

The Spiritualist.

A RECORD OF THE PROGRESS OF THE SCIENCE AND ETHICS OF SPIRITUALISM.

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

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A DESIRE for investigation being felt by many on hearing of the phenomena of Spiritualism, several residents in Dalston and its neighbourhood thought that if an Association were formed, and investigation instituted, the alleged facts of Spiritualism, if true, might be demonstrated. Accordingly, a preliminary Meeting was called and this Association formed on the 15th September, 1870.

Its purposes are the collection of facts, through its own circle, or circles, so as to form a perfect basis for honest opinion, and by various means to induce others to give the matter careful enquiry, before judging of the manifestations of modern Spiritualism.

Ordinary experimental *seances* are held weekly, on Thursday evenings, at 8 p.m., to which Members are admitted, as well as Members of similar Associations (*vide* Rule IX). Strangers can only be admitted to the ordinary *seance* held on the first Thursday evening in each month, on introduction by a Member. The last Thursday evening in each month is devoted to special *seances* with professional media, lectures, discussions, reading of papers, or narration of experiences of investigators; to which strangers are admitted, under the same regulations as are enforced on the first Thursday evening in each month.

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VERY soon after the introduction of Modern Spiritualism into England the subject attracted attention in Clerkenwell and neighbourhood, where several circles were formed, some of which were continued for a long number of years, and the great and increasing pressure from strangers for admission thereto led, in May, 1869, to the formation of this Association.

It seeks as its main object to assist, by various means, any person desirous to obtain information respecting Spiritualism, or to commence the investigation of its facts; but, whilst Members unite for this purpose, they have opportunities of improving their own knowledge of its teachings and varied phenomena, of becoming acquainted with the experience and opinions of others, and with the general literature of the movement.

Free public Services are held on Sunday evenings at Goswell Hall, 86, Goswell-road, and other meetings (of which announcement is duly made) are held on Thursday evenings; the latter meetings consist of *seances*, conferences, narrations of experience, the reading of papers, &c. Strangers are admitted on Thursday evenings on the introduction of a Member. Social gatherings are occasionally held for bringing Members and friends into closer acquaintance with one another. The Library is for the use of Members only.

Further information may be obtained from the Officers of the Association at the meetings, or by letter addressed to the Secretary at the Committee Rooms, 30, Parkfield-street, Islington.

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THE object of this Association is the discovery of truth in connection with Psychology.

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- 1.—By frequent meetings of its members for conference, inquiry, instruction, mental improvement, spiritual culture, social intercourse, and healthful recreation.
- 2.—By engaging in the education of children and others, for the purpose of developing their physical, mental, and spiritual powers.
- 3.—By the dissemination of knowledge by means of public instruction, lectures, reading-rooms, the press, and spirit communion.

THE MANCHESTER ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

A MEETING of the active members and friends of this Association was held on Sunday, the 26th day of October, 1873, to take into consideration the best means to adopt for the consolidation of the society. A provisional committee was appointed, from which a sub-committee was chosen, to draw up a prospectus.

The Objects of this Association are:—

1. Mutual aid on the part of its members in the discovery of all truth relating to man's spiritual nature, capacities, duties, welfare, destiny, its application to a regenerate life, also to assist enquirers in the investigation of the facts of Spiritualism.
2. To spread a knowledge of the truths connected with the facts, chiefly the truth of the reality of a future state of progressive existence for all.

As soon as a sufficient number of members is enrolled, a meeting will be called, at which a permanent committee will be elected for the management of the society. The provisional committee earnestly solicit the co-operation of all who desire the spread of the true and ennobling principles of Spiritualism. The public meetings of this association are held, *pro tem*, at the Temperance Hall, Grosvenor-street, every Sunday afternoon, at 2.30, except when other arrangements are made, of which due notice will be given.

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LETTER II.—ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

THE wants of a human soul during its exile in the material body, remain the same after quitting it. Supreme felicity consists in the power of satisfying spiritual desires—damnation is the impossibility of gratifying carnal appetites in a less material world. I would say to every man, "Analyse the nature of your desires; give them their true name; then ask yourself, 'Are they admissible in a less material world? Can they be gratified there? And if they could be really satisfied are they such as an intellectual and immortal spirit durst avow without shame before other intellectual and immortal beings like himself?'"

The wish that the soul feels to satisfy the spiritual aspirations of other immortal souls, to procure for them the pure joys of life, to assure them of the continuance of their existence after death, and thus to co-operate in the grand plan of supreme love and wisdom, the progress gained by this noble activity, so worthy of man, also the disinterested desire for all that is good; all these things make human souls fit for—and, in so far, give them a *right* to—a place among more elevated, more pure, and more holy spirits.

When, most revered Empress, we have the *firm conviction* that the most natural, though very rare, want that can arise in an immortal soul—the want of a God—the craving to approach nearer and nearer, and to endeavour to resemble the invisible Father of all creatures in every respect: that once become predominant in us; then need we verily feel no fear whatever concerning our future state, when death shall have freed each of us from his body, that thick wall that hides God from us. The material body that kept us from Him is destroyed, and the veil that shut out from our sight the Holy of Holies is rent asunder. The adorable Being that we loved above all else will then enter freely, and in all the splendour of His graciousness into our thirsting souls, and be received in all joy and love. When illimitable love for God shall have filled our soul, in consequence of the efforts it has made to approach Him, and to imitate Him in His life-giving love of mankind, and by all the means in its power—this soul then, as soon as it is out of its body, necessarily passes through many degrees in order to be perfected more and more, and rises with wondrous rapidity and facility towards the object of its most profound veneration and boundless love, towards the inexhaustible and only sufficient source for the satisfaction of all its wants and aspirations. Even as no feeble or diseased eye can look straight at the sun, neither can any unpurified spirit, still wrapped in the fog of materialism created by its life materialistic, even up to the moment of its separation from the body, endure the sight of the pure spiritual sun in its resplendent brightness, its highest type, its focus, whence radiate such floods of light as penetrate even finite beings with a sense of their infinity.

Who knows better than you, Madame, that only the good are attracted by the good, that only noble souls can find pleasure in the society of other chosen souls? Every man who knows life and men, who has often mixed perforce with flatterers, impertinent, weak-minded, and effeminate, scheming sycophants, ever seeking to curry favour, and with hypocrites seeking cunningly to penetrate the ideas and designs of others, in order to misinterpret them; such a one also knows how these vile

and base minds are suddenly confounded by a simple word uttered with firmness and dignity, or merely by one look of severity, which tells them plainly that they are unmasked and appreciated at their true value. How irksome the presence of an honest man then becomes to them. No false and hypocritical soul can be happy when in contact with an energetic and upright soul, who sees through his schemes. Every impure spirit that has quitted its material body must, from its very nature (urged on by an unseen but invincible force) fly the presence of every pure and bright spirit, to conceal, if it were possible, its numerous imperfections, but which it can neither hide from itself nor others.

Even were it not written, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14), it would be perfectly natural that it should be so. It is absolutely impossible that an impure soul and a pure one should have any point of contact, or that any sympathy should exist between them. A soul that fears the light cannot for this very reason be attracted by the source of light. Unclouded light must scorch such a spirit as if it were a consuming fire. And what, Madame, do we mean by impure souls? I think they are those into which the desire to be purified, corrected, and perfected has never entered. I think they are those who have not been guided in all things by the most disinterested principles; those who have made themselves the sole centre of all their thoughts and wishes; those who regard themselves as the motive of all that exists, who only seek the means of satisfying their senses and passions; those in whom egotism, pride, and self-love reign supreme, and who endeavour to serve two conflicting masters at once.

Such souls must, I think, after their separation from their bodies, be in a miserable and horrible state of introspection, or, in other words, of deepest self-loathing, and must be dragged down by an irresistible force, to the hideous company of other selfish souls who never cease to chant their own damnation.

Selfishness produces impurity in the soul and makes it suffer. In every human soul there is, however, a moral sense, a something pure and divine, which combats this selfishness. Without this sense man is incapable of any moral enjoyment, of any self-respect or self-contempt, or of comprehending heaven or hell. This divine light renders all darkness within insupportable, and this is why sensitive souls, possessed of the moral sense, suffer more cruelly where self predominates and conquers this feeling. On the concord and harmony existing within a man, between his will and his conscience, depend his purity and aptitude to receive the light, his happiness, his heaven, his God. His God appears to him in the likeness of Himself. To Him who knows what love is, God appears as supreme love, amidst many loving forms. His degree of felicity and aptitude of rendering others happy, are proportionate to the principle of love within him. He who loves unselfishly remains in everlasting harmony with the spring of all love, and with those who derive their happiness therefrom. Let us try to maintain within us a perfectly pure love, and we shall be always drawn thereby towards the most loving souls. Let us purge ourselves daily from all taint of self, and then, were we to quit this world to-day or to-morrow, our soul on rendering to earth its mortal coil would fly like lightning to the type of all who love, and join the blessed in their bliss unspeakable. None can know

what becomes of the soul after the death of the body, and yet I am fully persuaded that purified love must necessarily give to our spirits, once freed from the body, a boundless liberty, an existence intensified a hundred-fold, a continual enjoyment of God, and an unlimited power of giving pleasure to all who are capable of supreme happiness. Ah! how unapproachable is the moral liberty of the spirit freed from the body! How lightly the soul of the loving being rises, clothed in shining light! What infinite knowledge, what power of expression become its own! What light flows from it! What life animates all the atoms of which it is formed! Waves of bliss approach from every side the pure and lofty spirit to satisfy all his wants! Innumerable legions of loving spirits open their arms to him! Harmonious voices in innumerable choirs are heard singing joyously, and saying, "Spirit of our spirit! heart of our heart! love drawn from the fountain of all love! loving soul, thou belongest to all of us, and we to thee! God is love and God is ours. We are all full of God, and love finds its consummation in the happiness of all." I desire ardently, most revered Empress, that you and your noble and generous husband the Emperor, so disposed both of you to all that is good, and I with you, may never become strangers to the love that is at once God and man, and that it may be permitted us to prepare ourselves for the enjoyment of love by our actions, our prayers, and our sufferings, thereby drawing near to Him who allowed Himself to be nailed to the cross at Golgotha.

