

# The Spiritualist,

## AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

The Oldest Newspaper connected with Spiritualism in Great Britain.

No. 404.—(VOL. XVI.—No. 21.) LONDON: FRIDAY, MAY 21, 1880. Published Weekly: Price Twopence.

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

No. 404.—VOLUME SIXTEEN; NUMBER TWENTY-ONE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, MAY 21st, 1880.

“THE SPIRITUALIST” Newspaper.

Established in 1869.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY. PRICE TWOPENCE.

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AN ORACULAR STANDARD.

The *Evening Standard* constantly gives valuable psychological information in an indirect way, nor did it depart from its custom last Tuesday night, when in a leaderette it declared :—

A gentleman named PURDON—Mr. John E. Purdon, M. B.—has lately been investigating a couple of spiritualistic mediums, and has obtained results which he and the conductors of journals devoted to the Cause consider exceedingly important. One of the two subjects had a “slight febrile cold, which prevented the usual display of his mediumistic abilities,” but Mr. Purdon was not going to let his studies be disturbed by an occasional sneeze. Health however, is, Mr. Purdon thinks, very important, though we should hardly have expected to find spirits refusing to come at the medium’s call simply because he had a cold in his head. A great deal depends upon the presence in the medium—we are always quoting Mr. Purdon—of “a nitrogenised principle derived from the incomplete combustion of albumenoid matter. Its origin in the body can hardly be attributed to other than retrograde metamorphosis of built up tissues, notwithstanding its direct production by oxidation from nitrogenised food in the blood, is well within the limits of possibility.” Mr. Purdon’s investigation tended to show that the nitrogenised principle decreased while the medium was engaged in his performances, and this the extraordinarily scientific personage quoted says, is “primarily due to some interference with the nervous supply of the voluntary muscles, having its origin in the central ganglia of the brain, whereby the muscular system was thrown out of gear, leaving the will free to externalise potential energy through some other agency.” Mr. Purdon has an enormous advantage in making assertions as to what he discovered from the two mediums. As no one on earth can possibly have the faintest idea what he means, it is impossible to contradict him and show that he is wrong.

The “no one on earth” in the preceding sentence, means “the Editor of *The Standard*,” the language being that which is commonly applied to elementary scientific principles of wide application, and such as the President of the Royal Society might any day, for the sake of simplicity, apply to common popular subjects. There is nothing pedantic or unavoidably abstruse in the phraseology; it is only sufficiently technical to save time, on the assumption that the readers of the remarks do not wish the mental energy of intelligent writers taken up by beating out every point to the elementary School Board level. Surely a clever and well-known army surgeon like Dr. Purdon has a right to assume a minimum of receptive capacity in his listeners. He might, had he chosen, have led his readers into the highest regions of German metaphysics, but he wisely preferred to make his utterances studiously simple—“milk for babes,” in fact.

*The Standard* further says :—

For instance, Mr. Purdon says:—"It appears necessary to the adoption of my theory of mediumship to allow that particular cortical areas and those parts of the brain where sign co-ordination is localised, must be very materially influenced;" and if any one refused to allow this, and Mr. Purdon asked him why, the defeat of the challenger would be assured. It is very pleasant to follow Mr. Purdon for a moment now and then without being landed in a scientific quagmire. He ends the following little argument with a gleam of common sense, for example. "Let the objector ask himself what it is that prevents him from moving a chair at the other side of the room. The answer, that the nature of his constitution is such that he cannot do work beyond the reach of his arm becomes a fallacy—*i.e.*, the tacit assumption (an induction from previous experience) that it cannot be made long enough or otherwise modified, or that a something quite independent of the muscular system cannot be employed. The true answer to the question is that he does not know how to do it." That certainly is the point: he does not. When Mr. Purdon and his audiences have found out how to do it, and can lift a chair from the other side of the room in broad daylight and in the presence of honest men, we will cordially believe in any nitrogenised principle he likes to name.

Does the daily press gain anything by indulging in mental gymnastics over everything it does not understand? Would a clown in a pantomime add to his popularity by the same line of action? Mr. Vokes, who has made such a name for himself, has succeeded in that direction by showing to the more appreciative observers a delicate sense of refinement, while indulging in the eccentricities of his profession; and the clown at Covent Garden in the last pantomime, achieved respect in his vocation from the same cause. Similarly, although a daily newspaper editor dare not write far above the dead level of the average public—that weary dead level which it takes centuries to raise a few inches—still he might covertly show intelligent readers that he has a soul above his vocation, and knows what ought to be, even while the means do not exist to achieve his desired results. *The Standard* has greatly improved within the past year or two, and as it professes to represent cultured readers, it might do well to act up to its professions by ceasing to pour newspaper abuse over truths about which the general public are ignorant.

#### INTELLIGENT MAHOGANY IN PARIS.

You have already given us, from the *Daily News*, specimens of the clever sayings extracted by M. Nus and his fellow searchers from the table in the Rue Beaune, at Paris. The *Revue Spirite* of May 1880, thus expresses itself on the same subject.

"The table in the Rue Beaune, this talking table which, between ourselves, I strongly suspect of having served as interpreter to some ardent disciple of Fourier, furnishes us with some singular documents indeed.

"That which is more strange, more personal than even the groundwork of its teaching, is the form in which it puts it. It presents

each thought in an arrangement and choice of expression of extraordinary boldness, ease and concentration. From its dicta spontaneously given, and its positively overwhelming improvisations, a double interest arises, whether we study them in their philosophical deductions, or regard them in a purely literary point of view. Let us only judge them by the following definitions, each strictly confined to twelve words—Twelve, the perfect number, the most complete and the most harmonious, according to Toussenel.

"Zoology.—*Range of beings highly organised through their faculty of locomotion: voluntarily instinctive.*

"Harmony.—*Perfect equilibrium of all with its parts, and the parts among themselves.*

"Intelligence.—*Characteristic of man: the point of departure of reason: to comprehend God.*

"Conscience.—*Point of view where the being contemplates his creations or his chaos.*

"The table especially insisted on the revelation of a new religion, founded, according to its opinion, on the phenomenon itself universally expanded.

"'Very well,' said the sitters, 'what have you got to tell us about it?' Here is the answer:—

"*Progressive ideal for dogma, the arts for adoration, nature for a church.*

"When we consider that each of these phrases was given instantaneously, we stand confounded in face of an intellectual power equal to the task."

We need not agree with the definition of religion as given us by the table, but it would be difficult to find fault with the rest, or with the cleverness and conciseness of any. And we may well ask, if there be any sage in the flesh in any of the four quarters of the world, who could give such concise and measured as well as spontaneous answering as the above? SCRUTATOR.

