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"THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER:

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

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" " Experimental Research Committee, at 6.30 p.m.
Saturday, 6th.—Trance Seance, Mr. Colville, at 4 p.m.
Tuesday, 9th.—Correspondence Committee, at 5.45 p.m.
" " Finance Committee, at 6 p.m.
" " COUNCIL MEETING, at 6.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 10th.—Enquirers' Seance, at 8 p.m.
Thursday, 11th.—House and Offices Committee, at 5.30 p.m.
" " Soiree Committee, at 6 p.m.
Friday, 12th.—Library Committee, at 5.45 p.m.
" " Experimental Research Committee, at 6.30 p.m.
Saturday, 13th.—Trance Seance, Mr. Colville, at 4 p.m.
Wednesday, 17th.—Enquirers' Seance, at 8 p.m.
Friday, 19th.—Experimental Research Committee, at 6.30 p.m.
Saturday, 20th.—Trance Seance, Mr. Colville, at 4 p.m.
Wednesday, 24th.—Enquirers' Seance, at 8 p.m.
Thursday, 25th.—House and Offices Committee, at 5.30 p.m.
Friday, 26th.—Seance Committee, at 5.45 p.m.
" " Experimental Research Committee, at 6.30 p.m.
Saturday, 27th.—Trance Seance, Mr. Colville, at 4 p.m.

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SOIREES.

The Soirees will recommence in November. It is proposed to invite friends to give short addresses on some subject directly connected with Spiritualism, in order to give these meetings a more definite reference to Spiritualism than they have hitherto had.

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October 10th, 1877. A. JOY, Acting Secretary.

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

VOLUME ELEVEN. NUMBER FIFTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12th, 1877.

FACTS IN RELATION TO ABNORMAL SLATE-WRITING.

BY EPES SARGENT.

WHEN Professor E. Ray Lankester snatched away the slate from poor Slade, and rudely denounced him as an impostor, he no doubt thought he had taken an important step towards stamping out the "pestilent delusion" of Spiritualism. But he only reawakened attention towards it; old investigators, who had kept quiet for years, came forward and manfully testified to what they knew; a brisk demand for spiritual books and newspapers sprang up, and our facts instead of being invalidated, were reaffirmed with added weight, and multiplied and renewed with accelerated speed.

Slade was released on a law-quibble after his conviction before the Bow-street magistrate, Mr. Flowers, who acknowledged that the testimony in favour of the phenomena was "overwhelming," but insisted that he must decide according to what he knew of "the regular course of nature."

Slade was hurried off to the Hague, and there and elsewhere he has given irresistible proofs of the genuineness of the phenomena in his presence, and has made many intelligent converts. A few weeks ago, Slade, through his agent, in a letter wholly unexceptionable, civil, and sincere in its tone, wrote to Professor Lankester that he (Slade) would return to London, and give him the most ample opportunities to re-investigate the phenomena, provided he would promise to abstain from all further attempts to prosecute him as an impostor, or to molest him in any way.

Here was a grand opportunity for Professor Lankester to manifest his liberality and sincerity as a truth-seeker. True, he and Mr. Donkin had formed unfavourable impressions; but some fifty well-known Englishmen, including such men as Serjeant Cox, Alfred R. Wallace, Dr. George Wyld, the Rev. William Stainton-Moses, Mr. Hutton, of *The Spectator*, and others, had asserted their belief in the genuineness of the phenomena, and publicly declared that their experiences had been wholly different from those of Mr. Lankester and his friend. Surely, under these circumstances, and considering the new, unbiassed testimony that comes from the Hague, there was abundant reason why Professor Lankester should reconsider his somewhat hasty conclusions. But no! He had written a preface to one of Haeckel's books, in which he had avowed views wholly opposed to belief in a future life. Must he now jeopardise the infallibility of those opinions? That would never do. It is a pity nevertheless that he was not liberal and brave-hearted enough in the cause of truth, to say to Slade, "Come and give me the opportunity you propose. I will no longer attempt to prevent the spread of truth by keeping you out of England. There is indeed overwhelming testimony from men of character and education on your behalf. It comes not only from England and America but from Holland, and from the latter place after they have been made fully aware of your prosecution and arrest in London. Come and let us calmly experiment."

It is a pity, I repeat, that Professor Lankester did not reply in this wise; for, as surely as he lives ten years longer he will have to look back upon his conduct towards Slade as a blunder and a wrong; he will have to admit that the "pretended" phenomenon was in all probability a genuine one, and that "the babes and simpletons" were in the right, and he, the austere, implacable, rigid physicist, was grossly, if not brutally, in the wrong.

Mr. Leslie Stephens, too, who prates of our "dabbling in the filth of Spiritualism," and Mr. Frederick Harrison, who charges some of your English men of science with "grovelling before the trickery of a Yankee conjuror," will, before many years, be forced by the stress of facts to take back seats in the temple of science, and adopt a very different tone in regard to our demonstrable phenomena.

All this is merely introductory to that which I have to

tell you of Mr. Charles E. Watkins, medium, from Cleveland, Ohio. On Tuesday, September 18th, 1877, I bought a new slate, protected by pasteboard covers, and proceeded to No. 46, Beach-street, Boston, rang the bell and inquired for Mr. Watkins. I was ushered upstairs into a small reception-room, where Mr. Longley, his agent, told me that he (Watkins) was engaged with a sitter, but would soon be at leisure. In about three minutes, a young man entered, smoking the stump of a cigar, and looking flushed and in a bad mood.

In an off-hand and not very deferential tone, he asked me to follow him upstairs. I had never seen him before, and soon learnt that he had never seen me. He took me into a very modest sleeping room, having two windows fronting on Beach-street, the principle furniture of which was a bed, a small table, a wash-stand, and two chairs. A young, girlish-looking woman, with features remarkable for their expression of an almost child-like guilelessness and innocence, was introduced to me as Mrs. Watkins. My first favourable impressions of her were fully confirmed by subsequent inquiries. After a polite greeting she left the room, and Mr. Watkins and I were left alone. The noonday sun was streaming in. It was about half-past 12 p.m., one of our clear, bright September days.

Mr. Watkins still seemed flushed and excited. He paced the room for a moment uneasily, and when I asked him whether I could use the new slate I had brought, he replied, not in the most conciliatory tone,—

"If you choose to have me charge a dollar extra, you can use it. It requires more effort—is more exhausting—when I do not use my own well-charged slate."

"Very well," said I, meekly. "We will take what comes."

"I am depressed," said he, still pacing the room; "I have had something to disturb me; I feel sulky."

If there was acting in this, it was done with the art that conceals art.

My patience and my cheery words at last seemed to have their effect. He put his hand on my head for a moment, then took his seat opposite to me at the table; then rose suddenly, and standing off three feet from his chair, said:—

"Does your last name begin with S?"—"Yes."

"Does your first name begin with E?"—"Yes."

Then, his clouded face brightening, and a sweet smile transfiguring it, "You are Epes Sargent!" he exclaimed, while the tears sprang to his eyes.—"Yes; you are right."

"Forgive me all my rudeness and ill-humours," said he, cordially shaking my proffered hand. "Come; we will try to get something good. Write half a dozen names on slips of paper, and do it so that you will be sure I do not see you write."

Tearing off bits of paper, I wrote the names of six departed friends. I concealed the movement of my hand while writing, though he had turned away without manifesting the slightest wish to see me. (The Carpenterian theory, you know, is that the medium guesses by the movement of your pencil what you have written.) Without touching the pellets—only pointing at them with a slate-pencil—Mr. Watkins gave me the name written on each. I unfolded them one by one, and found that in every instance he was right. There was no conceivable escape from this proof of supersensual powers of vision *somewhere*.

He now handed me two slates, which I cleaned thoroughly with a wet towel, which I had asked for. The theory that by some chemical process there might be some writing upon a slate ineffaceable by scrubbing, but made visible after a minute or two, was wholly disproved by subsequent occurrences. Mr. Watkins did not touch the slates after I had washed them. He simply placed a crumb of slate-pencil

between them, and told me to hold them out at arm's length. This I did, first satisfying myself once more that they did not bear the mark of a single letter on any of their surfaces. I held the two joined slates out in my left hand, the medium being some four feet distant from them. "Do you hear writing?" asked he. I put my ear down, and distinctly heard the light scratching of the bit of slate-pencil. "It is finished," said he, as a slight rap came on the slate. I did not see how there could have been time for more than a simple name to have been written; but when I took one slate from the other, there, on the surface of the lower slate, was a letter of *fifty-four words*, signed with the name of a deceased brother, which name I had not written down among those on the pellets. The letter was characteristic, but gave no startling proof of the writer's identity. The handwriting had a general resemblance to my brother's, but I omitted to take steps to compare it carefully before the writing was rubbed out.

See how completely this simple, clear, fair and square experience knocks into utter insignificance the Lankesterian theory of fraud, of knee-writing, of the use of a bit of slate-pencil wedged in under the finger nail! Mr. Watkins, as hundreds of witnesses can now testify, has utterly demolished and dismissed from the minds of careful, unprepossessed investigators this stupid theory for ever.

A still better test was in store for me. The little slate, in stiff pasteboard covers, which I had bought an hour before, and brought with me, had rested untouched near my right elbow on the table. Mr. Watkins now took it up, lifted a cover, put a crumb of slate-pencil on the surface of the slate, closed the cover, and handed the slate to me. I *know* that there was no manipulation, no delay, no possibility of trick on his part. I *know* that no "prepossession" or expectancy of my own was a possible factor in the case, if I can be permitted to use my reason in saying so. I looked at the slate on both sides—satisfied myself (though there was no occasion for this under the circumstances) that it had not been tampered with, then held it out, and the name written on it was *Anna Cora Mowatt*, afterwards *Ritchie*, whose funeral I attended at Kensal-green in London, when Mr. Varley, Mr. D. D. Home, Mrs. Cox, Mr. Harrison, and other Spiritualists were present.

I held my own slate out a second time, and then came the words: "*My dear brother.—Yours, Lizzie.*" Her name had not been even written or uttered by me up to this time. *Lizzie* was the name by which we had always called her, though she usually signed herself Elizabeth.

Again I held out my own slate, and there came the words: "*My dear son, God bless you. Your father who loves you dearly.—Epes Sargent.*"

During these intervals the slate was held by me, and there was no possible way by which any human trick or jugglery could have been practised. The sunshine still streamed into the room; the medium sat there before me; no other person was present. No more stringent conditions could have been demanded even by Messrs. Lankester and Donkin. The medium, however, writhed as if in torture every time the slate-writing took place. It was evidently accompanied by some powerful nervous excitement on his part.

Mr. Chas. E. Watkins is twenty-nine years old, and a man of a highly nervous and sensitive temperament. He is a far different person intellectually from what I had been led to expect. He showed, by flashes, a high order of mind, and I regret that I could not have taken down in short-hand some of his remarks.

He now took my slate, and, after I had re-examined it, he held it out in his own hand, and in less than ten seconds one side was fully covered with a letter from my sister Lizzie. Here it is:—

Spirit-land.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—

I come to you this morning with my heart full of love for you, and I think that perhaps you may believe that it is me, your own sister. George is here with me.

Your loving sister,

LIZZIE.

If you ever doubt spirit communion look at this slate.

Your sister,

LIZZIE.

I still have the slate, with the writing uneffaced. There

were no punctuation marks, but the word *believe* was underlined. The whole was written in less than twelve seconds. I cannot say whether the expression *It is me* would have been used by my sister. It is defended by some grammarians as quite as proper as the French *C'est moi*.

Other curious things took place at this my first and, as yet, only sitting; but I have no time at present to describe them. The next evening (Wednesday) Mr. and Mrs. Watkins, with their agent, took tea with us at our house, I having engaged him to give a sitting to my wife. He had had nine sitters that day, however, and felt the need of relaxation; so I deferred the formal sitting, and we had a pleasant evening, giving Watkins full freedom to act out his peculiarities. He is a nervous, restless creature, thin and wiry in his form, and apparently unable to sit still five minutes at a time.

Once he started up and moved about the room as if followed by something. "What is the meaning of this?" said he. "Here is a dog—a black dog—following me about; he is so large"—indicating his size by stretching apart his hands. "He answers to the name of Rock."

