

# MISS WOOD IN DERBYSHIRE.

A Series of Experimental Seances

DEMONSTRATING THE FACT THAT

SPIRITS CAN APPEAR IN THE PHYSICAL FORM.

REPORTED BY W. P. ADSHEAD, BELPER.

ALSO

AN ACCOUNT OF MISS WOOD'S DEVELOPMENT  
AS A MEDIUM.

BY MRS. MOULD, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

*And Instances of Early and Recent Phenomena through her  
Mediumship.*

---

ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAIT, PLANS, AND ETCHINGS.

---

LONDON :

J. BURNS, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C.

1879.

---

PRINTED BY J. BURNS,  
15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, HOLBORN, W.C.

---

# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<b>INTRODUCTION :</b>	
The Proper Use of Mediums ... ..	v
The Responsibility rests on the Circle... ..	vi
The First Money that Miss Wood Received for any Seance	vii
Successful Experimental Seance ... ..	viii
A Deceased Wife Materialises, and is Recognised by her Husband ... ..	ix
Mr. J. Tyerman on Miss Wood's Mediumship ... ..	x
It is Attested Genuine by a Variety of Means ... ..	xi
Miss Wood—Personal Facts by T. P. Barkas, F.G.S. ...	xii
 <b>MISS WOOD IN DERBYSHIRE, BY W. P. ADSHEAD :</b>	
The Great Value of Test Conditions ... ..	1
The Engagement with Miss Wood ... ..	2
Cage in which Medium was placed (with Illustration) ...	3
Our First Seance—Anticipatory ... ..	4
Our Second Seance—The Spirit-Form Appears ... ..	5
Our Third Seance—The Cage Test Tried ... ..	6
A Deceased Wife Recognised ... ..	7
Our Fourth Seance—The Cage Test Succeeds ... ..	8
Our Fifth Seance—The Cage Door Unscrewed ... ..	9
"The Forms of the Departed enter at the Open Door" ...	10
Our Sixth Seance—Miss Wood Screwed up in the Cage ...	1 <sup>1</sup>
Our Seventh Seance—A Spiritual Sanctuary ... ..	12
"Thanking God for the Experience of the Week" ... ..	13
Dr. Carpenter—"Self-Deception or Intentional Deception"	14
"Another Grand Exposure"—Jo Cose ... ..	15
Powerful Tea-Table Manifestations ... ..	16
The Medium re-dresses in Dark Clothing ... ..	17
Second Seance at Mrs. Ford's ... ..	18

MISS WOOD IN DERBYSHIRE, BY W. P. ADSHEAD (*continued*):

The Medium Fastened by the Neck with a Collar	...	...	19
Miss Wood's Second Visit to Belper	...	...	20
Influence of a Drunken Man on the Medium	...	...	21
Spiritual Purification and Advice	...	...	22
The Medium screwed up in the Cage, yet Spirits appear	...	...	23
Five Hundred Guinea Challenge to Conjurers	...	...	24
Photographic Experiments	...	...	25
Spirits Scratch the Film of Photograph (with Illustration)	...	...	26
Sceptical Theories at Fault	...	...	27
Rev. H. R. Haweis on Spiritualism	...	...	28
Materialisation with the Medium in the Circle	...	...	29
Vigorous Appetite of the Medium when under Control	...	...	30
The Spirit-Form grows up to Full Stature before their eyes, and melts away	...	...	31
The Spirit cuts off a portion of his Whisker	...	...	32
The Spirit's Warm Breath and Perfect Teeth	...	...	33
Paraffin Moulds of Spirit's Feet	...	...	34
The Process Described (with Illustration)	...	...	35
Plan of the Seance-Room (with Illustration)	...	...	36
Two Materialised Spirits Use the Paraffin	...	...	37
The Spirit Shaking Hands and Speaking to the Sitters	...	...	38
"Of Miss Wood as a Medium, I cannot speak too highly"	...	...	39

## FACTS FROM THE HISTORY OF MISS WOOD'S DEVELOPMENT AS A

MEDIUM, BY MRS. MOULD, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE	...	...	40
First Attempts at Materialisation, 1873	...	...	41
Objects Carried by the Spirits	...	...	42
Photographing the Materialised Spirit-Form	...	...	43
Test-Conditions Introduced and Why?	...	...	44
Materialised Spirit's Finger and Thumb Bitten off	...	...	45
The Solidity of the Spirit-Form Tested	...	...	46
The Cause of Evil Controls	...	...	47
Miss Wood's Character Reviewed	...	...	48

## ANOTHER REMARKABLE SEANCE WITH MISS WOOD:

Description and Plan of Seance-Room	...	...	49
Two Forms and the Medium visible at same time	...	...	50
RULES FOR THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE	...	...	51



## INTRODUCTION.

---

So little is as yet known of the proper use of mediums, that it is not to be wondered at if they occasionally suffer from the circumstances in which they are placed. The "exposure" of mediums is one of the most prominent forms of thought in the public mind as regards Spiritualism. Those who know most of the subject are influenced in the least degree by this kind of rumour. The greater number of said "exposures" have been no exposures at all; they have either been the result of wilful conspiracy and direct lying, to injure the character of the medium, and thereby interrupt the progress of Spiritualism, or said exposures have proceeded from ambiguous phenomena, the nature of which the sitters were not in a position to decide upon. This contumely which has been heaped upon mediums, has proceeded principally from the false method which has been employed, of placing the sole responsibility of results upon the medium, whereas this burden should be borne by the sitters—those who constitute the circle.

Let us for a moment inquire what a medium is, and under what circumstances a medium performs the work. A physical medium is entirely passive, and, in truth, performs no work at all. He or she places him or herself into the hands of the circle or investigators, sits in whatever position he or she is assigned, undergoes any tests or fastenings which may be adjudged necessary to render it certain that the phenomena observed are not due to the tricks of said medium; and thus actually the responsibility is taken off the medium's shoulders as far as possible, and placed on to those of the investigators. If this is not so, what, in the name of common sense, is the use of all these protections? If the responsibility were understood to remain on the medium, all these fastenings and tests would be dispensed with.

The medium is evidently regarded by such investigators as an unworthy person who is not to be trusted, or, that the influences operating upon the medium while unconscious are of a kind which cannot be thoroughly relied upon. On this very low basis a great many investigations by non-Spiritualists and investigators are conducted, and to this class of minds and circumstances have mediums sometimes to subject themselves. Alas poor medium!

The medium, having been thus placed by the circle, generally

passes into the unconscious trance, and loses his or her individuality, as when in deep sleep, till the conclusion of the seance, and in this state the medium is supposed to be subject to the control of his or her own particular guides. But when the circle is constituted of unfriendly individuals, enemies indeed, whose sole object it is to discover the medium tripping, and discredit Spiritualism as far as possible, the sphere of the circle becomes so adverse, that the guides of the medium are not able to control, and the field is left open to the spiritual influences associated with the opposition. Under such circumstances, no wonder that anomalous manifestations should occur. The medium may be made to personate physicalised spirit-forms, by adopting some disguise derived from some portion of his or her garments. It is well known that spirits can carry objects great distances, and introduce them into closed rooms, and, possibly, opposition spirits may introduce articles into the circle, whereby to incriminate the mediums. By this process of antagonism to mediumship, exercised by spirits with adverse motives, mediums have been placed in positions, and thereby exposed to reproach, who would never have sought such a means of imposing upon the public, because the attempt would have without fail exposed them to detection.

To show that these phenomena representing spirits in the physical form may be obtained without doubt, and free from any suspicion of trick from adverse controls or on the part of the medium, this little work is published. It records a great variety of experiments, and extends over a considerable period of time.

To prove that Miss Wood's mediumship is a perennial and genuine fact, the following case, only recently reported, is taken from the beginning of her career many years ago, and when a knowledge of her powers was only known to her immediate friends and the members of the Newcastle Society for the Investigation of Spiritualism.

"THE FIRST MONEY THAT MISS WOOD RECEIVED FOR ANY  
SEANCE.

"This was what we called a 'dark seance'; nearly all our seances at this time were held in the dark, when the tying and untying of the medium, the ring test, and other physical phenomena took place. On the present occasion, one of our members, thinking himself more expert in tying knots than his fellow-members, would venture a sixpence that he would tie her so securely that the spirits could not unloose her, nor could she possibly unloose herself. Permission was given. To work he went with as much cord and time as he chose to take, and he took some time to secure the medium and save his sixpence. First he tied the right hand at the wrist to the side of the chair, and then he tied the left; next he tied the elbows, then her feet to the chair rail, afterwards passing the cord around her waist, through the back of



the chair, under and over her shoulders, crossing it over her back, and securing the ends behind the chair. He then expressed himself satisfied with this tying, and would give the medium sixpence if she or the spirits could undo the tying. I ought to state that flour was put into her hands as a further test. The table (not a small one) stood in the middle of the room, the gas chandelier was suspended above the middle of the table; there was quite sufficient room for two or three chairs between the table and the walls on all sides. All being ready, one of the members was requested to stand with matches in hand, ready to put out the gas and relight at command, while all the rest of the company took their seats. The medium (under control) now gave the word, 'Put out the light,' and in the same breath, 'Light up,' which was done instantly, when the medium and chair were found to have been lifted on to the table.

"After examining the tying, and seeing that all was right, the light was again put out and instantly relighted, when the medium and chair were found to be on the floor. This was repeated three or four times. The medium and chair were now on the table, the cords, &c., closely examined, and as Mr. P—— was not willing to lose his sixpence without having his sixpennyworth, he, in particular, examined the fastenings and other precautions against trickery very minutely, and expressed his entire satisfaction. It ought to be stated that the medium was entranced all the time, and spoke under control. Two iron rings, five inches in diameter, made of quarter-inch iron, were next laid on the table, and the light ordered to be put out and immediately relighted. This was done, and one of the iron rings was found to be on the right arm of the medium between the tyings on her wrist and elbow. Another close examination of the fastenings was now made, with the result of finding them to be thoroughly secure, and, amidst exclamations of astonishment, one person was asking another such questions as 'How did the ring get on to the arm? Matter through matter! Did it pass through the arm, or the arm through it?' Who can tell?

"Order having been restored, and all seated, except Mr.——, who stood, match in hand, ready to obey the order, which was given; 'Light out,'—'Quick, relight,' but before the light was well out, the ring was thrown against the opposite wall and fell on the floor with a ringing noise. The light was once more ordered to be extinguished, and in less than one minute the cords were thrown in the face of Mr.——, who at once confessed he was beaten, and handed over to Miss Wood the first sixpence she received for the exercise of her mediumship. No more severe test could possibly be applied, in a dark seance, than that to which Miss Wood was subjected on that occasion, to the complete satisfaction of all present.

"WILLIAM ARMSTRONG.

"*Cross Houses, Upper Claremont, Newcastle-on-Tyne.*"

At the present time Miss Wood is sitting for materialisations in the light, before the members and friends of the same society. The following is a report of one of her usual seances, published in the *Medium and Daybreak*, Oct. 25, 1878 :

“SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENTAL SEANCE.

“This morning, Oct. 20, I had the pleasure of witnessing some very convincing form manifestations through the medial power of Miss C. E. Wood, at the Newcastle society's rooms. I will spare unnecessary detail, and shortly say that the cabinet, which consisted of a curtain suspended across the corner of the room, was inspected by myself and others, both previous to and after the seance. The medium sat outside of the cabinet in full view of all the sitters, numbering nineteen, the whole of the time, and was never once out of their sight. Three forms successively appeared, the first purporting to be a woman, who, after several efforts, walked out of the cabinet and passed around the medium, and re-entered the cabinet on the other side of her. At the solicitation of the sitters she repeated this. The next form purported to be a child, who came out of the cabinet, and succeeded in getting about two feet clear of the medium, but could not get around her. The last form was a large one, and purported to be that of a man, but did not succeed in getting far out.

“The only improvement I could have wished was for the light to have been stronger ; but as it was I could see all the sitters and the medium distinctly. ‘Pocka’ controlled and spoke through the medium whilst the last two forms were out. Now the value of this to me, Sir, is that I never lost sight of the medium from first to last, and I am certain none of the sitters left their seats and went into the cabinet.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

“*Newcastle-on-Tyne.*

“H. A. KERSEY.

“We, the undersigned, testify to the correctness of the above report—

“John Hare, Chester Cresc.	“Jane Hammarbom, Northumber-
“Martha Hare,           ”	land Street.
“Nellie Hare,           ”	“Jno. Mould, 12, St. Thomas Cres.
“H. Norris, 59, Newgate St.	“Jas. Cameron, Gallowgate Steam
“E. Sanderson,       ”	Mills.
	“W. C. Robson, 8, Brandling Pl.”

A diagram of the society's seance-room is given at page 49 of this volume.

Miss Wood is equally successful in obtaining manifestations when she visits honest investigators in their own rooms. The following instance is quoted from the *Medium and Daybreak*, Feb. 28, 1879 :—



“A DECEASED WIFE MATERIALISES AND IS RECOGNISED  
BY HER HUSBAND.

“To the Editor.—Sir,—I think it my duty to inform the readers of your paper of a grand materialisation seance, held at the house of Mr. Ridley, Portobello. There were twenty-four persons present, including the medium, Miss Wood, who had sat the same morning at Newcastle; after the seance there, she had to walk to Portobello, as no trains run on the Team Valley line on Sundays. The weather being very unfavourable, it showed great willingness on the part of Miss Wood to walk a distance of seven miles. After the medium had received a little refreshment, we all took our seats in the room fitted up for the seance.

“The medium gave notice that she was quite willing to sit under any reasonable tests that any sitter had a desire to propose, but as many of us had sat with her before, we were quite convinced of the genuineness of her mediumship, therefore, she retired into the cabinet. After singing a hymn, ‘Pocka’ controlled, and held a lively conversation with us; then ‘Pocka’ gave us some singing through her medium.

“We then commenced singing; but had scarcely finished, when the spirit-form of one of our friends appeared—a lady who had passed away some weeks ago, whose name is ‘Mrs. B——.’ Her husband who was present, recognised her, and held communication with her. After the spirit had shaken hands with some of the sitters, she retired to the cabinet. Then from the cabinet came the spirit-form of ‘Pocka,’ who talked to us in the direct voice, then patted and kissed Mr. Livingston on the cheek; her little, dark face felt quite warm. After letting us all see her, she retired to the cabinet. Then came the spirit-form of one of Mr. Livingston’s guides, who gave his name as ‘Sepherafer.’ This spirit promised through his medium the night before, that he would materialise himself through Miss Wood, and this had not been made known to her. He is an ancient Egyptian, and is very tall in stature; his height would be about five feet ten inches, which formed a great contrast to the form of ‘Pocka.’ He then retired to the cabinet and we commenced singing. After that re-appeared the form of ‘Pocka,’ who requested us to give her the baby of a lady who was present, which we gave to ‘Pocka,’ who carried it to the medium in the cabinet, after which she controlled her medium, and told us the power was exhausted. Mr. Livingston’s guide then offered up an invocation and we separated, much pleased with what we had seen and heard.—Yours truly,

“LANCELOT RIDLEY, Chairman.

“WILLIAM GARDNER, Secretary.

“JOHN LIVINGSTON, Treasurer.

*“Portobello, near Chester-le-Street.”*

Miss Wood was not in view, nor fastened on the above occasion; but the great difference in the size of the physicalised spirits, and the fact that one was recognised and that another appeared in accordance with a previous promise, is direct evidence of identity, even superior to seeing the medium at the same time with the spirit. "Pocka," Miss Wood's spirit-friend, is of small stature—a mere child—and black in the face, being a negro or Indian. These three very different spirits appearing within a few minutes of one another is corroborative of the results recorded by Mr. Kersey above.

