping the manifestations."

Mr. HAIN FRISWELL: "I may say that I can corroborate all that has been said by the witness relative to the power of the adjuration to stop the manifestations."

The Countess de Pomar in reference to the opinion of Mr. Chevalier that a spirit which did not believe in Christ must be bad, said that it was hard to suppose that good Mohammedans or persons of other non-Christian faiths should not have good spirits.

Miss Anna Blackwell then spoke. Her sister, she said, was very incredulous, and would not believe in Spiritualism in the least. Nevertheless, she herself became what is called a writing medium. The spirit would use her hand to write what communication had to be made. The spirits wrote what was good and bad. One wanted to sign himself Satan and Beelzebub. But, continued Miss Blackwell, my sister did not believe in the least in the existence of such a spirit, and she said, "No; if you are permitted to come to me it is not to tell such outrageous lies. If you persist in

trying to impose on me you shan't write." I have been present at many of these little fights. She would resist the spirit, and when she saw the capital S of the Satan being written she would resist, and twist her hand about to prevent the name being written. The spirit has then written, "I hate you because I cannot deceive you?" I have on some occasions heard beautiful raps in my drawing-room—in the air, on the wall, on the ground—no one being near the furniture. We never begin without prayer. We say to the spirits that wish to deceive us, "Dear spirits, we are all imperfect; we will endeavour to benefit you by our lights, in so far as they are superior to yours." Sometimes they would overturn and break the table. Yet they were rendered better by our kindness. We would never dream of addressing one as an "Accursed spirit." From one who was very violent, and by whom I have been myself struck, we have received progressive messages, showing how he has become better. They have often sent us messages, saying "We are going up higher now; we have through your help, broken the chains of earth; and we leave you!" When my sister found the S being written, or the great B for Beelzebub, she would say, with kindness but firmness, "Dear spirit, you must not deceive; it is not for such tricks but for a good end that you are permitted to come!"

Dr. EDMUNDS: "How can you distinguish between a spirit that thus deceives and a devil—a mild devil, if I may use the word?"

Miss BLACKWELL: "I do not believe in a special devil, but the imperfect spirits are all in a manner devils."

In answer to another question, Miss Blackwell said that she did not believe in spirits travelling backwards and forwards from animals to man and from man to animals. But she considered that the creative act which gave rise to all, was such that we progressed from gases to crystals, from animals to man. At the same time there was a reason why one thing is a cress and another a flower.

Dr. EDMUNDS: "Then according to your progressive theory the spirit which animates a man may have once animated a horse?"

MISS BLACKWELL: "No, that is not so. A horse is a horse; it is capable of being taught to go better, but it cannot learn mathematics. Nevertheless everything is progressive, and spirits that have progressed may become purified and combined so as to reach a higher stage."

Mr. Percival then made a statement. His experience dated from 1829 to 1830, a period long antecedent to the development of Spiritualism in America. He was an officer in the Guards, but he felt very anxious about religious truth. He could not reconcile the tone of Christianity in society with the tone of Christianity in the Bible. He went to balls and parties, and never heard the name of God mentioned. He determined to leave the army and study religion—not necessarily to become a clergyman, for that should only be in obedience to a call from the Holy Ghost. He had heard in Ireland some excellent evangelical teachers, and he wished to enter at Trinity College, but his mother preferred that he should enter at Oxford or Cambridge, and he therefore knelt down by his bed and prayed for guidance. He saw a vision of his friend Harrington, whom he had known at Harrow; he was dressed in the canonical gown, and he took down a folio book from the library shelf to show him. Well, he went to Oxford, and while in doubt about two of the Thirty-nine Articles he asked his friend for counsel, and there he saw Mr. Harrington in canonical gown, and with all the surroundings which had been shown to him in the vision. A second time he saw visions when going to Brussels. While passing through Canterbury he knelt down in the coach to pray for guidance as to whether he should go *via* Calais or Ostend. He saw three heads—very remarkable ones. Well, he went by Margate and Ostend, and at Margate he saw two of the heads of the vision. The third—one at which he had shuddered—was not to be seen, but no sooner had he got into the cabin of the boat than the person entered, and directly began swearing and using the most profane language. He saw various other spiritual phenomena, and, in consequence of what he said, he was put into a private asylum. In spite of the doctors he got out, and he had



devoted himself to the remedying of the abuses with which he had become acquainted.

MR. HAIN FRISWELL: "I will be very brief in the statement which I have to make, and I will preface it by a remark which shall be still more brief. I am a loose hanger-on of the Church of England, sceptical as to spiritual tricks, and with an inclination to Mr. Chevalier's theory. Well, I was once employed by a celebrated journal to get certain facts; I spent ten pounds, twenty pounds, without getting them. While I was going along by Mrs. Marshall's, I thought I would look in, and I entered. The table was so crowded that I could not get a place at it, of which I was very glad, for I wanted to be a spectator only, and I sat by the fire. The table moved tremendously, and came to me. There was a paper written underneath it; the words were 'Let the scribe come to the table.' I sat at the table. There was a sort of cataleptic seizure of those present, which principally affected the ladies. They foamed at the mouth and shook each other. They then began to talk nonsense and to prophesy. I, wishing to put a stop to this, and feeling that it was what the Apostles might have witnessed, what was described by Tertullian and others, I put my hand on the table and said, 'Are you the spirit who imposed on Ananias, the sorcerer?' The answer was 'Yes.' I said, 'In the name of God depart—go away!' He went away, and so did the scribe."

MR. BENNETT: "Did you know any of those present?"

MR. HAIN FRISWELL: "Not any except the Marshall's, to whom I had paid many half-crowns."

MR. BERGHEIM: "When you put your hand on the table you willed that the manifestations should cease?"

MR. HAIN FRISWELL: "Yes."

MR. BERGHEIM: "Are you not aware that manifestations can be stopped by the exercise of an adverse will without any adjuration?"

MR. HAIN FRISWELL: "I do not know. I always used an adjuration, and I never failed to stop the manifestations."

Mr. SHORTER: "Is not a passive condition necessary for the manifestations?"

Mr. HAIN FRISWELL: "Yes."

Mr. Bergheim said that undoubtedly some cases of supposed epilepsy were cases of possession. He related an instance, in which he saw a shoeblack seized in the street. He sent away those who surrounded the boy and said to the spirit, "Be off with you!" without using any adjuration whatever, and the boy instantly woke up well.

Mr. Hain Friswell said he always used the name of the Trinity.

By Dr. KING CHAMBERS: "I cannot say whether passes had been used to produce the cataleptic seizures at Mrs. Marshall's. I had never witnessed anything of exactly the same kind there before. First one or two persons began to shake, then the movement seemed to spread around to all. I believe," he continued "in diabolical possession, because we are told it by our Lord, and the spirits then were cast out by the same means."

Dr. EDMUNDS: "We often see in a sick ward a hysterical seizure of one patient followed by the seizure of a number of others. And if a pail of water be thrown over one it will cure all the others. No doubt a strong effort of the will might similarly cure them all."

Mr. HAIN FRISWELL: "I never knew a doctor put his hand on a patient in a strong fit and cure him by the mere contact. Some are very clever; they cannot do that."

Dr. EDMUNDS: "I believe medical men in the room will bear me out when I say that firmness of will on the part of a doctor can do this."

Mr. D. H. DYTE: "You put your hand on the table when you willed that it should all cease?"

Mr. HAIN FRISWELL: "Yes, I put my hand gently on the table and rose repeating mentally the adjuration."

Mr. DYTE: "Had the adjuration anything to do with it?"

Mr. HAIN FRISWELL: "As a Christian I believe so. The governess of my children, one of my daughters, and another young lady have sat at a table and had raps, answers to foolish questions, &c. I put a stop to it all by the use of the adjuration."

FRIDAY, 10TH DECEMBER, 1869.

Chairman, Mr. Serjeant Cox.

No evidence whatever was received at this meeting.

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THURSDAY, 23RD DECEMBER, 1869.

Chairman, Mr. H. G. Atkinson.

Mr. William Faulkner, surgeon, of 40, Endell Street, W.C., attended this evening to give evidence respecting certain magnets, which, as he had stated in a letter to the "Standard," he was in the habit of supplying to people for the production of rapping sounds at spiritual *séances*. He said that for some years past he had been in the habit of supplying magnets, which were so constructed that by pressing a small brass button, raps could at all times be produced. Some of these magnets,—as for instance the one which he had brought with him, were made for concealment about the person; whilst others were constructed with a view to their attachment to various articles of furniture. The magnet was connected by means of wires to an electric battery, and other wires continued the communication from the magnet to the brass buttons.

Questioned by Messrs. Atkinson, Bergheim, and Wallace, Mr. Faulkner stated that he did not think it possible to construct any apparatus that would suffice to raise a table; he had never himself fitted up a house with these magnets, and he only knew of one house, Mr. Addison's, that was so fitted up. He also stated that he had not supplied any of these magnets for two or three years. The Committee then adjourned.

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THURSDAY, 6TH JANUARY, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. Maurice.

This meeting was devoted to the reading of correspondence and to the discussion of the business arrangements of the Committee.

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FRIDAY, 21ST JANUARY, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. Jeffery.

No business of importance was transacted at this Meeting.

THURSDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. Serjeant Cox.

The Report of Sub-committee No. 1 was brought up, read, and after some discussion, unanimously adopted. Mr. Jeffery's letter (see page 90) was then read, and the proceedings terminated.

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TUESDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. A. R. Wallace.

Miss Blackwell's paper on the Philosophy of Re-incarnation was produced and read, and an unanimous vote of thanks was passed upon her, which the Honorary Secretary was instructed to convey to her.

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TUESDAY, 1ST MARCH, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. Serjeant Cox.

Mr. Atkinson's paper (see page 104) was produced and read at this meeting. The rest of the evening was spent in discussing the Report of the Committee.

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TUESDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. Serjeant Cox.

The question of the Report occupied the entire attention of the Committee at this meeting.

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TUESDAY, 5TH APRIL, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. Serjeant Cox.

The Reports of Sub-committees Nos. 2 and 3 were this evening brought up, read and adopted.

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TUESDAY, 19TH APRIL, 1870.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

The whole of this evening was spent in discussing the question of the General Report of the Committee.

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TUESDAY, 10TH MAY, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. D. H. Dyte.

The consideration of the Report occupied the whole of this evening.



TUESDAY, 24TH MAY, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. H. D. Jencken.

The question of the General Report of the Committee was again proceeded with. The Honorary Secretary suggested the advisability of nominating a select Committee to prepare a draft Report for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee. Mr. Dyte accordingly moved : "That an Editing Committee be appointed to prepare a draft Report for presentation at the next meeting of the Committee ; such Editing Committee to consist of Mr. Serjeant Cox, Messrs. Geary, Levy, Volckman, Wallace, and the Honorary Secretary." This motion, having been seconded by Mr. Maurice, was put from the chair and carried unanimously.

The following Resolution, proposed by Mr. Bergheim and seconded by Mr. Atkinson, was also carried.

"That it be an instruction to the Editing Committee that the Report be based solely on the evidence before the Committee."

The meeting was then adjourned.

TUESDAY, 21ST JUNE, 1870.

Chairman, Dr. Edmunds.

The draft Report prepared by the Editing Committee was brought up and read at this meeting. After some trifling verbal alterations had been suggested and accepted, the Report was adopted *nem. dis.*, the Chairman, however, announcing his intention to draw up a separate Report.

A Resolution was then adopted instructing the Honorary Secretary to forward a copy of the Report to the Council of the London Dialectical Society, with a recommendation that it be printed and published ; and the Committee adjourned.

MONDAY, 1ST AUGUST, 1870.

Chairman, Mr. D. H. Dyte.

The reply of the Council of the London Dialectical Society to the recommendation of the Committee was read at this meeting, and the following resolution was passed in consequence :—

Proposed by Dr. Edmunds, seconded by Mr. Hannah :—

“That the Report be referred to the Editing Committee, (Messrs. Bennett, Cox, Geary, Levy, Volckman and Wallace,) and that they be requested to prepare it for publication, together with any supplementary or counter reports that may be received from members of the Committee, and appending thereto the Reports of the Sub-committees, and the evidence oral and verbal that has been collected ; the entire work when ready for publication to be submitted for approval to the Committee.”



## CORRESPONDENCE.

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The following letters have been selected from the vast number received by the Committee, either as containing direct evidence with regard to the phenomena under consideration ; or as proceeding from men whose acknowledged position in society renders of special value the mere expression of their opinion :—

PROFESSOR HUXLEY.

“Sir,—I regret that I am unable to accept the invitation of the Council of the Dialectical Society to co-operate with a Committee for the investigation of ‘Spiritualism ;’ and for two reasons. In the first place, I have no time for such an inquiry, which would involve much trouble and (unless it were unlike all inquiries of that kind I have known) much annoyance. In the second place, I take no interest in the subject. The only case of ‘Spiritualism’ I have had the opportunity of examining into for myself, was as gross an imposture as ever came under my notice. But supposing the phenomena to be genuine—they do not interest me. If any body would endow me with the faculty of listening to the chatter of old women and curates in the nearest cathedral town, I should decline the privilege, having better things to do.

“And if the folk in the spiritual world do not talk more wisely and sensibly than their friends report them to do, I put them in the same category.

"The only good that I can see in a demonstration of the truth of 'Spiritualism' is to furnish an additional argument against suicide. Better live a crossing-sweeper than die and be made to talk twaddle by a 'medium' hired at a guinea a *séance*.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"29th January, 1869."

"T. H. HUXLEY."

GEORGE HENRY LEWES.

"Dear Sir,—I shall not be able to attend the investigation of 'Spiritualism;' and in reference to your question about suggestions would only say that the one hint needful is that all present should distinguish between facts and inferences from facts. When any man says that phenomena are produced by *no* known physical laws, he declares that he knows the laws by which they are produced.

"Yours, &c.,

"Tuesday, 2nd February, 1869."

"G. H. LEWES."

MR. W. M. WILKINSON.

"Oakfield, Kilburn, N.W.

"7th February, 1869.

"Sir,—I have seen your letter informing the public that a committee, appointed by the Dialectical Society, is about to institute a thorough and searching 'inquiry into so-called Spiritual manifestations, with a view of obtaining a satisfactory elucidation of the phenomena,' and you ask believers 'to assist the Committee in arriving at a sound and just conclusion.'

"I am a believer in the occurrence of the facts, both from my own observation, and from testimony, the latter mode being of course the more extensive, inasmuch as it embraces the observation of all those who have witnessed the phenomena in all ages, down to our own. Of course the sum of what all have seen, is greater immeasurably than what any one can see. I consider testimony therefore of the first importance in the matter, which, if



it be true, cannot, in its very nature, be done to order, and submitted to pre-organized tests. Its laws are not known, nor the conditions under which it appears. If they were, and phenomena could be had the moment you say 'now we are all ready,' they would cease to be what they evidently are.

"The first thing in such an investigation is to assume nothing, not even that a Committee of the Dialectical Society can 'obtain a satisfactory elucidation of the phenomena.' No committee has ever done so yet. A committee of Professors of Harvard University, amongst whom was Agassiz, after having made an examination, did not think proper to publish their Report, though they had published their intention to do so, and were frequently and publicly asked for it.

"I do not think a committee seeking test phenomena will arrive at a sound conclusion, unless it also take full cognizance of testimony in books, and by a personal examination of witnesses who will depose to what they have seen. There is an extensive array both of written facts, and of witnesses, of the highest range and value. The Committee might easily obtain the attendance of 20, 50, or 100 witnesses of repute in literature, the sciences, and the professions, who will give their testimony. Testimony is all-important if only for this consideration, that the Report of this Committee will, when made, itself fall into the category of testimony; and it would be inconsistent to claim a greater weight for it than for other testimony from a credible source. Credible testimony has already been given in many thousands of instances. Your Committee will only add one more to the list. If it report in favour of the phenomena, no one will believe it; and if it report against, the facts will still occur, as they have done throughout recorded history, sacred and profane.

"The 'phenomena of so-called Spiritualism' are in fact a history of the supernatural (using the word in its common sense). That is a wide inquiry for your Committee, and one of supreme importance. If their Report is to have the effect of settling that great question of humanity, I should like to know their qualifications

for the post. You ought to have at least one of the archbishops amongst you, to represent the religious side of the question, with Professor De Morgan and Professor Tyndall to represent the pure and applied mathematics, and you should have all history and testimony at your fingers' ends. Otherwise, I for one shall hold myself at liberty to object to your Report, whether it be favourable or unfavourable.

"One thing is essential to give your Report even a negative value, and that is that you rigidly state all the conditions under which each investigation takes place, because your doing so may at all events show under what conditions spiritual phenomena will *not* occur.

"I hope you may have more success than I anticipate; and if you follow the very excellent programme of your Society, and can give even this subject fair treatment, you will be entitled to the best thanks of the community.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq."

"W. M. WILKINSON."

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DR. DAVEY

"Northwoods, Bristol, 7th Feb., 1869.

"Dear Sir,—It gives me no small satisfaction to find that the subject of Spiritualism is about to be duly investigated by a competent tribunal. I have been engaged in the investigation—the practical investigation—of Spiritualism since the summer of 1862. I have, during the past six or seven years, attended scores of *séances*, have satisfied myself not only of the mere abstract truth of Spiritualism, but of its great and marvellous power for good, both on moral and religious grounds. The direct and positive communications vouchsafed to me from very many near and dear relatives and friends, said to be *dead*, have been of the most pleasing yet startling character, and these have not only removed whatever doubts did once belong to me, but have convinced me of many great and solemn truths in regard to the futuro of man which,

anterior to 1862, were altogether ignored by me, and deemed scarcely worthy of the nursery.

“Faithfully yours,

“G. W. Bennett, Esq.”

“J. G. DAVEY, M.D.”

MR. SHORTER.

“23, Russell Road, Holloway, N.

“February 11th, 1869.

“G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.

“Dear Sir,—I beg to thank you for your courteous letter of the 6th ult. which I regret has only just come to hand. At the present stage of the inquiry I have but two suggestions to urge upon the Committee:—

“First. That in investigating phenomena, with the laws of which (should the Committee decide such phenomena to be genuine) they do not even profess to be acquainted, they should confine themselves (in the first instance at all events) to simple observation, without attempting to dictate the conditions under which the phenomena shall, or shall not, occur.

“Second. That as it is only a very small fraction of the whole body of facts bearing on the case which can come under the personal observation of the Committee or of any Committee, it would be highly desirable to obtain the evidence of persons of known intelligence and veracity, especially of men of science, who have preceded them in this investigation; and that to this end a letter of inquiry be addressed to them requesting them to state any facts in relation to the subject which have *come under their personal observation*. I would more particularly suggest that such application be made to the following gentlemen, whose addresses I append as far as they are known to me:—

“Cromwell F. Varley, Esq., Fleetwood House, Beckenham.

“Professor De Morgan, 91, Adelaide Road, N.W.

“Dr. J. M. Gully, The Priory, Great Malvern.

“Dr. J. J. G. Wilkinson, 4, St. John's Wood Villas, N.W.

“Dr. Dixon, 8, Great Ormond Street, W.C.

"Newton Crosland, Esq., Blackheath.

"William Howitt, Esq., The Orchard, Hare Green, Esher, Surrey.

"Robert Chambers, Esq., St. Andrew's, Edinburgh.

"H. D. Jencken, Esq., Kilmorey House, Norwood.

"J. G. Crawford, Esq., 52, Gloucester Crescent, N.W.

"W. M. Wilkinson, Esq., Oakfield, Kilburn.

"Lord Adare, 5, Buckingham Gate.

"The Master of Lindsay, Grosvenor Square.

"This would probably at present be sufficient. I must however add that I have held no communication on the subject with any of the gentlemen named (some of whom are not even personally known to me), and that I cannot say how far they may have the time and disposition to respond to such an inquiry, but I think the application would be well worth making.

"Yours respectfully,

"THOMAS SHORTER."

DR. J. J. GARTH WILKINSON.

"76, Wimpole Street, Cavendish Square,

"London, Feb. 12th, 1869.

"Dear Sir,—I have no suggestions to make with respect to 'Spiritualism' that will afford any guidance to the Committee of your valuable Society, whose freedom and good intentions as a social organ I beg to tell you I honour.

"Excepting one suggestion:—

"I recommend you to poll the Committee, *pro* and *con*, with any amount of definiteness you or they think right, on the general question of Spiritualism, before the deliberations; and then, again, after the deliberations: and thus ascertain statistically what difference the inquiry has made.

"I have long been convinced by the experience of my life as a pioneer in several heterodoxies which are rapidly becoming orthodoxes, that nearly all truth is temperamental to us, or given in the affections and intuitions, and that discussion and inquiry do little more than feed temperament.



"To prove this, observe the heat with which the driest abstractions are maintained on both sides. That heat, that affection, that indignation is the real factor of the opinions on both sides.

"I have been a believer in the spiritual world, and its nearness to the natural world, nearly all my life. And the rareness of communication between the two is to me one of the greatest of miracles; a proof of the economic wisdom, the supreme management, the extraordinary statesmanship of the Almighty. My whole soul, perfectly unconvincible by the other side, knows this for me; and floods me with the power of it every hour.

"Others are built from the opposite convictions; and do vast material good works in consequence. And can wait to turn over the next leaf till they die.

"Yours very faithfully,  
"GARTH WILKINSON."

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MR. WILLIAM HOWITT.

"The Orchard, Esher, Feb. 26th, 1869.

"Dear Sir,—On my return from a fortnight's absence, I find on my table a letter from you on behalf of the Dialectical Society, wishing for information on the subject of Spiritualism in reference to an investigation into its phenomena, proposed to be made by the Society. This statement will explain the cause of my silence. I reply to you now at once.

"I am by no means sanguine of any good result from the inquiries of such Committees. Englishmen, otherwise well advanced in the intelligence of the time, are, as it regards spiritualism, twenty years behind the literary and scientific publics of France, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States of America. Scores of societies of those countries, and millions of individuals, have entered upon, and passed actively through the investigations which you are now commencing, ten, fifteen, and twenty years ago. However, better late than never. Like the 'Seven Sleepers' and Rip van Winkle, some few of our English men of science and literature are, at length, waking up, to find the

world of intelligence abroad gone far a-head of them. Though late, it is still laudable. Perhaps, when the Dialectical Society has determined the present point, it will set on foot a similar inquiry into the correctness of the theory of the Copernican system, of that of the circulation of the blood, of the principle of gravitation, and of the identity of lightning and electricity; for Spiritualism, having now received the assent of about twenty millions of people in all countries, after personal examination, stands fairly on the same basis of fact that they do. Pray do not, however, imagine me disposed to be satirical. I am simply asserting what appears to me a most prominent and unavoidable truth.

“You ask me to give you any suggestions which I may think calculated to assist you in your inquiry. Most willingly; but I am afraid that it will be much easier for me to suggest than for you to adopt my chief suggestion, which is, to endeavour before opening your inquiries, to divest your minds of all prejudice on the subject. The tendency of both philosophy and general education for more than a century has been, whilst striving to suppress all prejudice, to create a load of prejudice against everything spiritual. Science, philosophy, and general opinion have assumed, more and more, a material character, and in no country more than in this. I must say to you as judges say to juries, ‘Gentlemen—Divest your minds of all mere hearsay; fix them only on the evidence.’ It is not easy; but till you have done this, you can make no real progress in your present inquiry. You may as well expect the delicate flowers of your conservatories to flourish in a night’s frost out of doors. To produce correct results you must establish the necessary conditions. Now, if you follow the example of Messrs. Faraday and Tyndall, and insist on dictating conditions on a subject of which you are ignorant, failure is inevitable. You must come to the subject with candour, and be willing to study carefully the laws and characteristics of the matter under consideration. It is from obedience or disobedience to this principle that inquiries instituted by societies, or by small companies of persons with minds open to the truth, have succeeded or failed.

The results of such inquiries are, that whilst societies and committees have retired generally from the investigation without obtaining positive facts, and, therefore, believing that no such existed, private companies and individuals have obtained the most unquestionable spiritual phenomena, to the amount of twenty millions of believers. From time to time, accordingly, we have learnt that Spiritualism has been demonstrated undeniably to be a myth and a delusion; that it was dead and gone; that the Davenports and other mediums have been proved impostors, and utterly put down;—the truth being all the time that the Davenports remained as genuine mediums as before, and that spiritualism has gone forward, advancing and expanding its field of action, without the least regard to the failures, the falsehoods, the misrepresentations, and the malice of men.

“Your second wish expressed is, that I would ‘endeavour to throw some light on the connection apparently existing between spiritualism and animal magnetism, or would refer you to any books other than Reichenbach, Gregory, Feuchtersleben, Ennemoser, Lee, Ashburner, myself, &c.’

“In referring you to a few of the leading works on the subject, and especially to those more particularly dealing with the connection between spiritualism and magnetism, I may excuse myself entering on my own views on this subject, which would extend too far the limits of this letter.

“From the first fact to which I have alluded, that of the very late period at which Englishmen of letters have entered on this inquiry, compared with those of other countries, there exists an extensive spiritual literature in both America, France, Switzerland, and Germany. I can for your present purposes indicate only a very few of these works, and those exclusively by scientific and learned writers.

“Amongst American works on Spiritualism you should carefully read the Introduction, by Judge Edmonds, to ‘Spiritualism’ by Judge Edmonds and G. T. Dexter, where you have the experiences of an able lawyer testing evidence as he would do in a court of justice.

"Next, the 'Investigations' of Professor Hare, in which, as a great electrician, he details his severe and long continued scrutiny into the nature of these phenomena ; both he and Judge Edmonds having undertaken these inquiries in the full persuasion that they should expose and put an end to the pretensions of spiritualism.

"I do not refer you here to the numerous works of A. J. Davis, which, though most remarkable in another point of view, are not so necessary to your purpose.

"The 'Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World,' by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, a carefully and clearly reasoned work, might be of service to you.

"Of German works :—

" 'Die Seherin von Prevorst' von Justinus Kerner, M.D.

" 'Die Zwei Besessener.'

" 'Die Somnambülen Tische. Zur Geschichte und Erklärungen dieser Erscheinung.'

"Dr. Kerner was a man of profound science, and distinguished by his works in different departments. His 'Seeress of Prevorst,' who was his patient, has been translated by Mrs. Crowe. The remarkable phenomena recorded in this work are especially valuable, as they have all been so fully and widely confirmed by the experiences of spiritualists of all countries since.

"Next in importance to these are the inquiries of Herr D. Hornung, the late secretary of the Berlin Magnetic Association :—

"1. 'Neue Geheimnisse des Tages durch Geistes Magnetismus.' Leipsic, 1857.

"2. 'Neueste Erfahrungen aus dem Geisterleben.' Leipsic, 1858.

"3. 'Heinrich Heine, der Unsterbliche,' also a brief continuation of his inquiries.

"These works contain the steady and persevering researches and experiments of Herr Hornung and a select body of friends through a course of years. Hornung commenced the inquiry as a practical magnetist, and continued it with unwearied assiduity, tracing the phenomena through all their phases, and availing him-



self of the experiences of scientific men in all parts of Germany, in Switzerland, France, and Italy.

“The works of Görres, one of the most learned journalists and historians of Germany, especially his ‘Christliche Mystik,’ abound with extraordinary facts, but would require a long time to peruse them.

“In French :—

“The ‘Pneumatologie’ of the Marquis de Mirville.

“‘Extraits de la Pneumatologie,’ &c.

“‘Des Tables Tournantes ; du Surnaturel en Général et des Esprits,’ of the Comte de Gasparin. 1854.

“‘Tables Tournantes’ de Comte de Szapary. 1854.

“The works of Baron Dupotet and of Puysegur.

“‘Pneumatologie Positive et Expérimentale,’ par le Baron de Guldenstubbé.

“The works of M. Segouin, who through magnetism was convinced of the truth of spiritualism.

“Cahagnet’s ‘Arcanes de la Vie Future Devoilés,’ and his ‘Encyclopédie Magnetique et Spirituelle.’ 4 tom.

“But, perhaps, most important of all as regards your inquiry, is the correspondence of the two celebrated professors of magnetism, MM. Deleuze and Billot, who, in prosecuting their magnetic researches were, each unknown to the other, surprised by the presence of spiritual phenomena of the most decided and varied kind. Glimpses of an *arrière pensée* in their published works led to an explanation between them, which was published in two volumes, in Paris, in 1836. I may add the ‘Journal de l’Ame’ of Dr. Roessinger, of Geneva, and his ‘Fragment sur l’Electricité Universelle.’

“In Italian :—

“Consoni’s ‘Varieta Elettro-Magnetico e Relativa Spiegazione.’

“These works, by men chiefly of scientific eminence, are more than can be mastered in a short time—they are only a sample, the rest are legion, spiritual literature comprising many hundred volumes ; for, as I have said, your Society is now entering on a

field as new, which has been traversed and reaped many years ago. And, after all, though evidently disembodied spirits come into contact with embodied ones, through the agency of magnetism and electricity, there is probably an inner cognate force operating in the process, which, like the principle of life, lies too deep for discovery by any human powers.

