

The Spiritualist

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VOLUME SIX. NUMBER SIX.

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ROUND THE WORLD AMONG SPIRITUALISTS.

LAST week we received from Messrs. Colby and Rich, publishers, 9, Montgomery-place, Boston, U.S., a copy of Mr. Peebles' new book, entitled "Round the World; or, Travels in Polynesia, China, India, Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and other Heathen Countries." It is now six years since Mr. Peebles first visited England on his way to Trebizonde, at which place he has been appointed Consul by the Government of the United States. During his brief stay in this country he delivered some public lectures on Spiritualism, attended several *seances*, chiefly at the residence of Mrs. Berry, and he made for himself numerous friends amongst us, who remain much attached to him to this day. During his first visit to the East he collected some interesting psychological facts, chiefly in relation to the healing powers of the dancing dervishes. Since then, however, he and Dr. Dunn have performed a feat which has not yet been accomplished by any other Spiritualist, namely, they have travelled all round the civilised globe, inquiring into the state of Spiritualism in every country which they visited; and as Spiritualism is not in a particularly flourishing condition, except in America and England, the feat was an arduous one in many respects. In his travels round the globe, he was accompanied by Dr. Dunn, a well-known American medium, who obtains both physical and trance manifestations. For all these reasons the book now under notice is unique.

At the outset of the book, Mr. Peebles states how he started from Hammonton, New Jersey, for San Francisco, across the American continent, a distance of 3,500 miles, or a week's travel by rail. He forgets to say when he started on his travels, the first date mentioned in the book being August 15th, when he reached Cheyenne, the capital of Wyoming, but he omits to state in what year; we believe it to have been in 1872. On his way to San Francisco he not only visited Utah and Salt Lake, but he made a personal call on Brigham Young, whom he describes as on excellent terms with himself, as too independent for a moral hero, and too selfish for a saint. Mr. Peebles gives some interesting extracts from a work written by the founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, to the *Chicago Democrat* in 1842, proving that the first Mormon leader was a seeing medium, and occasionally had visions of surpassing beauty.

There is nothing in the title of Mr. Peebles' book to show that it is connected with Spiritualism, and indeed the body of the work contains a great deal upon other subjects, so that it is a book probably intended for circulation also among the general public. In the present notice attention will be confined to those portions which relate to Spiritualism; hence it will not be necessary to refer to much that he saw and did in Utah territory and California. While in San Francisco he lectured at the Mercantile Library upon "Spiritualism" and "Social Life in Turkey" to intelligent and critical audiences.

under the presidency of Mr. Kendrick, and on the 11th of Sept., 1872, he embarked in the steamer *Idaho* for Australia, a passage of from thirty-five to forty days.

On board the boat were Prince Augustus, Duke of Saxe, who married the Brazilian Emperor's daughter, and Prince Phillipe, an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army, whom he describes as modest and thoroughly cultured gentlemen. Occasionally during the voyage he and Dr. Dunn would retire to their cabin, where trance addresses were delivered through the mediumship of the latter; some of these messages are interesting, although the astronomical remarks made by one of the spirits proved that he was totally ignorant of the facts of the science; for instance, he spoke of one of the Pleiades as a planet within the range of telescopic observation, and as possessed of an atmosphere like that of the earth, being evidently unaware that he was speaking of a sun possessing a temperature greater than that of molten iron. The communicating intelligence added, with all the self-complacency of ignorance, that astronomers who contradicted his assertions ought to talk with becoming modesty, the science of astronomy being yet in its swaddling clothes.

The first point at which they touched was the Sandwich Islands, nine in number, and containing some 65,000 inhabitants. Mr. Peebles says that the natives are not cannibals, and that a rumour that they were arose from their dissecting, for anatomical purposes, an Englishman who had been slain in battle. Did these intelligent savages learn anatomy in Guy's Hospital? The natives originally worshipped idols who were traditionally the images of deified mortals; they believe in good and bad spirits, in a future life, and in the return of the departed from the land of shades. Bennett, who first described their mythology, says that there was always a class among them who practised sorcery, and offered prayers to spirits. During his short stay in Honolulu, Mr. Peebles visited Mr. Sheldon, the editor of the *Pacific Advertiser*, who related to him several interesting incidents relating to Spiritualism in his own family, and other cases among the natives of the islands. It is to be regretted that Mr. Peebles has omitted to record these little-known facts about psychological phenomena among the savages of the Sandwich Islands.

On Sept. 26th they sailed from Honolulu to New Zealand, and in their daily outlook had beautiful views of the Pacific Islands, decked in the rich and gorgeous vegetation of the tropics. These beautiful islands are peopled by inhabitants who are described by the late Bishop of Oxford as "children of nature, children of the air, children of light, children of the sun, children of beauty taking their greatest pleasure in the dance." Mr. Peebles says that the inhabitants of the Cannibal Islands have been misrepresented by the missionaries; that they possess virtues and good qualities, and are honest. He argues that the Polynesian races were better morally and physically than they are now, before they were visited by missionaries and the sailors from whaling ships. On the 20th of October the ship touched at Auckland, New Zealand, and Mr. Peebles spent a pleasant afternoon with the Rev. Samuel Edgar, a liberal-minded Congregational clergyman, who offered him his pulpit to preach from upon Spiritualism. Six or seven days' further sail took him to Sydney, Australia, where his first hard work in the cause of Spiritualism began.

SPIRITUALISM IN AUSTRALIA.

After describing Sydney and Melbourne, and stating how Australia suffers because it has no great rivers, he tells how he met some of the most active Melbourne Spiritualists, namely, Messrs. Bright, Walker, Terry, Tyerman, Sanders, Gill, Stowe, Counsellor McIlwraith, Dr. Motherwell, and Mr. Carson. He says that Spiritualism took no organic form in Melbourne until 1869, when "the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists" was formed. Mr. Peebles states that Mr. Terry became acquainted with Spiritualism in 1861; he is a healing medium, a bookseller, and the editor and proprietor of the *Harbinger of Light*, which spiritual journal succeeded the *Glowworm*, published by Mr. B. S. Naylor, late of New Milford, Pembrokeshire. Mr. Peebles had a kindly public reception in Melbourne at the hands of about two hundred ladies and gentlemen, who assembled in the Masonic Hall to receive himself and Dr. Dunn; one of the gentlemen who invited him to visit Australia was Mr. Stanford, an American, the brother of ex-Governor Stanford, of California, who at present is president of the Central Pacific Railway. Mr. J. Ross presided over the meeting, and the hall was tastefully decorated.

Mr. Peebles had not long begun to lecture in Australia when he discovered the local press to be exceptionally abusive; it called him a "long-haired apostate," a "suspicious humbug," a "rabid lunatic," an "uncouth Revivalist," and a "vulgar blasphemous." It said: "This great and good man (Mr. Peebles) in speaking, works himself up to a frenzy, while with bloodshot eyes and rolling tongue and foaming mouth, he tells the opinion that some heathen Chinese had formed of Christianity away somewhere in the far West." Anybody at all acquainted with the mild, inoffensive Mr. Peebles will appreciate at its true value the veracity of such statements as these. The clairvoyance and healing gifts of Dr. Dunn were ridiculed in the daily papers, the city was in a state of excitement about the whole matter, and in walking the streets of Melbourne Mr. Peebles heard such expressions as—"There, there he goes—that old, long-haired Spiritualist." Mr. Peebles might have escaped these remarks, however, had he had his hair cut. The Melbourne *Daily Argus* and the *Ballarat Star* were the only journals which treated him fairly.

At Ballarat he was the guest of Mr. John Finlay, residing at Gracefield, some three miles from the city, a zealous Spiritualist and reformer, and a Shaker; he is the master of a fine suburban academy. Mr. Peebles found the working-men and gold-diggers in Ballarat to be in a prosperous state; the wages of the miners then averaged about £2 5s. per week, working eight hours a day. At Castlemaine, a town containing 7,000 inhabitants, he found a fine congregation of Spiritualists, ministered to every Sunday by Mr. J. C. Leach, a solicitor and gentleman of culture. At Sandhurst Mr. Peebles delivered lectures in the Rifles Orderly Hall, under the presidency of Mr. Denovan, an ex-member of the Colonial Parliament, who is universally esteemed as brave in the utterance of his convictions, and who has recently been invited to become a corresponding member of the British National Association of Spiritualists. Mr. Peebles found a few Spiritualists at Geelong who were afraid to state their belief publicly; but at Stawell he found many free-thinkers and Spiritualists, the latter unnecessarily divided upon the subject of reincarnation. The Stawell Spiritualists

have a fine edifice for Sunday meetings, known as the Lyceum Hall, Mr. B. S. Nayler being their settled speaker.

Mr. Peebles narrates how the savages of North-Eastern Australia are star-worshippers, chiefly of the Pleiades. They believe in immortality; they do not dread God, but reserve all their fears for the evil spirit, "the debble," to whom they render a sort of worship. He also makes the following statement about the belief of the natives in spirits:—

SPIRITUALISM OF THE AUSTRALIAN SAVAGES.