No possible clue had Watkins had to this discovery. Poor Rock! He was a splendid black-and-tan-coloured setter, who had often entered my library (where we were now seated), put up his nose as if to see what I was writing, and then gone quietly off after getting a pat on the head from me. He was the best-behaved, most intelligent, and *gentlemanly* dog I ever knew. He died from being poisoned some months ago. He belonged to the son of a lady (Mrs. W.), who had been at the tea-table with us that evening, and who was sitting talking with Mr. Longley in the next room, while my wife, her brother, and I were listening to Watkins. He seemed highly elated and amused by this canine identification, and ran, boy-like, and asked Mrs. W. if she had a coloured friend in the other world.

My wife found Mrs. Watkins an unsophisticated, interesting little lady, only twenty years old, a country girl whom Watkins had met and married in the little village of Florence, in Massachusetts, a year ago. She is exercising an excellent influence over him—strange, wayward, impulsive creature that he is. Said she to Mrs. Sargent, "He has been cast off by his own mother, who is very orthodox, and whom he dearly loves; but I hope to be both a mother and a wife to him." The words coming from this little gentle, delicate person who does not look more than seventeen, were almost ludicrously pathetic.

Within the week I have sent my brother James to get a sitting, also my friend John L. Shorey. Both got tests equally good with my own. Both got the independent slate-writing, under the strict, simple, and conclusive conditions I have named. My brother received a characteristic letter from our father, in which the signature had his peculiarities, shown in a "long s," extending below the line, and a very peculiar "g."

Watkins, who left the room while my brother wrote out his slips and rolled them tightly up into pellets, had not touched or seen one of them.

"That is an ancient name," said he re-entering, and pointing to a pellet, without touching it. My brother thought of *Abel Ball*, one of the names he had written. "I will write the name on a slate, said Watkins;" and, much to my brother's surprise, he wrote it—*Arria Sargent*. It was right, as was found on unfolding the pellet. The name *Arria* had been introduced into our family from an old engraving which I remember, when a boy, seeing on the wall at the house of my great uncle (bearing my name), and illustrating the story of "Arria and Poetus" in Roman history. The Emperor has ordered Poetus to stab himself. Arria snatches the dagger from her husband's hand and stabs herself, saying, "It is not difficult, Poetus." Well might the medium call it an ancient name.

Mr. Shorey had written the name of a deceased friend with whom he had had many discussions on Spiritualism, and who had tried to convince him of its truth. The message written and signed (Mr. Shorey holding the slate) was—"You see it is all true."

I could tell you of a Greek gentleman, a professor in one of our institutions, who got a message in modern Greek from

his grandfather, every accent rightly marked, and the words all correct.

I could tell you of a Swedish gentleman, a commissioner at the great Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, who got a satisfactory message in Swedish.

The proofs that the intelligence operating is independent of the medium's mind are so direct and various that we cannot resist them. We have heard bad things of Watkins; that, for money, he has been as ready to turn "*exposer*" of Spiritualism as *defender*; that he has attempted sham materialisations, &c., &c. But if he should come out to-morrow and declare that his slate-writing was all jugglery, it would not make the slightest impression on me, or on some hundred other investigators, *unless* he could teach us how to produce the same thaumaturgic results under the same conditions.

According to his own expressions, he has been a "wild, bad, wicked, reckless fellow; but my little wife is curing me," he adds. He is certainly the most remarkable medium (Foster excepted) I have ever met; and he gives the fairest, simplest, most scientific, and incontestable proofs of the operation of a psychic or spiritual force, independent of all possibilities of trick, prepossession, jugglery, collusion, or illusion. He fears no sceptical influence; he is eager to meet Lankester, Carpenter, or any one we can name; and, whatever his past may have been, there can be no doubt of his wonderful medial power.

Just before my brother entered the medium's room on Wednesday (Sept. 19th), a Mr. Maxfield, from Maine, a man of excellent character, but a confirmed atheist, had had a sitting. Watkins allowed him to write a number of names, he Watkins, leaving him alone in the room. Watkins now re-enters, and says: "You have mixed those pellets so that you cannot tell which is which?" "Yes." "You are certain that I have not seen or touched one of them?" "Yes." "If you hold out one of them, and I tell you the name and the relationship the writer bears to you, what shall you say?" "I shall believe." "Open that pellet, then, and you will find the name" (giving it in full) "of — Maxfield, your father."

Mr. Maxfield opened the pellet, saw the name, turned pale, covered his face with his hands, and wept like a child. The atheism and unbelief of years were shivered as by a lightning stroke. "Now stop that," said Watkins, "and let me tell you the names on all the other pellets you have in your hand." And one by one he gave every name correctly. Mr. Maxfield came again in the afternoon, and got further striking tests. As he is to write out himself a full account of his experiences, I will say no more.

Miss Kislingbury has been twice to take tea with us and pass the evening, and we have been charmed with her fresh enthusiasm, her intelligence, and her clear views in regard to Spiritualism. She left us September 13th for the mountains, as our city weather was quite hot, and she felt the need of an invigorating air. I regret she could not have waited to see Watkins. He regrets it too. I must close now with greetings to all good Spiritualists among your readers.

No. 68, Moreland-street, Boston, Mass.

THE RENDING OF THE CURTAIN OF DEATH.*

BY EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.

THE sympathy of all enlightened and true Spiritualists is excited when they reflect upon the dark pall that obscures the vision of the majority of their fellow men upon this momentous question of the continued existence, and presence, and agency of their deceased friends. How many, oppressed with gloom and sorrow, are ready to exclaim:—

O, if the dead were allowed to speak!
Could I only look on their faces meek,
How it would strengthen my heart so weak.

To such we would reply in the words of Mrs. Hemans:—

Hast thou been told that from the viewless bourne
The dark way never hath allowed return;
That all which tears can move with life is fled;
That earthly love is powerless on the dead,—
Believe it not.

Through Mrs. Conant, a spirit, in a message to her surviving husband, said:—

"When death came for me my mortal companion said: 'It is dark! all dark! All the light has gone out. I am left in utter darkness and desolation.' And in his great agony he cried out to know where that light had gone. He said: 'O God, answer my prayer!' And through returning angels God did answer it, and he beheld the light, and he rejoices in the knowledge that it lives and sheds glimmerings through his mortal pathway, and will return to meet him when his hour of change shall come, and light him through the passage of death, and make gloriously bright the spirit-world for him. I am Minnie, wife of Professor Gunning."

Surely, to be able to answer this question of spirit existence and presence, and love, the toil and labour of a whole life should count as nought. Millions would give largely of their time and means if this would ensure to them a solution of this all-important question, yet like men groping in the dark, they pass and re-pass the multiplied proofs which lay scattered in their way, and in their blindness utterly fail to discern them; and many are like the rustic, who, having once been deceived in mistaking a counterfeit for a genuine coin, afterward refused to pick up a true coin which lay in his way.

Hackneyed as the phrase is, it is nevertheless true that every intelligent human being has, or has had, a mission to perform—duties to discharge toward God, himself, and his fellow-men. This is a law of our being, and every one who fails to act in compliance with it must pay the penalty. And this law is equally binding in heaven as on earth, the only difference being that in heaven its requirements are often extended, and not only is love to God and to each other demanded, but also, according to the talents and opportunities bestowed, guidance and assistance to the inhabitants of earth. Thus we are in error when we imagine that we shall ever be freed from the obligations of duty. Heaven is no place for the indolent; their natures must change before they can progress. There ceaseless, but joyous activity ever exists, and it is well for us to exert ourselves here in every good work, so as to readily adapt ourselves to the active duties, as well as joys of that life.

That workers are sometimes intentionally transferred from this field of labour to that in spirit-life, I have no doubt whatever; and sometimes when the burdens of life become too heavy to be borne, God in His wisdom takes the weary traveller home; and here again he accomplishes the work through the agency of ministering spirits. I am fully aware with what incredulity this opinion will be received by some, but many separate and independent proofs have forced the conviction of its truth upon my mind. I fully believe that kind and sympathising spirit-friends often weaken the attraction, and sever the connection between the spirit-body and its earthly casket. Nor do I stand alone in my opinions upon this subject, for good orthodox Christians have held similar opinions. The Rev. Samuel Watson, D.D., in his work, *The Clock Struck One*, p. 111, says:—

"I shall never forget the sermon preached by the Rev. Dr. Winans, in the city of New Orleans, over thirty years since. It was the funeral of Rev. Elijah Steel, who sacrificed his life visiting the sick and dying of yellow fever there. Said the immortal Winans: 'Elijah Steel did much in this city for the sick and dying, by pointing them to Christ; but he has entered upon a much larger field of usefulness. He can now with the rapidity of thought go as a pure ministering spirit to the same great work in which he sacrificed his life. Whenever God has more use for His servants in the spiritual world than He has here, He takes them to labour in the same glorious cause, with greatly enhanced facilities, doing His will on earth as it is done in heaven.'"

Dr. Watson adds: "I was sojourning in the sunny clime, expecting to fall a victim to that scourge of the human race—consumption. This view of that subject removed the last difficulty in my way of dying. If that is to be my mission still, let me pass over the river and enter upon it, I thought, as the preacher spoke of the glorious privilege conferred upon the servants of Christ to be as the angels, messengers of God to minister to loved ones on earth. This has afforded me more comfort than anything from that time to the present."

At one time a spirit said to me: "When persons are very unhappy, with no work on earth to accomplish, their loving

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

spirit-friends sometimes weaken the mutual attraction between spirit and body, and thus cause them to pass away before their time."

One day in October, 1873, Dr. Kenney called upon me, and informed me that on the previous day he had been called to treat a gentleman who had been attacked by apoplexy, giving his name and place of residence—a short distance from Brooklyn—and stating that he, Dr. Kenney, had there felt and acted strangely, and that he could not account for it. The patient was a wealthy and highly esteemed gentleman, and when Dr. Kenney arrived and saw him, he was strongly of the opinion that he could save him, and he equally desired to do so; this arising in part from his realising that success in the treatment of the case would add to his reputation and increase his business, which at that time was not what it has since become. There had been three physicians in attendance, only one remaining; and this gentleman having before met Dr. Kenney, at once requested him to attempt the cure of the patient, as he himself could do no more for him. He complied with the request of the physician, and approached the bed where the patient lay insensible, with stertorous breathing, and placed his hand upon his stomach, when a commotion was almost immediately perceptible in that region, accompanied with symptoms of nausea. He felt that the effect was favourable, but was irresistibly drawn from the patient and became seated, and in a few moments after arose with the intention of approaching him again, but involuntarily turned towards the window, and from there he was impelled to move aimlessly about the room.

The friends of the patient urged him to attempt some measures for the relief of the sufferer, and he was equally with them anxious to do something for him; but he was compelled to constantly change his position, look out of the window, or pass into the adjoining room, then return, resume his seat, and then recommence and repeat the same movements; and while he felt and knew that "Old John" desired to come, he at the same time was conscious of another contending influence adverse to his own wishes, and those of the spirit that ordinarily controls him. Actuated by these conflicting feelings, and excessively annoyed and abashed at his own strange conduct, he heard the signal announcing the approach of a train of cars, when in his confusion and excitement he caught up his hat, rushed from the house, and proceeded hurriedly to the depôt and returned home.

His object in calling upon me was to ascertain my opinion of the matter, and after some reflection I stated that I could come to no other conclusion than that while he and his spirit control were desirous of attempting the relief of the patient, there were other spiritual intelligences superior to his control—probably friends of the sufferer—who for reasons of their own were equally desirous that nothing should be done, and that they cast an influence over him which prevented him from attempting anything.

A few days after his visit I called upon him when Old John controlled him, and told me that such was the fact; that he knew he could relieve the patient, but that the spirit friends of the latter desired to have him join them, as he had no further work to accomplish in this life, was well prepared to enter spirit life, and was unhappy in certain relations here, and so they prevented his doing anything for him. The gentleman died within two days thereafter.

Sometimes, on the other hand, the strong affection and will of earthly friends become obstacles, and delay the departure of the spirit. An estimable lady, an intimate friend of mine, when dying, exclaimed to her weeping sister: "O Nancy! don't hold me back; I want to go to mother!"