AS AN example of theological terrors Melancthon, in his memoirs of Martin Luther, says that "while he was deeply reflecting on the astonishing instances of the divine vengeance, so great alarm would suddenly affect his whole frame as almost to frighten him to death."

STRANGE HALLUCINATION.—A butcher named Raymond, residing at Swansea, has attempted suicide for the second time. Two years ago his next door neighbour and companion, Creese, a pawnbroker, hanged himself in his own house, and Raymond cut him down after death. He has said that the sight has haunted him at intervals ever since, and that the dead man's ghost has beckoned him to adopt the same method of quitting life. This time he was discovered only just in time to be saved. He is recovering slowly.—*The Echo.*

## 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. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

### THE PHYSIOLOGY AND MORALITY OF PHYSICAL MEDIUMSHIP.

Sir,—All mediums, whether public or private—and their name is legion—will, I doubt not, be quite satisfied to take their stand “somewhere between” the Angel and the Devil, so charitably assigned to them by Dr. Purdon in last week’s *Spiritualist*. There is no other place on earth, spiritually considered, for any man, be he a medium or an M.B.

To the dismay of learned doctors be it said, mediumship, or the cultivation of man’s spiritual powers, is becoming “more general;” and if it be “a means of escape from disease,”—“a misfortune,”—and only “a functional nervous disorder,”—to exercise those gifts which, better than all things, prove man to be “only a little lower than the angels,” then it should be incumbent upon our learned M.B.’s to point out to us such means of discovering and employing these hidden riches of the spiritual man, as may be, according to their ideas, more legitimate and healthy. But until they do so instruct us in other ways of obtaining that which so many thousands of us have already developed to the uplifting of our souls, they must not be surprised if we, one and all, continue to follow that path which has produced for us so much spiritual and salutary happiness.

Physical mediums, who though man-despised, are not God-forgotten, will fail to recognize themselves in the appalling picture of moral obliquity so carefully painted by Dr. Purdon; they will fail to perceive that they have had an “inferior development,” or that any “destructive change has been induced in” them of “that highest part of human nature, the moral and social instinctive impulse towards right doing for its own sake.” What say you, ladies and gentlemen, in private life, who possess physical powers of mediumship, and do not consider your “physical peculiarity” an “imperfection,” but rather one means, added to many others bestowed by the Father, of further advancement. Some of you are esteemed for your honorable virtues, and your aim is ever higher and higher; for you, as well as your despised professional brethren, know full well the road which leads to angel life, and that the crown is to the victor (over the lower nature). Such mediumship opens truly a “means of escape from disease”—the disease of sin.

CATHERINE WOODFORDE.

May 16th, 1880.

Sir,—Those persons who, like myself, have consistently opposed the “ghost theory” of the true manifestations which have been so often produced in our midst, may derive much cause for thankfulness from the results of the experiments which Dr. Purdon has given to us.

I take it that we may condense his paper into one mathematical formula.

One human body minus 100 per cent. urea = normal action, and

One human body minus 70 per cent. urea = “dream-self.”

Or in other words, when 30 per cent. urea is kept in, the “materialised spirit” does not go out. The importance of this view, as considered side by side with the experiments of Dr. Haughton, must be tested by accurate physiological experiment on recognised psychics; and it must not be forgotten that if it should be proven to be true, the “chapel-house odour” so

familiar to the witnesses to some materialisations is at once accounted for on grounds which do not require the introduction of the supernatural element, and are reconcilable with a theory of the good faith and honesty of the psychics. Further, it is of use to know that a clean glass test-tube and a few inches of test-paper are more than sufficient to lay a few ghosts, and that a strong tincture of *Leontodon taraxacum* will eliminate them altogether.

But my especial object is to ask Dr. Purdon to kindly give us his facts and figures in detail, in order that they may be carefully examined. The care and patience with which on all occasions he has examined the phenomena of materialisation, will induce him, no doubt, to supply detailed information on a subject which is well worthy the attention of Physiologists and Spiritualists.

C. CARTER BLAKE.

Sir,—I notice that Dr. Purdon leaves it, from his point of view, an open question what the intelligence at the root of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism may be, but he thinks that a “dreamself” of the medium is the channel through which the intelligence acts. Will he continue the subject, and state his opinion as to the nature of the intelligence which has been at the root of the best cases of spirit identity on record?

In dealing with the question of the amount of development of the moral sense in mediums, it would be convenient to classify those mediums who present mental phenomena only, apart from those who present physical phenomena in addition.

Is a vegetarian diet somewhat antagonistic to strong physical manifestations? Two of the most powerful physical mediums I have ever seen, ate meat in great quantities; one would eat it in slabs and almost without bread or vegetables. Several purely trance-mediums are vegetarians, or nearly so; they all appear to incline in that direction.

R.

### A CLAIRVOYANT SEANCE.

Sir,—Madam Prunière, clairvoyant and healing medium, who has given some remarkable evidences of her power here, will give a *séance* next Sunday evening, the 23rd, at 7 o’clock.

C. R. WILLIAMS.

6, Field View, London Fields, E.

### SYNCHRONOUS VISIONS.

On Wednesday night, last week, two ladies in private life who have the power of seeing visions in crystals, were among the guests at a *séance* at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory’s, 21, Green Street, Grosvenor Square, London. The seeresses did not sit next each other throughout the *séance*, but sometimes at opposite sides of the table, and at times the curious phenomenon was presented of their seeing the same object in the crystals, whilst at other moments their visions were altogether different. They both of them, for instance, saw a large figure of an angel; this gradually changed into clouds, full of little faces. But at another time, whilst the one observer saw two women, one of them with curls, the other seeress saw a boat on a chopping sea; she also had a view of Gibraltar, and a young widow small and dark, and two middies. At another

moment, both observers, at the same time, saw two human figures in the crystal.

Perhaps the crystal merely served to divert the minds of the seers from surrounding objects, thus giving mesmeric influences opportunity to act upon them. No clue to the meaning of these visions was afforded; they may have been but waking dreams. When the observers changed their position in relation to the crystal, they still saw the figures from the previous point of view, which indicates the subjective nature of the apparitions.

The crystal was a large one presented to Mrs. Gregory by the late Earl Stanhope.