(To be continued shortly, God willing.)

Zurich, 18. viii., 1798. JEAN GASPARD LAVATER.

"GLIMPSES OF A BRIGHTER LAND."*

ATTENTION was called in these pages some time ago to a very interesting little book with the above title. Among the messages in the book given through writing mediumship, is the following on the symbolical nature of most spirit messages, due to the incapacity of man while in his mortal frame, to fully understand spiritual conditions:

We are permitted to tell you that all that has been written on passing away is true, though mostly typical; imagery of things unseen, of which we will in a measure give you the key hereafter.

Water is emblematic of purity, cleansing, and baptism; therefore spirits frequently speak of water, and tell us of newly-born spirits passing over lakes or rivers in boats. This is emblematical. Boats are a means by which mortals or spirits are conveyed through life to their destiny or dwelling-place. Do you not traverse ocean in search of new scenes, for business, or for pleasure, while you are in the body; and are not the waters oft treacherous and turbulent? Are not many yearly swallowed up by the great mighty deep? Do not others traverse the sea in soft gentle repose, and arrive safely and happily at their destination? So, in allegorical terms, spirits are conveyed over the water to their eternal resting-place or home, mansion, or sphere.

Jewels also are spoken of as signs and types. What is a diamond but a beautiful creation valued for its rarity, or a pearl but the deposit or formation of an insect acting on the oyster; pretty to the eye, and

valuable on account of the difficulty of its attainment? To the eye of the ignorant are not pieces of glass the same? Remember, God created all things, and that beyond the material world nothing is of value save for its meaning and symbolism. From God emanates all things; He created the world and all that therein is. From God cometh all wisdom, light, and knowledge: the truth flashes from God even as the colours scintillate, sparkle, and radiate from the pure diamond; therefore high, good, and pure spirits wear diamonds not for their beauty or intrinsic value, but as typical of their inner minds and interior states. Some wear pearls, to denote their purity and love of goodness and truth, and others sapphires, to show their love for celestial truths and of tenderness.

We love to show our affection towards each other by making presents, and as these can be of no intrinsic value, they are only valued as tokens of love, thought, and feeling. We delight in exercising our taste in devising quaint or elegant designs to ornament the covers of books, or to adorn a friend's garment; or in representing scenes of past or of future life to embellish the walls of a friend's house during his absence. We use neither brushes nor paints; but we combine, condense, and use the elements to form colours and produce effects. The higher spirits can draw and paint, and play on many instruments, and they love to return to earth and assist those who have receptive minds and frames organised to receive impressions.

The great majority of the physical manifestations are produced by the lower spirits, for, as a general rule, *the lower the spirit the greater is its direct power over common matter*. The following message from *Glimpses of a Brighter Land*, bears upon this point:—

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am permitted to tell you that where we live all is sunshine and happiness—for sunshine is emblematic of celestial wisdom, and he who hath celestial wisdom and holdeth it fast is happy.

On the spirit quitting the flesh, it assumes a form similar to the earthly, but not composed of flesh, blood, and bone; it is firm and substantial, yet not material, and therefore can pass through material substances. There can be no obstacle to the progress of a spirit form any more than to thought. A spirit is free to come and go wheresoever it pleaseth, even as "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and you know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth:" you feel it, yet it cannot be seen—still its effects are visible in swaying branches and agitating leaves. So is our spirit influence felt, yet unseen by any eye save of those who have the power, or rather gift, of clairvoyance. They see us, while others see nothing. No obstacle impedes our progress; we have but to will, and like the electric shock passing through the telegraphic wire, we traverse space; but those whose minds, wishes, and desires are low, grovelling, and earthy, are heavy and torpid, and cannot rise; these are spirits not yet spiritualised, and the materialism clinging to them weighs them down. They cannot occupy themselves. They hang about their earthly dwellings, and, desiring to communicate, often seek by noises and foolish means to attract attention.

Some are aroused by these means, and thought begets action. Much then depends on those who receive these manifestations. If good, serious, and kind, their example helps to rouse the poor spirit, and to develope its progress; while those who ridicule and only use the

* *Glimpses of a Brighter Land*, given through a Writing Medium. London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox.

communications and manifestations as idle jokes and sport, pain and irritate the already unhappy spirit, and goad it on to prove its powers. Then do many become mad and violent, and endeavour to revenge the insult received by hideous noises, and throwing about furniture to terrify those who at first they simply wished to converse with.

If people could only be induced to consider the manifestations as a means of conversation used by those who have no other, they would no longer consider them trivial and ridiculous; many would be soothed by being permitted to converse, and would be sooner able to rise and leave earth. Remember, a clever child, if idle, may be long in learning a lesson, because his mind is not given to acquiring information, but wanders about to the waving trees, and the sunshine, and cool babbling brooks with shining pebbles and blue myosotis; yet when aroused, and his attention fixed, the lesson is speedily learnt and the knowledge is drawn in. Thus do many poor dull spirits wander on, unthinking, not acting, but clinging to old memories and old well known spots on earth; their earthliness and materialism make it easier for them to take in facts from those still on earth, than from the bright beings who seek to instruct them. They shrink from the light, and prefer darkness—wandering on wearily and drearily—some for months, some for years, some longer. Many, various, and innumerable are the means through which eventually they are roused and enlightened, and finally rise to greater happiness.

THE GRAVE OF MICHAEL SCOTT.

TALES of the supernatural are always welcome at Christmas time, and on the principle that an old narrative of good quality is better than a modern one of lower quality, we quote from Sir Walter Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, one of the most beautiful weird-like pieces of fiction ever penned upon other world subjects:—

I.

If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruin'd central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owl to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St. David's ruin'd pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

II.

Short halt did Deloraine make there;
Little reck'd he of the scene so fair:
With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong,
He struck full loud, and struck full long.
The porter hurried to the gate—
"Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late?"
"From Branksome I," the warrior cried;
And straight the wicket open'd wide:
For Branksome's Chiefs had in battle stood,
To fence the rights of fair Melrose;
And lands and livings, many a rood,
Had gifted the shrine for their souls' repose.

III.

Bold Deloraine his errand said;
The porter bent his humble head;
With torch in hand, and feet unshod,
And noiseless step, the path he trod;
The arched cloister, far and wide,
Rang to the warrior's clanking stride,
Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
He enter'd the cell of the ancient priest,
And lifted his barred aventayle,
To hail the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.

IV.

"The Lady of Branksome greets thee by me,
Says, that the fated hour is come,
And that to-night I shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb."
From sackcloth couch the Monk arose,
With toil his stiffen'd limbs he reared;
A hundred years had flung their snows
On his thin locks and floating beard.

V.

And strangely on the Knight look'd he,
And his blue eyes gleam'd wild and wide;
"And, darest thou, Warrior! seek to see
What heaven and hell alike would hide?
My breast, in belt of iron pent,
With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn;
For threescore years, in penance spent,
My knees those flinty stones have worn:
Yet all too little to atone
For knowing what should ne'er be known.
Would'st thou thy every future year
In ceaseless prayer and penance dree,
Yet wait thy latter end with fear—
Then, daring Warrior, follow me!"—

VI.

"Penance, father, will I none;
Prayer know I hardly one;
For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,
Save to patter an Ave Mary,
When I ride on a Border foray.
Other prayer can I none;
So speed me my errand, and let me be gone."

VII.

Again on the Knight look'd the Churchman old,
And again he sighed heavily;
For he had himself been a warrior bold,
And fought in Spain and Italy.
And he thought on the days that were long since by,
When his limbs were strong, and his courage was
high:—
Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
Where, cloister'd round, the garden lay;
The pillar'd arches were over their head,
And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.

VIII.

Spreading herbs, and flowerets bright,
Glisten'd with the dew of night;
Nor herb, nor floweret, glisten'd there,
But was carved in the cloister-arches as fair.
The Monk gazed long on the lovely moon,
Then into the night he looked forth;
And red and bright the streamers light
Were dancing in the glowing north.
So had he seen, in fair Castile,
The youth in glittering squadrons start;
Sudden the flying jennet wheel,
And hurl the unexpected dart.
He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,
That spirits were riding the northern light.

IX.

By a steel-clenched postern door,
They enter'd now the chancel tall;
The darken'd roof rose high aloof
On pillars lofty and light and small:
The key-stone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,
Was a fleur-de-lys, or quatre feuille;

The corbells were carved, grotesque and grim;
And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,
With base and with capital flourish'd around,
Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

X.

Full many a 'scentcheon and banner riven,
Shook to the cold night-wind of heaven,
Around the screen'd altar's pale;
And there the dying lamps did burn,
Before thy low and lowly urn,
O gallant chief of Otterburne!
And thine, dark night of Liddesdale!
O fading honours of the dead!
O high ambition, lowly laid!

XI.

The moon on the east oriel shone
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
By foliated tracery combined;
Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand
'Twixt poplars straight the ozier wand,
In many a freakish knot, had twined;
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
And changed the willow-wreaths to stone.
The silver light, so pale and faint,
Shew'd many a prophet, and many a saint,
Whose image on the glass was dyed;
Full in the midst, his Cross of Red
Triumphant Michael braudished,
And trampled the Apostate's pride.
The moon-beam kiss'd the holy pane,
And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.