On Sunday morning, March 16, 1879, Mr. John Tyerman, of Australia, was present at the usual weekly sitting given by Miss Wood, and he thus reports in the *Medium* for April 4, 1879:—

"The morning I was there Miss Wood sat outside of the curtains, which formed a sort of cabinet, and was visible to all present; and besides being in sight, she kept speaking, under control, every minute or two, and especially when any form appeared or other manifestation was taking place, so that there could be no doubt as to her position. A materialised form appeared several times, and once moved slowly from one side of the curtain, around the medium, and in at the opposite side. I never before saw a form and the medium at the same time so distinctly. And while the form and the medium were both visible outside the curtain, a bell was rung, chairs were moved about, and other things were done inside the curtains, which all present heard. I then held a walking-stick inside the curtains, and it was taken out of my hand. A white pocket-handkerchief was laid on a chair just outside the curtains, and it was taken up on one end of the stick. It was next tied to the stick, and was then thrust out at the openings of the curtains, and waved repeatedly as a flag. The form finally came outside the curtains—the medium being outside all the time, bear in mind—and handed me the extemporised flag, which I took from it. After a few other things were done, the seance terminated. When the sitting was over, the curtains were thrown back, and the keenest sceptic would have found nothing but plain solid walls and floor—nothing to facilitate trickery by confederates. Besides, Mr. Mould, Mr. Kersey, Mr. Burnside, and other gentlemen who were present, had the whole conditions of their own arranging, and as they have no personal ends to serve, but are simply trying to get at genuine facts, the idea of imposture is, in view of all the facts of the case, utterly impossible."

No more need be added. The facts, recorded under strict mechanical tests by Mr. Adshead, are amply sustained by similar phenomena obtained under other tests of various kinds, both before and since the occurrence of the Derbyshire experiences.



## MISS WOOD'S MEDIUMSHIP.

BY T. P. BARKAS, F.G.S.

In an article which appeared in the *Medium and Daybreak*, May 4th, 1877, Mr. Barkas said Spiritualism had been investigated in Newcastle-on-Tyne for twenty-five years. Prior to 1872 the manifestations had taken place in private houses and before select circles. In that year a society was formed under the presidency of a very old worker in the Cause, Mr. W. Armstrong, for the investigation of the phenomena, and in a few months several members of the society became developed as mediums. In the year 1873 it was discovered that two young ladies had very great mediumistic power. The one, Miss Wood, was at that time eighteen years of age, and the other, Miss Fairlamb, was about a year younger. For some trifling remuneration as a compensation for much time spent in the interests of the society, the young women devoted themselves to the work, and soon there were not only trance controls, but extraordinary movements of tables, chairs, bells, and other articles of furniture and musical instruments took place in the dark, under test conditions. In 1874 spectral forms of human faces and hands presented themselves at the openings of the cabinet in which the mediums were enclosed. Then fully developed forms; and, to make certain of the genuineness of these phenomena, private seances were organised in the houses of well-known gentlemen. "Rigid but friendly tests of many kinds were tried," says Mr. Barkas, "and the result was that materialisations took place, which nothing but a stubborn prejudice, perfectly inaccessible to the logic of facts, could resist or gainsay.

"I have seen through the mediumship of Miss Wood, in a private house, living forms walk from the curtained recess, which it was utterly impossible for her to simulate. I have seen children, women, and men of various ages, walk forth under her mediumship. I have seen a materialised form and the medium at the same time. I have had through her mediumship a childlike form standing beside me for about half an hour together; the child has placed its arms around my neck, and permitted me at the same time to place my arm around her neck, and has laid its cheek against mine, breathed upon my face, and, in fact, caressed me precisely as a child would do its parent or guardian. This was not in darkness, but in light, and in the presence of professors and fellows of one of the leading universities in the kingdom. I have, under these conditions, and after having handled the psychic form, seen it gradually vanish or dematerialise, and become invisible in the middle of the room.

"Miss Wood was born in October, 1854; she is the second daughter of Thomas Wood, of this town, and lost her elder sister, Maggie, when she was young. She remained with her parents

until she was fourteen years of age, and at that time went to a situation, which she occupied until November, 1873, when she was engaged as a medium by the Newcastle Society. Her father, who is a working mechanic, and an investigator into Spiritualism, took her to a meeting of the society, in 1872, which speedily led to her development as a medium. She remained as one of the society's mediums until about eight or ten months ago, when she withdrew from the society, and is now acting as an independent medium for these occult manifestations. Miss Wood's early mediumistic experiences were of a very demonstrative kind, principally physical, and in the early stage of her mediumship she required careful and judicious supervision. Her chief controls are referred to in the letters of Mr. Adshead, but she is subject to strange controls, which there is some difficulty in banishing.

"It is of the utmost importance that her mediumship should not be injured, and for this purpose she should not sit with very miscellaneous audiences, and should be screened from all influences of an objectionable kind, as she, like many sensitives, is subject to controls that are attracted by improper surroundings."

With Mr. Barkas's experienced counsel supporting those views enunciated in the opening page, this Introduction closes. Miss Wood is at present again retained as a medium in the service of Newcastle Society.



## MISS WOOD IN DERBYSHIRE.



[*From the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, March 9, 1877.*]

About three years ago my friend Mr. Baldwin, of Birmingham, informed me that at a recent seance in London he had grasped a materialised spirit-hand, and that on the same occasion a spirit-form had glided gently to the spot where he sat and had saluted him.

At this statement I greatly marvelled. I could not for a moment think of doubting my friend's honesty, and I hesitated to call in question his capacity for accurate observation; nevertheless I felt that I could not then believe in his singular experience as a fact.

I had just seen and read enough of Spiritualism to convince me there was something in it; but between my novice standpoint and the phenomenon of which my friend had spoken, there seemed to me to lie a whole realm of marvels which would not be easily traversed. However, I then determined that, cost what it might in time or money, I would not rest until I had proved, at least to my own satisfaction, whether or not the wonderful story to which I had listened was indeed a reality: that satisfaction to be grounded upon evidence which could not by any possibility be successfully disputed or overthrown.

And although I can now boast of a rather full experience in connection with phenomenal Spiritualism, strange as it may appear, I have to confess that until the last month I have not witnessed the marvellous phase of materialisation under conditions which in that respect left nothing to be desired, and which would justify me in saying, I know that the medium could not, either personally or by the aid of an accomplice, do what has been done.

On one occasion I travelled 240 miles in order to attend a seance which was to be held under exceptionally good conditions. I had not the slightest reason to doubt the integrity of the medium, who on that occasion was bound to a large and heavy article of furniture in an ante-room which formed the cabinet, and which was divided by a set of dark curtains from the room in which the circle sat. Five forms walked out from the cabinet, differing in size, general appearance, and dress; there was not the slightest indication that we were being imposed upon; but still the feeling was present to my mind, and judging from a quiet chat I had with a gentleman who sat next me—an M.A. who had travelled from Oxford to be

present that evening—the feeling was shared by him, that the seance would have been more satisfactory still, if the medium had been so secured within a space, under the supervision of all present, as to be powerless, and if, while so secured, the forms had walked out from the enclosure. This precisely appears to have been the view of this matter taken by Colonel Olcott.

He had spent a considerable time in investigating the mediumship of the Eddy Brothers. He appears to have had the greatest confidence in the honesty of the mediums, and the genuineness of the phenomena, while his own experience was amply corroborated by a large number of respectable witnesses; nevertheless, we find him saying, at page 150 of "People from the Other World," in reference more especially to the phenomenon of dematerialisation, "But I confess, upon a question of such great moment, I am not satisfied to take even so much as the above and consider the case proven. In my opinion it is indispensable that the phenomenon should be repeated under such strictly test conditions as to leave no room for more than one opinion."

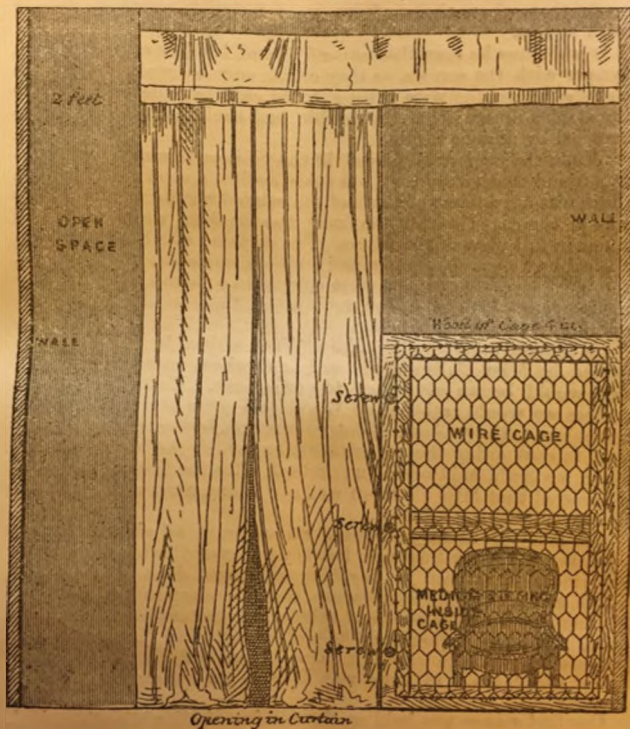
He then proceeds to give what he considers four test conditions, and says, "Submission to *one* or all of these concise tests would settle this question once and for ever." The first and most important test he describes thus: "The having William Eddy so shut into the further end of his cabinet by means of a door that should be bolted upon him, that he could not possibly come before the audience until the experiment was concluded, and until after the occurrence of the phenomenon."

This is a strong position, and exactly represents the conditions under which I was anxious to witness spirit-materialisation. To furnish myself and the friends in Belper with such an opportunity, it was decided to invite Miss Wood, of Newcastle, to give a series of six seances, provided she would consent to sit under conditions arranged by ourselves. Assuming that Miss Wood would do so, I suggested that a strong wire cage be prepared, large enough to contain an easy chair for the medium; that this cage be placed against a solid wall, in which there was not a window or break of any kind; that in a line with the cage, a space equal in length and width to that occupied by it should be enclosed by curtains, to form a cabinet, from which the materialised forms might walk out: and that both cabinet and cage be so completely under the supervision of every person in the room, that the smallest article could not be introduced into either without instant detection.

I wrote to Miss Wood stating exactly what was required, she replied, saying she was quite willing to visit Belper, and give six seances under our conditions: that is to say, she was quite willing to be fastened up in a cage.

A room admirably suited for the purpose was kindly placed at our disposal by our good friend Mr. H. Wheeldon, whose heart and hand are ever open and ready.

The construction of the cage was the next thing to be attended to, and as in this was to consist the test, great care was taken so to construct it, that a strong man if placed inside, and properly secured by having the door screwed up, could not possibly extricate himself without cutting the wire or smashing the frames, or if it was possible for him to liberate himself by forcing the wire netting



ELEVATION VIEW OF THE WIRE CAGE AND CABINET.

from its fastenings, he could not return to his position without the condition of the cage indicating the fact that he had been out.

Four strong wooden frames were prepared, a solid wooden bottom, and a frame for the top. These frames which were six



feet high, and four feet wide, were covered with galvanised wire, two inches mesh, which was fastened on by staples which were driven through from the outside, after which, the frames, the top, and bottom were put together by having screws driven in from the outside.

The door which faced the sitters was hung upon hinges, and so made that when the medium went inside it would be secured with screws.

It will thus be seen that anyone placed inside was powerless to tamper with the screws, as they could only be reached from the outside, whilst the wire netting could only be removed by having the staples drawn from the outside, and could not possibly be re-fastened by anyone inside.

When the cage was placed in the position it was to occupy, it was found that two sides stood close against a solid wall in which there was not a flaw; one side of the cabinet was formed by another side of the cage; whilst the front was the door, which was at all times in full view of the sitters. The curtains which were to form the cabinet were then hung, and on the completion of the whole, the most severely exacting were compelled to admit that if phenomena were obtained under such a test, there could be but one opinion as to their production.

On Monday, January 29th, Miss Wood arrived in Belper, accompanied by Miss Coltman, a young lady whose presence we were told would be an advantage to our seances. Under the circumstances we would rather Miss Wood had come alone, but we did not object to the presence of her companion, feeling quite confident that, in conducting the experiments on which we were about to enter, we could hold our own; indeed, after the first night it was discovered that Miss Coltman was not in any sense a factor in the problems awaiting solution.

She sang for us very sweetly, and we were all pleased to look upon her happy smiling face, but beyond contributing thus to our enjoyment, her share in anything that was done was *nil*; for when, as a precautionary measure, she was asked to occupy a seat far removed from the cage and cabinet, she instantly complied, and there remained during the whole of the seance. I mention this because I have been asked if Miss Wood had not a companion, and if she did not in some way help in the production of phenomena.

Our first seance was held on the evening of Miss Wood's arrival, Monday, Jan. 29. About thirty persons were present, occupying seats which were placed in four rows, one behind the other, a space of nearly six feet between the front row and the cabinet being left clear. A table stood against the cage door, on which were placed a musical box and a silver lamp, whose light could be increased or subdued, so as to meet every requirement.

A few minutes before seven o'clock Miss Wood entered the



seance-room, in which she had not been before. On being asked what she thought of the cage, she said, "It was a fine test," but could not give an opinion as to whether or not we would be successful in obtaining the phenomena we desired under such severe conditions, as she had never before sat in a cage for materialisation, but that in six seances, with good surroundings, it ought to be proved whether or not it could be done.

All being ready, Miss Wood entered the cage and seated herself in the chair; she was not bound to the chair. The door we screwed up, and the curtain dropped before it; the table was placed against the cage door, and my chair behind the table and also against the cage door, as I was determined there should be neither egress nor ingress without my knowledge.

After such elaborate preparation, and remembering that expectation had been on tiptoe, and that several then present were hoping that evening to have the dream of years fulfilled, that they would be able to see what they had long desired to look upon—the crown put upon the brow of phenomenal Spiritualism—by seeing, hearing, and feeling a materialised spirit-form, it might seem chilling and disappointing in the extreme to be told, after sitting about two hours, that nothing could be done that night. However, such was the case.

"Pocka," the watchful and ever attendant guide of the medium, told us that materialisation that night under such conditions could not take place, that the cage test being a new one, a repetition of the experiment would be necessary, but that "Benny," another spirit-helper, hoped, before the medium left Belper, to succeed. She then suggested that the medium should sit behind the curtains on the following evening, and on Wednesday night try the cage test again, but, thanks to the matured experience of the Belper Spiritualists as investigators, the seance, unlike some, that have been marked by confusion and disorder when untrained phenomena-hunters have not had their curiosity gratified, was characterised by the greatest harmony and passivity from the first moment to the last, and all left the meeting, feeling, that they had been assisting in an experiment which might deserve, but could not command success. This augured well for future efforts.

On Tuesday evening, January 30th, the chair on which the medium sat was brought out of the cage and placed behind the curtains. The back of the chair in its broadest part is twenty-one inches, and in its narrowest part sixteen inches. A piece of broad tape was stitched round the narrowest part of the chair-back, the stitching covered with wax and impressed with my seal; the remaining portion of the same piece of tape was carried down to the floor, to which it was nailed, the nail being covered with wax and sealed. Tape was then stitched round the wrists of the medium, and these in turn were stitched to the tape which went round the chair, care being taken to place the hands of the

medium at such a distance from each other that, supposing the stitches had been severed by any means, the hands could not have been mutually helpful in placing matters as they were. Thus conditioned, the medium was as thoroughly secured as mediums generally are for materialisations; and while we felt that phenomena obtained under such a test would be exceedingly difficult to account for on any sceptical theory, we were agreed to accept any manifestations which might occur as simply preparatory to those which we hoped would be given under conditions more severe.

The circle was a large one, amongst the number being our good friend Mr. G. Lee, of Ripley. The time passed pleasantly, in singing, in a comparison of notes by friends, and in general discussions, the subjects for which were suggested by "Pocka," or one of the sitters, usually by our excellent and earnest brother Mr. S. Smedley—such talks, unlike discussions generally, tending to create and sustain a pleasant interest and healthy feeling.

We were then told to lower the light, join hands, and sing. After passing twenty minutes thus, the curtains were seen slowly to divide, and the dark mass of drapery was relieved by a streak of white down the centre. This was the first glimmer of the sublime revelation which had been witnessed by those present, with two or three exceptions, assuming it to be a spirit-form. But it was the promise of a surpassingly glorious display of spirit-power, under the influence of which, any ignorance or doubt which might still exist in the minds of those who looked upon it, is destined to be for ever destroyed. The curtains then closed for a minute. On dividing again, the white streak became broader and broader still, until the outline of a form robed in sheeny vestments was visible. Very gradually, and as if timidly, a form came forward, until it stood out distinctly against the dark shade of the curtains. The spirit did not speak, but moving about noiselessly, went from one to another, of those who sat on the front seats, and touched their hands. Beyond the fact that the form was taller than the medium, there was no opportunity of judging of any other difference which might exist between them.