#### THE APPARITIONS AND CURES AT KNOCK.

The apparitions and cures at Knock, County Mayo, have not ceased, and day by day the locality is more and more thronged by visitors of all classes. *The Munster News* says:—

These wonderful and glorious miracles are at length beginning to be accepted by those who do not believe in the manifestation of heavenly beings in this world, or only when the fact can no longer be doubted. The cures miraculously witnessed, and the parties who are the happy recipients of these blessings are swelling to thousands. Visitors from other lands have witnessed the heavenly favours, and the opulent as well as numbers in the humbler walks of life, all bear testimony to the one fact—they have been cured, they have seen the heavenly visions. A religious young resident, whose sight was almost gone, and who had expended a large sum of money in London and elsewhere in the vain effort to effect a cure, at last repaired to Knock, and, after having been there for some time, performing the required devotions with implicit faith that if it were the will of heaven he would be cured, what were his joy and gratitude to find his sight gradually restored, and, after a short time longer, fully recovered. But in connection with him, more wonderful mercies were still further exemplified. When he had been some time in Limerick after his return, his mother was laid on a dying bed, with no hope of restoration. He immediately returned to Knock, to supplicate merciful intercession for his dying parent, and deep and heartfelt were his prayers, which were not in vain, for his parent was restored again to health. It was while thus engaged in supplication for his mother that the Blessed Virgin appeared to numbers in the chapel, clad in robes of white with gold stars studding

her mantle. Amongst those in the thronged edifice was a young clerical student, about to be ordained for the priesthood, and who chanced to kneel next the young man, and also an American suffering from paralysis of the right side. The student asked him "if he saw anything;" he replied "No," and then the young student told him to pray. After a short time elapsed he again addressed him in the same words, but received the same answer, and again the same command was given "to pray." The young student asked him again the third time and received the sorrowful answer, "I do not," and then grief overwhelming him, he burst out with the exclamation, "Oh, my God, am I then so great a sinner?" but the young student told him with a loud voice "to pray," and the whole congregation taking it up as if addressed to them, prayer resounded in a most audible and fervid manner throughout the church. Then amidst a sudden silence, a beautiful star was seen to cross by the stained glass window and gradually float till it rested near the banner lately presented by the Confraternity of Limerick, and almost immediately the vision of the Blessed Virgin was seen. This was the cause of a startling effect on the rapt congregation, for the American was suddenly seen to rise and attempt to rush through the congregation to where the Blessed Virgin rested near the banner, perfectly restored to the use of his side. Numerous other instances could be enumerated of the Divine favour and mercy bestowed on those who visit Knock.

A respectable native of Limerick who, having had relations with a religious community in another country, was obliged to return for the restoration of health to his own, visited Knock during the past week, and beheld a blind man, a native of Tipperary, recover his sight whilst making the rounds of the Stations of the Cross within the church. The afflicted man was led about by an assistant, from station to station, and at the eighth, whilst offering up the appropriate prayers, he appeared to be struck with sudden emotion, and he suddenly uttered an exclamation indicating that his vision was restored. He threw out his arms as if to reach objects before him, and seemed fascinated, remaining rooted to the spot, entranced, as he afterwards stated, by the vision of the Blessed Virgin, whom he beheld encompassed with a halo. The man manifested the perfect restoration of his sight, dispensing with his guide and walking about like other persons

as if he had never been suffering from blindness. A woman who had lost the use of one of her lower limbs, whilst beseeching relief through the intercession of the Blessed Lady, and making the devotions of the Stations of the Cross, felt life returning to the palsied limb, the artificial support to which it was connected falling away and enabling her to plant her foot on the ground, and walk with a little difficulty. This she was convinced would cease after a few other visits to the sanctified scene of mercy and relief. The Limerick man himself went with crutches to Knock, disabled by rheumatism, and entered his house on his return carrying only a hand stick, and evidently renovated in bodily constitution; his face bearing a complexion, and his manner manifesting the freshness of health. The commercial representative of an enterprising and successful Limerick trader, some time after the Divine apparition first became manifest, saw a disabled man recover the power of one of his limbs within the church, and was a witness to his restoration, from the moment when he felt a creeping sensation proceeding through the withered member, (a portion of which had lost flesh and shrunk to the bone), until it acquired the healthy proportions of its fellow member, and the man could walk "pedibus suis." Numbers of English and other Protestants of both sexes are amongst the pilgrims, and they perform the same acts and breathe the same prayers, if they do not entertain the same implicit faith, as the Catholic thousands whose discarded crutches and other contrivances of aid to decrepitude are increasing enormously.

#### A SPIRITUALISTIC MEETING.

Last Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., the Annual General Meeting of the members of the National Association of Spiritualists was held at 38, Great Russell-street, London. About two dozen persons were present, most of them members of the Council; the thin attendance was perhaps due to the meeting having been called in the holiday time of Whitsuntide.

The Annual Report and the Balance Sheet for the year were read and adopted. The latter set forth that the expenses during the year 1879 were £362 13s. 1d; a balance in hand to December last of £18 10s. 3d., was carried forward.

Some routine business having been transacted,

Mr. Dawson Rogers moved, and Mr. Stainton Moses seconded:

That the Council as now existing be dissolved; and that a Council be elected to consist of thirty-six members, of whom one-third shall retire at the expiration of the first year, another third at the expiration of the second, and the remaining third at the expiration of the third year, and so on successively; but that in every case they shall be eligible for re-election

Mr. E. T. Bennett moved as an amendment:

That the Council shall consist of sixty members, twenty to retire every year.

Five members voted for this amendment, and about a dozen against it, consequently it was lost.

Mr. Harrison moved the following amendment:

That the question of the size of the Council be referred altogether to the members, and that no member shall have any difficulty, if he desires, in voting on paper for the reduction to twenty-one.

Six members voted for this amendment and nine or ten against it; consequently it was lost.

Papers which had been sent by post to the members, permitting them to say whether they would like the Council reduced to thirty-six, or kept at its present still larger size, were produced and examined, on the understanding that they were not to be taken as votes, or to govern the decision of the meeting. It was found that forty voted for the reduction of the Council to thirty-six, and three voted against the reduction.

Mr. Bennett then moved another amendment:

That at least one third of the members of the Council shall reside outside the Metropolitan District.

Mr. Fitzgerald seconded this, and it was lost.

The original motion was then carried.

Mr. Bennett moved and Mr. Fitzgerald seconded.

That a poll of the members be taken on this question.

Four voted for this motion and a large majority against it.

It was then resolved

That the election of the new council shall take place on the 15th June.

A vote of thanks to the president having been passed,

Mr. Alexander Calder acknowledged the compliment, and added: You honour me too much. I have really done very little. The work done here is that of Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. Stainton Moses, Mr. Bennett, and others. You honour me too much.

The proceedings then closed.