XII.

They sate them down on a marble stone,—
(A Scottish monarch slept below;)
Thus spoke the Monk, in solemn tone:—
"I was not always a man of woe;
For Paynim countries I have trod,
And fought beneath the Cross of God:
Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear,
And their iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

XIII.

"In these far climes it was my lot
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott;
A wizard, of such dreaded fame,
That when, in Salamanca's cave,
Him listed his magic wand to wave,
The bells would ring in Notre Dame
Some of his skill he taught to me;
And, Warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eldon hills in three,
And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone:
But to speak them were a deadly sin;
And for having but thought them my heart within,
A treble penance must be done.

XIV.

"When Michael lay on his dying bed,
His conscience was awakened;
He bethought him of his sinful deed,
And he gave me a sign to come with speed.
I was in Spain when the morning rose,
But I stood by his bed ere evening close.
The words may not again be said,
That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid;
They would rend this Abbaye's massy nave,
And pile it in heaps above his grave.

XV.

"I swore to bury his Mighty Book,
That never mortal might therein look;
And never to tell where it was hid,
Save at his Chief of Branksome's need:
And when that need was past and o'er,
Again the volume to restore.
I buried him on St. Michael's night,
When the bell tolled one, and the moon was bright,
And I dug his chamber among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stained red,
That his patron's cross might over him wave,
And scare the fiends from the Wizard's grave.

XVI.

"It was a night of woe and dread,
When Michael in the tomb I laid!
Strange sounds along the chancel pass'd,
The banners waved without a blast"—
—Still spoke the Monk, when the bell toll'd one!—
I tell you that a braver man
Than William of Deloraine, good at need,
Against a foe ne'er spurr'd a steed;
Yet somewhat was he chill'd with dread,
And his hair did bristle upon his head.

XVII.

"Lo, Warrior! now, the Cross of Red
Points to the grave of the mighty dead;
Within it burns a wondrous light,
To chase the spirits that love the night:
That lamp shall burn unquenchably,
Until the eternal doom shall be."
Slew moved the Monk to the broad flag-stone,
Which the bloody Cross was traced upon:
He pointed to a secret nook;
An iron bar the Warrior took;
And the Monk made a sign with his wither'd hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

XVIII.

With beating heart to the task he went;
His sinewy frame o'er the grave-stone bent;
With bar of iron heaved amain,
Till the toil-drops fell from his brows, like rain.
It was by dint of passing strength,
That he moved the massy stone at length.
I would you had been there, to see
How the light broke forth so gloriously,
Stream'd upward to the chancel roof,
And through the galleries far aloof!
No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright:
It shone like heaven's own blessed light,
And, issuing from the tomb,
Show'd the Monk's cowl, and visage pale,
Danced on the dark-brow'd Warrior's mail,
And kiss'd his waving plume.

XIX.

Before their eyes the Wizard lay,
As if he had not been dead a day.
His hoary beard in silver roll'd,
He seem'd some seventy winters old;
A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,
With a wrought Spanish haldrie bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea:
His left hand held his Book of Might;
A silver cross was in his right;
The lamp was placed beside his knee:
High and majestic was his look,
At which the fellest fiends had shook,
And all unruffled was his face:
They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

XX.

Often had William of Deloraine
Rode through the battle's bloody plain,
And trampled down the warriors slain,
And neither known remorse nor awe;
Yet now remorse and awe he own'd;
His breath came thick, his head swam round,
When this strange scene of death he saw.
Bewilder'd and unnerv'd he stood,
And the priest prayed fervently and loud:
With eyes averted prayed he;
He might not endure the sight to see,
Of the man he had loved so brotherly.

XXI.

And when the priest his death-prayer had pray'd,
Thus unto Deloraine he said:—
"Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,
Or, Warrior, we may dearly rue;
For those, thou may'st not look upon,
Are gathering fast round the yawning stone!"
Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the Mighty Book,
With iron clasp'd, and with iron bound:

He thought, as he took it, the dead man frown'd;
But the glare of the sepulchral light,
Perchance, had dazzled the warrior's sight.

XXII.

When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,
The night return'd in double gloom;
For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few;
And, as the Knight and Priest withdrew,
With wavering steps and dizzy brain,
They hardly might the postern gain.
'Tis said, as through the aisles they pass'd,
They heard strange noises on the blast;
And through the cloister-galleries small,
Which at mid-height thread the chancel wall,
Loud sobs, and laughter louder, ran,
And voices unlike the voice of man;
As if the fiends kept holiday,
Because these spells were brought to day.
I cannot tell how the truth may be;
I say the tale as 'twas said to me.

XXIII.

"Now, hie thee hence," the Father said,
"And when we are on death-bed laid,
O may our dear Ladye, and sweet St. John,
Forgive our souls for the deed we have done!"—
The Monk return'd him to his cell,
And many a prayer and penance sped;
When the convent met at the noontide bell—
The Monk of St. Mary's aisle was dead!
Before the cross was the body laid,
With hands clasp'd fast, as if still he pray'd.

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER IN DARLINGTON.

THE advent of Miss Lottie Fowler at Darlington has been quite an event in the local annals of Spiritualism. The Spiritualists of Darlington have been rather bare, if not entirely so, of test mediums, hence the cause there has had to struggle against difficulties. The value of a medium like Miss Fowler, under these circumstances, cannot therefore be overrated. The writer of this was invited, along with local members of the press, ministers, and public educators, to a free *seance* with Miss Fowler, through the courtesy of the Messrs. Hinde.

A lady was told, to her amazement, the particulars of a dream she had had within a few days regarding some very near relative deceased, whose name and other matters equally satisfactory to the person concerned were given. The same lady wished to get a reply from a deceased friend to a mental question she would propound. The answer came shortly afterwards, through the medium, who said that a spirit (which she described), was present and held up a certain flower. The lady who propounded the test declared that that was the correct answer. The most striking instance probably during the whole evening, however, was that of the case of a middle-aged gentleman, who lived outside Darlington a few miles, but who was not known apparently to anyone present. The medium commenced by describing the appearance of the mother of the gentleman, who she further said had passed away a few months since. The sufferings of the deceased were described, and the nature of the disease, which were both admitted to be true. "Who is that lady?" said the medium, "who was standing beside you at the time of the death? I see some one. Was it a relative?" "No," was the reply, "it was a neighbour." "Well," said the medium, "I see only one there." The period of the illness was also mentioned, and the fact that the deceased was insensible for two days before she died. "Then," said the medium, "I see a will. Your mother shows me it." Some curious particulars were given about this will which the party concerned acknowledged to be correct. Then a "scapegrace" nephew, as the medium called him, was described. His habits of life and disposition, and the fact of his being far away were mentioned. He had been across the sea, the medium said, but had returned. All this was also admitted to be true. Then a sister who had passed away many years was spoken of, how she had left two children, one being still living, and the other dead. A brother was also described, and an account given of his family. He lived at a good distance. Many more intricate matters were given, which the astonished gentleman also admitted to be correct. Then a peculiar complaint, from which the gentleman himself had suffered for some years,

though only known to himself, was stated, and a recipe given for its alleviation. Many more matters quite as apt and convincing were told to this individual; indeed, for a whole hour a perfect string of "tests" were given. The medium then passed to another gentleman who seemed to be of a somewhat more self-assertive character. At any rate the medium, as was asserted, had a difficulty in getting *en rapport* with him on this account. Most of the descriptions given he failed to recognise, except one or two. One very remarkable test, was, however, afforded him. The medium was engaged for several minutes in giving a most minute description of a spirit of commanding mien and appearance, who it was stated was at the back of this gentleman's chair. The peculiarities of the said spirit were described, his gait was mimicked. Such was the completeness of the description that no one could have failed to recognise it, had it applied to a person with whom they had been familiar. The identity was thoroughly established in the gentleman's mind as that of his father, who had been for some years deceased. He was also given the name of a sister.

The *seance* soon after terminated, the whole of those present without exception expressing their gratification, although most were sceptics at the outset, to the remarkable psychological phenomena they had witnessed. Whilst it may be said that in some of the instances narrated, there was a possibility of collusion, the circumstances almost entirely preclude such a solution. The gathering, it must be remembered, was a promiscuous one of parties who had never met before, and who, previous to assembling, were unaware who was to be present. They were also nearly all strangers to each other, and to the medium. Still more conclusive evidence is afforded of the genuineness of the proceedings, by the fact that in nearly every case some of the most striking information given could by no possibility have been known to Miss Fowler.—*The Darlington and Stockton Times*.

HOME EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUALISM.

No. I.

BY FREDERICKA SHOWERS.

IN compliance with your request, I will endeavour to furnish you with an account of the spiritual manifestations that have occurred recently in my house at Teignmouth, in Devonshire. My acquaintance with Spiritualism dates only from the month of April, 1872. For more than a year previously, I had ceased to believe in the absolute truth of Christianity, and, outside of Christianity, could see nothing to rely on in proof of the immortality of the soul. The consequence was, that I was in a fair way of becoming an Athiest.

The severest of domestic afflictions had already befallen me. I have been twice married, and my son's name was Manby Nightingale. He was a grandson of the late Sir Charles Ethelstone Nightingale, Bart., of Kneesworth Hall, in Cambridgeshire. I mention this, because the name of Nightingale occurs in the course of the manifestations. My beloved eldest son, who held an appointment in the "Woods and Forests," in Burmah, had fallen a victim to the climate in the very flower of his youth, and his early death so intensified the anxiety that I had never been able to suppress, on the subject of a future state of existence, that I withdrew from all society, and tried to deaden the sense of my bereavement by constant mental occupation. I was incessantly engaged in reading arguments both on the Christian and materialistic sides of the question, and in translating extracts from German writers, sometimes for publication, and more frequently for distribution among relatives and friends. By most of these authors the direct proofs of supernatural action were treated as belonging solely to the domain of legend and myth, and in time the energy of my early faith in God, and in the efficacy of prayer became completely sapped.