Spirit is the underlying cause of all motion, energy, and moral activity. In the aboriginal "ceremonies, superstitions, and beliefs, there may be traced," says Mr. Parker, "relics of sun-worship, serpent-worship, and the worship of ancestral spirits whom they profess to frequently see." They believe that one class of spirits dwells in the air, another in the mountain, and others still wander about among the tall trees. These natives seldom quit a camp-fire at night, for fear of encountering malignant spirits. Mr. Benwick, among other marvels, writes this: "A spirit appeared to a *lubra*,—black woman,—announcing her speedy death. She related the occurrence the next day, with serious forebodings. Two days after seeing the apparition she died. Believing in demoniacal possession, the mediumistic 'medicine-men' of the tribe 'exorcise the evil spirits,' something as did Jesus and the apostles in New-Testament times. This class of men also alleviate pain, remove disease, and heal the sick, by charms and mesmeric manipulations. They dance within the enclosures of mystic rings, fall in the trance, and describe the marvellous visions beheld." The Rev. Mr. Ridley gives the following account of a "corroboree": "At Burndtha, on the Barwon, I met a company of forty blacks, engaging in a ceremony of some mystical purpose. A chorus of twenty, old and young, were singing, and beating time with boomerangs. A dozen or more were looking on. Suddenly, from under a sheet of bark, darted a man, with his body whitened by pipe-clay, his face painted yellow, and a tuft of feathers fastened upon the top of his head. He stood twenty minutes gazing upwards. One of the aborigines, who stood by, said he was looking for the spirits of dead men. At length they came, proving to be evil spirits, and a brisk conflict followed. Others of the party joined in this warfare with the 'powers in the air,' driving the ghosts away." They have a singular ceremony, called *Ye pene amie gai*, or dance of separate spirits. Holding branches in their hands, they dance in measured tread, and sing, till they fall prostrate in a sort of ecstatic trance. While in this condition, they hold converse with spirits, and utter prophecies.

Before Mr. Peebles and Dr. Dunn left for New Zealand they were presented with testimonials, and a large farewell *soiree* was held in their honour.

SPIRITUALISM IN NEW ZEALAND.

Our travellers left Melbourne for New Zealand in the *Albion*, and on arriving at Port Chalmers, were met by several Spiritualists, who accompanied them by rail to Dunedin, a journey of half an hour's duration. Mr. Peebles describes Dunedin as a city "sitting like a young queen overshadowed with mountains, and with crystal waters rippling at her feet." It has 19,000 inhabitants. He says that the general character of New Zealand is somewhat Scottish, and, though sterner, is morally superior to that of Victoria. The scenery of New Zealand, with its ever-green foliage, he describes as beautiful, and as a blending of the Swiss mountains with the Scottish highlands. At Dunedin he was the guest of Mr. Redmayne. He visited Rangiora, where Mr. and Mrs. R. Schmidt were the only avowed Spiritualists. Of the Spiritualism of the Maories he says:—

MAORI SPIRITUALISM.

Relation to, and communion with, a world of spirits are beliefs almost, if not completely universal. The native tribes and clans of these islands are not only aware of holding

intercourse with the so-called dead, but they understand the abuse, often using their mediumistic privileges for selfish ends. During their wars with the English, they were uniformly made acquainted by vision, clairvoyance, or clair-audience, with the movements of the British troops, before action in battle. Not a plan of her Majesty's officers could be kept from them. The leading chief of the *Ilan Hans* was a noted medium and medicine-man. He distinctly, said that the "spirits of the dead" guided him to his victories. The Maoris in the north island still own much territory, have their king, believe in communicating spirit intelligences, and hold but little intercourse with *Pakeha*, the white man.

The medium-priest in a tribe is called *Tohunga*. They meet in closed apartments, and chant their songs till the flickering fire fades away, when the *Tohunga* goes into his ecstatic state, and the spirit controlling tenders counsel, describes his new habitation in spirit life, gives the names of those whom he has met, and bears messages in return to kindred in the higher life. That these *Maoris* of New Zealand talk with immortals, no intelligent man having lived among them disputes. Are they Spiritualists, then, or *Spiritists*? Spiritualism is the synonym of the harmonial philosophy. Spiritism is the bare fact of spirit-converse.

TOHUNGA, AND VOICES OF THE DEAD.

The racy writer of *Old New Zealand*, treating of spiritual experiences among the Maoris, says in substance, "A popular young chief, something of an scholar, and registrar of births and deaths, had been killed in battle; and, at the request of friends, the *Tohunga* had promised to evoke, on a certain night, his spirit. The appointed time came. Fires were lit. The *Tohunga* repaired to the darkest corner of the room. All was silence, save the sobbing of the sisters of the deceased warrior-chief. There were thirty of us, sitting on the rush-strewn floor, the door shut, and the fire now burning down to embers. Suddenly there came a voice out from the partial darkness, *Salutation, salutation to my family, to my tribe, to you, pakeha, my friend!*" Our feelings were taken by storm. The oldest sister screamed, and rushed with extended arms in the direction from whence the voice came. Her brother, seizing, restrained her by main force. Others exclaimed, "Is it you? is it you? truly it is you! *ae! ae!*" and fell quite insensible upon the floor. The older women and some of the aged men, were not moved in the slightest degree, though believing it to be the spirit of the chief.

"Reflecting upon the novelty of the scene, the 'darkness visible,' and the deep interest manifest, the spirit spoke again 'Speak to me, my family, speak to me, my tribe; speak to me, the pakeha!' At last the silence gave way, and the brother spoke: 'How is it with you? is it well with you in that country?' The answer came, though not in the voice of the *Tohunga*-medium, but in strange, sepulchral sounds: '*It is well with me, my place is a good place. I have seen our friends: they are all with me!*' A woman from another part of the room now anxiously cried out, 'Have you seen my sister?' 'Yes, I have seen her: she is happy in our beautiful country.' 'Tell her my love so great for her will never cease.' 'Yes, I will bear the message.' Here the native woman burst into tears, and my own bosom swelled in sympathy.

"The spirit speaking again, giving directions about property and keepsakes, I thought I would more thoroughly test the genuineness of all this; and I said, 'We cannot find your book with the registered names; where have you concealed it?' The answer came instantly, 'I concealed it between the *tahuhu* of my house and the thatch; straight over you as you go in at the door.' The brother rushed out to see. All was silence. In five minutes he came hurriedly back, with the *book in his hand!* It astonished me.

"It was now late; and the spirit suddenly said, '*Farewell, my family, farewell, my tribe: I go.*' Those present breathed an impressive farewell; when the spirit cried out again, from high in the air, 'Farewell!'

"This, though seemingly tragical, is in every respect literally true. But what was it? ventriloquism, the Devil, or what?"

This last paragraph is simply a sop thrown out to please the orthodox. It might be paralleled thus: Peter, James, and John heard the spirits of Moses and Elias "talking with Jesus" upon the Mount of Transfiguration. "But what was it?—ventriloquism, the Devil, or what?"

Spiritualism is as common in the isles of the ocean to-day as it was in Palestine when the Nazarene there lived, eighteen centuries since. Dillon, commanding the East India Company's surveying ship "Research," visited the island of *anikovo*,—lat. 11° 40' south, long. 166° 40' east,—for the

purpose of inquiring into the fate of the French expedition under La Pérouse. At this island, where Dillon remained twenty-three days, he tells us there were *large houses set apart for the use of disembodied spirits*. Markham, in "The Cruise of 'The Rosario' in the South Seas in 1871," refers to the fact as related by Dillon.

Mr. Peebles says that the New Zealand mind is naturally sceptical, and that some of the Spiritualists tread on the very border lines of materialism. In Dunedin there is a "Society for the Investigation of Spiritualism," of which Mr. Redmayne is president, Mr. Wilson secretary, Mr. Beverley treasurer, and Messrs. Logan, Stout, and Carrick the committee. Mr. Beverley was born in Dundee; he is a botanist, a mathematician, a deep thinker, and the inventor of a new thermometer. Mr. Peebles and Dr. Dunn were treated fairly by the local newspapers.

Mr. Peebles narrates how Mr. Logan was a church member who had been fed too long upon the sulphurous husks of eternal punishment, so by way of relief he attended the lectures upon Spiritualism, with the following results:—

THEOLOGICAL INTOLERANCE IN NEW ZEALAND.

DUNEDIN, March 19, 1873.

MR. JOHN LOGAN.—DEAR SIR,—I am directed to summon you to appear before the session at a meeting to be held in the front vestry of the church on Monday, the 10th instant, at half-past seven (7.30) in the evening, to answer the following charges made against you; viz., That you appeared on the platform of the theatre at a public lecture, delivered by Mr. Peebles, on the evening of the Lord's Day, 2nd February last, when certain doctrines were propounded, as reported in the papers, contrary to the doctrines of this church.

That, being waited on by a committee appointed by the session, to remonstrate with you, and express its strong disapproval of your conduct, you avowed your right to appear where you did on Saturday or Sunday, and refused to abstain from such conduct for the future,—I am, &c.,

JOHN BOVIE,
Session Clerk, Knox Church.

This gentleman, Mr. Logan, was a most exemplary man, a faithful officer in the church, and a clerk to the superintendent of Otago, his family occupying a high social position. And yet he was arraigned, tried, convicted, and excommunicated by presbytery and synod!

Mr. Peebles evidently has no intention of visiting Australia or New Zealand again, or he would not have said that the ladies of those countries have more of the coarseness of Reuben's beauties than of delicacy and refinement. He says that neither paint nor powder can make up for inferiority of outline, but he qualifies this by adding, "I have seldom found better women or nobler men." But he qualifies this statement again by adding, "This is especially true as referring to leading Spiritualists," so that he leaves the others to shift for themselves.

On leaving New Zealand the friends there presented Mr. Peebles and Dr. Dunn with beautifully illuminated scrolls.

SPIRITUALISM IN CHINA.

From New Zealand they went to China, and there being no direct line of steamers, they embarked on the sailing vessel *Harriet Armitage*, well fitted, and freighted with 107 Chinamen booked for Hong Kong, who having gathered glittering piles of wealth from the gold-fields of the South Seas, had turned their faces towards their native land to enjoy their gains, and be buried with their fathers. In the course of the voyage the Chinese prayed to the Wind-god for wind, and went through a ceremony with lighted reeds and candles; after finishing their incantations they threw some rice and tea into the ocean, the result being a fine breeze from the right

quarter, which of course would not have come without this hocus-pocus.