The results up to this point indicate the folly of regarding the fruits of one or two seances, even with the same sitters and medium, and both good, as the best and highest examples which can be obtained in connection with any department of spiritual phenomena. The problem must be worked until the solution is secured.

On Wednesday evening, January 31st, Miss Wood entered the cage again; we were about to screw up the door, when the medium asked to be fastened to her chair as before. We deemed it unnecessary, but she replied she would rather be secured, adding, "If you get phenomena, you will obtain them under a double test!" She was therefore secured to her chair in the manner before described, the cage door was screwed up, and we settled into our places.



After endeavouring for an hour to fill the programme of the evening, as on the two former occasions, by singing and chatting, "Pocka" being one of the most lively and entertaining of the contributors, we were told that materialisation could not be effected with the cage door fastened.

Here was a fine opportunity for men of the Lankester type to say, "I told you so; the medium cannot get out of the cage, and therefore the thing cannot be done." An equally fine opportunity for the hypercritical objector to say, "If spirits can work with the door partially opened, why cannot they work with it screwed up." The criticism is unreasonable, for he has no proof that they cannot do both one and the other, inasmuch as he has not yet exhausted or got the full measure of the power in question. Spirit-power, like any other, is a conditioned quantity; results being entirely governed by conditions. We therefore, while we had fixed a point, to reach which we would make every effort in attempting to reach it, were quite willing to adopt the suggestions, and carry out the instructions of our friends on the other side. The cage door was therefore at once opened to a width of six inches, the door was fixed at this width of opening by the table being placed against it; and as I sat against the table, had the slightest attempt been made to open the door still wider, with the exactness of a barometer must the fact have been made known to me. In addition, two or three friends, like myself, narrowly watched the curtains, well knowing that the medium could not pass from the cage into the cabinet without these being disturbed, but not the slightest movement was discovered.

Under these conditions, having first lowered the light, and joined hands, we sat for about half an hour, when, while we were singing one of our favourite hymns, we were startled by a lady sitting in the front row of chairs rising to her feet, stretching out her hands, and exclaiming in most beseeching tones, "Do speak to me." These words were addressed to a beautifully radiant form, which she declares she distinctly saw, and recognised as the wife of a gentleman present, and who had recently passed to the higher life.

This emotion on the part of the lady continued for about fifteen minutes, rising and falling in intensity, as the clairvoyant vision waxed and waned.

Our attention was then directed to the space beyond the curtain which formed the far side of the cabinet, whence came forth slowly, clothed in flowing white robes, the head being covered with a mantle of the same material which fell below the waist, a form at least fifteen inches taller than the medium.

A hand was laid on the head of a young lady who sat near the cabinet: others in the circle were touched; coming across to where I sat, a hand, at my request, was laid on mine. I at once felt that it was unlike that of the medium; the hand was larger, the fingers

longer and altogether more substantial. The form did not speak, but by certain signs given in response to questions asked, we inferred we had before us, objectively, the spirit previously seen clairvoyantly, but in reference to that point the evidence was not strong enough to justify the friends present in affirming that such was the case.

Nothing more was done that evening. On examining the cage door it was found that the opening had not been increased; on going inside, the medium was discovered entranced, whilst the tapes and seals were in all respects as we had left them.

The results were certainly in advance of any previously obtained, but we had still to acknowledge that our test had not been realised, and it only therefore remained that we address ourselves to further experiment.

Precisely at seven o'clock on Thursday evening, February 1st, our circle met. For the most part it was composed as before, the fresh elements introduced, as the event proved, were not in any sense prejudicial.

After laying aside her walking jacket, and throwing her shawl round her shoulders, Miss Wood entered the cage, was bound and sealed in her chair, as before, after which the cage door was screwed up.

An examination of the cabinet proved there was nothing there but the bare floor and the curtains hung round.

The medium was soon controlled by "Pocka," who informed us the conditions were good. More than an hour was spent in the usual way, that is, in doing whatever would best serve to produce and sustain a harmonious atmosphere. We were then told to lower the light, join hands, and sing,—“Pocka” adding “Benny peaks; him tink him able terialise with cage door fast.” This information of course we were delighted to receive. Nor had we long to wait, for “Pocka,” addressing a young lady in the circle, said, “Benny peaks; him coming out, and him going kiss ou, and him say, ou feel him whiskers wet.” We were then told to sing again. While we were doing so the curtains divided, and a white robed form was seen behind. In anticipation, I drew a long breath, for, judging from the position which I occupied, I felt quite confident that the test was complete, and that the phenomenon of materialisation had been obtained under our own severe conditions. Much quicker than on the former occasion the form stepped from behind the curtains. The upper portion of the robe was thrown back so that the face, notably the dark beard and whiskers, were distinctly seen. With a firmer step and swifter motion than we had yet seen manifested, the form walked across the floor towards the chair on which the young lady alluded to above sat, and gave her the promised kiss.

I addressed the spirit as “Benny,” asking him to shake hands with me, which he did. Mr. A. Smedley and others were also



thus favoured, Mr. Smedley remarking that "Benny" gave him a grip which made him wince. I handed him a two-foot rule which lay on the table, with this he proceeded to tap some of the sitters on the head; then, taking a bundle of small cords from the table, he laid the scourge right lustily on the shoulders of a young gentleman who had asked to be so treated.

The large musical box of which I have spoken, weighing 35 lbs., had been placed on the floor, close to the curtain; this he wound up with amazing celerity and set it going. After it had played a few tunes, he picked it up without any apparent difficulty, and carried it behind the curtains; returning again, he walked out towards the sitters forming the first circle, taking the hands of several, and then, to prove he was not such "stuff as dreams are made of," he jumped about, causing the floor most sensibly to shake.

After "Benny" retired, "Pocka" making an effort, managed for a moment to show herself between the curtains, and had then to relinquish the attempt, not having power to do more. As I felt certain would be the case, we found the cage door screwed up, and the medium inside entranced, the tapes uncut, and the seals unbroken.

It is therefore a fair question to ask, Whence came the forms on which we had looked, which our own hands had handled, and which, so far as our senses would enable us to judge, had all the physical attributes of our common humanity?

I do not put the case too strongly when I say, if it was not the medium—and who will dare to say or undertake to prove it was—it could not under the circumstances, by any conceivable possibility, have been a human being, or in other words an aid or confederate.

The seance on Friday evening, Feb. 2nd, at which the usual number of sitters were present, was in some of its features similar to the one held on Wednesday evening, inasmuch as after the medium had been secured in the usual way, it was found that materialisation could not be effected with the cage door fast. In one sense this was unfortunate, as three or four persons were present who, having been told of the wonderful test obtained on the previous evening, were most anxious to see the experiment repeated.

The phenomenal "reason why" the thing could not be done, I leave others to give, merely observing that in connection with many of the problems of life, which come before us daily for solution, that which makes the difference between *can* and *cannot* is often something scarcely appreciable, and that, therefore, it cannot be difficult to imagine that, in a realm of whose laws we know so little in connection with working out to a successful issue phenomena which are the "despair of science," that which makes the difference between *can* and *cannot* may be something which to us is more inappreciable still.

However, so it was, and according to instructions the screws were drawn, and the cage door opened six inches, and fixed at that width by having the table placed against it.

Leaving the absolute test out of the question, the results of this evening's seance were in all respects as satisfactory as those of any previous sitting, if not more so; for we were made to realise that the poet, who, to millions, seemeth but a dreamer—one who, in his sweetest measures telleth but an idle tale—may nevertheless be a prophet, who in sublime strains recounts the possibilities of human experience; for we were made, not to sing of it as a drawing-room recreation, but to know it as a fact, that

Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door—  
The beloved ones, the true-hearted,  
Come to visit me once more.

With a slow and noiseless footstep,  
Come the messengers divine;  
Take the vacant chair beside me,  
Lay their gentle hands in mine.

It was even so, for out of the darkness of the cabinet came forth, with slow and noiseless footsteps, "a messenger divine," whose simple presence told of man's immortality in ringing tones, which neither the war-whoop of materialistic science, legal ignorance, or theological intolerance will ever silence.

Going first to one of the sitters and then another, generally to gratify a desire to be touched, the spirit-form came towards me, and sitting down on the musical box which stood on the floor at my feet, "laid a gentle hand in mine."

Could the words of the poet have received a much more literal fulfilment? The form was about the height of "Benny," but as far as we could judge, of a more slender build, if such a word is proper in this connection. The robes of the spirit were very beautiful, falling in great profusion around the feet, the movements when walking and touching the hand were quite different from "Benny's," having none of his impulsiveness and dash; the hand was very soft and warm, the touch or pressure was very gentle, indicating a sweet and loving nature. On rising from her seat, she went behind the curtains for a minute or two. When she returned, I asked if she would kindly write me a few lines on paper which I had provided for the purpose. Approaching the table, she took the pencil I offered, and bending over the table wrote about ten lines, singing the same "Maggie." I saw every word written, and when the note was finished I took it up and put it in my pocket. After having remained with us about twenty minutes, "Maggie" retired.

"Pocka" then came out, a wonderfully different form to any that had preceded her; she did not come far out, not more than eighteen inches from the cabinet; her robes, when compared with those of the spirit who had just retired, were certainly remarkable;



she stood about as high as the table, and yet her dress was as beautifully adjusted as that of any who had preceded her.

Seating herself on the ground near the musical box, she commenced to play upon it very sweetly indeed. She did not wind the box up, but passing her fingers over the steel comb, drew forth very beautiful and plaintive sounds. This done, for lack of power our little friend had to leave us, and although in parting from her we could not say in the sense in which the words are generally used, "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," we felt assured that in a few minutes she would be as truly lost to us as if the grave had hidden her from our sight. Wondrous law! marvellous chemistry! in accordance with which the elements, which in a short time and for a brief period the spirit has been able to gather around herself, enabling her to stand before us a "real presence," had been as quickly dissipated, floated off into thin air, and with unerring certainty, found their way back whence they came.

The seance on Saturday evening, February 3rd, was well attended, twenty-eight persons being present, amongst the number was Mr. Sowray, our postmaster. As his duties would not permit him to be present until an hour after the seance commenced, the guides of the medium allowed the doors to be opened for his admission, and I was glad that the concession had been made, as he, as an investigator, had the opportunity of witnessing materialisation under as severe a test as I think it would be possible to apply—the medium being secured to her chair with tapes and seals, and the cage door screwed up. Before the form appeared we were told by "Pocka," that the spirit who materialised on Wednesday evening would again come out of the cabinet. The spirit referred to was supposed to be the wife of a gentleman then present.

The sight as the figure emerged from behind the curtains, was one never to be forgotten. Taller considerably than the medium, her snowy white garments hung about her person with an infinite grace, and we all felt (I say it without exaggeration) that our visitor from the higher spheres stood before us a model of beauty, as far as form and attire were concerned, such as it would have been the joy of an artist's heart to place upon his canvas.

The spirit seemed to possess much more power and confidence than on her former visit. Going almost at once to where her niece sat, she laid her hand upon her head and kissed her; she then made the circuit of the front rows of sitters, lingering longest near those who were dearest to her on earth; after which she raised her arm for the purpose of giving her hand to someone sitting behind, in doing which, the upper portion of her robe was thrown back, displaying an arm, long, well-formed, and white as marble.

Our friend Mrs. Hitchcock, of Nottingham, who was present, affirms she distinctly saw the features of the spirit, and without any mistake recognised them as those of the spirit announced by "Pocka," and this testimony seems to have been confirmed by many



little acts, trifling apparently in themselves, but significant when taken in connection with such declaration.

She remained with us a considerable time, and just before going, taking the hand of Mr. H. Wheeldon's little daughter, she led her back towards the cabinet, then folding her in her robes, she stooped down and kissed her, then retired.

No other manifestation occurred; on examination we found the cage door screwed up, the medium entranced, tapes uncut, and seals unbroken.

Thus for a second time, under a test as complete as can be devised, we had proved that to be possible which learned men tell us is impossible.

Verily, this great marvel is amongst the "things which are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes."

On Sunday morning, February 4th, we had another seance, and the last of the series. Being a time at which most of our friends would be at liberty, we met at 10 o'clock, the room being well filled. The very atmosphere seemed charged with pure spiritual feeling. Not in any sanctuary in the land could those who had assembled for the purpose of public worship, say with more propriety at that hour, "It is good to be here." We felt it was good to be there. The place had been consecrated for us by the presence of angels. It had become to us the trysting-ground where the dwellers in two worlds met to join hands.

We gathered in an upper room, quiet and secluded; it was not chosen because it would shelter us from disturbance, but we were reminded, both by the place and the occasion, of another room, in which nearly 2000 years ago, on the first day of the week, a number of persecuted but kind-hearted and loving men met, the door being shut for fear of the Jews; and that whilst the door was so shut, Jesus, the friend and brother whom they mourned, came and stood in their midst, saying, "Peace be unto you," thus "bringing life and immortality to light."

But such great changes in the world's estimate of men and things does the wheel of time bring round, it has come to pass that the men who regard the event and the place of which I have spoken with a devotion—a religious awe—equal to that which inspires the pilgrim on his way to the shrine of the prophet, who in the very precincts of the spot would walk with uncovered head—when told that what occurred then occurs now, and when asked to "turn aside and see the great sight," answer with rude and impudent rejoinder, "Blasphemy! Delusion! Imposture!" The men who talk so glibly of Thomas's infidelity are themselves a thousand-fold more infidel still.

The seance was in one of its features similar to two that had preceded it, for after the medium had been secured to her chair and screwed up in the cage for more than an hour, it was found necessary to open the cage door a few inches; this was done, the

table being placed against it, and we had not long to wait before a form differing slightly from both "Benny" and "Meggie," and greatly from the spirit who appeared on the previous evening, came from behind the curtains.

It was manifest that this was work to which the spirit had not been accustomed. After advancing and retiring several times, more confidence seemed to be acquired; gradually drawing clear of the cabinet, with cautious step, the spirit glided towards a gentleman sitting near me, and stood near him for some time. It soon transpired, that one from whom he had parted years before, and with whom in the interval he had held communion through the mediumship of Mrs. Hitchcock and others, had that morning managed to demonstrate the fact that she still lived, in a manner more impressive than ever. It was his wife; of that fact he had no doubt, and we shared in his joy. She afterwards told her husband, through Mrs. Hitchcock, that she had thus manifested, and further, that she had been most anxious to bring with her the two children, who were with her in spirit-life, materialised, but had found it impossible to do so; however she quite hoped that on some future occasion even this would be accomplished.

The details of the seance need not be further described, suffice it to say that at the close we found the cage door as fixed, the medium entranced, the tapes uncut, and the seals unbroken.

We returned home, thanking God for the experience of the week, that the full and bright complement of all the glad messages we had ever received had come to us in a knowledge of the fact that the dear friends whom we had buried out of our sight, still live beneath brighter skies and happier surroundings than any they had known upon earth; and that they were able to return from their bright abode, not only to tell us of their own state, and to incite us to purity of life and high spiritual aspiration, as a sure means of redemption from evil, but also to announce the most glorious of all gospels, that the great sea of human life, which is for ever "breaking on the eternal shore," is illustrative to an extent and in a degree grander than had ever come within the range of earthly experience, of the power, the wisdom, and the love of our father, God; inasmuch as beyond the grave there was not only existence, but hope, and infinite progression for every child of the human race.

My narrative must here cease; it will be continued, telling of manifestations quite as wonderful as those now recorded.

[*From the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, March 23, 1877.*]

In continuation of my narrative I have to say that Miss Wood, having decided to prolong her stay in Derbyshire, accepted the invitation of friends in Derby, to give materialisation seances there. Thither accordingly she and Miss Coltman went on Monday Feb. 5th.

In this connection, I think it is only justice to Miss Coltman to say that her presence on the scene had reference exclusively to Miss Wood's comfort when absent from home and amongst strangers. The medium having with her, both day and night, a loved and pleasant companion, is, as all Spiritualists know, if not an absolute necessity, an excellent preparation for a successful seance. This is the sense in which it was said Miss Coltman's services would be an advantage to our circles, and in that sense undoubtedly they were.

It was arranged to hold the first seance on the following evening, at the residence of Mrs. Ford. In the afternoon of that day, half-a-dozen friends met there for tea, Miss Wood being amongst the number when she unmistakably proved herself to be, as far as physical phenomena are concerned, what I am disposed to call an "all round" medium, that is to say, it would appear as if every phase of physical phenomena from the tiny rap, to the fully materialised form, may, when conditions serve, be obtained through her mediumship.