A HAUNTED HOUSE.

In the spring of 1872, a gentleman who is well known among Secularists, paid us a long and agreeable visit, and in the circumstances in which I was placed, his society was particularly congenial. We passed much of our time in discussing subjects of religious and superstitious belief, being, I think, mutually of opinion that most of those who differed from us in this respect, were people dwarfed in intelligence, and incapable of fundamental thought. Among instances of credulity and hallucination, I one day alluded to some rather extraordinary things that had occurred in my own house, and had come under my own observation; in fact, even I had, in a

particular instance, been the subject of an optical delusion! Three times during my occupancy of that house, at intervals of two and three years, we had all been aroused at night by shrieks and cries of terror, occasioned by the alleged appearance of a female form; and so great was the consequent panic, that we invariably preferred sitting up to going again to bed. However, convinced that it could only be a creation of the brain, in time the impression used gradually to wear off.

In the month of October, 1871, contrary to my usual custom, I occupied the room in which this phantom was said to put in an appearance. It was an apartment generally avoided by the family, and reserved for the use of visitors. There *had* been a time when the thought of sleeping there might possibly have made me a little uncomfortable, but I was an enlightened infidel now, and ghosts and spectres had vanished, with my faith in the traditional and contradictory character of the testimony adduced for them. It was the first anniversary of my dear child's death; and unable to close my eyes, I was mentally calculating the difference of time between India and England, when, on turning to speak to our large dog, who had just entered the room, my eyes encountered the figure of a woman standing not far from the foot of the bed. It was more like a beautiful illuminated statue, and did not in the least realise the common terrifying idea of a ghost. Nevertheless I sprang up, exclaiming, "Is this, then, indeed true?" Almost before I had time to utter the words, she had disappeared.

I related this to my visitor, who then asked whether I knew anything about Spiritualism. "No," was my reply; for the word, as connected with any particular phase of manifestations, had never attracted my notice, and, indeed, conveyed no definite meaning to me. I felt interested though, in some measure, in even the small amount of information that he could give; and, somewhat amused at my curiosity, he promised, on returning to town, to forward some Spiritualistic paper or pamphlet, a promise which was duly fulfilled. I looked at it with interest, and a yearning desire that some of its wonderful statements might be true; but the spirits seemed to me to talk such arrant nonsense, and the whole thing was so entirely opposed to the views I then entertained on the subject of death, that the paper was ultimately laid aside with no very friendly feeling towards those who were (as I thought) trifling with the most sacred feelings of the heart—an impression which was strengthened when, a few months later, I attended a *seance* at which John King was said to appear.

However, I began to take in a paper, and in one of the numbers there was said to be a likeness of the aforesaid spirit. Nobody was more incredulous than my daughter, who used frequently to say, "Oh, mama, how can you look at such nonsense?" But though I could not help admitting that a great deal of it seemed nonsense, there was one difficulty that always perplexed me—"How come men, of high literary attainments, and good social position, to endorse such palpable falsehoods and absurdities?" Had they suddenly lost their senses on this one topic alone? I could not explain the matter so satisfactorily and easily as some of my friends did, not having the same faith which they had, in the baseness and credulity of human nature.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMSHIP AT HOME.

My daughter Mary was the only one of my children who was with me in England, the others, all older, having gone out to India. She had always been peculiar, and had from earliest childhood the habit of (as we thought) talking to herself. Whenever left in a room alone, she could be heard carrying on an imaginary conversation in a loud tone of voice, in the form of question and answer. This was commonly observed by visitors, and constantly by servants, who used to interrupt and call her away, saying that the practice foreboded an early or violent death. About the age of thirteen, however, this peculiarity ceased. Mr. Burns had at my request forwarded me some pamphlets, and I was much impressed with one or two by Mr. William Howitt, who spoke so confidently of the possibility of communion with spirits. Anxious to test, if possible, some of his statements for myself, I purchased a very light small table, and with some difficulty got Miss Showers, then but sixteen years old, occasionally to place her hands on it, and sit with me in a darkened room, but the evenings were beginning to be so pleasant (for it was late in the spring of this year) that she did not at all like giving up her walks for such a purpose. Very frequently, I made a young servant, whom we had recently engaged, join us also, under the impression that it was necessary to form a

complete circle with the hands, which two of us could not of course have done.

For some days we got nothing but a few uncertain movements, and these were hardly satisfactory enough to encourage us to go on, but one night we were suddenly startled by finding the table glide altogether away, and then follow my daughter, who ran with mingled feelings of amusement and fear to the opposite side of the room. We tried to sit round it again, but it became so utterly unmanageable, that I brought in a candle, under the impression that manifestations could not occur in the light. We all stood around, and Miss Showers merely placed a thumb and finger on the surface. The table jerked about violently; at last there was a crash, and the leg broke. Subsequently we sat round a massive rosewood table, and it heaved up several times like a wave.

This was something so unexpected and startling, that my rest that night was much disturbed, and I looked forward anxiously to the close of the next day, in order that our sittings might re-commence. A strongly-made four-legged deal table was brought into the room, and a sort of tramping movement, like that of a horse, commenced almost immediately we touched it. My daughter sang an air called "The Prussian March," and the wood moved, vibrated, thrilled, as if imbued with life. She sat far away, and I placed my hands over those of Ellen the servant, in order to make sure that she was not causing the movement, but the precaution was really unnecessary, since no touch could have produced the same vibration. It was totally unlike anything I had ever felt.

SPIRIT LIGHTS AND FORMS.

While thus engaged I glanced towards the book-case, and saw two vivid patches of light flickering on the wall above. The only earthly light in the house was far away in the kitchen, for we have no gas so high up the hill at Teignmouth, and, puzzled to account for what I saw, I drew the attention of my daughter and the servant towards them, but they could see nothing.

Leaving the room I closed the door, but was almost immediately recalled by loud exclamations of surprise and alarm. A crescent moon was said to be suspended over the sofa, large round lights were floating about the room, a luminous arm shot across the apartment, and finally the shadow, apparently of a slight young man, had passed over the blind before the window, the shutters of which were fastened; but though both girls were trembling with fear, and started simultaneously as they described each of these appearances, to me all was darkness. I could not discern a single object.

I may mention here, that our house is a perfectly isolated one, a mile from the town of Teignmouth. The only neighbours we have are the people who have charge of the Exeter-road, and we keep a very large and sagacious watch-dog.

THE RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE OF A KNOWLEDGE OF SPIRITUALISM.

It became evident to me now that some at least of the statements of Spiritualists were certainly true. Who could tell whither these manifestations might lead? Perhaps I might even get a message from the dead, or at least something to prove that death was not annihilation? The subject completely absorbed my thoughts, and at last, by a strong effort, I resumed a practice that had been long despairingly abandoned, and began to utter a short prayer night and morning. It was not an orthodox one, and consisted solely of a verse of Lord Byron's that I had read in girlhood, and had never forgotten:—

"Father of Light, on Thee I call,
My soul is dark within;
Thou who canst mark the sparrow's fall,
Avert the death of sin.
Thou who canst guide the wandering star,
Who calmest the elemental war,
Whose mantle is yon boundless sky,
My thoughts, my words, my crimes forgive,
And since I soon must cease to live,
Oh teach me how to die."

I enter thus minutely into a description of my feelings at the time, because it is not possible in putting all the circumstances together, to doubt that the spiritual manifestations we got were given in answer to prayer, and I believe that any person who enters into an enquiry of this nature in something of the same frame of mind, will get evidence enough of a similar nature to prove unmistakably that there is a future existence, and that the spirit world is near to and around us.

MATERIALIZED SPIRIT HANDS.

On one or two subsequent evenings the lights were again seen and described by Miss Showers and Ellen, and I was

straining my eyes in the hope of being able to discern them also, when Ellen startled us by exclaiming, "Oh! who touched me? did you, Miss Mary?" She said a cold finger had been passed three times over her hand. We were both even more surprised than herself, and our first impulse was to grope for the handle of the door, and run away. Returning after a little while, we were resuming our places, when the door was suddenly violently slammed, and the servant's cap pulled off her head. We had not courage enough to continue that evening, and were glad to call dear old Lion in from the verandah preparatory to going to bed. Before retiring, however, Miss Showers came into my room and told me she did not quite believe in Ellen's having been touched by an invisible hand. "What an idea, mama," she said! "how could her cap be pulled off in that way? I am sure she did it herself."

"Why, Mary," I asked, "did you not see and describe the lights, and the arm, and the figure? Surely they were even more extraordinary than this?" "Oh, yes," was the answer, "but touching is a different thing—nobody touched me." Well, I did not wish to enter into any argument, but the remark made me uncomfortable and suspicious, and I resolved on watching Ellen more carefully. However, Mary had good reason to repent of her incredulity on the following night. Her hair was repeatedly pulled down, her hands severely pinched, and she received several loud stinging slaps on the face. Ellen's chair was as close as possible to mine, and the slightest movement on her part would have been perceptible to me. My daughter was on my left hand, and the servant on my right. The manifestations were too violent to allow of our keeping up a circle.

Our small *seances* grew daily more interesting. I told several people of the extraordinary circumstances that had occurred, and invited a lady with her husband and children to spend the evening, in the hope of their witnessing them. There were six of us in all. The room was darkened, and we formed a circle round a heavy table. None of my guests knew anything whatever about Spiritualism, and were greatly astonished at the movements and the amusing answers given through the alphabet to their questions. Two of them also saw lights and circlets of stars after we had sat about half-an-hour.