A few years since the three sisters Cary were living together in New York. Elmina first died. A few years thereafter Alice passed away, leaving Phoebe apparently in robust health, but she soon followed. Remarking upon the illness and death of the latter, the *Christian Union* of Aug. 9th, 1871, said:—"Phoebe was in many respects a contrast to her sisters. There seemed to be more iron in her mental as well as in her physical composition. . . . In brief, she was a hearty, wholesome woman, and would have been esteemed by all the world, as well as those who knew her best, in

body, mind, and soul, robust. . . . But a change was in preparation. A shadow unseen was creeping toward her. . . . She had based all her most deliberate calculations on the expectation of many years of life, and yet, when friends and physicians spoke hopefully to her of recovery, she replied that she knew of no reason why she should not recover, except that she neither found, nor could excite, any desire in herself to do so, and this she said with a sort of wonder. To a friend she remarked: "Alice, when she was here, always absorbed me, and she absorbs me still. *I feel her constantly drawing me.*" She is now one of those of whom she wrote:—

The veil of flesh that hid,
Is softly drawn aside;
More clearly I behold them now
Than those who never died.
Who died? What means that word,
Of men so much abhorred?
Caught up in clouds of heaven to be
For ever with the Lord.

We worship God and pray to Him for His blessing and grace. We invoke the intercession of the saints, and pray God that through them He will impart to us like purity, love, and strength. We know them to be endowed with a larger and more expanded spirituality than we possess, and to exist in closer relationship with the Source of all power, wisdom, and love. We are weak, while they are strong. We are surrounded and hemmed in with the temptations and defilements of earth-life, while they enjoy the happiness and freedom of an exalted existence. They have experienced, and still remember similar trials to those which beset us, and have passed to a superior plane where they can estimate their force with impartiality, and with the warmest sympathy for us in our weakness and suffering. Having the power to assist us, and knowing their desire to do so, what more rational and becoming than to ask their assistance, and especially when we further know that the desire and request on our part increases their ability to help us. The child looks to the parent, the weak to the strong, the inexperienced to those of experience for counsel and advice, for direction and assistance. We are children in knowledge; we are weak and inexperienced. We need counsel and assistance, and when we are blest with powerful and wise friends who stand ready to aid us, is it wise or prudent for us to disdainfully reject the proffered aid, and continue to blindly grope and stumble when our paths could be made plain and clear? I think not. We should highly appreciate the beneficent provision of the Divine Father, through which we can obtain comfort and strength from this source in our difficulties, and joyfully and thankfully avail ourselves of the means thus furnished by Him; and those who have the full knowledge and proper appreciation of this great privilege, can only view with eyes of pity those who in their blindness are unable to perceive how fruitful of good the ministry of angels is to man.

That professed Christians, who believe in the Bible as the Word of God, should reject the doctrine of spirit communion, and deny the daily fulfilment of the promise that "He shall give His angels charge concerning thee," is indefensible—inexcusable—when that volume, from Genesis to Revelation, is replete with the teachings and proofs of this communion, of this watchful care and guidance. All that we claim as substantially true can be as well proven from the records of the Bible as from the observation and experience of men in the present age, provided the Bible narrations of spiritual manifestations be admitted as authentic and reliable. We there find that both good and evil angels or spirits exist—that both have had intercourse with mortals—that good angels minister to men's necessities—that dark spirits tempt to evil—and that every man determines by his thoughts, actions, and desires, which class of these he will have for his helpers, advisers, and associates. Choose ye between them.

I feel their touch upon my hair,
Upon my cheek and on my brow;
I know that they are everywhere,
That they are with me even now.
The air grows softer as they move,
The day seems brighter when they come,
And all my soul melts into love,
And longs for its immortal home.

CHARITY ORGANISATION.

To assist in the investigation of the important questions raised by Mr. S. C. Hall, we quote as follows the greater part of the 1876 Report of the Clapham Society for Organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicity:—

TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE PARISH OF CLAPHAM.

The committee earnestly hope that you will assist them by refusing to administer any charity without inquiry into the case of the person demanding it, indiscriminate relief being one of the main stimulants to pauperism and vagrancy.

The committee will make the necessary inquiry free of expense, whether you subscribe to its funds or not.

The committee ask for your co-operation in the following manner:—

1. Give tickets instead of money to beggars in the streets, or to persons begging under the pretence of selling small articles.

2. Should you feel disposed to place reliance upon the statements of mendicants who refuse the society's tickets, ask for their names and addresses. If such names and addresses be sent to the office, a report upon the case will, if requested, be sent to you. Tickets can be obtained at the office gratis.

3. Should any person apply for relief at your houses, either by letter or otherwise, please to send such letter, or the necessary information to the office. The case will be investigated, and a report, if requested, sent for your information.

The object of the society is not to check benevolence, but to assist the public in directing it into channels where it will do good instead of harm. Office—79, Bromell's-road, Clapham, London.

The committee cannot repeat too often that they are ready to investigate for anybody, whether a subscriber or not, every application for assistance, or case of apparent distress or embarrassment, and to report the result to the person referring the case to them. It matters not whether the applicant resides in Clapham or elsewhere—if the former the case is investigated by the committee themselves and their agent; if the latter it is referred to the proper district committee.

Tickets are enclosed with this report (and more may be had on application) which entitle the bearer to have his or her case investigated, and dealt with, and in all necessary cases to receive relief in food immediately.

REPORT.

The committee, in presenting their seventh annual report, have to thank the inhabitants of Clapham for the support which has been continued to them, and for the funds which have enabled them to carry on their work. They would at the same time point out that there are cases occasionally brought before them in which a very considerable expenditure is needed, in order to produce the permanent benefit which is ever the principal object of the committee; and that with larger funds they would be better able to deal with such cases, and sometimes even to lift a whole family out of a state of misery and wretchedness, with a good hope that a fresh start under different circumstances, and possibly in another country, would bring them prosperity and happiness, and thus relieve the community at large from the pernicious influence and painful spectacle of hopeless and degraded poverty.

The number of cases dealt with during the past year (111 resident, 745 non-resident and vagrant) is not so great as in some former years. This is, undoubtedly, in part due to the fact that the principles upon which the committee act are better understood, and that, in consequence, the lazy, dissolute, and impostors, knowing that every case is carefully investigated, no longer make applications, which surely result in the exposure of their own idleness, improvidence, and drunkenness. At the same time the committee feel that the number of resident cases dealt with in the year is not so great as might be expected, and that their organisation is not utilised so much as it should be by those interested in the condition of the poor, or to whom charitable appeals are made. They would gladly have both more personal help and more work. It is their desire that all the inhabitants should make greater use of the knowledge they have accumulated, and of the services of the committee and their agent; and they would heartily welcome any who would join them, attend their meetings, and help to extend the knowledge of their work, and give it greater strength and wider influence. It is but too certain that there are still many mendicants, impostors, and worthless characters, who, although they ought to be left to the operation of the Poor Law, too often succeed in diverting to their own use the charity which should be reserved for the brave strugglers with poverty, misfortune, and sickness—the unobtrusive and patient bearers of troubles and evils which have come upon them through no fault of their own, and which they are powerless to prevent. They would ask all into whose hands this report may come to do what they can—by making the work of the committee known to others, by dissuading the kind-hearted from giving without inquiry, and especially by availing themselves of the information at the command of the committee, and of the services of the agent in the case of all applications made to them for help—to extend the range of the society's influence, and thus aid in the directing the bounty of the benevolent to worthy objects, and in protecting them from the imposition to which they are so liable.

Before entering into details of the work of the last year, the committee would again remind their subscribers that organisation, investigation, and the acquisition and supply of information to all engaged in any charitable work in Clapham, and to all from whom help is asked (and the long notoriety of the inhabitants for charity and liberality specially expose them to such requests), need their chief care, and take up most of their time and attention. It is for these purposes that an office, an officer, and subscriptions are needed; but as there are yet, and probably will long continue to be, many cases brought under their notice in which the help needed cannot be obtained from any of the charities or charitable agencies of Clapham, the committee would point

out, as they have done before, in what way their own relief and help is given.

It may be classed under three heads:—

1. The relief always afforded to tramps and street beggars, who call at the office with or without a ticket, who have as much bread as they can eat. This relief is given not only for the sake of the mendicant, but for that of the inhabitants of the district. Formerly, when a charitable person was accosted by a beggar with a piteous tale of starvation, although it was impossible to test the truth of the story, and although it might be surmised that the applicant was probably an impostor, yet the fear lest the distress might be real usually led to a compromise of the gift of a penny or a halfpenny. The sums thus collected by trading on the feelings of the charitable often far exceeded the wages of an artisan, and the profession was lucrative and attractive. As a natural consequence, Clapham was infested with beggars from all parts of London; now, the certainty that any beggar can immediately get bread for asking has removed the only plea for a dole. The inhabitants have accordingly ceased, as a rule, to give to street beggars; these have, consequently, not found their visits sufficiently profitable, and a change has been effected hardly credible to those who do not remember the former condition of the parish in this respect.

2. The second class of relief is that given to help families or individuals over a temporary distress, without compelling them to resort to the Poor Law. This relief is only given after the fullest investigation.

3. The third kind of relief is that given to aid families or individuals to improve their position permanently, by enabling them to get work, to migrate to parts of the country where work may be had, to emigrate, to provide them with necessary tools or stock-in-trade, to put out their children, and the like. This assistance is given either by grants or loans. In either case the money is actually expended by the agent, who sees that the intentions of the committee are really carried out.

The committee cannot conclude their report without expressing their great regret at having lost during the last year Mr. Richard Simpson, who had been honorary secretary for more than five years, and whose services, always valuable, were especially so in their early days, when their work was heavier, and the committee were without the experience by which, after seven years' existence, they were guided and aided. Those only who worked with Mr. Simpson, and turned to him often for advice and help, can fully estimate the value of his services during these past years, or truly appreciate the loss which the committee have sustained by his death.

During the past year the committee received 111 applications from or on behalf of residents; 745 non-residents applied at the office, of whom 612 were relieved with bread.

	1876.	1875.
Non-residents...	745	579
Relieved with bread ...	612	472
Not relieved, for various reasons ...	133	107

ILLUSTRATIVE CASES.

"A widow, supporting her aged mother, lost her work temporarily as dressmaker through small-pox in her house. Relieved to the extent of £2, and sewing machine redeemed from pledge.

"A young woman, having come from Ireland, and not having succeeded at two situations, was assisted to return home to her mother at a cost of £1 13s. 6d., independently of substantial help from a gentleman, who found her without friends in England, and brought the case to notice.

"A washerwoman, temporarily disabled through a poisoned thumb, was relieved to the extent of £1.

"A cabman, laid up with rheumatic fever, having a wife and several young children, was assisted during illness to the extent of £3 2s. 1s. now restored to health, and has resumed work.

"A labouring man, out of work, with wife and several sick children, was assisted, by food and boots for children, to the extent of £1 17s., and employment got for the husband.

"A working man was sent to sea-side for the benefit of his health, at a cost of £2 1s., has returned home, and resumed work.

LOANS.

"Loan of £20, in two instalments of £10 with good security, to a person keeping a second-hand wardrobe shop, to enable him to purchase stock. More than one-half of loan already repaid.

"Loan of £10 to a person to enable her to purchase necessary clothing to take up a situation as governess in a gentleman's family. Loan repaid.

"Loan of £1 8s. to a young woman to enable her, with money she had in hand, to purchase a sewing machine. Loan nearly repaid.

"Loan of £1 10s. to a widow, to enable her to purchase some articles necessary for carrying on laundry work.

"A stonemason and family, who were assisted to emigrate to New Zealand in 1875, by a loan of £5, are now doing well and have repaid the loan with many thanks."

The loans for 1876 were £30 1s. 6d., and the repayments £25 6s. 6d. For 1875, loans £13 1s., repayments, £22 3s. 6d.

RULES.

1. That a charity office be established in a central position in the parish.

2. That one or more properly accredited charity officers be appointed by the committee, who shall be responsible for the investigation of all cases coming before the committee, and shall be in communication with the relieving officer and agents of the various charities in the parish.

3. That the charity office shall be open to applicants every week-day, at such stated hours as the committee shall determine; and that a charity officer shall be in attendance during those hours to receive applications.