JOAN OF ARC.—"Who's he?" adds Southey, "may now be asked of men greater as soldiers in their day than Frederick and Wellington, greater as discoverers than Sir Isaac or Sir Humphrey." And then he wonders who ate the first oyster, and cries, *Fanitas vanitatum*. William Tell, we are told, never shot the historic apple off the head of Tell, jun. The reason is plain—the splendid story is a fabrication. It has been strongly doubted whether Joan of Arc ever suffered the punishment that has made her a martyr, though details of her execution and last moments grace the civic records of Rouen. Several books have been published discussing the question. A Belgian lawyer is the author of one of these. He contends that the historians—who have done nothing but copy each other in their narratives of her death—err exceedingly in saying that it took place on the last day of May, 1473, the fact being that she was alive and well many years after that date. There are good grounds, too, for believing that the pretty tale of Abelard and Heloise is a pure fiction. To think that the touching story of their amour is a purely imaginary one seems next to irreverent, but the arrows out of the quiver of truth pierce many a cherished love. Even the existence of Cleopatra,

"Star-eyed Egyptian,  
Glorious sorceress of the Nile,"

is denied by commentators of no mean repute. That there once was a person of that name they will admit, but not the Cleopatra of tradition.—*The Globe*.

## CLAIRVOYANCE.\*

BY THE HON. PERCY WYNDHAM, M.P.

The mesmeric state can be induced in various ways by passes of the hand over the eyes of the patient, by his fixing his eyes upon a leaden disc with a piece of copper in the middle, or even in rare cases by the patient taking the hand of another person and inducing the state by an act of volition on his own part. This is the case with Mr. J. W. Fletcher, the somnambule, to whom I paid a visit last summer. I went there without notice or previous appointment, and on his passing into a state of trance questioned him on various matters relating to myself. I give one instance only: I asked him to go to where my boys were at school. I was of course careful not to mention the name of the place, Eton. The general description he gave of them, the house and room they were in, was accurate, but of course it nearly always occurs that one general description is much like another; and for this reason, as a test, it is better to choose some locality that possesses some definite feature of a peculiar character. The upper school at Eton fulfils this condition. It is entirely without furniture beyond some fixed desks and benches, and has only one feature to distinguish it from any other large well-proportioned room. Accordingly when he was describing the external appearance of the buildings there, and among others one that resembled the upper school, I, carefully abstaining from using the word upper school, which might suggest the locality to one who had heard of the name, asked him to go into the building and tell me what he saw there. He described it as a very long room, wainscoted with oak; I then said, "Do you see anything else in it?" He replied, "I see a row of busts round the room, and the tops of the heads are covered with dust." This was the feature which I wished to see whether he would notice or not, the peculiarity of the upper school at Eton being the row of busts of distinguished men who have been educated there placed round the room.

Of course, I am well aware that many people deny the phenomena of what is sometimes called clairvoyance, but it is not my purpose to deal with any doubts of the kind; if I had the time I had not the inclination, as personal experience can alone convince persons whether the wonders of artificial

somnambulism are true or not. I must ask those who disbelieve in the whole matter to bear with me while I attempt what must appear to them the unprofitable inquiry as to how the mind of Mr. Fletcher received the impression of the appearance of the interior of the upper school at Eton. I had hold of Mr. Fletcher's hand. Could that be the medium of contact between my brain and his? This solution must be dismissed at once; it might explain this individual case, but in the great majority of cases there is no contact between the clairvoyant and his questioner. So far as I know, only three theories are put forward in explanation of similar cases by those who would believe the external circumstances to be as I state them. The first is the belief that man possesses a soul, and that this soul in certain abnormal conditions of the body is freed from the limitations which that body ordinarily imposes on it. With people holding this belief the solution is easy. According to them, the soul of the clairvoyant, which is himself, while his body is in a state of insensibility, is able to have cognisance of the place in obedience to the will of the operator. I shall not dwell upon this, whatever my own opinion may be, as it begs the question, and if admitted proves more than I require for my argument. The second is difficult of explanation, if, indeed, capable of it. It is as follows: that there is no question of soul or other consciousness than that which is a secretion of the body,—that in certain abnormal conditions the powers of the body become marvellously extended—how they are extended is not known,—and the man sees without the use of his eyes. What is worth remarking here is that there is admitted independence of the organs of sight. Another solution would be that Mr. Fletcher was able to describe the appearance of the upper school by what is called thought-reading, that he read the thoughts that were passing through my brain at the time. That the phenomenon of thought-reading exists I have little doubt, but it is quite distinct from clairvoyance. If the phenomenon of thought-reading, or sympathy, has any existence, what does it mean? It means that under certain conditions the motive power of the brain may be something distinct from and outside itself, that it obeys a will other than its own. If so, it is easier to conceive that it is not its own governor, that the power it ordinarily obeys is not itself, but something other than itself, whose

\* A portion of a presidential address, delivered a few days ago, to the Cumberland Association for the Advancement of Literature and Science.

behest it obeys. To resume, then. In the second of the three possible explanations I have given of the power possessed by Mr. Fletcher we have the effect of sight without the use of the organs of sight; in the third the effect of hearing without the use of the organs of sound. The independence of two such important material organs makes the conception of a total independence of the material body less difficult.

#### TEMPORARILY MATERIALISED SPIRIT HANDS.

Dr. Slade is now in Topeka, Kansas, *en route* for his home in New York, after four years' exciting experiences in various parts of the World. *The Kansas Daily Times* and other journals give glowing accounts of his *séances*. At present it is common, while Dr. Slade's hands are in sight, for spirit hands under the table to try to pull the slates from the hands of the sitters. The evanescent hands exhibit much muscular power, but the fulcrum from which the power acts has not yet been satisfactorily determined. *The Kansas Daily Times* says:—

"Then followed a startling test, and one that baffled all attempts at solution. 'I want you to take this slate from my hand, and pass it to the gentleman opposite to me,' demanded the medium of the spirit; and he held the slate *under* the table, whilst his other hand rested *on* the table. There was evidently a pulling at the slate, and then Slade placed his other hand on the table, and the slate seemed to have disappeared. 'Have you got it?' asked Slade.

"'No,' replied the gentleman; 'yes, I have, too!'

"'Put it on the table, then,' said Slade.

"'I can't get it away from him!' said the gentleman; but by dint of pulling he brought it safe above board amid much laughter. 'This wonderful manifestation was repeated till all in the circle had tested it.'"

MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM TEBB and Miss Christino Tebb are at Ober Ammergau, and intend to travel for a few weeks in Switzerland.