“With my best wishes for the successful prosecution of your proposed labours,

“I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

“WILLIAM HOWITT.”

“George Wheatley Bennett, Esq.”

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THE RT. HON. LORD LYTTON.

“Torquay, Feb. 28th, 1869.

“Sir,—I am honoured by your letter of the 25th.

“I am unable to offer any suggestions as to a scientific examination of the phenomena which you classify under the head of ‘Spiritualism,’ for the data requisite to science are not yet attainable. So far as my experience goes, the phenomena, when freed from the impostures with which their exhibition abounds, and examined rationally, are traceable to material influences of the nature of which we are ignorant. They require certain physical organisations or temperaments to produce them, and vary according to those organisations or temperaments. Hence, Albertus Magnus says, that a man must be born a magician, *i.e.*, born with certain physical idiosyncrasies, which no study can acquire.

“In those constitutional idiosyncrasies, whether the phenomena exhibited through or by them be classed under the name of clairvoyance, spirit manifestation, or witchcraft, I have invariably found a marked comparative preponderance of the electric fluid; and the phenomena are more or less striking in proportion to the electricity of the atmosphere. Hence the most notable exhibitions appear to have been obtained in the dry winter nights of New York.

"I should say that if any number of sound thinking persons wish to investigate these phenomena, they should commence by dismissing all preconceived judgments, and in a temper utterly free from credulity ; and, above all, be very careful not to jump to the conclusion that spirits of another world are concerned in the matter. They who adopt that opinion stop all genuinely scientific inquiry, and are apt to be led into very dangerous and mischievous errors of conduct. They are deceived into believing that they hear predictions and receive counsels from beings wiser than themselves, and, acting accordingly, may readily be duped into disgrace and ruin. I have known such instances.

"It is now as in the days of Mediaeval witchcraft, in which the supposed fiends juggled and betrayed the invoker ; where one truth is announced through these abnormal media, 100 lies are uttered ; people are, as in dreams, apt to remember the truth and forget the lies. And as to the responses obtained, emanating from wiser intellects than are vouchsafed to the living, it is noticeable that triviality and inanity are the prevalent characteristics of the revelations, and not one thought has been put forth by them which was not in the world before.

"To those who believe that they are conferring with the spirits of the dead, I would only say, 'Let them be as rigid in their cross-examination of these pretended souls departed as they would be in that of a claimant of their property on the ground of identity with some heir-at-law long missing,' and the communicants will soon break down, and be condemned as impostors by any practical jury.

"The word 'Spiritualism' in itself should not be admitted in rational inquiry. Natural agencies are apparent in all the phenomena (at least so far as I have witnessed them) ascribed to spirits.

"If matter be moved from one end of the room to the other, it must be by a material agency—though it may be as invisible as an electric or odic fluid—and the matter of a human brain is always needed to convey any impression to the auditor or spectator.

"If an inquiry were instituted on the rational spirit with which metaphysics, mechanics, and physiology are studied, it is possible that some useful discoveries may be made; in any other mode of inquiry my persuasion is, that the result will be disappointment to real philosophers, and only conducive to the increase of profitless and mischievous superstitions.

"Your obedient servant,

"LYTTON."

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MR. J. ENMORE JONES.

"Sir,—You are welcome to use the narrative\* published in the "Spiritual Magazine" as to incidents that happened at my house. As a family, we are willing to make a declaration before a magistrate as to its correctness. My mother, who was raised with her chair into the air, is alive and well (age 84).

"I could not but smile at the idea of your Committee collecting as large a body of facts as they can get together, ancient and modern. Why, you would require a wheelbarrow or two to assist. The Bible is full of facts; 'Plutarch's Lives' contain many incidents; all the leading theological teachers' lives were governed by spirit direction. See their biographies, even after being stripped of the mass of supernatural incidents.

"If you obtain the nine volumes of 'Spiritual Telegraph,' published at New York; Governor Talmadge's appendix to Linton's 'Healing of the Nations;' Judge Edmonds' 'Introduction' to his book, 'Spiritualism;' R. Dale Owen's book, 'Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World;' Redman's 'Mystic Hours,'—you will have such a mass of evidence as will satisfy any extraordinary committee, that phenomena are produced by invisible beings, who see us, see our thoughts, and as we cannot see them, can checkmate us, or help us when they like to take the trouble.

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\* [The narrative referred to was recited by Mr. Jones in his *vis à vis* statement to the Committee, and will be found on page 147.—*Editorial Note.*]



"To assist you, somewhat, I send you a copy of my book, *Natural and Supernatural.*' The sections relating to the supernatural will help you. The incidents marked and named in a list on inside of cover I vouch for.

"Allow me to strongly recommend you to adopt, as a Committee, the only plan by which you can get at the facts for yourselves, especially if you have a sitting with Mr. Home.

"Be very watchful. Be suspicious, but *do not show it.* Act as gentlemen. *Mentally* express your suspicions, if any, and you will have a visible answer. Thus showing your *thoughts* are perceived by—whom? by intellectual, intelligent beings.

"I am Sir, yours truly

"J. ENMORE JONES.

"28th Feb. 1869.

"Enmore Park, S. Norwood.

"To G. W. Bennett, Esq., Hon. Sec."

DR. J. DIXON.

"8, Great Ormond Street, W.C.

"March 3rd, 1869.

"G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq., Hon. Sec.

"Dialectical Society.

"Dear Sir,—I acknowledge the polite intimation of your Committee's object.

"For my own part, I began the process of investigation 18 years ago, at 45 years of age, and I continue it. I am glad to hear of others investigating, particularly men of the dialectical stamp, although I do not think proceeding by court of inquiry and adjudication is best. A Committee to examine fully and impartially (*viz.*, judge impartially) implies such a court—a court to decide whether that be fact which is testified to as fact by thousands of men as sharp as the Committee itself!

"It seems to me that there is a certain degree of repudiation of testimony implied by the very appointment of such a Committee,

and that such repudiation will necessarily extend itself to the testimony of the Committee itself. Should the Committee affirm certain facts in question, the majority of your Society and of outsiders will, unless they belie all precedent, add the Committee to their list of 'dupes,' 'victims,' 'fools;' should it *not* affirm the facts, it will confirm the unknowing in their theoretical denial, but it will not make men unknow that which they know.

"I see only this dilemma for the Committee, to escape which there seems to me only one rational course, namely, not to pronounce an opinion or judgment; but, after stating the facts brought before them, to conclude by recommending the Society to accept concurrent respectable testimony upon this subject as upon any other, and to study the facts individually for themselves.

"I regard it, however, as a sign in the direction of accepting such testimony if it is the Committee who, through you, ask for personal experience.

"For myself I would willingly write mine *in extenso*, but my engagements do not permit, nor can I send any of those volumes of the 'Spiritual Magazine,' which contain various narratives of my experience; but I will request your acceptance, by same post, of a small volume\* which contains a little narrative by me—you will find it at pages xxiii-xxxii. The Committee may find it as worthy of their attention as any other small thing which indicates a truth. In these phenomena I have always attached importance to thought, feeling, or knowledge, demonstrably not belonging to the persons present before our eyes.

"The little work itself ('Confessions of a Truth Seeker') is written by Mr. Thomas Shorter: he was for years, until his vision became impaired, secretary of the Working Men's College, and would have brought his little book out with his name, but for the office he held. The book contains his testimony, which is interesting and suggestive to inquirers. It was my testimony generally which chiefly induced him to follow the subject to its

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\* [ "Confessions of a Truth Seeker," q. v.—*Editorial Note.* ]

final issue in his mind. Since then, he has written a valuable octavo volume, 'The Two Worlds,' which the Dialectical Library should not be without.

"I am, my Dear Sir,

"Yours very truly,

"J. DIXON."

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MR. NEWTON CROSLAND.

"Lynton Lodge, Vanbrugh Park Road, Blackheath,

"6th March, 1869.

"Dear Sir,—I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, (by a curious coincidence dated on my birthday.)

"All that I and my wife know of the facts of Spiritualism is contained in my essay on 'Apparitions;' and my wife's book entitled 'Light in the Valley.'

"By being too early in the field in my advocacy of the cause of Spiritualism, I lost £600 per annum. The consequence is, that I am now obliged to work hard, and I have no time or leisure to devote to teaching others a subject which I consider profound, complicated, instructive, fascinating, and ennobling. The facts of Spiritualism are to me as certain and indisputable as those of the multiplication table; and to be asked now-a-days whether I believe them, is almost as playfully irritating as to be questioned about the grounds for my opinion that 12 times 12 make 144.

"One caution however I must give, and that is, that the subject is not to be grappled with and mastered without the most careful, elaborate, and anxious study. It took me 18 months' patient investigation to learn the simple elements of the subject. The religious philosophy which underlies and is suggested by the outer phenomena, is of the choicest and most sterling value. It does therefore amuse me when I hear clever people talk 'of arriving at conclusions,' after a few hours' examination. Let us therefore take care what path we choose in our process of investigation. It

ought to guide us to a world of light and beauty ; but we may more easily drift into a quagmire of dangerous nonsense.

“I remain, dear Sir, yours truly,

“G. W. Bennett, Esq.

“NEWTON CROSLAND.

“As far as my comfort and convenience are concerned, I would rather you asked me to go through a course of Mathematics with you, than a course of Spiritualistic study. The former would be light in comparison with the latter.”

MR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.

“St. Andrews, March 8th, 1869.

“Sir,—For any one desirous of making the inquiry you speak of, I know no book more worthy of attention than Mrs. De Morgan’s volume, ‘From Matter to Spirit.’ ‘Incidents of my Life,’ by D. D. Home, is also important for the learner. As to the theory you mention\*, I know that it was fully embraced by the late Professor Gregory. He read a lecture on it in Edinburgh but I think it never was published. My own opinion is that their identity will in time be demonstrated.

“In the present state of science individual opinion goes no way. Every man must examine and attain conviction for himself. It is well, however, that new students should be warned against trusting in the *dicta*, for these are as often false as true.

“I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

“R. CHAMBERS.”

“G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.”

MR. W. M. WILKINSON.

“44, Lincoln’s Inn Fields, London, W.C.,

“12th May, 1869.

“Dear Sir,—I am not able to attend your Committee, but in place of my oral testimony I send you a piece of written evidence

\* [The magnetic theory by which Professor Gregory and others have sought to account for the ‘Spiritual’ phenomena.—*Note by the Hon. Secretary.*]



which I attest the truth of. As some people place more value upon testimony given under the responsibility of an oath, I can refer you to my sworn evidence in the Home and Lyon suit, and also to the affidavits of Mr. Robert Chambers, Gerald Massey, Mr. Cromwell F. Varley, Dr. Gully, Mr. S. C. Hall and Mrs. S. C. Hall. These are to be found in the last June number of the 'Spiritual Magazine,' along with the testimony of Professor De Morgan, and an instructive account of how Spiritualism is viewed by Professor Tyndall and such like. This number is out of print, but some of the gentlemen on your Committee no doubt have it. I commend the sworn testimony to your consideration.

"When your Committee has favoured us with its report as to the existence of a spiritual world, and as to whether there have ever occurred any supernatural phenomena, I fear the question will be very much where it was before. The public will think you are a set of asses if you report in favour of it, and I shall think you are not very wise if you go the other way. So you have not at all a pleasant task before you if you have the least care for what people think or say of you.

"Yours faithfully,

"G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.,

"W. M. WILKINSON."

"H. M. Customs."

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[From the "SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE" for April, 1860.]

"The following illustrations of the physical manifestations of (*so-called*) Spiritualism occurred in the house of the writer on the evenings of the 25th and 26th February, 1860, in the presence of two of his friends and of himself, through the mediumship of J. R. M. Squire, Esq., of Boston, U. S., at present on a visit in England. The writer of this narrative solemnly pledges his word of honour to the strict and literal accuracy, and to the careful sifting by himself and his friend, of every statement contained therein. He has classified the physical manifestations which he witnessed on these two occasions, by which they will be more readily narrated than if a strict chronological detail were given.

"1. *Rapping*.—The raps on the dining table were loud, frequent, and intelligent, *i. e.* they responded to the wish of the medium, imitating his raps, rapping the numbers requested and giving responses by the alphabet to questions put.

"The writer is positive that no attempt on the part of Mr. Squire, artificially to produce *such* raps as he heard would have succeeded.

"2. *Moving of Tables*.—The dining table, a large heavy oak table, 5 feet by 7 feet, was frequently lifted up and moved about the room, and this not by any of the four persons present. Again, a writing table on which the four witnesses seated themselves was twice tilted over with a strange unearthly facility, and they landed on the floor. These two facts, the raps and movements, the writer is fully conscious can only be received by those who have faith alike in his accuracy of statement, and in his power of observation and detection of fraud. What follows requires only faith in the truthfulness of his narrative.

"3. *Writing by an unseen Agent*.—Mr. Squire held a pencil on a sheet of paper with one hand under the table. It was rapidly and audibly written on, and then pulled forcibly out of his hand and thrown across the room. On one sheet was written the surname of the writer, and on the other, '*O tarry thou.*' (On the chimneypiece in the dining-room is an illuminated card with the verse from the Psalm, '*O tarry thou, the Lord's leisure,*' &c.)

"Farther, the writer placed below the dining table, on two occasions, a piece of blank paper and a cedar pencil. The fire, partly wood, was burning brightly. The four persons present formed a circle with their hands on the table. Writing was distinctly heard on the paper. On examining the paper, the word '*God*' was three times written in a cramped hand, and on the other occasion the writer's surname.

"No one present had the slightest chance of even touching the paper either before or after it was placed by the writer under the dining table.

"4. *Ringing Bells, playing an Accordion, breaking the Cedar*

*Pencil, &c., &c.*—A small hand-bell placed on the paper under the table, and the hands of all four persons present being all the time, as before, held on the table in a circle, the bell was frequently and loudly rung; the number of times asked was rung, and the bell was thrown about the room, and thrown on to the table by some unseen agent. An accordion, similarly placed as the bell, was played by no human agent or power, and it was also freely moved and played while held in the writer's hand. The sensation thus produced resembled a bite of a strong fish at a line. The bell was tossed about and twisted and played with, as if an ape had it in his paw, and also wrapped up in a pocket handkerchief which was on the ground. The cedar pencil, on the writer expressing the wish, was snapped in two and one half thrown on the table. The chairs and a book were thrown across the room, falling as lightly as if they were an article of clothing. While the bell was being played with, the writer was five times distinctly touched on the leg under the table. The sensation was most unpleasant. Mr. Squire was also about this time, as far as the writer could judge in the dark by the sound of the voice, lifted about two feet in the air. This was accompanied with marked tremor and nervous exaltation.

“5. *Lifting Weight and breaking a large Table.*—A heavy circular table, made of birch and strongly constructed, was lifted a somersault in the air and thrown on the bed, the left hand only of Mr. Squire being placed on the surface, his other hand held, and his legs tied to the chair on which he sat. The table was afterwards twice lifted on to the head of the writer and of Mr. Squire. Only a strong force applied at the further side of the circular top could have produced this result. This force Mr. Squire, as is evident from his position (standing close to the writer at one point of the circle with his hands tied,) could not have exerted. The efforts of the writer to prevent this lifting of the table had no influence on the strange unseen force applied to lift the table thus against his wish and force.

“At the writer's request, this table was afterwards smashed and

broken,\* and one fragment thrown across the room, the table at the time being held by the writer and Mr. Squire. This occurred in half a minute. The writer has since vainly endeavoured, with all his strength, to break one of the remaining legs. The one broken was rent across the grain of the wood. The noise of the table thrown and knocked about by unseen agency on the floor, while the writer *held Mr. Squire's hands*, was really awful and mysterious, and it was *impossible* for Mr. Squire to have taken any part in the operation.

“6. *Medium Writing*.—The sudden seizure of the hand of the medium with a desire to write, and the writing itself require to be seen to be credited. The writer contents himself with adding to this record three of the messages thus written, and afterwards, with some difficulty, spelt out. They do not appear to him at all worthy of the spiritual origin ascribed to them by Mr. Squire and the Spiritualists, still less does he regard them as a fraud. He feels satisfied that they were written by Mr. Squire, his hand tracing what his mind was quite unconscious of.

“A.—*I do not desire to intrude myself upon you, gentlemen, but I may be able at some future time, to add somewhat largely to your ideas upon this subject, and will do so hereafter.*

“B.—*I am quite well aware what a mind tinged with science most requires, and I am for one, quite proud to add, that I have perhaps a higher respect for such, than my friend the attorney, and*

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\* The phenomena related in this section were all performed in the dark, with a screen before the fire and in the presence of the whole party, a candle being from time to time lighted. The hands of Mr. Squire were held by the writer, who is as positive as it is possible for a witness to be that Mr. Squire neither could nor did aid or contribute to the production of these phenomena.

The writer is of course aware of the objection, that the dark offered an opportunity for fraud, and that it is faith in his honesty as a witness and capacity as an investigator of phenomena, opposed to all his previous prejudices and views, which must determine the reader how far he may be capable of deciding this question. He is most positively of opinion that such fraud was entirely and utterly impossible and impracticable.



*so you may trust if we ever do chance to meet again, I shall bear such need in mind.*

*“C.—Kind gentlemen, will you allow me to thank you for your strict attention, and to regret, if I may, your table. May a kind Providence guide and protect you and keep you in Christ Jesus.*

*“While these sheets are passing through the press, the writer had another opportunity, on the evening of the 16th March, of testing the truth of these phenomena, in the chambers of a Barrister, in the Temple. Two independent witnesses and himself and Mr. Squire were present. Suffice it here to record, that again the several phenomena of rapping, moving tables, writing by an unseen agent, touch, ringing of a bell, and medium writing were repeated and subjected to the most searching scrutiny.*

*“The writer can only renew the expression of his unqualified belief that these phenomena were produced by some unseen agent, and that it was utterly out of Mr. Squire’s power to perform them by legerdemain, had he been so disposed. The writer may be allowed to add his impression that anyone acquainted with Mr. Squire would at once acquit him of attempting such an imposture. Still this is not important, inasmuch as the opportunity was not given for such an attempt.*

*“The writer of the above narrative solemnly re-asserts the truth of every incident detailed, all of which occurred in his own house and presence, and in that of his friend. He can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of (*so-called*) Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as, for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place, or chance of any legerdemain or fraud, in these physical manifestation. He is aware, even from recent experience, of the impossibility of convincing any one, by a mere narrative, of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of convincing others. Yet he cannot doubt*

the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced.

"Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which even in the writings of divines of the English church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil.

"But to the thoughtful reader of the Word of God the recognition of spiritual agencies is no new doctrine, nor is it so to the student of ecclesiastical history. The writings of the fathers abound with statements of spiritual manifestations. Singularly enough, in the Apology of Tertullian, we find a reference to physical manifestations similar to those we are here considering. In speaking of the Christian miracles, he says that they have been imitated by persons who, by forming a chain with their hands, obtained by means of divining tables and chairs, miraculous manifestations. In the narrative in the Acts of the damsel possessed with the spirit of Python (*i. e.* of the oracle of Delphi \*) and of the evil spirits at the command of the Jew exorcists, in both of which instances the spirits are spoken of as a personality, and as recognizing the Lord Jesus and the Apostle of the Gentiles. It is interesting to compare the commentary of divines who admit the existence of spiritual agencies with that of those who deny the same. The painful effort of the learned Lardner, in his *Credibility of the Gospel history*, to explain away the power of that spirit of Python, which dwelt in the damsel of Philippi, is a curious illustration of how men twist the plain narrative of Holy Scripture to fit their own notions and theological tenets.

"In surveying this new world of thought opened to him by the

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\* The opinion of scholars is divided on the question of the oracle of Delphi, as to whether it possessed the power of answering questions relating to the future, or were merely a skilful contrivance of priestcraft. Cicero's testimony is positive: "Manet id quod negari non potest, nisi omnem historiam perverterimus, multis sæculis verax fuisse id oraculum." Such was also Milton's opinion: "The oracles are dumb," &c., &c.

physical manifestations here recorded, the writer feels it due to his position distinctly to state that he does not accept the interpretation which the American sect, terming themselves *Spiritualists*, place on these phenomena. He does not believe that the raps and table-tiltings and strange fantastic freaks which he here records, are the acts of the spirits of the departed, nor of their efforts to communicate with the living. Still less is he prepared to receive the doctrine that the trashy common-place evangelical dicta, enunciated by medium writing and raps, are communications from the Spirit of God, in support of the truth of revelation. It is his opinion that the doctrines of the Spiritualists, as set forth in their American and English writings, tend, in the few instances in which they soar above vulgar credulity, to materialist teaching of the most objectionable kind. It is not the place here to enter into this wide question; only in recording his belief in the physical manifestations here related, the writer has felt it due to himself, as a member of the Church of England, to guard against the implication of thereby accepting the opinions of the American professors, who have related and theorized on such manifestations.

“The writer would in conclusion add, that the strange physical manifestations he has related, remind him more of the vagaries of *Puck* in the *Midsummer's Night Dream*, or of the wild scene in the *Walpurgisnacht*, in *Faust*, than of anything else.

“At any rate, believing as he does, that reason is the highest attribute of his nature, and the reflected image of his Creator, the writer cannot accept as emanations from the Spirit, revelations of a spiritual nature inconsistent with his intuitive conceptions of the nature and attributes of God. He cannot trace the dignity of the divine power in breaking cedar pencils and tables, or ringing bells, nor its wisdom in the mild communications of the medium writings. He believes that if God meant to reveal to him that this Spiritualism was the work of His Holy Spirit, He would not have given His will in the very heathenish oracular manner here recorded. He fails to see anything like divine wisdom or divine power in these unreasoning medium writings and grotesque physical



phenomena, and he desires the aid of those better qualified than himself to explain the nature of the unseen agency which he here attests. His own impression is, that the power is similar to that manifested at the delphic oracle, and by the ancient sorcerers and magicians, and he believes that the spirit of Python, silenced by the incarnation, has revived with some of its ancient power.

“J. LOCKHART ROBERTSON, M.D.

(Continued in Appendix.)

“Hayward’s Heath.”

“I was present at the house of Dr. Robertson when the phenomena described up to page three took place, and I verify the truth of his narrative. The other person present was Mr. Critchett, the assistant Secretary of the Society of Arts.

“W. M. WILKINSON.”

DR. CHARLES KIDD.

“Dear Sir,—I think the Dialectical Society has done much good in examining the so-called phenomena of ‘Spiritualism.’ Some of the appearances are obviously of mesmeric origin, some others are due to what we can all recognize as the *petit mal* of epileptic and hysteric nervous disorder (possibly the ‘possession by an evil spirit’ of the New Testament) the majority are evidently ‘subjective’ phenomena, as we witness them every day in patients under chloroform, modified in a thousand ways by external influences, phrenological shape of the head, &c.

“There is much innocence amongst spiritualists proper as to subjective and objective phenomena, for on my expressing my idea as above to one of the chiefs of the Spiritualistic Society, not long ago, he admitted, or rather boasted, that he did not know one thing about the functions of the brain, or in what subjective impressions differed from objective. Yet we have subjective impressions in dreams. One sometimes is in a hurry to pick up a handful of sovereigns off the ground in a dream, yet we know they only exist as a subjective vision. Need I mention the fixed and almost



tangible, solid realities that a hospital patient in delirium tremens points at, how he of imagination 'all compact' with the poet and the lover gives to airy nothings

'A local habitation and a name.'

But it was vain to argue with the chief recognized guide of the spiritualists, who, editing and copying merely what others told him, could see no farther. "Believe me, very truly yours,

"CHARLES KIDD, M.D.

"Saekville Street, June 30th.

"P.S.—You can make a patient who is partially under chloroform, dead asleep so to say, to sing a song by a particular external manipulation of the larynx, &c., as you can give the idea to a person in a common dream he is falling over a cliff by placing him on the dangerous edge of the bed with a reflex feeling, half instinctive and suggestive, that he is falling off. These are subjective impressions brought about by a second party; they are not exactly the same as the spiritualistic revelations, but they go very near them."

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MR. F. FUSEDALE.

"8, Southampton Row, Holborn,

"London, W.C., July 9th, 1869.

"Dear Dr. Edmunds,—Seeing your name in the recent discussion on spiritual phenomena, and feeling a deep interest in the cause, I have taken the liberty of addressing you on the subject. I may state that I have been acquainted with Spiritualism about eight or nine years, and I have seen the different phases of the subject quite sufficient to convince me of the truth of it. But what I wish to relate to you took place in my own family some two or three years ago. But let me state that my wife has possessed the power of seeing spirits for years and does continue to see them, although what I am about to relate to you took place about the time I have before stated. I may say that the phenomenon was witnessed by my wife, her sister, a girl then about twelve years old, and three of my own children, a boy about eleven and

two girls about five and eight years respectively. The commencement of these extraordinary manifestations began by the moving of the furniture of the bedrooms at the top of the house, where we all slept. The tables, the wash-stand, and the looking-glass were constantly being moved about the room, and the looking-glass and ornaments were put on the bed and then put back in their places again without ever doing any injury to them ; and then began the rapping down stairs, on the chairs and tables, and all round the rooms ; and then they commenced to take any little things of the children's or my wife's and hide them for a time and then return them again, and the children and my wife would see the things they took, (in particular a brooch of my wife's), appear to pass through solid substances, such as the wall or the doors, when they were taken from them ; and they would take things out of the children's hands, as if in play, and hide them and then after a little time return them again.

“After this another phase began. They all began to see the spirits ; and let me state they saw both good and evil ones ; the good were bright and the evil were dark. And I believe I am not going beyond the truth when I state that for six months we never sat down to meals without having audible evidence of their presence by their rapping on the table and chairs we were sitting on, and they would answer any question asked them by replying ‘yes’ or ‘no’ in the usual way ; and they would also shew the children pictures on the wall, and they would look in rapture on what they saw. Sometimes the scenes appeared to be scenes in distant lands, for they would write the nature of the scenery, and sometimes scenes from the spirit-land. But I omitted to mention that we have four children in the spirit-life, the eldest, a girl, would at the time I before stated be about twelve years old, and she appeared to be always near them, for her mother, my wife, said she easily recognised her as her child. My own mother was constantly there, who, I may mention, has been in the spirit-life upwards of thirty years. And they all used to shew them graphical scenes in a crystal or, more correctly speaking, simply a toy ball silvered taken

from a Christmas tree ; and also the incidents in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, as related by our Lord in the 15th chapter of Luke's Gospel. I have seen them so engaged (I mean the children) for half an hour at a time, the scenes constantly changing ; and let me state that I was a little sceptical at first myself about what they saw, but they (the spirit-friends) told me they would show me a scene in the crystal to convince me of the truth of what they said, which they did by shewing me a scene in the arctic regions—a ship embedded in the ice, the men on board, and dogs coming to them on the ice—which scene the children also saw. In the evening also, before anything of the sort commenced, they would tell the children what portion of scripture should be read, and a favourite one was the chapter of the Prodigal Son, and they would correct them if they did not read correctly. They would also guide their hands to write while sitting at the table, merely with their fingers, without pencil, and if the others sitting beside them would read what they wrote they said it appeared in illuminated letters on the table ; and my wife would also see different objects on the table.

“Although I have never seen anything myself except what I have before mentioned, I have had intelligent communications from the spirits by rapping and the alphabet, and while we have all been sitting round the table I have heard the knocking on or under the table as loud and distinct as would require the efforts of five or six persons to produce. I have also seen the chair move by request with my little boy sitting on it, his legs not being able to touch the floor, more than half across the room, while we were seated round the table, with a bright lamp burning at the time, without any effort on his part or any human agency being near. I could continue further but think I have stated sufficient to prove that what I have stated are facts and no trickery or imposture, and facts which, to my mind, convince me how near we are to the spirit-land, and how and with what pleasure our spirit-friends like to make their presence known and realised to help us on our journey to that bright and better land, and to prove by unmistakable

evidence the immortality of the soul and the eternal progression beyond the grave, and so to take away the sting from death and to rob the grave of its victory, and to convince us more of the truths of Christianity and love of our Heavenly Father. I must apologise for trespassing so much upon your patience; but believing you to be a searcher after truth, as I have ever been, is the only motive that has prompted me to address you on the subject; you are at liberty to make what use you please of this if you think any good may come from it, at the same time,

“ Believe me to remain yours truly,

“ Dr. Edmunds.”

“ F. FUSEDALE.”

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MR. EDWIN ARNOLD.

“ Sidcup Lodge, Sidcup, S.E.,

“ July 10th, 1869.