4. That tickets, bearing the address of the charity office, be supplied to the householders in the parish for distribution, and that the cases of

all applicants presenting themselves with tickets at the charity office shall be investigated and reported to the committee.

5. That the committee (or a sub-committee to be appointed for that purpose) do meet at least once in every week to consider and deal with all cases investigated and referred to them by the charity officer or the Board of Guardians.

6. That all cases properly belonging to the Poor Law shall be at once referred to the Guardians, and that in general the committee do not supplement the relief given by the Guardians.

7. That as a rule the committee will only entertain the cases of persons resident in the parish.

8. That all cases that can appropriately be dealt with by any existing charity within the parish shall be referred to such charity, and that relief shall only be granted by the committee in cases which cannot properly be dealt with by any other agency.

9. That during the interval between the meetings of the committee, the charity officer have discretion to grant temporary relief to cases which upon inquiry seem to demand it, and that immediate relief be afforded in all urgent cases. All such relief to be reported to the committee at their next meeting.

10. That a complete alphabetical register of all cases resident in the district, inquired into by the charity officer, or relieved either by the committee, or from any other source as to which information can be obtained (exclusive of any cases which may be expressly excepted by the committee), be kept at the charity office, and be open to the inspection of the relieving officer, agents of charities, and all persons interested in the administration of charity in the parish.

11. That besides dealing with cases in which application is made at the charity office, the committee will endeavour, as far as possible, to reach the cases of deserving and necessitous persons who may shrink from applying for relief.

12. That the committee shall endeavour at all times to work in harmony with the Board of Guardians and existing charities, and, so far as possible, to avoid interfering with them in their respective spheres of action.

13. That indiscriminate charity be discouraged within the parish, as being bad in principle and injurious in its effects.

14. That application be made to all householders in the parish for subscriptions to provide the necessary funds to carry on the work of the committee.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE annual meeting of this society was held Oct. 3rd, at Weirs-court, Newgate-street, Mr. John Mould, President, in the chair.

The minutes of the last quarterly meeting having been read and confirmed, the Secretary read the report for the past six months, of which the following is an abridgment:—"The reorganisation of this society continues to receive the marked approval which was manifested during the first quarter, when the number of members rose to 80; they have still further risen this quarter, and the number of subscribing members on your books now stands at 118; there are also thirteen honorary members, and three life members. The lectures have been 43 in number; 33 of which were trance, and 10 normal addresses. There has been a great variety of speakers. The *séance* department goes on satisfactorily, thanks to Miss Fairlamb, who continues to give good *séances* for form manifestations. We have, however, been deprived of the services of Miss Wood, since the unfortunate Blackburn affair; but we have had too much experience of her to do otherwise than welcome her when she returns. Your committee congratulates you on the result of your efforts on behalf of the Indian Famine Relief Fund. Your librarian reports that, by the aid of various donations in books and cash, and by collections at lectures in aid of the library by Messrs. Morse and Colville, there is a total of 112 volumes on your shelves; 87 volumes have been issued to members during the past half-year, and 28 have the loan of a book each at the present time. He also reports that he has received from the above-named sources, £8 9s. 2d.; has expended in new books, £7 7s. 9d.; and has a balance in hand of £1 1s. 5d. Your auditors having duly examined the treasurer's accounts, report them correct, and to be as follows:—Dr.—To balance in hand, £7 17s.; collections, £37 3s. 4½d.; subscriptions, £18 14s. 11d.; cash from Debating Society, £2; cash from pic-nic, £4 13s. 8d.; total, £70 8s. 11½d. Cr.—By lectures (fees, fares, and entertainment), £38 5s. 6d.; advertisements, printing, and posting, £5; rent, rates, and gas, £12 17s. 5d.; woman for cleaning, £3 14s. 6d.; cost of pic-nic, £2 10s. 2d.; account books and 200 new rules, £2 0s. 6d.; stamps and stationery, £1 4s. 5d.; balance with treasurer, £4 16s. 5½d.; total, £70 8s. 11½d.; outstanding accounts, £5 11s. 5d."

The adoption of the report having been duly moved and seconded, was, after discussion, carried unanimously.

Some business of a routine character having been transacted, the election of an Executive was then proceeded with, the result being as follows:—President, John Mould; vice-presidents, W. C. Robson and Wm. Hunter; hon. treasurer, John Miller; hon. financial secretary, Fenwick Pickup; hon. corresponding secretary, H. A. Kersey; auditors, E. J. Blake and John Hare; librarian, M. Patterson; committee, Wm. Armstrong, Thos. Ashton, John Colman, J. Haydock, Jas. Robson, L. Bristol, S. D. Wyld, and Andrew Aiston.

A vote of thanks to the chairman terminated the proceedings.

MR. COLVILLE'S TRANCE ADDRESSES.—Every Monday evening Mr. Colville delivers trance addresses at the Langham Hall, Portland-street, Regent-street, London, commencing at eight o'clock; admission free. On Saturday afternoons, at four o'clock, he gives trance addresses at the rooms of the National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, and members and friends have then a good opportunity of putting questions to the controlling intelligences at their leisure. Mr. Colville is a young trance medium of great promise.

SLATE-WRITING EXTRAORDINARY.*

BY ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

I TRUST you may consider the following experiment worthy of record in your paper, because it differs from cases of abnormal slate-writing of which evidence was adduced at the trial of Slade, and because it affords a demonstration of the reality of the phenomenon and the absence of imposture from which there seems no escape. I confine myself to this one experiment and narrate the essential facts only.

The sitting was at a private house in Richmond, on the 21st of last month. Two ladies and three gentlemen were present, besides myself and the medium, Dr. Monck. A shaded candle was in the room, giving light sufficient to see every object on the table round which we sat. Four small and common slates were on the table. Of these I chose two, and after carefully cleaning and placing a small fragment of pencil between them, I tied them together with a strong cord, passed around them both lengthways and crosswise, so as effectually to prevent the slates from moving on each other. I then laid them flat on the table, without losing sight of them for an instant. Dr. Monck placed the fingers of both hands on them, while I and a lady sitting opposite me placed our hands on the corners of the slates. *From this position our hands never moved, till I untied them to ascertain the result.* After waiting a minute or two, Dr. Monck asked me to name any short word I wished to be written on the slate. I named the word "God." He then ask me to say how I wished it written. I replied, "lengthways of the slate;" then if I wished it written with a large or small "g," and I chose a capital "G." In a very short time writing was heard on the slate. The medium's hands were convulsively withdrawn, and I then myself untied the cord (which was a strong silk watch-guard, lent by one of the visitors), and on opening the slates, found on the lower one the word I had asked for, written in the manner I had requested, the writing being somewhat faint and laboured, but perfectly legible. The slate with the writing on it is now in my possession.

The essential features of this experiment are—that I myself cleaned and tied up the slates, that I kept my hand on them all the time, that they never went out of my sight for a moment, and that I named the word to be written and the manner of writing it after they were thus secured and held by me. I ask, how are these facts to be explained, and what interpretation is to be placed upon them?

I was present on this occasion, and certify that Mr. Wallace's account of what happened is correct.

EDWARD T. BENNETT.

MR. MORSE'S BENEFIT SOIREE.

ON Wednesday next the annual complimentary *soirée* to Mr. J. J. Morse will be held at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, Regent-street, London, and there will probably be a large attendance on the occasion. It is expected to be the first general meeting of London Spiritualists for the coming season. The following is the programme:—

PROGRAMME.

PART I.

Pianoforte solo, "Minuet, Symphony in E flat," (Mozart), Miss Maltby.

Song, "Agatha" (Franz Abt), Miss Schallehn.

Song, "Is this a dream?" (Arthur Sullivan), Mrs. Limpus.

Cavatina, "M'appari tutt amor" ("Martha"), (Flotow), Mr. Ernest A. Tietkens.

Old Welsh song, "The Ash Grove," Madame Schneegans.

Pianoforte solo, "Rondo Brilliant" (Weber), Miss Holmes.

Recitation, "Luko" (Bret Harte), Mr. Frank Dietz.

Duet, "Oh that we two were Maying" (Alice Mary Smith), Madame Schneegans and Mr. Ernest A. Tietkens.

Mr. J. J. Morse.

Interval of ten minutes.

PART II.

Pianoforte duet (Gounod), the Misses Annie and Evelyn Ward.

Recitation, Miss Ella Dietz.

Vocal duet, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Ward.

Song, "Evangeline" (John Blockly), Miss Schallehn.

Song, "Esmeralda" (Levey), Mrs. Limpus.

Song, "Good night, beloved" (Balfe), Mr. Ernest A. Tietkens.

Song, "The Old Cottage Clock" (Molloy), Madame Schneegans.

Song, Mr. J. C. Ward.

Recitation, "The Northern Farmer" (Tennyson), Mr. Frank Dietz.

Final duet, concertina and piano (Zampa), Miss A. Ward and

Mr. J. C. Ward.

* From *The Spectator*, October 6th, 1877.

"TEN YEARS."

BY FLORENCE MARRYAT.

I.

How many years is't since we met?
If we must count by years—why ten,
But if by wasted lives, 'twere then
Too hard a task our minds to set.

II.

Ten years! of slow, remorseless pain,
Of trembling hope, of jealous fear,
Of absence from what was most dear.
Ten years—and now we meet again!

III.

We parted in the bloom of youth,
Face pressed to face, and heart to heart,
And crying that we could not part,
And life should prove our earnest truth.

IV.

There is no falsehood in your soul;
I know your words were true, dear love,
Although what followed did not prove
You strong enough to bear the whole.

V.

You thought your world embraced by me;
But rival worlds and alien ties,
And looks of love from other eyes,
Proclaimed your thought a fantasy.

VI.

Then I, too, turned to other friends,
Not dearer than you were to me,
The God who reads my soul can see;
But whilst we live, life must have ends.

VII.

And now we two must meet again,
Clasp hand in hand, forgetting all
The past, which bound us in her thrall,
With the long interval of pain.

VIII.

We meet again—but how? my youth
Has died beneath my burthened heart;
And I feel I retain no part
In what the world calls love or truth.

IX.

Has your life proved as sad and drear,
With hours so dark and full of grief,
God's love alone could bring relief
Or make you bear to linger here?

X.

Nay! No reply—I should not ask;
It was His voice that parted us;
And if He wills I suffer thus,
In silence I will learn the task.

XI.

E'en should I find the passing years
Have sternly blotted out your love,
I still will look to Heaven above,
And bless Him through my silent tears.

XII.

Oh, Christ! I thank Thee that my heart
Has found a safer, surer home,
Whence by Thy grace no more 'twill roam—
The blessed Heaven where Thou art.

XIII.

Hadst Thou not come with wondrous power
To fill my soul with Thy great love,
I now should all my weakness prove,
And sink o'erwhelmed by this dark hour.

XIV.

But set my love, dear Lord of Love,
Chastened and sanctified by Thine,
A sacrifice upon the shrine,
I hope to worship at above!

THE COMMUNION OF THE LIVING WITH THE DEAD.

Translated from "La Religion Laïque," by J. N. Gledstanes.

ALL that we possess we owe to humanity. If God created us capable of being what we are, humanity has made us what we have become. That civilisation of which we boast so much is the product of the action of previous generations; no acquisition, invention, or application of the forces of nature, and no idea, truth, liberty, or virtue, and no particle of material, intellectual, or moral capital which we enjoy but has been gained at the cost of labour, strife, and effort, or originated from the thought or action of some human being, known or unknown, who has lived before us, and who sometimes thereby has brought on himself poverty, humiliation, and martyrdom.