ON Friday evening, May 28th, at eight o'clock, Mr. Frank and Miss Ella Dietz will give recitations, probably the last this season, at the Langham Hall, 43, Great Portland Street, London.

THE setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone. Shadows of evening fall around us, and the world seems like a dim reflection—itsself a broader shadow. We look forward into the coming lonely night. The soul withdraws into itself. Then stars arise and the night is holy.—*Longfellow*.

#### RELIGIOUS HOSTILITY TO SPIRITUALISM.

BY C. C. MASSEY.

SOME time ago I called attention in your paper to the very interesting meetings then being held at the studio of Mr. Edward Clifford, in Wigmore Street, to consider the relative efficacy of certain agencies—"Art, Philanthropy, Spiritualism, Conversion, Roman Catholicism, Temperance," in regard to their "power over evil." I was able to avail myself only once of Mr. Clifford's kind invitation to these meetings; but I gather from a report of them which he has just sent me that of the six subjects mentioned, five were unrepresented by any important testimonies. Nor is this surprising, seeing that the restriction of speakers to *facts* excluded discussion of those elevating influences which may purify a whole life-time and protect it from evil, but are not rich in the incidents and crises which illustrate religious experience. The attempt to secure a representation of Spiritualism had the result which appears in the following passages of the printed report. Mr. Clifford's comments, embodying the sentiment of the so-called religious world upon this subject, afford an opportunity for explanations which may perhaps lead to a better understanding of the relation of Spiritualism to religion.

Mr. Clifford took considerable pains to invite leading Spiritualists to relate any experience as to the power of Spiritualism in overcoming evil; but the reply was the same from all of them—that Spiritualism had as yet no moral results. We give the following extracts from letters from well-known gentlemen who are leading Spiritualists, and whose opinions are much looked up to by Spiritualists:—

"I have never regarded the sort of Spiritualism which can alone be presented to the public, or of which *any one* can have personal experience as directly conducive to moral results. I look upon the recognition of the *facts* of Spiritualism (often I think misconstrued by Spiritualists themselves), as of supreme importance to science and in relation to transcendental speculations, and so no doubt to the moral interests which depend on these. But I should find it difficult to explain wherein a belief in Spiritualism may have, and doubtless often has, a direct 'power over evil' without going into consideration which would be called 'theoretical,' and so excluded from your programme."

"Such facts as you refer to are not easily to be got at, as Spiritualism is in its modern phase so recent a movement, and has at present no general organization. I am quite satisfied, however, that the principles and teachings of Spiritualism are such as must produce the best effects on human nature when better known and more appreciated, while I am inclined to believe that whatever good effects are produced by 'conversion,' are really due to spiritual influence."

"I shall be very much surprised if you get any evidence of consequence of the moral effects of Spiritualism. As far as my experience goes it shows conclusively the existence of disembodied spirits, and nothing more. They seem to be without the range of moral feeling, although they can muster a few common-places."

In commenting on these and other letters, Mr. Clifford expressed his belief that Spiritualism was neither more nor less than the sin of sorcery, and was as distinctly forbidden in the Bible as the sin of theft. It can lead unbelievers as far as the belief in an after-existence,

but (as far as he knew) it never led any one further. It was a complete "cul de sac," and was no more a step towards Christ than a train to York is a means of getting to Bristol. It takes a man slightly in that direction, but never gets him there. Meanwhile, the risk of possession by evil spirits, if communication with them is once invited, is real and terrible.

We think it is almost certain that the coming fashionable religion will be a combination of Spiritualism with materialism, and that one of its chief characteristics will be a bitter hatred and opposition to Christ. This "religion" is foretold clearly in the Bible (especially in the books of Thessalonians and Revelation), and it is already begun. "Seducing spirits" and "doctrines of devils" are terribly rife now in London and America, and materialists will soon be obliged to recognize Spiritualism as a distinct force, and then it will carry them headlong. We would entreat persons to abstain from the slightest approach to it. Doors that have once been rashly opened are not easily closed. If God sends us messages from the other world by angels, as he did to Mary and to Peter and to others, let us reverently and gratefully receive them, but let us not disobey Him by striving to lift the veil ourselves. We could tell terrible stories of the awful states that persons have reached through Spiritualism. Insanity is one of the commonest, but one of the least dreadful results. The discussion then produced only negative information as to the power of Spiritualism; and strange to say, it was almost equally difficult to get facts told of evil having been overcome by pure philanthropy. This was a real surprise to us, but for some reason or other it was the case. "We do not work for those kinds of results, and we have no such facts to relate, but it stands to reason that the means we use *must* be right, and we are satisfied with them." This was the kind of reply received again and again.

The writer of the letter first quoted above, certainly did not, and cannot, claim to be a representative Spiritualist, though he seems to be in substantial agreement with others who may perhaps have a better title to be so regarded. It is, however, doubtful whether Spiritualism admits of a truly and sufficiently representative statement. This is not a mere question of definition, (though that is difficult enough), it concerns the essential significance and tendency of the movement. If it is really doing, however gradually and slowly, the work which we believe it is fitted, if not indeed ordained, to accomplish, then, surely, a mightier "power over evil" has seldom arisen in the world, though its effects may not be instantly apparent in individual life. That mere Spiritualism—or, as for this purpose it had better be designated, Spiritism—stops, its mission ended, where true religion begins, may be admitted. But on the other hand, religion without the sensible evidences to which we appeal, has proved generally helpless against the intellectual error which blocks the way to all recognition of religious truth, and would in time paralyse all religious influences. It is this fact of which the religious world, in its deep antagonism to

Spiritualism, takes no account. Mr. Clifford does not see that this demonstration of an after existence, of which he, secure in his own faith, speaks so slightly, is just the first thing needful in the present state of the world. This fact, that we are not ephemeral, is the foundation of religion, yet religion is powerless to prove it. And the world has nearly ceased to accept it without proof. Nothing is more strange than the inability of the religious mind to see in the coincident demonstration of disembodied life and intelligence with the spread of materialistic opinions, an appropriate, if not providential, corrective. But "it is forbidden." Herein, and as far as I can see, herein only, do Spiritualists necessarily break loose from orthodox religion, and repudiate its bonds. They do not believe, however strong their faith in Christianity, that the Levitical law of the Jews and the prohibitions in the New Testament, which were addressed to the Christian converts of that day, and had for an object their withdrawal from Pagan rites and mysteries, are binding for all time and under all circumstances. As to the dangers of which Mr. Clifford speaks, to some extent they are admitted. Every "control" is a possession for the time being, and sometimes the control is bad and nearly permanent, thrusting out the individuality, or deeply infecting it. But Spiritualists very generally believe in the spiritual guardianship of mediums, which, if true, goes a long way to prove that this phenomenal movement is not a disorderly and aberrational inroad, but has been instituted and is protected by superior powers. That "the coming fashionable religion will be a combination of Spiritualism with materialism, and that one of its chief characteristics will be a bitter hatred and opposition to Christ," is a denunciation for which Mr. Clifford will not easily find either evidence or probable reasons. As for materialism, it is more in danger from a single powerful physical medium than from a host of preachers, theologians, and missionaries. The former hands over the converted materialist to the latter, when the work of religion begins, or is then first possible. Spiritualism is neither dogmatic nor anti-dogmatic. Whatever was the case in the first surprise and inexperience of the movement, we are all pretty well agreed now that spirit teachings have in themselves no authority, and in their theological complexion they are as various as the opinions of men on earth. That there is a