They again passed the Fiji Islands, and Mr. Peebles remarks: "The Fijis must soon fall into the hands of the English"—a prophecy which has since been verified by the result. A newspaper is published in the Islands called the *Fiji Times*; it has occasionally called attention to Spiritualism. Mr. Peebles reports the *seances* with Dr. Dunn which he held on board the ship during the long and weary voyage.

At last they reached Hong Kong, which in English means "Incense Harbour," because the junks and proas here discharge their cargo of fragrant spices. His statements about the Spiritualism of the Chinese have already been published in these pages. Mr. Peebles visited Canton, where he was the guest of Dr. Kerr, and he discovered the American Consul (Mr. Bailey) to be a distant relation of his own. He says that China had homes for the aged, asylums for the blind, foundling hospitals, and retreats for lame and worn-out animals "long before more civilised people stepped foot upon their shores." He makes the following statement about Chinese kitchen gods:—

CHINESE KITCHEN-GODS AND SPIRITS.

The Chinese have been educated to believe that communications can be received from the inhabitants of the heavens and the hells, after complying with certain conditions. Dreams and visions are carefully noted. Trance is common in the higher circles of Chinese society. Considering it sacred, and connecting it with their ancestors in heaven, they conceal it, so far as is possible, from the searching, critical eyes of foreigners. A recent writer says, "I wonder if the Spiritualists of this day in New England ever think that their belief is nothing new in theory or practice, or that it has been known and believed in China for more than twenty-three hundred years. Not only do the Chinese Spiritualists believe in the same agencies and same results which distinguish Spiritualists here, but they also practise all the methods adopted in this country for spiritual manifestations, and a hundred others that do not seem to be known here. . . . During the stay of spirits in that nether world, the lower spheres, they can rap on furniture, pull the garments of the living, make noises in the air, play on musical instruments, show their footprints in the sand, and, taking possession of human beings, talk through them. In a thousand other ways they manifest their presence."

It is very common for coolies to consult trance-mediums of the cash-taking kind, touching the wish and will of their ancestors, before deciding to sail for the western world. They also sacrifice to Buddha, and petition the attendance of guardian spirits during their absence from China.

Mr. Peebles gives a great deal of information about the religion, the manners, and customs of the Chinese. He further gives the following information about Chinese *seances*:—

WHAT MISSIONARIES SAY OF CHINESE SPIRIT-INTERCOURSE.

"There is no driving out of these Chinese," says Father Gonzalo, "the cursed belief that the spirits of their ancestors are about them, availing themselves of every opportunity to give advice and counsel."

"They burn incense, beat a drum to call the attention of the desired spirit," writes Padra de Mae, "and then, by idolatrous methods, one of which is a spasmodic ecstasy, they get responses from the dead. . . . They have great fear of the evil spirits that inhabit forests."

In two volumes entitled *Social Life among the Chinese*, by the Rev. J. Doolittle, the author informs us that "they have invented several ways by which they find out the pleasure of gods and spirits. One of the most common of their utensils is the Ka-pue, a piece of bamboo-root, bean-shaped, and divided in the centre, to indicate the positive and the negative. The incense lighted, the Ka-pue properly manipulated before the symbol-god, the pieces are tossed from the medium's hand indicating the will of the spirit by the way they fall." . . . The following manifestation is more mental: "The professional takes in the hand a stick of lighted incense to expel all defiling

influences; prayers of some kind are repeated, the fingers are interlaced, and the medium's eyes are shut, giving unmistakable evidence of being possessed by some supernatural and spiritual power. The body sways back and forward; the incense falls, and the person begins to step about, assuming the walk and peculiar attitude of the spirit. This is considered infallible proof that the divinity has entered the body of the medium. Sometimes the god, using the mouth of the medium, gives the supplicant a sound scolding for invoking his aid to obtain unlawful or unworthy ends." . . . Another "method of obtaining communications, is for the applicant to make his wishes known to a person belonging to a society or company established for facilitating such consultations. Upon these occasions, the means employed consist in the use of a willow or bamboo pen, placed upon the top of the hand over a table of white sand; the arm becomes tremulous, and the writing is produced." And still another course is "for the female medium to sit by a table on which are two lighted candles, and three sticks of burning incense. After inquiring the names of the deceased, and the time of their death, she bows her head upon the table with the face concealed. Soon lifting it, the eyes closed, the countenance changed, the silence profound, she is supposed to be possessed by the spirit of the dead individual, and begins to address the applicant; in other words, the dead has come into her body, using her organs of speech to communicate with the living. . . Sometimes these mediums profess to be possessed by some specified god of great healing powers, and in this condition they prescribe for the sick. It is believed that the god or spirit invoked actually casts itself into the medium, and dictates the medicine."

Rev. Mr. Nevins in his work, *China and the Chinese*, declares that "volumes might be written upon the gods, genii, and familiar spirits supposed to be continually in communication with the people. The Chinese have a large number of books upon this subject, among the most noted of which is the *Liau-chai-che-i*, a large work of sixteen volumes. . . . Tu Sien signifies a spirit in the body. And there is a class of familiar spirits supposed to dwell in the bodies of certain Chinese who become the mediums of communication with the unseen world. Individuals said to be possessed by these spirits are visited by multitudes, particularly those who have recently lost relatives by death, and wish to converse with them. . . . Remarkable disclosures and revelations are believed to be made by the involuntary movements of a bamboo pencil, and through those that claim to see in the dark. Persons considering themselves endowed with superior intelligence are firm believers in these and other modes of consulting spirits."

It was my privilege to see these coolie Chinamen conversing with their spirit-ancestors in several temples. Their methods are numerous; and the prevalence of this belief among them astonished me. It is almost universal; and yet with the lower classes it has degenerated into absurd superstitions.

ANCIENT CHINESE SPIRITUALISM.

"The practice of divination," writes Sir John Barrow, "with many strange methods of summoning the dead to instruct the living, and reveal the future, is of very ancient origin, as is proven by Chinese manuscripts antedating the revelations of Scripture." The "eight diagrams, with directions for divination, were invented," says the Rev. Mr. Nevius, "by the Emperor Fuhi, probably nearly 3000 B.C. About 1100 B.C., Wen-Wang, the Literary Prince, and his son Chow-Kung, further developed the system, with explanations." The Yih-King is a sort of encyclopædia of spiritual marvels and manifestations. It was denominated, in the time of Confucius, the *Book of Changes*.

Gliddon writes, "The emperor of China, Yao, who reigned about 2337 years B.C., in order to suppress false prophecies, miracles, magic, and revelation, commanded his two ministers of astronomy and religion to cut asunder all communications between sky and earth, so that, as the chronicle expresses it, there should be no more of what is called 'the lifting up and coming down.'"

This missionary, Mr. Nevius, further assures us that in the "latter part of the Chan dynasty, which continued to 249 B.C., Kwei-Kuh-Sien-sz, applied the Yih-King to the use of soothsaying, and is regarded as among the fathers of augurs. During the past and the preceding dynasty, many books have been written upon this subject, among the most noted of which is the *Poh-chi-ching-tsung*, a work of six volumes on the "Source of True Divination." Here are a few passages from the preface:—

"The secret of augury consists in communication with the

gods. The interpretations of the transformations are deep and mysterious. The theory of the science is most intricate, the practice of it most important. The sacred classic says, 'That which is true gives indications of the future.' To know the condition of the dead, and hold with them intelligent intercourse, as did the ancients, produces a most salutary influence upon the parties. . . . But when from intoxication or feasting or licentious pleasures they proceed to invoke the gods, what infatuation to suppose that their prayers will move them! Often when no response is given, or the interpretation is not verified, they lay the blame at the door of the augur, forgetting that their failure is due to their want of sincerity. . . . It is the great fault of augurs, too, that, from a desire of gain, they use the art of divination as a trap to ensnare the people," &c.

Naturally undemonstrative and secretive, the higher classes of Chinamen seek to conceal their full knowledge of spirit intercourse from foreigners, and from the inferior castes of their own countrymen, thinking them not sufficiently intelligent to rightly use it. The lower orders, superstitious and money-grasping, often prostitute their mediumistic gifts to gain and fortune-telling. These clairvoyant fortune-tellers, surpassing wandering gipsies in "hitting" the past, infest the temples, streets, and roadsides, promising to find lost property, discover precious metals, and reveal the hidden future. What good thing is not abused? Liberty lives, though license prowls abroad in night-time. Christianity wore the laurels it wove, though Peter denied and Judas betrayed. Spirit-communication is a reality, and, wisely used, a mighty redemptive power, as well as a positive demonstration of a future existence.

After a short stay in Cochin China, Mr. Peebles and Dr. Dunn sailed in the *Irrawaddy* for Singapore. The *Irrawaddy* was a magnificent French steamer. A *garçon* on board reminded Dr. Dunn and Mr. Peebles to appear in a particular dress at certain times of the day, but as they did not see the force of practising artificial habits on board ship, they called the attention of the commander to this impertinence, which, of course, was at once stopped.

Mr. Peebles speaks very highly of the island of Singapore, which is a famous mart for jewellery, and seems to be a landing-place for the waifs of the world. They were detained in Singapore for two weeks, waiting the arrival of the steamer which was to take them to England. Of the religion of the Malays, Mr. Peebles says:—

THE RELIGION OF THE MALAYS.

In the thirteenth century, Mohammedan missionaries converted the Malays in the Straits of Malacca to Islamism, using persuasion instead of the sword. Their original religion, however, was entirely different. John Cameron, F.R.G.S., assures us that "such Malays as have embraced none of the more modern religions believe in some divine personality, corresponding to God; and in a future life, where good men enjoy ecstatic bliss, and the wicked suffer purgatorial punishments." But "their religion," he adds, "is strangely mixed up with demonology. They believe that every person is attended by a good and a bad angel; the latter leading to sickness, danger, and sin, while the good angel seeks the individual's health and happiness." In their "lives they are influenced more by fear than hope." They propitiate the wicked angel and the evil spirits. It is only at death that they ask the especial care of their good angel. They stand in no fear of the transition. Some of their ruins indicate a relationship theologically to the sun and serpent worshippers.

