

The Spiritualist

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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DALSTON ASSOCIATION OF ENQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.

(ESTABLISHED 1870.)

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THE purposes of the Association are:—

(1) The collection of well-authenticated facts affecting Spiritualism, through its own circle, or circles, and other available sources, so as to form a basis for sound judgment.

(2) By various means to offer facilities to investigators, and to induce others to give the matter careful inquiry, with a view to a better understanding of the phenomena and teachings of Spiritualism.

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

In addition to the weekly meetings and seances, members of the Association have the privilege of utilising the well-stocked Library, comprising numerous standard works on Spiritualism and kindred subjects. All the English Spiritualist newspapers and magazines are regularly supplied to the Rooms for the perusal of Members.

All communications to be addressed to the Secretary, at the Rooms of the Association, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, E. A stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed in all letters requiring replies. Copies of the Prospectus, Rules, Circle Regulations, and directions "how to form Spirit "Circles," with any further information, to be obtained on application to the Secretary at his private residence, 12, St. Phillip's-road, Dalston, E.

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BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS is formed to unite Spiritualists of every variety of opinion for their mutual aid and benefit; to aid students and inquirers in their researches, by placing at their disposal the means of systematic investigation into the facts and phenomena, called Spiritual or Psychic; to make known the positive results arrived at by careful research; and to direct attention to the beneficial influence which those results are calculated to exercise upon social relationships and individual conduct. It is intended to include Spiritualists of every class whether members of Local and Provincial Societies or not, and all inquirers into psychological and kindred phenomena.

PERSONS wishing to join the Association, and local Societies wishing to become allied, are requested to communicate with the Assistant Secretary, Mr. John W. Haxby, 8, Sandall-road, Camden-town, London, N.W., of whom copies of the Constitution and Rules may be had upon application.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS

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2.—By engaging in the education of children and others, for the purpose of developing their physical, mental, and spiritual powers.

3.—By the dissemination of knowledge by means of public instruction, lectures, reading-rooms, the press, and spirit communion.

February, 1875.

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BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

IT IS INTENDED TO HOLD A
B A Z A A R

Under the auspices of the Association, in the latter part of May, 1875.

The Association concluded at its last Council Meeting to take the premises which have been offered to it at 38, Great Russell-street, London, W.C.

The object of the proposed Bazaar is to assist in meeting the very considerable expenses, which will be needful to furnish Library and Reading Rooms, *Seance* Rooms, Council Room, &c., thus providing a Central Establishment, which it is hoped will be found of great value to both London and Country Spiritualists, Members of the Association and others.

The idea has not received the formal sanction of the Association, but will undoubtedly do so at the next meeting of the Council.

Contributions for the Bazaar are earnestly solicited to include:—Useful and Ornamental Articles of all kinds,—Books, Photographs, Engravings and Works of Art, Paintings, Drawings, Direct Writings, or any "Spiritual" Curiosities from the treasures of private Mediums, would be specially acceptable.

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On behalf of the (future) Bazaar Committee,
M. A. EVERITT,
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Further arrangements will be announced as soon as possible.
February, 1875.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper.

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

VOLUME SIX. NUMBER NINE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26th, 1875.

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FEMALE MEDICAL SOCIETY.

The Female Medical Society is established for the following objects:—
1.—To promote the employment of properly educated women in the practice of Midwifery, and the treatment of the Diseases of Women and Children.

2.—To provide educated women with proper facilities for learning the theory and practice of Midwifery, and the accessory branches of Medical Science.

The addresses of skilled Lady Midwives, Prospectuses of the College, and all particulars as to the operations of the Society, may be obtained of the Lady Secretary.

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STRANGE POWERS OF THE SPIRITS OF SLEEPING MORTALS.

A FEW months ago Prince Wittgenstein published a remarkable article in these pages, setting forth how the spirit of his sleeping sister 'manifested at one of his seances, but knew nothing of the circumstance in her normal state. We have a few more facts to give about the production of results at a distance, involving issues of the most important nature in their bearing upon the whole of the present philosophy of Spiritualism. Here is a letter on the subject from Mr. Fitzgerald:—

PHYSICAL EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THE SPIRIT OF A MESMERIC SENSITIVE.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—The most powerful mesmerist I have ever known was H. E. Lewis, a negro, through whom the late Lord Lytton obtained many of his semi-spiritual experiences. The phenomena obtained through the agency of Lewis had frequently an important bearing upon the now more fully developed facts of Spiritualism. I was introduced to him some twenty years ago by Mr. Henry Thompson, of Fairfield, himself a very powerful mesmerist. I was then an ardent investigator of the phenomena of mesmerism, and was also laying the foundation of my present assured convictions in relation to Spiritualism. Determined to sift to the bottom the genuineness of certain phenomena above referred to, I took an apartment in Lewis's house in Baker-street, and myself made arrangements for several lecturing excursions in localities with which Lewis was unacquainted.

In February, 1856, we went to Blackheath, where an incident occurred which I think will be of interest to you. We put up at a tavern, where, in the evening, Lewis mesmerised a number of persons in the coffee-room, gave some striking illustrations of electro-biology, and succeeded in greatly interesting some of the inhabitants of the locality. It was arranged that a hall should be taken for a lecture to be given on the following day, an audience being guaranteed by the *habitués* of the coffee-room in question. The lecture took place, and after the more ordinary experiments in mesmerism and electro-biology had been very successfully exhibited, Lewis proceeded to illustrate some of the phenomena of clairvoyance and somnambulism, in the person of a young woman—a perfect stranger to him—who, with others, had come upon the platform from amongst the audience. Whilst she was in the "deep sleep," he ordered her to "go home" and to describe what she saw there. She described a kitchen, in which were two persons, occupied with some domestic duties. "Do you think you could touch the person nearest to you?" inquired Lewis. The only answer, I think, was an indistinct murmur. Placing one hand on her head, and the other over the region of the *solar plexus*, he then said, "I will you to touch her on the shoulder, you must do so, you shall do so!" Presently the girl laughed, and said, "I have touched her, they are so frightened!" Turning to the audience, Lewis asked whether any one in the hall knew the young woman, and, on receiving an answer in the affirmative, requested that a "deputation" should proceed to her abode, and ascertain the truth or falsity of her statement. The persons who went on this errand afterwards returned to the hall, and stated that everything described by the girl had actually taken place, and that the household in question was in a state of great perturbation, one of its members declaring that, whilst occupied in the kitchen, she had been touched on the shoulder by a ghost.

The young woman who was the "sensitive" on this occasion was servant to Mr. Taylor, shoemaker, of Blackheath. In my note-book I find likewise the name of Mr. Bishop, dentist, also of Blackheath, who at the time offered to testify to the truth of the foregoing incident. DESMOND G. FITZGERALD.

6, Loughborough-road North, Brixton, S.W., Feb. 22nd

The circumstances in the following letter are curious, but may perhaps be explained away as mere coincidence:—

MENTAL IMPRESSIONS PRODUCED BY ONE SLEEPING PERSON UPON ANOTHER.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—In conversation about absent persons, especially around the Christmas fire, the remark is commonly made: "I wonder whether they are thinking of us while we are talking about them." In order to begin to test whether such synchronicity of thought is a reality, a friend and myself resolved that we would try to impress each other by will-power at different times during a week's absence, and to enter in our note-books the exact time at which we thought of each other, or tried to impress each other.