great deal of anti-Christian sentiment among Spiritualists is not the result of Spiritualistic teachings, but arises simply from the fact that Spiritualism is chiefly concerned in restoring the belief in soul to people who had lost that belief along with a prior rejection of Christianity. It cannot do more for them, and the emancipated intellect does not always return to the totality of a discarded faith on discovering that its negations have gone too far. Free thought is not the offspring of Spiritualism, though free-thinkers, being more deeply obliged to Spiritualism for its proofs, are likely always to figure more conspicuously in its ranks. Thus their opinions seem to give a tone to the movement which is not its essential significance. If orthodox Christianity is on the decline, as I believe it is, that is due to intellectual causes with which Spiritualism has no connexion. Our battle is against materialism, and materialism only. Other associations in sympathy with Spiritualism on this essential point, have other and further reaching aims, but these are not now in question. If the orthodox choose, as it seems they do, to join their forces with materialists in reviling the only agency that can deal effectually with the latter, that is their affair. But it is desirable that they should not do so under any excusable misapprehension of our pretensions or character.

Temple, 10th May.

#### AN UNCOMFORTABLE STORY.

*The Religio-Philosophical Journal* of May 8th, to hand by last mail, contains the following narrative written by Mrs. E. C. Hyde, of Smithfield, Virginia:—

As I see an occasional request in your paper for incidents of a spiritual nature, I have decided to send you a somewhat singular one which occurred some years ago at Petersburg, Va. A learned and very worthy gentleman, whom we will call Mr. A., had been educated for the ministry in a certain faith. Some years after entering upon his calling, he formed the acquaintance of a clergyman of another denomination. As their friendship ripened, Mr. A. became convinced that his was a wrong faith, and adopted that of the other. This led to a schism in the family—the wife and children adhering to the original faith, while the husband and father became an object of scorn, though never swerving from his new faith.

Matters were in this disagreeable, unsettled state for several years, when a prominent wealthy lady of the neighbourhood died. Quite a strong friendship had existed between this lady and Mrs. A. Mr. A. and family attended the funeral, which occurred late in the afternoon. After returning home and taking the evening meal he retired, as was his custom, to his study for the purpose of reading. The book which he selected for the evening was Jung Stilling, in which he read until about eleven o'clock, when, lowering the book a moment to reflect upon a passage which he had just read, a loud knock resounded upon the outer door. He proceeded slowly to the door, intending to administer a severe rebuke to the person who had thus rudely disturbed him at so late an hour, but before he reached it a voice screamed, "Open the door this minute, or I'll tear the house down!" Hastily throwing open the door he found "darkness there and nothing more." Not a soul was visible, and utter silence reigned without. He closed the door and went back to his book, but had not read long when a cry of pain was heard in the nursery, and his little daughter, a child of seven or eight years, cried out, "Papa, some one is choking me." He hastened to the bed and found the child nervous and excited as though she had been struggling with some one. Supposing her to have been the subject of nightmare, he placed her feet in a warm water bath, rubbed them dry, then returned her to bed and endeavoured to soothe her to sleep. As she still remained restless, he sent for a physician who pronounced her perfectly well, only nervous from a bad dream; gave her a mild sedative and said she would be all right in the morning. However, medical skill in this case as in so many others of a similar nature, proved of no avail. The child grew speedily worse and died in a day or two with no marked disease save nervousness, as the physician termed it.

Not long after this, Mr. A. was again reading Jung Stilling at the same hour as before, when having reached the identical passage of the previous occasion, the same knock was heard and the same threat repeated. Again he opened the door and found nothing there. He returned to his book when a cry of pain was again heard in the nursery, and a second daughter complained that the little sister who had just died was choking her. The father applied the warm bath more thoroughly than before and sent for the physician, who again

pronounced it a "bad dream," etc. The child continued to droop. Everything was done that thought could suggest, but to no purpose, for she too died in a short time. This case has puzzled me exceedingly. It was evidently the work of spirits seemingly actuated by a desire for revenge, though I cannot understand why, as Mr. A. is extremely worthy, liberal minded, benevolent and greatly admired by his intimate friends though understood by but few of them.

Among your many readers there are doubtless those who will understand this case. Should anyone deem it worth the while, I would be glad to see the explanation.

#### A CALCULATING BOY'S SECRET.

The *Revue Spirite* of May gives an account of an extraordinary calculating boy, named Jacques Inodi, ten years of age, and entirely uneducated; his mother died, his father forsok him, and for some time he gained a precarious livelihood by visiting cafés in different towns in the South of France, and showing the visitors his calculating powers.

At length the master of a café, at Marseilles, took the boy into his service, to their mutual advantage; now he is at Paris, and it is said that the Anthropological Society is likely to have him educated.

Jacques Inodi was born in Piedmont, in the Province of Coni. He is said to have "an enormous skull, more developed on the right side than on the left." An assertion fully borne out by his portrait, which is given from a photograph, in the *Revue* of April.

A gentleman, named M. George, writing from Marseilles, says:

"Persons who desire to know the number of minutes and seconds that they have lived do not puzzle him in the least; almost instantaneously he gives the answer. That which appeared most to fatigue him was simple multiplication, rather a long sum, it is true. He was asked to multiply 78,965,428 by 56,789.

"Not having these numbers before his eyes, and moreover, not being able to read, it was necessary to repeat them two or three times, until having remembered them, he could repeat them alone himself. A moment after, he dictated this exact and long product, 4,484,367,690,692, not however, without having thought (*cherché*) a little, with an evidently laborious effort, which proves that he is not aided by mediumship."