In company with the American Consul, Major Studer, our travellers visited Johore, where they were the guests of Mr. J. Meldrum, the owner of the largest steam saw-mills in Asia: the forests round the town cover about 10,000 square miles.

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA.

On the 27th June, 1873, they left Singapore in the *Statesman*, under the command of Captain Valiant, for Calcutta, *via* Penang, and had many *seances* during the voyage, which are fully recorded. On the 4th of July they encountered a dreadful storm in the Bay of Bengal,

in which several ships were wrecked, but the *Statesman* escaped, and steamed up the sluggish Hoogly to Calcutta, where they landed on the 7th of July, the hottest time of the whole year, and at the beginning of the rainy season. They put up at the Great Eastern Hotel, the finest in Calcutta. During their stay in the town, they visited General Lichfield, the American Consul, also Keshub Chunder Sen, who Mr. Peebles had previously met in England, and who has a friendly disposition towards Spiritualism. At Sekrole, the European part of the city of Benares, he was the guest of Dr. Lazarus. At Calcutta he met Baboo Peary Chand Mitra, commission merchant, writer, and Brahminical Spiritualist; he is also a writing and seeing medium. He assured Mr. Peebles that his deceased wife was as constantly with him at times as though in the body. He met also Shib Chunder Deb, a devoted Spiritualist, who has recently published a book on the subject. Also Mohindro Saul Paul and Romanath Senx, two highly intelligent young Hindoo gentlemen connected with the higher castes, and firm Spiritualists. Mr. Peebles visited Allahabad, the "City of God," a universal resort for pilgrims.

THE RETURN JOURNEY.

He travelled from Calcutta to Bombay, across India by rail, a distance of 1,500 miles. From Bombay he crossed the Indian Ocean to Aden in the *Aretusa*, whose captain was an Austrian Spiritualist, well read in the works of Allan Kardec. They sailed up the Red Sea and landed at Suez, from which place they proceeded to Cairo, a distance of about 150 miles across a vast plain of sand. They visited the catacombs, and the pyramids and had a *seance* at the top of the Great Pyramid, particulars of which have already been recorded in these pages.

During their stay in Cairo they put up at the Oriental Hotel, which is kept by the husband of Madame Blavatsky. Madame Blavatsky, assisted by others, formed a society of Spiritualists in Cairo in the year 1870. Shortly after the visit of Mr. Peebles to Cairo, she left for Odessa, and afterwards went to America, where she witnessed the manifestations through the Eddy brothers and others, as we have already published.

Mr. Peebles left Cairo for Alexandria and sailed in the Austrian steamer for Jaffa, the Joppa of the New Testament. He next spent some time in the Holy Land. He visited Ramleh, said by St. Jerome to be the Arimathea of Joseph. He travelled through the Judean country and visited Jerusalem, where of course he examined all the places of interest. After a night's rest upon Mount Zion he went to Mar Saba and the Dead Sea, in the bitter waters of which he bathed. On his way home he visited Rhodes and Cyprus, also Smyrna, in which place he found a number of prominent Spiritualists, including Mr. C. Constant and Mr. E. H. Rossi. He says that Mr. Constant has a palatial residence, in front of which is a beautiful garden, fringed with fig, lemon, and orange trees. Here the travellers were warmly received, and treated to Turkish coffee, fruits, and delicious preserves, in accordance with Oriental custom. They next visited Ephesus, and saw the shafts which Mr. J. T. Wood was sinking between Prion and St. John's Church in search of the Temple of Diana of the Ephesians.

They afterwards sailed up the Dardanelles, and visited Constantinople. Of Spiritualism in Turkey he says:

SPIRITUALISM IN TURKEY.

There are excellent mediums and many Spiritualists in Constantinople. During the winter season they hold regular circles in Pera, the European part of the city. Writing and trance are the usual forms of manifestation. These spirits, with a few exceptions, teach reincarnation. Invited, we addressed the Spiritualists in the hall of the *Chambre de Commerce*. The attention they gave, and the interest they manifested, were truly inspiring.

The Hon. John P. Brown, connected with the legation, and a thirty-years' resident of Turkey, I found to be a firm Spiritualist. In a letter written to the *Universe* he said:—

"Many Moslems also fully believe in a power or faculty of the spirit of man to see, behold, or have an intuitive perception of, things invisible by the ordinary organs of sight. This assertion they sustain by the frequent examples of individuals having the most correct and exact knowledge of events occurring at a vast distance from them—of visions in which they behold, like pictures passing before their eyes, scenes of which they have never had any previous knowledge or perception. . . . These Turkish Spiritualists are always people of well-known purity and virtue, animated with the highest degree of benevolence, and deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of others. This belief is often acted upon and exercised in such a manner by others as to lead some persons to suppose that Spiritualism and animal magnetism are one and the same thing; for the pious Moslem believes that he can effect cures, or at least give relief from bodily sufferings, by prayer, and the imposing of his hands on the invalid."

Next they visited Athens and the Acropolis, also the prison cave in which the ancient Greeks confined the great Spiritualist, Socrates. From Athens they went to Naples, where they met Signor Damiani, after which they went to Rome and Florence. Outside Florence, under the cypress-trees shading a plain brown marble monument, reposes all that is mortal of one whose name lives not only in America, but in all enlightened lands. This slab has upon it only these words: "Theodore Parker, born at Lexington, Mass., U.S.A., Aug. 24th, 1810. Died at Florence, May 10th, 1860." Close by is the monument of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, with simply the plain initials, E. B. B., with the following lines:—

"A stone above my heart and head,
But no name written on the stone."

At Florence Mr. Peebles met Girolamo Parisi, the editor and publisher of the Spiritual periodical *Aurora*. He also met Baron Kirkup, who has been a Spiritualist for more than twenty years, and has never shrunk from the frank avowal of his principles; he has a large library of books treating of magic, and the unsystematised philosophy of the mystics. The Baron is a practical mesmerist, and his daughter is the principal medium he consults. Mr. Peebles says our poet Longfellow attended a *seance* at Baron Kirkup's residence, and avowed himself a believer in the present ministry of angels.

From Florence they went to Trieste, Austria, and called upon Leon Favre, the Consul-General of France, who is a devoted Spiritualist, but unfortunately he was absent at the time. Captain Richard Burton was then the British Consul at Trieste, and Mr. Peebles says of him, "So far as the captain has any religious bias, it is towards Spiritualism."

From Trieste he went to Venice, thence to Milan, thence through the Mont Cenis tunnel to Paris, where he examined the havoc made during the late war. From Paris he came to London, where we had the pleasure of meeting both himself and Dr. Dunn, who looked tired and jaded with their travels; and after a few days' stay in London they sailed for New York *via* Liverpool.

The book, as already has been said, is unique; it is

more adapted to the American than the English mind, being full of exclamatory and poetical passages, and containing not much in the way of statistics and dates. Had Mr. Peebles given statistical information about the number of Spiritualists residing in the different towns he visited in Australia and New Zealand, had he put on record the respective ages and numerical strength of the local societies, and above all, had he recorded all that he could see or discover about psychological phenomena among savage races now fast dying out, the book would have been of more historical value, so that in future years any person travelling over the same ground would have been able to chronicle the changes which had taken place since the first record was made. However, the book is exceedingly interesting, and will be as much valued by friends of Mr. Peebles in the Old World as it is by those in the New.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS IN AUSTRIA.

BY THE BARONESS ADELMA VAY.

On the occasion of a brief visit from my cousin, Count Wurmbrand, who was very anxious to witness something in the way of spirit manifestations, Mrs. Pucher, the medium of whom I wrote in my previous communication, was again invited to our house, and sat four evenings for materialisations. The extemporised cabinet previously described was again brought into requisition, and each evening we had the appearance of the lights, which increased constantly in distinctness and interest throughout the *seance*. No full spirit form appeared, as in the former manifestations; but several times the moving light, which was always well defined and came out quite beyond the edge of the door, would elongate as if taking the form of an arm, and if beckoned to, without a word spoken, would respond at once, and brighten as if with delight. When it was asked to move up or down, or outwards, it always suited the action to the word, one time moving a foot or more beyond the edge of the door, leaving the intervening space quite dark. The last evening, during the whole of which the light was unusually bright and distinct, I asked it to show how rapidly spirits moved in the universe, and it passed immediately, almost as a flash, from the bottom to the top of the door in full view of all present. Each evening during the manifestations my cousin sat not more than six feet from the opening, and the other observers present were but little farther away, and one or two could look quite into the cabinet. The space within was so small that the slightest movement of the medium was audible. She, however, as before, was quite unconscious during the manifestations, and saw not a single light the whole time.

We are deeply interested in the results thus far obtained, and look eagerly for more remarkable to follow as the development of the medium proceeds.

BARONESS ADELMA VAY
BARON VAY (Captain).

Gonobitz, Jan. 19th, 1875.

A NEW edition of the useful little book *Where are the Dead?* has just been issued.

MR. WALLACE, one of the oldest mediums in this country, is in want of, and well deserves, aid, and we are very pleased to hear from Mr. Haxby that steps are being taken to assist him, but have not received any letters or specific information what those steps may be.

PEARLS AT SEANCES.