I never before realised the necessity of passivity on the part of mediums, as I did during that week, for my entries were mostly made during the evenings, and I saw clearly that if my friend could interfere with my thoughts whilst I was busily engaged in the day, my freedom as an individual would be nowhere. I also saw quite clearly a philosophical reason why a Satan of some kind or other might be able to

"Find some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

We compared notes at the end of the week, and found no similarity between our entries, but my friend narrated the following remarkable incident:—

"Last Monday night (Feb. 15th) I had been asleep about two hours when I suddenly awoke, as if forced to by some outside power. Ordinarily I do not wake, but sleep all through the night. I could see nothing, but had a mental impression that you were in the room, and beset with some deep trouble, so that you did not know what to do."

Such was his story. Now it so happens that on that Monday night the usual smooth career of my life was beset by a great trouble; I had written and torn up several letters about it before I finished one which satisfied me, after which I went to bed in a perturbed state of mind, but with no intention of conveying information on the point to my friend.

My friend has several times tried to mesmerise me, and failed; I have tried to mesmerise him, and succeeded. He is, to a slight extent, a medium. AN EXPERIMENTALIST.

Feb. 21st, 1875.

PHOTOGRAPHING THE SPIRITS OF SLEEPING PERSONS.

In *Human Nature* for this month, in an interesting article signed "M.A. (Oxon.)," the following letter by the Comte de Bullet, Hôtel de l'Athénée, Rue Scribe, Paris, is published:—

I, the undersigned, William Julian, Count de Bullet, certify to having obtained at M. Buguet's, Photographer, Boulevard de Montmartre, by ordinary methods of photography, at several sittings, the following portraits:—

1. The double of my sister, now living at Baltimore, U.S.A.
2. My uncle.
3. M. de Layman, an intimate friend.
4. One of my aunts.

In assurance of which, I freely sign the present attestation.

Hôtel de l'Athénée, Rue Scribe,
Paris, Dec. 10, 1874.

G. J. DE BULLET.

The writer of the article says:—

I was so much interested in the fact of the double of a living person being presented, that I took pains to get some further information. Mr. Gledstones has kindly enabled me to give precise facts as to this most remarkable occurrence, which has been repeated again and again, once notably at a sitting on New Year's Day, at which he was present. I wrote to the Comte de Bullet, asking him to be so kind as to give me precise information on these points:—1. Whether his sister was probably asleep at the time when the photograph was taken? 2. Whether he had himself seen the double at any other time or place? 3. Whether the likeness was one about which no doubt could exist, and if it were recognised by others than himself? 4. Whether he had ever made the experiment of endeavouring to impress his thoughts on his sister by exercise of will-power? 5. Whether the phenomenon in question had occurred more than once?

To these questions the Count sent the following reply:—

Paris, Jan. 15, 1875.

My dear Sir,—I have received your esteemed letter of the 9th inst., and shall be happy if what I have observed in the interesting science of Spiritualism may be of some use to you.

Answering to the first question in your letter, I can say that it is probable that my sister was asleep at the time the photograph was taken, for I calculated the hour—12 noon here gives 6 o'clock at Baltimore.

Respecting the second question, I have never seen her double on any occasion, though I have very often felt her impression by intuition, *always at a time when she would be likely to be asleep.*

As to question three, the likeness is so striking that every one who knows her has instantly recognised it. I have her likeness now in eight different positions, in large size (8 in. by 5 in.), and there is not the slightest doubt about the likeness.

In answer to the fourth question, I have never tried to impress thoughts on the mind of my sister. Between her and me, since childhood, there has always existed the deepest affection. We have always corresponded, and her children are most affectionate and devoted to me.

I go to M. Buguet before noon, and when I pose before the camera, I simply put mentally the question I wish, or ask her to come to me if possible. On one plate she appears with a card in her hands, with her answer, which is written quite distinctly. The writing is in French, except when she does not wish M. Buguet to know its contents; then she writes in English.

On New Year's Day I went to Buguet and said, mentally, "You read my thoughts, my dear sister, and it would be a grand New Year's gift for me if you could come to me with all your children." When the operation was done she appeared on the plate with her three daughters. I sat a second time, and she came with her two boys, making in all her five children—all perfect likenesses. The drain on the medium was severe, for there were seven portraits in all. On the plate with her daughters she appears holding a card on which is written, "Your desire is realised; receive the felicitations of my children," signed with her name. Here I would observe that M. Buguet did not know whether she had any children, nor how many, nor how they were divided—three girls and two boys.

On the 10th of this month I sat again, and asked my sister, if possible, to come with my mother, who lives about 1,200 miles distant from her. She came with a card in her hands with this written on it, "Your thoughts to-day are for our dear mother. I will do all I can to gratify you by helping her to appear. Come on Tuesday at 10 o'clock." (10 o'clock here would give 4 o'clock at the residence of my mother. She is in the habit of getting up early, and that explains my sister fixing the early hour of 10 here.) I sat at the time appointed, and she came with my mother standing by her side.

All these facts I give you are the result of the most rigorous investigation, and I can avouch all I say.

(Signed) G. J. DE BULLET.

If, then, it be a fact that the spirits of the millions of persons in the world are actively engaged during the sleep of their bodies, and have the power to produce physical and mental effects under certain conditions, what a vast amount of invisible intelligent power exists in the universe without our necessarily being obliged to call in the theory of the existence of the spirits of the departed to produce phenomena. What powers (as we said a few weeks ago) are possessed by the spirits of mediums while their bodies are entranced, and what results may they not possibly produce under the influence of the wills of the observers, if not by their own volition, in the other state of consciousness? Scores of arguments both for and against the spirit theory may be founded upon the valuable mass of new facts which is coming in like a flood upon the students of psychology.

The Christian Spiritualist, a journal which has always been conducted in a friendly and genial spirit, has improved of late both in appearance and contents; it is published monthly by Mr. Arnold of Fleet-street, price twopence.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

NO. XXVII.

["Imperator's" argument being concluded, I pondered it carefully, and two days after (July 14th, 1873) made a rejoinder on the points which still seemed difficult to me. These referred to—1, Identity; 2, The nature and work of Jesus Christ; 3, External evidence confirmatory of the claims made.—I requested that independent communications should be made through another medium, and expressed my intention of seeking out some medium with a view to getting such authentication. I also traversed the views put forward respecting the teachings in many ways which it is not now important to particularise. My answer expressed fairly my convictions at that time; but I see now that my rejoinders were based upon insufficient knowledge, and they have since been met in many ways; sufficiently, at any rate, to assure me that what remains unanswered will in due time receive its reply. But, at the time, I was very far from being satisfied, and expressed my dissent emphatically: In reply it was written as follows:—]

Friend, your statement has the merit of candour and perspicuity, which you allege that ours lacks: We have no difficulty in seeing your difficulty, though we find it impossible to supply it; and undesirable even if it were possible. If we fail at once to comply with all the conditions which you prescribe, we say again that it is from no lack of desire to afford you every satisfaction. We desire earnestly to bear conviction in upon your mind; but in so doing we must use our own means at our own time. It would be to us most sad, most deplorable, that our work should be marred or delayed by the failure of part of our plans. If it were so we should regret it both on your account and on our own; but we are unable to change the result. We are not omnipotent; and we cannot influence you save by the ordinary processes of argument and evidence which do not now reach your mind. That being so, we recognise the fact that you are not yet prepared to receive our words, and we wait in patience for the time when they shall find an entrance into your mind.