"Medium or not," however, M. George continues "Jacques Inodi is not the less one of the most convincing proofs of anterior acquirements." "The phrenologists," he adds, "will say that with so prominent a forehead, and with the bump of calculation so developed, all is explained." But he thinks, also, that "they should not put forward as a *cause* that which is but an *effect*."

Medium or no medium, Jacques Inodi could never demonstrate these problems, however acquired, unless he had a brain proportioned to his work, or what spirits call "a good tool to work with." And probably no spirit could put this marvellous faculty into a brain in which the organ of calculation was deficient.

There is, however, a very interesting letter in the *Revue Spirite*, of May, which reveals a view of the question of mediumship or otherwise, doubly important because a solution of it proceeds from the boy himself.

A M. Bouillae writes from Beze, near to Cette, and says that a young woman came into his house while Jacques was there, and the boy said to her, "Would you like me to tell you how many minutes have passed since you were born? Tell me your age; come now, let me know." The young woman thus interrogated answered, "twenty two years." "How many months and days?" the boy added, "Ah! you don't know. Well now, in what year, what month and what day of the month were you born?" The young woman having answered, Jacques said, "That makes twenty two years, three months and seventeen days." He then held down his head, and in twenty seconds he gave the number of minutes. I took a note and made the calculation; it was exact. I remarked that the child did not think or seek it, (*ne cherchait pas*) he was simply *very attentive*, he listened. I said to him, "my little friend it is not you who make these calculations." He looked me full in the face without answering. I repeated "I know it is not you," and leaning towards him, and lowering my voice, I added, "I talk with the dead." He looked at me, and answered with a satisfied air: "Do you talk with the dead? You! Very well; yes, sir, it is not I, it is my mother, who is dead that does all this for me, that I may get my bread," &c. I asked him if he had told this to other people. He answered, "no," and said that no one had asked him; and turning round he cried: ("Tenez.") "There is my mother, there she is." "Ask her," I said, "if it pleases her to see you with us?" But the spirit was gone. This

poor child told me about his family, and much about his mother whom his father beat, &c., &c.

It would seem contrary to natural law that this poor mother, when dead, should have this marvellous faculty of calculation, unless she had had it when living. May we suppose then, that spirits with calculating power accompany the mother's soul, or may even assume the presentment of the mother for the child's satisfaction?

By no means the least interesting details, in reference to this interesting subject, are contained in a note appended to M. Bouillac's letter, given us by the editor of the *Revue*, which is here subscribed:—

"On April 8th, we saw Jacques Inodi, at the house of the astronomer, M. Camille Flammarion, who, surrounded as he was by men of science, put questions to this wondrous calculator. The child is like his photograph given in the *Revue* of April 1880; his eyes are sharp and sparkling with intelligence; he has a quick, clever answer, and full of joy and alacrity, he was able to imitate instantly, after having seen them once, the remarkable conjuring feats of Professor Jacobs, who is more afraid of the eyes of this marvellous child than he is of those of a company of *savans*.

"The boy since he has learned to read the figures, appears to calculate less easily. I asked him if he remembered M. Bouillac, the gentleman who *talked with the dead*; he begged me to tell him that he often thought of him, and made me also a secret confidant respecting his mother.

"M. Flammarion put a long difficult problem to him that would have puzzled a mathematician; and in two minutes, the time that Jacques asked, a precise solution was given by this human calculating machine. He resolved all the problems while playing and laughing, and while addressing *bons mots* to those present, who, generally thought that this prodigious faculty proceeded from other existences and anterior acquisitions.

"We had Jacques Inodi at one of the Tuesday Meetings of our Scientific Society for Psychological Studies, namely the 20th of April last; he filled the two hundred and fifty persons present with wonder. May this child, so greatly endowed, be wisely protected by those who have the right to direct him; his faculties might be diminished, and even, perhaps, quite etiolated, if they should not understand how to manage him prudently."

X.

#### A SPIRITUALISTIC FUNERAL IN NEW ZEALAND.

A novel and yet impressive burial service was performed on Thursday afternoon last, in the Southern Cemetery, Dunedin, over the remains of the infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Braithwaite. When the coffin had been lowered into the grave, Mr. Braithwaite delivered the following address:—

"We have assembled on this spot, friends, to inter the body of our infant daughter in its natural home, to ultimately become component parts of mother earth. However much we wished to keep her here, we recognise only the loving-kindness of God in thus freeing, by the 'change called death,' the infantile spirit of our dear child from the sufferings it underwent, and that by His wise, beneficent, and unerring laws, the freed spirit has entered upon a state of progressive existence suitable to its new condition of life, to be tended and cared for by earnest and willing friends gone before. We are at this time impressed with the sublime and deeply suggestive words attributed to Jesus Christ—'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

Mr. Braithwaite then read with much feeling and expression the following beautiful lines by John Pierpont:—

I know her fair face is hid,  
Under the coffin lid;  
Closed are her eyes, cold is her forehead fair;  
My hand that marble felt,  
O'er it in prayer I knelt;  
Yet my heart whispers that *she* is not there.  
Not there! where then is *she*?  
The form I used to see  
Was but the raiment that she used to wear;  
The grave that now doth press  
Upon the cast-off dress,  
Is but her wardrobe lock'd—*she* is not there.  
She lives! in all the past  
She lives! nor to the last,  
Of seeing her again, will I despair;  
In dreams I see her now,  
And on her angel brow  
I see it written—"Thou shalt see me there."  
Yes, we all live to God;  
Father, thy chastening rod,  
So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,  
That in the Spirit Land,  
Meeting at Thy right hand,  
'Twill be our heaven to find that she is there

The speaker then concluded as follows:—

"We now visibly consign her body to the earth, 'dust to dust,' and resign her spirit with confidence to the mercy, justice, and immutable laws of the Great Father of us all. Farewell! Invisibly her spirit will be ever present."—*Saturday Advertiser*, Dunedin.

## MESMERISM AND ITS PHENOMENA,

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**CHAPTER III.**—Sympathy—Community of Sensations, of Emotions—Danger of Rash Experiments—Public Exhibitions of Doubtful Advantage—Sympathy with the Bystanders—Thought Reading—Sources of Error—Medical Intuition—Sympathetic Warnings—Sympathies and Antipathies—Existence of a Peculiar Force or Influence.

**CHAPTER IV.**—Direct Clairvoyance or Lucid Vision, without the Eyes—Vision of Near Object: through Opaque Bodies; at a distance—Sympathy and Clairvoyance in Regard to Absent Persons—Retrospection—Introspection.