A MONTH or two ago a description was published in these pages, of a *seance* held at the house of Dr. Speer, of Alexandria-road, St. John's-wood, and particulars were given of the manner in which, through the mediumship of a gentleman in private life, pearls, corals, and precious stones of various kinds, were brought by the spirits. They fall both in broad daylight and gas-light; frequently they drop one by one on the table while he is at dinner. He has noticed that some motion on his part tends to promote their falling; the force used by the spirits in producing many of their physical manifestations is drawn chiefly from the head, hands and feet, consequently when he suddenly moves his hand or his head, corals or pearls are more apt to drop than at other times. We have seen them drop upon the table in daylight, and once saw a little piece of coral drop upon a book which he was holding in his hands in the garden; the piece of coral rolled off and fell upon the gravel. Although we looked for it, and could not find it, he, after a pause, stooped down and picked it up, being able to detect it under such difficult conditions, in consequence, probably, of the spirits who had brought it influencing his actions, since the piece was so minute that it might easily have escaped the notice of an eye placed a short distance from the ground. He has also noticed that sometimes when he attempts to pick up a pearl or piece of coral the instant it has fallen, it disappears, it being necessary for a short period to elapse before it becomes permanent.

This particular kind of mediumship has been possessed by a lady in private life for many years, as is well known to many of those who have had the pleasure of frequently attending the *seances* held at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, of 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square. The medium now under notice also unfortunately has objections to the publication of her name; she will, however, be readily identified by many London Spiritualists by what has been just said. This lady also has noticed that the stones have a tendency to disappear if she touches them the moment after they fall, and she says that sometimes they did not appear to fall at all, but presented themselves just as if they had come up through the wood or cloth of the table.

Mrs. Gregory had a *seance* with this lady recently, and tells us that the medium saw her husband and son standing near her, and they said that they would bring her a gift to show that they were united in their efforts to guide and help her. They then said in relation to some home troubles, "Lessons of life are given and taken in a household." Then a large pearl to which a small pearl was attached fell upon the table, the one being intended to represent the father, and the baby-pearl the son. This message was then given—"Remember, dear mother, that of pearl is the gate through which you will enter into the city of the Lord. Sorrow and suffering are the stepping-stones which bridge the path from earth-life to this gate. Good night, dear mother; the good work progresses, and the reign of righteousness for which you have worked so hard is near."

MR. MORSE IN AMERICA.—A Report in the *Boston Daily Globe*, of Jan. 11th, and a complimentary paragraph in the *Boston Herald* of the same date, show that Mr. Morse is getting on well in America, and that his trance addresses are giving general satisfaction, two circumstances which all his friends in this country will be glad to hear. *The Spiritual Scientist*, of January 14th, published in Boston, puts the following sentences into his mouth as having been given under inspiration:—"The phenomena of materialisation is only to be understood in the light of the experiments of John Dalton, of Manchester, England. This celebrated chemist placed on record the ultimate condition of an atom, having by strict analysis resolved it into an intangible, seeming nonentity." Whether the spirits, the organism of the medium, or the reporter, were at fault in the evolution of the information just quoted, there is no evidence to show, but "phenomena" being a plural word, requires to be followed by the word "are," and not by the word "is;" Dalton, instead of resolving atoms into nonentities, was the first to determine their actual weight, and to place them upon a more substantial footing in the realm of physics than they ever held before. It is a curious fact that no new revelation of the slightest value to physical science has ever been made in the domain of physics by trance mediumship; indeed, trance utterances usually display want of knowledge of the whole subject. These remarks do not apply to Mr. Morse's mediumship in particular, but are true of trance revelations all the world over, so far as we know.

CONDITIONS INFLUENCING SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

A few weeks ago, an account was published in these pages of a *seance* held at the house of Mr. Stanhope Templeman Spear, M.D. (Edin.), at which some manifestations took place through the mediumship of a gentleman in private life, who does not wish his name to be published. Those manifestations included direct spirit music, scented breezes sweeping round the room, spirit lights, raps, and other physical phenomena, after which the medium was entranced and delivered the following address, for which we were unable to find space in the former narrative:—

The conditions which concern the manifestation of spirits upon the plane of matter are well worthy of your serious consideration. We are not able to command the conditions which enable us to manifest. It is frequently alleged against us, that that which occurs readily on one occasion does not occur on another; that when persons have been invited to tabulate them they do not occur, and so discredit has been thrown upon us. It is not rightly so, for many things interfere. The atmospheric conditions of the past few days have prevented us from acting with precision, and in circles like our own we have decided that nothing should be done, rather than we should do them with inaccuracy. It is plain that the conditions which we have here cannot exist in public circles, where many persons are gathered together for the purpose of witnessing manifestations; there something is done, and done imperfectly. Moreover, no proper care is taken that circles should be properly formed; they are formed at haphazard as regards the elements, which are as important to us as the purity of the substances used in the most delicate experiments is to the chemist. New elements demand careful experiment on our side to meet the altered conditions, but our friends usually make no allowance for that; they are attempted, and our manifestations are annulled; then the charge falls upon us instead of upon their ignorance of the conditions which alone can command success. Circles are formed for amusement, and friends meet at a time when they have nothing better to do; they ask curious questions, or seek for curious manifestations; this spirit of idle curiosity draws about them influences of the lowest kind, frivolous manifestations are the result, messages false and deceptive, and these things are again charged upon us. It is not we, but they who are to blame, for they place us in an atmosphere in which it is impossible for us to operate. To-night we meet in a room charged with essences. It would be well that friends should recognise the fact that it is necessary that atmospheric conditions should be provided, that a circle should never meet in any room which has been used for at least two hours previously, and they should remedy atmospheric difficulties by the use of perfumes, although these do not give the pure atmosphere we desire. Manifestations can be best given in a room set apart for our work. They were wise who in old days separated their mediums from the external world, and kept *seance* rooms free from external influence. In your life it is impossible to do this, but the nearer you can give us these conditions the better.

Manifestations are possible and probable in proportion as certain conditions are rigorously kept in view. In the formation and in the meeting of circles, men are only too apt to forget that which does not come frequently within their notice, and the formation of circles is the largest element in the success of spiritual manifestations. Circles must be formed of congenial persons, and separated from inharmonious elements; the higher manifestations can only be given where there are the higher conditions. The higher possibilities of spiritual intercourse are largely repressed by the want of receptivity of those who seek communion with those of the world of spirits, and who err greatly by attributing too much importance to objective and material manifestations; they should seek after higher developments of spirit power. We know well the value of that which meets the objective senses, and is thus brought to the level of scientific fact; but within that which meets your senses, there is a higher spiritual meaning, a diviner verity. We do not say you should do away with that which is objective any more than neglect the body; within that and beyond that there is the real, the true, the eternal, of which what you grasp by your senses is the external and the low. We pray and desire with earnest longing that those of our friends who seek after truth may be led and

educated to the spiritual essence, the real, the true, and the eternal, which may not be realisable by the human sense, but is the only reality of the spiritual sense.

You have now the development of one of the highest forms of spiritual manifestation; some of the richest and purest teaching ever vouchsafed to man is now in your midst, yet the medium was but a short time ago, merely a channel for the vaguest and most indistinct utterances from the spirit land; the influences which then surrounded her were of the worst. Afterwards she was isolated, purer and more intellectual influences surrounded her, and the consequence has been that spirits utterly unable to operate before are now developing a mass of teaching which all may read with improvement. In a parable such as that, you will read the whole story of spirit influence upon man. In proportion as you provide us with influences which we can operate through, we can reveal to you the secrets of the life unto which you must all enter, but if you regard us merely as the vehicles of some force which may be paraded for your amusement or of something curious which must be inquired into, you miss the spiritual essence which underlies our whole mission. We are far from being even developers of scientific knowledge. We are the spiritual messengers of the Supreme, sent to instruct you, to give you fuller knowledge of Him and of your own destiny; to this all else in our mission is subsidiary. If you will gather up the crumbs of knowledge we are able to show you, you may in the end gain a plane of intelligence, a knowledge of spiritual things, and of the life hereafter, of which, when you enter, you will find the use and benefit. We are not the aimless creatures man has imagined us to be, for he has showered upon us the faults inherent in himself. The vagueness is not ours, but springs from those whose thoughts are on the material plane. We claim something beyond and beside the material, something essentially spiritual, which no human science can tabulate and record, but which the human soul may assimilate, and which may bear fruit when human knowledge and science alike have passed.

It is not well that we should tax further the power which has been used to the very end; although we have much we wish to say, we refrain from further utterance, but we would implore the Giver of all blessings and the Father of Light, to bless and illumine your souls with the light of His wisdom, and with the blessings of His grace, so that you may bring forth fruit unto perfection. May the blessing of the Supreme rest upon you!

ELECTRICITY IN THE BODY.

STATEMENTS are sometimes made that electricity is given out from the hands and other parts of the human body, but the experiments of Mr. Varley and others with exquisitely delicate apparatus tend to show that this is not the case; there is, however, plenty of electricity at work inside the body, in closed circuits in the nerves and muscles, and the presence of these extremely feeble currents, is made evident by the same apparatus which shows that none is thrown off to an appreciable extent from the body itself. When friction is applied to the outside of the body, electrical phenomena are sometimes produced, on the same principle that electricity is obtained from a frictional electrical machine; for instance, very dry hair often becomes electrical by the friction against it of the teeth of an india-rubber comb. Sometimes when the skin is dry, and a flannel shirt or other large garment is rapidly pulled off it, the friction will produce electrical disturbance; and in cold and very dry atmospheres, such as are sometimes found in certain parts of America, the friction of the boots against a dry carpet will generate so much electricity, that the gas can be lit by a spark from the finger held near the gas-jet. These facts are due simply to friction, and the most powerful electrical apparatus in the world, such as will kill an ox with a single spark, will not move a table a single inch under those conditions which cause tables to move at spirit circles.