Into most of the questions which you have raised we do not follow you. They have been answered before, so far as it is now desirable to answer them. Nothing that we could now say would add any force to the replies which have been already given. Into matters of opinion it is idle for us to enter. Whether what we say seems to you consistent with what we do or have previously done, is a very small matter. You are not now in the best condition to judge dispassionately on such a matter. Whether the eventual outcome of what you call Spiritualism is what we say, or what you think, is equally beside the point. We view the question from a more extended standpoint, one to which you are not yet able

to mount. Your vision is circumscribed, and we see with clearer eye than yours. Whether you consider our teaching to be a legitimate development of Christianity is also of small moment. You admit its moral grandeur, and we need not discuss the meaning of development. Whether you believe it or not, it is teaching of which the world stands in sore need; teaching which it will sooner or later receive with thankfulness, whether you accept it or not; whether or not you receive us, and are prepared to aid us in disseminating it. We had hoped that we had found an instrument suited to our wants. We hope so still; for we know that the phase through which you are now passing is but a transient one, soon to give place to that assured conviction which is born of doubt. But even if it were not so, we must bow to the Almighty fiat, and seek anew for means of carrying on the work which we have in charge. No instrument is necessary to our end; though a good one is desirable. We should deplore greatly that you should put aside what is to you a means of enlightenment and progress. But over the issue we have no power. Should you, in the freedom of your will, decide to do so, we shall bow to the decision, and regret that your mind is not sufficiently developed to accept what we have presented to it.

Any attempt to prove identity by such imposed tests as you have put upon us would be worse than useless.

It would probably end in failure; and would certainly fail to ensure conviction. It may be possible for us to give collateral proofs from time to time. If it be so, we shall gladly avail ourselves of the opportunity; and if your connection with us is prolonged, you will find hereafter that many such proofs are accumulated. But the validity of our claims must rest on some more solid foundation than that. The evidence is not to be built on so shadowy a foundation. It would not stand the test of time. It is on moral grounds that we must appeal to you; and you yourself, we trust, will one day see that the physical is transient and unsatisfactory. For the present your mind is not sufficiently calm to weigh judicially the moral evidence. We are either of God or of the devil. If of God, as our words argue, then we shall not be likely to fabricate a story which, as you say, the world would receive with derision. But if we are, as you incline to think, of evil, then it rests with you to account for a story which bears on its face the marks of a Divine origin coming from an evil source. We do not trouble ourselves much on this score. We have no fear that what we have said will, in the end when fairly weighed, be held to be attributable to an evil source. It is to the matter of the message rather than to the character of the messenger that we direct attention.

For ourselves it is a small matter. For God's work and God's truth it is serious. For you and for your future it is of most vital moment. It may be well that you should have time for thought and reflection. The growth of the revelation which has centred round you has been rapid and dazzling. It may be well that you should have time for serious and sober thought before we say more. We think that we may well withdraw for a time, and allow you to be at peace with your thoughts. We do not leave you alone; but rather with guardians more vigilant, and with guides more experienced. It is better too for us; for time may decide whether it be possible for us to continue the work begun; or whether precious time has been wasted, and the work must be begun anew. It must in any case

* In *The Spiritualist* of August 15th, 1873, an account was printed of some remarkable seances held at the house of Mr. Stanhope T. Speer, M.D., Douglas-house, Alexandra-road, St. John's-wood, through the mediumship of a gentleman in private life who does not wish his name to be published. It will be remembered that most of the spirits gave their names and proved their identity; also that the extracts they gave from their writings were found, after laborious search in the British Museum Library and elsewhere, to be true. Hence there is evidence that spirits can give teachings through this medium free, to a large extent, at all events, from colour from his own thoughts; consequently the "spirit teachings" printed above, obtained through his mediumship, may be assumed to be to a considerable extent reliable. It is proper to state that these communications are selected in chronological order from a mass which has been given continuously for the past six months. Many of the originals are of such a personal nature that they are necessarily omitted, otherwise no change is made. The communicating spirits are many; each gives his name and details of his earth-life very fully. These facts, in all cases unknown to the medium previously, have been invariably found to be correct in every particular. The handwriting peculiar to the communicating intelligence is always preserved and the individuality remains throughout the same.—Ed.

be a grievous disappointment that the fruit of so many labours, of so many prayers, should drop untimely to the ground. But we and you must act according to that light which is in us as the guide of our actions. We are responsible in the sight of God for so much as that; and we must see to it that we weigh the issues aright. Our prayers shall be not less frequent nor less earnest than heretofore. We trust that they may be more effectual.

Farewell: and may the Great God guide and direct you.
+ IMPERATOR.

After this I made several attempts at communication. I also went, as I had intimated, to a medium to whom I was not known. I tried to the best of my power to elicit some information as to my guides, and especially as to the identity of Imperator. The effort was vain. All I got was that the spirit with me was Zoud, a Russian historian. I inquired as soon as I got home by writing, and was told that the statement was false. It was said:

We are not able to advise you to place reliance on the statements made. They are not trustworthy. If, contrary to our advice, you place yourself in communication with strange spirits who do not know you, and who are not in harmony with us, you will receive communications which are perplexing and unreliable.

I remonstrated energetically, and said that it would have been so easy to satisfy my reasonable desire.

No. We wish to give you every satisfaction; but the chief ordered us not to attend, and we were unable to prevent you from going. You get more harm than you can know from such experiments in your present state. We urge you very earnestly to refrain from such sittings in your present state, lest evil ensue. You require only patience. Impatient attempts to force matters on do but cause annoyance and distress to all of us. Far better that you rest in peace, and await the issue. The chief will do what is right, and any premature steps are mistaken.

But, I remonstrated, you all seem leagued to bewilder me. Can you do nothing that I ask?

Friend, you cannot have the mathematical proof that you crave. Nor can we give you proof exactly when you wish for it. Nor would it be good for you if we were able. All is arranged wisely and well.

The spirit who communicated thus is the same who gave the earlier messages printed in "The Spiritualist" a year ago. I was fain to stop, for I could get no satisfaction. On July 25 we had a sitting at which Imperator controlled, and some information was given; but nothing that touched my mental condition. The other members of the circle were not in sympathy with my difficulties, and during the control their questions were answered, and their difficulties solved. My spirit being in abeyance did not affect the conditions. Then a friend of mine, lately passed from earth, was brought, and full proof of identity, by means of reference to events known only to me and him, was given. Though impressed, I was not satisfied. Then came the vacation, and I left London for Ireland. Then I had curious communications respecting a friend who lay sick in London, but nothing that bore upon the question now at issue. I then went on to Wales, and received on Aug. 24 another message from Imperator, which it is necessary to transcribe. I had endeavoured to elicit answers, and was warned that it was not well for me to do so. My bodily condition was below par, and my mental state was dis-

turbed. I was advised to review the past rather than to attempt to look further into the future.

Employ yourself in meditating on the past. Think carefully over that which we have been permitted to do for you. Weigh again and again the total outcome of what is before you. Estimate its value, and watch the moral tendency of our words. We do not blame you for doubts which have been the natural outcome of your peculiar frame of mind. It is inevitable that you should weigh and test everything, and your impetuous nature hurries you along too fast, while a mind naturally inclined to doubt conflicts with the too eager impetuosity. Hence your distracted state of mind. Hence the difficulties in your way. We do not blame; we do but point out that such a frame of mind is not that which is best fitted for impartial judgment. It needs that you should curb your impetuous mind, and resist the tendency to form hasty conclusions on the one hand, while you put aside carping criticism, and allow weight to that which we may call the constructive side of our teaching. At present you dwell too exclusively on the destructive.