JOHN KING IN TEIGNMOUTH.

I was carrying on a conversation in a subdued tone with Mr. W., and relating the single instance in which I had attended a *seance* in London, expressing my disbelief in the spirit forms, and my contempt for the people who could attempt to palm off on an incredulous public such an imposition as John King. We all joined in laughing at the absurdity of calling a spirit by that name, and our amusement had not altogether subsided, when Ellen, in rather a husky voice, addressed my daughter, saying, "Miss Mary, will you look, please?" She did not indicate where or at what, but Miss Showers instinctively turned towards the window, the shutters of which were carefully closed, and shrieked, "Oh! there is a man on the sofa! He has got on a white turban! It is John King!" The shrieks were re-echoed by Ellen, and were so startling, so unmistakably genuine, that a general rush was made towards the door, the handle of which was almost wrenched off, and the panels in peril of being broken by the efforts made to escape.

We had no desire to sit any more that night. I forced my guests to swallow a little wine, but eating was out of the question for any of us. I heard afterwards that they did not get much sleep, and I was quite ill from agitation and want of rest the next day. It was consequently about ten in the morning when I went down stairs.

DIRECT SPIRIT WRITING.

In walking listlessly about the room which had been the scene of so much excitement on the previous evening, my eyes fell on a piece of paper that was lying on the bookcase standing close to the sofa; I took it up, and saw some writing, but not a single word could be deciphered, so the paper was thrown away into the fireplace. When my daughter returned from school in the afternoon, I found fault with her for scribbling on Indian letter paper, remarking that I had Indian letters to write, and should have to send to Teignmouth for paper before they could be finished. "I have not been scribbling," was her reply. "I never came into the room this morning before going to school; the shutters were not even opened then." The paper was still lying where it had been thrown, and she picked it up, and after a short examination, replaced it on the book-case. The next morning there it still lay. Almost mechanically I took it up, and being near a window, held it to a pane of glass, but accidentally the reverse

way. What was my astonishment then when the following words became distinctly legible: "All wrong; John King is a nobleman. Three hundred years ago he entered the spirit world." It now came forcibly to my recollection that just before the apparition of John King, I was expressing my disbelief in his existence, and the writing was apparently done at that moment in reference to our conversation.

It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the delight that this communication afforded me. I was almost giddy with happiness. There was a spirit world then after all, and Spiritualism was true. My dear son had not gone from me for ever; he had only preceded me to a more advanced, a happier existence. Others had had to grope their way through difficulties and perplexing doubts to the knowledge that had been so blessedly vouchsafed me.

Some may imagine I believed too easily, but I knew my own child; I knew every inflection of her voice. What mother does not? Doubt was for ever over for me, and as time went on, and the manifestations progressed, my convictions were daily strengthened, though I had reason to alter some of my first impressions. Both life and death seemed now to wear a different aspect. Even as an ardent orthodox Christian, it would have been impossible for me to have derived the same consolation from the gloomy theology which taught that

"All worldly shapes must melt in gloom,
The Sun himself must die,
Before this mortal shall assume
Its immortality."

This appalling picture of a shattered universe preceding a resurrection, must surely be more a source of terror than of solace to any bereaved mourner, however firm his faith.

SPIRIT RAPS AND NOISES.

Our *seances* now became a nightly occurrence, though we could not continue long at a time, owing to the absence of a fire in weather which was still keen and cold. Rapping sounds became very marked and clear; books, cushions, and other objects were constantly thrown, and with such accurate aim that no one was ever hurt, though the side of the head, or ear, or shoulder, was invariably touched. For two or three nights there occurred a ticking sound, as of a telegraphic needle, accompanied by stamping movements, and occasionally a postman's knock, given with such vigour as to make our dog leave his favourite lounge in the verandah, and run from one gate to another, barking excitedly. We were very nervous at first, and used to leave the room, for it never occurred to us to ask what the sounds implied; but, after two tables had been pulled away and broken, I laid down a piece of paper, and the noise of writing soon became distinctly audible.

A MESSAGE FROM INDIA.

My daughter, Miss Nightingale, was in India, and had been rather unwell, though not so much so, by the latest accounts, as to occasion any anxiety. However, on taking up the paper, the apparent signal for which was a loud postman's knock and falling of a pencil in a distant part of the room, I read a short message, which made me feel rather nervous on her account. There had not, apparently, been a good point to the pencil, and the writing was not very distinct; but we made out the following:—

Over of earth
And ocean's waves
Appears very ill.
JOHN KING.

The name of John King was written from right to left. I was so certain of the genuineness of this communication, and so frightened at the idea of hearing some unfavourable news regarding my absent children, that it was more than a week before we sat again; and we would not have done so then, had it not been that two gentlemen called, and expressed a great wish to see some of the manifestations, which I decided on restricting solely to movements of the table and rapping. These became so uncontrollable, however, that, apprehensive of damage to my drawing-room table, I sent upstairs for a strong four-legged deal table. It was one of Gillow's, and very stoutly made. This table literally rose at one of those gentlemen, who was obliged to retreat into a corner. In a short time one of the legs was broken completely off, as neatly as if done with a saw. I am certain no person, however strong, could, under any circumstances, have broken it in the same way. The wood was not split in the least; it was broken off as one would break a piece of sealing-wax, and in this instance no human force had been used, for all hands were on the table. Mr. H—, to whom a most marked dislike had been evinced all through the mani-

festations, was very roughly treated, and pulled off his chair several times, or rather his chair was pulled away from him, and he fell on the floor. Later in the evening (I am not certain though whether it was not on a subsequent evening), on getting up to open the door, he was hit a very severe blow on the mouth, and sat down evidently in extreme pain, saying he feared his teeth had been loosened.

After the table had been removed, the ticking sound, as of a telegraphic needle working, commenced again, and it was notified, through raps, that there was a message for me.

The first hint of such a thing made me get up to leave the room, but the raps became more and more imperative, and I was prevailed upon to resume my seat. Soon the sound of the writing was heard, and the postman's knock and the noise of the falling pencil announced that the message was finished. I took it up with a beating heart, and saw the following :—

"Ethel Nightingale—Horrid.—Cheer up, all is well across the sea.—John King."

The word "horrid" under the name made me feel ill and uneasy, and I asked my visitors to be kind enough to leave the house, but as I spoke there were the same, but imperative raps, and another message was written :—

"Horrid means Mr. H.—"

I may remark here that my daughter in India was very ill at the time I got the first message, and recovered in a few days in a manner totally unexpected. The two gentlemen who were present on the evening just alluded to, did not even know of Miss Nightingale's existence, and I am not sure that the servant was aware of her name. Mr. H— had previously made a remark as to the genuineness of the manifestations in a manner to offend Miss Showers, which accounts, I think, for the marked animosity shown to him.

"PETER" AT TEIGNMOUTH.

At our next sitting, the rapping assumed a totally different sound. With a number of loud, clear, ringing raps, an intelligence, styling himself "Peter," seemed literally to spring up in the space between the chairs occupied by Mary and myself. There was something so marked and lively here, that we could, from the first, distinguish the control from that of John King. If we had ever heard the name of "Peter," we certainly had no recollection of any such spirit at the time of his appearance, and I cannot be too positive in affirming that the spirit manifestations spoken of in connection with "John King" were regarded by us both as something beneath our contempt—that was, of course, before he showed himself in the drawing-room. After that, doubt would simply have been impossible. I had one object, and one alone, in investigating Spiritualism, which was to get a communication (if such a thing were possible) from the dead, and over the portal of the grave there hung such a pall of grief, and gloom, and solemnity, that any attempt to raise it seemed almost like an act of desecration.

APPEARANCE OF "JOHN KING" WITHOUT A CABINET.

BY THE EDITOR.

LAST Saturday night I called at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, Holborn; to attend the usual Saturday evening *seance* given by Mr. C. E. Williams, the medium, to Spiritualists only. Only three other spectators were present, the attendance being much smaller than usual. I remarked that we had seen enough of the ordinary manifestations—could not the spirits try something new?

We sat round a table in the dark, holding each other's hands, with nobody besides our five selves in the room. I had hold of one of the hands of Mr. Williams, who sat next to me.

After a short time a strong light flashed up, gradually acquired full intensity, then died out, the total duration of the flash being about three seconds. It revealed the upper part of the large, powerful form of John King over the centre of the table, clad in his white robes and white turban, with beard and moustache; the lower part of his bust was inclined in the direction of the medium, who was leaning back in his

chair in a trance, breathing heavily whenever extra power was drawn from his body. The light did not reveal the medium, and came from a point about eighteen inches in front of John King. There was something dark between the observers and the source of the light, so that John King's bust was illuminated, and nothing else. The bust was high up over the table, the bottom of the visible part of the form being higher than the top of Mr. Williams' head would have been, had he been sitting upright in his chair.

After the lapse of five or ten minutes, John King showed himself a second time in the same way. He asked, "Did you see me?" I replied, "Yes, but I did not see your eyes or lips move. Can you try again?" This remark was made because I knew spirits to have the power of manufacturing forms with no life in them, and it was desirable to learn whether this was the same active living John King who manifests at the cabinet *seances*.

After the lapse of more time, he showed himself once again, looked at me, and said, "Do you see me now?" I replied, "Yes, and I see your eyes and lips moving."

All three manifestations were sharp, clear, and decisive, in a good light of short duration.