In the course of the Christmas lectures recently delivered at the Royal Institution, Dr. J. H. Gladstone explained that weak currents of electricity are often present where they are least suspected; for instance, if a silver fork be held in one hand, and a finger of the other hand should touch the steel part of the knife which it holds, two dissimilar metals are connected by the intervening human body; consequently, directly the knife and fork are plunged into any liquid which acts chemically, a weak electrical current is produced, which flows through the body. Thus, when the knife and fork are plunged into a beef steak, the gravy of the steak acts feebly upon the iron of the knife, so a weak electrical current is pro-

duced, which flows through the body of the eater. To show that this was actually the case, Dr. Gladstone connected a knife and fork with a reflecting galvanometer by means of wires, then when he plunged them into a beef steak; the weak electrical current produced deflected the needle of the galvanometer, so that the reflected circle of light thrown by the mirror was seen to travel for a yard or two along the white screen in the theatre of the Royal Institution. Thus the effects of the electrical current generated by the knife and fork and beef steak were made visible to the large body of listeners.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.

ON Thursday night, last week, the ninth half-yearly general meeting of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism was held at 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, London, Mr. Alfred E. Lovell, president, in the chair. Among the members present were Mrs. Theresa Wood, Mr. George Blyton, Mr. and Mrs. T. Blyton, Mrs. and Miss Showers, Mr. G. R. Tapp, Mr. A. Ferguson Black, Mr. George, Mr. W. Forbes Playfair, Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen, Mr. H. P. Smith, and Mr. W. H. Harrison.

The half-yearly report of the Council was read by the secretary; it congratulated the Association on the continued prosperity which had attended the work of the society during the past six months. It set forth that at the weekly *seances* some very good manifestations had been obtained, through the mediumship of Mrs. Lovell, Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Parkes, Mr. James Webster, Miss Keeves, and Mrs. Bassett. The report said that Mr. Parkes was controlled by several distinct spirits, the individuality of each of whom was most marked; very good tests of spirit identity were given through Mr. Webster; and satisfactory evidence of spirit presence and communion had been given through the mediumship of Mrs. Bassett. No members of the Association had resigned during the past six months, and two new members had been added. Donations to the society, or presents of books had been made by Mr. William Oxley, Mr. Charles Blackburn, and Mr. Henry M. Dunphy. The value of the books in the library had been assessed by Mr. T. Wilkes and Mr. G. R. Tapp, but whether they assessed them at their first cost, or at the amount they would fetch if now sold, was not stated. The accounts of the last half-year had been audited by Mr. G. R. Tapp and Mr. T. Blyton; the statement of account showed a balance of £2 10s. 3¹/₂d. cash in hand, after paying all the expenses of the year 1874. The Council recommended that Rule 7 should be amended, and that payment of periodical subscriptions from honorary members should not be compulsory in future.

The adoption of the report was moved by Mr. Playfair, and seconded by Mrs. Theresa Wood.

Mr. G. Blyton moved an amendment to the effect that the report should express no opinion about disembodied spirits having communicated at the *seances*.

Mr. T. Blyton said that he was opposed to his brother's amendment, but would second it for the sake of giving rise to a discussion.

The report was however adopted in its entirety.

Mr. A. M. Greene resigned office as honorary secretary, and enclosed a subscription of £2 2s. towards the funds of the Association.

Regret was expressed that Mr. Greene should have been obliged by circumstances beyond his control to resign office, and a vote of thanks was awarded to him by the members and Council.

Mr. A. E. Lovell resigned the office of president, because he resided at such a distance from the place of meeting, and because the office brought him more prominence than he desired, although he by no means feared publicity.

After the warm thanks of the society had been given to Mr. Lovell, Mr. Playfair moved that the Council should be authorised to invite Mr. H. D. Jencken, M.R.I., one of the honorary members of the society, to accept the office of president of the Association.

Mr. T. Blyton seconded this; he thought that from Mr. Jencken's great experience in Spiritualism, he would make an excellent and popular president. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Tapp said that in the absence of their president, in consequence of his residence at a distance, there was never any difficulty in finding a member to occupy the chair at meetings, *pro tem*.

The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Lovell was then elected a member of the Council in place of Mr. George Blyton, who resigned.

The election of a new secretary was referred to the Council at its next meeting. The alterations in Rule 7, recommended

in the report of the Council, were then proposed to be made, to the effect that any subscription on the part of honorary members should be optional. This was proposed by Mr. T. Blyton, and seconded by Mr. Playfair.

Mr. Tapp moved that the rule stand as at present, because the Association could not afford to lose any subscriptions, and because he found that the National Association of Spiritualists had no rule exempting honorary members from contributing to the funds.

Mr. Harrison said that the adoption of the recommendation of the Council would put the Dalston Association in the same position as the National Association in respect to honorary members, for in the latter case any subscription was optional.

Mr. Blyton said that most of the honorary members joined the Association to help it, and usually desired to pay a subscription at first; but if they were constantly asked for money afterwards, they would probably resign, since they never attended the meetings of the society, or derived much benefit from its work.

Mr. Tredwen said that they rather honoured the society by becoming honorary members, therefore should not be asked to pay for so doing.

Mr. Tapp said that perhaps he had considered the matter rather hurriedly.

Mr. Tredwen said that many people might do honour to the society by joining it, who were not moneyed people, and the rule as it stood had a tendency to exclude them.

Mr. Tapp withdrew his amendment, so the original motion was carried.

Mr. George Blyton proposed that the words about any subscriptions from honorary members being optional should be left out of the rule, but after some discussion, it was resolved that the rule should not be further altered.

Mr. T. Blyton proposed that the title of the Association should be changed to that of the "Dalston Society of Spiritualists." He added that the society had been investigating the subject for four years, so it ought to have some opinion of its own by this time, and should call itself a society of Spiritualists.

Mr. G. Blyton seconded this, because in the report of the Council just passed, the society fully committed itself and the Association to the Spiritual explanation of the facts.

Mr. Tredwen moved, and Mr. Playfair seconded, that the title should remain as at present.

Six members voted for the retention of the old title, and four in favour of the proposed new one.

The meeting then closed with the usual vote of thanks.

WORK FOR THE IMAGINATION.—It appears that Mr. Holman Hunt's attention has been called to the fact that in his picture of "The Shadow of Death" he has represented the Saviour as using his left hand to saw a plank, and he has written a letter to justify this odd departure from ordinary usage. It has always been supposed that Mr. Hunt prided himself as an artist upon his severe realism, but he now explains that he is not such "a slave" to nature and truth as he has been supposed to be. "To have made the Saviour saw with his right hand would," he says, "have necessitated the separation of the two figures in the picture by the space required for the uninteresting mass of wood, which would thus have occupied the most precious part of the canvas." And, in order to avoid this, "I had only to trust to the spectator to imagine that, tired with his labour, the Saviour had stepped over the plank to approach his mother, or to see her, for the sun yet had to sink, and, recognising that it was already late enough to prepare for the evening's relaxation and duties, that he had assumed the position which gave the most relief physically and mentally before turning to put away his tools." It will perhaps be thought that this is leaving a good deal to the imagination of the spectator, and that the license thus claimed might be carried to an awkward length. A painter who could not get a figure into his composition in a natural way might double it up or turn it upside down, trusting that the spectator would imagine that the person thus portrayed was only seeking some momentary relaxation of over-strained muscle. Mr. Hunt's apology is at least curious, and reminds one of the old epitaph about

Mr. Woodhen, the best of men,

to which an explanatory note was attached: "His name was Woodcock, but it would not come in rhyme." An artist who cannot get the better of a plank without making the rest of his picture unnatural must, we should have thought, be devoid of ingenuity.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

THE NATURE OF SPIRIT LIFE.

In the course of Mrs. Tappan's recent address in the trance state, at Birmingham, she said:—

You are accustomed to suppose that in order to make a good appearance in the moral world, your dwelling or habitation, or surroundings must be of such and such an order. Now, in spiritual life this is the same, but it chanced to be a fact that the abode of the spirit as well as the garments that it wears, and the various surroundings that it possesses, are the result of far different kinds of labour than those employed on earth to attain them, and that you cannot do it by any recognised system of fraud upon your neighbour, or by any of the usual terms called speculation, and business, and training; but that the entire property of the spirit is the result of his or her sterling mental and moral qualities: that your spiritual body in substance must be able to attract to itself particles of beauty by the amount and intensity of the beauty and light that is within; that you cannot cover up the inner darkness with a robe of splendour, nor shelter the imperfect soul in an abode and palace of luxury; that the pauper who is honest in purpose, and strives to do his best, inherits a home, while the prince who has lavished no gifts save those robbed from the poor and the fatherless, is a beggar in spirit-life. (Applause.) And so inevitably the law is this, that upon entering spiritual existence you find yourself in precisely the condition and surroundings that your mental and moral status call you to, and you find that you have builded your spiritual habitation, and clothed your spiritual body, either with a raiment of good thoughts and deeds, or with shadowy garments of unkindness and corruption. This is not merely a sentiment, or a flower of speech or of rhetoric, but so palpable is it that it belongs to the world of legitimate cause and effect—that the soul attracts those atoms that beautify and adorn it in exact proportion as it is beautiful, and can so attract them. The lily, which has within itself the germ of the flower, absorbs from sun and from air the properties that clothe it in whiteness: and the spirit of thought, and action, and volition draws to itself either the shadowy vapours of uncertainty and profligate life, or the beautiful white atoms that glisten in the sunlight of purity and truth. Between these two stand all souls in their spiritual state, whether they be embodied or disembodied; and hence, to the spiritual vision and in the spiritual world, there is no such thing as the possibility of concealing the real state or condition of mind one from the other. The mask that is worn upon earth is often successful, but even here a clear-sighted and intuitive observer may see the lines of character, or may perceive that vice has made its inroads even upon the fairest physical form; while the spiritual body which is composed of atoms which respond much more readily to the individual, is an exact expression of what the individual life has been within. Yet, were this all, there is no harshness of judgment there. It is pitiable enough to be deformed upon earth physically, and no one sees such an object without saying "poor thing." So in spirit, when the deformed and perverted soul lays off the garments of earthly splendour that may have been a mask, it is enough that the pitying angels say, "Poor soul, for behold the consciousness of deformity is its own punishment."