“ Sir,—I have never yet been able to fulfil my intention of expressing, either by letter or *viva voce*, my conclusions upon the question of ‘spiritual manifestations.’ In the first place the great extent of the subject, and, in the next, my unceasing occupations must explain and apologise for this. Understanding, however, that your investigations are drawing to a close, I feel myself bound to make some statement of my opinion, since you have included me among your cited witnesses and since I have been present at a considerable number of more or less remarkable *séances*. The long and careful inquiries which your Committee seems to have conducted renders it less important that I should, as I intended, recapitulate my own experiences as an observer of the alleged phenomena. All I desire to say, and all I can say (without reservation and explanations impossible in so limited a space) is this: that I regard many of the ‘manifestations’ as genuine, undeniable, and inexplicable by any known law, or any collusion, arrangement, or deception of the senses; and that I conceive it to be the duty and the interest of men of science and sense to examine and prosecute the inquiry, as one which has fairly passed from the region of ridicule. I am not



inclined to consider what I hold the *veritable* phenomena as being in any way *supernatural*, but rather as initiatory demonstrations of mental and vital power not yet comprehended nor regularly exercised. With reference to the supposed interpositions and actions of departed spirits, I can see nothing against the analogy of nature in this, but it is not a proved fact for me by what I have myself witnessed. The statement to which I am prepared to attach my name is this: that conjoined with the rubbish of much ignorance and some deplorable folly and fraud, there is a body of well-established facts beyond denial and outside any existing philosophical explanation, which facts promise to open a new world of human inquiry and experience, are in the highest degree interesting, and tend to elevate ideas of the continuity of life, and to reconcile, perhaps, the materialist and metaphysician.

“I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

“EDWIN ARNOLD, M.A.”

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MR. J. HAWKINS SIMPSON.

“July 19th, 1869.

“James Edmunds, Esq., M.D., &c.

“Dear Sir,—In reply to yours of the 17th inst., I cannot (as I before stated) find time to make a written exposition to be sent to you, nor can I send my ‘notes’ for inspection, because there are marginal columns containing personal remarks, &c. I think that it would not be easy to put into clearer or more precise and discriminating language than that used in my ‘notes,’ the description of phenomena which I sifted with the intention, and which would throw some light on the *modus operandi*. When I tell you that a large landscape view, as carried in my brain, was made perfectly visible in a spherical crystal to every one in a dark room, although the individuals composing the party occupied opposite places to each other, and no one, except Mr. Home, who held the crystal, was within three feet of the crystal; you will admit that a field of inquiry is here opened up which would yield results increasing our knowledge of mental action, etc., etc.

"Colours were similarly produced, though I could not gather that any brain then present was the exciting cause. Every colour of the rainbow was given brilliantly, especially the violet of a very opaque character, and that (as was rapped out) 'to show the violet as seen by disembodied spirits.' I express no opinion as to the intelligence which directs the wonderful phenomena, those of light, colour, and music being exquisitely beautiful, because I am determined to take nothing for granted, but I can safely say that patient and earnest study of the subject by a disciplined body would bring knowledge that would be a blessing to mankind. Dreams, thought, education, memory, and the diseases or ills attending deviation from natural laws, would be understood better by thousands of experiments made conscientiously.

"But what patience is required on the part of observers and mediums, and what hesitation in making stray asseverations.

"Faithfully yours,

"J. HAWKINS SIMPSON."

MR. ANDREW GLENDINNING,

"Ivy Bank, Port Glasgow,

"30th August, 1869.

"The Honorary Secretary, Spiritualism Committee.

"Sir—I understand you receive written communications bearing upon your late inquiry concerning Spiritualism. If so, and if it is of any interest to you, I will send you particulars of a 'house haunting' case in Port Glasgow which happened some few years ago, and which I investigated along with the police.

"I am, yours truly,

"ANDREW GLENDINNING."

[*Account Forwarded.*]

"In April, 1864, considerable excitement arose amongst the people resident in Scott's Lane, Port Glasgow, owing to noises which were heard in an apartment occupied by Hugh McCardle,

gardener, and his family. The knockings were heard almost nightly for about two weeks, and after the rumour had spread through the town, large numbers of men and women assembled in the lane from about seven o'clock till ten o'clock every evening. The stair, lobby and apartments were often crowded, but the police occasionally passed through the lane to ensure order. I visited the house to investigate the matter, and obtained the assistance of Mr. James Fegan, grocer. While waiting in the room for the commencement of the noises, Police Sergeant James McDonald and a constable came in. I told Sergeant McDonald my object, and, as he was anxious to expose the trick—if such it were—he consented to assist me. The knockings commenced about nine o'clock, and continued for more than an hour. The first sounds were similar to what is made by scratching on rough boards; then knocking, as if made with a heavy hammer, on the floor, under the bed, which was situated immediately above the outer stair. Sergeant McDonald and I took a candle and went below the bed, exactly over the spot where the sounds were proceeding from. Mr. Fegan stood in front of the bed. J. F. Anstruther, Esq., and a number of persons were in the room besides the constable. Being informed that knocks had been given as affirmative or negative answers to questions, we asked a good many questions, requesting that three knocks be given for yes, and one for no. The knocks were rapid and loud, and were often given before the question was quite finished. During any pause in the question, the knocks seemed to beat to the air, 'There is nae luck about the house;' I whistled that tune, and the knocks became still louder and accompanied my measure. I whistled other airs, 'Let us gang to Kelvin grove, bonnie lassie, oh;' 'Scots wha hae wi Wallace bled,' &c., &c., and, beginning always with the second line, they kept exact time. We asked some questions in a low tone—quite a whisper—our position being such that no one could see our lips moving, so as to guess the nature of our questions; but it made no difference in regard to the knocks. As ten o'clock struck on the town

clock, each stroke seemed supplemented by a sound in the wall, above the bed. We got a pickaxe, and tore up part of the flooring at the spot where the knocking was going on; the sounds shifted position for a little, but at times they were the same as if a person were hammering heavily on the edge of the hole we had made in the floor.

"We examined minutely the floor, walls, ceiling, &c.; we got the children (who were asleep) out of the bed, and lifted aside the bed-clothes, mattress, bed-bottom, and, in short, did everything we could think of to discover, if possible, the cause of the knockings; others (amongst whom were police constables and the superintendent) examined the lobby, staircase, and cellars; they likewise tried, by knocking on various places, to produce similar sounds, but without the slightest success.

(Signed) "ANDREW GLENDINNING, Port Glasgow."

"15th October, 1866. The foregoing is abridged from letters written me shortly after the occurrences.

(Initialed) "A. G.

"16th October, 1866. We solemnly testify that the foregoing statement drawn up by Mr. Andrew Glendinning, is exactly correct.

(Signed) { "JAMES McDONALD, late Sergeant, Port Glasgow.  
"JAMES FEGAN, grocer, Port Glasgow.

"Port Glasgow, 16th October, 1866."

"We conscientiously affirm that, besides the knockings which were heard by many people in the house we lived in, in April, 1864, and besides some occurrences, which were only known to a part of us, there were various articles scattered about from their places, as if thrown by some person, although no one was near where they were thrown from; such as small pieces of coal, broken crockery, and potatoes. We also saw, at times, at the back of the bed, the appearance of a hand moving up and down, and we sometimes tried to catch it, but could not, for, (however quickly we reached out our hands) it as quickly vanished, and we only felt cold air. And sometimes, when the hours were striking



on the town clock, low knocks were made on the inner partition, between the bed and the press. These things were seen and heard by some of the strangers and neighbours, as well as by ourselves. And we state solemnly, that we did not do any of these things, nor cause, nor allow them to be done, and that we have no idea whatever how to account for them, as they were all quite mysterious to us.

“For self and family,

(Signed) “HUGH MCCARDLE.

“Port Glasgow, 16th October, 1866.”

“I have known Hugh McCardle, gardener, for some time, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, he is an honest, sober, industrious, straightforward, truthful man.

(Signed) “JAMES FEGAN.”

MR. GEORGE HENRY LEWES.

“The Priory, 21, North Bank,

“Regent’s Park, 21st Dec., 1869.

“Sir,—Although my health does not permit of my going out in the evening, and there are other reasons why I should be indisposed to investigate the ‘spiritualistic’ phenomena further, in their present condition of not having fairly extricated themselves from the suspicions of being due to the unconscious co-operation of the assistants when not due to the positive imposture of one, still I am glad to hear the serious way in which your Committee is investigating the matter; and with such men as Mr. Wallace and Mr. Crookes we have a right to expect some definite result.

“With regard to your suggestion that I should name some further tests, I can only say that the case should be investigated precisely as any other case would be by scientific men.

“I. As a commencement, we have phenomena of which we do not know the means of production. But ‘spiritualist’ logic, by a common fallacy, confounds the cause we do not know with an unknown cause. If I do not know the cause of the patch on

bulldogs' eyes, I am not to conclude that the cause is one lying outside the laws of physiology—an unknown cause. In like manner, if I do not know how tables are turned and chairs leap in the air, my ignorance is no warrant for the conclusion that the cause is one lying outside the ordinary laws of physics. To know this, I must positively know what *is* the cause. The ordinary laws of physics do not explain the phenomena! When you trace the phenomena to their cause—imposture, or expectant attention, or whatever it may be—the ordinary laws do suffice.

“II. The only certain fact then being our ignorance of the means of production, we have to ascertain, if possible, what those means are. Any hypothesis propounded must conform to two requisites. First, it must explain the phenomena; secondly, it must be not only a *vera causa*, but one proved to be in operation.

“Suppose we assume the force to be ‘magnetic.’ To justify this assumption we must show that the phenomena are *like* those of magnetism, follow the laws of magnetism, are produceable by magnetism. Has any one attempted to do this?

“Next we must show that magnetism is actually in operation. I might propose as an hypothesis that the chair leaped in the air because a Kobbold tilted it up. *If* a Kobbold were present, and if he had the power, the effects might follow. But you would not believe in the presence of a Kobbold, because his presence would enable you to explain the phenomena. What I have said of magnetism and Kobbolds, applies to all other agents hypothetically propounded. No guess, however wild, need be rejected if it admit of verification; no guess that cannot be verified is worth a moment's attention.

“The Committee, therefore, is like a man in the presence of a phenomenon which is unlike all those he has hitherto studied. He is ignorant of the means of its production, and has to find out—if he can—what they are.

“In my experience, and it has been large, the *means* have always been proved to be either deliberate imposture, aided by the unconscious assistance of spectators, or the well-known effects of

expectant attention. In the cases that I have not investigated, the means may have been other ; on these cases therefore I should be silent.

“ Yours truly,

“ GEORGE HENRY LEWES.”

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PROFESSOR TYNDALL.

“ 22nd Dec. 1869.

“ Sir,—You mention in your note to me three gentlemen, two of whom are personally known to me, and for both of whom I entertain a sincere esteem.

“ The house of one of these, namely Mr. Wallace, I have already visited, and made there the acquaintance of the lady who was the reputed medium between Mr. Wallace and the supernatural.

“ And if earnestly invited by Mr. Crookes, the editor of the ‘Chemical News,’ to witness phenomena which in his opinion ‘tend to demonstrate the existence of some power (magnetic or otherwise) which has not yet been recognized by men of science,’ I should pay due respect to his invitation.

“ But understand my position : more than a year ago Mr. Cromwell Varley, who is, I believe, one of the greatest modern spiritualists, did me the favour to pay me a visit, and he then employed a comparison which, though flattering to my spiritual strength, seems to mark me out as unfit for spiritual investigation. He said that my presence at a *séance* resembled that of a great magnet among a number of small ones. I throw all into confusion. Still he expressed a hope that arrangements might be made to show me the phenomena, and I expressed my willingness to witness such things as Mr. Varley might think worth showing to me. I have not since been favoured by a visit from Mr. Varley.

“ I am now perfectly willing to accept the personal invitation of Mr. Crookes, should he consider that he can show me phenomena of the character you describe.

“ I am sir, your obedient servant,

“ G. W. Bennett, Esq.”

“ JOHN TYNDALL.”

DR. WILLIAM B. CARPENTER, V.P.R.S., &c.

“University of London, Burlington House, W.

“December 24th, 1869.

“Sir,—My time is far too fully occupied by my official duties and scientific pursuits to enable me to enter at any length into a statement of my opinions in regard to the so-called spiritual manifestations. But I may state generally that I have satisfied myself by personal investigation that, whilst a great number of what pass as such are the results of intentional imposture, and many others of self deception, there are certain phenomena which are quite genuine, and must be considered as fair subjects of scientific study. My inquiries have led me to the conclusion, however, that the source of these phenomena does not lie in any communication *ab extra*, but that they depend upon the *subjective* condition of the individual which operates according to certain recognized physiological laws. These I expounded in an article on mesmerism, electro biology, &c., which I wrote for the ‘Quarterly Review’ in October 1853; and I have not seen any subsequent reason for modifying the opinions therein expressed.

“I have since become cognizant of many facts, however, which lead me to the belief that the process to which I have given the name ‘Unconscious Cerebration’—of which you will find an account in the accompanying abstract—performs a large part in the production of the phenomena known as spiritualistic.

“I remain, Sir, your obedt. servant,

“G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.”      “WILLIAM B. CARPENTER.”

[*Abstract Enclosed.*]

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“Man’s conscious life essentially consists in an action and re-action between his mind and all that is outside it,—the *me* and the *not me*. But this action and re-action cannot take place, in his present stage of existence, without the intervention of a material instrument; whose function it is to bridge over the hiatus between the individual consciousness and the external world, and thus to



bring them into mutual communication. So long, therefore, as either the mental or the bodily part of man was studied to the exclusion of the other, no true progress could be made in psychological science; and thus it was that the bygone controversies between the spiritualists and the materialists, in which the disputants on either side looked at his composite nature from that side only, were barren of any other good result than that of bringing into view phenomena that might otherwise have escaped detection. But the psychologist who looks at his subject in the light of that more advanced philosophy of the present day which regards matter merely as the vehicle of force, has no difficulty in seeing where both sets of disputants were right and both wrong; and, laying the foundations of his science broad and deep in the *whole* constitution of the individual Man and his relations to the world external to him, aims to build it up with the materials furnished by experience of every kind, mental and bodily, normal and abnormal,—ignoring no fact, however strange, that can be attested by valid evidence, and accepting none, however authoritatively sanctioned, that will not stand the test of thorough scrutiny.

“It is with the view of promoting the advance of such a Psychology, that the lecturer desires to bring into more distinct recognition a doctrine which has been familiar to the metaphysicians of Germany from Leibnitz to the present time, under the names ‘Latent Thought,’ or the ‘Preconscious Activity of the Soul,’ and was systematically expounded in this country by Sir William Hamilton; whilst in physiological language it may be designated as the ‘Unconscious Action of the Brain,’ or, more strictly, ‘Unconscious Cerebration.’\* To himself it seems of

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\* Dr. Laycock, in an able essay on the “Reflex Action of the Brain,” published in 1844, brought together a number of phenomena which justified his extension of the doctrine of reflex action from the spinal cord to the brain; but as he did not draw a distinction between the reflex action of the *sensory ganglia* (sensori-motor) and that of the *cerebrum* (ideo-motor), and did not assert that either could take place *without consciousness*, he was not understood at the time to affirm this position, though it appears

little consequence whether the doctrine be expressed in terms of metaphysics or in terms of physiology, provided it be recognized as having a positive scientific basis. But since, in the systems of philosophy long prevalent in this country, *consciousness* has been almost uniformly taken as the basis of all strictly mental activity, it seems convenient to designate as functions of the nervous system all those operations which lie below that level. And there is this advantage in approaching the subject from the physiological side,—that the study of the automatic actions of other parts of the nervous system furnishes a clue, by the guidance of which we may be led to the scientific elucidation of many phenomena that would otherwise remain obscure and meaningless.”

Referring to a discourse delivered by him March 12th, 1852, “On the Influence of Suggestion in modifying and directing Muscular Movement independently of Volition,” Dr. Carpenter reminded his audience that the doctrine of *ideo-motor* action therein set forth had been referred to by Professor Faraday as furnishing an adequate scientific *rationale* of the phenomena of “table-turning” and “table-talking,” which developed themselves epidemically soon afterwards. “Whilst the ordinary phenomena of ‘table-talking’ present a most curious body of illustrations of that principle, cases have occasionally occurred in the experience of persons above suspicion of intentional deception, in which the answers given by the movements of the tables were not only unknown to the questioners, but were even *contrary to their belief at the time*, and yet afterwards proved to be true. Such cases afford typical examples of the doctrine of ‘Unconscious Cerebra-

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from his subsequent statements that he certainly meant to do so. The lecturer, having long previously taught the doctrine of the sensory ganglia, and having been convinced by Dr. Laycock’s reasoning that it might be extended to the cerebrum, was led by a consideration of the anatomical relations of the cerebrum to the sensory ganglia to believe that a succession of changes might take place automatically in the former, of which the *results* only might rise to consciousness; and to this kind of activity he gave the designation of “Unconscious Cerebration.”

tion ;' for in several of them it was capable of being distinctly shown, that the answers, although contrary to the belief of the questioners at the time, were true to facts of which they had been formerly cognizant, but which had vanished from their recollection, the *residua* of these forgotten impressions giving rise to cerebral changes which prompted the responses without any consciousness on the part of the agents of the latent springs of their actions."

In order, however, to present the doctrine in its proper scientific aspect by giving it a definite physiological basis, Dr. Carpenter recapitulated what he considered to be the fundamental doctrines relating to the *original* or *primary*, and the *acquired* or *secondary* automatic actions of the principal divisions of the cerebro-spinal centres. These may be distinguished as,—

1. The *Spinal Cord* (including the *Medulla Oblongata*) ;
2. The *Sensory Ganglia* ;
3. The *Cerebellum* ;
4. The *Cerebrum*.

"Leaving out of consideration the cerebellum, of which the function has not yet been satisfactorily determined, and fixing our attention upon the other centres, we find that each of them, in addition to its *original* or *primary* automatic actions, comes to be the instrument of a set of *secondary* automatic actions, which, though originally prompted by the will, and still remaining under its control, are habitually performed without any volitional agency.

"Thus the *primary* function of the *spinal cord* as an independent centre consists in the performance of the motions of respiration and swallowing, which are essential to the maintenance of life ; and in many of the lower animals it is certain that the ordinary movements of locomotion have the same *primary* automatic character. In man, however, the power of performing these movements is *acquired* by a process of education ; yet when once the co-ordination has been established, the movements are performed automatically, —continuing when set going by one act of the will, until they are checked by another act. Of this we have daily experience in the continuance of the act of walking, whilst the attention is closely



and continuously occupied upon an internal train of thought; each movement suggesting the succeeding one; and the repetition being thus indefinitely prolonged, until, the attention being recalled, the automatic impulse is superseded by volitional control.

"The *primary* automatic action of the *sensory ganglia*, again, seems to be chiefly connected with movements of *protection*; as in the sneezing produced by the application of irritants to the nasal surface, or the closure of the eyelids at a flash of light. But their *secondarily*-automatic agency may be distinctly traced in the guidance of the habitual movements of locomotion performed under the conditions previously stated. Thus a man in a state of profound abstraction walks through a crowded street, without jostling his fellow-passengers or bruising himself against lamp-posts; and he follows the line of direction which is most familiar to him, even though at starting he had intended to take some other.

"The influence of *habitudes acquired by experience*, which take the place in man of the intuitive capacities of the lower animals, is peculiarly well seen in that co-ordination of visual and tactile perceptions, by which we acquire our notions of the forms and relations of external objects, and regulate our muscular movements in accordance with those notions. A bird just come forth from the egg will peck at an insect with perfect aim; but an infant is long in learning to grasp at a bright object held within its reach, being obviously unable in the first instance either to estimate its distance, or to combine the muscular actions needed for its prehension. And the observation of numerous cases in which sight has been first obtained after tactile familiarity with external objects had been fully acquired, enables it to be positively affirmed that no object can be *immediately* recognized by sight alone, when seen for the first time under such circumstances.\*

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\* Thus, in a case published about three years ago by Mr. Critchett, of a young woman who first obtained sight at the age of nineteen, it is recorded that when a pair of scissors was first held before her, although she correctly described their shape and metallic lustre, she had not the least idea of their identity with the implement she had been accustomed to handle; but when told what it was, laughed at what she called her own stupidity.



"This class of facts is of great importance in our present inquiry; because we have here a distinct instance of the *formation of judgments on the basis of an acquired experience, by a process of which, even when we give our attention to it, we are altogether unconscious.* Thus when we obtain a conception of solid form by the mental combination of two dissimilar pictures in the stereoscope, that conception *seems* to be so necessary and immediate, that its formation might be supposed to be the result of an *original* intuition, if we had no means of tracing out the antecedent stages of the process, and of thus satisfying ourselves that it is *secondary* or *acquired*. The faculty to which it is due may be said to be the *resultant* of our whole previous training in this direction; which not merely enables us to recognize the forms and relations of objects of which we have some antecedent knowledge, so that they are in some degree suggested by the single picture, but also to create (so to speak) forms and relations of which the single picture gives us no adequate idea. The physiologist can scarcely doubt, that as the nervous system, like every other part of the organism, *grows to* the mode in which it is habitually exercised, a *direct* channel of instrumental action here comes to take the place of the *circuit* through which the process was originally performed; so that the *acquired intuition* of man, in regard to the forms and relations of external objects, comes to be as certain and direct as the *original intuition* of the lower animals, whilst probably far exceeding it in completeness and range.

"The relation of the *cerebrum*, or brain proper, to the spinal cord and sensory ganglia, can only be properly studied by the light of comparative anatomy; and from this we learn that instead of being (as was formerly supposed) the centre of the whole system, in direct connection with the organs of sense and with the muscular apparatus, it is a superadded organ, the development of which seems to bear a pretty constant relation to the degree in which intelligence supersedes instinct as a spring of action. The ganglionic matter which is spread out upon the surface of the hemispheres, and in which their potentiality resides, is connected with the sensory tract

at their base (which is the real centre of convergence for the sensory nerves of the whole body) by commissural fibres, long since termed by Reil, with sagacious foresight, 'nerves of the internal senses;' and its anatomical relation to the sensorium is thus precisely the same as that of the retina, which is a ganglionic expansion connected with the sensorium by the optic nerve. Hence it may fairly be surmised (1) that, as we only become conscious of visual impressions on the retina when their influence has been transmitted to the central sensorium, so we only become conscious of ideational changes in the cerebral hemispheres when their influence has been transmitted to the same centre; (2) that, as visual changes may take place in the retina of which we are unconscious, either through a temporary inactivity of the sensorium (as in sleep), or through the entire occupation of the attention in some other direction, so may ideational changes take place in the cerebrum, of which we may be at the time unconscious for want of receptivity on the part of the sensorium, but of which the results may at a subsequent time present themselves to the consciousness as ideas elaborated by an automatic process of which we have no cognizance.

"That the cerebrum, like the nervous centres on which it is super-imposed, has an automatic activity of its own, cannot be doubted by those who have attended to the phenomena of somnambulism (whether natural or induced), in which the directing and controlling power of the will seems completely suspended, and the trains of thought follow the lead either of some dominant idea or of suggestion from without. There are well-authenticated cases in which such automatic action has not only evolved results that were perfect in themselves, but has wrought these out through a shorter and more direct process than had been conceived possible in the waking state; the withdrawal of all distracting influences appearing to favour that undisturbed action of the mental mechanism (if such a phrase be permissible), which is the condition most favourable to the success of the operation. But in all such instances the automatic action follows the course of the habitual lines of thought, and expresses the result of the whole previous training and

discipline of the mind, which has been carried on under volitional direction. The lawyer could not thus have written in his sleep a lucid opinion, unravelling the perplexities of a complicated case, if he had not assiduously cultivated the intellectual habit by which it was elaborated; nor could the mathematician, in the same state, have not merely executed with perfect correctness a lengthened computation, which had baffled him in the waking state, but found out a much more direct means of attaining the result, if his previous training had not been of a kind to develop this self-acting power.

“With such evidence that the cerebrum may work *automatically*, it may further be regarded as physiologically probable (on the grounds already stated) that such automatic action may take place *unconsciously*; and facts which are within the experience of every one seem to justify this conclusion. Thus, when we have been trying to recollect some name, phrase, or occurrence, and, after vainly employing all the expedients we can think of for bringing the desiderated idea to our minds, have abandoned the attempt as useless, it will often occur spontaneously a little while afterwards, suddenly flashing (as it were) before our consciousness; and this although the mind has been completely engrossed at the time by some entirely different train of thought, so that no link of association can be detected whereby the result has been knowingly apprehended. Now in these cases it seems probable that the train of action we have purposely set going in the first instance has continued in movement when we have withdrawn our attention from it, and goes on all the more regularly in consequence of that withdrawal; for experience shows that we are much more likely to recover the forgotten idea when we cease to trouble ourselves about it, than when we go on searching for it,—just as a rider who has lost himself in some unknown region is more likely to find his way home by dropping the reins on his horse’s neck, and letting him take his own course, than by wearying him in trying one road after another.

“The same mode of action seems to have a large share in the process of *invention*, whether artistic, poetical, or mechanical; for



numerous instances might be cited, in which, the object to be attained having been kept before the mind for some time without any immediate result, that result has suddenly presented itself either on first awaking out of sleep, or in the midst of some entirely different occupation. And it is a common experience of inventors (whether artists, poets, or mechanics) that when they have been brought to a stand by some difficulty, the tangle will be more likely to unravel itself (so to speak) if the attention be completely withdrawn from it, than by any amount of continued effort.

“The same appears to be true of those acts of *judgment* in which a great many opposing considerations are involved, and in which we take time to form our conclusion. As was well said by Abraham Tucker\* of this class of cases, ‘with all our care to digest our materials, we cannot do it completely; but after a night’s rest, or some recreation, or the mind being turned into some different course of thinking, *she finds they have ranged themselves anew during her absence*, and in such manner as exhibits almost at one view all their mutual relations, dependences and consequences—which shows that our organs do not stand idle the moment we cease to employ them, but continue the motions we put into them after they have gone out of sight, thereby working themselves to a glibness and smoothness, and falling into *a more regular and orderly posture than we could have placed them with all our skill and industry*.’ Experience shows that the soundest judgments of the well-disciplined mind are thus formed; all the considerations which ought to be taken into account being first duly brought before it, and then left free to arrange themselves by fixing the attention on some other occupation; and if time be given for this unconscious balancing, we find, when we return to the subject, that the direction in which our minds gravitate is a surer guide than any estimate we might have formed under volitional pressure.

“This unconscious action of the brain, however, is often exerted

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\* ‘*Light of Nature Pursued*,’ 2nd edition (1805), chap. x. § 4, vol. i. p. 248.



in giving a bias to our judgment, of which we may be entirely unaware. Almost every one is thus influenced more or less by the habits of thought and feeling early impressed upon him ; and the judgment is especially liable to be warped by these, when the ordinary vigour of the mind is depressed by physical or moral causes. This kind of perversion may be so decided in its evil effects, as to lead to a suspicion of a want of honesty or candour, which may be totally unfounded ; the real source of it lying hid deep down in that stratum of the mental constitution, which represents the results of those early influences for which the individual himself is not responsible. Thus, as Mr. Lecky has shown, the doctrine of unconscious cerebration inculcates *toleration* for differences not merely of belief, but of the moral standard.

“One of the most frequently recurring forms of unconscious cerebral action, is that by which what we call ‘common sense’ decides for us in a great variety of cases, in which we do not think it worth while to submit the question to a logical discussion. Now this ‘common sense’ is, so to speak, an *acquired intuition* ; being the *resultant* of the whole previous activity of the mind, conjointly with that of the brain which is its instrument. Its value will consequently depend upon the nature of the training and discipline which the intellectual powers have received ; and it may be affirmed without hesitation, that where those powers have been originally good, and have been thoroughly well cultivated and exercised, the ‘common sense’ judgment is likely to be even superior to that which may be worked out by an elaborate process of reasoning, wherein some more acute reasoner will almost always be able to find some flaw. Thus the ‘common sense’ decision of mankind in regard to the existence of an external world, is practically worth more than all the arguments of all the logicians who have discussed the basis of our belief in it.

“If, then, it be true that every form of intuition, whether *original* or *acquired*, is referable to the ever-flowing under-current, which may be designated as ‘unconscious cerebration’ or ‘pre-conscious activity of the soul,’ according as we use the terms of

physiology or of metaphysics, the question naturally arises what power we have of directing and controlling its course, of strengthening or repressing its power.

"We have not that direct mastery over it, which we can gain by a determined exercise of the will over our conscious activity. We cannot *acquire*, if we have it not in our original constitution, the creative power of genius, so as to *make ourselves* great poets, artists, or musicians; nor can we gain by practice that peculiar *insight* which characterizes the scientific discoverer of the highest class, or that ingenuity which distinguishes the great mechanical inventor; for these gifts are of the nature of *instincts*, which may be developed and strengthened by appropriate cultivation, but which no culture will of itself produce, any more than it can raise a crop of corn where there has been no seed.