During tea, manifestations occurred which furnished an amusing and at the same time an instructive comment upon a lecture delivered by Dr. Carpenter, at the London Institution, Finsbury Circus, on "Mesmerism, Spiritualism, and allied subjects," on an evening in December last year. In speaking of the phenomena of Spiritualism, the lecturer made use of language which, in the opinion of those who know better, will not enhance his reputation either for wisdom or discretion. Indeed in hundreds of homes in England to-day, his "wise saws" and those of his brothers of the Royal Society who share his views in reference to this matter, are laughed at, and regarded as the most absurd trifling with a subject vaster in its proportions and more important in the fields of research which it opens out, than any to which they have hitherto applied their powers.

Thus speaks the learned scientist, "They were told of things which were done, which, on the face of them, were incredible, such as tables floating in the air, and, in investigating such matters, they must begin by looking out for self-deception, or intentional deception." But what if after the most severe scrutiny neither one nor the other can be discovered? This is exactly the point where our quarrel with scientific dogmatism commences; for we assert that after the most exhaustive investigation of the phenomena called spiritual, there is a large residuum of fact,



which cannot be accounted for on any theory known to the schools of mere material science, while the representatives of these schools on the other hand say, "If the phenomena you describe have occurred, they have been produced by methods, easily explained and easily repeated, which have escaped your observation," and that without offering a shadow of proof in support of what they say. Unscientific and illogical as this position is, Dr. Carpenter advances one which is more ridiculous still, by virtually claiming that the man of small opportunity for investigating spiritual phenomena is better qualified to judge of their true character, than the man who, having large opportunity, has made a good use of it. For, alluding to the experiments of Mr. Crookes, he says, "Mr. Crookes had made the most interesting discovery of the radiometer, but if he had used the same skill in investigating the other classes of the phenomena, he thought that he would have been led to see them from a different point of view."

Leaving Mr. Crookes to deal with this left-handed compliment as he may, I take leave to say, that, without making the slightest pretention to a scientific training, I am in every respect as well qualified as any physiologist or physicist in the land to decide the question, on its merits, as to whether or not a table rises from the floor, whether or not the levitation is produced by a vulgar trick, and whether or not my mental condition was such as to enable me at the time to form a correct opinion.

It is this unwillingness on the part of sceptical scientists, to grant to those who differ from them in this matter the same ability for correct observations which they claim for themselves, that has fairly exposed them to the withering rebuke which is administered in the following paragraph, which appeared in the *Banner of Light*, of Feb. 17th, under the caption "Another Grand Exposure!"

"Jo Cose states that he has met a highly educated man, who declares that the prevalent belief, that there exists a European continent is one of the most stupendous delusions of this deluded age.

"London and Paris never had an existence outside of the brains of befuddled perambulating swindlers. Ships that are said to go to Europe do no such thing, but sail in circles of a thousand miles in diameter. Passengers in these ships fondly imagine they land in the ports of great cities, and are deluded into the idea that they travel in lands beyond the sea, while the real fact is, they do not leave the vessel until they disembark at the place from which they started.

"This gentleman avers that the delusion is caused by the electro-biological-magnetic-supermundane-mesmeristatic action of the water on which the ship floats, producing an unconscious cerebration of the molecular muscles. Jo Cose thinks this is very evident, if not more so.

"The gentleman alluded to proposes to devote his life and energies to the exposure of this wide-spread and 'pestilent delusion,' that has for centuries despoiled the world of its best minds."

It is perhaps questionable whether even such satire carries a sting for minds that are proof against a simple and honest recital of facts, such as that of which I am about to speak.

As is ever the case when I am privileged to share the hospitality of our kind hostess, during tea our conversation ran along merrily as a "peal of marriage-bells" when suddenly the table rose from the floor. As such an upheaval was no child's play, I asked if it was "Benny" who was thus operating, when three tremendous blows were given with the leg of the table nearest to where I sat. The work appeared to be done with as much ease as though I had struck the floor three times with a walking-stick.

The movements of the table increased to a degree which compelled us, in order to prevent our tea from being spilt, to raise our cups a considerable distance above its surface. The table did not always rise at a point near the medium, but sometimes at a considerable distance from her. Again it would move rapidly along the floor and back again, which motion could only be produced by pushing or pulling, which most assuredly was not done by any one sitting round the table, while the intelligence connected with the movements was demonstrated, by answers to a number of questions being given, by means of direct raps, or distinct movements of the table.

Had a student of dynamics been present, he would, I think, if his opinion had been asked of Miss Wood's power, looking at her simply as a weight-lifting machine, have said, "I think it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for so small and slender a young lady, even if she stood on her feet and used both her hands for the purpose, to move the table as it has been moved;" and his opinion would have been quite correct, for so heavy is the table in question, when the room came to be cleared for the seance it required three individuals to transfer it to the drawing-room. So that Dr. Carpenter's two theories, "self-deception and intentional deception," must be confined to those present, exclusive of the medium. But to suggest that the latter was the procuring cause of the manifestations is simply an insult. Amusement was not their "holy grail." As well talk of children playing at "blind man's buff" around their mother's grave, as talk of those whose only object in devoting time and spending money in conducting these investigations is to obtain evidence of man's immortality, or accept any other conclusion to which the phenomena legitimately conduct, sitting round a tea-table and using their power and skill to deceive each other; while, in reference to the former theory, that of "self-deception," it is enough to say that everyone present, while the manifestations were going on, was in a condition to distinguish between white bread and brown, to lift a thin slice of bread-and-



butter, to discover where their kind offices were required, and from the variety spread before them, choose their food on the soundest dietetic principles. If their own senses were faithful, if they were to be trusted in regard to this larger service, it is not presumption to say they were perfectly reliable when they testified to the fact that the table did move, and when they enabled us carefully to observe and minutely describe its movements.

After tea the room was cleared for the seance; a cabinet was formed by suspending from a rod fixed near the ceiling, a set of dark curtains, which completely enclosed one corner of the room. In the cabinet was placed an easy-chair for the medium, leaving room enough for materialisation purposes.

Eighteen persons were present, amongst the number were two gentlemen who had seen little or nothing of spiritual phenomena and were sceptical in reference to this its grandest phase.

Before the friends assembled, Mrs. Ford, aforetime an exceedingly sceptical lady, and still a severely critical investigator, said, "As we cannot have your cage test here, I am most anxious to apply one that would be to me, and I think, to other friends also almost as satisfactory, and that is, that Miss Wood go up stairs with me, and allow me to undress and redress her, so that in the event of a form or forms walking out of the cabinet robed in white, we may feel quite assured that the medium took nothing into the cabinet with her, which would account for such an appearance." Miss Wood, when asked by Mrs. Ford if she would submit to such a test, replied: "I have not yet done so, but I am quite willing to do so to-night."

On coming down stairs dressed in Mrs. Ford's dark clothes, she at once entered the cabinet, and was secured to the easy-chair by having tapes stitched round her wrists, which were in turn stitched to the chair, and then nailed to the skirting-board, the stitches on chair and nail being sealed.

The first hour or two spent at one of these seances is pretty much like all first hours so spent, in singing and conversation, tending to create a pleasant and harmonious feeling. It was so this evening. When an hour and a half had passed we were told to lower the light and join hands.

Notwithstanding all I had witnessed during the previous week, I was as deeply interested as anyone present in the success of the test which was then being applied.

Ever since the time when some wild screaming writer in one of the Newcastle papers did his best to strangle Spiritualism by a coarsely written article, referring to a seance held in that neighbourhood, at which a small quantity of white material was found on the person of the medium, I have been anxious to be present when the phenomena have had to be weighted with that special test. The reply of Mr. Barkas to that coarse production was eminently satisfactory, still, it was with a feeling akin to that of



the chemist when the result of his experiment begins to manifest itself, that I saw the curtains move.

In a minute or two afterwards, at the extreme end of the cabinet, there came forth from behind the curtains, a form robed in white. It was "Meggie," the beautiful and gentle spirit who had before manifested at Belper. She lingered near the fireplace, leaning on the mantelpiece. The skirt of her snowy white dress fell in ample folds on the floor, while her head, arms, and shoulders were covered with a garment of the same material, which reached to her knees. Seating herself on the ground, she took a musical album which lay near at hand, and without winding it up, by a method peculiar to those who have dwelt even for a brief time amid the higher and diviner harmonies, drew from it strains, which its mechanism had certainly not been arranged to give forth. Rising to her feet, as far as her strength would permit, she went from one to another, complying with very earnest requests to be touched. Having asked her if she would write a few lines for Mrs. Ford, she approached and took from me the paper and pencil which had been provided, and sitting down near a footstool, wrote a short note, which, on rising, she presented to Mrs. Ford—a *souvenir* in my opinion quite as precious as the autograph of a queen. With a manifestly faltering step the spirit slowly retired into the cabinet, when "Pocka" informed us, that for lack of power, nothing more could be done then, adding, that dematerialisation had commenced, and "Meggie" had lost a portion of her body before she had got fairly behind the curtains. Thus the gate which for a moment had stood ajar, to permit the enfranchised spirit to bring us greeting from the other side, was closed, and from this, the vestibule of heaven's audience-chamber, we had to find our way back to the ordinary haunts of human life, where still, for how long we know not, in many forms, the results of a misapprehension of the divine economy are destined to strew our path.

On Sunday, February 11, another seance was held at Mrs. Ford's. As two or three persons were then present who were not in attendance on the Tuesday evening previous, Miss Wood was asked if she would again submit to the special test. Without a moment's hesitation she acceded to the request. The change of dress was even more thorough than before, her stockings and boots having been taken off and examined. When she came down stairs, my brother led her to the cabinet, and was proceeding to fasten her to the chair as before, when the two sceptical gentlemen referred to as being present at the former seance, advanced towards the cabinet, saying, they had an additional test they would like to apply. My brother asked what it was. They declined to say; upon which my brother observed he could not consent to allow them to fasten the medium until he knew what they were going to do.

They then informed him they had brought with them a velvet collar, which they wished to fasten round the medium's neck with

a padlock, the collar having a piece of string through it, which they wished to have nailed to the floor and sealed.

This incident occasioned a temporary excitement and inharmony, which caused "Pocka," who held control of the medium, to say she was afraid they could not manifest that evening, and the meeting had better be broken up.

Two or three of the friends left the house, the others remaining to reflect on what had passed—the sceptical feeling, doubtless, that their scepticism had not been lessened, whilst those who were better versed in the philosophy of the occult felt that another practical lesson had been given, setting forth the absolute necessity of giving to those who come to "roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre" the conditions, without which they cannot do their work.

In about half an hour the friends were informed that if they chose to re-arrange themselves in circle, and would preserve harmony, the guides of the medium would try what could be done, adding that they had decided the medium should submit to the additional test which had been suggested. The collar was then placed round the medium's neck and locked, the string being nailed to the floor and sealed.

In a short time my brother was asked to enter the cabinet, when he found the medium's neck so swollen that the collar had to be removed at once. Instead of the lock being again affixed, the collar was stitched round the neck, leaving freedom enough, but still so tight as to make it impossible to pass it over the head. The part stitched was sealed, after which the collar was sewn to the medium's dress, and the string again nailed and sealed.

After waiting a little longer than the usual time, "Meggie," the spirit who had manifested at the former seance, again walked slowly out of the cabinet. As before, she was robed from head to foot in long, flowing white garments.

Herein lay a triumph greater than had ever been achieved by czar or king when they had brought nations to their feet, for, as one from out the serried ranks of the immortals who are contending for the truth, "Meggie" came, the friends saw, and she conquered, no room being left for doubt as to the genuineness of the manifestation.

The details of the seance need not be dwelt upon; suffice it to say she "showed herself alive by many infallible proofs."

In this age of conflict with, and triumph over, the forces of nature, men may be found who, in their ambition born of success, have come to regard the word impossible, when applied to human ingenuity and skill, as being almost obsolete.

However, notwithstanding all that has been accomplished, there still is, and ever must be, a limit to the possible. For, as in mathematics two and two can never be made into five, so in physics a solid body measuring twelve inches in diameter can never be



passed through an opening measuring nine inches; neither can a dark suit of woollen clothes, in the absence of chemical and mechanical appliances, by man's skill and dexterous manipulation be transformed into garments white and soft, rivalling in their texture the productions of the finest looms.

Therefore, when the cabinet was entered, and the medium found dressed in the dark-clothes, and bound to the floor by the collar stitched and sealed, all were compelled to admit it was *impossible* the medium could have done what had been done.

I may be reminded of the wonderful transformations and marvellous escapes from bonds exhibited by the professors of legerdemain. I reply—Whole continents of difference lie between *doing* and *seeming* to do, and this is precisely the corner in which conjurers will take very good care not to allow themselves to be fixed. I am pleased to be able to add that at the close of the seance the two sceptical gentlemen referred to, with the greatest frankness admitted that their test had been complied with, and that they were quite convinced of the honesty of the medium and the genuineness of the phenomena.

It being deemed advisable by the Belper friends to pursue the investigation further, and if possible obtain phenomena of a somewhat different character, and under other conditions, it was decided to engage Miss Wood to give six additional seances. Finding it would suit her convenience to remain with us, I told her there were three distinct manifestations we were anxious to obtain—first, for the spirit to materialise in the cabinet, and come out, while the medium sat in the circle; next, for the spirit to materialise outside, while the medium was seated in her chair in the cabinet; and the last, to obtain moulds of spirit-hands or feet, while the medium was screwed up in the cage. Severe as the tests were, Miss Wood said: "Your conditions are so good, I think it is quite possible you may succeed."

After spending a week in Derby, Miss Wood returned to Belper on Tuesday, February 13. In answer to my inquiry, she said she felt well, and quite prepared for the seance in the evening, which we had every reason to expect would be at least a continuation of, if not an improvement upon, our previous successes; but we were destined to prove, as many have proved before, that, as far as spiritual mediumship is concerned, to expect is one thing, and to realise your expectations another; for not only was the evening a blank as far as phenomena were concerned, but the medium, in the absence of objective manifestations, was subjected to greater exhaustion than if her vitality had been drawn upon for the production of two or three materialised spirit-forms.

As usual, Miss Wood on entering the seance-room went at once into the cage, was bound and sealed to her chair, and the door of the cage screwed up. As I was about to let the curtain drop in front of the cage, I observed Miss Wood lying back in the chair



as in a death swoon. Thinking she was, perhaps, more deeply entranced than usual, I said nothing. She must have remained in that condition for nearly a quarter of an hour, as not the slightest movement was heard.

Then "Pocka" took control, and informed us the conditions were bad; that in coming to the seance some drunken men had jostled against the medium; that spirits who had been drunkards in earth-life were present, and their influence would prevent any manifestations taking place that evening; that on being bound, the medium had been controlled by a spirit who had committed suicide by poison, and that she had been injuriously affected by the control; that the cage must be opened, and the medium released at once, taken home under control, and put to bed. This was done, and she remained under control until a late hour.

Some might say it was an evening lost. Not so; for out of our disappointment grew a lesson often inculcated before, and driven home that night with more than mortal eloquence: Banish the drink from your midst; do what you can to prevent its victims from being sent prematurely, or at all, into the "land of souls;" then will your hours of spirit-communion be secure against such unwelcome visitation.

We were afterwards informed by those who accompanied Miss Wood to the seance, that in passing along the street, two drunken men rushed from the road on to the pavement, nearly knocking the medium down. This fact, to those who know anything of sensitives and the laws which govern mediumship, will be premiss enough on which to build a theory which will account for the peculiar occurrences of the evening.

On Wednesday, Feb. 14th, in the afternoon, Miss Wood, acting on the advice of her guides, went in company with three friends to the seance-room, had the door and windows open to promote ventilation, and then sat for about an hour in the cage.