And remember, friend, that your doubts and difficulties must, until they are removed, operate as a barrier to our further progress. They have already hindered us much, and caused us to withhold much. This is unavoidable. We urge you then to clear your mind once and for ever by stern exercise of will of all the mists which now becloud your judgment. This is what we hope for as the result of rest and isolation. It is all important that the circle to whom we communicate should be in perfect harmony. Rising doubts are to us as the fogs of earth which bewilder the traveller, and hinder him on his way. We cannot work in the midst of them. They must be removed. And we do not doubt that an honest and unprejudiced survey of the past will clear them away: as the sun of truth rises on your horizon, they will disperse, and you will be astonished at the prospect that shall dawn upon you.

Be not too eager. If anything seems new and strange to you, do not therefore reject it. Estimate it according to your light, and, if need be, put it aside to wait for further enlightenment. To the honest and true heart all else will come in God's time. In the end you will arrive at a plane of knowledge, when much that now seems so new and strange will be revealed and explained. Only keep before you the fact that there is much that is new and true of which you now know nothing; many fresh truths to be learned; many old errors to be dissipated. Wait and pray.

+ IMPERATOR.

IMPEDIMENTS TO SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.—A lady has sent us the following spirit message, given through her own mediumship:—"You cannot have any conception of the difficulties which we have to encounter in attempting to speak with you. We have to fight our way through the mist and mazziness of matter, and not only that, but through the mist caused by material lusts and ambitions. We take vitality from every sitter, therefore we take their physical characteristics, and as these follow from their spiritual state we have to partake of that. Consequently the messages which we start to you like doves which we have nourished in our bosoms, and let loose from us to fly to you with pure wings of angelic colour, reach you stained, marred, and unable to sing, because of the terrible atmosphere through which they pass. This is not a mere fancy, but a true image, and if you bear this in mind it will help you much. It is needed that you should purify this atmosphere, so that the white-winged messengers might arrive with less soot upon their wings. Bear this in mind and you will be far more forbearing at your spiritual meetings."—Through the mediumship of Mrs. K. C.

A "TEST" FROM THE DELPHIC ORACLE.

BY ST. GEORGE W. STOCK, B.A. (OXON).

OUR modern methods of thought are, perhaps, not quite so perfect as we are inclined to think them; and if there is one direction in which we are more hopelessly on a false track than another, it is in the region of what is called "historical criticism." The historical critic is a self-complacent personage, with a sovereign contempt for the understanding of all who came into the world before himself. He takes his own limited experience as the universal type of world-order; and if ever history, in the wake of nature, departs from the humdrum course of daily life, the critic accounts for the aberration by a patronising allusion to "the ideas current at the time." If nature was only discovered yesterday, history, it seems, is the invention of to-day. It is only of late that intuitive perception of historical truth has been acquired, which enables the critic to decide at a glance that one statement of an author is to be accepted as genuine, while another, perhaps on the very same page, and resting on equally valid evidence, is to be explained away as mere mythology, or the product of the religious sentiment working upon the peculiar beliefs and ideas of the day. Historical criticism has achieved many triumphs, but none more brilliant than the total extirpation of the miraculous element from Christianity. It is interesting to observe the change that has come over the spirit of religious thought in the present century as compared with preceding ones, in the delight with which the removal of this incubus upon faith is hailed by Rationalists and Theists and advanced theologians generally. They can respect a Deity who behaves with decorum—

A par le Roi, défense à Dieu,
De faire miracle, dans ce lieu.

And yet the so-called "miracles" are not such terrible bugbears after all, and will ultimately be recognised in their true light, as intrinsically of equal credibility with other parts of the gospel narrative, and as constituting no greater claim to an authority calculated to ride rough-shod over advanced moral sensibilities. For what is it that has given, as is commonly supposed, the death-blow to belief in the Christian miracles? Evidently the comparative study of history. It has been found that the accounts in question do not stand isolated, but have their parallels in the history of every nation under the sun. And so what is commonly admitted to lend credibility to a narrative is in this instance assumed to abolish it! So confident is Matthew Arnold in the strength of this strange inversion of reason that he considers all discussion as to the evidence of Christian miracles superfluous, when he has the pages of Herodotus to which to refer his orthodox opponents. Now it is a well-known fact, and one which no sane Spiritualist will be anxious to deny, that the love of the marvellous is one of the most prolific faculties of the human mind, and that miracles breed like rabbits in a warren: but after all deductions have been made, we need not doubt but that much in Herodotus and other ancient authors, which has hitherto been regarded as grotesque fable, will regain its place as sober history. The records of the past will, in fact, have to be studied afresh in the light thrown upon them by the phenomena of modern Spiritualism. Nowhere is this more evident than with regard to the oracles which played so important a part in the political and social life of the Greeks. The prestige which these

institutions had acquired in the earliest dawn of history they maintained amid the full blaze of Hellenic civilisation. They were believed in by Plato, heterodox in all else; and by Socrates, with a plenitude of conviction for which he accounts by an appeal to the daily experience of himself and others, of their veracity. That real powers of clairvoyance were possessed by the Pythia, or priestess of the Delphic god, might be made abundantly evident by quotations from trustworthy historians. We need not, therefore, throw ourselves into the usual attitude of incredulity in reading the following account given us by Herodotus of the test imposed by Cræsus, King of Lydia, upon the oracle at Delphi, previous to consulting it as to the success of his proposed attack upon the rising power of Persia. I translate quite literally from the pages of the father of history:—

Having formed this design, he at once proceeded to test the oracles, those in Greece and the one in Libya, despatching messengers in different directions, some to go to Delphi, some to Abol in Phocis, and some to Dodina; while others were sent off to the temples of Amphiaraus and Trophonius, and others to the Branchidol in the Milesian territory. These were the Grecian oracles which Cræsus sent to consult. And in Libya he sent other persons to inquire of the oracle of Hammon. Now, he sent thus to sound the oracles, in order that, if he found them truthful, he might afterwards ask them if he should undertake an expedition against the Persians. So he despatched his Lydians to test the oracles, instructing them to take count of the time from the day they left Sardis, and on the hundredth day consult the oracles, asking what the King of the Lydians, Cræsus, son of Halyattes, was doing at that moment: the answers they were to take down in writing, and bring back to himself. Now, it is nowhere recorded what declarations were made by the rest of the oracles; but at Delphi the moment the Lydians entered the sanctuary and proceeded to put the desired question, the Pythia gave the following reply in hexameters:—

The number of the sands I know, and the measure of the sea,
The dumb have voice and language, and the speechless speech to me.
A steaming odour strikes my sense, from scaly tortoise sent,
With seethed lambkin's tender flesh in blazing cauldron blent,
Mid brass above and brass below, the twain together pent.

This declaration of the Pythia the Lydians took down in writing, and then went off to Sardis. And when the other messengers who had been despatched abroad arrived with their oracles, Cræsus unfolded each in turn, and looked over their contents. With the rest he was not struck, but as soon as he heard the one from Delphi, he broke into prayer, and hailed it, thinking there was no oracle but that at Delphi, since it had discovered what he was doing. For after he had despatched his messengers to the seats of divination, he watched for the appointed day, and set himself to do what he considered on reflection was the most unlikely thing to be discovered or conjectured. He chopped up a tortoise and a lamb, and began to boil them together with his own hands in a brass cauldron, on which he had put a brass lid.

That the oracle, having thus established its reputation with Cræsus, afterwards misled him to his ruin, may be borne in mind with advantage by consulters of spirits at the present day.