"Still, where we cannot create, we may learn to admire the beautiful, to recognize the true, and to value the good; and this power of appreciation grows and intensifies, in proportion as it is exercised aright. The more we fix our attention on the highest ideals of art, and withdraw ourselves from the influence of those lower forms of it which in any way connect themselves with the grosser parts of our nature, the more thorough will be our intuitive appreciation of what is noble and elevating, the more thorough our intuitive distaste for all that is mean and degrading. And so in the pursuit of truth, the more faithfully, strictly, and perseveringly we aim to disentangle ourselves from all selfish aims, all conscious prejudices, the more shall we find ourselves becoming progressively emancipated from those unconscious prejudices which cling around us as results of early misdirection and erroneous habits of thought, and which are more dangerous to our consistency than those against which we *knowingly* put ourselves upon our guard. And so in those judgments in regard to ourselves or others for which we are all daily appealing to the guidance of common sense, the safety of that guidance will depend upon the degree in which we have habitually aimed to cultivate our power of reasoning correctly, to try every question by first

principles rather than by the dictates of a supposed temporary expediency, and above all, 'to be just and fear not.' And every course of self-discipline thus steadily and honestly pursued, tends not merely to clear the mental vision of the *individual*, but to ennoble the *race*; by developing that power of *immediate insight*, which, in man's highest phase of existence, will not only supersede the laborious operations of his intellect, but will reveal to him truths and glories of the unseen, which the intellect alone can see but 'as through a glass, darkly.'

"W. B. C."

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MR. T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE.

"Villino Trollope, Florence,

"29th December, 1869.

"Sir—In reply to your letter of the 17th, I can only say that I have little or nothing to add to those previous statements of mine, of which you are in possession. With regard to the sittings with Mrs. Guppy, I can only say that the greatest watchfulness on the part of those taking part in them failed to detect any trace of imposture. The physical phenomena which took place (in the dark), such as the sudden falling on the table of a large quantity of jonquils, which filled the whole room with their odour, were extraordinary, and, on any common theory of physics, unaccountable. The room in which this took place had been carefully examined by me, and Mrs. Guppy's person had been carefully searched by my wife. With regard to metaphysical phenomena, an attempt to hold communication with intelligences other than those present in the flesh was stated by a lady to whom a communication was addressed to have been extraordinarily successful and to have been proved by the event. In the case of myself and my wife all such attempts resulted in total failure. I have recently had a sitting with Dr. Willis, of Boston. The physical manifestations (in the dark) were remarkable and perplexing. The attempts at spiritual communication were altogether failures.

"In short the result of my experience thus far is this, that the physical phenomena frequently produced are, *in many cases*, not the result of any sleight of hand, and that those who have witnessed them with due attention must be convinced that there is no analogy between them and the tricks of professed 'conjurers.' I may also mention that Boseo, one of the greatest professors of legerdemain ever known, in a conversation with me upon the subject, utterly scouted the idea of the possibility of such phenomena as I saw produced by Mr. Home, being performed by any of the resources of his art. To what sort of agency these results are to be attributed, I have no idea, and give no opinion; although, (inasmuch as I consider that the word 'supernatural' involves a contradiction in terms), I hold that to admit that the phenomena exist, implies the admission that they are 'natural,' or in accordance with *some* law of nature. With regard to the *metaphysical* phenomena, though I have witnessed many strange things, I have never known any that satisfactorily excluded the *possibility* of mistake or imposture.

"Permit me to add that if you should think fit to make any public use of this letter, I must request that it be printed, if at all, *in extenso*.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE."

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PROFESSOR HUXLEY.

"24, Abbey Place,

"Jan. 2nd, 1870.

"Sir,—I have been unwilling to reply to your letter of the 18th Dec., 1869, hastily, and I therefore delayed my answer until my return from a short absence from London.

"If the gentlemen whom you mention, and for whose judgment and capacity I have every respect, have not been able in the course of some months to arrive at results satisfactory to themselves and capable of being stated satisfactorily to the scientific public, it



would be mere presumption in me to entertain the hope that I should be more successful, without a much greater expenditure of time and trouble. But for the present year my time and energies are already so fully preoccupied that it would be little short of madness for me to undertake an investigation of so delicate and difficult a character. The only certain result of which would be an interminable series of attacks from the side from which I might chance to differ.

"I hope that I am perfectly open to conviction on this or any other subject; but I must frankly confess to you that it does not interest me; and that I think that my duty as a man of science towards the public may be much better discharged by activity in other directions.

"I am, Sir,

"Yours truly,

"T. H. HUXLEY."

"G. W. Bennett, Esq."

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MR. CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

"Tottenham, April 6th, 1870.

"Dear Sir,—I regret to say that at the Sub-committee I attended (that with Mr. Home), although I attended the whole of its meetings, I had no reason to induce me to concur in your report. Such movement and sound as occurred when I was present was of too slight a character to entitle one to come to any conclusion, except that it might have been easily produced without extraordinary means. I absented myself from the general meetings when the phenomena, spoken to gravely, came within the range of the impossible, *e.g.*, spirit flowers and fruits alleged to be thrown in a medium's lap. If Mr. Home had given further *séances* I should have attended, as he afforded the fullest facilities for investigation.

"Yours truly,

"CHARLES BRADLAUGH."

"G. W. Bennett, Esq."

M. LÉON FAVRE.

"1, Place Vintimille, Paris, 13 Juin, 1870.

"Monsieur,—Votre Comité fait appel aux convictions et demande que tous ceux qui ont pu acquérir la certitude des phénomènes dont l'observation occupe les esprits sérieux, viennent témoigner de leur croyance en les signant de leur nom.

"Je m'empresse, monsieur, tout inconnu que je suis, à vous donner cette déclaration, qui est pour moi une satisfaction de conscience.

"J'ai étudié longuement minutieusement et consciencieusement les phénomènes spiritualistes. Non seulement je me suis convaincu de leur réalité irréfragable, mais j'ai la conviction profonde qu'ils sont produits par les âmes de ceux qui ont quitté la terre, et—bien plus—qu'ils ne peuvent être produits que par elles.

"Je crois donc à l'existence d'un monde invisible correspondant au monde que perçoivent nos regards. Je erois que les habitans de ce monde sont pour la plupart les anciens habitans du globe terrestre, et je erois à la communication possible et démontrée des deux mondes entr'eux.

"Je suis tout prêt, monsieur, à toutes les affirmations en ce genre que vous croirez utiles à la divulgation de la vérité, et vous prie d'accepter l'assurance de ma considération bien fraternelle,

"L. FAVRE CLAVAIROZ,

"Monsieur G. W. Bennett, "Consul Général de France."

"Secrétaire du Comité sur le Spiritualisme de la

"Société Dialectique à Londres."

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MRS. LÆTITIA LEWIS.

"Erehless Castle, Beauly, Invernesshire,

"November 20th, 1870.

"Sir,—Having read with much interest the articles in 'The Queen,' on Spiritualism, I forward to you my personal experience on the subject for the benefit of the Dialectical Society. I must inform you that I am not a medium and had no belief in spirits

till I became convinced almost against my will. Whilst residing at my home in South Wales during the spring of the present year, most wonderful spiritual manifestations occurred *spontaneously* to myself and daughter. The enclosed is a copy of a letter I wrote (to a relation and a clergyman) at the time. I give my name and address, and also the names of individuals concerned, which of course you will keep private. I do so to convince you of the accuracy of the facts stated.

“LÆTITIA LEWIS,

“Of Stradey, Carmarthenshire.”

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*(Copy of a Letter sent by me to a near relative, who is a  
Clergyman in the Church of England.)*

“My dear —,

“As I think you are a strong-minded man, and considering you the spiritual head of the family (in the ecclesiastical sense of the word), I write now to tell you the sequel of the ‘spiritual manifestations’ that so alarmed me when last here. I have no belief in the spirits, but have been incredulous when hearing of other people’s faith. I wrote to tell, at the time, to many of the family the curious events here, so that perhaps you heard I was obliged to change my bed-room as I could get no sleep. When the fire was out, such constant noises awoke me that I was always striking matches, and expecting to see some wild animal in the room, so great was the rustling and shuffling, as if some uneasy monster were moving about; also a most extraordinary brilliant light appeared on the inside of the bed-curtains; this light I and several others in the house have seen at different times, but not in the same room. Many other very odd events occurred, too numerous to mention here, so I will only relate one or two instances. A candle was seen to light itself; the valance of my sofa was tucked up in the most curious way at night by invisible hands; my clothes, which were left arranged on this sofa, were constantly interfered with, books reversed in the most wonderful manner,

ete., etc. The exact impression of a skeleton's hand was seen on the glass of a book-case in this same room.

"I was really glad to have to visit my sister at Henbury, on the 20th of April, for there I thought my rest would not be disturbed; but to my surprise, very loud raps (twice during the first night, and for two nights after), came on the doors and walls, which greatly alarmed me, and the clothes, as before, were interfered with. Since then nothing more has occurred to me.

"The first letter I received in Paris, early in May, from my married daughter (at Stradey), stated that the rapping had commenced in her room in the most demonstrative manner, on the wall and all parts of the room—frequently during the day, but more so at night. She was nearly a week without sleep, and had the courage to try and talk in the day with this noisy spirit, by spelling the letters; but, though the raps answered, she could make out nothing by the alphabet. This continued for a fortnight or longer, the rapping becoming more vehement. On beginning to write one day, to her great surprise, fear, and wonder, her hand was forced to make letters she could not read; words were formed but she could not make them out. This was the first sentence she read with difficulty—'Will you begin to believe that I am present? My mind is troubled until I have revealed my secret.' My daughter asked, 'Who are you?' 'Benj. Way.' Then, at her asking for the name in full, 'Benjamin Way \*' was written. She then asked, 'Are you *Uncle Ben*?' 'Yes, yes, dear child.' Pages were written, and she asked a great many questions; these always brought the reply, 'You must not tease me,' 'Go to the devil.' The spirit wrote where he came from; but this, and other past events in his life, I decline to write. My daughter cried for days and was fearfully frightened. Her crying so distressed the spirit that the raps followed her everywhere more and more, and then, on writing again, it said, 'What, crying again? you pain me so, dear, dear child, you must forgive me.' This one communication I must

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\* B. Way is the name of my eldest brother—deceased several years ago—and the signature is exactly like his, when living.



write, as it is so strange, and was evidently the cause of the spirit's uneasiness; the subject being his will, and where it was to be found, describing the place in a great tin box. The spirit came to me as I was his favourite sister, and left off troubling me as I was so frightened. My daughter, wisely trying to get rid of this most persevering spirit, bade it attend a *séance* which she heard from her husband would be given in the neighbourhood of Manchester. The medium was Mrs. —, a minister's wife, at W—. My daughter's husband, Mr. M.—, wishing to see some manifestations (being an unbeliever in spirits), got a friend to take him, as he did not know the people. I must tell you that, although my daughter had written to her husband of her alarm, she never named the secret or subject of the will; only that Benjamin Way's spirit had divulged a secret among his numerous manifestations to her. The first *séance* was very unsatisfactory. Mrs. —, a very delicate person, nearly fainted from the extreme violence with which her hand was banged on the table, and any further manifestations were impossible, with the exception of rapping and tables being turned. Some days later, Mr. M— attended another *séance*. Questions were asked through Mrs. —, who was still very weak. The spirit, when asked if it was the same that had promised to meet him there, said, 'Yes, and I am here.' It then wrote its name, 'Benj. Way;' which was passing strange, as neither Mr. or Mrs. — had heard the name before. When asked for proof, it drew a diagram of the tin box; which was a proof to my daughter that the promise that the spirit would attend at the *séance* at W— had been kept; for, as I before mentioned, my daughter had not named the will or tin box to her husband."

*Pages 284 to 325, containing the first portion of Miss Blackwell's Paper, may be found in the original edition, published by Longmans, price 15s.*

## CONCLUSION OF MISS ANNA BLACKWELL'S PAPER.

“The theoretic indications of the preceding pages explain the so-called ‘Spiritual Phenomena’ as being produced, by the inhabitants of the spirit-sphere of the earth, through their superior command of the ‘fluids’ and ‘forces’ that make up the totality of planetary existence; a command which enables them to bring to bear—1st, on the objects around us, 2ndly, on the invisible material elements contained in the atmosphere, 3rdly, on the fibres of the human brain and nerves—the subtle and powerful agent which, for want of a better name, we may call the magneto-vital or electro-vital fluid (although those terms are very far from expressing its real nature), and which is furnished partly by the *périsprits* of the spirits themselves, partly by the atmosphere, partly by the nervous system of the human body; 4thly, through their power of ‘materialising,’ for a short time, the substance of their fluidic corporeality, and of assuming, or causing us to perceive, the appearance of almost any lower form they may wish to present to us; 5thly, through the more extended vision of the fluidic sphere, which shows them a wide range of human actions and intentions, and thus enables them to forecast coming events with more or less correctness, and, when permitted to do so, to predict the same with more or less exactness, according to the ‘flexibility’ of the organism of the ‘medium’; 6thly, through the *radiating* power of the *périsprit*, which surrounds each soul, whether incorporated in compact or in fluidic Matter, with a sort of magnetic atmosphere, that extends beyond its corporeal envelopé, and causes each of us to exert, on everything around us, an unconscious influence whose quality, intensity, and range of action, are always in correspondence with our mental and moral states; an explanation that also accounts for the facts of sympathy and antipathy, of presentiments &c., as well as for the difficulty and uncertainty attending the production of the ‘Spiritual Phenomena,’ as being ‘manifestations’ of minds, wills, and means of action (often very complicated,) that are not ours, and that not only are not under our control, but

to the production of which the tension of our mental fibres, attendant on a strong desire for their occurrence, constitutes a serious and often insurmountable impediment.

“Under the first head may be classed the raps (which I have heard, hundreds of times, when alone, and busied with other matters;) displacements of objects; playing on musical instruments (the strings of the piano in my drawing-room have been made to vibrate in cadence, in the light, in presence of several persons, with no one near it;) shaking of rooms; increased or diminished weight, and floating, of bodies; ‘spirit-lights’; the elongation of the human frame, through the counteraction or intensification, in a given direction, of the cohesive attraction that holds its molecules into form; cures, through a re-arrangement of the molecules of diseased organs; the presence of real flowers, shells, birds, or other material objects, in closed rooms; and, in general, what are usually termed ‘physical manifestations,’ all of which are produced with jets or currents of the magneto-vital force, and also, in the case of the flowers, &c., with the aid of fluidic substances that are stated to have the power of intercepting the visual rays, and thus of hiding, from human eyes, any material object which has been covered with them; the objects so covered being previously brought into the room, by spirits, and kept hidden until, by the removal of the fluidic covering, those objects are rendered visible. I attribute to the employment of the force referred to, a very violent blow I once received from an unseen agent, sufficiently severe to make me ill for several days; heavy poundings on the walls and furniture of a room on the upper floor of my house, that went on, for many months, almost continuously, by night and by day; the grouping, into a letter and cyphers, of some pins that I had dropped upon a table on leaving a room to which I returned about twenty minutes afterwards, and into which I am sure that no human being had entered during my absence, the pins so placed conveying a message which no human being could have framed, and which no one but myself could have understood; the production, upon a table in my drawing-room, by lamplight, in presence of seven

persons, all of whose hands were in full view, of scratching sounds, as though some one were writing on its under-surface with the end of a match, imitating writing so perfectly, during more than a quarter of an hour, that we could distinguish the long and short letters, the dotting of the *i*'s and crossing of the *t*'s; on another occasion, in the same room, in presence of four persons who were all standing a few feet from the table, but none of whom were touching it, the production of 'direct writing,' effected, with a slight scratching sound, heard by all, in a small closed drawer of the same bare table, on which a large lamp was burning, under circumstances which render it absolutely certain, for those who were present, that the writing was done by spirit-action, and probably through a disintegration of particles of the lead of a pencil that had been placed in the drawer, a few moments before, with some small sheets of perfectly blank paper, and the depositing of those particles on the paper by a process analogous to electro-plating; and a great variety of other manifestations of the action of an intelligent extra-human power that have occurred to me, during many years, and often in the manner most convincing to oneself, though the least so to others, viz., when I have been entirely alone.

"Under the second head may be classed the evanescent appearances of hands, faces, birds, animals, flowers, &c., which are produced by a condensation, out of the atmosphere, of the material elements of those pseudo-formations, to which, by the application of the electro-vital force in modes not yet known to us, spirits are able to impart a temporary vitality, but which, having no soul, are without consciousness or lasting coherence, and dissolve into their original elements on the cessation of the currents that determined their formation. Lady D——, assures me that 'a magnificent white flower, as large as a dinner-plate, and with long purple stamens,' suddenly appeared on a chair close beside her, one evening, as she sat in her drawing-room, in company with Mr. Home; it remained visible to them both, for about two minutes, when 'it melted into the air.' It was *real*, but only for the time of its appearance; and would no doubt have been seen by any persons who



might have been present. The bit of cloth, to sight and touch exactly the same as though woven of wool, which was condensed out of the air, and then dissipated, in presence of Mr. Livermore (of New York) and several other persons, and the flowers which that gentleman has repeatedly seen to form in the air and then melt away, are examples of this same action.

“In the autumn of 1867, I was told by a ‘medium’ to whom I was a total stranger, that I ‘should see, in six weeks,’ a beloved relative who had recently returned into the spirit-world. About sunset of the last day of the ‘six weeks,’ as I was musing, in much sadness, on the non-fulfilment of this promise, I ‘happened’ to raise my eyes to one of the folding windows of a house opposite to the window at which I was sitting, when I saw, in the lower part of the long right-hand pane, what looked exactly like a life-size daguerreotype of the face I had despaired of seeing, with the dingy, unstable look of the old daguerreotypes, but a perfect likeness. As I looked at it, it faded away, and appeared again higher up, in the middle of the pane; it then faded away a second time, and again appeared, in the top of the pane, after which it disappeared altogether. There seemed to be, upon the pane, a sort of dark iridescence, out of which the face was evolved; each appearance lasting about eight seconds, and each being darker and fainter than the preceding one. I believe this effect to have been produced by the application, to the glass, of semi-materialised fluidic matter, to which the invisible operators were able to impart the needful gradations of tone, at the moment when, by acting on my nervous system, they caused me to raise my eyes, involuntarily, to the window.

“Soon after the death of Charles Dickens, Mrs. M. G. was standing at the door of her Paris residence, in the Rue de T——, waiting for her daughter to come down and to get into the carriage before her, and admiring, meantime, the beautiful clouding of the tortoise-shell handle of a new parasol which she had in her hand, when she saw the face of the lamented novelist, for whom she had much affection, looking out at her from the surface of the shell.

The face was small, but with every feature perfectly distinct ; and, as she gazed upon it, in utter amazement, *the eyes moved, and the mouth smiled*. I am authorized to say that the lady referred to, whose initials will be recognised by many, is ready to answer any inquiries that may be addressed to her in regard to a 'manifestation' of spirit-ingenuity that must, I think, have been effected by covering a small part of the shell with a film of 'materialised' fluidic substance, and the execution, in this semi-fluidic vehicle, of a series of changes, of *re-paintings*, so to say, accomplished so rapidly as to create, to the perception of the observer, the apparent movement of the eyes and mouth ; and I think it probable that other parties, had they been present, would have seen both the 'phenomena' just described.

"The two following incidents come under the third head. Early one afternoon, when searching for a certain passage in the writings of the most controverted of authors, I suddenly came upon a passage which, conversant as I am with the writings referred to, I had never seen. As the passage, thus found, bore directly on the subject with which I was busy, I was so much delighted with my discovery that, after having resumed my search, I turned back several pages in order to have another look at it, found it, read it again three or four times, made a brief memorandum of it in my note-book, and again went on with my search. Later in the day, having found the passage I wanted, I began to look for the one on which I had so unexpectedly lighted ; but, to my great surprise, I could not find it. I spent all the evening, and nearly the whole of the next two days, in hunting for it, but in vain, and it was only when I had thoroughly ascertained that the writings referred to contained no such passage, that I began to perceive the fact of 'glamour' having been wrought upon my brain ; the very considerable modification of my comprehension of those writings, effected by the great number of consecutive readings of them that I had thus been led to make, explaining the motive of the spirit-action which, *by causing certain fibres of my brain to vibrate as they would have been made to vibrate by the sight of the printed*

*words which I thought I read*, produced, on my consciousness, an effect equivalent to that which would have been produced by the actual sight of those words.

"I attribute to the same action on the fibres of the brain the appearance of a name which, with my eyes open, I one day saw written, seemingly, in the air, and, on another occasion, with my eyes shut, of a white scroll, across which a pen moved slowly, writing a message which I read as it wrote.

"The appearance of spirits, 'in their habit as they lived,' or in vague drapery which they have not cared to render distinctly visible, is more difficult to class, because, in some cases, though many persons may be present when they occur, they are seen only by one of them, and would therefore seem to be *subjective*; while in others, they are seen by several persons at the same time, and would therefore seem to be *objective*. But it is to be remarked, on the one hand, that there can be no reason why this sort of *suggestion* may not be exercised upon the brain and nerves of several persons as easily as upon those of one person; and, on the other hand, that the perception of such appearances, even when merely *subjective*, implies *action*, and, consequently, *an agent*, as the determining cause of that subjective effect. And as, in some instances, the spirit thus seen has given pretty strong proof of actual presence—as in the case of Mr. Robert Dale Owen, who writes me that he and six other persons lately saw 'a beautiful female figure, in "shining raiment,"' emerge from the wall of a long drawing-room, glide onwards to where they were sitting, 'drop into his hand what proved to be a rose,' and then, continue her gliding course, and disappear through the wall at the opposite end of the room—it is not easy to avoid the conclusion that these appearances, though sometimes *subjective*, are sometimes caused by the actual bodily presence of those who are able thus to render themselves visible to us. And it seems probable that, in the latter case, a double action is necessary on the part of the spirits, and that they both operate a partial 'materialization' of their corporeal envelope, and also exercise a determining action on the percep-

tive organs of the human beings to whom they wish to show themselves.

“Of the many spirits whom I have seen, only two have been those of persons known to me in my present life ; one of these I have seen once, the other I have seen eight times.

“One evening, on nearing the door of my dressing-room, I suddenly saw, just before me, a little to my left, what looked like a dark-haired man, in ordinary dress, in the act of passing through the wall in front of me. His head was slightly thrown back, his eyes were raised, and his face wore a sad, dreamy, and fixed expression. He did not appear to see either me or the wall, into which he passed as though it had been built of vapour. Spirits say that the compact Matter of our sphere of Relation is as imperceptible, for them, as the fluidic Matter of their sphere is for us, and that they only become cognisant of it, and able to act upon it, through our minds and organisms ; and such, certainly, appeared to be the case with the spirit in question. On another occasion I saw, in the same room, standing in the air like the ‘saints and angels’ in old pictures, a group of eighteen or twenty handsome young men, in white tunics, with red belts and buskins, and curious red hats, with ‘cream-bowl’ crowns and very broad brims, embroidered with gold, and set on so slantingly that the thin line of gold on the edge of the brims produced, round each head, something like the effect of a nimbus. The right hand of each grasped a stout crook, taller than himself, and resting on the ground. They looked as though they had halted on a march ; and the eyes of all were fixed upon me with a grave, earnest, and rather friendly gaze. After looking at them for a few seconds, I put my hands to my eyes ; and then, looking up again to see if they were still there, I saw the same group, but much higher up, at a height, apparently, far above the ceiling, and proportionally fainter. This second glimpse was only instantaneous ; and though I looked up, several times, during the evening, in the hope of seeing them again, I saw nothing more of my white-vestured visitants.

“One afternoon, when my friend Lady W—— and her daughter



were sitting in their drawing-room, a female figure, unknown to either, was seen, by both of them, to cross the room and disappear through the wall.

“Recently, at a dinner party in the Avenue de——, Mrs. M. G., saw a beautiful young woman, elegantly attired in white, walk through the room, and go out at one of the doors. Surprised that she should have gone through the room without speaking or being spoken to, Mrs. M. G. inquired, of the hostess, who was the charming young lady that had just passed by; when she found that the appearance, which no one else had seen on that occasion, but which (as she then learned for the first time,) had often been seen by other visitors and by some of the servants, was the spirit of a daughter of the family, who had died, some time before, under peculiar circumstances that seemed to account for her re-appearing.

“One day, about two o’clock (my servant having gone out on an errand, so that I was alone in the small detached house which I occupy), I saw, on looking into my garden from a first-floor window, a very odd-looking, little old woman, not more than four feet high, covered from head to foot with a most singular hooded cloak, of what looked like nankeen that had been faded and stained by sun and rain till its original colour could hardly be made out, just in the act of turning, with slow and heavy gait, into the little alley at the side of the house (with no outlet at the farther end, where it is shut in by high walls,) that leads to the kitchen-door. She was bent so nearly double that I saw only the top of her head and her back; but, as she looked like a peasant, though in a garb the like of which I had never seen, I took it for granted that she was carrying a heavy basket with something to sell, though it struck me as strange that she should be carrying it in front of her, instead of on one side. As I was just then much pestered by vendors of poultry, fruit, &c., who always cheated, and always left the garden-door open, and whose visits I was doing my best to discourage, I at once ran downstairs, wondering how she could have opened the garden-door without ringing the alarm-bell attached to it, and went to the kitchen, to tell her that her wares were not wanted,

and to request her not to come again, when to my amazement, I found there was nobody there. The garden-door was shut; and no old woman was to be seen. As it was simply impossible that she could either have reached the kitchen, or returned through the garden, in the few seconds which it took me to reach the kitchen-door, I had not the least doubt that I had seen a denizen of the other world; but, for various reasons, I did not mention the matter to anyone.

"A few months afterwards, being again alone in my house, I again saw, at the same hour, from the same window, the same old woman, in the same place, just in the act, as before, of turning into the little alley, in the same queer cloak, with the same heavy gait, and bending over, as I supposed, the same heavy basket. Fully determined, this time, to ascertain the nature of so strange a visitation, I sprang downstairs, almost at a single leap, and dashed out through the front-door into the garden, arriving, certainly in less than ten seconds, at the angle of the house where I could see both the garden and the alley at a glance. Not a trace of the old woman was to be seen; the garden-door, as on the former occasion, was shut; and I returned into the house more than ever convinced that I had seen a 'spirit.' But still I did not mention to any one what had occurred; among other reasons, because I felt sure that, if the house got the reputation of being 'haunted,' no servant would ever stay in it alone.

"The following year, I had a new servant, not previously known to me, and who, being very fond of gardening, at once took my little garden into her own hands. One day, after she had been with me a few weeks, she suddenly walked into the room where I was writing, pale, in a state of great excitement and bewilderment, and informed me, in answer to my repeated inquiries as to what was the matter with her, that she had 'seen a spirit.'

" 'I had gone out into the garden,' she continued, 'and was just picking the grubs off the rose-bushes, when I heard steps close behind me, on the gravel; I turned round to see who it was, very much surprised that anybody could have come in, as I had not heard the garden-bell ring; and there, staring into my very face,

was a little bit of an old woman, just about so high (indicating, with her hand, about four feet from the floor,) such a queer-looking old thing, covered all over with the strangest old cloak, made of some kind of unbleached cotton, all full of weather-stains. She was bent pretty nearly double, like this (again indicating by a gesture), *with her two hands leaning on a stick*. She stared right into my eyes, with a strange sort of smile, half pleased, half malicious. I was just opening my mouth to ask her what she wanted, and what she meant by coming in, and standing there, in that impudent way, when she seemed to go backwards into the arbour, and then, all of a sudden she was gone! I never thought of her being anything else but an old woman; for how could I think that a spirit would make a noise on the gravel? But when I saw her go backwards, like that, into the arbour, and then disappear, of course I knew she must be a spirit!

“From that time, for several months, my servant saw ‘the old woman’ repeatedly, and at last grew so used to seeing her that she liked her coming, and would go to sleep with her sitting on the foot of the bed. But I never saw her again, although I frequently felt her presence; and that she came for the servant, and not for me, was indicated by her going, each time that I had seen her, towards the kitchen-door. Believing that she could only have been permitted to show herself to us in order that we might help her ‘upwards,’ I obtained the help of some mediumistic friends, near neighbours, who came regularly, several times a week, to assist in carrying on the spiritual education of our strange visitor. We found, through raps in the table, that she had been suffering, for about 800 years, the terrible spirit-punishment of ‘darkness,’ for crimes committed by her in a former incarnation; that my servant, then incarnated as her daughter, had taken part in those crimes, with which I, also, had been indirectly connected. Hence the necessity of our both concurring in the attempt to give her the truer ideas of the nature of life, and of the process of amendment, which, in the fluidic world, is the equivalent of *light*. At first she was both despairing and violent, knocking the table about, and refus-

ing to listen to us. But we persevered, gradually got her into a better state of mind, and had, at length, the satisfaction of receiving her farewell message of gratitude and happiness, on quitting the surface of the earth for a higher region of the spirit-sphere, there to prepare for making a new attempt at reformation in a new earthly life.