In the evening we met as usual. Twenty persons were present. the medium was secured as before and cage screwed up. Although the conditions were greatly improved, we were informed that the medium had not altogether recovered from the bad influences of the evening before, but as the medium's own band had full control they hoped to be able to manifest. We were exhorted to be as passive as possible, and thus aid those who were working on the other side. But after doing their best, they found they were not equal to the conditions which had been imposed, for "Pocka" informed us they would not be able to materialise with the cage door fast. It was therefore opened a few inches, and the table placed against it. After singing for some time, with more than our usual vigour, in order to help the conditions, the beautiful and gentle spirit "Meggie" came out of the cabinet. In all respects her appearance answered the descriptions already given of her, save that the robe seemed of a more dazzling whiteness. I felt,

and I think everyone present felt, that her magnetism was a baptism of sweet influences; her every movement betokened the gentleness and refinement of her nature, and every act she was able to perform her deep sympathy and love. Approaching Master Edwin Smedley, she took him up in her arms, carried him back to the cabinet, kissed him, and then replaced him in his chair. Whether in doing so she had overtaxed her powers, I know not, but immediately after, it came to pass that as she stood against the dark curtains, a great change took place in her appearance, it was as if the rays of the sun had suddenly been brought to bear upon a pile of snow, she seemed to be melting away. I exclaimed, "See, the form is dematerialising." Having decreased about two feet in height, and proportionally in breadth, the process stopped, and gradually the form rose again into its former proportions. Coming away from the cabinet, I offered her my hand which she took. I then asked if she would kindly write a few lines, when, taking the pencil and paper from me, she bent over the table and wrote:—

"My dear Friends,—I have got a little more power, I am very glad to be with you once more; go on in your good work, and I will help you all I can. Good night. MEGGIE."

She then retired, and the veil which hides the shining ones from our sight dropped between the two worlds.

After singing another hymn, "Pocka" informed us, that "Bretimo," an Italian spirit, and the principal guide of Mr. T. Brown, of Howden-le-Wear, had been trying to materialise, but found he would not be able to do so then; he would try again to-morrow evening, and hoped to be more successful. She further told us we must sit on Thursday for the cage test, on Friday for materialisation in the cabinet with medium in the circle, on Saturday for materialisation outside with medium in the cabinet, and on Sunday morning for spirit-moulds.

I think it will not be out of place here to say, that while in Belper recently, Mr. Brown under his guide "Bretimo," delivered several addresses, which, for deep insight into human nature, fine philosophic thought, robust common sense, and glowing descriptions of "Life beyond the Grave," I have seldom heard equalled. We anticipate another visit from Mr. Brown, when I feel sure his services will be more than ever appreciated.

On Thursday evening, February 15th, we met again. The circle was a large and a most harmonious one, and as we were about to carry out the instructions of the spirits, we determined, in perfect accord with the earnestly expressed wish of the medium, to make "assurance doubly sure;" she remarking again, "If you obtain phenomena you will get them under the double test." She was therefore so secured to the chair and the floor, had the cage door been open the test would have been a good one; however, to make it absolutely impossible for the medium to show even a hand, the



cage door was screwed up, the curtain dropped before, and the table placed against it.

The seance proved to be a grand one, the best I ever attended or have heard of. There were twenty-two persons present, and the conditions all that could be desired.

For about an hour "Pocka" sang for, and chatted with us; she made the time pass pleasantly by relating in her own inimitable style, portions of her experience with other investigators; in asking questions which were sometimes difficult to answer, and in discoursing, not only sensibly, but philosophically, on subjects which have often puzzled older and more pretentious students. We were then told to lower the light a little, join hands, and sing. We had not long to wait, before the curtains opened, and "Benny" walked out. He appeared to have considerable power, his form was erect, and his step firm. I offered him an apple; he at once stretched out his hand and took it; he was heard to bite a piece out of it; walking close up to me, he placed the piece in my mouth. In this manner the apple was divided into about six pieces, which were in succession placed in the mouths of as many different persons. A friend gave him a biscuit, which he brought and placed in my mouth; another gave him an orange, with his teeth he tore the rind off, and dividing it into a good many parts, gave a portion to such as were within reach, until all were disposed of. Then in response to numerous requests, "Benny" walked close up to the front circle, and stretching forth his hand, permitted those behind to touch or shake it. After dancing for about five minutes, during which the floor shook, he retired.

Not much time passed before the curtains opened again, and there stood between them a form robed in white, not so tall as "Benny," but broader in the chest. The spirit seemed timid, and did not advance beyond the curtains. Having been told that he would materialise if possible, I said, "Is it 'Bretimo'?" The head was bowed in response.

Miss Saunders, a young lady sitting on my left, said, "If it is 'Bretimo,' be kind enough to give the test you promised." Immediately, the spirit in a deep sonorous voice said, "Good morning"—his usual salutation when about to give an address through his medium, Mr. Brown. "Quite right," said Miss Saunders, upon which the form retired.

We were then informed that about a week previously Mr. Brown was controlled by "Bretimo," who told Mr. Wheeldon, Mrs. Wheeldon, and Miss Saunders, the only persons present, that he hoped to be able to materialise through Miss Wood's mediumship, and that if he did, he would give them one or two tests; if possible, he would say, "Good morning;" if he could not speak he would knock six times. The first test being the most satisfactory we were delighted to receive it.

Then came "Pocka," the intelligent, light-hearted Indian girl.



She had much more power than when she manifested before. We were deeply interested by her efforts to sustain a conversation. The voice was pitched low, and yet sharp, and was without the slightest modulation. I at once recognised it as the same I had heard at a seance given by Misses Wood and Fairlamb (two names that should always have been linked together as far as their connection with Spiritualism is concerned) at 15, Southampton Row. I also soon discerned the general movements of the little psychic to be similar to those of the tiny spirit-form which allowed Mrs. Everitt, at the seance in question, to go and sit down beside the curtains and caress her; "Pocka" taking from Mrs. Everitt her parasol, with which she playfully struck those immediately around her.

The contrast in point of size between "Pocka" and "Benny" was most remarkable. The outline of the robed figure clearly proved that the form stood erect, and when, reaching forth my hand, I asked her to kiss it, the little head was bent forward, and the warm lips pressed upon it, in addition to which, for a few minutes, she jumped about, proving she had the free and unconstrained use of arms and legs; and all this while the medium was screwed up in the cage, and sealed in the chair.

For the medium to liberate herself from her bondage, and place herself in such a position that, had she the necessary skill and appliances, she could represent the different forms we had looked upon, and then return to the condition in which we left her—the cage, tapes, and seals being found as when the seance commenced—would, to me, be almost as great a marvel as anything else which could be done. Indeed, so profoundly impressed am I with the impossibility of this being done, that unless those who have boasted that it is their mission to stamp out the "imposture of Spiritualism," of "their great charity," are moved to take the scales from our eyes, I have to say, I am prepared to write a cheque for two hundred and fifty guineas, and my friend, Mr. A. Smedley, will write one for a similar amount, and the FIVE HUNDRED GUINEAS shall at once be paid to any person who will, under similar conditions to those described above, produce phenomena which shall in all respects be like those of which I have just spoken, and so distinctly explain the method by which they are produced that the person to whom the method is made known, or any other person or persons to whom, in turn, the said method may be made known, will be able at any time, or in any place, to produce exactly the same kind of phenomena as those which appeared when Miss Wood was screwed up in the cage. If, as is claimed, the marvels are simply clever conjuring, the above conditions will not be regarded as too stringent. It is also to be understood that those who accept this challenge forfeit a like sum in the event of failing to produce the phenomena under the conditions named above.

Neither I nor my friend have any great liking for challenges of this description. We make the offer simply to prove our confidence in what we believe to be the truth, and our willingness, should we be the subjects of delusion or imposture, to pay handsomely for having our eyes opened.

At the close of the seance the heavy druggot which hung before the cage door had to be removed, and the screw-driver brought into requisition before the medium could be released. She was found entranced, and the tape and seals intact.

On the following morning, Friday, Feb. 16th, I accompanied Miss Wood to the photographic studio of Mr. Booth, in this town, for the purpose of trying to obtain a spirit-picture of "Pocka." Miss Wood sat two or three times without success. I then suggested that it might make a difference if the medium was the operator. Miss Wood placing her hands upon a book, "Pocka" was asked if it would; three raps were immediately given. Encouraged by this reply, Miss Wood, instructed by Mr. Graham, the manager, proceeded to clean a plate, she then collodionised it, placed it in the bath, and when ready, in the carrier and camera.

I sat for my likeness. Before the plate was taken into the developing room, "Pocka" was asked if she had done anything, she rapped, "Yes." This we could scarcely believe, however, on opening the carrier, there were marks on the plate, as if two fingers had been drawn across the film, removing it, and gathering it into a layer near the edge of the plate. The plate was placed in a repeating back camera. In the picture on the side where the film was disturbed, my right leg was almost invisible, being veiled in a dense aura or fog, while the picture on the other side is perfectly distinct and clear.

Another plate was prepared by Miss Wood, and treated in all respects like the former one, with a similar result.

While the third plate was being cleaned by Miss Wood, Mr. Booth, the proprietor of the studio, and a sceptic came in; the two plates were shown to him, and it was explained how the marks had been obtained. With evident interest, he watched Miss Wood's movements, until he saw the plate placed in the carrier, without a mark of any kind upon it. After the portrait had been taken, and before the plate was removed from the camera, "Pocka" was asked if she had done anything, she rapped, "Yes." Have you scratched the film? She rapped, "Yes." Mr. Booth, Mr. Graham, and myself went into the developing room, and on opening the carrier, we found that a portion of the film had been removed as if by a finger having been placed flatly upon the plate, and drawn upwards. Mr. Booth looked very much astonished. I asked him if he could offer any explanation, he replied: I know of nothing that will explain it.

A fourth plate was prepared, and treated in precisely the same way, and before it was removed from the camera, the question was



again asked if anything had been done. "Pocka" rapped out "No." On opening the carrier, the plate was found as free from marks as when placed in it.

Altogether twenty-one plates were prepared and operated upon. on five of these there were no marks, and in every instance before the plate was removed from the camera, we were told that nothing had been done; on the remainder there were marks of one kind or another, and in every instance, before the plate was removed from the camera, we were told by raps that something had been done.



PHOTOGRAPH OF MR. W. P. ADSHEAD,

Showing a mark in the film made by the spirit "Pocka," while the plate was in the camera at the time the photograph was taken. It is a fac-simile of the 21st plate.

When the tenth plate had been prepared, and placed in the camera, I suggested it might be well to apply an additional test; I therefore asked "Pocka" if she would make a mark down the plate, and then across it; she rapped, she would try. Before the plate was removed from the camera, she was asked if she had done so, she rapped, "No." Have you done anything? "Yes." On opening the carrier it was found that a broad piece of the film had been drawn down the centre of the plate, and a little on one side,



a patch of the film had been removed, as if a finger had been planted there for the purpose of drawing it across, but had not been able to do so.

When the eleventh plate had been prepared, she was again asked to try and make the mark down the plate, and across. Before the plate was removed from the camera, she was asked if she had done so, she rapped, "Yes," and sure enough, on the carrier being opened, there was the mark I had asked her to produce. This experiment was successfully repeated on the twenty-first plate.

In connection with the eighteenth plate, the results were most remarkable. In all respects it was treated as the others.

Our postmaster, Mr. Sowray, sat for his likeness. On inquiring, we were told something had been done: on development, there was seen to be a dark mass resting on Mr. Sowray's knee, and covering the whole of the right side of his person. It was not sufficiently defined to enable us to say what it was.

We were told to put the plate in the camera again just as it was. On withdrawing it, we found the dark mass had been taken out and instead, there appeared the rude profile of a negro face.

This was perhaps the most extraordinary piece of work which had been done, inasmuch as the outline had been as clearly and sharply cut as though it had been executed by a fine-pointed instrument. Miss Wood stood close to Mr. Sowray while this picture was taken. Three gentlemen who were present during a portion of the time in which these interesting experiments were being conducted, and who knew little or nothing of Spiritualism, were thoroughly convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena; so self-evident was it, that an intelligent power had been at work, under conditions which ruled out the possibility of imposture. To say nothing of the work done, and a portion of it done as desired, upon what theory other than the spiritual, can it be explained, that twenty-one correct answers were given to as many questions, having reference to facts, which did not then lie, and never at any previous time had lain within the knowledge, either of the medium, or any other human being. During the whole time, Miss Wood was in her normal state.

Dr. Carpenter's "Dried Peas" are of no use here. The theories of psychic and odyllic force, as commonly understood, appear to be equally at fault. If by any subtle rendering, the information communicated can be referred to the mind of any human being then present, the fact ought to be proved, for hitherto psychologists have been working within a line, beyond which these phenomena seem to lie.

The above would appear to supply in one form at least, the "missing link" desiderated by the Rev. H. R. Haweis in an extract from his new book, entitled, "Current Coin," pages 46 and 47. Speaking of Spiritualism, he says:—

"The important question is, not so much whether or no the thing looks trivial, or whether or no the dead are trying to communicate (although of course that is important), but whether the phenomena witnessed prove the possibility of intelligence of some kind, human or otherwise, living and acting upon matter, without the brain and nervous system declared by physiologists to be indispensable to the very existence of any intelligence.

"This is the real reason why Modern Spiritualism cannot get a hearing with most scientific men.

"The latest position of science is, that mind itself is the product of matter and force organised in such a system as man's. Without such a material nervous system, mind, it is repeated *ad nauseam*, cannot exist, much less manifest itself. Modern Spiritualism affects to supply direct evidence to the contrary.

"It offers to produce intelligence of some kind acting upon matter, and yet unconnected with a brain and a nervous system. If this could be proved, the materialist argument would at once fall; for if intelligence similar to ours exists, and can operate outside the usual organised conditions, our souls *may*—we do not say *must*—do the same. God is conceivable, and intelligence ceases to be the mere product of force and matter specially organised."

The experiment is worth repeating, for if mediums can be found, through whom the same results can be obtained, a quick and ready method of carrying conviction to the minds of the most sceptical may be established, and proof of immortality be adduced which neither theology, law, nor science can gainsay.

[From the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, March 30.]

In pursuance of instructions received, our circle met again on Friday evening, for the purpose of trying to obtain the marvellous phenomenon of a materialised spirit-form walking out of the cabinet while the medium was outside in the circle. The attendance was large, above thirty persons being present. Miss Wood entered the cabinet immediately on her arrival, and sat on an easy-chair unbound.

In some of its features this was the most remarkable seance I ever attended. In addition to Miss Wood, there were six other mediums present, and these were controlled and exercised so violently, the perspiration stood in beads on their brows. After chatting and singing for about an hour, the medium, under control, walked out of the cabinet, and sat on a chair close to the front circle.

For about ten minutes "Pocka" chatted with us as merrily as during the former part of the seance; then came a change. Gradually the voice became weaker, the speech slower. In tones somewhat like those of a peevish child, the control said, "Me hungry;

me want something to eat." Immediately pockets were searched for anything in the shape of food. An apple was placed in the hand of the medium; this was devoured at once; another apple was despatched as quickly. Then some biscuits and an orange were given to her, but these failed to satisfy, for the plaintive cry still came from the lips of the medium, "Me hungry; me want something to eat." On being told we had nothing more to give, she seemed much distressed, and in still fainter tones said, "If me don't hav something to eat me die, and you put me in de grave again."

For a few minutes she was quieter, during which time the curtains were seen to divide at the bottom, and a white mass appeared. It was seen for a minute, and then the curtains closed. Again it appeared, this time showing in larger proportions. The curtains closed once more.

The medium, who had been moaning in a most piteous manner, again said, "Me hungry; me want something to eat." On being reminded we had nothing to give her, and further told that as soon as the seance was over a supply of food would be brought to her, she replied, "If me no get something to eat, me die, and you have to put me in de grave again."

Scarcely had she finished the sentence before she rose from her chair, and, approaching the table against which I sat, snatched at something which had evidently attracted her attention, which proved to be an article said to be relished as food by the dwellers in more northern climes, and before she could be prevented, had placed it in her mouth and swallowed it. I laid my hand upon hers and felt it to be almost as cold as ice.

She resumed her seat, and became a little quieter. Again the curtains were divided, the opening being higher and wider than before, the height and width being indicated by the white substance showing behind.

These movements alternated with greater or less rapidity until the full height, but not the full breadth, of the spirit-form stood revealed.

I invited the spirit to come out from behind the curtains, but there seemed to be a lack of power. However, as if to convince us the question had been apprehended, and, had the power existed, would have been complied with, the spirit, with a sweep of the leg, projected the long, flowing, and dazzling white robes we had been looking upon, a considerable distance across the floor. I felt this to be the critical moment—the moment when it must be decided whether those beautiful garments covered a materialised spirit-form or whether the glorious vision was purely subjective. These were the only questions to be answered, as the medium sat before us dressed in dark clothes.