APARTMENTS FOR SEANCES WANTED.—Constant complaints reach us from good mediums who come to London, about the difficulty of obtaining apartments in which public seances may be held. This arises partly because of the prejudice against Spiritualism, and partly because of the publicity into which the premises are brought. Consequently, although high rates are paid for rooms for such purposes, there is difficulty in obtaining them. Rooms are usually desired somewhere in the district between Russell-square and Edgware-road, or Paddington, the neighbourhood of the Marble-arch or Regent-street being most in favour. We are not sure that good mediums would not do well at Notting-hill, since there are many Spiritualists in that locality; consequently, any readers who have suitable apartments to let should make the circumstance known. At the present time the Brixton Psychological Society has a difficulty in obtaining rooms in Brixton for its meetings.

REORGANISATION AMONG SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.

On Wednesday night, last week, a meeting was held at the house of Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, 6, Loughborough-road North, Brixton, London, convened by Mr. Rendle for the purpose of reorganising the local spiritual society for the benefit of residents in Brixton and the surrounding neighbourhood. Among the ladies and gentlemen present were Mr. and Miss Fitzgerald, the Misses Withall, Miss E. D. Ponder, Mrs. Rudd, Mr. and Mrs. James Kerry, Mr. and Mrs. Peddle, Mr. E. P. Ashton, Mr. H. Withall, Mr. G. R. Tapp, Mr. A. Parker, Mr. S. Redford, Mr. S. Peddle, Mr. A. Yeates, Mr. Eve, Mr. Arthur E. Rendle, and Mr. W. H. Harrison.

ELECTION OF COUNCIL AND OFFICERS.

Mr. Rendle said that thirty persons in Brixton had promised to join the proposed Society, so the present meeting had been called to decide upon a definite line of action; also to elect a Council and officers; the Misses Ponder, also Mr. and Mrs. Bird, and Mr. Ashton, had helped him with their advice as to what was best to be done. He would therefore move that in the opinion of those present the Brixton Society of Spiritualists should be then and there reorganised.

This was seconded by Mr. E. Parkinson Ashton, and passed unanimously.

Mr. Rendle then proposed as members of the Council of the new society Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, Mrs. Rudd, Mr. E. P. Ashton, Miss E. D. Ponder, and Miss Withall, with power to add to their number. Three to form a quorum.

This was seconded, and passed unanimously.

Mr. Rendle moved that Mr. James Deane should be appointed treasurer.

Mr. Fitzgerald said that he knew him, and thought him very suitable for the post.

This also was passed unanimously.

Mr. Withall proposed Mr. Rendle as secretary; Mr. Ashton seconded this; and it was passed unanimously.

Mr. G. R. Tapp, at the request of Mr. Ashton, gave some details relating to the early history of the Brixton Society, which was founded in 1870, and he explained why, after a tolerably successful career of about twelve months, the attendances at the meetings gradually fell off. He said that the meetings were first held at Branksome-terrace, Acre Lane, and afterwards in the Lothian-road at Brixton.

Mr. Harrison remarked that the life of every young organisation of the kind depended entirely upon a good working secretary, who would always be present in good time when meetings were to be held, who would not be discouraged by occasional thin attendances, and who would work actively to get the members to perform their duties. So long as Mr. R. Pearce worked as secretary to the St. John's Association of Spiritualists it lived, but directly he ceased to do so it died.

Mr. Tapp said that he could corroborate this; for instance, Mr. T. Blyton had been the life and soul of the Dalston Society, and when he gave up the secretaryship for a time it began to languish, but now that he had returned, the members all knew that the society had begun a fresh lease of life.

Mr. Rendle proposed that Mr. J. M. Gully, M.D., should be invited to become president of the society; Mr. Harrison seconded this, and it was passed unanimously.

Mr. Rendle then proposed that Mr. Alexander Calder should be invited to take the position of vice-president; this was seconded by Mr. Withall, and passed unanimously.

SUGGESTED TITLES FOR THE SOCIETY.

Mr. Rendle then asked what the name of the resuscitated society should be? Among the names suggested to him had been the Brixton Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, the Brixton Psychological Society, the Brixton Association for the Study and Advancement of Spiritual Science, the Brixton Spiritual Evidence Society, and the Brixton Society of Spiritualists.

Mr. Ashton thought that the Brixton Society of Spiritists would be best.

Mr. Fitzgerald said that the term "spiritists" was not used in England.

Miss Withall remarked that the term "spiritists" was usually taken to imply a belief in reincarnation.

Mr. Tapp said that if it were stated in the title that it was a society of Spiritualists, it would keep away many would-be members, who wished to inquire into the subject.

Mr. Parker said that if it was a society of Spiritualists, why be ashamed of the name?

Mr. Tapp said that nobody would be ashamed of the name, but the name would prevent inquirers from joining who were not Spiritualists, yet who would become such if they were allowed to enroll themselves and to investigate.

Mr. Ashton and several others said that they quite agreed with Mr. Tapp.

Mr. Tapp proposed that the name of the reorganised Association be "The Brixton Psychological Society."

Miss Ponder seconded this, and it was passed unanimously.

PROSPECTUS OF THE SOCIETY.

Mr. Rendle then moved that the following prospectus be adopted:—"This Society is formed for the purpose of promoting the study of Spiritualism and kindred subjects, as well by experimental investigation as by collecting and classifying well-attested phenomena and facts relating thereto. It is intended to include Spiritualists and inquirers into the spiritual sciences of every class, without regard to theological or other tenets."

Mr. Harrison moved an amendment that the words "without regard to theological or other tenets" be omitted; they might be unjustly construed into a term of offence; besides, it was impossible to make any reference of any kind to theological subjects, without giving rise to angry criticism.

Mr. Parker seconded this, and the amendment was passed unanimously.

Mr. Ashton did not like the word "science" in the proposed prospectus. It conveyed an idea of secularism.

Mr. Harrison said that Mr. Ashton's remark was a very true one, but the error arose from the vulgar mistake on the part of the public of considering the words "science" and "physics" to be synonymous terms. "Science" meant merely "exact knowledge," so those who objected to science, objected to exact knowledge and to clear thought; in other words they announced to the world that they liked to have muddled ideas.

Mr. Tapp said that the meaning of the word "science" was "to know."

Mr. Ashton said that all this was very true, still, many persons would not understand it without explanation, consequently the use of the word would unnecessarily offend some orthodox people. He would, therefore, move that the words "inquirers into Spiritualism" be substituted.

Mr. Fitzgerald seconded this.

Mr. Withall proposed that the prospectus be allowed to stand as at present, until it had been considered by the Council, and brought forward again at the next general meeting.

Mr. Rendle seconded the amendment.

There was then a division upon the point. Fourteen voted for Mr. Withall's amendment and six against it. The amendment was consequently carried.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Mr. Rendle asked what should be the amount of the subscriptions of the members.

Mr. Tapp said that the subscriptions to the Dalston Society were not very high, but they were found to work well; the annual subscription was ten shillings, or three shillings a quarter; those who wished to subscribe more could do so by becoming life members.

Mr. Rendle said that Brixton was rather a richer neighbourhood than Dalston, and that rooms were cheaper at the latter place. He would, therefore, propose that the annual subscription to the Brixton Society should be twelve shillings, or seven shillings for the half year, or four shillings the quarter; also that a subscription of three guineas should entitle anybody to life membership.

This was seconded by Mr. Withall.

Mr. Peddle suggested that the annual subscription should be ten shillings, in order not to shut out poor people; when the society wanted more funds, there were means of raising money by lectures and *soirees*.