“We obtained like results also in the case of some other backward spirits who had been mixed up in the same transactions, whom we had equally to take in hand and instruct, and from all of whom we had, at length, farewell messages of thanks and rejoicing; from which time, the noises in the top of the house, that had given me so much annoyance, entirely ceased.

“Not the least curious of the many curious points involved in the visits of ‘the old woman’ (who, however, objected to being thus designated, and requested us to call her ‘Vléha,’ which she said was her name in her last incarnation), was her statement, in reply to our inquiry as to what had brought her to this house, that she had been drawn to it by the approach of the ‘sphere’ (périspritic luminosity or radiation) *of the servant who did not enter it until the following year*, and her perception of which ‘sphere’ she declared to have been the first ray of ‘light’ she had seen since her return to the spirit-world. I could give, from my own experience, another instance of this pre-projection of ‘spirit-spheres,’ even more remarkable, did space permit.

“My friends, Mrs. G.—and Miss B.—were sitting together, one evening, in this city, when the table suddenly rapped out ‘Totty,’ the pet name of Mrs. G’s. four-year-old grandchild, then in London. ‘What! my darling little Totty,’ exclaimed Mrs. G. in great agitation and alarm, ‘are you in the spirit-world?’ ‘No,’ replied the raps, ‘Totty’s body is asleep; and Totty’s spirit comes to you, dearest Grandmamma, to beg you to,’ &c.;—the burden of ‘Totty’s’ entreaty referring to a matter upon which Mrs. G. had been anxiously meditating all day, uncertain what course to pursue in regard to it.

“I have several times, when alone, been spoken to by spirits; but—except on one occasion, when I was startled by a seemingly-



human voice, as loud as the blast of a trumpet, at the moment when, in another country, a great unlooked-for sorrow was falling, with the suddenness of the thunderbolt, upon my life—only through the *interior hearing* which, being occasioned by spirit-action on the auditive nerves, is only ‘heard’ by the party on whom this sort of ‘glamour’ is wrought. But that ‘hearing,’ even if purely subjective, must have been caused by those who knew what they were about; for it told me, and truly, each time, of events of vital importance to me, but of which I had no knowledge, that were then occurring hundreds of miles away.

“On several occasions, and in various ways, I have been ‘warned’ of the death of persons at a distance. One morning, on suddenly waking, I looked at my watch, and saw that it was half-past four. A short time afterwards, being still awake, I heard so tremendous a knock on the (outer) wall of my room, that I felt sure a near relative, then very ill, in England, was passing away. At breakfast, I spoke of this knock to a lady who was visiting me, and also to my servant, and added, ‘Take notice, both of you, that X——probably departed, this morning, a few minutes after half-past four.’ Two hours afterwards came a telegram, from England, saying ‘X——died this morning at twenty minutes to five.’

“Did space permit, I might bring forward many more examples of spirit-action that have occurred in my own experience or in that of my immediate friends. But those now adduced, as illustrations of the principles laid down in the present paper, suffice to substantiate the claim of the Spiritist Philosophy to give the key to the ‘Phenomena’ your Committee are examining, and their noble initiative in regard to which will confer enduring honour on their names and labours, when the clamours of Ignorance and Prejudice, in reference to the glorious facts of the Soul’s immortality and of the intercommunication between the two spheres of planetary life, shall have died away and been forgotten.

“I am, Sir,

“Yours faithfully,

“Paris, July 7th, 1870.”

“ANNA BLACKWELL.”

## THE COUNTESS DE POMAR.

*"To the Committee of the London Dialectical Society appointed to investigate 'Spiritualism.'"*

"Gentlemen,—Having been requested by some members of your Committee to furnish a report of *séances* at which I have been present, I have concluded, after duly considering the matter, to do so, upon condition of being allowed to state my views respecting the value of spiritual communications.

"*Séances* are so much alike in all essentials, that little good can be derived from reporting them unless we consider them with reference to their value as evidence of the individuality and immortality of the soul; this is, in fact, the true touchstone of their importance; and, therefore, I must, as a preliminary to my report of spiritual experiences, offer a few considerations in regard to the vexed question as to whether the soul is material or immaterial, mortal or immortal.

"In doing so, however, I do not suppose that all difficulties are to be instantly removed; on the contrary, I fully admit that differences of opinion must be expected to exist, and only ask the same concession from those who are opposed to my views.

"Those who argue that the soul is material in the sense of being a manifestation of matter in action, must, in candour, confess that they have a great many difficulties to contend with in demonstrating their views; and they should therefore admit, as I do, that, in relation to all such questions, there must be more or less of honest difference of opinion, since all men cannot see and judge alike; and each will judge according to his capacity for judging. No one would expect a mere peasant to understand the laws of electricity, as they were understood by Faraday; and the same difference must exist with well-educated men, for they are not all on the same level, and therefore they cannot see with the same eyes.

"The ideas of beauty presented to the mind by the works of Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, and Murillo, vary as widely as does

the style of those great painters, and the appreciation of those who contemplate them.

“Some maintain that the German Composers are the finest the world ever produced, others are equally ready to do battle in favour of the Italian School.

“There are men who, with Plato, would banish poets from the republic of letters ; others believe them to be the first and best of educators. Carlyle sometimes waxes furious when speaking of the fine arts, which others believe to be essential to the well-being of society.

“In like manner men of equal integrity differ respecting religious theories ; and, therefore, the only safe conclusion to be arrived at is, that human beings are not capable of seeing alike, but that reasoning upon precisely the same evidence men will reach opposite conclusions, and, consequently, that opposite opinions must be held.

“This, however, can be very easily accounted for by those who maintain that our present life is but one of a series of lives through which we must pass in order to attain perfection, and in each of which we are only capable of a certain amount of growth and development.

“Those who deny Spiritualism as a whole, and who believe the present life to be the all of existence, must confess that they have some difficult points to explain. For instance, what is to be said about *memory*, and its relation to matter ? It is assumed that all our mental perceptions are inseparably associated with the brain, that what is seen by the physical eye, is afterwards seen by the mental eye, both, however, being material ; in which case it must follow that the impressions received are actually stamped upon material substance ; so that what men call ‘remembering’ is literally nothing more than bringing out the old mental photograph which has been stored in the brain.

“There is, however, a physiological difficulty connected with this assumption. Physiologists inform us that the human body is perpetually undergoing change ; that at every instant of time, new

matter is taking the place of the old, and that at short intervals the body is so completely changed that not an atom of its former self remains. This change too, and especially with those who read and think much, is more active, they tell us, in the brain than in other parts of the body ; so that, it is concluded, only a still shorter time is needed to ensure a complete change of the matter of which the brain is composed. This being the case, and no physiologist will dispute it, how can it be accounted for that we are capable of remembering events that occurred, and scenes we viewed, thirty or forty years ago ? The scenes of our childhood are still visible to the mental eye, and the tones of the mother's voice are still as clearly heard by the mental ear, as they were forty years before, when first they sounded through the physical chambers.

“Is it possible to explain this fact by the material theory ? To do so it is necessary to suppose that the old matter, which originally received the impressions, re-stamped these upon the new ; and that this process was repeated every time the molecules of matter were changed ; that is to say, twelve or fifteen times in a life-time.

“But how can this be done, and we remain unconscious of the process ? If my seeing a waterfall with the physical eye produces a mental picture I recall at pleasure, how can that mental picture of the waterfall be stamped into my new brain matter without my being conscious of the act ? For the re-stamping must be necessary in all cases, even those in which for many years the scene remembered has not recurred to the mind ; and, obviously, in such cases the ideas of things must have passed from old molecules to new ones without our being in any way conscious of the transaction.

“Surely this is harder to believe than is the theory, that memory is a result of the action of a spiritual element in our nature, which remains essentially the same during its connection with the physical body, the particles of which are constantly changing.

“Then there is the difficulty of explaining how matter can produce ideas. Is it not impossible to speak of ideas as of material objects ? Can we conceive of extension or ponderability in connection with our thoughts ? To speak of a pound of sorrow, or of an



ounce of hope, seems impossible; we cannot expect either music or poetry from the rock or the plant; yet both the latter enter into the composition of our mortal bodies; and it ought to be as feasible to extract the former from the earth, or from potatoes, in their natural condition, as after they have been consumed, if *matter* can think and produce ideas.

“Of course it will be said that we must not expect ideas from matter before it becomes organised; but here again a difficulty occurs. It is generally said by physiologists, that in chemical composition as in formation, no difference exists between the brain of the Esquimau, and that of the most highly cultivated European. Their elements and their mode of organization are the same; and yet how different are the men! But would this be the case, if it were true that matter produces ideas? Should not the same results follow from the same organization? The question cannot be one of weight, because it is known that the contents of the skull of *some* Esquimaux or Red Indians weigh more than do those of some educated Europeans. Plato is reported as having had a very large head; and it has been argued from this that he was therefore more capable of laborious thought. It is also said, that, from men of small heads, we have no right to expect great works of philosophy or art. But is it not well known that very bad men have had large heads? Look at a collection of busts, from those of bad Roman Emperors down to the modern murderers, and how many of them are found to have larger heads than some who have worked nobly for the elevation of the human race.

“If the quality of the mind resulted solely from the size of the brain, we should have a right to expect equal results from equal weights; this, however, is not the case.

“If space permitted, a legion of kindred difficulties might be suggested; enough, however, has been said to prove that modesty should be shown by Anti-spiritualists, when insisting upon what they are pleased to call ‘the weakness of spirit evidence.’

“But the spiritualist does not pretend that he has no difficulties to contend with; on the contrary, he confesses them, and knows

that it is in the nature of the case for them to exist; the spiritualist admits it to be impossible for him to show the soul, as he can show a physical organ; or to analyse it, as he does gases and solids. But he has a full consciousness of its existence; and is sensible of the fact, that it is spirit alone which can give evidence of itself. Soul alone can conceive of soul. Material bodies can only be tested by material agents; and, as the lesser cannot comprehend the greater, it is certain that self-consciousness is the true evidence of the soul's existence.

"How can a child comprehend a man? Can the lower nature comprehend the higher? Does the coward understand the hero? In like manner, it is soul alone that can conceive of soul; and according to their degrees of development, do souls comprehend each other ?

"It is therefore but reasonable to accept the evidence of our self-consciousness, as we do that of our nervous system; we feel a pain, but cannot prove the fact to our neighbours, still we are sure of it, through our self-consciousness.

"We must deal in a similar way with the question of immortality; and it is somewhat curious that this question should be debated; since the materialists, though denying a future state to the mind, are ready enough to admit their belief, that matter cannot be destroyed; this being so, how can they conceive of the destruction of its properties? Vitality may be latent for ages; but supply the conditions necessary for the manifestation, and at once it becomes active. Seed found in the hand of an Egyptian mummy has been sown, and produced abundantly, yet no one doubted that the seed had been enclosed above four thousand years. According to the materialist, this vitality is a property of matter; and if the materialists are right, so also is consciousness; why then, if the former be persistent, may not the latter be so too? Does it not rather appear that once developed it ought to go on for ever? Nature wastes nothing; but is economical in the use of her materials; why then suppose that the atom will persist, but the mind that studied it will perish; that the earth will remain, but

the genius that solves its mysteries of flower, tree, and stone, will perish? Does not the consciousness of the superior value of our inner selves, become evidence in favour of the idea, that the higher nature will survive the changes of matter, and live on in knowledge, when the materials of the physical frame will have been re-incorporated with a thousand other forms?

“It is at this point that Spiritualism comes to our aid by furnishing proof of the soul’s immortality. Unhappily, however, so numerous are the mocking voices, it cannot obtain the unbiassed learning its great importance demands; a consequence probably of its being somewhat in advance of the age, and, to some extent, on account of the impositions which have been practised in its name.

“When it was proposed to light London with gas, no less a man than Sir Walter Scott printed his protest against the ridiculous attempt to light the streets of a city with smoke. What was reported by a committee of the House of Commons against Railways? And who has not heard of the scorn encountered by the first advocates of Vaccination, and of Oceanic Telegraphy? Still these discoveries have all made their way, as Spiritualism will do ere long, for nothing can resist the collective evidence in its favour.

“Nor is that evidence so completely modern as many seem to suppose, for in all history the belief has prevailed that spirits, having left their mortal bodies were permitted to communicate with those they loved, and who were still in the flesh. Homer, Herodotus, Plato, Cicero, &c., all speak distinctly as to the belief entertained by the ancient nations, and when we read the history of Saul and Samuel and the Witch of Endor, we cannot doubt as to what was the belief of the Hebrew people.

“In the christian world the belief has never failed, and this not merely because it is pleasing to believe that the dear ones dead, still take an interest in our condition; but because of testimony given by so many of the noblest and purest of men and women, to the fact that they have been thus visited. From the days of the christian fathers there is an unbroken line of testimony to

this fact, and curiously enough, it is borne by men who are applauded for everything but this belief in Spiritualism. When they speak of what they saw and knew, they are rejected; but are reverently believed when speaking about matters of speculation.

"It is not here denied that errors have been mingled with the aforesaid belief, but what is contended for is this, that when so many millions of people, led by thousands of eminent men, have believed themselves to be in direct communication with the spirits of the dead, and when the wisest of human teachers have recorded the facts of their experience, no one can be justified in denying these statements until he has gained such a knowledge of the economy of the universe as will entitle him to say that all such communications are impossible. We must first know what is possible, before saying that such visits are impossible.

"Those who developed the Telegraphic systems cared nothing for the outsiders who said that such a mode of sending messages must, in the nature of things, be 'impossible.' Relying upon their own experience, although unable to understand the nature of the phenomena of electricity they still went on, and now we send our messages round the world.

"In presence of 'so great a crowd of witnesses,' it appears almost superfluous to speak of my own experience, and yet I must do so, for I know by what, to myself, are infallible proofs of the truth, that spirits do hold communication with us. I never doubted the immortality of the soul, so that I did not need confirmation of the fact, yet I gladly testify that it has been given to me and in great abundance. And to shew that I have not been self-deceived, I will mention one particular fact.

"During a period of five months I was a 'medium,' and even when sitting alone, I have frequently had communications so clear and distinct that mistake was impossible, for ideas have been thus conveyed to me which previously had no place in my mind.

"This power suddenly quitted me, and it has never returned. Now had it been a case of self-deception, is it not clear that it would have continued, seeing that as far as health, mental power,



and belief in spiritual communications are concerned, I underwent no change.

“Then again, I have sat in my own house with personal friends, no other medium but myself being present; and the communications respecting departed relatives and friends were alike interesting and remarkable. I have been told of many things about them of which I had no previous knowledge, and which the persons sitting with me could not have known, for the communications were from those who had died in distant countries, and yet these proved to be correct; many of them have been in Spanish. All this has occurred to me through my own mediumship.

“I have attended many *séances*, with more or less marked results—and I think it right to mention that I have sat several times with Mr. Home without having a single manifestation, even when the whole circle has been composed of friends and Spiritualists. At others, we have obtained the most beautiful manifestations through his mediumship; we have thus had messages, movements of inanimate objects, and music, perfect in sentiment and expression, on the accordion, which has frequently played in my hand when sitting near him. Of these *séances* it will probably be more interesting to mention one which, as we were not sitting for the purpose, should be called ‘*no séance*.’

“Death was in the house; and the beloved one who had left us was yet uncoffined. I was sitting in the library with my son at the tea-table, and we were sitting close together, as the sorrow of the hour rendered it natural we should do, when Mr. Home was unexpectedly announced; he had come from a public reading, dressed as he had been on the platform, and consequently with no possibility of the machinery about him which so many unbelievers suppose him to carry concealed. He was quite unaware of the sad event that had occurred, his first intention having been merely to make inquiries at the door. He drew a chair up to the table beside my son, and affectionately placed an arm round his waist.

“Raps were heard almost immediately, on the table, on the chandeliers, and in various parts of the room; we adopted the usual

course of repeating the alphabet, and the messages spelt out were 'joy, not sorrow,' and 'not gone away;' directly after this, as if in confirmation of the statement, the favourite seat of the departed, a large arm chair, which was standing in its usual place near the window at the farther end of the room, moved in a sweep towards the table at which we were sitting, and came nearly round to my side. Then a sofa moved across the room in another direction; while this was occurring we three were still sitting at the table from which Mr. Home had not moved since he first sat down.

"In this case there could be no ocular delusion. No *séance* had been proposed; we were not even sitting with our hands on the table as is the custom at *séances*, and the room was well lighted with gas.

"My son was somewhat alarmed at what had occurred. I, seeing the power was so great, got out an accordion which I had purchased myself for these occasions, and which had been twice changed at the shop by me, it having been pronounced out of tune by the invisible performers, who always shewed us the fact by playing the discordant notes. I then begged them to play something in accordance with our feelings; and a very beautiful and solemn air was played, while Mr. Home held the instrument, which he did, not only under the table, but horizontally in the air, or above his head, according to the impulses they gave to it. As they finished playing, it came towards me, and Mr. Home told me to take it, which I did, and it then played a favourite tune which I asked for, partly in my hand and partly in his as he took it from me, when the sounds had become faint from my want of power.

"What could I do but believe the evidence of my own senses corroborated too as that evidence has been by so many others?

"To multiply narratives of this kind is comparative useless; were it not so, I could fill a large volume with reports of remarkable *séances* at which I have been present; I prefer to add a few remarks respecting the value of spirit communication, and first as to the curious fact that, to the same question different spirits give various and sometimes contradictory answers. This is a stumbling

block to many, but the reason of the fact is clear and not far to seek. Some people suppose that when the spirit has left the body it is immediately enlightened and purified, so that it at once learns all it will ever know, and becomes perfect. But is that a rational supposition? Can it be believed that immediately after death, the soul of the illiterate shoe-black becomes all at once as enlightened as the soul of Shakespeare? Who can imagine that the soul of Mrs. Manning can be changed instantly after death, so as to become as pure and holy as that of Mrs. Fry? In the order of nature there are no such sudden transformations, and we have no right to expect them after death.

“On the contrary, we should expect that growth in knowledge and goodness will be in the future as gradual as it is in the present, and if this be so, we can at once account for the contradictory answers so frequently given by spirits, if one of these has but recently left us, it cannot know much more than it knew while in the flesh, and therefore will err when speaking of subjects it can only fully understand when it has reached a much higher degree of knowledge.

“In like manner the moral nature requires a long period of time to change from bad to good; so that if a soul passes away while steeped in sin and falsehood, it cannot all at once become pure and true; such a spirit, if called upon to answer a question, is therefore as likely to speak ignorantly and falsely as it would have been while in the flesh. This we are learning from our intercourse with the spirit-world, and we believe it to be true because it harmonises with what common-sense teaches us must be the case in that world as in this. It will possibly be said that this must cast, more or less, doubts on all spirit communications; but no spiritist has ever imagined that absolute reliance is to be placed in what spirits say. We must always use our own judgment in regard to these communications, and take each of them for what it may be worth.

“All the spirits with whom I have had communication have invariably told me that they do grow in knowledge and goodness, and this through being re-incarnated; that they return to this

earth many times, as many as are necessary for enabling them to grow to perfection.

"This quite accords with my own deep conviction. If I be asked how long it would take a spirit to rise through the various degrees until it is fitted for leaving this sphere, I could not answer, except to say, there will be time enough in eternity for the due perfection of all, however imperfect may be their natures to-day, and in this hope and conviction I rest content, quite certain that such a thing as eternal punishment is altogether contrary to the great law of God which is written on all His works—*The law of eternal progress.*

"The sin we have committed, or are inclined to commit, we shall suffer for until we have thoroughly purged it out of our nature ; the wrong we have done, we shall expiate, and we shall not come out free till we have paid the uttermost farthing ; but we *shall* pay it, and go gladly on our way when we have left it far behind us, 'always stretching forward towards the mark,' perfect happiness awaiting us as we get further on in our long journey, happiness which will really be *our own* because we shall have worked for, and earned it, and have grown up to understand, and yearn after it. Our happiness will be to be *all good, all wise, all pure, 'perfect as our Father is perfect.'* Can any single life on earth, perfect us sufficiently even to *comprehend* such perfection ? And yet the standard was given !

"In these latter days science has come to help us on our way, and show us the weak points and faculties of the old creeds. But lest we should bow down before, and content ourselves with science alone, spiritism has come with it, side by side, the same discoveries in electricity which enable us to send our thoughts to the other side of the earth, were borne by Benjamin Franklin to the other side of the grave, and also serve our spirit-friends to produce the little *rap*, that sends a thrill of joy through our frame, as we receive a telegraphic message from those who have gone before us to that bright shore, proving that we are still loved and remembered, and that the dead are not dead and can never



die; and in this certainty, I rest content, not doubting that as time passes, *spiritism* will become triumphant, and that the noble doctrine to which it bears testimony—that of the re-incarnation—will be received by all classes and conditions of men; giving them that peace and consolation which no other doctrine has hitherto succeeded in giving to humanity.

“M. DE MEDINA POMAR.”

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M. CAMILLE FLAMMARION,

Astronomer; formerly of the Observatory of Paris, Professor of Astronomy of the Polytechnic Association, Academic Officer of the University of France, Author of “The Plurality of Inhabited Worlds,” etc. etc.

“*To the Honorary Secretary of the ‘Spiritualism Committee’ of the Dialectical Society of London.*”

“Cher Monsieur—Voici ma réponse, que Mademoiselle Blackwell a traduite sur ma demande pour votre *Report*, et que je vous envoie, relue et dûment approuvée. Je souhaite que ce petit résumé soit de quelque utilité pour la solution du problème qui vous occupe.

“Recevez, je vous prie, l’expression de mes sentiments sympathiques et dévoués.

“FLAMMARION.”

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“*To G. W. Bennett, Esq., Hon. Sec. of the Spiritualism Committee of the Dialectical Society.*”

“Sir—I have to apologise for my long delay in replying to the inquiry which your Committee has done me, through you, the honour of addressing to me. Having been travelling for several weeks, I have been, since my return to Paris, so completely absorbed by the press of scientific business accumulated during my absence that I have hitherto been unable to find a moment for conferring with you on the serious and weighty subject to which your letter refers.

“For ten years past, I have taken much interest in the so-called ‘Spiritual Phenomena.’ Every scientific man should say, with the old Roman writer, ‘*Homo sum, et nihil humanum a me alienum puto* ;’ but, if it were easy, in former times, to embrace at a single glance the totality of human knowledge, that knowledge has already become too complex to be grasped entirely by any one mind. In regard to myself, I may say that, from my childhood, Astronomy has absorbed my nights and my days, while the endeavour to popularize, under a literary form, the facts of that most sublime of sciences, has equally absorbed my evenings and my mornings. Such being the case, I need hardly add the avowal that I have had but very little time to give to anything but purely scientific investigation. Nevertheless, the occasional hours that I have been able to devote, from time to time, to the attentive and impartial study of the facts in question—such as the movements of tables and other objects, raps and other sounds occurring without any perceptible cause, conversations held with inert objects, and the various other phenomena produced under the influence of ‘mediums’—have led me to a conclusion that may be briefly summed up as follows :—

“Of those who call themselves ‘mediums’ and ‘spiritists’ a considerable number are persons of limited intelligence, incapable of bringing the experimental method to bear on the investigation of this order of phenomena, and consequently are often the dupes, of their credulity or ignorance ; while others, of whom the number is also considerable, are impostors whose moral sense has become so blunted by the habit of fraud that they seem to be incapable of appreciating the heinousness of their criminal abuse of the confidence of those who apply to them for instruction or for consolation. And even where the subject is being investigated seriously and in good faith, the force to which the production of these phenomena is due is so capricious in its action that much delay and disappointment is inevitable in the prosecution of any experimental inquiry in regard to them. It is, therefore, no easy matter to put aside the obstacles thus placed in the way of the serious inquirer, to eliminate these sources of error, and to get at

genuine manifestations of the phenomena in question ; carefully guarding one's own mind against all error, all self-deception, in the methodical and scrupulous examination of the order of facts now under discussion. Nevertheless, I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated 'magnetic,' 'somnambulic,' 'mediumic,' and others not yet explained by science, to be 'impossible,' is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about ; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biassed by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.

"After an affirmation so categorical, it is hardly necessary for me to assure the members of the Dialectical Society that I have acquired, through my own observation, the absolute certainty of the reality of these phenomena.

"This first point established, I come to the next point of your inquiry, viz., the explanation of these phenomena.

"In regard to this point, I am not yet prepared to make any positive affirmation ; for it appears to me that we do not yet possess all the elements necessary for an absolute decision of the question, and that no one of the hypotheses hitherto put forward on the subject can be regarded as affording, of itself, and to the exclusion of all others, a sufficient explanation of all the facts of the case.

"It has been attempted to explain these phenomena by attributing them to 'unconscious movements' on the part of the 'medium' or the persons in whose presence they occur. Many men whom I greatly esteem, members of the Institute, have adopted this theory, which, nevertheless, explains but a very small proportion of the

facts we are considering, and for the greater number of which it is utterly inadequate to account. Another theory refers these phenomena to the action of a nervous fluid, developed in a special direction. Another, again, refers them to organic electricity. Some observers have started the theory, difficult to admit, of a collective hallucination on the part of those who affirm their perception of these phenomena. Some have attributed them to the Devil of ecclesiastical tradition ; others have seen in them an action of the souls of the dead. My own opinion, so far, is that several distinct forces are probably active in the production of these complex phenomena.

“The scientific world in France, as elsewhere, is far from being agreed in regard to this subject. The geologist Delarue, Dr. Puel, so widely known as a physiologist and botanist, and many others, consider these phenomena to be an effect of animal magnetism. My learned teacher and friend, M. Babinet, of the Institute, who has endeavoured, with M. E. Liais, (now Director of the Observatory of Brazil,) and several others of my colleagues of the Observatory of Paris, to ascertain their nature and cause, is not fully convinced of the intervention of spirits in their production, though this hypothesis, by which alone certain categories of these phenomena would seem to be explicable, has been adopted by many of our most esteemed *savants* ; among others, by Dr. Hœfle, the learned author of the *History of Chemistry*, and the *General Encyclopædia*, and by the diligent labourer in the field of astronomic discovery whose death we have recently had to deplore, M. Hermann Goldschmidt, the discoverer of fourteen planets. Before, however, we can admit, as proven, the hypothesis which attributes the phenomena in question to the agency of intelligent beings co-existing with ourselves in connection with our planet, but under physical conditions and in an order of perceptions and activities different from ours (a possibility to which the discoveries in regard to the rates of movement of vibrating bodies would seem to point), the gap now existing between this hypothesis and certainty must be filled by the



discovery of the links which are still wanting to the completion of the chain of evidence that, by revealing to us the nature of the force, and the *modus operandi* employed by those intelligences for the production of these phenomena, shall connect this hypothesis with the *terra firma* of scientific demonstration.

“But although thus compelled, in the absence of conclusive data in regard to the cause of the so-called ‘Spiritual Phenomena,’ to refrain from making any positive affirmation in regard to this part of the subject, I may add that while the general assertion of its spiritual nature, on the part of the occult force which, within the last quarter of a century, has thus manifested itself all over the globe, constitutes a feature of the case which, from its universality, merits the attention of the impartial investigator—the history of the human race, from the earliest ages, furnishes instances of coincidences, previsions, and presentiments of warnings experienced in certain critical moments, of apparitions more or less distinctly seen, which are stated, on evidence as trustworthy as that which we possess with regard to any other branch of historical tradition, to have occurred, spontaneously, in the experience of all nations, and which may therefore be held to strengthen the presumption of the possibility of communication between incarnate and disincarnate spirits. I may also add that my own investigations in the fields of philosophy and of modern astronomy have led me personally, as is well known, to the adoption of ideas in regard to Space and Time, the plurality of inhabited worlds, the eternity and ubiquity of the acting forces of the Universe, and the indestructibility of souls as of atoms, which have caused me to consider the immense panorama of Existence from a purely spiritualistic point of view, in which the everlastingness of intelligent life is seen to result from the harmonious succession of sidereal incarnations. Our earth being one of the heavenly bodies, a province of planetary existence, and our present life being a phase of our eternal duration, it appears only natural (the *supernatural* does not exist) that there should exist a permanent link between the spheres, the bodies, and the souls of the universe, and therefore

altogether probable that the existence of this link will be demonstrated, in course of time, by the advance of scientific discovery.

"It would be difficult to over-rate the importance of the questions thus brought forward for consideration ; and I have seen with lively satisfaction the noble initiative which, through the formation of your Committee of Inquiry, has been taken by a body of men so justly eminent as the members of the Dialectical Society, in the experimental investigation of these deeply interesting phenomena. I am most happy, therefore, to comply with the tenor of your letter, by sending you the humble tribute of my observations on the subject in question, and thus to have the opportunity of offering to your Society the expression of my sincerest good wishes for the speedy elucidation of the mysteries of Nature that have not yet been brought within the domain of Positive Science.