I therefore, stretching my hand as far towards the curtains as possible, asked that the hand of the spirit might be laid on mine. Apparently a slight effort was necessary to do this, but it was



accomplished, the hand was laid upon mine; the fingers unlike those of the medium were large, fleshy, and warm.

The fact was therefore demonstrated that while the medium sat in her chair, controlled by an intelligence that in most beseeching but subdued accents craved for food, there stood before us another intelligence not so influenced, and one who could not only comprehend the request which had been preferred, but could also govern the functions of the material body which had been taken on, so that the request might be granted in the manner desired.

If it be objected that the sense of touch, equally with the sense of sight, might be at fault, I have to say that if I did not then feel a warm, solid hand laid on mine, I never did; for in order to prove whether at that moment I was or was not the slave of a "dominant idea," I severely examined myself, and felt quite assured that my right hand had not lost its cunning, but it was sufficiently sensitive and facile, and my judgment sufficiently well balanced, to enable me to draw a bill of exchange, sign a deed of conveyance, or do any other special act, the right doing of which requires the harmonious action of the powers of body and mind.

Mrs. H. Wheeldon informs me that after the seance was over, two plates of cake and bread-and-butter were brought into the room, and quickly eaten by the medium, still under control,—she, while doing so, covering the food with her arm, lest any portion of it should be taken from her.

I should be glad to know what relation, if any, this singular craving for food bears to the manifestations obtained, the medium, in her normal condition, being abstemious, and altogether undemonstrative.

On Saturday evening, February 17th, with interest unabated, a large circle assembled, hoping to witness what is perhaps, all things considered, the most astounding phase of spiritual phenomena—that of the spirit-form being built up and dematerialised in the presence of the lookers on.

As the second series of seances drew to a close, the testimony in favour of man's immortality, became cumulative to a degree exceeding far our utmost expectations. For those who were then present were privileged to look upon a sight surpassing in all that makes a thing marvellous, that upon which Manoah looked, when, "as the flame went up from off the altar, the angel of the Lord with whom he had been conversing, ascended in the flame of the altar," for not only did our heavenly visitant vanish from our sight, gradually disappearing until there was no trace of his presence left, but from a white something no bigger than a man's hand, there grew within the sphere of our actual observation a form, the solidity and structural perfection of whose parts were testified to by our senses of sight, feeling, hearing, and, I may add, taste. Although it might seem unnecessary in view of this special mani-

festation, the medium was secured, by being stitched and sealed in the chair and to the floor as before.

The cabinet with its immediate surroundings was subjected to a thorough examination, and everything pronounced quite satisfactory, one of the examiners being a gentleman who had not been present at any previous seance.

I occupied my old position in front of the cage door, and close to the cabinet, Mr. A. Smedley being my *vis-à-vis*, that is to say that he sat close to the cabinet at the other end, indeed so close he could at any moment, if so disposed, observe all that occurred on either side of the curtains; so that it was quite impossible for a form, either human or extemporised, to pass from or into the cabinet, without his knowledge.

He made careful notes of all that occurred, and I am happy to find from their perusal that his observations are entirely confirmatory of my own experience, and I am sure of that of all present.

When "Pocka" took control she was not long in opening one of her favourite batteries.

To puzzle those supposed to be knowing ones, by asking questions which they failed to answer correctly, appeared to afford her great pleasure. The experiment was tried to-night on a good old Wesleyan friend, on a subject connected with New Testament history, when it was found, he had either forgotten his catechism, or been caught napping. The result was all the same, "Pocka" fairly roared with delight.

Thus pleasantly sped the time for more than an hour, when, as might be expected, we were delighted to hear "Pocka" say, "'Benny' peaks, him tink him able to 'terialise outside cabinet, sing for your lives;" which we did with a will, and continued to do for about twenty minutes, when several of the friends together said, "There is something white lying on the floor outside the curtains," one lady said it seemed to her as large as a pint jug; to Mr. Smedley, myself, and others about the size of a man's hand, not much difference between the two figures. It so remained for a minute or two, then the bulk increased, but so indefinite was it in shape, it was difficult to think of anything with which to compare it. When it had attained about eighteen inches in height, it gradually drew away from the cabinet, until those who sat near could see completely round it.

Here I hazard the opinion, that, had the medium been put under an hydraulic press for a few hours, it is questionable if she could have been compressed into a mass as small as that we now looked upon.

Coming close to the table, and within a few inches of where I sat, something like development was observed; dividing lines appeared, shading off into what might be the rudiments of a robe. A minute or two more, and the change was such as to lead a lady sitting near me to say, "I believe it is 'Pocka!'" I replied, "We



must wait a little longer, as the form is not yet developed," and I was right, for it continued to rise and broaden, like nothing so much (except that the process was quicker) as a flower opening its petals to the sun, until "Benny" stood before us, so perfect and complete as to justify us in saying in the language of two of our finest representative poets

"And the grave is not the goal."

"A man's a man for a' that."

"Benny" was soon at work. Having bowed to the company, he laid his hand on Mr. Smedley's head, pressing it rather heavily, and then stroked his face.

Mr. Smedley took his hand, which he says was much larger than his own and double the size of the medium's. He appeared to be more thoroughly *en rapport* with the circle than on any previous occasion, doing his best to reach circumference as well as centre, to convince all that he was something more substantial than the ghost which is for ever dogging a murderer's steps.

In consequence, I presume, of having acquired either more confidence or power, he did not wrap himself in his robe so closely as usual; it was well thrown back from his face and off his hands.

Producing a pair of scissors, I asked "Benny" if he would oblige me by giving me a portion of his whisker. Instead of either bowing or shaking his head, I was delighted to hear him answer, in good honest Scotch, "Aye." He took the scissors, and I saw him cut from his face a portion of his whisker, which he gave to me, and which is now in my possession.

This was the first occasion on which he had spoken to us when materialised, and very much we enjoyed the northern twang. He chatted with us about ten minutes, during which time he busied himself in dividing, as before, certain apples and oranges which were given to him for that purpose.

Then the time of his departure drew near, and his exit was certainly in all respects as wonderful as his advent.

To liken his going to the sun dipping below the horizon, would not be correct. A better idea of the phenomenon might be obtained by having a figure made of wax placed near a good fire, so that every part of the figure might be brought within the action of the increased temperature. But there would be this essential difference between the two things, that whereas when the figure of wax was completely dissolved, the material might be gathered up and re-modeled, in the case of "Benny" the dematerialisation was so complete as not to leave a vestige of anything to tell either of what he was made or where he had gone. Measuring his full height against the curtains of the cabinet, he stood before us, a man of as fine proportions as any in the room.

As his white robes stood out, strongly relieved by the dark background, we were able to note distinctly, inch by inch, the lessening of the form, until there lay on the floor what appeared to be a



piece of white material about as large as a pocket-handkerchief, and eventually even that disappeared; but in that form it certainly did not pass into the cabinet, for Mr. Smedley, who had charged himself with the special duty of observing whether or not dematerialisation was completely effected outside the cabinet, affirms that not a single particle of the white substance he had been looking at passed behind the curtains in that form.

How marvellous are Thy works, O God! Think of it as we may, believe it or not, this also is a part of the divine plan, the result of law ever existent, though held in abeyance. How profound and far reaching those provisions of the Divine wisdom and love, which find their truest interpretation in the highest development of the human race.

Compare the search amongst the "Vestiges of Creation" for proof of the existence of extinct forms of life, with the study of the sublime mystery, upon the mere fringe of which we had just been permitted to look, and a mystery almost as great is evolved, that men of high culture and great mental grasp should almost exclusively expend upon the mere genesis of things, the time, strength, and thought which would carry them on to the advanced positions of fact and truth, where the possibilities of humanity would lie before them in the pure serene light of God's own existence.

Then "Pocka" paid her farewell visit. Her appearance, contrasting strongly as it did with that of "Benny," placed the phenomenon of materialisation before two or three persons who had not witnessed it before in a stronger light. She was very lively, her movements free and unconstrained, so that we could better judge of her appearance and build than ever before.

At my request, she came and kissed my hand; and Mr. Smedley, in his notes, says:—

"I asked her if she would give me a piece of her robe. She answered, 'No.' I asked if she would lay hold of my finger. She said 'es,' and took it in her little hand, holding it for a few seconds. I then said, 'You must have a tongue, Pocka; you can talk. I wonder if you have any teeth?' She at once took hold of my hand, and put one of my fingers in her mouth, and pressed it between her teeth, which, to the touch, were as perfect as teeth could be, her warm breath being also felt by me whilst my finger was in her mouth." Mr. Smedley then adds, not without reason, "Of course Mr. Edlin, the assistant-judge, *knows* that spirits *cannot* come back from the other world, because prejudice says they cannot. But we say they *can*, because we have seen, felt, and conversed with them, many of our children have done the same, and are therefore wiser in this respect than many of our professors and judges." So ended this memorable seance, and at the conclusion the medium was found in the cabinet entranced, and as firmly secured as when we left her.

As the two last seances in which special tests had been applied

were successful, we were encouraged to hope that in conducting our third and last experiment we might be equally fortunate.

Therefore, on Sunday morning, February 18, precisely at the hour when thousands of persons in different parts of the country had met to listen to wordy, and in many cases baseless, speculations about immortality—at all events to statements unsupported by direct and positive evidence—our circle met for the purpose of trying to prove it, and to obtain the proof in a form which neither sophistry, prejudice, nor persecution would be able to overturn. We reckoned that if in the past angels had trod our earth, and if to-day our ascended friends, like Moses and Elias, can return for a brief time to the scene of their earthly pilgrimage, it were, perchance, possible that they could leave behind them, as memorials of their visit, *footprints*, stamped not on the “sands of time,” which the beating surf of daily life might soon obliterate, but impressed on a substance which for long years to come would hold in sacred keeping the precious trust. If this could be done, and these memorials placed where the eye of the man who, perhaps, for the best part of his life had been tossed on a sea of conjecture, doubt, and despair in reference to future existence, might fall upon them, and they become to him a true and bright Apocalypse,—what a fresh and stirring significance would be given to the beautiful lines of the poet, when we could speak of them as

Footsteps which perhaps another  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.

In America, through the mediumship of Mrs. Hardy, spirit-moulds have been obtained under test conditions, sceptics themselves being the judges. The moulds were produced inside a wire cage securely fastened, while the medium sat at a distance from it. In making our experiment we proposed to reverse the American method by placing the medium in the cage, and having the moulds produced outside.

It was carefully noted that when Miss Wood entered the seance room she had nothing in her hands. Divesting herself of her jacket, she at once entered the cage, and was secured to the chair as before, which could not have been done without completely crushing articles so fragile as spirit-moulds, had she had any such about her person. The cage door was then screwed up.

Two pails having been provided, a pound of paraffin wax, which had lain on the top of the cage for about a week, was cut into small pieces, and placed in one of the pails; into this pail was poured boiling water until it was three-parts full, and into the other pail an equal quantity of cold water. The pails were then placed in the cabinet about twelve inches from the side of the cage. After singing for some time, “Pocka” requested us to take the pails out of the cabinet, and place them about two feet in front of the curtain. Her instructions were carried out. We



were then informed that the spirits would try and produce moulds under conditions somewhat different to those we had imposed, but in order to accomplish their purpose it would be necessary to open the cage door a few inches.

The screws were taken out, and an opening made, through which a very small baby could not have been passed, the table being placed against the door as before. We were not kept long in doubt as to the character of the manifestations; and in the manifestations that were given to us we had, I think at least, a very strong intimation that, when the best mental and physical conditions are offered to the spirits, they, on their part, to the extent of their knowledge and power, will work, to make the demonstration as complete as can be secured by our best devised tests. The old proverb, "seeing is believing" was on this occasion fitly and beautifully illustrated. We had not asked to *see* spirit-moulds made; we professed to be content if we found them in the cabinet while the medium was secured in the cage, an experience, which has not hitherto, I believe, been improved upon.

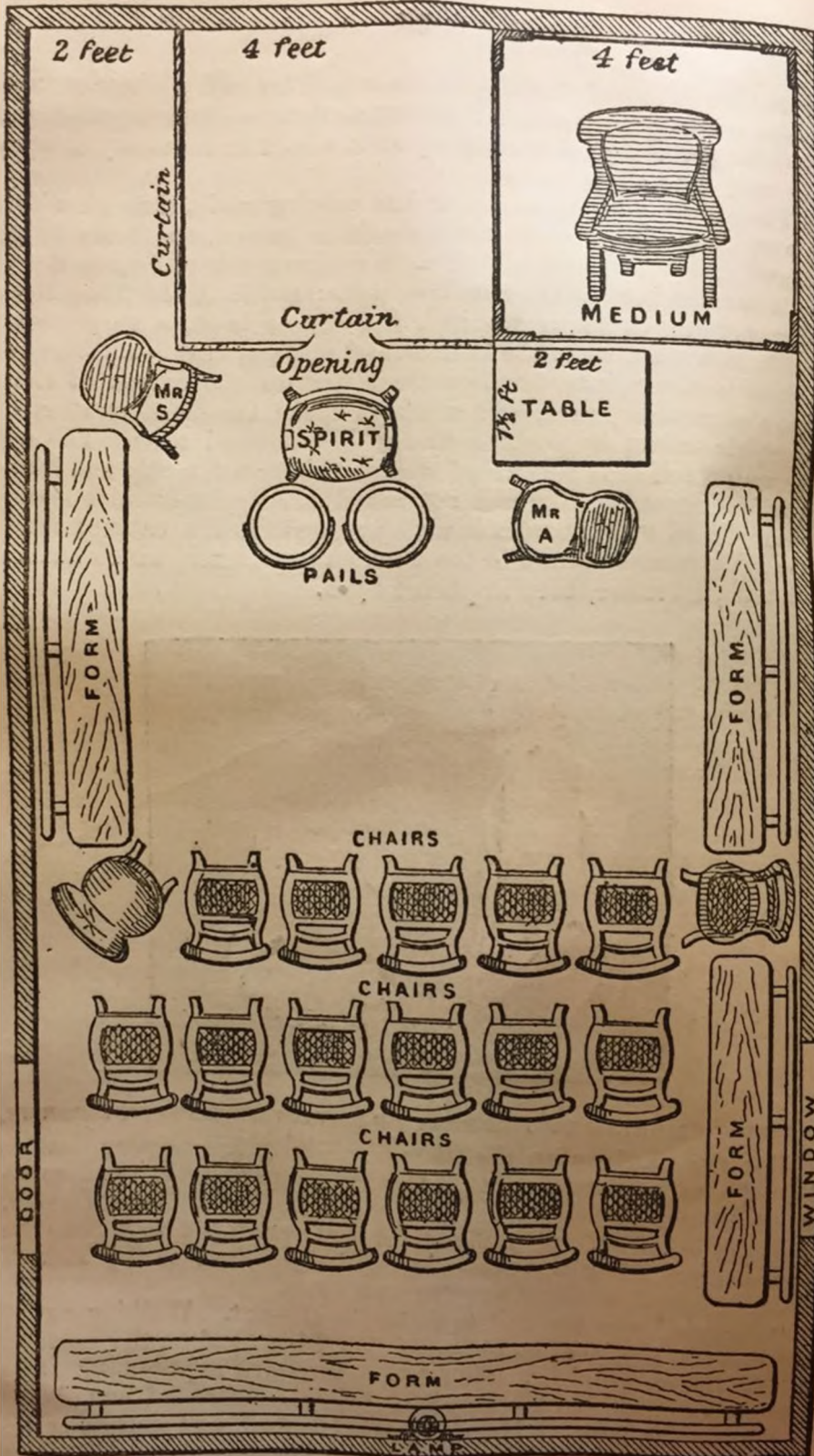


#### PARAFFIN MOULDS OF THE FEET OF MATERIALISED SPIRIT-FORMS.

But the workers on the other side,—doubtless arguing, just as logically as we should on this, that if one person sitting close to another saw that other put a boot on his foot and pull it off again, it would be exceedingly difficult for that person not to believe he had seen the thing so done—addressed themselves to the task of MAKING SPIRIT-MOULDS BEFORE OUR EYES.