Mr. Tapp said that when lectures had been given in Dalston, they had a good effect upon Spiritualism, secured publicity, and were noticed in local papers, but they had a bad effect upon the funds. Private *seances*, with good mediums, or little parties now and then, usually covered all their expenses, and left a small balance in favour of the society.

The resolution was then passed unanimously.

THE LIBRARY.

Mr. Rendle asked what was to be done about a library. He suggested that they should get books from Mr. Burns's shop, at two guineas a year, for which amount they could have occasional packages for lending purposes.

Mr. Tapp said that the society would have to choose between this and establishing a permanent library. A permanent library was a great inducement to local residents to become members. The Dalston Society put aside a moderate amount of money every year to purchase books, and by these means had established a good library containing nearly all the standard works on Spiritualism. Several friends had assisted by giving books to the library; for instance Mr. Oxley, of Manchester, had given many of Swedenborg's works; thus at Dalston they had a valuable library; they also took in and filed for binding all the English spiritual periodicals.

Several speakers said that the subject had better be considered at a future time, so the conversation on the point dropped.

PLACE OF MEETING.

Mr. Rendle said that he, and Mrs. Rudd, and Miss E. D. Ponder, had been making inquiries for some time in Brixton for rooms in which seances and spiritual meetings could be held. Some who had rooms to let, objected to Spiritualism altogether, others did not, but objected to publicity being given to such meetings, if held upon their premises; he therefore was not sure he could get any rooms for the purposes of the society at present.

Mr. Fitzgerald said that while rooms were being sought for, the nominal address of the society might be his house, to which letters could be addressed *pro tem*. The society also might meet there once a week for a short time, until it had obtained rooms of its own. (Applause.)

Mr. Tapp moved that this generous offer be accepted with thanks.

Mr. Ashton seconded the motion, which was carried with acclamation.

LECTURE BY MR. D. H. WILSON.

Mr. Rendle announced that Mr. D. H. Wilson, M.A. (Cantab.), was about to deliver a lecture in Brixton, entitled "Criticisms Hostile to Spiritualism Refuted and Discussed." He would suggest that this lecture should be given early in March, under the auspices of the Brixton Psychological Society. This offer was accepted with thanks.

Mr. Ashton suggested that Dr. Kenealy be invited to preside.

Mr. Tapp thought that the Parliamentary duties of Dr. Kenealy would absorb all his energies for the present—(Laughter); he therefore did not think it advisable that the learned doctor should be asked. (Applause.)

Mr. Rendle moved, and Mrs. Rudd seconded, that the first meeting of the Council should be held that day week. This was passed unanimously, and the proceedings closed.

A REINCARNATED BABY.

(Translated from the "Revue-Spirite" for February, 1875.)

VEVEX, Dec. 18, 1874.

HERE is a curious experience which has occurred through the mediumship of my second little son, aged three years. Some time before his birth, spirits announced to me that the child would be gifted with powerful medial faculties; and many very singular physical manifestations which have occurred in his presence, at different times, have confirmed me in the faith that I had in their word. I was given to understand that, several ages ago, this child was incarnated in England, where he gave himself up to the practice of necromancy, alchemy, and astrology, by means of which much evil accrued, and which at length brought upon him a miserable death. His present incarnation, I am assured, is accorded in order to give him an opportunity of repairing the evil which he committed long ago, by contributing to the building up of the Spiritist temple at which we are working, by means of the medial powers which he has brought with him as a legacy from his last incarnation. All this is logical, and entirely in agreement with our notions respecting the object of reincarnation. Well, then, some weeks back, the child was playing and prattling in my study, when I suddenly heard him talking about England, concerning which country nobody, to my knowledge, had ever spoken to him. This roused my attention, and I asked him if he knew what England meant? He answered me: "*Oh yes; it is a country where I was a very, very long time ago.*"

Q. Were you a little boy then as you are now?—A. *Oh no; I was tall, taller than you are, and I had a long beard!*

Q. Were mamma and I with you then?—A. *No; I had another papa and another mamma.*

Q. And what were you doing?—A. *I played a good deal with fire, and once I burnt myself so, that I died.*

I think you must acknowledge that if even all this is no other than a child's reverie, yet that the coincidence is sufficiently strange to make one believe that reminiscences may come even to a child in his play.

Some weeks back, the same little boy went to his mother in the morning, telling her that his grandmother (whom he had only seen when a baby of some months old, therefore of whom he could have had no recollection) had come to her and had passed the night talking to her; and that he had seen her well and had heard her. Now it so happened, that my wife had been dreaming much about her mother, who had died some months previously. What think you of this?

EMILE DE W * * *.

EXTRAORDINARY SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS
IN MANCHESTER.

BY WILLIAM OXLEY.

I WAS impressed a few days ago to write to Dr. Monck, requesting him to pay me a visit, little thinking at the time of the importance of the issues involved, but which the sequel will show. My own family being somewhat dubious about the phenomenal part of Spiritualism, I thought it would give them an opportunity of witnessing in their own home things which would remove their doubts; but, more than all, I was wishful to see the effects of the presence of such a gifted medium in our own private circle, where loving hearts, with scientific intelligence and intuitive perception of spiritual truth are combined. The results proved eminently satisfactory to my own family, where Dr. Monck was guest during his sojourn, and who gained their confidence and friendship by his suavity and homeliness, and what transpired at the circle assumed an importance which cannot be overrated.

As time was limited, the doctor only arriving on Thursday evening at six, we had tea, and sat as soon as the table was cleared. After sitting about ten minutes the raps were heard, and several messages spelt out, relating to one present and from one lately deceased. This was remarkable, as it was a clear impossibility for Dr. Monck to have known anything of our private domestic history. After he went behind the curtains in the window recess, lights were visible, one of which formed into a beautiful hand. Yesterday evening we had a sitting in another room, and after a while the message was given—"Darken the room." The gas was turned off, and the medium was entranced. A deceased parent came, and gave unmistakable proofs of identity by giving me several messages to her children, mentioning their names. The medium was then floated up to the ceiling, where we heard him clap the ceiling with his hands. "Samuel," the controlling spirit, then called me to rise and stand against the door; when I was about six inches in front of it, the medium came down and sat on my shoulders. I held both his feet in front of me, and walked about a yard with him on my shoulders, when he was taken off in an instant and deposited in his chair. Strange to say, I felt him no heavier than a child, and could have carried him for miles at the same weight. My son was then called out, and we stood side by side, when the medium was placed on both our shoulders, and it was all we could do this time to sustain him, the weight being oppressive.

It was now nearly eight o'clock: I and the Doctor took a cab to visit a private circle in another part of the city. Arriving there, I simply introduced him as Dr. Monck, not mentioning any names. We sat immediately round an oval table, when Samuel, the chief speaker of his attendant spirits, accosted two or three by name, and referred to circumstances connected with their respective families. Samuel next announced the presence of two of our own attendant angels, giving their names, well known to us; and then took place a scene of surpassing interest. The medium presented a majestic appearance, his countenance beaming with radiancy; he slowly rose from his chair, clasped his hands, and raised them gently above his head, ejaculating words which we did not understand. He next slowly walked round the table to one who sat opposite to him: placing his right hand on the head of this one, and raising his left hand, looking upwards (though his eyes were closed, except the white lower parts), he spoke as follows:—"Brother Osiris, in the name of the High One, and of those assembled with you, I consecrate you; I consecrate you to your holy office, with the holy anointing oil; let it run down your garments, even to the fringes; do your

work, and we will be with you at the hour of what you call death; faint not;" after which he returned to his seat.