Afterwards, a light held by a hand and arm appeared over the table. If a bladder, one-third full of air, and about nine inches long, were held at the upper end by a hand, so as to hang downwards in form something like a pear, with vertical large wrinkles or folds in it, it would much resemble in shape the luminous object we saw over and over again, for two or three minutes each time. The light was brightly phosphorescent, and illuminated objects within a radius of five or six inches from its centre; it gave off no smoke or smell. The arm carrying it, so far as it could be seen, came from the direction of the centre of the breast of Mr. Williams. The light was hard. I asked them to beat the table with it; the hand did so gently, and the lower part of the luminous object made such a noise as a cake of wax would have done had it been used in the same way. The luminous substance appeared to be hard; it was not thrown into waves, and did not appear to yield at all when the blows were made.

Afterwards the ordinary "ring test" was given. The iron ring was rubbed against my face and arm, then upon the knuckles of the hand by which I held the hand of Mr. Williams. The instant afterwards it ran up my hand and arm, and remained threaded upon the latter. I felt it come on, and the position of the two hands was such that either the welded ring must have opened and permitted Mr. Williams's wrist to pass through it, or Mr. Williams's wrist must have opened to permit the ring to pass.

In showing the ordinary dark circle manifestations the spirits put phosphorescent lights upon the musical instruments, which flew about freely all over the room, and round the circle outside the sitters, tapping each member of the circle on the back. The musical box was a very large and heavy one, yet it flew about like the other instruments. "Peter" tuned the violin in one corner of the room, and the noises were the same as if a strong, powerful man were handling it and vigorously turning the screws. Then, suddenly, up it flew over our heads to the opposite side of the room, and began flying about like a bat.

The other spectators remarked that it was one of the

finest *seances* they had ever attended. Mr. Williams had had no previous sitting that day, consequently was not exhausted when the *seance* began; the circle also was a small and harmonious one.

The sitters held each other's hands, and the hands of the medium the whole time.

THE OUTRAGE AT A SPIRIT CIRCLE.

THE following letter has been sent us by the perpetrator of the outrage at Mr. Cook's house. As he tries to exculpate himself by throwing not a little dirt at an innocent person, in strict justice his communication ought not to be published, and he should be made to confine his remarks to himself. Nevertheless, here is his letter:—

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—In the report which appears in your journal of a *seance* lately held at Mr. Cook's, I am accused of seizing the ghost, thereby breaking the conditions by which the members of the circle were bound.

In reply I have to state, that having for forty minutes carefully observed and scrutinised the face, features, gestures, size, style, and peculiarities of utterance of the so-called spirit, the conviction irresistibly forced itself upon me that *no ghost*, but the medium, Miss Florence Cook, herself, was before the circle. I perceived also an occasional tip-toeing by the young lady as if to alter her stature, and was much struck by the utter puerility of her remarks throughout the *seance*. I am confirmed in my conviction, as above stated, by the facts that the *struggling* ghost had to be forcibly extricated from my grasp, and afterwards to be "aided" into her cabinet by a Justice of the Peace.

I may add that no third parties had any knowledge of my invitation to, or presence at, the *seance* in question.

Dec. 16th, 1873.

WM. VOLCKMAN.

Mr. Corner and Mr. Tapp, who seized Volckman, state that they did not touch Katie, but grasped the aggressor by the neck chiefly. This probably made him let go, and Katie was back in the cabinet in an instant—Mr. Luxmoore's letter describes under what conditions. The whole proceeding only occupied a few seconds.

The writer of the foregoing letter implies in his remarks that the outrage was not a predetermined thing. But it so happens that his uneasy looks and his abrupt remarks had been the subject of comment in the early part of the evening; he was himself told of his unusual manner. He afterwards broke the conditions on which he was admitted. The Earl of Caithness, though no Spiritualist, strictly adhered to the conditions.

The following is a letter from Mr. Luxmoore on the subject:—

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—From the observations I have heard, it appears to me that there is, at least in some portion of the public mind, a misapprehension of the part I took when the figure purporting to be Katie was grasped at Miss Cook's *seance*. I must first say that I do not believe that the time occupied, from the moment the figure was grasped until it was in the cabinet, was more than six seconds, as the moment I saw what was taking place, I sprung from my chair, caught the figure in my arm, and put it—or I might almost say threw it—into the cabinet. I was prepared for much resistance, as I thought there would be a great struggle to get it away from the person clasping it, but to my great surprise there appeared to me to be no resistance, and very much less weight than if it had been Miss Cook, who, I am informed, weighs about 8st. 5lbs. I am told the notion has been formed by those supposing it to be Miss Cook, that she was too exhausted from the struggle to get back to the cabinet. This, however, could not be the case, for if there were any struggle, it did not last, as I have said, more than six seconds. I, knowing from experience in mesmerism the danger the medium was in, had but one object, that was, to

get the figure back to her medium with the least possible delay. People seem to forget that Miss Cook is *not a public* medium, and that persons are admitted to her *seance* as a favour, all being required to give their word, and abide by the conditions which I lay down before the *seance* begins; and, according to my views of honour, are as much bound to adhere to those conditions as they would be bound to tell the truth when examined on oath; it is no excuse their specially pleading that they believe there is imposition. If they thought that, why earnestly beg to come? Why give presents, and then say they had bought themselves into Mr. Cook's house? One would almost be induced to think that breaking a solemn promise at a spiritual *seance* is quite a different thing from doing so under any other circumstances. What may be the standard of morality of those holding such an opinion I leave your readers to judge. Some imagine that if Katie is a spirit she should not have required assistance to get out of the grasp of any one taking hold of her, but they forget that, even if a spirit, she is clothed in a natural form, and subject to what I term, for want of a better word, the inconveniences of materialisation.

I am fully aware that by writing in this style I subject myself to ridicule, and to be considered either a fool or an impostor, but having gone through this and even more when promulgating the truth of mesmerism—some twenty-five years since—that gives me not one moment's pain. It has been in one way or another the lot of such men as Harvey (the discoverer of the circulation of the blood), Jenner (the discoverer of vaccination), Elliotson (who was one of the first to use the stethoscope), and many others. I, a mere pigmy when contrasted with such names, ought perhaps to consider it an honour to undergo the same treatment. I must, however, hold hard, as I find I am writing far too much about self.

One correspondent, in another journal, says:—"This letter is not written in any carping or cavilling spirit, and must not be taken to imply doubt in the honesty of the medium, for I hold that it is quite impossible for any unbiassed person to read the numerous accounts of the *seances* held by Miss Cook without arriving at the conclusion that she is a real and genuine medium. Such, at any rate, I emphatically hold her to be; but in the light of reports like the above, every excuse must be made for the action taken by the gentleman—a leading member of the Dialectical Society—who committed what Miss Cook's friends have termed a 'gross outrage,' but for which they themselves alone are to blame, on account of the way in which these *seances* have apparently been conducted." I quite admit that Miss Cook's friends were to blame, but my reason for saying this, and the writer's above quoted, may be different. The error was ever admitting the person into the *seance*. I long resisted, but allowed my better judgment to be overruled. I promise never to do so again.

On reproof I find I have omitted one especial reason for my so hastily getting the figure back into the cabinet—it is that both Katie herself, when communicating with us, and also Mrs. Tappan, in answer to a question after a lecture, have stated that grasping and retaining the figure from her medium, while that medium is entranced, would be attended with *great danger*, so that to my mind the safety of the medium was *paramount to all other considerations*. My own mesmeric experience with very sensitive clairvoyants is perfectly in accordance with this view (see *Zoist*, Vol. iv., page 517. Mrs. Bird's case, written by me). J. C. LUXMOORE.

16, Gloster-square, 20th Dec., 1873.

SIR E. B. LYTTON AND SPIRITUALISM.

THE following is a portion of an article from the *New York Era*:—

The man Foster, himself, is the most unspiritual looking personage imaginable—there is nothing at all ascetic or æsthetic about him. He is of this world, worldly, and is full-formed, full-faced, muscular, handsome; a good-looking blonde-brunette of the order that takes life easily. He loves wine and tobacco, horses and social excitements, and vehemently insists that a man's spiritual gifts have nothing to do with a man's spiritual character, but are essentially fortuitous and accidental. Pope "lipped in numbers, for the numbers came;" and so Foster became a medium simply because, as he phrases it, "the spirits came to him"—he did not go out of his way or change his habits to seek them.

He is a Yankee by birth, having seen the light first in Salem, Mass. He is about thirty-five years of age, and has been a clairvoyant and a medium since his tenth year. His

spiritual gifts attracted some attention in New England, and subsequently visiting London, he became quite a lion. During this portion of his career he became quite intimate with the great novelist and romancer, Bulwer, and this episode in his life is worthy of attention.

He was introduced to Bulwer, then Sir Edward only, in London, by Mrs. Frederick Barnes, an intimate friend and warm admirer of the distinguished author. Bulwer at that time was undertaking a new novel, and was likewise investigating Spiritualism, and thus meeting Foster at such a period his mind was still more strongly directed to this subject. He invited Mr. Foster to call and see him at Knebworth, an invitation of which Mr. Foster availed himself on several occasions, and for several days at a time. His reminiscences of Bulwer at his ancestral home, are decidedly interesting, and throw considerable light upon the character of that prince of letters.

According to Foster, Bulwer was a man very haughty and self-assertive in the company of his equals or his rivals, in rank or literature. He was reserved with Palmerston, on his guard with Disraeli, and rather unfriendly with Earl Russell; but with those who did not come into competition with him in any sense, he was very courteous and affable. To Foster he was the pink of politeness, a perfect host; and he was beloved by all the servants of his elegant establishment. He was given to hospitality, and was in the habit of entertaining the best men in the kingdom. He was a great worker, also a great dandy, full of pet affectations—a mixture of Beau Brummel and N. P. Willis. He was not a man of sincere convictions, and devoutly believed in only one thing—himself.