No communion or solidarity could exist among men, unless the people of to-day felt that they also lived in the past, tied by sacred memory and by gratitude to their ancestors, who in their time had, with loving foresight, prepared the conditions for subsequent generations, and transmitted to them the common heritage prepared and improved. In this sentiment is a feeling of great value, which has largely contributed to the preservation and progress of society. It is to be found in the ancient religious systems, in the worship of gods, demi-gods, heroes, or ancestors. Catholicism has reproduced it in the worship of saints. We should like to see the worship of saints continued in the universal religion of the future, but of course eliminating everything approaching to idolatry. Belief in individual immortality once established, we are disposed to admit the influence of the living on the dead and the dead on the living. Our beloved departed ones inspire, support, and protect us, while we on our part ameliorate their future condition by developing our present potentialities, perfecting society, and gradually causing order, equity, and harmony to reign in our terrestrial domain. The feeling which inclines us to continue united in spirit with the dead, whom we have loved or who have loved us, is an essentially religious sentiment. The thought that our acts are known to those whose esteem we cherish, the confession that we make to them of our faults, hopes, and projects, the desire we feel not to afflict them, and not to have to blush in their presence, our faith in their assistance and moral support, the conviction of the good we do them in labouring to ameliorate that world into which they will be summoned to live again, all these consequences of the life beyond the grave are for the believer inexhaustible sources of development and progress. But the family sphere, even when enlarged by the remembrance of those who have been sympathetic with us in this world, is too restricted to satisfy the religious wants of a being who has become sufficiently social and human to feel that he lives not only as a member of a family, but at the same time as a member of his city, his country, and of humanity. To respond to the sentiment of universal solidarity, which makes every one of us a member of the human family and a citizen of the world, we must be able, in thought at least, to connect ourselves with all the men who have not led useless lives upon earth, and whose virtues, genius, and labours, devotion and discoveries, have contributed to make us what we are to-day.

Among all the benefactors of humanity, among all the martyrs of truth and progress, we only know the few illustrious individuals whose names are chronicled in history. Let us honour them—at least those of them whose names have descended to us. Let us take them for guides and models. In them we perceive humanity increasing day by day and century by century, in power, knowledge, morality, and in gravitation towards God. Let us join the best of these virtuous, devoted, and enlightened men in their efforts to lead the whole human family to perfection. Such is the great communion of the living and dead in the heart of the world, and such is the meaning we should like to see given to the worship of saints, honours paid to the names of the heroes and benefactors of humanity, at all times and in all countries. It remains for us to say who are our saints, or at least what are the qualifications required of those who are gone before to entitle them to be inscribed in the Golden Book of our ancestors—the spiritual fathers of humanity. It would seem that Christianity as soon as it was called "Catholic," a Greek word meaning "universal," set to work to belie its name. Nothing is less universal or more difficult to render universal than Catholic Christianity, with its narrow belief, irrational and monstrous dogmas, and the exclusive spirit of its church, out of which—if we are to believe it—there is no salvation. A religion, which aspired to become the religion of humanity, should have accommodated itself to all the forms of religious feeling; it should have conceived a creed large enough to embrace all the aspirations of the human soul, and capable of satisfying them. The insufficiency and narrowness of the Catholic conception have obliged the Romish Church to rely on physical force as an auxiliary to the spirit of proselytism and Catholicism; they have caused the spiritual power to find itself rivetted to the temporal power like two convicts to the same chain, inasmuch as the Pope has been obliged ever to struggle against the Emperor, or else allow him to join him in the management of the Christian flock, after they have mutually made concessions, for which morality has often had to blush, and humanity to pay the cost. Nothing shows better the exclusive spirit of Catholicism than the selection of saints it has made for enjoyment of the honours of its paradise. It looks as if men had never existed before the establishment of the Church of Peter, or that nothing had ever happened without its pale. All that that Church has accomplished, however, is insignificant in comparison with what humanity has done both anterior to Catholicism and since, outside the Romish Church, or in spite of it. But it is especially in the qualifications upon which it founds the title to holiness that the Romish Church has shown itself singularly narrow and little humanitarian or universal. It has not only excluded from its Golden Book all the heroes, all the large hearts and grand souls who have lived outside the Christian circle, but it has only admitted saints of undeniable orthodoxy, and has never thought of asking them what good they have done to the world, what they have added to the common heritage, what great idea or noble example they have left, what useful

discovery they have made. To have suffered and worked for the faith is all that is required.

We desire to break with the Catholic tradition in this regard, and we wish to open a Golden Book, which shall be in reality a book of humanity, where holiness shall not be peculiar to any sect or church, but shall belong to all times, to all peoples of bygone centuries, and be a record of labour, devotion, and self-sacrifice for the good of mankind, whether in moral worth, science, or genius, or in any of the branches of human activity. The Catholic communion, of course, shall have its share, but only its share of honour. We will judge its pretensions like the others, by submitting them to the same test, and by asking each individual whose name has reached us, not what he has done for his faith and his church, but what he has done for mankind, and the advancement of future generations, in the way of truth, justice, and beauty.

We are going to propose and submit to the judgment of our friends, and all who sympathise with our work, a list of the saints we should like to see figure in the calendar, either concurrently with those already there, or in their place, the greater number of whom, without injustice, may be said to have had their day. We will begin next month to publish the names of the saints for the month of August, and so on for each of the other months of the year. The reception of our saints, and the arrangement of their dates for the different days of the year, let it be understood, have nothing definitive, it being merely a suggestion that we make. Certain names may, no doubt, be objected to, but there are some who will be enthusiastically admitted, such, for instance, as Socrates, Aristides, Phocion, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Hypatia, Joan of Arc, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague. Is it not enough to make us blush with shame to have a Catholic Golden Book, a book claiming to be universal, of all the saints, and yet not to find the above-mentioned names therein?

MRS. SUYDAM, THE FIRE-TEST MEDIUM.

LAST week we (*Banner of Light*) published the testimony of Mr. John Wetherbee concerning this well-known lady from the West. Dr. Mack furnishes us with the following views regarding her at the present writing:—

"Are the Spiritualists of Boston generally aware of the fact that one of the most remarkable exhibitions of spirit power that has ever been made before a public assembly is now offered daily in our city? Are our physicists and men of science aware of their opportunity of testing a most remarkable phenomenon? If not, I hope a few words from me as to the conditions under which Mrs. Suydam submits hands, arms and feet, throat and mouth, to the ordeal by fire, will attract some attention.

"Before an assemblage, not so large as it ought to be, and often composed chiefly of sceptics, Mrs. Suydam will hold hand or arm for the space of thirty seconds in a steady flame from a kerosene lamp. She will move either arm back and forth through the flame, and after the experiment not a hair will be found singed. She will thrust a piece of blazing wood, dipped in alcohol, into her mouth, and keep it there fifteen seconds. In short, she will give the most ample proof that some abnormal power is at work shielding her skin from the ordinary effects of fire.

"To prove that she does not produce this insensibility by any artificial or chemical means, she will allow any chemist to wash her arms and hands in any preparation he may think available to test the genuineness of the phenomenon.

"The charge so loosely brought against Mrs. Suydam that she produces the manifestation by any other aid than the spiritual, I believe to be wholly unfounded. She passes into a state of trance while the phenomena are in progress, and she allows the most sceptical committees all proper facilities for testing her sincerity and satisfying themselves that the phenomena are inexplicable by any fact or process at present known to science."

SPIRITS SETTING FIRE TO A HOUSE.—What object spirits could have in setting fire to a house is not easy to determine. The *Gazette*, of Onawa, Iowa, speaks as follows:—"The 'manifestations' consisted mainly in the abstraction and hiding of the wearing apparel of the young lady 'medium'; in a few instances something was destroyed. There were peculiar and unaccountable freaks of various kinds, and this state of things was going on by spells for several months. About one month after the article appeared in the *Press*, an alarm of fire was one day raised in the house. An attempt to put out the fire made known the fact that as fast as it was put out in one part, it would break forth in another. Some neighbours were called in, and they all worked briskly trying to save the house. The fire would break out in the most unexpected places. Once it was found in a closed chest; again the centre of a bed. It must have appeared in twenty separate and distinct spots throughout the building. Finally the fires were extinguished without material damage; but the family was so much disturbed by the inexplicable phenomenon that they moved all their household effects away to a neighbour's dwelling and abandoned the house. They stayed away two weeks and then moved back. I have not heard of any trouble since, although it is not known that the manifestations have entirely ceased. As a matter of course, this affair has been a source of much annoyance and anxiety to the worthy family in which it has occurred. This is, I think, the first case on record of 'materialisation' by invisible house burners. There is no question as to the facts. Who is wise enough to explain?" The probability is that the spirits performing these manifestations had no intention of burning the house down—they only wished to make their presence forcibly known, and in a manner that the press all over the country would take especial delight in publishing the same. They might have been evil disposed spirits, like thousands still in mortal form.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*,

Poetry.

AN "INSECTATIVE" IDYL.

Our, for some pup-pup-pup-pup-power,
To catch the fuf fuf-fly
That every bub bub-blessed hour
Mum mocks my angry cry.
He bub-bub-buzzeth when I read;
With tickling cuc-cuc-creep
Across my face with mad'ning speed
He crawltoth when I sleep.

He bites me on the nun-nun-nose,
And buzzes in my ear;
His lazy huh-huh-horn he blows,
That tickles me to hear.
Forth from the syrup he cuc-crawls,
With sticky fuf-fuf-feet;
In liquid sweetness oft he falls,
But, oh, he is not sweet.

He is no fuf-philosopher,
Science is not his meat,
And yet he huh-hath, as it were,
Air-pumps in all his feet.
No dud-dud-dud dud-doctor he;
For every aggravation
His only treatment seems to be
Cuc-counter irritation.

He does not pup-pup-pup-preach,
But all these dreamy days,
When saint or sinner he can reach,
He pup-pup-pup-preys.
Oh, wretched fuf-fuf-fuf-fly!
Oh, mite of living death!
I'd like to smite you hip and thigh,
And shut off your bub-breath!

ROBERT J. BURDETTE, in the *Burlington Hawkeye*.

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers.]

M. A. OXON'S BOOK.

SIR,—Kindly allow me a little space to say that the state of the subscription lists warrants me in preparing the volume of which your advertisement columns have given notice.

When I projected the book it was my intention to reprint various papers of mine which have appeared in certain magazines and periodicals. I was led, however, to abandon this scheme in favour of one more comprehensive and of greater probable utility.

I wish to publish a book which shall summarize, and act as a kind of guide to the best literature of modern Spiritualism, which shall answer the reiterated question—What is there that I can read on this subject?

This plan involves a wider range of preparation, and demands a longer time for its completion, than my original idea necessitated. Such a work cannot be hurried, even if it were desirable or necessary to push it on at the expense of completeness and precision. Moreover, the demands on my time are increasingly heavy, and my vacation (on which I depend for private work) was this year greatly lessened by a period of ill health.

I am compelled, therefore, to ask indulgence of my friends, and to defer the publication until a time of which I will give due notice. Meantime, I shall carry on the work of preparation as rapidly as I can.

M. A. OXON.

CHARITY ORGANISATION.

SIR,—After reading your review of Mr. S. C. Hall's *Words of Warning*, I thought well to purchase the work and study it, so as to be able to form a more correct judgment of its contents. The first part is in poetry, and highly sensational, and, as the incidents are the creations of the poet's fancy, I pass it by without further remark. In the second part, however, we are led to believe that the author is dealing with facts; of the reliability of his statements your readers may judge for themselves. On page 29 he says:—"Several annual reports of these branch societies are before me. I subject some of them to 'inquiry.'"

He then proceeds to take to pieces, in a very unfair and misleading way, portions of these reports. The Clapham committee is, among others, held up as an example of iniquity, and its work thus summarised:—"In the wealthy suburb of Clapham £159 14s. 6d. was collected; the expenditure being only £110 11s. 6d; but there is also a balance in hand of £64 3s. At Clapham, during the year, six persons were relieved by gifts, and five by loans." What are the facts? The office expenses were £116 11s. 6d, £61 8s. 7d. was given away, and £39 1s. 6d. advanced as loans. The cases that came under the consideration of the committee were 111; of these 31 were assisted by grants, 9 by loans, and 14 by letters for hospitals, &c.; 25 were dismissed; 32 were recommended to other agencies. In addition to this, 612 non-residents, or vagrants, were relieved with bread.

The City fares no better at Mr. Hall's hands. He says:—"The society, therefore, reports 15 loans and grants"; whereas 136 were so assisted to the amount of £388 11s. 5d.