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**CHAPTER VI.**—Mesmerism, Electro-Biology, Electro-Psychology and Hypnotism, essentially the same—Phenomena of Suggestions in the Conscious or Waking State—Dr. Darling's Method and its Effects—Mr. Lewis's Method and its Results—The Immissible State—Control Exercised by the Operator—Gazing—Mr. Braid's Hypnotism—The Author's Experience—Importance of Perseverance—The Subject must be Studied.

**CHAPTER VII.**—Trance, Natural and Accidental; Mesmeric—Trance Produced at Will by the Subjects—Col. Townsend—Fleuret—Extasis—Extatics not all Imposters—Luminous Emanations—Extasis often Predicted—M. Chagnet's Extatics—Visions of the Spiritual World.

**CHAPTER VIII.**—Phreno-Mesmerism—Progress of Phrenology—Effects of Touching the Head in the Sleep—Variety in the Phenomena—Suggestions—Sympathy—There are Cases in which these Act, and others in which they do not Act—Phenomena Described—The Lower Animals Susceptible of Mesmerism—Fascination Among Animals—Instinct—Sympathy of Animals—Snail Telegraph Founded on It.

**CHAPTER IX.**—Action of Magnets, Crystals, &c., on the Human Frame—Researches of Reichenbach—His Odyle is Identical with the Mesmeric Fluid of Mesmer, or with the Influence which Causes the Mesmeric Phenomena—Odyle or Mesmeric Light—Aurora Borealis Artificially Produced—Mesmerised Water—Useful Applications of Mesmerism—Physiological, Therapeutical, &c.—Treatment of Insanity, Magic Divination, Witchcraft, &c., explained by Mesmerism and Traced to Natural Causes—Apparitions—Second Sight is Waking Clairvoyance—Predictions of Various Kinds.

**CHAPTER X.**—An Explanation of the Phenomena Attempted or Suggested—A Force (Odyle) Universally Diffused, Certainly Exists, and is Probably the Medium of Sympathy and Lucid Vision—Its Characters—Difficulties of the Subject—Effects of Odyle—Somnambulism—Suggestion—Sympathy—Thought-Reading—Lucid Vision—Odyle Emanations—Odyle Traces followed up by Lucid Subjects—Magic and Witchcraft—The Magic Crystal, and Mirror, &c., Induce Waking Clairvoyance—Universal Sympathy—Lucid Perception of the Future.

**CHAPTER XI.**—Interest felt in Mesmerism by Men of Science—Due Limits of Scientific Caution—Practical Hints—Conditions of Success in Experiments—Cause of Failure—Mesmerism a Serious Thing—Cautions to the Student—Opposition to be Expected.

**CHAPTER XII.**—Phenomena Observed in the Conscious or Waking State—Effects of Suggestion on Persons in an Immissible State—Mr. Lewis's Experiments With and Without Suggestion—Cases—Dr. Darling's Experiments—Cases—Conscious or Waking Clairvoyance, Produced by Passes, or by Concentration—Major Buckley's Method—Cases—The Magic Crystal Induces Waking Lucidity, when Gazed at—Cases—Magic Mirror—Mesmerised Water—Egyptian Magic.

**CHAPTER XIII.**—Production of the Mesmeric Sleep—Cases—Eight out of Nine Persons Recently Tried by the Author Thrown into Mesmeric Sleep—Sleep Produced without the knowledge of the Subject—Suggestion in the Sleep—Phreno-Mesmerism in the Sleep—Sympathetic Clairvoyance in the Sleep—Cases—Perception of Time—Cases: Sir J. Franklin, Major Buckley's Case of Retrospection.

**CHAPTER XIV.**—Direct Clairvoyance—Cases—Travelling Clairvoyance—Cases—Singular Vision of Mr. D.—Letters of Two Clergymen, with Cases—Clairvoyance of Alexis—Other Cases.

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## INFORMATION FOR NON-SPIRITUALISTS.

In thirty years Spiritualism has spread through all the most civilised countries on the globe, until it now has tens of thousands of adherents, and about thirty periodicals. It has also outlived the same popular abuse which at the outset opposed railways, gas, and Galileo's discovery of the rotation of the earth.

The Dialectical Society, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, appointed a large committee, which for two years investigated the phenomena occurring in the presence of non-professional mediums, and finally reported that the facts were true, that the raps and other noises governed by intelligence were real, and that solid objects sometimes moved in the presence of mediums without being touched.

Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, deviser of the radiometer, and discoverer of the new metal thallium, investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism in his own house, and reported them to be true. Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Cromwell Varley, Prof. Zollner, and a great number of intelligent professional men have done the same.

## HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES AT HOME.

Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or stranger to the family present.

The assertions of a few newspapers, conjurors, and men of science that the alleged phenomena are jugglery are proved to be untrue by the fact that manifestations are readily obtained by private families, with no stranger present, and without deception by any member of the family. At the present time there are only about half a dozen professional mediums for the physical phenomena in all Great Britain, consequently, if these were all tricksters (which they are not), they are so few in number as to be unable to bear out the imposture theory as the foundation of the great movement of modern Spiritualism. Readers should protect themselves against any impostors who may tell them that the phenomena are not real, by trying simple home experiments which cost nothing, thus showing how egregiously those are duped who trust in worthless authorities.

One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household, and about one new circle in three, formed according to the following instructions, obtains the phenomena:—

1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, 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 of little importance. Any table will do.

3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is weakening.

4. 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.

5. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first indications will probably be table-tilting or raps.

6. 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 tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three raps 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.

7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class of messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of erudition, but should believe no more about them or the contents of the messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.

8. Should no results be obtained at the first two *séances* because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.

Mediumship may either be used or abused. Mediums should not lower their strength by sitting more than about twice a week; angular, excitable people, had better avoid the nervous stimulus of mediumship altogether.

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**CONTENTS.**

An Oracular Standard.....	241
Intelligent Mahogany in Paris.....	242
Paragraphs:—Strange Hallucination.....	242
Joan of Arc.....	245
Correspondence:—The Physiology and Morality of Physical Mediumship.....	243
A Clairvoyant Seance.....	243
Synchronous Visions.....	243
The Apparitions and Cures at Knock.....	244
Clairvoyance. By The Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P. ....	246
Temporarily Materialised Spirit Hands.....	247
Religious Hostility to Spiritualism. By C. C. Massey.....	247
An Uncomfortable Story.....	249
A Calculating Boy's Secret.....	250
A Spiritualistic Funeral in New Zealand.....	251

Printed for the Proprietor by ARLISS ANDREWS, at the Museum Printing Works, 31, Museum-street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C., and published by E. W. ALLEN, Ave-Maria-lane, London, E.C.