The states of spiritual existence, and the employments, we say, correspond to the innate thought and wish of the individual, and hence the primal object of each spirit is to endeavour to find out the laws that govern his new existence, and adapt and shape himself to it; to find by what process these deformities can be entirely eradicated; to discover how, if possible, the soul may be beautified; and when it has found that only upon the exhibition of kind actions and thoughts towards others these blemishes are removed, straightway each soul has sufficient employment, for no soul enters the spirit world so perfect as to be without blemish; and this constitutes an employment from the lowest to the highest, that the primal work is to rectify the individual errors, to seek forgiveness for the individual wrongs. And when the soul finds that its structure is marred by some act or deed performed on earth, there is no rest for that spirit until the sweet thought of forgiveness comes. If any one has wronged you, see to it that you make haste to forgive, for you do not know what soul you may be dragging down by incurring the thought of un forgiveness; and you do not know what blemish it entails upon your own soul, since you also wish to be forgiven.

We present to you these stages and thoughts of spirit-life as the united testimony of those holding daily and hourly converse with spiritual beings; and as for the babes that go out

from your midst, those blossoms of your own hearts, that you have wondered where they might be found, remember that so kind is the Divine Father that in spirit-life these children are cared for by angel guardians, who take them in their arms, and bear them to the abodes of such sweet flowers, transplanting them to the heavenly regions where they may gain wisdom and knowledge and growth, and meet you as angels when you enter their abodes. If cut off from earthly experience, they may by observation and guidance gain spiritual strength; and such is the compensation of nature everywhere, that those who are robbed of earthly experience in their early life, are deprived also of much of earthly sorrow; and the babe that welcomes you will be the smiling angel that has prepared the way before you to the abode of souls. When all that you have held dear have gone thither, and when the air is peopled with those whom you trusted when they were by your side, shall you hesitate to stretch out your hand in the dark because your senses are veiled? Rather say to those that have ever been kind to you on earth, "Oh, open these eyes, that they may be no longer blind, and these ears that they may not be deaf, and this understanding, that it may not be shadowed, and let us see the real world that has been only shadowed by earthly vapours." (Applause.)

WITCHCRAFT IN DEVONSHIRE.—A remarkable case of credulity (our Exeter correspondent writes) came before the Exeter magistrates to-day (Wednesday). It appeared from the evidence that a woman named Arthurs, a fortune-teller, was consulted by another woman on behalf of her son, who was suffering from some internal complaint. Arthurs pretended to read from a book the nature of the complaint and the remedy required. She also went through some mystic performances with a pack of cards, and said if the young man did not recover by a certain date he would die. Arthurs gave the woman some mixture in a bottle, for which she charged £2, but the invalid did not get better. The mother told Arthurs that she believed her son had been bewitched, and believed she was able to effect a cure. The police, however, got hold of the affair, and arrested Arthurs, who told a police officer that she had cured "hundreds of cases, and that she was very clever in that way." A witness said she had also consulted Arthurs, and had recommended the woman in this case to her. The magistrates sent Arthurs to prison for two months, and ordered £3 found on her to be kept towards her maintenance in gaol. By a singular coincidence a witchcraft case also came before the Newton Abbot Board of Guardians this morning. A labouring man applied for relief, saying he had been bewitched, and was unable to work. In reply to the chairman, the man said he believed in witchcraft. Admiral Wise, one of the guardians, said there was no doubt the man believed he was bewitched, and his faith could not be shaken; his illness, however, was no doubt due to an attack of apoplexy. The man was granted relief, and it was suggested that the police should look after a "wizard," who had promised to cure him.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

THE TEMPLE OF DIANA AT EPHESUS.—Last Saturday afternoon, Mr. John T. Wood, director of the excavations at Ephesus, which resulted in discovering the Temple of the great goddess Diana, gave the first of a series of lectures, at the Royal Institution, in which he set forth some of the first results of his work. He told how, in May, 1863, under a firman from the Turkish Government, he undertook to begin a series of excavations at Ephesus, at his own expense, under the auspices of the Trustees of the British Museum. He spent a long time in examining the ground and in sinking pits in different places, which pits were visited by Mr. Peebles and Dr. Dunn, as narrated in another column. Mr. Wood thus discovered several buried tombs, buildings, and statues, but not the site of the great Temple of Diana. One day he was accosted by a tall earnest-looking Greek, who said that he had dreamed a dream, and seen where much treasure was buried; he had seen a chamber and an underground passage leading to it; so would Mr. Wood permit him to dig under the authority of the firman, but at his own cost? Mr. Wood said that he humoured the man, and the holes that the man consequently dug were paid for by "a silly Greek merchant in Smyrna," but of course no treasure was found. The dreamer and his merchant friend tried afterwards to get Mr. Wood to pay their expenses, but without effect; they next tried threats, which, said Mr. Wood, were equally ineffectual, for the Greek had merely asked for permission to dig under the firman. In this first lecture Mr. Wood merely described his preliminary work, leaving the account of his greater discoveries for a future lecture.

A SPIRITUAL PRAYER.

THE following is an invocation, by Mr. J. J. Morse, on the occasion of a lecture upon Death, at Lincoln Hall, Philadelphia, Sunday evening, Dec. 13th, 1874:—

Oh! Thou source and fountain of all life; Thou who art the life of our life, the light of our light, to whom we turn in the hour of trouble, as in the day of trial; Thou to whom humanity in all ages has reared its shrines, forgetting that Thou canst be found more truly in the human soul. We draw near to Thee with the feeble meed of good that we may have done, for these are the best prayers and offerings that we can bring to Thee—these alone show how noble and God-like is man. We thank Thee, oh! Father, that Thou hast planted within our souls the ability to gather the ripe fruits of wisdom, which, if the mind doth digest, will strengthen and build up the spiritual within us, and make us more noble and strong for the duties of life, and more fit to show forth the divinity which thou hast implanted in our natures. Grant, oh! Father, that the angels may again gather near us, and make us stronger, that we may be better able to march on in the battle of life. Give to all of us that high courage and moral power to stand up in defence of Thy truths as revealed within our own souls, and in all the fields of nature, wherein thy words are plainly written. We know that as man understands this great volume he becomes his own priest, and this is the church wherein and whereby he can most truly worship Thee and fulfil his mission in this world, and thus prepare himself, by a life of purity and goodness, to enter into the one beyond, with a conscience unstained by any sorrowful recollections of deeds done in the body, never forgetting Thy providence manifested while sojourning here, and ever learning thy wisdom and seeing its power more perfectly displayed, and knowing indeed that thou art our Father, our Friend, our God.

A GOOD TEST.—Sir Charles Isham has had some leaflets printed for distribution, containing the account once published in these pages by Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester, setting forth how the latter gentleman passed a thread through the pierced portion of the ear of Miss Showers, and brought the two ends of the thread into the room outside the cabinet, while the spirits materialised themselves inside. The spirits came out without any threads in their ears, which was proof, either that there was duplication of form, or that some more than mortal power had freed the medium, who was afterwards found in the cabinet with the thread through her ears as at first. This test was afterwards tried by another gentleman in Newcastle, with another medium, but less efficiently, for both ends of the thread were not brought outside the cabinet, so that the question of the possibility of tying and untying could be raised.

THE ILLUSTRATED SPIRITUAL PERIODICAL.—More subscribers are entering their names for the proposed exceedingly handsome spiritual periodical, which, if published, will be calculated to exert a beneficial influence on behalf of Spiritualism. M. Aksakof, of St. Petersburg, has entered his name for a large number of copies monthly. An enlarged list of subscribers will be published shortly. Still, enough supporters are not likely to be found in Europe to carry out the idea, so it is intended to make an international journal of it, by giving space in it also to engravings and articles relating to Spiritualism in the United States, and by inviting Spiritualists there to support the journal by taking it regularly. Some weeks must elapse before the extent to which they will support the project can be known, because at the present moment there is so much discouragement there caused by the recent doings in Philadelphia, that the American spiritual public are not well prepared to take up anything new, whatever its merits. Communications about the illustrated spiritual periodical should be addressed to Mr. W. H. Harrison, 11, Ave Mariane, London, E.C.

THE HOLMES'S IN PHILADELPHIA.—There is still a great agitation among the Spiritualists of the United States, in consequence of Mr. Dale Owen and Dr. Child having been deceived in Philadelphia, by the two professional mediums, Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, who get genuine manifestations, but mix them with others. Mr. Owen informs us that Colonel Olcott is now testing the Holmes's manifestations, and that the results will be published; it is rumoured that he has already obtained materialised faces and hands under test conditions. There is no doubt they can get these heads and hands, since such are always obtainable by mediums who, like

the Holmes's, get very strong dark circle manifestations, such as the flying of musical instruments all over a room, while the hands and feet of the mediums are held by disbelievers. Extraordinary manifestations can be obtained through the Holmes's mediumship, but such will give no evidence that the Katie King exhibited on their own premises, and in a peculiarly constructed cabinet, was genuine. As we long ago pointed out, the mediums are not trustworthy, so no good to the movement will be done by recognising manifestations.