This will be sufficient to show that the author's arguments have not a sound basis. With regard to the society itself, it is true that a large proportion of the expenditure is in working expenses; but then the

society does not, and never did, profess to be solely for the relief of distress, though it undertakes cases of temporary trouble when other sources fail. Its great objects are, as its name indicates, the organisation of charitable relief and the repression of mendicancy; it seeks to keep the stream of money expended in charity from professional beggars and bad characters, and to guide it to those who, through misfortune, have fallen into want; and I venture to think that money subscribed to the society, though a large portion *does* go as salaries and other expenses, is better laid out than when given in sixpences and shillings to beggars in the streets, assisting in their destruction, and serving only to increase the receipts of the publicans. As to the action of the society, "drying up the natural channels of the heart," one of its great efforts is the encouraging of personal work among the poor, for which a sixpence given to a passing beggar is a very sorry substitute.

I do not say that the society has never made a mistake, but its objects are good, and it is open to any one to join the local committee of their district, and to send a representative to the central council, the constitution of which is as liberal as can be wished.

The great want of the society is *workers*, and I think it would be better to act in that way, and try to guide the committees aright, than to sit at home and write sensational effusions against people who, even if mistaken, have a good end in view—the benefit of their fellow men.

JAMES DEAN.

Clapham, October 7th, 1877.

SPIRITUALISM IN IRELAND.

SIR,—My travels in Ireland, so far, have been full of pleasing surprises; and, no doubt, they will be followed up shortly by another and more public visit, as it is my intention to give a series of lectures on mesmerism and phrenology throughout the country; but, for the present, I have contented myself with giving mesmeric *séances* in private. In Dublin I was surprised to find so many gentlemen fully acquainted with the subject of mesmerism; but I regret, at the same time, to be compelled to state that, so great is the fear of Mrs. Grundy, that these gentlemen decline to avow their belief. One of them informed me, that did he avow his belief in public, and state what was his actual knowledge of the subject of mesmerism, he would be considered a madman, perhaps a Spiritualist, and the effect would, in a short time, be visible in the declining number of pupils attending his school. Another, whose business did not consist of "teaching the young idea how to shoot," but who provided some of the benighted inhabitants of the city with coal, told me that he practised mesmerism for healing purposes for many years, and had not the slightest doubt of its value; but he declined to do so any more, as he was now connected with the Church, and took an active part in religious work, Sunday-school business, and temperance, and it would not do for him to say anything about it. Besides, he noticed that, as a rule, persons who dabbled in mesmerism generally became infidels or Spiritualists. But I really believe one of the reasons why he declined to have anything more to do with it is that he might lose the sale of his coal to his religious (?) customers. Alas! when it is a question between truth and money, between independent honesty and expediency, money and expediency too often weigh down the balance and decide the question.

Before leaving Dublin I had the pleasure of attending a *séance* given by Mrs. McMahon, a writing and rapping medium. This lady four or five years ago suffered severely from paralysis of the lower limbs, and was unable to walk; she owes her recovery to direct spirit-action. The spirits used to move a table round the room, she leaning on the top of it, and following, by which means she gained strength, and obtained exercise which she was unable to procure in any other form. As a long account of this remarkable cure was published in the pages of *The Medium* some time ago, I will say no more about it, further than that this lady still firmly believes she was cured by spirit agency, and that she still holds communication with spirits. She has a husband and five children in the spirit-world; all of them, she says, have given her undoubted tests of spirit identity. If so, she has, indeed, been highly favoured, as proofs of spirit identity are few enough. I enjoyed the *séance* thoroughly. Raps were abundant, produced in daylight, and good test and thought-reading communications were rapped out. After ten days comfortable sojourn in the good old city of Dublin, I proceeded to Newry. Spiritualism has planted itself here, but it is rather of the hothouse kind, and will not stand out-door scrutiny and treatment. I had a request made here, namely, that if I attended a *séance* I would not send an account of it to the papers, so I have not done so. From Newry I went to fulfil an engagement at Kilkeel, a rambling country village, with 1,500 inhabitants. A handsome old-fashioned square-towered church strikes the attention of the stranger as he enters the place on car from Rostrevor—famous now as a watering place. Kilkeel is a lovely place, adjacent to a fine bay, and backed by a mountainous amphitheatre, where the hills rear their heads into the blue vault above. Fish are abundant in the bay, and even now, when the fishing season is considered nearly over, I have gone down to the new pier and fishing harbour, and watched with interest the fishing smacks arrive one after another, laden with fish captured during the night. My host is a Spiritualist, and has a fine library, containing rare and valuable works, which are seldom found upon the bookshelves of the libraries of more pretentious people. I shall send more particulars in my next. J. COATES.

Kilkeel, October 6th, 1877.

MESMERISM.

SIR,—Mr. Atkinson, in his letter on Mesmerism, in *The Spiritualist* of October 5th, says he would be happy to copy out the case of Anne Vials with additional remarks and information, if he knew that it would be acceptable.

I have a vivid recollection of the case of Anne Vials, who, poor girl, was, in her natural state, about as plain a specimen of feminine humanity as I ever beheld, with only one arm, and general appearance far from prepossessing. During her state of *extase*, however, the ordinary appearance was marvellously changed, her facial expression and her graceful attitudes being worthy the study of painter, sculptor, and actor.

I hope your correspondent may be induced to give as full details as possible of this very remarkable case.

JOHN JAMES.

Tottenham, October 8th.

ASTROLOGY.

SIR,—Mr. Massey having asked whether I can confirm the confident statement made in the preface of a certain book that "*Horary* astrology is both infallible and easily learned," I may just remark that close application will in a few days—at all events within a month—give the student such a knowledge of the art as will enable him to "read" the various "schemes" he erects with correctness and facility. I must be guarded in speaking of the "infallibility" of the science. My experience goes to show that in the early efforts to acquire a knowledge of astrology, the student may draw inaccurate conclusions from the horoscope, just in the same manner as the grammar-school boy misconstrues a sentence from Virgil or Ovid. I do not profess to be an adept, indeed there are but few people who ever arrive at such a degree of perfection in their judgments as to be themselves infallible. When there is such a person, then it will be time enough to inquire as to the fallibility or otherwise of the science. I have found astrology extremely useful in all the affairs of life, and in eighteen cases out of twenty unmistakably appropriate in its decisions. If I was anxious to buy a house, or invest in any of the speculative enterprises of the day, I certainly should be guided by the stars in coming to a decision.

I may say that circumstances recently forced me into litigation. As there was no help for it, I elected a suitable day on which to commence the proceedings, and I feel quite confident that, notwithstanding the "law's delay," I shall come out triumphant. There have been seven appearances before the Court already, in the shape of motions and applications, yet in no instance have I received a reverse. The opposition now threaten an appeal, but if they carry it on, which I doubt, they will meet with the same run of "ill-luck" as hitherto. ALDEBARAN.

PROVINCIAL NOTES.—NO. II.

SIR,—With your permission I will continue these "Notes," the first of which appeared in your columns of October 5th. Resuming the survey commenced in my last, we will take Liverpool as being next in order. An exhaustive account of the rise and progress of Spiritualism in the above town has already been contributed to your pages. Your present correspondent need only mention facts subsequent to the close of that narrative. About fifteen months ago the Liverpool Psychological Society was located at the Islington Assembly Rooms. Its meetings were well attended, current expenses were met, and a more than average degree of prosperity was experienced. Acting under strong suggestions the committee decided to remove to more commodious premises. The change was made. Normal speakers were largely used, and the influence of social position cultivated. But the real test of the value of the higher class patronage failed, for the society contracted liabilities it was unable to discharge. At the expiration of the first year's tenancy of its new abode it withdrew therefrom, and its then president resigned. Since that time the society has been in a state of suspended animation. It is partially recovering now, and doubtless it will succeed in re-establishing itself ere long. The present position of Spiritualism in Liverpool, so far as public expression is concerned, is a state of quiescence. In Southport and Blackpool the cause has a few firm friends. In the first-named town several lectures have been delivered. In Preston the movement is pressed forward chiefly in the direction of private *séances*, and occasional letters in the local papers, the *Herald* and the *Guardian*. Much opposition is expressed to the subject. In Blackburn Spiritualism has fallen down very much, crude methods of presenting and investigating the phenomena being largely responsible for the present decadence of the movement there.

In the county of Yorkshire a considerable amount of activity is manifested, though on the whole things are not quite so vigorous as they used to be. Bradford holds regular services every Sunday. The meetings do not appeal to a very wide circle. Leeds has abandoned public work for some years past. A few semi-public *séances* were held, though, towards the close of last year. The towns of Ossett and Gawthorpe have for a long time expressed much of their zeal in testing the educational value of the emotional aspects of Spiritualism. The zeal expressed does not bring the results really due to it. The town of Keighley possesses a building built for Spiritualist meetings, and specially devoted to that purpose. It will seat about one hundred and fifty to one hundred and seventy people. Meetings are held on Sundays and Thursdays, good attendances being obtained. Subjective phenomena are the rule, and objective—physical—the exception. Spiritualism may really be said to have originated in Keighley, so far as England is concerned, the "Lyceum Brotherhood" being the oldest Spiritual Association extant; its founder has lately passed to the higher life. The local press gives fair reports in an impartial spirit.

Previous to continuing our way northwards, a slight return south needs to be made—Leicester, Derby, and Belper, calling for a passing notice. In the first-named town there is a good average society. A room is rented in which services are held on Sundays, and occasional meetings during the week. The society has recently suffered from some rather trying events, and in consequence it is not in its normal condition. Derby has a Psychological Society, and a number of intel-

ligent and well-to-do people in the town are busily investigating the phenomena, but at present the local indications do not present much that calls for a special notice. In Belper Spiritualism has attracted a large share of public attention; the facts have been rigidly scrutinised, and systematically investigated, and results of a very interesting nature have been obtained. The local spiritual authorities have done their best to scatter their results abroad. Nottingham, too, here claims mention. There are two societies in the town, one representing the Liberal aspect, and the other the Conservative aspect of Spiritualism's tendencies and theories. The division of force is unhappy. Public work is retarded, while the spectacle of a divided camp is presented to the public. The *Nottingham Journal* is fair and impartial when it reports any meetings held in our interest.

Resuming our journey north, but deviating a moment, making, in fact, a curve, we are able just to note Hull. Local action is not very marked. The centre of activity is not well sustained; it is a question indeed if the subject really excites much interest in the above unspiritual town.

Returning inland, we travel on to Halifax, where the local Spiritualists rent the Old County Court Rooms, holding Sunday meetings, with local talent, normal and abnormal, in the speakers. The cause, though, has not so much sympathy bestowed upon it since recent events in Huddersfield; thus the workers have rather a difficult task to sustain their position. At Sowerby Bridge, the neighbouring town, there exists a Lyceum building, and public services and a Lyceum school are held therein every Sunday. Unlike their Keighley co-workers, the Sowerby Bridge Spiritualists have still a heavy debt upon their building. In Huddersfield Spiritualism is very quiet at present.

The reader shall be taken further north in my next communication. X.

MATERIALIZATION OF SPIRIT HEADS. NO. XIII.—PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE DARK.

SIR,—In your last number, in reference to the photographs of the moulds and busts obtained by us, I read that the National Association of Spiritualists "always refers the gifts connected with phenomenal Spiritualism to the Research Committee, before they are placed on permanent view. Of this committee Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, the electrician, is chairman. There may be a few natural questions which the public would like to ask, and Mr. O'Sullivan to answer, about the moulds, so perhaps those questions had better be put through the Research Committee."

I, therefore, beg leave to invite those questions at once. They will probably, I suppose, be substantially the same as those which had been already addressed to me by an individual member of that committee, and to which I had intended to respond to-day. But as some further points of interrogation might proceed from the committee, I deem it better not to make two bites of one cherry, and to reserve my reply till I am favoured with the whole, or at least the intimation that I may regard those questions as those of the committee. I shall then be happy to reply to them with full accuracy, and with all that candour and honesty which I think all readers of these letters must have recognised as stamped throughout on their face.