"I am, Sir, Yours faithfully,

"CAMILLE FLAMMARION,"

"10, Rue des Moineaux (Palais Royal),  
Paris. May 8, 1870."

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*"To the Committee of the Dialectical Society investigating  
Spiritualism.*

"Ladies and Gentlemen—I have been desired by the Committee of the London Dialectical Society now investigating spiritual manifestations to furnish them with some account of my experience therein. I do so with pleasure but I omit details as much as possible, as no doubt you have been overwhelmed with accounts of phenomena of common occurrence. I may state that I have got no power peculiar to mediums, nor am I conscious of spiritual existence, except through the most palpable physical manifestations ; I am, therefore, constitutionally an unbeliever in such things, and in all matters a rationalist. My personal presence at the spirit circle is even an impediment to the success of the phenomena ; and this and other facts have led me to the discovery that mediumship does not depend on belief or scepticism, but upon

organic conditions or temperamental peculiarities. I am of that physiological type which is the opposite of mediumship, but Mrs. Burns and her sisters are of the purely mediumistic temperament; on account of which I have had very special opportunities of becoming acquainted with the subject, and I now report on behalf of these ladies rather than for myself.

"Mediumship, then, is a natural faculty peculiar to certain individuals, which the spirit circle does not create, but merely calls into exercise. From childhood Mrs. Burns has been a medium, and in the darkness of the evening could perceive the odic emanations from graveyards while yet a child, and many years before Spiritualism was heard of. About eight years ago, during my prolonged absence from home, Mrs. Burns and her sister Mary sat at the table, after the manner of spiritualists, and readily produced all the phenomena. Their sister Caroline was also found to be a powerful medium, and a table would walk about the room if she simply placed her finger on the top of it. It would also lie down on its side, or turn its legs up in the air with its face downwards if desired. We never took the least trouble to cultivate these manifestations, as much more interesting phenomena occurred.

"Spontaneously, Miss Mary was found to be a very superior writing medium. By taking a pencil in her hand she would write automatically in response to mental questions. I have seen her write on different subjects with a pencil in each hand, without giving any attention to what she was doing. In desperate cases of illness we have repeatedly received medical prescriptions in this way, the application of which was of immediate benefit. This young lady also has the faculty of conversing with spirits, face to face. A brother of mine, whom she never saw and knew nothing about, thus appeared to her and conversed with her a long time; and the description she gave of him, and the information he communicated, was ample evidence of the identity of the spirit, and of the fact that there was a spirit in the matter.

"We have also cultivated the trance. Mrs. Burns has been in

this state simultaneously with Mrs. Everitt and Mr. Cogman, while sitting together in *séance*. They met in the spiritual state, and conversed and walked together. When they returned to physical consciousness, they each gave the same testimony as to their spiritual experiences.

"Mrs. Burns and Miss Mary see spirits quite readily while in the trance. By this means the spirits have been seen scattering perfumes in the form of flowers. Mrs. Burns will exclaim 'There they are, throwing the flowers!' and instantly a puff of cool air and most delicious perfumes are experienced. These experiments have been repeatedly verified at Mrs. Everitt's and other circles. The spirits are also seen producing the direct writing, but the details of the process are not very minutely observed. I was at Mr. Everitt's house when the spirit 'John Watt' wrote his name on the ceiling with a pencil. Mrs. Burns and two other clairvoyants were present, and they all described the event at the moment of its occurrence, and before the light was struck. The spirits are also seen to move physical objects and touch persons in the circle. Miss Mary saw the spirit take the coat off Mr. Fay's back while his hands were tied, at the public *séance* given by the Davenport brothers. She was also astonished at the light which came out of the cabinet while the manifestations were going on inside. Mrs. Burns saw the spirits at Mr. Alsop's circle carry a bible, upwards of eleven pounds in weight, from the sideboard on to the table. This process of carrying has been observed many times. The spirits do not put their hands *under* objects when they carry them; they place their fingers on the top and seem to move the objects by magnetic attraction, in the same manner as spiritualists move a table by placing their fingers on the top of it. When the spirit voice is heard, Mrs. Burns sees the spirit holding the tube and carrying it about the room. She has thus observed 'John Watt' at Mrs. Everitt's, and 'John King' at the *séances* held by Messrs. Herne and Williams. She also saw the spirits untie John Blackburn, a medium from Halifax, who had been previously tied



in a most extraordinary manner by the spirit while he was in a trance. The rope was manipulated by the spirits by a kind of magnetic attraction proceeding from their hands, and not by the ordinary form of leverage with the finger points.

“We make use of this seeing faculty as a means of communion with the spirits. To practice it, we retire to a darkened room, and, in a short time, if the conditions are favourable, the spirits appear in groups in the vicinity of the persons to whom they are attached. By this means, persons now deceased have been accurately described by the clairvoyants. The spirits communicate their information by writing it in luminous scrolls, which are promptly read. These spirits are of various historical periods and countries, and their appearance is very peculiar. Sometimes they write through Miss Mary’s hand automatically, and in different styles and languages. On one occasion a gentleman translated one of these communications: it was in Spanish, and the spirit had described himself as a Spaniard. In the trance she has also spoken in various languages. I have had a test of the genuineness of these clairvoyant observations, which I shall here detail.

“Mrs. Burns and myself were present at a *séance* at Mr. Mylne’s house, in Islington. A female figure was minutely described by Mrs. Burns as standing near me, who said she was related to me. My family connections are very few, so I had no difficulty in recalling them all, and I was obliged to deny that I had ever had such a relative. A few months afterwards I visited my parents in Ayrshire, accompanied by my sister-in-law, Miss Mary, who had not been at the *séance* at Islington. We had a sitting, and she described the same spirit as standing between my mother and myself, and said that she was a near relation of mine, who was attracted to me on account of my literary pursuits. I replied that I was certain there was some mistake, as I could recall no such person as having been a member of our family. As soon as my mother heard the full description of the spirit she said it applied to an only sister of hers who died upwards of seventy years ago, and of whose existence I had never heard. She had been a precocious

child, passionately fond of books, and died when quite young. As soon as my mother recognised this fact, the spirit was seen to give manifestations of assent and pleasure.

“Mrs. Burns sees spirits in attendance on public speakers, and has also observed them in the theatre, inspiring the leading characters. She perceives that they touch the head, or send down a shaft of white light upon it when any striking thought or original idea is to be uttered.

“I have not mentioned many cases of physical phenomena that have occurred in our experience, as you will doubtlessly have been liberally supplied with such accounts.

“The result of my experience has been to establish to my mind that there are two kinds of matter—one peculiar to the physical world, and one peculiar to the spiritual world :

“That every object has a spiritual, as well as a physical condition :

“That certain individuals give off this spiritual matter in such a way as to relate them peculiarly to the spiritual world; which constitutes such persons mediums :

“That this spiritualised form of matter is that of which the objective personality of spirits is composed; that it is the link which enables them to control physical objects; and also that it is the bond which connects mind with matter in the physical state.

“J. BURNS.

“15, Southampton Row,

“London, W.C., 21 April, 1871.”

## NOTES OF SÉANCES.

[COMMUNICATED TO THE COMMITTEE.]

## No. 1.—MRS. HONYWOOD.

“ I spent the winter of 1858—9 at Naples, and made the acquaintance of Mr. Robert Dale Owen from the United States. He spoke to me on the subject of table-turning, raps, &c., and said that he believed it to be odile or odic force ; he did not then accept the idea of spirit influence. He could not doubt the fact of a force at work, but he thought it was in its infancy and uncontrollable, and hoped ere long to learn the mystery. He asked me to his house, and introduced me to an American lady, a Mrs. M——, a medium. After a short acquaintance I invited the lady to our apartments on the Chiaja, and asked if she would kindly sit at a table, and let us see the wonders of which we had heard so much. Mrs. M. at once acceded, saying she was passive and had no power to produce or control the manifestations. We sat down, four in number, at a small table, placing our four pair of hands flat on the table, thus balancing the weight evenly ; it soon began to rock, and heave, and tip. Mrs. M—— now told us when the table was balanced on three legs and tapped on the floor with the fourth, to say the alphabet and stop at the letter when the fourth leg tapped. We then agreed that if the table rocked from north to south, east and

west should say the alphabet and ask questions, and *vice versa*, so that the person asking a question could not by any means or involuntary pressure influence the tips. Col. W—— sat opposite Mrs. M—— and a niece of mine opposite me. After a while, wishing for a decisive test, I asked if a mental question could be answered, three tips or taps from the fourth leg signifying yes. I thought, where is F. W——, a brother of Col. W——'s; (I knew that Col. W——, sitting at my right was very anxious about his brother, for *some days previous* he had told me he had received no letters by the Indian mail, and as it was during the mutiny, he felt very uneasy). The reply was, 'In his tent, before Lucknow.' I then thought, 'What is he doing?' 'Lying down reading.' 'What is his name?' 'F——.' The Italian name was given. The table was tipping from Col. W—— to Mrs. M—— all this time. I did not know the answers; no one present knew my thoughts until the name was given, and the answers proved to be correct so far as the whereabouts and name. This convinced me there was some truth in this mystery, and I determined to pursue the investigation patiently in spite of all opposition, ridicule, or difficulty, and to arrive at the truth if possible.

"The medium was a stranger to us all, and thought reading could not explain the replies.

"BARBARA HONYWOOD."

#### No. 2.—MRS. HONYWOOD AND LORD LINDSAY.

"I met Mr. Home at the house of a friend on the 17th March, 1869. We sat down five in number at a round table, in the back drawing-room. There was an oil lamp on a table in the front room, and fires in both grates. After a while Mr. Home became entranced, walked into the front room and stood on the hearth rug. He began to dance slowly, raising first one foot and then the other, his hands hanging loosely as I have read of Easterns and Indians, moving in time to music. He then knelt down, rubbing and clasping his hands together in front of the fire. I



asked, 'Are you a fire worshipper?' Ho nodded and looked pleased. 'Are you a Persian?' He smiled and nodded assent, after which he rose and placed four chairs in a row near the folding doors, signing to us to sit there. He now went to the table on which stood the moderator lamp; taking off the globo he placed it on the table and deliberately clasped the chimney of the lamp with both hands; then advancing to the lady of the house he asked her to touch it, but she refused, knowing it was hot. Mr. Home said 'Have you no faith? Will you not trust in Dan if he says it is cool?' She replied, 'Certainly,' and placed her finger on the glass, exclaiming, 'Oh, it is not at all hot!' This was corroborated by Lord Lindsay and myself, who in turn both laid our finger on the glass several times to test it. Mr. Home laughed and said, 'I will make it hot for you, old fellow,' and holding it towards Mr. —, he turned, apparently addressing some one, and said in a sad tone of voice, 'It is necessary to confirm the faith of others that the glass should be made hot for him.' Mr. — now touched it, and exclaimed, 'You have, indeed,' shaking his hand and shewing me a red mark. So hot was the glass when the fourth person touched it, that it raised a blister, which I saw some days subsequently, peeling. I leave it for the scientific to determine how the heat was re-impacted to the glass, after being withdrawn.

"Mr. Home now returned to the fire-place, and thrust the chimney into the red-hot coals, resting the end on the top bar: he left it there for about four or five minutes, then lifting it he clasped it in both hands, went to the table, took a lucifer match from a box, handing it to the lady of the house, desired her to touch the glass — the match instantly ignited; and having called our attention to this fact, he observed, 'The tongue and lips are the most sensitive parts of the body,' and thrust the heated glass into his mouth, applying, especially, his tongue to it. He once more returned to the fire, and again placed the chimney on the upper bar, the end of the glass resting amidst the red coals. He left it there and walked about the room, selected a small fern-leaf from a vase of flowers, and raising the chimney, placed it within, and replaced the chimney

among the coals. After a few moments he told us to observe very carefully, as the experiment would be very pretty. Mr. Home now held up the glass, and we perceived the fern-leaf within apparently on fire. He replaced it after a few seconds, and holding it up again, exclaimed, 'Is it not pretty?' The fern appeared red-hot; each little leaf edged with gold, yet flameless, like clouds at sunset—rich glowing crimson tinged with molten gold. After we had all looked at it and admired it, he advanced to Mrs. —, and laughingly shook it out on her muslin dress. I expected to see it crumble away; but no, it was still green, though dry and withered. Unfortunately it was not preserved.

"Again Mr. Home returned to the fire, and once more placed the glass on the coals, where he left it and walked about the room. Going to the lamp, he passed his hand slowly backwards and forwards through the flame, not an inch from the wick; returning to the fire-place he lifted the chimney, and moving the coals about with his hand, selected a small flat red-hot coal, and placed it in the chimney—shook it up and down, and advancing to us, playfully said 'H— here is a present for you,' and threw out the coal on her muslin dress. Catching it up in dismay, she tossed it to Lord Lindsay, who, unable to retain it in his hand, threw it from palm to palm till he reached the grate and flung it in. While we were all looking at the muslin dress and wondering that it was neither soiled nor singed, Mr. Home approached and in a hurt tone of voice said 'No, no, you will not find a mark; did you think that we would hurt your dress.' Mr. Home then selected a small spray of white flower, and going to the lamp, he passed it two or three times through the flame, then carried it to the grate and held it first in the flame and then in the smoke above the coals, moving it gently about. He now brought it back to us, asking us to look at it and smell it, calling our attention to the fact that the flower did not smell of smoke, and that it was unchanged by the heat and flame of lamp and fire. He then bid us notice that his hand which held the flower smelt of smoke while the flower remained uninjured. Then addressing

us, he said, 'The spirit now speaking through Dan, and that has enabled him to show you these curious fire-tests, in which he hopes you have all felt interested, is the spirit of an Asiatic fire-worshipper, who was anxious to come here to-night as he had heard of *séances* held here. He now bids you farewell, as he will return no more.'

"After this Mr. Home awoke.

"BARBARA HONYWOOD."

"I was present at this *séance*, and can corroborate the truth of the above statement.

"LINDSAY."

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No. 3.—MRS. HONYWOOD.

"I was kindly invited by a friend, on the 27th March, 1869 (Easter Eve), to meet Mr. D. D. Home. We sat round a very heavy, solid table, in the centre of the room—five ladies and four gentlemen. There was a bright fire, a pair of candles alight on the mantel-piece, and the moon and gas-light streaming in at both windows. In the second drawing-room there was a gas-chandelier but no fire. Our host, Mr. H——, pinned the velvet *portière* together in the centre, leaving it open like a V in the upper portion. We conversed awhile quietly; raps came on the table and floor, and vibration in the table and on the floor was felt by all present. Mr. Home passed into a trance, and his chair was slowly drawn back from the table. He got up and walked about the room, then made signs with a pocket handkerchief to a lady to blindfold him. Taking up a sheet of writing-paper and a pencil, he walked round the table, holding the paper for a few seconds at the back of each of our heads. He went into the next room, and opening the lower part of the *portière*, lay down on the floor. Soon we perceived shadows passing the upper part of the *portière*, then a cross passed slowly four times. It had been taken off a table, and was waved backwards and forwards as high as a man could reach. Mr. Home was lying on the floor, in the full gas-light and in the sight of all present. He then rose and presented

the paper to a Spanish lady present (Mr. Home is not acquainted with the language, and had written the message blindfolded). He then walked to the fire-place, and took out a large coal—the lower part was red for about an inch and a half, and the upper black and flaming. Placing it in a small metal bell and concealing it with both hands, he carried it off into the next room, saying, as he passed us, ‘Do not look too much at Dan.’ He moved about as if uncertain for a while, then put out the gas, and we saw the red-hot coal high up in the air above the curtains, and finally heard it dropped into the fender. He now returned, and placed the metal bell on the fire. Passing again into the second room, he began playing a solemn chant on the piano. After a little while he called three ladies and two gentlemen by their names. In passing through the curtain, Mrs. H—— ran against a small table, which startled her, and a gentleman accidentally trod on the cross we had seen waved in the air, which had been afterwards laid upon the floor. This interrupted and disturbed the conditions; the grand-piano rose slightly and swayed from side to side.

“All now returned to the table for a while; Mr. Home rose, and calling three ladies, placed a small table close to the *portière*; nothing however occurred, and all returned to the table. Mr. Home now took the bell off the fire, where I feel sure it had remained at least ten or fifteen minutes. Taking a sheet of paper from the table he placed it on his left hand and put the bell upon it. He asked Mrs. H—— ‘if she would trust Dan, and hold the bell without fear?’ she replied, ‘if you tell me it will not burn me I will trust you.’ He placed the sheet of paper on her hand and put the bell upon it and she held it for some seconds: another lady held it, after which he put it on the table-cloth. Mr. H—— asking if it would burn the cloth, he assured him it would not. Mr. H—— tried to touch the handle of the bell but it was too hot to rest his finger on it. Another gentleman also tried to touch it, but could not endure the heat. I forgot to mention Mr. Home asked Mr. L—— to make the sign of the cross upon the bell in pencil, at the beginning. Mr. H—— now



extinguished the candles, leaving only the bright fire-light and the moonlight. Mr. Home sat down for a while and awoke ; raps came on the table, pencil and paper were asked for and were placed under the table, our dresses were pulled ; a pencil was twice put into the hand of the Spanish lady ; a Mrs. E—— asked for a pencil and it was placed before her, but disappeared as she put out her hand to take it, and was put into the lady's hand next to her, beneath the table. A chair now moved quickly up to Mr. Home's side by itself ; he again passed into a trance and was drawn away from the table and walked round the room with the bell, and although the clapper did not move we each heard tiny clear sounds on the bell as he held it near our ears. Mr. Home now went and stood near the *portière*, shadows were seen, and I saw a ball of fire, also a long ray of light pass the upper part of the curtain far above his head and the furthest side of the curtain.

"We then saw a face come out from behind the curtain and retire several times, as a lady present was nervous and started, which disturbed it, and seemed to draw it, or force it back. After a few seconds it passed slowly across, backwards and forwards, three or four times. It seemed to me an oval face with a broad forehead, and a close fitting cap with a plaited frill. I saw no hair, only the forehead and brow, the eyelids were closed, and I observed to Mr. H——, 'I could see no eyes.' Rays of light were emitted from the cap like a halo—I could distinguish no nose or mouth, the face was so luminous, it shone like the moon, the rays of light fell obliquely from the brow and throat towards the window, where the rays of the real moon were shining at the time into the room.

"I could see the outline of the head, throat, and shoulders ; a Mr. H—— observed it was the face of a fresh-coloured, healthy old woman, and a Mr. L—— said it was a very old and wrinkled face ; a Mrs. E—— said she saw a luminous cross on the breast, and all the eight persons present saw the face.

"Mr. Home now returned to the table and awoke ; raps came again on the table, and we were all of us touched, our silk dresses

rustled and gently pulled; my foot was clasped, and the big toe bent gently down as if by the pressure of a thumb; my foot was resting at the time on a claw of the table, and three people sat between me and Mr. Home, whose hands were visible on the table. Some had their hands clasped underneath the table by spirit hands, and some perceived a fragrant scent; the accordion was gently played, but the power seemed fading away, and soon left us. Mr. H—— asked for one test before concluding the *séance*, and asked that the lady's name, whose face we had all seen, might be given. Raps spelt out:— It is for . . . , the face of his sister B . . . . The lady had passed from earth about six months before and was blind—which accounted for my not being able to see any eyes—and always wore a peculiar frilled cap.

“During the whole evening we all heard a loud rumbling noise, as if heavy furniture were being rolled overhead—there were no rooms above—and the following evening at a *séance* this explanation was given:— ‘That a spirit had been very anxious to attract our notice, but could not communicate that night.’ On referring to my friends present at the above *séance* for corroboration of my statement, Mr. L—— adds: ‘I was standing next to Mr. Home when the grand piano was raised from the ground, and I noticed that Mr. Home's chair was raised at the same time. I should say both were elevated about eight inches from the floor.’

“BARBARA HONYWOOD.”

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“No 4.—MRS. HONYWOOD.

“On Sunday, April the 11th, 1869, I dined with a friend Mrs. ——, and met Mr. Home, the Master of Lindsay, his cousin, Mr. Walter Lindsay, Gen. ——, and Capt. S——.

“After dinner we sat at a round table, and almost immediately heard raps on a table in the corner of the room; they sounded like dripping water—drip, drip, drip. The table was three yards distant from where we sat. The room was lighted by a dull fire, and a lamp in the back room. The window was open, and some

showy lamps outside, gave it all the appearance of moonlight streaming in at the window. The table rose to a height of two feet, and waved gently in the air; Mr. Home soon passed into a trance, and requested Capt. S—— to extinguish the lamp; the back room was only lighted by the light from the lamps outside, and the front room by the fire which had burned low, and only flickered up from time to time.

“Mr. Home walked over to the open window and stood there, his figure clearly defined by the light outside; between him and the outer air a shadow seemed to fall like a veil, and gradually it assumed the form of a head and shoulders advancing and retreating, the left arm outstretched. To me it appeared like gauze, now transparent, and again opaque, but never distinct, or material. Mr. Home appeared to be conversing with some one. All present, but myself, now saw lights on the piano and wall, and said they were brilliant and beautiful, and that one light remained for a quarter of an hour flickering in a corner of the room. From where I sat I could not see the piano, neither am I clairvoyant. During the evening I saw a little flicker from time to time on the wall, where nothing could account for my seeing it materially; but all the others said they saw them repeatedly, and described them as yellow, blue, and red.

“My friends now said they saw dark figures moving about, and entering from the window. Mr. Home walked about the room talking a good deal in a low voice; at last he said, ‘It is the anniversary of a birth;’ and, at the same moment, all but myself said they saw a tall, dark figure approach the table, issuing from the *portière* near us, and wave its arm. The *portière* was pushed or bulged out, and some thought assumed the form of an infant lying down. Capt. S—— then observed: ‘The figure has moved and is standing near —— (pointing to the lady of the house), beneath his own picture.’ ‘Yes,’ said Mr. Home, ‘it is A——, and he will appear again if —— is not frightened.’ Mr. Home then resumed his place at the table, and three persons present observed that his eyes flashed like fire. The atmosphere of the room was

intensely cold, and made us all shiver. Mrs. — now felt the tall, dark figure approach her chair, lean on it, and then stand on one side of it—it was a large and heavy arm-chair. Mrs. — now said she saw the figure distinctly. Capt. S., W. Lindsay and the Master of Lindsay also said they saw it, and that it passed over the chair, stretched out its arms, and stroked her hair. The Master of Lindsay said the eyes flamed, and Capt. S—— observed to Mrs. — ‘Do not be alarmed, he is coming round in front.’ The lady said the face then appeared to come within six inches of her face, and the figure shut out all else in the room. She could only see two brilliant eyes looking into hers, and a dark figure which on passing away seemed to pass through ‘the Master of Lindsay, who shivered from the intense cold. Gen. B—— then felt a form near him, which some observed appeared trying to place its arms round him, and he said the pressure felt soft yet firm. Mr. Home said : ‘It is Jane—she wishes to take possession of you.’ I saw none of this—all appeared dark ; and I only repeat the observations made by the others present. A voice now whispered to me, ‘Good morning!’ at which some one present laughed ; when the sound was repeated, apparently all round the room, by the invisibles, near the floor, far away but distinct and musical, lasting for about thirty seconds. Lights on the heads of several present were observed ; a star over the lady of the house, and a broad blue light across the M. of Lindsay’s forehead ; also red, blue and yellow lights above Gen. B——. Three or four of the party now said they saw eyes distinctly. Mr. W. Lindsay said there was a large bright eye in the centre of the table, from whence other eyes appeared to emanate and approach and retreat. On asking Mr. Home to explain this, he replied : ‘It is the eye of your guardian angel that is ever with you.’ A few moments later a small work-table was moved up from the furthest corner of the room to where we sat : a work-box was lifted from it, and placed in the hands of the lady of the house, and then a paper knife ; for the purpose, they said, of calming and quieting her. Her hand was then softly pressed. Mr. Home now appeared very



much agitated, and said : ‘ The spirits on all sides are forcing me to repeat what they are saying. They are most anxious to speak audibly themselves, but have not yet sufficient power ; they will still strive to overcome the difficulty.’ Mr. Home now said, ‘ Listen to them in the next room.’ A rustling sound was heard and the patter of feet, as if people were moving across the floor and leaving the room. I observed the windows carefully, the shutters were closed, and I could see the streak of light through the centre brightening and paling from time to time as the gas lights flared ; and when others said they saw figures moving about, I saw the whole streak of light from top to bottom of the shutter become hidden, as if a black cloud passed inside the room and shut the light out from me, but at no time could I distinguish any form or positive figure, or see any eyes save our own.

“BARBARA HONYWOOD.”

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No. 5.—THE HON. MRS. ———

“From among the many remarkable instances of spiritual phenomena which I have witnessed, I will cite the following :—It was on the evening of the 17th of March, and there were five persons present. Mr. Home, in the trance state, walked to a table on which stood a moderator lamp burning brightly, removed the glass globe, and then the lamp chimney, and brought it to me, holding it firmly in his hands. I declined to touch it, knowing it was burning hot. Mr. Home then said, ‘ Have you no faith ? it is quite cool.’ I consented to take hold of it, and found to my astonishment that it was hardly warm ; another lady present likewise felt it, and made the same remark. Mr. Home then passed on to a gentleman of the party, and before offering him the lamp chimney, he said, in a sad, low tone of voice, as if deprecating anger, ‘ It is necessary to confirm the faith of others, that this should be made hot for you.’ The gentleman then lightly touched the glass with one finger, and found that it was so burning hot that even in those few seconds of time it had raised a blister on his finger, which remained for three days afterwards. Mr. Home

then proceeded to the fire, and thrust the lamp glass into the middle of the burning coals, and after waiting and watching it for five minutes he took it out, and held it tightly clasped with both hands. Fetching a lucifer match from the writing table, he brought it to me, and desired me to touch the glass with it. Of course it instantly ignited, owing to the great heat; and having pointed this out carefully to all present, Mr. Home thrust the burning chimney into his mouth and held it there, observing at the time that the tongue was the most sensitive part of the human body. Not apparently satisfied with this, or thinking that he had failed to shew us that it was done by supernatural agency, he again proceeded to the fireplace, took out a red hot coal and placed it inside the chimney, then brought it to me and dropped it on to my white muslin dress, where it remained for some seconds, as it was so hot we all feared to touch it. My dress, though made of the finest muslin, was not ignited, and we even failed to detect the slightest trace or mark of any kind after the closest examination. Mr. Home remarked that we need not be afraid as they (the spirits) would never hurt us. He then took a flower, and after breathing gently over it, passed it several times through the flame of the moderator lamp; after shewing us that its leaves and blossom were untouched, he took it to the fire, and held it in the smoke and moved it gently about amongst the coals; then bringing it back again to us, he made us observe that there was no smell of smoke or burning about it, and that it was precisely in the same state as when he first plucked it.

“On other occasions I have seen chairs moved and brought by invisible hands from the other side of the room, three or four musical instruments played in harmony together at one time, and have likewise heard voices, sometimes speaking together at an apparently great distance, and at other times close to me. But perhaps the most remarkable spiritual manifestation is what is called ‘direct drawing.’ Pencils and paper are placed either on the table or under it, and in a few minutes, there will be found something drawn or written upon it. I have seen drawn most

beautiful spiritual faeces, sometimes touched with a little colour, at others, only a pencil sketch. On one occasion I placed a pencil and paper *on* the table, and looking at it ten minutes later I found a complete programme of a concert written out, which the spirits told us they would play in the course of the evening; and this promise was faithfully carried out, and all the pieces of music played in a most masterly manner on different instruments, a violin, flute, piccolo and concertina, all lying on the table. I have this piece of paper now in my possession. I must add that these spiritual drawings, &c., are best obtained when the lights are extinguished."

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No. 6.—MR. GUPPY.

*Séance with the Spiritual Society of Florence.*

"The *séance* opened with a message: 'It has been asked in this Society if spirits can distinguish colours; we will show you.'

"A noise was heard on the table, and the light showed a heap of sugar plums of all colours mixed together—about a handful. Light put out again; we heard rattling; lighted the candle and found the sugar plums all assorted in little heaps of separate colours.

"SAML. GUPPY."

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No. 7.—MR. GUPPY.

*Another Séance with the same Society.*

"The room, at my request, had been made very warm, as at the previous *séance* we were shivering. Some of the most eminent Florentine literati were present. First came a shower of fresh flowers, which fell all about the table while Mrs. Guppy's hands were held. The light was put out again, and in ten minutes an awful crash was heard on the table, as if the chandelier had fallen down. On lighting the candle, we found a large lump of beautiful ice, about a foot long and one and a half inches thick which had fallen on the table with such force that it was broken. It began to melt immediately, and was put into a dish. This was more

than an hour after the beginning of the *séance*, in which time the ice would have melted had it been in the room.