"Meggie" was the first to make the attempt. Walking out of the cabinet, she went at once and placed her hand on the back of Mr. Smedley's chair. He asked if the spirit required it? She bowed her head. Mr. Smedley passed the chair forward, and placed it opposite the pails. "Meggie" seated herself, and gathering up her long robes, dipped her left foot in the melted paraffin, then





Ground Plan of the Room.

into the cold water, again in the paraffin, and she thus continued, dipping in the pails alternately until the work was finished. So closely veiled was the spirit, it was not known who was at work. Some one, judging by the vigour displayed, said, "It is Benny;" upon which the spirit placed a hand on Mr. Smedley's, as much as to say, "Feel who it is." "It is Meggie," said Mr. Smedley; "she has given me her small hand."

When a sufficient quantity of the paraffin had been taken on, "Meggie" placed her left foot on her right knee, allowing it to rest there about two minutes. She then removed the mould from her foot, held it up and tapped it, so that all might see and hear, and then at my request, placed it in my hand, and it was by me in turn placed in safety. "Meggie" essayed to repeat the experiment with the right foot, but after dipping it two or three times, in consequence, I presume, of her power failing, she rose from her seat, went into the cabinet and did not return. The paraffin taken on by the right foot was afterwards found on the cabinet floor.

Then came "Benny." On emerging from the cabinet, he bowed to the friends. He then placed his large hand on Mr. Smedley's head—a "sign manual" easily understood and recognised.

Taking a chair offered to him, he placed it opposite the pails, and with a vigour far exceeding that displayed by "Meggie," he proceeded to dip his left foot in the pails alternately, as she had done; in fact the motion was so swift and steady as to suggest the idea of a little steam engine being at work—a figure actually employed by someone present when referring to "Benny's" movements.

In order that those who read this report may have a strictly correct impression as to the opportunity for close and accurate observation on the part of those who attended this seance, I may state that while "Benny" was making the mould of his foot, Mr. Smedley sat so close to him on his right, as to permit the spirit to lay his hand on his head, and stroke his face, which he did. On his left, I sat so close to him as to permit me to take the mould from him, when finished, without leaving my seat, whilst those who occupied the chairs on the front row were distant about three feet from the pails.

The whole process, from the first dip to the finished mould, was distinctly seen, and the fact that they were made as stated rests on as good evidence as can be offered for the shining of the sun, or the falling of snow.

Had there been a lingering suspicion in the mind of anyone present, that the medium by some "subtle device or otherwise"—for in this case we could not speak of "palmistry"—had managed to present us with an impression of her own little foot, it was destined to be for ever destroyed the moment "Benny," at my request placed in my hand the mould, we saw him take from his foot. I involuntarily exclaimed, "What a difference!" I indeed felt I had got hold of the Scotchman's slipper.



When "Benny" had finished his modelling, he replaced the chair in its former position, and then walked about, shaking hands, and speaking to those around him.

On "Meggie's" retirement, "Pocka" controlling the medium, said, "Benny" peaks, him give 'ou test," at the time we had not the slightest idea of what was intended, but "Benny," remembering he had asked that the cage door might be partially opened, and anxious that this concession should not in any respect diminish the completeness of the test under which the moulds had been obtained, undertook in his own way to convince us that the medium was not in any sense an active participant in the work which had been done.

Therefore, approaching the cage door he closed it, and pushed the table up closely against it; he then took my right arm in both his hands, and pressed it firmly on the table, as much as to say, "You take care it does not move an inch," which duty I faithfully discharged.

Stooping down, he drew the musical box from beneath the table, and carrying it towards the cage door, placed it on one end on the floor, the other end leaning against the door, the position of the box then being such, that, had the door been opened, the box must have been thrown backwards. Having effected these arrangements, "Benny" bid us adieu, and vanished.

It will thus be seen, when I state that the table never moved, and that at the close of the seance the musical-box was found resting against the cage door, and the medium inside the cage entranced and secured to the chair, that the moulds were given to us under a test as absolute as though the cage door had been screwed up. But supposing the cage test had been less complete than it was, we are confronted by other difficulties which require explanation. In the first place, as a rule individuals have not two left feet, but the moulds we got were both taken from left feet; and again the anatomical structure and proportions of both right and left foot in most individuals is so much alike the shoemaker finds it enough for his purpose to measure one; but I find the outside measurement of the mould taken from "Benny's" foot is nine inches in length and four inches in breadth, while that taken from "Meggie's" foot is eight inches in length and two and a quarter in breadth. Again, the cabinet was so surrounded and watched on every side, by no conceivable possibility could a human being introduce himself or herself without instant detection; whilst at the close of the seance, when an article of some kind was asked for in which to place the moulds for conveyance to my house, nothing could be found, not even a sheet of paper could be had, until one large enough for the purpose was brought from a friend's house. I ask, then, if the moulds of which I have been speaking were not taken from the feet of the medium—and in view of the facts I



have narrated who will dare say they were?—from whose feet were they taken?

Here is a wall against which sceptical scientists, bigoted theologians, conjurers, and incompetent judges are invited to knock their heads, with the caution that, in the event of a collision, the heads will be smashed, for assuredly this wall, like every other fact in nature, will stand firm as the everlasting hills.

My own theory—and I shall hold it until I get a better—is, these moulds are indeed the “footprints of angels,” and as such they are to me very precious.

In some of the cathedrals of Europe there are servitors who, for a consideration, will open for inspection cabinets filled with holy relics, some of which, on account of their preciousness, are deposited in golden caskets, and to which there clings the mysterious sanctity of ages, but amongst these there is to be found nothing so calculated to stir to its deepest depths the human soul as these moulds; for, granting these relics are what they are represented to be, they at best but illustrate the history of a dead past, whereas our simple piece of wax, so moulded, like the falling apple which to the prophetic eye of Newton brought a revelation big with glorious results, tells of a future, compared with which the highest developments of life and culture hitherto attained are like the faintest streaks of morning light when compared with the full unclouded splendour of noonday.

My task is now finished. I have endeavoured to give a faithful record of the facts connected with Miss Wood's visit to Derbyshire, in the order of their occurrence. Doubtless, my statement in some of its details to a large number of persons will appear incredible. But I am of opinion that if in any place conditions as good as those we were able to offer Miss Wood in Belper and Derby are given, the same results may be obtained through her mediumship.

I feel it in my heart to say that the best thanks of the great body of investigators into Spiritualism in this country are due to our friends in Newcastle, who have succeeded in developing to such a state of perfection so excellent a servant of the spirit-world.

Of Miss Wood as a medium I cannot speak too highly. By her conduct during the ordeal through which she passed, she gained for herself the full confidence and esteem of all who were privileged to attend her seances. I can only hope that her career in the future will be as pleasant as was her short sojourn in Derbyshire.

But if it should be her misfortune to meet one, who, emulating the historical renown of a certain professor, considers it his duty to *hunt and worry like a wild beast* so gentle and so sensitive a young lady, and proceeds to put his devilish purpose into execution—believing though I do that even bad men have sometimes their use—I feel I could pray that on the head of such a one a swift retribution might fall.

## FACTS FROM THE HISTORY OF MISS WOOD'S DEVELOPMENT AS A MEDIUM.

By MRS. MOULD, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

[*From the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, October 26, 1877.*]

As no two blades of grass are alike, so no two minds, however nearly they may be allied, are exactly similar: we find this in thoughts, moods, feelings, and likings, and must expect to find the same law ruling the spiritual part of our nature, causing us all to vary in our experiences, on our first acquaintance with Spiritualism.

Speaking of my own personal reminiscences of it, my first enlightenment upon the subject arose from hearing lectures delivered by Mrs. Emma Hardinge (as she was then called) and Dr. Sexton, at times wide apart, each speaker treating the theme differently; the one telling us how spiritual growth must accrue by inquiring into this subject, and the close alliance of a higher life with this material one; how man must approximate to all that is pure and good by such intercourse, and become fitter for his entrance into the other life, by learning something of it here. The gentleman lecturer pursued another course: he recited the marvels of it; how anyone could find the truth of it out for himself, urging each one to spell it out by his own personal endeavours.

Spiritualism was so new to me, that, however easy it might seem to be to try it, to one not at all acquainted with it in any way, it was impossible for me to believe that I could in such a simple manner as placing my hands upon a table, thus upset the law of gravitation. So I waited for some years for a way to be opened up to me, when the lectures delivered by Mr. Morse while in the trance condition aroused attention, and became the means of our introduction to him, and through this gentleman to our Newcastle mediums, by whose aid we were able to pursue the inquiry so eagerly desired.

Miss Wood was first introduced to us as a medium for good manifestations in the dark, and through whom we could likewise obtain raps, with or without a sitting, by merely holding our hands for a minute or two in the light, not only on a table, but on any object we chose to prefer. By these means we were introduced to all her spirit-guides—the light, heavy, or medium taps being severally indicative of them.

As public seances are, of all sittings, the most unsatisfactory ones for investigators; a recapitulation of the phenomena observed in the hall at Weir's Court would be useless and unprofitable; suffice it to observe, that our first initiation into the mysteries of Spiritualism



was begun there, and consisted of rappings, and touches, and the possession of the medium's faculties by entrancement, when several and distinct individualities could be traced, altogether different from the personality of the medium in her normal condition.

But there are so many clever people in the world, who are able, by sharpness, nimbleness, by control of the minds of those about them, or of the circumstances in which they may be placed, to confuse, or blind the senses, that, without at all impugning the honour of those who are essential to the production of such wonderful manifestations as the spiritual phenomena, yet, for the sake of quickly arriving at the truth, and of establishing lasting convictions of it upon the mind, it is most desirable for both sitters and medium to be personally acquainted, and to form as select and as properly organised a circle as is possible, especially at the commencement of an investigation; when, with this thorough grounding, and not till then, may we firmly build up our theories upon this perplexing topic. We came to this conclusion after what could not be called other than a useless waste of time, during which the inquiry was conducted amidst a heterogeneous mixture of individualities, the nature of the phenomena inducing their continual re-assertion, while their wonderfulness occasioned the extremest scepticism; but as there is good in all things, we learned this lesson, that, just as no other study can be conducted under unsuitable conditions, so only by repeated and careful observation could we expect to understand the circumstances that would be productive of the best results.

For the reasons already advanced, some friends with ourselves agreed to form a circle at our house, and we commenced holding our sittings in April, 1873. These we continued holding weekly, for only dark seances at first, of which the annexed are specimens.

Forming a circle of from twelve to fifteen persons (including the medium, whose hands were held on either side of her), we commenced by singing until Miss Wood became entranced by one of her guides, who, after introductions and small talk, soon left her, and then commenced manipulations by the spirits upon the various sitters, those who were most mediumistic receiving the greatest share of attention, while others who were somewhat fearful got little or none at all; it was, besides, observed that those who were kind and open in manners, and most expressive of their feelings, and desirous of favours shown them, were the soonest noticed.

The manifestations given were taps with tubes, pulls of the dress, strokes upon the head, and pressures from soft hands; the pockets of some were rifled of their contents, and placed in out-of-the-way positions; the heads of some would be ornamented with others' belongings; boots and slippers were pulled off, and a host of other exercises of power, too numerous to mention, were afforded. One or two of us felt a little child sit upon our knees and embrace us, and then appear to go round us, touching the

shoulders and back part of the head, answering to our thoughts at times by pats upon the person.

When the power was used up, we again sang until the medium awoke from trance, when we were allowed to turn on the gas, which revealed confusion on all sides of us : boots, slippers, handkerchiefs, bonnets, tubes, &c., strewn here and there, or thrown to some far corner of the room, where they were not easily found.

The room was thoroughly darkened for these sittings. If a speck of light was observed when we commenced, it had either to be immediately subdued, or it tended to delay, or in some cases prevent, the unseen working altogether. We thus had a great many seances by simply holding the medium's hands; but, as perfect satisfaction was required by all that they were never loosened during the sitting, it was suggested, and acted upon, that Miss Wood be secured so as to prove to all simultaneously that the power was outside of her. This, after some delay, was accomplished by fastening her hands and feet to the chair, and that piece of furniture and her thereon placed in the centre of the circle. Sometimes the fastenings used were of tape, oftentimes of thread, thoroughly knotted, and once or twice by fine strong silk; yet whatever was used was found as secure at the finish of the sitting as at the beginning. At a further advanced sitting we sat in a horseshoe position, the piano meeting each end of it, while the end sitters had both hands held by the hand of his neighbour, all the rest of the sitters joining hands, and Miss Wood was most securely tied in a chair, in the centre of the sitters.

At first we had the usual manifestations of touches and noises, while the piano was strummed every now and then, the music-stool was pushed backwards and forwards, and one or two of the sitters were well castigated with a paper tube, while two or three distinct and separate manifestations were produced at once. Then gradually the noises subsided, when "Benny" entranced Miss Wood and appeared to waste time in profitless remarks. At last he sang the "Song of the Birds," and recited "The Auction" most humorously and poetically. When this was concluded there was again a complete cessation of all manifestations for a while; then, by the sounding of notes upon the piano (in lieu of raps), we were requested to move close round that instrument, in doing which a gentleman's foot accidentally came in contact with Miss Wood's chair. Immediately afterwards he told us he was touched by something behind him, when his foot again went forward, but he could not find the chair. Books were brought to us from a far side-table at the other end of the room; the easy chair was wheeled against our chairs, outside of the sitters; the fender followed suit; we heard the movements of articles upon the mantelpiece, which was at the extreme end of the room opposite to the piano; and eventually "good night" was rapped out at the far end of the room. When we struck a light we were astonished to find both Miss Wood and



chair behind the screen, near to the mantelpiece; she was still tied, and in a deep trance and must have been carried over the heads of the sitters.

After a short time we commenced with a dark sitting, when, after it was concluded, with a subdued light we gained materialisations. Miss Wood, lying upon a mattress behind a folding screen, was not placed under test conditions. The results of this phase of her development may be best illustrated by the following facts.

When the first part of our meeting was over and Miss Wood had placed herself in the cabinet, "Pocka" entranced her, merrily chatting with us, and saying she intended to materialise and dematerialise in our presence. Of course we thanked her cordially, when she next proceeded to make puns upon all our names. She then left her medium. After we had sung about twenty minutes we saw a small white speck in front of us upon the floor, which grew larger and larger very gradually until it assumed the form of "Pocka," when we gave her our warmest greetings. After she had remained in front of us for a while she gently faded away until she had completely disappeared.

We then sang for about ten minutes, when another speck of light was seen, which in the same slow manner rose up and up, higher than the last, till a tall form in white robes emerged out of it and began most energetically to fling books and other articles about. By raps he told us he was "Benny," and on being asked if he would kindly measure and mark his height upon the wall he consented, when a pencil was given him, and he made a mark immediately above his head. He then gradually dematerialised out of sight. We then sang until Miss Wood came out of trance, when she was measured and found to be seven inches less in size than the figure. Another similar seance was held shortly afterwards, when "Pocka" in like manner first formed from a speck of light and disappeared, followed by a like process on "Benny's" part; but this seance had an additional importance attached to it, from the fact that the screen was so far opened that the wall inside the cabinet was distinctly visible, and something dark could be seen lying upon the ground.

Soon following this last sitting, was formed a seance for photographing the materialised form, by the aid of the magnesium light. The preliminaries having been arranged, Miss Wood, with Miss Fairlamb, both entered the cabinet, and were carefully wrapped up in shawls, to protect them from the sudden glare of light, which is often so injurious to the medium. After talking with the two controls, "Pocka" and "Cissy," and singing for awhile, a signal was given by raps for the plates to be prepared. In a little while, "Cissy" made her appearance, and was photographed, then retired into the cabinet, coming out a second time to undergo a similar process, both processes turning out failures as far as the face was concerned, although the form was pretty accurately

described. Before she came out a third time, the sitters were requested not to gaze too much at her, as that prevented her keeping steady enough to be taken well. Miss Wood was then brought out of the cabinet and placed on a chair well muffled up to increase the power, when another attempt was made, which might be called successful as far as the face was concerned, as that was well defined.