But I may at once let your readers know the question which underlies these queries, and of which I had been before informed by private correspondence. It seems that while no one suspects for a moment the "unquestionable honour and integrity" of the witnesses (those witnesses being the Count and Countess de Bullet, Mr. De Veh, Mr. Lvoff, of Moscow, and myself), some few gentlemen have conceived the notion that these moulds have been derived, not from the materialised heads of spirits (as the spirits declare them to be), but from plaster-casts brought into the *séance* room by fraudulent, lying, trickster spirits (I suppose "elementaries"), brought in as "*apports*," and then carried away again—I suppose to the museums or shops from which they had been "conveyed, the wise it call." I understand that one person claims to have seen in the British Museum the exact *fac-simile* of the head of Glaucus. I should like to see them side by side. The same had been two or three times told the Count de Bullet here in regard to the collection of sculpture in the Louvre, but examination proved that there had been only general resemblance, yet with entire difference. Chancing to see recently a small photograph of the Antinous of the Vatican, in which the pose of the head and general appearance seemed very like that of Glaucus, the Count had the head and shoulders enlarged to the same size as our bust of Glaucus. It became at once apparent that they are totally different. Why is not a similar photograph taken of the alleged head in the British Museum, and compared with that of Glaucus? I will wager the expense of it that they are not found to be the same. At our *séance* yesterday John King spoke out pretty strongly about this plaster-cast theory of a few persons over in London. He had heard a letter read, and the subject talked about amongst us before the *séance* began, and he was very indignant; felt greatly insulted.

"Why, do they take us for rogues and liars, and as bad as thieves? For we should be such if we brought plaster casts here to dip into the paraffin and deceive you, while pretending them to be our own materialised heads? And how do those wise people think their plaster casts were got out of the moulds, without break, or cut, or damage to the moulds? But it is not worth answering."

Thus, John King. But, differing from him, I am willing to answer, and expect to do so conclusively, so soon as the queries are received.

Oct. 7.—We have used up a good number of photographic plates in the dark since my last. They are now of larger size, with a larger instrument. We often get failures, that is to say, failures to get distinct forms and features. But there have been several good ones. Many of the failures are curious and instructive. In one of them the naked arm of a young female spirit is there, but with a break separating it from the rest of the body, showing a part of the shoulder and side to have not

held together, in conformity with what we have often been told takes place. In one the features of a young girl are not clear, while her whole form, in profile, is there down nearly to the knees, draped only with her abundant long hair. It suggests, what is probable enough, that in the higher phases of spirit life the form is draped only in the innocence of spirit purity. We have one of John King naked to the waist, where drapery begins. He said that this was to show us that they could form their bodies as well as heads, and hands, and arms, and drapery. In one very wonderful one there are two John Kings, close together, both bare to the waist, the one in front view, the other in profile, both finely formed. After seeing this on the negative, I had supposed that he had posed twice successively before the same glass during the five minutes of time. But it seems it was not so. The next day the first thing he asked was how we had liked his "double." I told him what had been my supposition about it. "No," he answered, "that would have been impossible. I took a double amount of power and formed myself in two John Kings; and it was one pose for both. I at first was going to make them stand side by side, both fronting the instrument, but my friends Daguerre (pronounced by him Dugger) and Guisey advised me to change it, as some people might suppose them to be some sort of duplicate views of one form, and so I put one in profile so that you could see that there were two." I may here say that Mr. Firman (entranced and clairvoyant) had told the Count at the time that there were two figures standing, and that they looked like statues. It was only some hours afterwards, on getting the plate developed at Fontaine's, that we got the explanation of this in the startling appearance of these two John Kings, or John King and his "double."

Another phenomenon, seen by the Count at one of the dark photographing *séances*, was this. There was a large body of light, nearly a couple of feet in diameter, of irregular shape, very bright, and flashing out rays, and at the same time about a dozen similar smaller ones, of about three inches in diameter. John King afterwards said it was light he was collecting. In most of our photographs there appears more or less of small bits of light, from which luminosity radiates around. These seem to be a sort of dust of the light he collects and employs. Indeed, he once accepted my expression of light dust as applicable to them. These sometimes seem to move in different directions, as shown by a sort of wake of luminosity behind them. J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

2, Rue Solferino, Paris.

A SEANCE IN BOSTON.

To the Editor of the "Banner of Light."

SIR,—On Monday evening, September 10th, I had occasion to visit Mr. Houghton at his residence, Jamaica Plain. After spending some time in conversation I was about to leave, when Mr. Houghton suggested to Mrs. Thayer, who was present, to "try the spirits" and see if they would favour us with any demonstration of their power. Mrs. Thayer seemed reluctant to comply, but to settle the question the light was extinguished, and we sat in darkness for a minute or two, and then, a light being struck, a few specimens of very fine and choice leaves were found on the table. They were evidently newly gathered, and were cold and wet with dew. One of the leaves, after lying a few minutes, began to curl up, which was considered a proof that it had been recently gathered. Mrs. Thayer and Mrs. Houghton had, it appears, visited Forest Hills Cemetery a day or two before, and had noticed leaves similar to those just brought, and suggested that it was from that place they had come. This was subsequently confirmed by a spirit who entranced the medium, and who gave some interesting information relative to the manifestations. It is a fine offence to gather anything in the cemetery grounds, but spirits seem to ignore human rules and regulations.

Two days after this occurrence I again visited Mrs. Thayer for the purpose of introducing Miss Kisingbury, of London (Secretary of the British National Association of Spiritualists, now on a visit to the United States), who was desirous of witnessing that lady's medial powers. After about an hour's conversation we requested Mrs. Thayer to sit for manifestations. To this she at first objected, but finally consented. We sat round a small table in the usual manner, and in a very short time Mrs. Thayer hurriedly requested a light to be struck when a beautiful white lily was seen in front of Miss Kisingbury. This lady then explained that she had been promised by a spirit in London, through Mr. J. W. Fletcher, that if she would visit Mrs. Thayer a lily would be given to her. Miss Kisingbury, who had kept this promise a secret, was very gratified to find it so wonderfully fulfilled. After this flowers were brought in the usual way, as many as twenty different specimens being counted, among which was a large bunch of *Hydrangea Guericifolia*. Spirit-hands then formed, one of which touched me on the shoulder, and then gently patted my knee. Both these *séances* may be considered impromptu, and therefore afford additional proof, if any were wanting, of the genuineness of Mrs. Thayer's mediumship.

Miss Kisingbury, who had only once witnessed a flower *séance*, through Mrs. Guppy, expressed herself much gratified with the manifestations, and carried off her lily and a few other trophies in evident triumph.

I am happy to say that Mrs. Thayer, since I last wrote, has changed her determination. Instead of going to Washington she now proposes to locate in Boston.

ROBERT COOPER.

Mr. A. Joy is drawing up a catalogue of the books in the library of the National Association of Spiritualists.

MR. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—On Sunday next Mr. Morse will deliver a trance address at Doughty Hall, Bedford-row, W.C., to commence at 7 p.m. On Tuesday and Thursday, October 16 and 18, Mr. Morse will deliver trance addresses before the Marylebone Association, 25, Great Quebec-street, at 8 p.m. His complimentary *soirée* will be held at the Cavendish-rooms, Mortimer-street, W., on Wednesday next.

THE DUBLIN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE.

THE *Dublin University Magazine* (London: Hurst and Blackett) is rich every month in articles dealing with advanced religious questions, and some of the deepest religious problems of the age are thoughtfully and carefully considered. The number for October contains an excellent likeness and biographical sketch of the Rev. H. R. Haweis, a review of the book of the Countess of Caithness, *Serious Letters to Serious Friends*, an article by Dr. Keningale Cook, entitled, "Did Jesus know Greek?" also an article by Dr. Edward T. Blake, on "The Medical Basis of Charms." We append two extracts from the last-mentioned contribution:—

AMULETS AND TALISMANS.

"Charms" are as old as superstition, and superstition as old as man. The essence of *fetichism* (*feitigo*, Portuguese, from Latin *factitius*, i.e., made by art) is ignorance; and however poetical and even religious may have been, in its higher phases, the veneration of divinity as embodied in natural objects and powers, we must not lose sight of the fact that the main element of fetich-worship is the degrading sentiment of fear. Terror exerts ever a demoralising influence.

The words *amulet* and *talisman* are often used as synonyms, the latter is said to possess more extensive powers than the former. The essential difference between them is to be sought in their respective histories.

Amulets, more modern, are as much the offspring of a mystic faith as the talisman is the child of astrology. An amulet is animated by the spirit of a *person*; a talisman has been influenced by *celestial bodies*. Hence, any tangible object—a piece of metal, a stone, even an egg—may become endowed with talismanic virtue, but the metal must have been cast, the stone cut, the egg laid in a certain planetary hour and with particular incantations.

Nothing seems to have been too low or insignificant for the influence of the talisman. Warburton tells us that in order to free any place from obnoxious vermin, the figure of the animal should be made in wax or consecrated metal during a planetary conjunction.

It is to this custom that Butler sarcastically alludes in his lines—

He swore that you had robbed his house,
And stole his talismanic l—e.—*Hudibras*.

Certain priests of old produced eggs having peculiar marks, averred by them to represent the figures of comets, or of eclipses. During the culmination of a star, they drove a very brisk trade in these fragile commodities, which certainly must have been credited with the power of imparting a greater degree of immunity from danger than they themselves possessed!

The Samothracians were once noted for their ingenuity and industry in producing talismans. These were little pieces of sacred iron, formed into images, and variously set in rings.

There is a certain business-like magic in this island manufacture, because Byron tells us that if any one were seized with a passion for exploring the neighbouring Archipelago, he would need a good supply of talismans, did he desire to return with life and limb! The advertising of these talismans was an ingenious mode of ensuring that strangers should pay their footing.

It seems to have been a custom, when one wished to pay court to a man who had done a thing so unusual in the East as to "write a book," to bind a part or the whole of his literary efforts on the forehead, as a sort of delicate compliment intimating the superiority of his intelligence over one's own. Bernard, a former Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, assures us that this was the true meaning of Job, when he desired that his "adversary had written a book," a passage usually misquoted as a satire on Job's part.

That it was said in all humility we may see by a careful analysis of the two verses which immediately follow:—

Surely I would take it upon my shoulder;
And bind it as a crown to me.
I would declare unto him the number of my steps:
As a prince would I go near unto him.

From the Babylonish Captivity the Jews brought to Palestine a revived faith in talismans, whose aid they had learned to invoke on the banks of the Nile nearly a thousand years before. These were called phylacteries (Greek, *phylacterion*, i.e., preservation). They consisted of parchment inscribed with texts, usually drawn from the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy.

The use of these pieces of parchment, worn, during prayers, in the synagogues, attached to the front of the head, is a curious example of that intense literalness so severely censured in the sect of Pharisees. This particular form of phylactery was defended by the singular abuse of such injunctions as those contained in Proverbs iii. 1—3; vi. 21.

A favourite passage was that taken from Exodus xiii. 16: "And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt."

This passage is interesting, as showing another source of the amulet. The Hegira of the Hebrews occurred almost 1,500 years before the Christian Era.

We know from actual research that charms consisting of written pieces of papyrus, tightly rolled up and sewed into a covering of linen, closely resembling the Jewish phylactery, were in common use in Egypt, for many such have been found at Thebes.

Hence, too, was doubtless brought to Italy the custom still extant amongst noble Roman children of wearing a *bullæ*, suspended from the neck.

The greatest enemy to a belief in amulets is the advance of scientific knowledge. When Harvey, in 1628, demonstrated that the nutrition of the body was sustained by physical means, still more when Bichat, 150

years later, carried physiologists another great step forward, showing that the tissues are removed and replaced in obedience to chemical laws, a mighty blow was dealt to the foundations of extravagant credulity.

As amulets have existed from the commencement of the world, they will continue to its destruction. They are called by different names: "Perkins' Tractors," "Mesmeric Pads," and the thousand and one commercial forms of applying so-called electricity and galvanism. Pulvermacher's Belts and Darlow's Skeuasma, probably owe most of their curative power to some such mental influence. To deny that they do cure would be insane. Have we not all seen warts disappear after having been touched by a wedding-ring?

Perhaps the great fault of physicians in this most literal and material age is to undervalue the enormous curative influence of the mind over special forms of disease.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Last Tuesday night, at a meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists, Mr. Alexander Calder, President, occupied the chair. The other members present were Mr. C. C. Massey, Mrs. Maltby, Mr. Stainton-Moses, M.A., the Rev. W. W. Newbould, Mr. Henry Withall, the Rev. T. Colley, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Miss Houghton, Mr. Mawson, Mr. C. Pearson, Mr. A. Joy, M. Inst. C.E., and Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen. In the course of the meeting it transpired that the Research Committee was about to try experiments to discover whether variations took place in the weight of mediums during the production of certain manifestations. It was stated that the fortnightly discussion meetings would in all probability shortly be resumed. The leave of absence of the secretary was unanimously extended from two to three months. Several presents to the Library were reported, also a promise of a complete file of the *Banner of Light* from Messrs. Colby and Rich. Nothing else of public interest took place, most of the time being taken up with matters connected with the interior working of the Association.