As for Spiritualism he studied its phenomena, and never suffered himself or others to rail at it. Yet he was not a convert to Spiritualism, as then (or now) understood. He had trained himself always to look at both sides of every question, so that when others attacked Spiritualism he would guardedly defend it; and when others enthusiastically supported it he would attack its abuses—so that neither side of the argument could fairly claim having his countenance.

During Foster's visit to Bulwer the latter was engaged in constructing that wonderful novel called *A Strange Story*, in which certain spiritual phenomena are discussed and illustrated in a manner as yet unsurpassed for originality and interest. Certain points in the hero of this novel were taken from the personell and history of Foster, and Bulwer often alluded to the fact that Foster was the model upon which he had based his Margrave.

On several occasions Bulwer, who evidently regarded *A Strange Story* as his greatest book, would read passages from it to Foster. The two, author and medium, would sit in the library at Knebworth, side by side, and there, after the reading, the author would become a disciple and Foster would hold a *seance*.

On one occasion, Bulwer advised Foster confidentially not to call himself "a Spiritualist" so that the name should not excite popular prejudice against him, but to give his exhibitions merely as scientific phenomena; but this advice was unpalatable to Foster, and Bulwer taking some offence that it was not adopted a coolness arose between the two men.

Remaining for some time in London, and then travelling through Europe, Foster returned to this country, and has now temporarily located himself at No. 19, West Twenty-second-street, en route for Australia.

LECTURE AT GOWER STREET.

On Wednesday last week Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan delivered the last of her series of lectures on "Spiritualism and Science," at Lawson's Rooms, Gower-street.

Mr. J. C. Luxmoore, who presided, made a few remarks about an interruption to the proceedings which he had been informed had taken place at the previous meeting. He stated his intention of keeping order so long as he remained in the chair, and expressed the hope that in so doing, he would be supported by the audience. He said that it was the duty of the audience in the first place to select a proper chairman, and after doing so, to support him fully in carrying out the rules and regulations.

Mrs. Tappan then passed into the trance state, and said she would give a *resume* that evening of the chief points of her past lectures upon the same subject, which had been delivered in that place. She then proceeded to speak on the relation between spirit and matter. She spoke of thought as being, in a sense, material to spirits. Perhaps the most im-

portant part of her remarks related to the over-consumption of nervous energy, induced by too much brainwork, incidental to the manners and customs of the educated section of English society. She said that it threw too great a strain upon the vital powers, that it was the cause of many diseases, that it tended to the deterioration of the race, and that throwing too much strain upon the nervous system, was analogous to drawing upon capital in business.

At the close of the lecture, questions were put, and one of the speakers stated that last summer, in the Midland Counties, a miner dreamt that he would be suffocated, and was so impressed by the dream, that he refused to go to work in the morning. His wife, however, at last persuaded him to go, and in the mine a stone fell upon him and killed him. His cousin was working five miles off. He had been on the night shift, and at half past six in the morning, when returning home, he saw his cousin coming along the road, and he addressed him by name, but the figure disappeared. He hurried off at once to the village, and arrived there just in time to see the corpse of his cousin brought into the house. The narrator said he should like to ask Mrs. Tappan how all that was brought about?

Mrs. Tappan said there were several kinds of spiritual vision; sometimes spirits were materialised, and could be seen by natural vision, but in this instance there was no proof that what was seen was really a materialised form, and it was probably seen by clairvoyance or spiritual vision.

Another speaker said he could understand how a spirit might be seen by clairvoyance, but not how his clothes could also be seen. Could Mrs. Tappan explain that?

Mrs. Tappan replied that a mesmerist, by psychological impression, could make his sensitive see whatever he pleased, and if a spirit could similarly act upon a sensitive by impression, she saw no reason why that spirit should have any difficulty in showing his clothes as well as himself. (Applause.)

Prince E. de Sayn Wittgenstein, at Mrs. Tappan's request, selected the subject of a poem for her. He chose for the subject, Miss Cook's spirit, "Katie King," because of his delight at her manifestations at a *seance* at which he had been present the night before at Mr. Luxmoore's house. Mrs. Tappan at once, in the trance, gave an extemporaneous poem on the subject.

Mr. Harrison proposed a vote of thanks to Mrs. Tappan for the interesting series of lectures she had delivered in that place; and he spoke more especially in favour of the manner in which she handled mental and spiritual subjects.

Mr. Pearson seconded the vote of thanks, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Cowper proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. T. Slater, for the energy he had displayed in getting up the meetings, and undertaking the general management. If it had not been for Mr. Slater, the meetings would never have been held.

This was seconded and carried unanimously. A warm vote of thanks to Mr. Luxmoore for presiding, closed the proceedings.

THE VIKRAM AND THE VAMPIRE.

CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON, who, it will be remembered, has borne public testimony to the reality of the phenomena witnessed by him, in the presence of the Davenport Brothers, wrote a book not long since entitled *Vikram and the Vampire; or, Tales of Hindu Devilry*, published by Messrs. Longmans, and illustrated with many grotesque and comical engravings by Ernest Griset. The book is now out of print, but we believe that Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son have still a stock upon hand.

The volume is a curious one. It is a remarkably free translation of the *Baital-Pachisi; or, Twenty-five Tales of a Baital*. The Baital is a Vampire, or evil spirit, which animates dead bodies. The story is the rude beginning of that factitious history, which ripened to the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, originally composed in Sanskrit, "the language of the gods." It has been translated into all the modern dialects of India. It cannot be said there is much instruction in the book, nor will it please many. But those who have a taste for wild tales of the supernatural and the grotesque, will be delighted with it, as it is well written, full

of fun and a suitable book for reading at Christmas time, when ghost stories are the fashion and goblins in season.

One Raja Vikram, owing to circumstances which it is unnecessary to repeat, found it necessary to consult a gentleman of the name of Shanta Shil, the jogi, who was a somewhat powerful magician. Shanta Shil was clad in the ochre-coloured loin-wrap of his class; from his head streamed long tangled locks of hair, like horse-hair; his black body was striped with lines of chalk, and a girdle of thigh-bones encircled his waist. His face was smeared with ashes from a funeral pyre, and his eyes, fixed as those of a statue, gleamed from this mask with an infernal light of hate. His cheeks were shaven, and he had not forgotten to draw the horizontal citron-mark, but this was of blood; and Vikram, as he drew near, saw that he was playing upon a human skull with two shank-bones, making music for the horrid revelry. Spectres and goblins danced around to this unearthly music.

Shanta Shil sent Raja Vikram to a mimosa tree, about five miles off, on which a body was hanging, and directed him to bring it to him at once.

Spectres and the horrible scenes of revelry beset the Raja on his way to the mimosa tree, in company with his son. He found a grotesque creature hanging to the tree by its legs, and on examination discovered it to be a Baital or vampire, and every time the Raja and his son pulled it off one branch, it slipped from their grasp, shot upwards, and hung on again by its legs to another. Still, with praiseworthy perseverance they endeavoured to secure it, and at last managed to get it into a sack, although its legs required a good bit of screwing to force them in. The Baital told Raja Vikram that it was of a loquacious disposition, and that it was an hour's walk back to the jogi, who sat favouring his friends with the peculiar music which they loved; therefore he (the Baital afore-said) intended to beguile the way with tales of the most pleasing nature; and he stated that if ever he beguiled or entreated the Raja into answering any of his questions, he (the Baital) would return to his tree. The consequence was that the Baital proceeded to tell a number of tales which worked upon the feelings of the Raja and his son, and every time he aggravated them into asking a question he shot out of his bag, back to his tree, and they had all their work over again. After being outwitted many times in this way, the Raja, after bagging the Baital once more, sat down on the ground and said he would listen to the story there. This annoyed the Baital, who told Vikram that he was bound to walk, but the Raja explained that no bargain had been made in the agreement as to the time in which he should perform the journey to the jogi, consequently the Baital was obliged to put up with this evasion of the spirit of the original arrangement.

The book can only be recommended to those who appreciate well written tales, of a grotesque, and not very useful kind, but the following extract, of a slightly satirical nature, about the methods whereby Indian devotees reach the state of "inner-breathing," and work themselves into a curious mesmeric condition by contemplation and abstinence from food, is of interest:—

THE MESMERIC STATE OF HINDU DEVOTEES.

Meanwhile, Madhusadan the Third, having taken a wallet and neckband, became a jogi, and began to wander far and

wide, living on nothing but chaff, and practising his devotions. In order to see Bramha, he attended to the following duties:—1. Hearing; 2. Meditation; 3. Fixing the mind; 4. Absorbing the mind. He combated the three evils, restlessness, injuriousness, voluptuousness, by settling the Deity in his spirit, by subjecting his senses, and by destroying desire. Thus he would do away with the illusion (Maya) which conceals all true knowledge. He repeated the name of the Deity till it appeared to him in the form of a dry light, or glory. Though connected with the affairs of life—that is, with affairs belonging to a body containing blood, bones, and impurities; to organs which are blind, palsied, and full of weakness and error; to a mind filled with thirst, hunger, sorrow, infatuation; to confirmed habits, and to the fruits of former births; still he strove not to view these things as realities. He made a companion of a dog, honouring it with his own food, so as the better to think on spirit. He practised all the five operations connected with the vital air, or air collected in the body. He attended much to Pranayama, or the gradual suppression of breathing, and he secured fixedness of mind as follows:—By placing his sight and thoughts on the tip of his nose, he perceived smell; on the tip of his tongue, he realised taste; on the root of his tongue, he knew sound, and so forth. He practised the eighty-four Asana or postures, raising his hand to the wonders of the heavens, till he felt no longer the inconvenience of heat or cold, hunger or thirst. He particularly preferred the Padma or Lotus-posture, which consists of bringing the feet to the sides, holding the right foot in the left hand, and the left in the right. In the work of suppressing his breath, he permitted its respiration to reach, at furthest, twelve fingers' breath, and gradually diminished the distance from his nostrils till he could confine it to the length of twelve fingers from his nose, and, even after restraining it for some time, he would draw it from no greater distance than from his heart.