This seance was not thought satisfactory, the face of what was supposed to be a little Hindoo girl appearing as a big, ugly, blackened one, unlike either of the mediums. It occasioned some ill-feeling, and is instanced because it was the means of developing the mediumship in another way, for when Miss Wood next sat for materialisation she insisted upon having tests applied, when it will be observed that the figure then, instead of forming before us, formed in the cabinet, and then appeared to us. To satisfy her, a gentleman fastened some tape round her neck, knotted it, and sealed the knot, the tape was then passed from thence to the wrists, which were each tied, knotted, and sealed, when she lay down, and the ends of the tape were nailed to the skirting-board, knotted and sealed as the others. Presently "Pocka" controlled her and conversed with us, full of wit as usual; then we sang for awhile, when the leaf of the screen was gently opened, and "Pocka" appeared, rather cloudy at first. She then gained a little in intensity. Going every now and then to where her medium was, she playfully hid herself behind the arm-chair, and also seated herself in the empty fire-grate, appearing to put her head up the chimney. When she was before us, we asked if "Benny" could give us some raps in the cabinet, when knockings were heard distinctly two or three times. At that time she was fully three feet from the screen, holding out both hands towards us to let us see she did not do it. Then it was desired that the leaf of the screen be moved, and it was opened and shut two or three times. Shortly afterwards "Pocka" went in to her medium and rapped out "Good-night." When the gas was turned up and the medium examined, all the fastenings were found to be intact.

About this time a new feature in the development began to manifest itself. When the sittings were concluded, and the medium was disentranced, a coffee supper was always partaken of by her and other mediums who might be present, with any of the rest of the company who chose to remain. This was usually accompanied by so-called spiritual manifestations, consisting of raps, movements of plates, &c., and efforts at table-tilting. The table at which we sat was a large dining one, and unusually heavy, so that with the efforts to tilt it, the creaks, and what might seem stretching of its various parts, were often prolonged and loud, and a leg was often visibly raised. This led to one of the gentlemen present asking if he lifted up one side of it himself, could the other side be raised by this invisible agency, when an affirmative reply was



rapped out, and the gentleman placed both of his arms in a-kimbo fashion beneath it, and with an effort contrived to lift and hold it up. As he raised up the one side, the other rose as well, without anyone touching it, remaining poised and perfectly level, with all the supper things spread upon it, until the gentleman declared it was too heavy for him to hold up any longer, and consequently lowered it down again on *terra firma*, the opposite side descending much more gently than his own. At the next sitting, a week later, it was asked if the table could be raised without help, when the reply was rapped out, "We will try;" and after a little interval of straining, it was lifted four or five inches into the air, remaining thus suspended for a few minutes ere it again gently resumed its proper position. A few minutes afterwards, an oil painting upon the wall was lifted from two supports and lowered a few inches further down. It must be observed that these manifestations took place in the full glare of a three-light chandelier, while at the same time a huge fire was burning in the grate.

Of the 200 or more seances which I have attended, perhaps the most satisfactory ones to myself were the third or fourth, and nearly the last one.

The first one was a dark seance, where the medium's hands were held by sitters on either side. At previous sittings I had often been singled out for taps from tubes, &c., somewhat puzzled to conjecture how particular parts, such as a finger, or some part of the head, could be so aptly struck, even when an effort was made to change its position, yet the stroke was always unerring. I on this particular evening which I wish to record, was placed very near Miss Wood, to receive a touch direct from the spirit, and, feeling somewhat awestruck to be placed in such close proximity to the invisible, I took my place three sitters from the medium. After the usual manifestations of touches with tubes, &c., or pulls of the dress, I was gently kissed upon the cheek, and a little while after felt a very soft hand touch me. A grape was next put into my mouth so unexpectedly, that without intending injury I instinctively brought my teeth together before the finger and thumb that inserted the grape could be withdrawn, yet I felt no substance between the teeth, and the parts of the finger and thumb were dematerialised in my mouth. "Pocka," the little sprite who favoured me, aware of my concern for her if I had in any way hurt her, and knowing the unintentional nature of the action, soon quieted my fears; for though the nip was not beneficial, there was no injury to her medium. This seance introduced me to spirits, as they have ever been since to me, viz., as human beings like ourselves. Any fear that might happen to arise would be of the same nature as is experienced in meeting with company here with which the soul is not in accord.

The next seance which I wish to specify, was held in Weir's Court, when Miss Wood, after requesting the usual test-conditions,

was placed in the cabinet, taped and sealed as usual. The floor of the room had just been washed, and was very wet, and as I had thin boots on, I sat behind the circle of sitters, with my feet resting upon the rung of one of the front chairs. A demur was raised, when "Pocka," who had entranced Miss Wood, told me to sit in a cabinet, facing the one in which her medium was: thus I was placed very near her, shut off somewhat (by the form of case I was in) from the rest of the sitters, with my feet resting upon a gas-stove, which one of the gentleman had kindly sought for me. After singing some time, we were told "Benny" was going to materialise, when presently a shadowy figure issued forth in a very dim light, from the cabinet opposite, so very noiselessly and ghostly it glided out—in spite of myself, I felt a chill creep through me. As long as this feeling of awe pervaded me, the figure kept well away, but as soon as I had imbibed the notion that really it was a human being like myself, it came nearer and nearer, and, tubing some of the gentlemen present, hit me a few strokes by way of a change; dancing backwards and forwards with remarkable agility, until at one time coming much too near my footstool, while wheeling round towards me, it fell sheer over my right shoulder—a huge mass of drapery that was of no weight whatever; in fact I felt nothing more than the weight of a light muslin curtain. The spirit took some little time to regain its balance. When I asked the spirit if it had any body? "No" was tapped out upon my hand. I next requested to be allowed to hold the drapery; this was agreed to, and I was allowed to squeeze the whole of it; next he lifted up his foot and let me grasp it, one seemingly of veritable flesh and blood; then the hands, they too were as real; afterwards I stroked the beard upon the face, which felt shaggy and wet; when, after some further demonstrations of his power to lift and move things about, he passed into the cabinet where his medium was, and I saw him no more.

Both of the tests which I received in these two seances were unexpected and very convincing, besides furnishing a fund of information on the subject of materialisations, which were a study in themselves: how much only as was necessary of a body was formed under stringent conditions and need of conclusive manifestations of power to the sitters; how rapidly the substance of it could be dissolved; how that substance was derived from the medium direct, as a hurt seemingly given to the spirits only affects the mediums.

Then what appeared frivolous small-talk seemed on after-consideration to be a means of diverting reflection and of conforming all minds to an equal state to produce the nearest approach to harmony; and again, when this vapid conversation was so lengthily continued as to cause dissatisfaction, it was then noticeable that they were correct in their statements that they had been gathering up power, for these delays were often followed by the most power-



ful manifestations; and although not exactly understandable at all times, it was pleasant to feel them all as one, in a sense, in their anxiety to help us and prevent causing unnecessary alarm; and yet for all their solicitude and trouble how little can we repay them. Ofttimes a few poor expressions of love and assurances (maybe) minus the feeling, which nevertheless often serve as condolences to those not emancipated far enough in spirit to have knowledge of the all in human nature. Yet all who have in some earnest way endeavoured to probe this enigma, with after-reflection must experience unutterable gratitude for their help in the hour of need; so that, as the spirits themselves tell us, if we cannot evidence our most sacred desires by external gifts and forms, yet, by having a sincere regard for them, with our best wishes for their welfare, we may be enabled to complete most good; because the emotional faculties being wholly spiritual, are most reaching to those who have parted from earth, and we hope may aid somewhat their gradual growth from the finite to the infinite.

During the course of our investigations we experienced the difficulties of having to contend with what we called evil controls, when the most stubborn aspect of human nature was exhibited, combined with low, reckless manners. These we found difficult to manage, and it is a still harder matter to express an opinion about them. Sometimes we supposed them traceable to the humour of the medium, sometimes to the system being overtasked; when due to the latter cause, absolute rest was the only remedy, whilst the former, having a moral cause for it, had in like manner to be treated. We were not successful in our treatment of them, but, from what I then and have since observed, I should suppose the exercise of a strong will-power to be sufficient to cope with the difficulty as it occurs.

Various opinions have been expressed as to the cause of the evil, some supposing it assignable to the nature of the novice, others to the body, having been rendered so sensitive, it readily imbibes the atmosphere of either good or evil in the company that is encountered during the day, bearing the unseen influence to the circle room, where it becomes manifest. No doubt there is some truth in this, rendering it important for the medium to keep as free as possible from such malaria till the spiritual nature is strong enough to resist its incubus; but a great deal depends upon the mode of developing. Sitting too much, and too long, by trying the powers too much, weakens them, inducing morbid feelings, till the healthy tone of their whole nature, becoming lowered, and unfit for proper control, is acted upon unhealthily, thus deteriorating the manifestation and preventing progress. But I believe the chief cause of evil controls proceeds from developing in a miscellaneous circle of sitters, when the medium's sensitive nature and passive state receives the combined yet often antagonistic action of the inharmonic mass of minds, thus preparing the way for, and further-

ing the introduction of, spirits of a like nature, at any time, from the untraceable and spiritual source. Hence the necessity of selecting a harmonious circle with freedom from intrusion or disturbance of any kind, from mind or matter, till the development is so far advanced as to be beyond the risk of them.

Seeing the difficulties encompassing the growth of mediums, and the little care that has been exercised in that direction, we cannot wonder at the often so-called "exposures" that have taken place; and I think it behoves us at times, in our intercourse with sensitives, to ensure absolute test-conditions, that we may have the firm conviction impressed upon us that it is a power outside of them, so that we may unflinchingly bear testimony to the genuineness of their mediumship when we feel called upon to state our opinion through any mishap that may have come to them.

Having seen so much of the development of Miss Wood, and witnessed the power exercised under test and other conditions, I feel free to express my convictions as to the genuineness of her gift, and besides having known her personally for three years and a half, and seen a great deal of her during that time, I consider myself qualified to sketch a true portrait of her as she has appeared to me. As expression is said to be the index of character, I must define Miss Wood to be determined and inflexible, denoting one well able to plunge through what has been dived into; thoroughly honest, so being thus true to herself, "it must follow as the night the day" she will not "then be false to any" one; and naturally kind, her guides are correspondingly so, and will strain a point to serve sitters to the utmost of their ability. Of a friendly nature, when her sympathies are evoked she will cordially respond to her share in any undertaking, be it menial or elevating. Abiding steadfast to those whom she respects, she is stern in front to her enemies; appearing more so, however, than she really is, and is not unyielding, even to those who do not deserve such lenity. This is as I know Miss Wood to be. There are very many points of character not touched upon at all, which I have not had an opportunity of observing sufficiently to define correctly, but if by accurate analysis of the principal part we may safely infer the rest, then we may conclude that the shadows always necessary to relieve the lights must have a harmonising and not a disjointed effect.

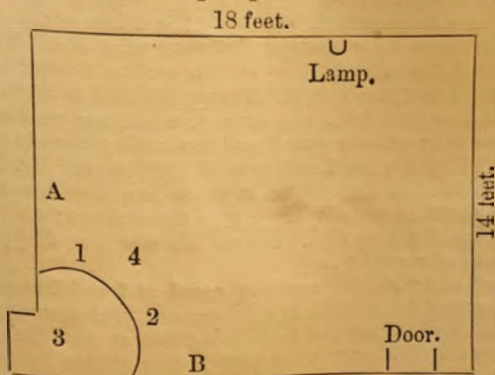


# ANOTHER REMARKABLE SEANCE WITH MISS WOOD.

[From the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, June 28th, 1878.]

During the last few weeks there have appeared in the MEDIUM several descriptions of remarkable seances through our local mediums, but the following account of a seance held in the seance room of the Newcastle Psychological Society on Friday evening, the 14th inst., will serve as a crowning illustration to them all.

A full account of the fixtures of the seance-room will be found in No. 427 of the MEDIUM, but it has been found necessary, in order to impress the account more deeply upon the minds of the readers, to give the following diagram of the room:—



At a few minutes past eight o'clock about twelve persons attended the usual weekly developing circle, which was concluded at ten minutes past nine p.m. Miss Wood, who happened to be present, was asked by one of the circle if she would be willing to have a short seance for materialisation, which she very kindly agreed to.

The circle was composed of eleven persons, who sat in the manner shown in the diagram, Mr. J. Ker sitting near A, and Mr. J. Moffet sitting near B. Miss Wood entered the cabinet at eighteen minutes past nine p.m., and took her seat at the point indicated by the figure 3. The sitting now commenced with singing "There's a land that is fairer than day," and on the conclusion of the first verse a form was seen looking out at the aperture of the curtain, which turned out to be the spirit-form of "Benny," who is improving very much. The features of his face were plainly discernible. He spoke to many of the sitters with playful humour, shook hands with two or three with a grip that only a strong man can give, and told them that the "little lassie" ("Pocka") was getting ready to come out, and that he was going to help her in-

side of the cabinet. He presently disappeared inside of the cabinet, and the diminutive form of "Pocka" appeared, who seemed lithe-some and gladsome, playing with the sitters, and, of course, kissing some. She endeavoured to speak in the direct voice, but the sounds were not intelligible to any of the sitters, and after the space of a few minutes she re-entered the cabinet, only to come out again after the lapse of a few seconds. She was now seen at figure 2 to lift the curtain up at one side. "Benny," who had entranced the medium and was holding intercourse with the circle, said that the "little lassie" was trying to lift the curtain and that he would leave the medium and help her.

#### TWO FORMS AND THE MEDIUM VISIBLE AT THE SAME TIME.

Presently the spirit-form of "Benny" appeared at figure 1. There were now two forms plainly visible by the whole of the circle, and by their gestures they seemed inherent with life. They then jointly lifted the curtain (the middle section thereof extending from figures 1 to 2, the side strips being fastened to the walls) to a distance of four feet from the ground, when the medium (Miss Wood) could be plainly seen by all the circle sitting in her chair. She then lifted her hand and extended it towards Mr. Ker, who on taking hold of it was drawn towards her, and his hand was passed in front of Miss Wood's face three times: on the third time she heaved a deep sigh. The curtain was then dropped down for the space of a minute.

"Benny" and "Pocka" again appeared at 1 and 2 respectively, and again raised the curtain to a distance of four feet and gently rested it on the back of the medium's chair at 3. The medium and the two spirit-forms were now plainly visible by the whole circle. The medium now got up from her chair and again extended her hand towards Mr. Ker, who took hold of it, and she immediately walked from the cabinet to figure 4 with a tottering gait. The two forms of "Pocka" and "Benny" were still plainly visible. After standing for a brief space she (the medium) returned to the cabinet and took her seat, the curtain was lifted from off the back of the chair and placed on the ground, and the forms of "Benny" and "Pocka" withdrew after bidding all good night.

Thus ended one of the most conclusive seances that has ever taken place in the town of Newcastle. On breaking up the seance, and looking to see the time it was found to be exactly twenty minutes to ten p.m., so that this remarkable seance occupied the short space of twenty-two minutes.

Signed by the following sitters:—

JOHN KER, 39, Wesley Street.	G. MONTGOMERY, 41, Jesmond Rd.
J. MOFFET, 19, Princes St.	Mr. G. L. HOLMES, 14, Toward St.
Gateshead.	Mrs. G. L. HOLMES, do.
G. WILSON, 4, Toward St., Byker.	Mr. PRICE, South Shields.
Mrs. G. WILSON, do.	Mrs. PRICE, South Shields.



# TO INVESTIGATORS.

---

THAT all may be placed in a position to investigate the Spiritual phenomena, and judge for themselves, the following information is appended. All Spiritualists were once investigators, and the same path which has led them to knowledge and conviction is open to all who choose to walk therein.

## 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 to 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 temperament are present, they require to be arranged so as to produce harmony in the psychical atmosphere 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.

**\* 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, 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, Proprietor 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.

## NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE SPIRITUAL EVIDENCE SOCIETY.

WEIR'S COURT, NEWGATE STREET.

(President: John Mould. Hon. Sec. H. A. Kersey, 4, Eslington Terrace, Jesmond Road.)

Lectures every Sunday Evening at 6.30, and occasionally in the Afternoon, and on Monday Evenings at 8 o'clock.

### WEEKLY SEANCES AND MEETINGS.

Sunday, Seance at 10.30 a.m.—"Form Manifestations."

Tuesday, " at 8 p.m.—"Physical Manifestations."

Wednesday, at 7.45 p.m.—Spiritualists' Improvement Class.

Thursday, Seance at 8 p.m.—"Form Manifestations."

Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m.—Developing Circles for Members and Friends (free).

The Library of the Society is open every Wednesday evening from 8 to 9 p.m. for the issue of Books to Members.