PASSED TO THE HIGHER LIFE.—At Leipsic, on the 15th January, about midnight, Wilhelmine Auguste, the beloved wife of Gregor Constantin Wittig, translator of the articles from *The Spiritualist* for *Psychic Studies*, and of the works of Andrew Jackson Davis, Dr. Hare, Mr. Wallace and other English and American writers on Spiritualism, into German. Mme. Wittig assisted and supported her husband in his labours for eighteen years, and must therefore rank as one of the pioneers of the Spiritualistic movement in Germany. She leaves three daughters, aged seventeen, fifteen and thirteen years.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—At the meeting of the Council of the National Association next Monday, the subject of taking offices and establishing a public reading-room will have to be seriously considered, the desire being to achieve this result at the smallest possible expense consistent with efficiency, the Association being young and not so rich in funds as it probably will be in years to come. The members might make the question of taking offices a very easy one, by bringing in a large number of new members, for the accumulation of additional small subscriptions will amount to a large sum in the aggregate, so that great things could then be done without any particular burden of expense falling upon anybody. This is one of the chief advantages of organisation and of united action.

THE LAST WITCHES EXECUTED IN ENGLAND.—The following brief notice of the last persons who suffered from witchcraft in these kingdoms is curious. In 1698, a girl nineteen years of age, having eaten a leaf of sorrel, which she got from a reputed witch, fell into convulsions and vomiting. She is said to have vomited needles, pins, feathers, an iron knife a span long, and egg shells. The accused was immediately committed to the county gaol, and at the assizes held soon after, was hanged and burned. In 1722, at Dornock, Sutherland, an old woman was accused of being a witch. Her crime was transforming her daughter into a pony, and getting her shod by the devil, of which crime she was found guilty, and burned. The Act against witchcraft was repealed in England and Scotland about 1750; but not in Ireland until 1821.—*Banner of Light*.

PINE'S "SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH."—A correspondent has written to us from Brixton, expressing the opinion that Mr. Pine's book, *The Spiritual Telegraph* (E. W. Allen), had better never have been published, in which opinion we agree, for the book is not calculated to do good to the Spiritual movement. It has been previously pointed out in these pages, that Pine's telegraph itself is not so good as Professor Hare's, because in the latter case the indices and letters were out of sight of the medium, also that instruments of a very similar kind to Mr. Pine's have been previously used in this country. The teachings in the book savour of materialism, and spirits might have better employed their time than to return to earth by thousands to give elementary ideas about social problems. Pages 113 and 114 are almost entirely filled by a description of the causes of the changes of the seasons; it is explained how the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit is the cause of spring, summer, autumn, and winter in northern and southern latitudes. This elementary fact in astronomy every person of moderate intelligence ought to know, and is necessarily as familiar to the young astronomer as the alphabet is to the child just able to spell. Among the slides sold by optical instrument makers for use in magic lanterns for the information of children, one of the cheapest and commonest is that which represents the cause of the change of the seasons, yet Mr. Pine publishes that 1,999 spirits were present to see this information given to him by his telegraph. How many spirits would have attended if some intelligent shade resolved to inform him by his telegraph that two and two make four? Some of the spirits have informed him how "pie" trees grow in the spirit land. Although we think the book calculated to prejudice inquirers of culture and education against Spiritualism, it contains internal evidence that the author thinks differently, and that the book is issued in all sincerity on his part, but the advertisements give exaggerated ideas as to the value of its contents.

Poetry.

OUR ANGEL-KINDED.

The following is one of several beautiful poems, by the late Mr. William Leighton, of Liverpool, contained in a neat little book just published by Messrs. Longmans, entitled *Baby Died To-day, and Other Poems*:—

Far in the glories of a fadeless day,
Amid excess of beauty, and the swell
Of rich and everlasting melody,
Our angel-kindred dwell.

No care can reach them in their radiant home;
No night can trail its terror o'er their skies;
No sin can cast around its baleful gloom;
No tears can dim their eyes.

Immortal pleasures crowd the golden hours;
Undreamed-of beauty basks on every hand;
And odorous breathings from the lips of flowers
Fill all the peaceful land.

And bright forms mingling in the holy mirth,
Pure white-robed dwellers on the blissful shore,
Our kindred are,—the loved and lost of earth—
The happy 'gone before!'

Among them cherub shapes of childhood glide;
Maidens are there with waving locks of gold;
And manhood in its glory and its pride,
And age no longer old!

And he, the last that left us, whose young life—
By laughing, promise-laden breezes driven—
Disdained to meet the rude world's noisy strife
And sought the calm of Heaven,—

I dream I see him in his radiant rest,
Among his angel-kindred up on high,
And honoured as befits the latest guest
They welcome to the sky.

Brethren on ministering missions move,
Or guide him where'er Heaven's rich marvels rise,
And si-sters look unutterable love
Into his answering eyes.

Ah, blessed spirits in their balmy ease!
No cross of earth can ever chafe them now!
For them no more the trembling hands and knees,
Nor doubt-beclouded brow!

Ours is the darkness; theirs the boundless day;
They drink true life; we draw the laboured breath;
They have eternal sunshine on their way;
We have the gloom of death.

Yet, nearing the cold river, I rejoice
That when I pass its darkness and its roar,
All these will welcome me with heart and voice
Upon the further shore.

Correspondence.

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

THE PHILADELPHIA SEANCES.

SIR,—Spiritualism has very much to contend against, and, spite of the many converts, it is spreading more slowly than it ought to do were the opposition it meets from prejudice and misrepresentation a little less strong. But of all the enemies which assail the claims of Spiritualism there are none to be compared to those which occasionally crop up inside the movement itself, as witness the damage to the cause just effected by the Holmes family. I do not mean to insinuate that these mediums are thorough cheats, possessing no mediumistic power whatever. It is likely enough that they are really mediums, but unable to exhibit the wonderful manifestations which characterise the seances of such as Mr. Williams, and because of the advantage which such manifestations brought them, they were unhappily tempted to simulate them. But this slip in morals, now and again occurring amongst the professors of Spiritualism, works sad havoc amongst those who are examining and inquiring into the subject. Many who are disposed to know more than the first scrap of intelligence brought them regarding the wonderful things constantly happening, are driven away by such malpractices as the Holmes's are guilty of. It is a great wrong inflicted upon two classes, those inside and those outside, weakening the former, and preventing the latter from seeking information, and throwing a strong shadow of distrust over the whole matter. But in the present state of imperfection, it is difficult to see that these evils can be entirely prevented.

However, they may be largely reduced, and though I must certainly differ with Mr. Serjeant Cox, who writes in your issue of the 15th inst. regarding some of his suggested methods of testing the reality of phenomena, yet he has cause to remark upon the want of caution exhibited by Mr.

R. Dale Owen, who, had he been a little more exacting, would have saved the movement from this shock in which he is so intimately concerned. I had the utmost confidence in Mr. Owen's desire to chronicle only real phenomena, and his determination to be "scrupulous in demanding fair conditions," but he has somehow in this case allowed his accustomed care to relax. Doubtless he has been imposed upon latterly by granting confidence in persons who did not deceive him to begin with. Let his lesson be a warning to all of us. *The same thing should not happen again* because of its impossibility.

But while we take all legitimate precautions against imposition—and honest mediums will not object to them—let us be honourable in our conduct while demanding tests of genuineness. It is not necessary, for example, to grasp suddenly anything in the shape of a materialisation. That might do much harm to those engaged. A better plan would be courteously to ask for satisfaction and conviction by being allowed to see both medium and form at one time. This request is frequently granted. If it is refused, there is nothing for it but to submit; but there are other tests, and equally severe ones. For example, at a *seance* lately, the medium was roughly sewed into his clothes, so that it was impossible for him to take them off without detection. Another case: a heavy set of clanking fetters were locked upon the limbs, and yet the manifestations took place. As Mr. Serjeant Cox says, there are "fifty other tests equally easy and conclusive," and infinitely to be preferred to the grasping he recommends, or the squirting of coloured matter upon the "form." To prevent the possibility of persons other than the medium personating materialisations, a thorough examination of the room must be made.

There is a point in this Philadelphia Katie King exposure which I should like to see noticed, and therefore refer to it here. In a late number of *The Spiritualist*, the London Katie King, in answer to some question, said that Mr. Dale Owen was deceived, but not altogether, or words to that effect. Now he has been altogether deceived. The Katie King was an impostor in flesh and blood. I understood the English Katie to mean that it *was* a spirit, though not the one it represented itself to be. But spirits, I presume, are not above mistakes. Was it a mistake? What does Katie say?

M.
Bonnington.

[We have little sympathy with the general purport of this letter, by a writer who—contrary to custom—has not favoured us with his name. If Philadelphia mediums, condemned by us in this journal long ago, as unreliable, afterwards impose on the unwary, it is no reason why respectable mediums in private life should be roped or chained to satisfy individuals in whose opinions, or presence or absence at the *seances*, they feel little interest. There are good mediums like Mrs. Fay and Mr. Williams, who give manifestations under test conditions, which materialists and persons who cannot appreciate honour or integrity, and cannot see why these two conditions should interfere in the production of physical results—cannot explain. But to rope and chain all media to meet undeveloped conditions of mind means that the development of the higher phenomena shall be checked, and that a few manifestations shall be constantly produced with precision, under inexplicable conditions, to please people upon whose *lives* they afterwards produce little better moral or religious effect than clever conjuring, which is a sorry result! Spiritualism is something higher than this, and after it thus produces something to meet the elementary wants of elementary thinkers, the latter have no right to demand that *all* media shall be subjected to their conditions, or that they shall be allowed to see manifestations intended only for people of honour, who really possess friends on whom they can rely, who do not wish personal integrity to be a myth, and who believe in things which they cannot bite between their teeth. Other inquirers than materialists have religious and mental wants to be satisfied, and they have an equal right to manifestations which shall meet their requirements.—Ed.]

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EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"One of the sub-committees of the Dialectical Society reported:—

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

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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