As respect time, he began by retaining inspiration for twenty-six seconds, and he enlarged this period gradually till he became perfect. He sat cross-legged, closing with his fingers all the avenues of inspiration, and he practised Prityahara, or the power of restraining the members of the body and mind, with meditation and concentration, to which there are four enemies, viz., a sleepy heart, human passions, a confused mind, and attachment to anything but the one Bramha. He also cultivated Yama, that is, inoffensiveness, truth, honesty, the forsaking of all evil in the world, and the refusal of gifts except for sacrifice, and Nihama, i.e., purity relative to the use of water after defilement, pleasure in everything whether in prosperity or adversity, renouncing food when hungry, and keeping down the body. Thus delivered from these four enemies of the flesh, he resembled the unruffled flame of the lamp, and by Bramhaghana, or meditating on the Deity, placing his mind on the sun, moon, fire, or any other luminous body, or within his heart, or at the bottom of his throat, or in the centre of his skull, he was enabled to ascend from gross images of omnipotence to the works and the divine wisdom of the glorious original.

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE has been lecturing in Boston on Physiology.

THE English testimonial to Judge Edmonds, of New York, was started from Liverpool by mail steamer last week.

MR. C. E. WILLIAMS will hold no more public seances this week at Lamb's Conduit-street, but will resume them next week as usual.

MISS ANNA BLACKWELL is translating Kardec's *Livres des Esprits* into English; a work which has raised so much controversy in France, is sure to be read with interest in this country.

A WEEKLY spiritual newspaper, price threepence, has just been started in Australia, under the editorship of the Rev. Mr. Tyerman, Melbourne. The first two numbers contain many unorthodox articles, and very little Australian news.

DR. CUMMING ON SPIRITS.—The *Daily Telegraph* of last Monday says:—"Dr. Cumming, in a sermon which he preached at the Scotch National Church, Covent-garden, last night, related an instance of the interest manifested by the Queen in the sermons which are preached before her Majesty. Sometime since he delivered a discourse before the Queen upon the cognisance of the departed dead of what transpires in the world. The sermon being over, her Majesty came up and thanked him for the discourse, remarking that from it she had received great consolation."

Correspondence.

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

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

SIR,—Knowing the interest you take in all cases of proof of spirit identity, the following instance may be of interest.

Recently I was present at a *seance* at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, at which Mr. Rouse was the medium. Previous to going there I called on some friends, one of whom was a medium, and a message was given me that an Indian spirit who is often with me, would show himself to the medium at the coming *seance* as a test to me.

When the *seance* was about half over, Mr. Rouse remarked that an Indian spirit had been endeavouring to attract his attention for a considerable time past; he described the Indian as being without the usual war dress, and as an old man, with very white hair.

I then related to the company the promise which had been made to me a short time before.

As the question of the action of one mind upon another may be raised, it is right to state that I was thinking at the *seance* about the possibility of the Indian putting in an appearance, but I imagined he would have shown himself in the prime of life, stalwart, and in his paint and war dress, and entirely different in appearance to the description given by Mr. Rouse, whose description was afterwards corroborated by a message given to me through another medium.

N. FABYAN DAWK.

Portman Chambers, Portman-square,
Dec. 19th, 1873.

THE OUTRAGE AT MR. COOK'S.

SIR,—I enclose a copy of a letter which I have addressed to the editor of the *Medium*, but as it may not "answer his purpose" to publish it, I send it you as well, to use as you may think fit. IOTA.

Junior United Service Club, Dec. 22nd, 1873.

The following is the letter:—

"GRASPING A SPIRIT.

"20th Dec., 1873.

"To the Editor of the *Medium*.—Sir,—Your correspondent 'H. E. T.' ignores the fact that the 'gentleman referred to,' in grasping the spirit, broke the conditions to which he had, before the beginning of the *seance*, solemnly pledged himself.

"It is to the credit of the 'gentleman referred to' that he himself has not ventured to defend his conduct in print. I should think he must wish that his friends had shown the like discretion.

"'H. E. T.' evidently writes in good faith, but he is mistaken when he says that no tests are allowed but such as are 'dictated by those interested.' Who are 'those interested?' The editor of the *Spiritualist* has long ceased to have anything to do with the invitations to Miss Cook's *seances*, and it is impossible to conceive what interest the gentleman who manages them now could have in deceiving the public. Moreover many tests, which do not violate certain simple conditions, and which may be suggested by the company, are allowed. We know that some conditions are required in all cases of spiritual phenomena. I cannot think that 'H. E. T.' has acted in the interest of truth by fanning doubts which had never any sufficient foundation, and what he himself, it seems, does not entertain. IOTA."

[Last spring, when the editor of the *Spiritualist* had to do with the issue of invitations to the circle, it is hard to say what "interest" he had in the matter, beyond the scientific one of closely watching at a private circle the development of some of the finest phenomena connected with modern Spiritualism; for these facilities he felt greatly indebted to Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Cook. Beyond that, the matter involved the consumption of about two days of his time per week, and much care and responsibility, such as are now felt by Mr. Luxmoore.—ED.]

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. W.—Mrs. Guppy has never been admitted to one of Miss Cook's *seances*, and knows nothing about them. Mr. Guppy has been present at one only, and expressed himself highly delighted with the same.

W. H. (Liverpool).—Will write to you in a day or two; please send the original from which the abstract was made.

LEGAL PERSECUTION OF AMERICAN MEDIUMS.—We find in the *Denison (Texas) News* of November 13th, an indignant protest against the new trick of legislatures and courts in combining against Spiritual mediumship, in the vain hope of crippling its usefulness, by compelling it to take out a license, or else submit to fines, and sometimes to lengthened imprisonment. The *News* says:—"The Legislature did many good things, and a few bad ones. Among other Acts is one that is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution and the enlightened age in which we live—one which taxes the faith and worship of several thousand conscientious citizens of Texas. The 13th Legislature saw fit to incorporate in the law regulating taxation a clause forbidding the Spiritualists lecturing or holding *seances*, unless they first procure a license, which costs ten dollars in each county." The law reads as follows:—"From every Spiritualist, clairvoyant, mesmerist, or medium, so called, who plies his or her vocation for money, ten dollars for each and every county." On this matter the State journal of Austin, which is the capital of Texas, remarks that there are many thousands of conscientious Spiritualists in this State. Spiritualism is their faith, their religion. The Democratic 13th Legislature taxed these people for their faith and their worship. Was ever anything more monstrous. Why, the Tycoon of Japan is more liberal than that. So is the Mexican Government." The *Denison News* professes to believe that the next Legislature will strike out this provision of the Act, which is clearly unconstitutional and at the same time oppressive. It above all deprecates the taxation of a man's religious faith. We also perceive, by the daily press, that "Dr. Sherman, of Adrian, Mich., has been complained of for blasphemy committed by him in making certain utterances at a Spiritualist mass-meeting in August last;" and now the Providence Young Men's Christian Association, not to be outdone, have raised a howl (successful, we are sorry to say) against Spiritualism as exhibited by the Davenport Brothers in that city, petitioning, "in the name of humanity, Christianity, and the good of our people," against the granting of a license to them, and for the revoking of such license, if it had been given to them [which was done by the obsequious Board of Aldermen, on the ground that the exhibition was "to be given as a merry-making affair"], for Sunday exhibitions, "that the efforts of the Christian community in our city may not hereafter be confronted by licensed desecration of the Sabbath for the love of money and the deceiving of the people."—*Banner of Light*.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF ENQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM. (ESTABLISHED 1870.)

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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

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

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

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

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

"George Cary, Esq., B.A.; Edward W. Cox, Esq., Sergeant-at-law; William B. Gower, Esq.; H. D. Jencken, Esq., Barrister-at-law; J. H. Levy, Esq.; W. H. Swepston, Esq., Solicitor; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.; Josiah Webber, Esq."

After inquiring into the subject for two years, the Committee issued its report, which, with the evidence, forms a bulky volume, published by Messrs. Longmans. Among other things this Committee reported:—

"1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.

"2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.

"3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.

"One of the sub-committees of the Dialectical Society reported:—
"Your committee studiously avoided the employment of professional or paid mediums. All were members of the committee, persons of social position, of unimpeachable integrity, with no pecuniary object, having nothing to gain by deception, and everything to lose by detection of imposture."

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

INQUIRERS into Spiritualism should begin by forming spirit circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or professional medium present. Should no results be obtained on the first occasion, try again with other sitters. One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household.

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is usually of no importance. Any table will do, just large enough to conveniently accommodate the sitters. The removal of a hand from the table for a few seconds does no harm, but when one of the sitters breaks the circle by leaving the table it sometimes, but not always, very considerably delays the manifestations.

3. Before the sitting begins, place some pointed lead-pencils and some sheets of clean writing paper on the table, to write down any communications that may be obtained.

4. People who do not like each other should not sit in the same circle, for such a want of harmony tends to prevent manifestations, except with well-developed physical mediums; it is not yet known why. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is a weakening influence.

5. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle gives the higher spirits more power to come to the circle, and makes it more difficult for the lower spirits to get near.

6. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tiltings or raps.

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

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

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

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

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

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END OF VOLUME THREE.

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