This scene may possibly be imagined, but the intense interest, uncton, and gravity of the moment will never pass away from the minds of those who witnessed this ceremony; a revelation was made, and the consequences of this important meeting may possibly shortly be made apparent.

Again resuming our seats, the order was given to turn off the light, when immediately hands were felt by several or most of the sitters. We heard a sound as if a heavy earth-sod were thrown on the floor, and it made the room shake. A water-bottle, nearly full, was carried round, and rubbed against several of the faces of those near the table; we also heard the sound of many things being put on the table, and some as being thrown under it, the medium all the while sitting between myself and another, each holding one of his hands the whole time. I then felt the medium rise up suddenly, and a weight hanging from my arm; the light being turned on, the chair upon which the medium had been sitting was seen suspended from my left arm, my hand still grasping his; the table was literally covered with articles from the chimney-piece and other parts of the room; an album was picked up from the feet of a lady present, still closed, and one of the cards had been taken out and deposited near her right foot. On looking at the floor, we found, instead of the sod we expected to see, some grains of hard white spar, ranging in size from that of a pea to small grains, about as much as would form the bulk of a small walnut; on looking further, we found that a piece of this size had been broken off a lump of hard white spar rock on the mantel-piece, with which the pieces quite corresponded.

What appeared white transparent lights now presented themselves, when one formed into a face at once recognised by two of the party as that of the deceased father of one of the sitters.

Thus ended one of the most remarkable *seances* that it has been my privilege to witness. If those whose ignorance or folly, or something worse, only knew what they missed by demanding tests of their own making, they would do far better to leave it to the controlling spirits, who in such cases themselves propose and furnish tests far more conclusive than any that suspicious people can devise; such do not think that by questioning the veracity and integrity of their neighbours they are revealing their own characters.

Just one word as to circles, and I have done. My observation and experience prove that seven should form a circle of thoroughly harmonious minds in their desire to obtain the higher knowledge of spirit life; when this is determined, appoint a secretary to record the communications given, and it will be found that there are seven attendant spirits, whose names will be given; these names will reveal the character and quality of the controlling spirits, who are representatives of some human quality of intelligence and affection. I am persuaded if those who are seeking interior truths relating to the human spirit will adopt this course, they will be richly rewarded.

WILLIAM OXLEY.

Higher Broughton, Manchester, Feb. 20th, 1875.

MR. CHARLES BLACKBURN has accepted office as a Vice-President of the National Association of Spiritualists.

SPIRITUALISM IN HUNGARY.—A letter from the Baroness Von Vay, dated Gonobitz, Feb. 15th, informs us that she and Baron Vay took their medium, Mrs. Pucher, to Pesth for a fortnight, where the latter gave twelve consecutive materialisation *seances*, some of them under bad conditions, several persons unacquainted with the phenomena being present. The controlling spirit did not show much more than his hands, which were larger than those of the medium; he exhibited some large spirit lights, one of which had the form of a "staff." Mrs. Pucher also obtained loud raps through her mediumship, in the light. On Sunday, Feb. 14th, the Baron and Baroness Vay gave a *seance* to upwards of sixty persons in their great hall; Mrs. Pucher was the medium, and she sat in a cabinet composed of screens covered with a plaid. She was nervous at having to appear before so many observers, some of whom were not Spiritualists, so her spirits gave a message through her writing mediumship, asking M. Nicholas Vay to mesmerise her inside the cabinet; the manifestations were not strong. Our correspondent thinks the visit to Pesth to have resulted in good to the Spiritual movement there. Her letter breaks off abruptly with the statement that "her patients were waiting for their medicines;" for Baroness Vay spends much of her time in doing good to the sick and afflicted.

Poetry.

WHO MADE YOU? TWO SONNETS.

I.

"My child, who made you?" "Made me!" I reply:
 "The gases generating seas and land—
 The waves that lisp along the thirsty sand—
 Primeval fossils, heron, moose and fly—
 Fires in the crater and sun-fires on high—
 Boreas the biting—Zephyrus the bland—
 The fleece of Jason—wares of Samarcand—
 My mother's prayer—my nurse's lullaby—
 School slates and palimpsests—ships—harbour bars—
 Things far and near, minute, great, old and new—
 Calumets, capstans, mines, and falling stars—
 Siva—skald—fetich—systems false and true—
 Blacks in the canes and Caesar's in their cars,
 And all that is, and has been,—Who made you?"

II.

"I am the outcome of all things that went
 Before me, and that, even to this hour,
 Exist on earth or in the firmament;
 For nothing is unsubject to the power
 And influence of all besides. The dower
 Of each man is with Nature to be blent,
 To be the mind-and-body woven bower
 By countless architects upreared, and meant
 To stand for ever. And this mortal frame
 Can no more perish than th' immortal mind.
 It will but change its hues and form, the same
 Remaining, consort of the soul, behind;
 And each impression that upon me came
 In life will with my future be combined."

J. C. E.

Correspondence.

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

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOLOGICAL DOGMAS.

STR.—An essential element at the commencement of a discussion is that the premises be clearly stated, and that the subject to be discussed be defined in the plainest possible words.

Before entering upon such a discussion as that which Mr. Pearce invites you to open in your columns, it is, I think, necessary that he should be asked to explain himself more clearly.

He says, "The two major issues raised are:—

- (a) The Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (b) The plenary inspiration of the Scriptures."

With reference to (a)—Does Mr. Pearce mean that:—The Lord Jesus Christ was God? If so, would he object to the substitution of that form of expression? If he does not mean so, will he explain what he does mean in words which half-a-dozen readers will not understand in as many different ways?

With reference to (b)—What does Mr. Pearce mean by "the Scriptures?" Does he mean "the Holy Bible" as published by authority in this country? And by "plenary" does he mean the literal sense of the word to be accepted? If otherwise, will he kindly explain himself?

Mr. Pearce's own letter shows the necessity of the precautions I am urging; for in the following paragraph he uses the phrase "inspiration of the Scriptures," as if he considered a belief in them to be incompatible with their being also "unreliable." Mr. Pearce apparently employs the phrases "plenary inspiration" and "inspiration" as identical, and also implies a confusion in his own mind between the ideas of "inspiration" and "infallibility."

It seems to me absolutely necessary that definitions should be as clear and explicit as possible for a discussion to be of any real benefit.

It is true, as Mr. Pearce beautifully says, that a man's life does gradually conform to the ideal he inmostly worships. Hence the infinite importance of the highest possible ideal.

EDWARD T. BENNETT.

Betchworth, Feb. 21st, 1875.

[Without clear definitions such as Mr. Bennett requests, it is obviously impossible to proceed further without confusion in this discussion. We do not see what good can arise from considering these theological dogmas, for in the end the controversialists are sure to adhere, as at first, to those ideas which they like best, and which are, to a great extent, hereditary and ineradicable. The questions at issue ought rather to be fought out in the columns of *The Christian World*; but unfortunately orthodox journals are usually afraid to let both sides of such problems be heard, and warn their readers against perusing "infidel books;" this line of action is of itself an open confession of consciousness of weakness. No good came of bringing theological matters into the deliberations of the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists some months ago, except to cause wearisome delay and expense, and to introduce the risk of breaking up the first successful attempt in this country at united friendly action among

Spiritualists, the great bulk of whom, fortunately, have proved too Christ-like in practice to care to separate from each other over such questions. All the letters sent us on these subjects ought to be of a kindly and conciliatory tone.—Ed.]