“SAML. GUPPY.”

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No. 8.—MR. GUPPY.

*Test Séance with Mr. Adolphus Trollope, Mrs. Trollope, Miss Blayden and Col. Harvey.*

“First, the room was searched by the gentlemen while Mrs. Guppy was being undressed and re-dressed in the presence of Mrs. Trollope, every article of her dress being closely examined.

“We sat at the table, Mrs. Guppy firmly held, both hands, by Mr. Trollope and his wife, while Colonel Harvey and Miss Blayden held my hands and touched Mrs. Guppy’s. In about ten minutes all exclaimed, ‘I smell flowers,’ and a shower of flowers came. On lighting the candle the whole of Mrs. Guppy’s and Mr. Trollope’s hands and arms were found covered with jonquil flowers. The smell was quite overpowering. The doors had been locked, the window fastened. Had a bunch of jonquils been in the room before the *séance* it would have been detected by the smell.

“SAML. GUPPY.”

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No. 9.—MR. GUPPY.

“Mrs. Guppy went to a *séance* at the Ambassador’s, Sir Augustus Paget; present, Lady Paget, Count and Countess Moltki, and a daughter of Sir Digby Murray. They held Mrs. Guppy firmly, and asked for a noise; and there was a loud concussion on the wall, like a gun. Flowers were afterwards brought.

“SAML. GUPPY.”

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# MINUTES

## OF THE

### SUB-COMMITTEES.

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SUB-COMMITTEE No. 1.

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#### EXPERIMENT I.

*Feby. 24th, 1869.* Six members present. A circle formed. Private house. Medium non-professional.

All hands resting on a square heavy dining-table on four legs with castors. For one hour and a quarter no motion or sound. Two members left; the four remaining sat for an hour. Phenomena at intervals. 1st. Motions of the fable, sometimes very gentle, then rapid, and such as would require, to produce them voluntarily, a great and visible exertion of muscular force. A slight rising of the table from the floor. This was easily seen by all present by reason of the corner of the table being close to a writing table, one inch and two thirds higher, up to the level of which it was raised twice. 2nd. Sounds. These consisted of creakings and taps. The former were such as would result from efforts to move the table by the legs or from unequal strains applied to various parts of it; the latter were such as could only be produced by distinct blows with a pencil, finger tip, or light hammer. On questions being asked, they were followed by one, two or three sounds. During the whole time the hands of those present were laid flat on the table: the room was well lighted with gas, and everything could be distinctly seen. At the termination of the sitting there was quite a volley of raps, according to request preferred that "Good night!" might thus be signified. *Note:* all present were members of the Committee, and declare upon their honour that none of these motions or sounds were produced voluntarily or consciously by

themselves. Moreover they have found, by repeated experiment, that they are not able to produce similar sounds and motions when endeavouring to do so.

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#### EXPERIMENT II.

*Feb. 26th.* Conditions as before. Seven Members present. In about half an hour the table moved along the floor, but did not rise as on the former occasion. This or similar movements occurred three or four times in the course of a sitting of about two hours' duration. The tapping or other sounds were not so distinct as on the first evening.

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#### EXPERIMENT III.

*March 2nd.* Conditions as before. Five Members present. In a sitting of about an hour and a half no effects whatever were produced.

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#### EXPERIMENT IV.

*March 9th.* Nine Members present. Conditions as before. The following phenomena were produced: 1st. The members of the circle standing, rested the tips of their fingers only on the table. It made a considerable movement. 2nd. Holding their hands a few inches above the table, and no one in any way touching it, it moved a distance of more than a foot. 3rd. To render the experiment absolutely conclusive, all present stood clear away from the table, and stretching out their hands over it without touching it, it again moved as before, and about the same distance. During this time, one of the Committee was placed upon the floor to look carefully beneath the table, while others were placed outside to see that no person went near to the table. In this position it was frequently moved, without possibility of contact by any person present. 4th. Whilst thus standing clear of the table, but with the tips of their fingers resting upon it, all at the same moment raised their hands at a given signal; and on several occasions the table jumped from the floor to an elevation varying from half an inch to an inch. 5th. All held their hands close above the table, but not touching it, and then on a word of command raised them suddenly, and the table jumped as before. The member lying on the floor, and those placed outside the circle, were keenly watching as before, and all observed the phenomena as described.

It may be observed that the motion of the table, whether upward or horizontal, was not produced by any *sensible* attractive force of the hands of those present. The persons forming the circle were quite unconscious of any expenditure of attractive force, but the force, whatever it was, seemed to obey, to some extent, the will of those present.

## EXPERIMENT V.

*March 15th.* *Séance* from 8.30 to 10 p.m. Conditions as before. Eight Members present. Sounds were heard, seeming to proceed from various parts of the table. They consisted chiefly of one or three creaks or taps. These followed questions put by those in the circle, but were generally very faint, and in many instances the questions were not followed by any sounds whatever.

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## EXPERIMENT VI.

*March 22nd.* Eight to ten p.m. Conditions as before. Six persons present. Sounds were audible soon after the seats were taken, and lasted till the end of the sitting. Frequently they were faint, but were always sufficiently distinct to be heard by all. For the most part they appeared to proceed from the floor. It being suggested that, in consequence of a succession of five or six raps following a question, communication should be established by means of the alphabet, it was called by one of the members; certain letters, on being called, were followed by three distinct and quick tapplings. The letters thus indicated were set down upon paper, and in this manner the following sentence was spelled, "You stupify everybody with your nonsense." A request was made that the table be moved, but was not complied with. At the termination of the sitting, one of the circle asking for an expression of "good night" to be conveyed by raps on the table, there was quite a volley of sounds—not proceeding from the table but from the floor.

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## EXPERIMENT VII.

*March 25th.* Conditions as before. Seven members present. *Séance* at eight p.m., lasting about an hour and a half. Very slight effects produced.

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## EXPERIMENT VIII.

*March 30th.* Conditions as before. Six members present, and one visitor. Sitting at 8 p.m., lasting about two hours. A member of the Committee having objected to the assumption of one and three sounds meaning no and yes, it was asked, "If one sound means 'No,' give three raps;" which were immediately given. Again it was asked, "If three sounds are to mean 'Yes,' let three more raps be given"; and three raps were immediately heard. It was thereupon agreed that, in future reports, it will only be necessary to speak of answers being in the negative or affirmative, without specifying the number of raps or sounds indicating such answers. That one rap shall be taken and expressed as a negative,

three as an affirmative, and two as uncertain ; the sounds hitherto, by this interpretation, having conveyed intelligible answers.

A round tripod table, smaller and lighter than the square table hitherto used, was employed for the first experiments. All hands were placed on it, and every member of the circle placed each of his feet in contact with that of his neighbour on the right and left. The usual tapping sounds were speedily produced, and when questions were put the table tilted once or thrice on one side, the elevation varying from one to about three inches. It also moved along the floor, but with the hands resting on it. These manifestations becoming weaker, the circle was formed at the square table. This, in the course of the evening, moved along the floor, but not without contact with hands, although the experiment was tried more than once. But the sounds which came from the table, sometimes during conversation, as if in approval or dissent of the remarks made, and those following the questions put consisted, not only of gentle tapplings and distinct raps, but sometimes of heavy blows ; and occasionally, when a physical manifestation was asked for, as that the table might be raised, of creaking, cracking, scratching, and other sounds quite indescribable, coupled with a trembling or vibratory movement of the table.

Five distinct raps following a repeatedly expressed wish for physical manifestations, the alphabet, as on a former occasion, was used as a means of communication, and then the following sentence was formed, "Do keep your mouths shut ;" another was as follows, "This is a great work ; it demands your life, your soul, your all ; go on friends, God prosper your work."

Occasionally, to save time, when a word was partly spelled out, a guess was made at the remainder and the question asked, "Is it such a word ?" The answer being in the affirmative the word was written down accordingly. But in more than one instance the answer was in the negative, and the supposed word only formed part of another word. It is to be remarked that the sounds in correction of the letters and formation of the words of the communications were very sharp, distinct, and regular. During the whole of the time the communications were being spelled out, every member of the circle placed each of his feet in contact with that of his neighbour, and his hands on the table.

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#### EXPERIMENT IX.

*April 6th.* Conditions as before. Five members present. Raps were heard proceeding from the table. The alphabet was proposed, and on inquiry it was found, that a certain member present was to call the alphabet. On his doing so, the table rapped at certain letters which were



written down and a sentence was thus spelt, and the communication caused considerable amusement. Other questions were put and answered by the usual signals. The raps, however, at times seemed to manifest the most lively disposition and occurred continually during conversation; they also distinctly kept time to music with perfect accuracy.

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#### EXPERIMENT X.

*April 11th.* Conditions as before. Six members present. The sitting lasted about one hour and a half. In less than five minutes tapping sounds were heard, proceeding from the leaf of the table; at first faint, but soon they became louder, and so continued during nearly the entire sitting. During conversation, they were of a sharp, decided, and lively character, often occurring in volleys, and came from different parts of the table according to request. There were also motions of the table. These consisted: (1.) Of a rapid to-and-fro movement along the floor, in one instance while only the tips of the fingers were in contact with the table. (2.) A peculiar tremor of the whole table followed by a sudden jerk, somewhat similar to the jolting of a cart. (3.) Tiltings of the table three times on a question being put, the elevation being about half an inch.

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#### EXPERIMENT XI.

*April 15th.* Conditions as before. Eight members present. Sitting at 8 p.m. Within five minutes tapping sounds were heard on the leaf of the table. Various questions, as to order of sitting, &c., were put, and answered by rappings. The alphabet was called for, and the word "laugh" was spelled out. It was asked if it was intended that we should laugh. An affirmative answer being given, the members laughed; upon which the table made a most vigorous sound and motion imitative of and responsive to the laughter, and so ludicrous as to cause a general peal of real laughter to which the table shook, and the tapping kept time as an accompaniment. The following questions were then put and answered by the number of raps given:—"How many children has Mrs. M—?" "Four;" "Mrs. W—?" "Three;" "Mrs. D—?" No rap; "Mrs. E—?" "Five;" "Mrs. S—?" "Two." It was ascertained, upon inquiry, that these replies were perfectly correct, except in the case of Mrs. E—, who has only four children living, but has lost one. Neither the medium nor any person present, was aware of all the above numbers, but each number was known to some of them. The inquiry for a written communication being responded to by three raps, some sheets of paper with a pencil were laid under the table, and at the end of the sitting examined, but no letter or mark was found on the paper. In order

to test whether these sounds would continue under different conditions, all sat at some distance from the table, holding hands in a circle round it. But instead of upon the table as before, loud rappings were heard to proceed from various parts of the floor, and from the chair on which the medium sat ; while some came from the other side of the room, a distance of about fifteen feet from the nearest person. A desire having been expressed for a shower of raps, loud rapping came from every part of the table at once, producing an effect similar to that of a shower of hail falling upon it. The sounds throughout the evening were very sharp and distinct. It was observed that, although during conversation the rappings are sometimes of a singularly lively character, yet when a question is put they cease instantly, and not one is heard until the response is given.

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#### EXPERIMENT XII.

*April 20th.* Eight persons present. Conditions as before. Sitting a little before 8, lasting about two hours. Sounds from the table were heard within ten minutes. On a song being sung rapping commenced immediately. A lively air was always accompanied by a spirited beating to time, the sounds, in harmony with the song sung, being loud or soft, and following the measure note by note, conveying as much musical expression as such an accompaniment was capable of. The sounds were frequently accompanied by slight vibratory or trembling motions of the table. It was asked—"Will you answer a written question by the alphabet?" To this the usual token of assent was given. A member of the Committee wrote on a slip of paper : "What is the name of my sister?" but what was so written was not disclosed to any person present. The word "Mary Ann" was spelt. The answer was not quite correct, it should have been Marian. In order to place beyond doubt that these sounds could in no way be produced by any person present, the back of every chair was turned to the table, and at some distance from it, each person kneeling upon the chair and resting his arms on its back, with the tips of his fingers only upon the table.

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#### EXPERIMENT XIII.

*April 29th.* Nine members present. Medium and conditions as before. In about a quarter of an hour the table made sundry movements along the floor with rappings. The sounds at first were very softly given but subsequently became much stronger. They beat time to the airs played by a musical box, and came from any part of the table requested by the members. Some questions were put and followed by raps, but more fre-

quently by tilting of the table at its sides, ends, or corners, the elevation being from one to four inches. An endeavour was made by those sitting near, to prevent the table from rising, but it resisted all their efforts. The chair on which the medium was seated was drawn several times over the floor. First it moved backwards several feet ; then it gave several twists and turns, and finally returned with the medium to nearly its original position. The chair had no castors, and moved quite noiselessly, the medium appearing perfectly still and holding her feet above the carpet ; so that during the entire phenomenon no part of her person or of her dress touched the floor. There was bright gaslight, and the members had a clear opportunity to observe all that occurred ; and all agreed that imposture was impossible. While this was going on, a rapping sound came continually from the floor beneath and around the chair. It was then suggested that trials should be made if the table would move without contact. All present, including the medium, stood quite clear of the table, holding their hands from three to six inches above it, and without any way touching it. Observers were placed under it to see that it was not touched there. The following were the observations.

1. The table repeatedly moved along the floor in different directions, often taking that requested. Thus, in accordance with a desire expressed that it should move from the front to the back room, it took that direction, and on approaching the folding doors and meeting with an obstruction, turned as if to avoid it.

2. On a given signal all raised their hands suddenly, and the table immediately sprang or jerked up from the floor about one inch.

3. Without any movement of the hands the table jerked off the floor, sometimes at one side or corner, sometimes at another, according to request, the elevation varying from one to four inches.

The distance of the circle from the table was now considerably increased, all standing about two feet from it, and without extending the hands towards it. The same phenomena were frequently repeated. Once the table jerked up on one side, making a considerable forward movement, and again it moved along the floor about two feet, rising at one end and causing some noise in its fall. After a time, the power appearing to fail, all approached the table, placing their hands in contact with it. Then, on withdrawing all hands suddenly, the same movements were renewed.

During many of these phenomena, various members of the Committee volunteered by turns to keep watch below the table, whilst others standing round them carefully noted everything that took place ; but no one could discover any visible agency in their production.

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## EXPERIMENT XIV.

*May 4th.* Nine members present. Place and conditions as before. Within ten minutes sharp snapping sounds were heard, appearing to come from the table. They kept time with airs played by a musical box and with a song sung for the purpose of the experiment, and there were frequent inquiries and questions.

It was indicated by rappings who should preside.

In the course of the evening there were many slight movements of the table, accompanied by creaking and tapping sounds. Subsequently, however, all stood quite clear of the table, with hands extended two or three inches over it, but without in any way touching it, and the table made two lateral movements, rolling each time at least six inches from the place where it stood.

Then the experiment, as formerly recorded, of raising the hands suddenly at a given signal, was repeated three times, but without result.

The chair on which the medium sat was frequently drawn back from the table; and as she expressed a conviction that she did nothing to cause these movements, at the request of the Committee she knelt in the chair, perfectly motionless, and with hands extended, and it again moved, having no castors, smoothly along the floor, about six inches from its original position. No one touched her or the chair during this experiment. Although the tapping and other sounds were not confined to one part of the table, they generally came from that part before the medium. It was, therefore, suggested that she should sit at a distance, one of the Committee holding her feet, and two others of the Committee holding her hands. The sounds, however, continued to come as before, from that part of the table immediately facing her, contact by her being thus rendered impossible.

A dark sitting being proposed, the gas was turned off and a variety of remarkable phenomena occurred, which, not being under test conditions, are not reported.

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EXPERIMENT XV.

*May 11th.* Eight members present. Conditions as before. All present sat at the table in the usual manner for about one hour and a half. The room was lit with gas as usual. Afterwards, in pursuance of a suggestion by Professor Varley, the gas was turned out, and a faint light thrown by two lanterns, each provided with a wax candle and fitted with coloured glass; and subsequently the room was made totally dark, but no phenomena whatever were produced throughout the evening.



## EXPERIMENT XVI.

*May 18th.* The meeting was held at the house of another member of the Committee. The table was a large and heavy dining table. Twelve members present. Conditions as before. Within ten minutes faint sounds were heard, proceeding from the table, which soon grew stronger. Some answers were given to questions. Music was played on the piano-forte, and one piece was accompanied by tapping sounds from all parts of the table, and another piece both by tapping sounds, vibrations, and slight vertical movements of the table at its sides, ends, and corners. The sounds and movements all kept time with the music. The same phenomena also occurred when a song was sung. During the *séance* the sounds were very equally distributed, being seldom confined to one part of the table. On two or three occasions the table made lateral movements, but on contact of the hands with it being broken, no effect was produced. During tea, when the business of the meeting was concluded, there were several slight upward movements of the corners of the table, and the rapping sounds proceeded loudly from different parts of it, and for some time were frequent and lively.

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## EXPERIMENT XVII.

*May 27th.* Twelve members present. Conditions as before. The usual tapping on the table in answer to questions and keeping time with music. An intimation being thus given that a communication was secured, the word "dark" was spelled. It was thereupon decided to put out the gas. The various sounds from the table immediately increased in number and intensity. The table tilted at different sides, moved along the floor in various directions, lurched to and fro, and finally went into the back room. The hands of all present were in contact, and resting on the table. Nine of the members affirmed they distinctly saw luminous sparks in the middle of the table, and in the neighbourhood of the medium. Some of these were apparently phosphorescent clouds, and others points or stars of blue light, dancing in the air like fire-flies. The same luminous points appeared at the tips of the fingers of some of those present, and when the hand was shaken these luminous drops were scattered from it like drops of water, retaining their luminosity for some time upon the objects on which they fell.

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## EXPERIMENT XVIII.

*June 1st.* Four members present. *Séance* at 8 p.m. No medium in the room. Sat at the dining table with hands resting on it for about one hour. No effects whatever were produced, nor could the slightest creak-

ing or rapping on the table be detected. The members afterwards purposely endeavoured to produce the sounds they had heard in the previous experiments, but were unable to do so.

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EXPERIMENT XIX.

*June 9th.* Eight members present. *Séance* at 8 p.m. Conditions as before. The usual rappings and tiltings occurred. The most interesting fact this evening was, that though the tapping sounds proceeded from different parts of the table, but principally from that in front of the medium, yet when she went into the hall to receive a message, they still continued to come from that part of the table. The alphabet being repeated in accordance with the signal, "Queer Pals" was spelt out. These words seemed to amuse and puzzle the meeting; however, it was suggested they might apply to the Christy Minstrels, whose nigger melodies, at St. George's Hall, were very clearly heard through the open window of the back room. At this suggestion the table gave three considerable tilts. "I must ask for your patience for a short time" was next spelt out; and subsequently another sentence was commenced, but the raps occurring without regard to the letters called over, it was not complete. Tilting, lateral, and vibratory movements of the table occurred at frequent intervals, one or three tilts being generally given when a question was put.

The manifestations becoming weak, a dark *séance* was decided on, and the gas turned out. Then, after a few minutes, loud knocking, scratching, and other sounds proceeded from different parts of the table, and were often accompanied by violent movements of the table itself. Sometimes it rose at one end about six inches, and dropped suddenly, making much noise. Sometimes, however, the fall was very gradual. It also moved from side to side, with the legs at one end raised above the floor, and the part so raised felt to the hands as if floating in the air. Some cups and saucers on the tea tray in the centre of the table rattled frequently as if they were being overturned and struck against one another, while the table itself was perfectly motionless. During the whole of these phenomena all the persons in the room sat round the table, the hands of each one resting on it and in contact with that of his neighbour on either side.

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EXPERIMENT XX.

*June 17th.* Six members present. Conditions as before. The following phenomena occurred.

1. Sounds on the table of many different tones, from delicate taps to

loud distinct raps, and appearing to come from all parts of the table, especially from the *end furthest from the medium*.

2. Raps of various degrees of loudness were also heard on the floor, walls, and chairs, and they were frequently given at the part requested by the members. On four loud raps being asked for as a test, they were at once given, appearing to come from the part of the table opposite to the medium and far beyond her reach.

3. *Paper Experiment.* The medium held a sheet of note paper at arm's length over the table by one of its corners, and at request faint but distinct taps were heard upon it. The other corners of the paper were then held by members of the Committee, and the sounds were again heard by all at the table; while those who held the paper felt the impact of the invisible blows. One or more questions were answered in this way by three clear and distinctly audible taps, which had a sound similar in character to that produced by dropping water. This new and curious phenomenon occurred close under the eyes of all present, without any physical cause for it being detected.

4. Rapping sounds beat time to a song, and imitated the laughter of one of the members.

5. Paper and pencil were placed under the table with a request that it should be written on; but shortly afterwards the following message was spelt out by raps in the usual way: "We are not able to write."

6. A member having previously written some name on a paper, requested that it should be spelt by raps. On going over the alphabet the word "Emily" was formed, and the sounds then ceased. "Is that all," was asked—"No," (by one rap). "Am I to go on?"—"No." The member then stated that he had written *two names*, of which the first was "*Emily*." The second was repeatedly refused to be given. He then proposed to try another test, and privately wrote on a slip of paper, which he folded and held in his hand unseen by the medium or any person present. The answer given was, "Sister-in-law." He now showed the question to the party; it was: "What is the second name of the Prince of Wales's eldest son." It was now proposed to discontinue the questions, which seemed to have failed, when the questioner asked: is there any connection between your answer and my questions?" To which there came "Yes." "Will you explain that connection?"—"Yes." The member then repeated the alphabet again, and the following sentence was spelt. "*You tell who Emily is.*" (It is to be particularly noticed that while these words were being given, the medium was conversing with another lady; and the member declares he had no knowledge of what the sentence was which was being spelled). The questioner at first declined to do as

requested; declaring that the spirits ought to tell the name he had written down; but on being urged by the members of the Committee, he stated that the lady named "Emily W—," whose name he had first written down, was his "sister-in-law."

It may be noticed that the raps by which these communications were spelt seemed chiefly to come from various parts of the floor of the room, and when any indistinctness caused a question as to the correctness of any letter, the confirmation was frequently given by very loud raps on the table.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXI.

*June 21st.* Seven members present. Place and conditions as before. It was stated that the medium could remain but a short time. Immediately loud tapping sounds issued from the table opposite to the place where she was sitting. Rapping sounds of different tone and intensity were incessant during her presence, and continued for some time after she had gone from the room, coming from the table and various parts of the floor and walls. The paper-tapping experiment was again tried with the same result as before. A small harmonican was held by the medium, and it was asked to be played upon. A number of faint tapping sounds were made on the wooden frame, but no music was produced. A small round table was placed on the floor inside a cylinder purposely constructed so as to preclude the possibility of contact of the feet or legs with any part of it. The table thus protected gave out repeated raps in reply to questions, one hand only being placed upon its surface.

Raps, in conjunction with vertical and slight lateral movements of the large dining-table, beat accurate time to an air played by a musical box. The dining-table moved along the floor several inches, three times, without contact by any person present. *Movement of harmonican without contact.* On the medium and two other members holding their hands above the harmonican without in any way touching it, it moved almost entirely round by successive jerks on the table on which it was placed. The dining-table was strongly moved a distance of six feet, the hands of the members present resting lightly on it.

The medium left at 9. The phenomena for a time ceased; but in about 15 minutes after her departure very distinct rappings were heard upon the floor, door, and table. Their character was more that of knocking than tapping. Five raps were asked for and given. Questions were then put and the alphabet called over, but they failed to elicit any intelligent communication by the ordinary signals.



## EXPERIMENT XXII.

*June 28th.* Six Members present. Time of sitting, 8 to 9.30 p.m. Conditions as before. *Phenomena:* As soon as the circle was formed, the rapping sounds came from the table, close to the member who sat at the end opposite to the medium, and distant from her 12 feet; and, with occasional slight vertical movements of the table, kept time to the airs of the musical box. "Will you disclose your name?" was asked, and the word, "Elizabeth" was spelled; but nobody present had an acquaintance with that name. It was then asked, "What is the best means of producing the phenomena?" The answer spelt was, "Make a circle." This was accordingly done, all present holding hands and resting them on the table, which then gave sundry movements, chiefly lateral, and once rather suddenly shifted its position some five or six feet. All present then turned the backs of their chairs towards the turned table, and distant from it about ten or twelve inches, holding the hand of his neighbour on either side. All hands were then extended towards the table, but not nearer to it than about twelve inches; so that there was no possibility of its being touched by any person present. The table, a heavy dining table, then rolled forward and backward slowly along the floor, with a sort of labored movement or effort, four times; the distance varying from three to six inches. This experiment was subsequently repeated with similar results. A dark *séance* was held for about ten minutes, the usual conditions being observed, but the phenomena were very trifling.

## EXPERIMENT XXIII.

*July 5th.* Five members present. Conditions as usual. The ordinary tapping sounds from the table occurred, but no phenomena worth reporting; and the raps did not continue beyond the first half-hour, when they ceased suddenly and did not return.

## EXPERIMENT XXIV.

*July 12th.* Seven members present. Miss ——, a young lady, was introduced as a trance medium. After sitting for a short time, her eyes closed, and she spoke and replied to questions as one would in assuming different characters. There were four of these personifications, but nothing transpired which in the opinion of the Committee afforded evidence worth recording.

## EXPERIMENT XXV.

*July 19th.* Seven members present. Conditions as before. *Phenomena:*

A few creaking and tapping sounds unaccompanied by any intelligible communication.

It was resolved to adjourn the meeting for the Vacation.

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EXPERIMENT XXVI.

*Sept. 27th.* Five members present. Conditions as before. The medium present was Mr. Morse. No rapping or motions produced. Mr. Morse fell into a trance, delivered an address, and answered some questions in writing, but they were not test questions and nothing satisfactory was elicited.

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EXPERIMENT XXVII.

*October 4th.* Four members present. Conditions as usual. A few minutes after sitting, taps were heard proceeding from the table, and the musical box being played, they kept time to its music. On the alphabet being repeated, "Table is too large" was spelt out, and a flap was accordingly removed. It was then signified that the lights were to be put out. The room was then darkened and all present joined hands. After a few minutes there was a sound of something falling upon the table; and on re-lighting, it was found that a teaspoon had been thrown a distance of fourteen inches from a saucer, which had been left with a few tea-things on the middle of the table. During the *séance*, the tapping sounds from the table, and others from the floor, were very distinct; and there were also lateral movements of the table in various directions, but not without the ordinary contact of the hands.

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EXPERIMENT XXVIII.

*October 11th.* Seven members present. Conditions as before. The usual rappings were produced. The table was moved seven or eight times. A book, in the pocket of one of the members, having been audibly rapped upon while in his pocket, he was requested to lay it on the table. Having done so, there were several distinct tappings on the cover. The book was then suspended upon ivory paper-knives held by two of the members. In this position there were repeated and very distinct rappings upon the covers of the book. No other phenomena occurred requiring note.

Communication rapped out: "Next Monday I will ring the bell in the canvas."

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EXPERIMENT XXIX.

*October 18th.* Eight members present. Conditions as before. No

sounds or movements of the table occurred during the first hour of sitting. After tea, very loud and distinct knocking, rapping, and scraping sounds proceeded from all parts of the table, and from the floor. They beat time to music, and intelligent communications were made in the usual manner. The following were spelt out: 1. "Coming if we can." 2. "Mrs. —" (the medium) "is too sensitive for us at present."

A cylinder of canvas, three feet in height, and about two feet in diameter, was placed under a small table, the legs of which were contained within it; inside the cylinder was a bell, resting on the floor. No sounds proceeded from the bell, but there were repeated rappings upon and jerkings of the table. This cylinder precluded the possibility of contact with the table by a foot of any of the persons present, during the entire continuance of the knockings and jerkings of the table.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXX.

*Oct. 25th.* Five Members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Knocking, snapping, and rapping sounds from the back room, floor, and table; and one member stated that he felt repeated tappings on his knee. There was the usual accompaniment of these sounds to songs, and some intelligent communications were given in the usual manner. The bell was placed within the cylinder of canvas, under the table, as described in the last experiment, but it was not sounded. It was asked that "Cheer boys, cheer," might be rapped on the table. The measure of that air was instantly and loudly rapped upon it, the time being kept very exactly.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXI.

*Nov. 1st.* Five Members present. Conditions as usual. No phenomena whatever occurred, during a sitting of an hour and a half.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXII.

*Nov. 8th.* Six Members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Raps, and slight tiltings of one side of the table. Affirmative raps during a story related by one of the members.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXIII.

*Nov. 15th.* At the residence of another of the members. Seven members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Knocking and rapping sounds, and slight movements of the table. The sounds generally proceeded from the table and floor; but in one instance, one loud knock came from the door, on a remark being made in reference to a member

present. The following words were formed in the usual manner: "Nux Vomica, beware of." It was then asked to whom this applied, and the lady whose name was given, stated that she was taking homœopathic medicine, which probably contained that drug. It was then asked what treatment she required, and the reply rapped out was, "Heat." "Does she require anything else?" was asked. "Nothing" was spelt out. Raps were made upon the table, in perfect time to songs sung.