ASTROLOGY.—It was natural that the astrologers of old should regard the planetary influences as depending in the main on the position of the celestial bodies in the sky above the person or place whose fortunes were in question. Thus, two men at the same moment in Rome and in Persia would by no means have the same horoscope cast for their nativities, so that their fortunes, according to the principles of judicial astrology, would be quite different. In fact, it might happen that two men, born at the same instant of time, would have all the principal circumstances of their lives contrasted—planets riding high in the heavens of one, being below the horizon of the other, and *vice versa*. The celestial sphere placed as at the moment of the native's birth was divided into twelve parts by great circles supposed to pass through the point overhead, and its opposite, the point vertically beneath the feet. These twelve divisions were called "houses." The first, called the Ascendant House, was the portion rising above the horizon at the east. It was regarded as the House of Life, the planets located therein at the moment of birth having most potent influence on the life and destiny of the native. Such planets were said to rule the ascendant, being in the ascending house; and it is from this usage that our familiar expression that such and such an influence is "in the ascendant" is derived. The next house was the House of Riches, and was one-third of the way from the east below the horizon towards the place of the sun at midnight. The third was the House of Kindred, short journeys, letters, messages, &c. It was two-thirds of the way towards the place of the midnight sun. The fourth was the House of Parents, and was the house which the sun reached at midnight. The fifth was the House of Children and Women, also of all sorts of amusements, theatres, banquets, and merry-making. The sixth was the House of Sickness. The seventh was the House of Love and Marriage. These three houses (the fifth, sixth, and seventh) followed in order from the fourth, so as to correspond to the part of the sun's path below the horizon, between his place at midnight and his place when descending in the west. The seventh, opposite to the first, was the Descendant. The eighth house was the first house above the horizon, lying to the west, and was the House of Death. The ninth house, next to the mid-heaven on the west, was the House of Religion, science, learning, books, and long voyages. The tenth, which was in the mid-heaven, or region occupied by the sun at mid-day, was the House of Honour, denoting credit, renown, profession or calling, trade, or preferment. The eleventh house, next to the mid-heaven on the east, was the House of Friends. Lastly, the twelfth house was the House of Enemies. The houses were not all of equal potency. The angular houses, which are the first, the fourth, the seventh, and the tenth—lying east, north, west, and south—were first in power, whether for good or evil. The second, fifth, eighth, and eleventh houses were called succedents, as following the angular houses, and next to them in power. The remaining four houses—viz., the third, sixth, ninth, and twelfth houses—were called cadents, and were regarded as weakest in influence. The houses were regarded alternately masculine and feminine: the first, third, fifth, &c., being masculine; while the second, fourth, sixth, &c., were feminine. It will be easily understood how these houses were dealt with in erecting a scheme of nativity. The position of the planets at the moment of the native's birth, in the several houses, determined his fortunes with regard to the various matters associated with these houses. Thus, planets of good influence in the native's ascendant, or first house, signified generally a prosperous life; but if at the same epoch a planet of malefic influence was in the seventh house, then the native, though on the whole prosperous, would be unfortunate in marriage. A good planet in the tenth house signified good fortune and honour in office or business, and generally a prosperous career as distinguished from a happy life; but evil planets in the ninth house would suggest to the native caution in undertaking long voyages, or entering upon religious or scientific controversies.—*Belgravia*.

Review.

Serious Letters to Serious Friends. By the Countess of Caithness. London: Trubner and Co. 1877.

[The following review is abridged from the *Dublin University Magazine* for October.]

Although this volume contains many ideas which would startle orthodox readers, yet there is also so much that is eminently suggestive in the broad and hopeful views of life that it advances, that even those who would not agree with its more distinct dogmas might reap some pleasure and benefit from its spirit. The author has thought earnestly for herself upon the grandest problems which our intelligence can reach. The anomalies of this present existence have led her to look for a wider light by which to interpret them; and instead of keeping her inquiring vision within the limits of every-day life, she has turned it upon the dim depths of the universe in the endeavour to detect therein something of the long sweep of the Divine laws. There must always be minds that will find delight in inquiries such as these, notwithstanding that they will be regarded by their more easily satisfied neighbours as rash and over-curious. In their essays to discover the lands that lie beyond the waters of time, they are ever supported, as was Columbus in his search for America, by an unconquerable conviction of their reality. Those who have not time or inclination for this species of research and speculation, may do well to expand their minds by consideration of the conclusions of those who have ventured to cross these most difficult waters. And although most will be inclined to cry "Breakers ahead" when they face some of the theories propounded by the Countess of Caithness in *Serious Letters*, yet her conclusions with regard to the life which most immediately concerns us, that of this planet, are so orderly, and her spirit is so deeply religious, that it is possible to follow and only differ from her in a measure.

In speaking of the doctrine of the Fall, she says:—

I would rather then believe that we were originally destined to have lived as pure Fluidic spirits, in a far happier sphere than this purgatorial earth, having been created "a little lower than the angels," to whose degree, and still higher degrees, we should have attained, by patient and confiding perseverance in well-doing in the heavenly path set before us, and that we never need to have come to a material earth, or to have been clothed in the skins of beasts, *i.e.*, in these material bodies of *flesh*, which so limit our innate soaring capacities and aspirations.

I believe that *our own* rebellion, in the spiritual state, caused us to fall away "From the heaven that was about us in our infancy," and that we have each individually fallen exactly into *our own place*—not any one else's place—but our own particular place, the one exactly adapted to our particular state, or quality. And that we have been born on to a material earth, not as a punishment due to our disobedience, but as a natural magnetic consequence of our own material propensities, which have caused us to turn away from our higher, and seek to satisfy our lower nature, on a material plane—a literal feeding on the husks left by the swine or lower animals—for whom the material food was provided.

We thus believe that we of the human race on this earth are fallen creatures, not because we have inherited the curse pronounced upon a distant progenitor, called "the first Adam," but because we are each the fathers of our own faults, consequently each our own Adam, and may therefore have to expiate them until "the third and fourth generation," or over and over again, and until we are able to perceive that *they alone* separate us from our heavenly Father, and we feel impelled by the earnest desire to arise and go to our Father and say, "Father, we have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and are no longer worthy to be called Thy children"; when we shall be received back again into the heavenly habitation, and shall again be "the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." For we are told that our "Father runneth to meet us, even when He seeth us a great way off."

But in the meantime, and until we truly repent and seek His forgiveness, we are no longer worthy to be called His children, on account of our disobedience and voluntary "journey into a far country," and "until we come to ourselves," and are able to see the folly of our ways, we are but seeking to feed ourselves on the food provided for the lower animals (a degree of spirit element at a less advanced stage of development), and which, although sufficient for their necessities and sustenance, can furnish us but with "husks," as compared to the more spiritual nutriment we were destined to have partaken of in our Father's house; we are literally indulging in swinish tastes and feeding upon swinish food.

This will perhaps be sufficient to show our author's style and quality of thought.

A story is told by Lady Caithness of a little boy of hers who passed away many years ago before the age of five; a

story of so marvellous a nature that we cannot but reproduce it. A child enjoying good health, he was wont to make rhymes; and this mystic prophetic morsel is one of them:

Early in spring I got a new wing,
Covered with silver and gold,
It helped me to fly, up to the sky,
And thus is my history told.

Verily the strangest autobiography we have met with.

THE HYMN OF THE BROWN BIRD.

BY EDWARD S. WHEELER.

ONE morning, not being well, I lay an extra half-hour in bed, cherishing inadequacy, pending breakfast, known to be coming in proper form and due time. Whatever social and political good may require in the way of restriction of woman's sphere of effort, I cheerfully concede her the right to plan, oversee, or even prepare and cook breakfast. The daughters of Eve have enough to bear—I would not deprive them of one of their enjoyments, and "getting breakfast" always seems a pleasure to them, and I am generous enough not to wish to deprive others of the satisfaction of doing it for me, which is manly, I take it. "'Tis better to give than to receive," saith the Scripture; I am magnanimous, and accept the second best, taking all I can get. I have noticed the same disposition in others of my sex.

While I lay thus, placidly awaiting domestic developments, through my window looking south I saw, upon a tall tree, a sparrow, who smoothed his plumage and then sang, again and again, his brief, twittering notes. It was a gloomy morning, and I was not cheerful or courageous; but the small brown bird gave me such an example of cheer and bravery under adverse circumstances, that my reflections were turned in a more healthy and hopeful course. As I mused the old spell of improvisation came over me, and fast as speech the subjoined rhymes passed through my mind. This was a year ago, and since then I have read them over many times. Surmising that the hymn, as I call it, may mean as much to some other troubled soul as it meant to me—having committed it to memory—I send it to you, not as an example of smooth verse, but as a specimen of improvisation and a pious lesson:—

A brown bird perched on a tall, tall tree;
Very high up indeed sat he.
On the very tip-top of a blasted limb
He perched, and twittered his matin hymn.

There were clouds above, there was ice below,
There were sullen clouds and frozen snow,
And of the sunlight not one pale ray
Shone in to warm the dull wintry day.

Yet the small bird sat, high up on the tree,
And loud and long and sweet sang he;
And he called for the birdlings of every feather
To gather, and gather, and gather together,
And sing with him through the Christmas weather.

* * * * *

Brave little heart in the feathered breast,
Thus in joy and hope 'mid storms to rest,
To sing in winter, as if he saw
The abiding force of the perfect law,
And knew kind Providence would bring,
Through frost and death, new flowers of spring.

Gesticulating with many a lurch,
Pert preacher of the highest church,
Thy service I see, thy hymns I hear,
And I heed the sermon that follows clear:

"O, man! the Power that fills my breast
With joyous trust and perfect rest,
Permits no care to mar my life,
No vexing doubt with peace at strife;
But unto thee He grandly gives
A soul to reason while it lives.

Shall that which heeds the brown bird's song
Hear not thy prayer, or do thee wrong?
Shall the All-wise, Creative Soul
Forget thee while it loves the whole?
Shall sparrows ne'er unnumbered lie,
And thou in cold oblivion die?

Life dawns from life, love speeds from love!
Thy soul an oversoul doth prove;
Thy reason but a glorious ray
From primitive—eternal day.
Come, join thy morning hymn with mine,
And make the universe our shrine."

And so while the birds sing, even though tempest-tossed, we will accept their prophesying, confident that the crocus will succeed the snow, and the violets in time perfume the air, modestly announcing the rose, perfect queen of summer. No more, while spirit-voices echo answers to the questions of our hearts, and palpable presences of the disembodied move among us, can we doubt the eternal summer in whose zone dwell those already resurrected awaiting us.—*Banner of Light.*

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FOR some time past there has been more or less delay in the matter of attention to certain letters addressed to *The Spiritualist* office, but this has been due to the prolonged absence of Mr. Harrison from London. He returns next Wednesday.

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

Representing the English and American Literature of Spiritualism, obtainable of W. H. Harrison, Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office, 33, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.

[For purposes of mutual convenience the above office has been rented on the premises of the National Association of Spiritualists, but the Association and The Spiritualist Newspaper and publishing business are not in any way connected with each other.]

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY and MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Eugene Crowell, M.D., of New York. This is a standard work on Spiritualism by a competent observer, who, after studying its facts for many years, has drawn from them only such conclusions as they warrant, and who has comprehensively dealt with the whole subject. In two volumes, price 10s. 6d. per volume.

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

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

REPORT ON SPIRITUALISM, by the Committee of the Dialectical Society. This committee consisted of literary, scientific, and other professional men who investigated Spiritualism for two years without engaging the services of any professional medium, after which they published the report. Original edition, 15s.; moderately abridged edition, 5s.

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

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

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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.

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, considerably delays the manifestations.

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.

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 frequently found to be a weakening influence.

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.

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.

When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him hit 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.

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 afterwards be strengthened. Next ask "Who is the medium?" When the intelligence asserts itself to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as the alleged spirits are found to exhibit all the virtues and all the failings of humanity.

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