*1st Experiment.*—All sat away from the table, forming a circle round it and holding hands. The sounds, although less distinct, continued to come from it, keeping time with a song.

*2nd Experiment.*—The medium placed each hand in that of her neighbour on either side, whilst her feet rested on the hands of a third member. The sounds, however, continued to proceed from the table and floor as before.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXIV.

*Nov. 22nd.* At the same house as last week. Six members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds from table and floor. A song was sung, to which the raps kept time. The presence of one of the circle seemed to affect the phenomena, for the sounds, which before her entry were very distinct, became very feeble; and immediately on her quitting the circle, they again became clear and distinct. No cause could be traced for this effect, except that the lady in question was not in good health.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXV.

*Dec. 7th.* At the same house as in the last experiment. Five members present. Conditions as usual. The table was a large and heavy dining table, twelve feet long by five feet wide, and not on castors. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds of various characters from table and floor, and movements of the table.

Communication by raps: "*Have Tuesday for meeting.*" Some one present asked "Why?" "*It was the original day; you will have better manifestations; get all the old members, if possible.*"

It may be observed, that there had been some conversation at the beginning of the evening, on changing the day for meeting; but all present, who could have known, affirmed that they had forgotten that Tuesday had been the original day, until reminded of the fact by the communication. The rapping sounds kept time to songs.

*Movements of the table.*—At first these were slight, and in a lateral direction. They then increased in force, with a slight vertical movement at



one end, the tips of the fingers only being in contact with the table. All hands were then held within a few inches of the table, no one touching it, and all standing up; and it then gave three horizontal movements in different directions; each movement being from three to four inches, and occurring at intervals of about one minute.

A visitor, who stated that he was a stranger to these phenomena, sat under the table for a considerable time during the production of the sounds, and said that he distinctly felt vibration of the wood with which he placed his hand or head in contact when the taps were heard. After tea the gas was turned out, but the fire in the grate prevented total darkness. Nothing then took place for about a quarter of an hour. Then the table frequently and violently shifted its position, moving along the floor in different directions, the movements varying from one to three feet. During the greater part of these phenomena, the members stood up, with the tips of their fingers only in contact with the table.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXVI.

*Dec. 14th.* At the same house, with the same table as last week. Six members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena*: Raps of varied tone and intensity from different parts of the table. In one instance, where a question was put, three sounds followed, resembling blows on the table with the clenched hand. The raps at times proceeded from different parts of the room. Rapping sounds kept time to songs, and to music on the piano.

*Sounds from table without contact.*—All sat away from the table, without in any manner touching it, and the sounds, although somewhat fainter, continued to proceed from it. Some of the questions that were asked were followed by the usual affirmative or negative signals, and the following communication was also given, through the hand of a lady present: "*Wait a little, you may have something.*" Soon after there were horizontal movements of the table in different directions, all hands resting on it. Also two or three slight movements, from half an inch to an inch, without contact, every person kneeling on a chair, the back of which was placed about six inches from and turned towards the table, and all hands being held a few inches above it—three gas lights above, so that the slightest movement was visible. Peculiar vibratory movements of the table followed, keeping time to the measure of a song.

*Experiment*:—A glass tumbler, with two finger rings near it, and a pencil with a sheet of paper, which was carefully examined, and found perfectly free from any mark, were placed on the floor under the table, in view of the circle, who carefully watched the proceeding. Some time

after the paper was taken up, and found to have a mark resembling the letter I, distinctly pencilled on it. The glass and rings were found as they were placed.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXVI.

*Dec. 22nd.* Three members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Sounds, and slight movements of the table. Rapping sounds commenced a few minutes after sitting. Several questions were put and followed by the usual negative and affirmative signals, but no communication by the alphabet was given. At the question, "Do you know Mrs. Sims?" the table vibrated and trembled in a remarkable manner, and gave out a shower of rapping sounds. It also jerked or jumped considerably, when "Can you ring the bell?" was asked. The sounds varied a good deal in tone and character. Some were remarkably loud, and came from every quarter of the table. They beat time to the airs of the musical box, and accompanied the conversation at tea-time.

*Experiment:*—A bell was suspended in a closed hat-box, placed on the table; it was not, however, sounded. Also a sheet of paper, with pencil, was placed under the table, but this experiment likewise failed.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXVIII.

*Dec. 28th.* Eight members present. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds from the table and floor, and movements of the table, with and without contact. The alphabet was repeated, and the following letters were rapped: "A bad circle—want of harmony." At the letter "f" the table tilted three times, and at the letters "a, r," gave several forcible horizontal movements, tilting at either end.

Raps, with slight tiltings of the table, beating time to the measure of a song. Two or three poems were recited, to the measure of which there were loud raps from the table and floor, and the table also marked the metre by various horizontal movements and tiltings.

Hood's Anatomy Song being repeated by one of the members, the knocking, rapping and tilting sounds, with various horizontal, trembling and vibratory movements of the table accompanied it, in exact harmony with the measure, added to which were strange movements, in accordance with the character of the verses. In one instance the table shifted its position several feet, the tips of the fingers only, being in contact with it.

*Movements without contact.*—Question: "Would the table now be moved without contact?" Answer: "Yes, by three raps on the table."

All chairs were then turned with their backs to the table, and nine

inches away from it; and all present *knelt* on the chairs, with their wrists resting on the backs, and their hands a few inches, above the table.

Under these conditions, the table (the heavy dining-room table previously described) moved four times, each time from four to six inches, and the second time nearly twelve inches.

Then all hands were placed on the backs of the chairs, and nearly a foot from the table, when four movements occurred, one slow and continuous, for nearly a minute.

Then all present placed their hands behind their backs, kneeling erect on their chairs, which were removed a foot clear away from the table; the gas also was turned up higher, so as to give abundance of light, and under these test conditions, distinct movements occurred, to the extent of several inches each time, and visible to every one present.

The motions were in various directions, towards all parts of the room—some were abrupt, others steady. At the same time, and under the same conditions, distinct raps occurred, apparently both on the floor and on the table, in answer to requests for them.

The above described movements were so unmistakeable, that all present unhesitatingly declared their conviction, that no physical force, exerted by any one present, could possibly have produced them; and they declared further, in writing, that a rigid examination of the table, showed it to be an ordinary dining-table, with no machinery or apparatus of any kind connected with it. The table was laid on the floor with its legs up, and taken to pieces as far as practicable.

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#### EXPERIMENT XXXIX.

*January 4th.* Seven members present. Conditions as usual. Nothing occurred during the *séance*, except a few rapping sounds from the table. Various experiments were tried, all of which failed.

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#### EXPERIMENT XL.

*January 11th.* Six members present. Conditions as usual. *Phenomena:* Rapping sounds and slight movements of the table.

The medium left about twenty minutes before the termination of the sitting; but the raps continued to come from the table as before, and gave affirmative and negative signals to questions.

Some experiments were tried, including the movement of the table without contact, but they were not attended with success.

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*SUB-COMMITTEE No. 3.*

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## EXPERIMENT I.

*Feb. 26th.* This section of the Committee arranged to hold a series of meetings at the house of one of its members, and met for the first time this evening. Six members present. After some preliminary conversation, and the reading of extracts from books on the subject, those present sat in circle at a large loo table for more than an hour without any apparent results.

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## EXPERIMENT II.

*March 5th.* Six members present. The members present sat in circle, but without any visible movement of the table.

At 9.30, when the Rev. Mr. D—— arrived, and had sat about four or five minutes, there occurred some gentle tapping on, and swaying of the table. These were continued, with occasional cessation, for about 45 minutes; during which time some negatives and affirmatives were given in answer to a variety of questions. Frequently the replies were confused, and as if given with difficulty or reluctance.

P.S.—The table used on this occasion was an oblong oak hall-table, on four legs, without castors. Weight, between 50 and 60 lbs. Size of top, 3 ft. 10 in. by 2 ft.

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## EXPERIMENT III.

*March 12th.* Five Members present. All present sat down to the table about 7.45, and continued until about 9.15; but no unusual sound or movement could be recognised during the whole sitting, or any part of it. No medium was present.

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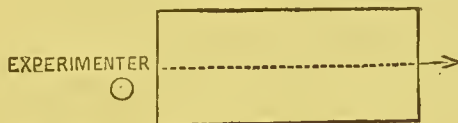
## EXPERIMENT IV.

*April 1st.* Four members present. No medium present. Nearly three quarters of an hour elapsed without any other than “slight manifestations;” but on two members leaving their seats at the table, it began to move—slowly, revolving on a centre; it tilted once or twice on two legs in the direction of its width, and then moved quickly in the direction of the carpet, which opposed its further progress for a time. It ultimately overcame this difficulty, and proceeded at a rapid rate across the room—moving first in one direction, and then, after a short interval, in the opposite. The motion was usually smooth and uniform, though on two or



three occasions, the noise made by the table on the board floor, seemed indicative of pressure. Several of those experimenting now left the table, and it then moved slowly, with three persons—two ladies and a gentleman—touching it apparently with the tips of their fingers. After a pause, it moved again in various directions, with four persons touching it. Its movements afterwards may be summarised as follows :—

Three tilts and knocks on floor, with two legs. Two others—another tilt—four persons resting the tips of their fingers on the table. Tilt movement, and tilt again. Rapid movement of table half across the room, back again in a circular direction. Reverse movement and two violent tilts. The hands as before, apparently resting lightly on the table. Circular motion to the right and then to the left, several times round. Semicircular movement and violent tilt. Backward movement across the room, driving the reporter, Mr. Gannon, out of his chair. Three persons only at the table. Slight movements again with two persons, and motion as indicated in the diagram was produced by one person.

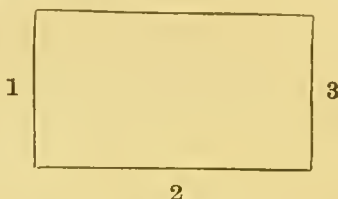


At the suggestion of several of the Committee, the lights were lowered, and a succession of tilts and knocks followed. Mr. B— now left the table, which immediately tilted five or six times, and on Mr. H—, who was not at the table, calling over the alphabet the following words were rapped out, “Not so many to sit.” Several other manifestations followed, but the room being but dimly lighted it was difficult to observe so accurately. The movements appeared to be a repetition of those already recorded. After the *séance* the table was examined, and it was found that one gentleman of medium strength could slide it along the floor and tilt it from the side only without difficulty. With several others resting their hands upon it one operator could move it—though not easily—and tilt it in one direction by the exertion of considerable force. The examination proved that a certain rubbing, rattling sound which was in the sliding movements, supposed to indicate pressure by the persons round the table, was really due to a large amount of the weight being raised, and the table partly relieved of its own gravity, whilst performing the movements. All hands were on the top surface of the table, and, of course, any force they may have exerted must have been downwards.

The table is of carved oak, of strong make. The top is 3 feet 9½ inches by 2 feet wide, and projects 1¼ inches over the frame-work in which the

legs are fixed. There are strong bracing cross-spars near the lower end of the legs which are without castors.

In reference to the darkened part of the *séance*, a member of the Subcommittee says: "During the time the lights were at the lowest I was seated close to the table, three persons having their hands resting on it, their positions being as follows :—



The fourth side being side being vacant. I noticed that the table invariably tilted towards 2; at times with so much force, that I was unable in the position in which I sat to prevent it rising, though I succeeded in modifying the vigour of the tilts. On one occasion the table tilted so much that it over-balanced itself, and would probably have fallen to the ground had it not been upheld by those round it."

Some of the tilts were given with great force and sharpness, as though when raised to the full height it desired, a powerful spring were released, snapping the two legs down on the floor, so that the noise could be heard all over and outside the house.

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#### EXPERIMENT V.

*April 8th.* Five Members present. At about 8.30 all present sat down to a large loo table which, in a few minutes, began to sway and tilt in a very lively manner, and it continued these movements from 12 to 15 minutes, when it began to take rotatory movements, which were rapidly accelerated, and the speed became so great, that the experimenters dropt off one after another from fatigue, and the impossibility of running fast enough and long enough to preserve his or her position. The table took long circular sweeps round the room and at the same time rotated on its base. The room is 22 feet wide and about 28 feet long. It has a smooth floor with Persian carpets here and there which were put away from the middle of the floor to prevent obstruction.

The table afterwards tilted twice, so that it stood with its rim on the floor. The pillar, with its heavy foot base, standing of course at right angles, and all quite clear of the floor.

Some of the company became alarmed at these violent proceedings, and for a moment left the table; but being for the most part persuaded

to keep or resume their places, the table let itself down again gently enough.

The operations lasted more than an hour, and consisted of such movements as described, with the occasional rapping out of some unimportant sentences, which were not invariably courteous or complimentary to all present.

Regret was felt that so few of the members of the Sub-committee were present this evening.

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#### EXPERIMENT VI.

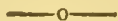
*May, 13th.* Five members present. A paid medium. The company sat about forty-five minutes with but slight indications of force. Then some sentences were spelled out by rapping, and writing through the medium's hand, and then the medium appeared to suffer a series of spasmodic jerkings, during which he spoke of himself in the third person, and answered to a variety of questions put by some of the Committee.

Nothing took place on this occasion to warrant any decided opinion as to the nature of these occurrences, other than, that no test or satisfactory evidence was given that any external foreign intelligence had been acting through the medium.

The sitting continued about two hours. At times the table swayed about a foot from one side to the other. It was the same low table.



## APPENDIX.



DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON is desirous, in order to complete the story of his early experiences in Spiritualism, to place on record here the sequel to the paper reprinted in the text (p. 247) from the *Spiritual Magazine*, of April, 1860. This paper also was anonymously published in the pages of that journal for May, 1860.

## DIRECT WRITING.

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR,—I willingly comply with your request to record in a letter the instances of direct writing, which I have witnessed (some of them in your presence) through the mediumship of Mr. Squire. I am simply a student of science, and I am neither a partisan of Spiritualism nor, I thank the Church of my baptism, are my theological tenets or inner Spiritual life in any way dependent on, or to be influenced by what the unseen agents, be they demons, as I believe, or spirits of the departed, as Mr. Squire holds, may choose to communicate. In the written Word of God, and in the living teaching of the Church of England, I have the only guides, which I either desire or should choose to accept in all that relates to the unseen mysteries of God. I neither expect nor desire any further Revelation or new light, and utterly hold in ridicule as the productions of a mystic the pretended Revelations of the spirit-world, by the late Emanuel Swedenborg. The old paths of the Church of England in which my fathers trod suffice for all my spiritual desires and requirements, and it is simply as a problem in physical science that I consent to examine or discuss the phenomena of Spiritualism.

In my former communication, *Facts, by Dr. ———*, in your last number, I gave an outline of the physical phenomena which, through the mediumship of Mr. Squire, were produced in my house. I stated my belief that these phenomena were not the result of fraud, nor the doings of a conjurer, but, were really produced by some unseen agency; and to this opinion, despite the doubting warning letters of kind friends who have read the communication, I still adhere. It is a question of scientific evidence, of which I am surely capable of judging, and as a candid witness I am constrained to state that, despite the suspicious fact of some of the principal manifestations occurring in the dark, I believe that it was utterly out of Mr. Squire's power to produce the phenomena I have recorded, by either fraud or artifice.

The following is the brief summary I gave in the paper in question of the direct writing I then witnessed:—

"3. *Writing by an unseen Agent.*—Mr. Squire held a pencil on a sheet of



paper with one hand under the table. It was rapidly and audibly written on and then pulled forcibly out of his hand and thrown across the room. On one sheet was written the surname of the writer, and on the other, '*O tarry thou*' (On the chimney-piece in the dining-room is an illuminated card with the verse from the Psalm, *O tarry thou, the Lord's leisure, &c.*).

"Farther, the writer placed below the dining table, on two occasions, a piece of blank paper and a cedar pencil. The fire, partly wood, was burning brightly. The four persons present formed a circle with their hands on the table. Writing was distinctly heard on the paper. On examining the paper, the word '*God*' was three times written in a cramped hand, and on the other occasion the writer's surname."

I shall now give these facts more in detail, together with one or two others, which I have since witnessed:—

1. On the evening of the 25th February, a piece of paper laid on a stiff MS. book, and a pencil, with the point turned towards his hand, were held under my dining-table by Mr. Squire in one hand, the other forming a circle with ours round the table. The fire was burning brightly; the gas turned on low. The pencil was distinctly heard to move, and on the paper was written my surname. The experiment was repeated thrice. On the second occasion the words "*O tarry thou*" were written. On each occasion the book was forcibly drawn out of Mr. Squire's hand, and was thrown across the room. The words "*O tarry thou*" are portion of a text on an illuminated card on the chimney-piece.

2. On the evening of the 26th February, we had, as I have recorded, stronger physical manifestations. We also placed a sheet of paper on the floor, under the centre of the dining-table, laying a pencil on it. The hands of all present were formed in a circle on the table. The pencil was distinctly heard to move, and after a time the paper was thrown across the room. On the paper was written, in a cramped, awkward hand, the word "*God*" three times. On a repetition of this experiment my surname was written. It is a wide, scrawling writing, filling the whole sheet of paper.

3. On the 16th of April I received through your hands the following message, written in your presence by Mr. Squire, under that influence known as medium writing. "*Will you be kind enough to ask the gentleman of whom you speak to look in a little case on his library shelf, and he will find a paper written backwards with the words, 'God bless you, Dr. —.'*" I looked in the case accordingly, and there found written on an envelope, in ink, in the same cramped hand, the message in question.

As a piece of scientific or exhaustive evidence, this message is of no value whatever, as, while I would not for a moment suspect Mr. Squire or yourself of so foolish and impertinent a trick, it is, nevertheless, open to any objector to assert that you or he placed this writing in the case when you did me the honour of a visit on the 25th and 26th of February.

4. On the evening of the 16th of April, in the chamber of a friend of mine in the Temple, we had an illustration of direct writing under similar circumstances to that I have above recorded, *i.e.*:—On a sheet of paper laid under the table with a pencil on it, a writing was heard and afterwards found on the paper. It was again a surname, that of the owner of the rooms, and the word "*God*." The

paper was afterwards placed in a very curious way under the sofa cushion, the leg of the sofa being placed on the cushion. At the end of the evening, just as we were leaving, my friend suggested that Mr. Squire might have some steel spring in his sleeve by which the writing could be performed. Mr. Squire kindly bared his arm, and then kneeling on the floor so that he could have no support for the paper, held it with his bared arm under the table. The words, "*Good night*" were immediately written. The gas was then burning, and my friend was observing Mr. Squire, but could detect no movement of his body or arm to account in any way for the writing being produced by his agency.

5. On the evening of the 4th of April, at a *séance* in Russell Square, the phenomenon of direct writing was again repeated on a piece of paper placed with a pencil under the table. Several friends having, with reference to my former experiences, suggested that the writing might be produced by Mr. Squire with the agency of his feet, I procured his consent, at the commencement of this experiment, to fasten them to the chair. Immediately his hand began to write in the usual manner of medium writing, and he wrote "Untie the medium's feet: If this evidence will not satisfy you we cannot help you," or words to this effect. I did not preserve the paper. On this being done, the writing began, and the words, "*Lionel David*," were written in the same cramped hand as on former occasions. By rapping and the alphabet, it afterwards was stated that this name and spirit (?) was the brother of one of the company present who was killed at Inkermann.

These are the five instances in which I have witnessed direct writing by an unseen agent. I do not class the phenomena among the most convincing of those which I have seen. The *possibility* of the writing being done by a trick by means of the feet of the medium, although, personally, I do not for a moment suppose that that is the case, materially weakens the value of this direct writing as narrative evidence. So also does the trashy commonplace nature of the communication when made, which is only equalled by the final suggestion in the editorial note appended to my former communication, that the cause of this wild rubbish being communicated to me was the condescension of some high angel to the requirements of my mind. I wish, Mr. Editor, you would manage to convey to the spirits that I feel equal to a little stronger food!

Before bringing this letter to a conclusion, I would desire to record the other striking physical phenomena which, on the evening of the 4th of April, I witnessed at the *séance* in Russell Square. Mr. Squire twice lifted a large, heavy, square table on to the bed, he sitting on a chair, his feet tied, and one hand held by one of the company. He also twice, in a manner similar to what occurred in my own house, lifted the same table on to his head, and that of a person standing beside him, both holding the table at one point only. The raps, also, were loud and frequent, the table-cloth was twisted round my head; and, again, while I and one of the company held Mr. Squire's hand in a circle, one of the chairs was without effort or noise placed upon the table.

There is a strange sameness in all these phenomena, and, what is so vexing, they appear to tend to nothing. Neither Mr. Squire nor I are a bit wiser than we were. I believed in the spirit-world—the communion of saints—long before I ever heard of *Spiritualism*, and this science or art has added actually nothing to my knowledge on the subject.

Still, the undoubted physical phenomena which I have recorded in my former paper already referred to, are wonderful facts, and should as such command a diligent investigation. My narrative, I am glad to know, has attracted the notice of one or two eminent in science.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble Servant,

M. R. C. P.

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## HOW TO INVESTIGATE SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

By J. BURNS.

It is a common but very significant saying that to cook a hare you must first catch it; and the suggestion thus conveyed indicates the prime necessity in attempting a study of Spiritualism. Reading is all very well, for the experience of others is a valuable aid to progress, but it can never stand in place of experimental knowledge. Hence the cry, when a man is assailed by some irrepressible Spiritualist, How or where can I see anything of it? The public have a vague impression that some one called a medium is necessary to elicit the phenomena, and that his assistance can only be obtained by those who have the money to pay for it. This notion is only partly true. There are but very few professional mediums in England, and these are able to obtain some of the more remarkable and special phases of the phenomena. Once they were sceptics, and quite unconscious of the wonderful power which is daily being exercised in their presence. Circumstances introduced them to a circle, or enabled the manifestations to occur spontaneously. Their friends begged of them to sit for investigation: gradually the circle of inquirers widened till the mediums' time became so much occupied that no other avocation could be followed, and a charge had to be made to provide means of subsistence and to afford protection from the importunities of sitters. In this way all public mediums have been produced. The function of mediumship is not an art which can be acquired by tuition or dexterity, but it is a natural endowment dependent upon bodily temperament, and it may be developed by exercise and propitious circumstances. Mediumship thus being a natural faculty, it ought to be of frequent occurrence; and so it is. It is probable that there is a latent medium of one sort or other for every family in the country. Not that there is a medium in every home, for several families may be found in which there are no mediums, while the members of another family may be all of them mediums. Like literary talent, mechanical skill, and other qualities of mind, mediumship is not by any means found equally represented in each individual.

Such being the case, and mediumship being a principle inherent in man, the question of Spiritualism is capable of universal solution. Do



not, then, take any man's word as a finality, whether he declares in favour of Spiritualism or against it. Do as the sub-committees of the London Dialectical Society did (see their separate reports), sit down, observe the conditions, and produce results for yourselves. Spiritualism is simply a branch of science, treating of an unexplored region of human nature. It discusses not only man's relations to the spirit-world, but demonstrates what man is, what his powers are, and whither he is bound. If man is immortal, he must be so in accordance with natural law; and if immortality be a fact, it must be capable of discovery. There is therefore no superstition or credulity in Spiritualism, but each investigator speaks as he finds, and reasons according to the facts presented to his intellect. To remain in ignorance of any department of man's being is to leave the field to the occupation of that grim giant, Superstition, whose two heads, Negation and Credulity, by their withering scowl, reduce to tyranny, slavery, misdirection, and misery, the ignorant denizens of an otherwise fair world. That all may by experiment satisfy themselves of the existence and nature of spiritual phenomena, there is herewith placed freely at their disposal—

#### *RULES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.*

**ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.**—The phenomena cannot be successfully elicited in very warm, sultry weather, in extreme cold, when thunder and lightning and magnetic disturbances prevail, when the atmosphere is very moist, or when there is much rain, or storms of wind. A warm, dry atmosphere is best, as it presents the mean between all extremes, and agrees with the harmonious state of man's organism which is proper for the manifestation of spiritual phenomena. A subdued light or darkness increases the power and facilitates control.

**LOCAL CONDITIONS.**—The room in which a circle is held for development or investigation should be set apart for that purpose. It should be comfortably warmed and ventilated, but draughts or currents of air should be avoided. Those persons composing the circle should meet in the room about an hour before the experiments commence; the same sitters should attend each time, and occupy the same places. This maintains the peculiar magnetic conditions necessary for the production of the phenomena. A developing circle exhausts power, or uses it up.

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS.**—The phenomena are produced by a vital force emanating from the sitters, which the spirits use as a connecting link between themselves and objects. Certain temperaments give off this power; others emit an opposite influence. If the circle is composed of persons with suitable temperaments, manifestations will take place readily; if the contrary be the case, much perseverance will be necessary to produce results. If both kinds of temperaments are present, they require to be arranged so as to produce harmony in the psychical atmo-



sphere evolved from them. The physical manifestations especially depend upon temperament. If a circle does not succeed, changes should be made in the sitters till the proper conditions are supplied.

**MENTAL CONDITIONS.**—All forms of mental excitement are detrimental to success. Those with strong and opposite opinions should not sit together: opinionated, dogmatic, and positive people are better out of the circle and room. Parties between whom there are feelings of envy, hate, contempt, or other inharmonious sentiment should not sit at the same circle. The vicious and crude should be excluded from all such experiments. The minds of the sitters should be in a passive rather than an active state, possessed by the love of truth and of mankind. One harmonious and fully-developed individual is invaluable in the formation of a circle.

**THE CIRCLE** should consist of from three to ten persons of both sexes, and sit round an oval, oblong, or square table. Cane-bottomed chairs or those with wooden seats are preferable to stuffed chairs. Mediums and sensitives should never sit on stuffed chairs, cushions, or sofas used by other persons, as the influences which accumulate in the cushions often affect the mediums unpleasantly. The active and quiet, the fair and dark, the ruddy and pale, male and female, should be seated alternately. If there is a medium present, he or she should occupy the end of the table with the back to the north. A mellow mediumistic person should be placed on each side of the medium, and those most positive should be at the opposite corners. No person should be placed behind the medium. A circle may represent a horseshoe magnet, with the medium placed between the poles. Sometimes a single individual possesses all the conditions necessary for spirit-communion in his or her own person. When this is the case the phenomena may be obtained by such a person sitting alone.

**CONDUCT AT THE CIRCLE.**—The sitters should place their hands on the table, and endeavour to make each other feel easy and comfortable. Agreeable conversation, singing, reading, or invocation may be engaged in—anything that will tend to harmonise the minds of those present, and unite them in one purpose, is in order. By engaging in such exercises the circle may be made very profitable apart from the manifestations. Sitters should not desire anything in particular, but unite in being pleased to receive that which is best for all. The director of the circle should sit opposite the medium, and put all questions to the spirit, and keep order. A recorder should take notes of the conditions and proceedings. Manifestations may take place in a few minutes, or the circle may sit many times before any result occurs. Under these circumstances it is well to change the positions of the sitters, or introduce new elements, till success is achieved. When the table begins to tilt, or when raps occur, do not be too impatient to get answers to questions. When the table can answer

questions by giving three tips or raps for "Yes," and one for "No," it may assist in placing the sitters properly. The spirits or intelligences which produce the phenomena should be treated with the same courtesy and consideration as you would desire for yourselves if you were introduced into the company of strangers for their personal benefit. At the same time, the sitters should not on any account allow their judgment to be warped or their good sense imposed upon by spirits, whatever their professions may be. Reason with them kindly, firmly, and considerately.

INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRITS is carried on by various means. The simplest is three tips of the table or raps for "Yes," and one for "No." By this means the spirits can answer in the affirmative or negative. By calling over the alphabet the spirits will rap at the proper letters to constitute a message. Sometimes the hand of a sitter is shaken, then a pencil should be placed in the hand, when the spirits may write by it automatically. Other sitters may become entranced, and the spirits use the vocal organs of such mediums to speak. The spirits sometimes impress mediums with messages, while others are clairvoyant, and see the spirits, and messages from them written in luminous letters in the atmosphere. Sometimes the table and other objects are lifted, moved from place to place, and even through closed doors. Patiently and kindly seek for tests of identity from loved ones in the spirit-world, and exercise caution respecting spirits who make extravagant pretensions of any kind.

BEFORE proceeding with their investigations, inquirers into Spiritualism should correspond with Mr. BURNS, Managing Representative of the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C., who will gladly forward a packet of publications and useful information gratis. Stamps should in all cases be enclosed for return postage. Deputations of mediums or lecturers may be arranged for to visit any locality where public meetings or seances can be instituted.

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## SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION.

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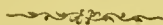


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