SIR,—The questions which your correspondents, Mr. Geo. M. Sutherland and Mr. C. W. Pearce, discuss in your paper of February 19th, are doubtless looked upon by many Spiritualists as of very grave importance. Your correspondent, Mr. Pearce, raises questions of the most sweeping kind, and settles them off-hand by laying down what he calls fixed laws, that, to his mind, completely dispose of the matter. I am sorry to say I cannot agree with his premises, and am, therefore, not likely to arrive at the same conclusions as himself. He first asks "Is it of consequence that the truth or falsity of the divinity of Christ and the inspiration of the Scriptures should be established?" and answers it immediately by "Yes, every way; because it is a fixed law, perceived by every intelligent person, that a man's life gradually conforms to the quality of the ideal he inmostly worships."

In reply to this I defy your correspondent to prove that it is of any consequence either to a man's present or his future happiness to believe anything of the kind. No such belief ever could or ever did *per se* make a man happier in the next life as far as I have ever discovered from the revelations of spirits. The communicating spirit through whom the *Spirit Teachings* have been given in your paper, neither believes in one nor the other. Neither do the spirits who speak so beautifully through Mrs. Tappan, nor does our old friend Tien-sien-tie through Mr. Morse; yet the man who denies that their teachings have for their object "the honour and glory of God, the elevation or progression of man's spirit heavenwards, love to the neighbour, and abnegation of self," must either be incapable of understanding the English language, or be too bigoted to admit that it can have any such meaning. Now, sir, these last words I have quoted from the letter of your correspondent Mr. Sutherland, who writes to praise his own spirit-communications, which he tells us are all of the above quality of teaching. Yet, in the same letter, he is careful to tell your readers that he will have nothing to do with spirits who do not "bow down to and worship our Lord Jesus Christ as God." If, therefore, the teaching of those I have enumerated—and I could also add the names of A. J. Davis, Peebles, and Hardinge—are to the same effect as those your correspondent Mr. Sutherland swears by (merely because they endorse his own creed), and of this your readers are all able to judge, then I consider Mr. Pearce's assertion that it is of consequence that "the truth or falsity of their denials be established" is entirely disproved. If we get similar teachings from non-believers in Christ's divinity to what we had from Christ Himself, how can it be of consequence to believe it or to disbelieve it?

According to Mr. Pearce, every one who disbelieves the divinity of Christ sinks into pantheism or polytheism. "He has no divine image to which his life can conform if God be not manifest in the flesh." This last is an assertion that I can quite agree with, but the only difference between me and Mr. Pearce is that he thinks, for some reason or other for which neither he nor any one else can give the slightest proof, that God manifested Himself in the person of one man only, whereas I think He manifests Himself in all men, and the best men of all ages afford us ideals enough to which to conform our lives. Mr. Pearce says that if we reject Christ as our ideal, "every one fashions his own god, but he can only do so after an ideal, and nature only remains," according to which one would conclude that he ignores the existence of all other evidences of God's creative powers but Christ and nature. Does Mr. Pearce require to be reminded that the laws of nature are the laws of God, and that man is ever living under those laws, and can only attain happiness by conforming to them, and that moral laws are just as much the laws of nature and of God as physical laws? Christ was a discoverer in the region of moral law, as Galileo, Franklin, and Newton have been in the region of physical law. He is therefore no more entitled to be made a God of than Franklin or Newton. All men in the scientific world do not bow down and worship these discoverers, but we judge of their own knowledge from the extent to which they conform to the opinions of previous discoverers, and it makes no difference whether they ever heard of those discoverers or not. When, however, a man denies that the earth is round, and seeks to prove that it is flat, we estimate the value of his teachings accordingly. Seeing, therefore, that the spirits whom I have alluded to as denying the divinity of Christ, nevertheless endorse the great

moral laws which He taught (if He did not discover them), I consider that they recognise the divinity of Christ in the only sense of the word in which it deserves to be recognised, and they prove, as He said Himself, that "he that is not against us is on our part."

As to the conclusion which Mr. Pearce and "Ex-Spiritualist" alike come to, namely, that "the consequences of abandoning faith in Christ for the false teachings of mediums are miserable," of course its value depends entirely on what he calls "false teachings." First prove that the spirit which dwelt in the body of Christ emanated from a more divine source than the spirit which dwells in the body of every child born into the world to-day, and it will be time enough to characterise as "false teachings" whatever emanates from a man who does not believe in Christ's divine origin, simply because he sees no sufficient proof of it. I could say much more on this subject, but I know your space is too limited. I can only say, in conclusion, that I am amazed at the narrowness which seems to characterise those who think that we Christians are the only favoured mortals on the face of the earth, and that millions upon millions of human beings in America, China, India, and elsewhere, who have all their own "Bibles" and their own "Christ," and have never heard of our Bible and our Christ, are necessarily miserable self-deluded wretches, whom we can afford to look down upon with pity. FRITZ.

Manchester, Feb. 21st, 1875.

[So far as we know, Mr. Pearce held the same views as "Fritz" a few years ago, for he sent a circular letter to all the members of Parliament, exhorting them to prohibit the reading of the Bible in schools, in order not to encourage what he called a "degrading superstition."—Ed.]

SIR,—My seven reasons for renouncing [Renounce, *v.*, to disown, to abnegate.—*Johnson's Dictionary*] Modern Spiritualism, having called forth a long criticism, allow me to make seven remarks in reply.

1. It may be desirable for some readers of *The Spiritualist*, kindly to reconsider the "Theological Objections" published last week. I believe these are my *last* words in any publication of the kind.
2. Christianity is surely not an hereditary religion, but a gift. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."
3. The word "Antichrist" is no "vague expression" to those who study intelligently the Epistles of St. John.
4. The writings of Swedenborg and T. L. Harris, accepted as truth, *must* lead out from the practice of sitting for spirits; even the healing power referred to, attracts people to them, not Christ.
5. To meet the idea of a retraction of former convictions requiring the name to make it a full one, it will now be given.
6. It is a "reason" for renouncing the whole system, that one who thoroughly investigated, after all, saw the injurious effects, in the long run, on its adherents.
7. The three little words, "as a rule," are omitted in the criticism, which makes the seventh reason look like a "sweeping statement." This was never meant to be conveyed by the "Ex-Spiritualist."

MARY HAX.

Brighton.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS IN BRIGHTON.

SIR,—I feel bound, at the request of "Samuel," the controlling spirit of Dr. Monck, to give a brief account of some of the manifestations which were produced at my house. During the *seance* we numbered in all fourteen or fifteen, too great a number, it appears, for Dr. Monck's manifestations; after sitting in the light and having only raps, a few were touched. I then proposed to try the dark. We soon had the accordion playing over our heads, and Dr. Monck being entranced, Samuel spoke to everybody, answering all kinds of questions, but we had the best manifestations after midnight, when all our guests had left. My son having proposed to try direct writing, we returned to the dining-room, and were favoured in a few moments with direct writing in a very peculiar way. After this, several objects, as a watch-box, my son's watch, and a tumbler containing water, were seen to move without any contact with anybody. The accordion was then tied up with a cord, and put into a pillow-case, and again tied up with cord, and, while held by Dr. Monck in full sight, sounds were produced. After this, the room being darkened, "Sarah" and "W Z" were given in luminous letters, "W Z" being the initials of a lady friend of my daughter, who passed away some years ago. A large light in the shape of a moon was next produced; and, finally, Dr. Monck was lifted about twenty inches from the floor, my children feeling both his feet when he was suspended. This is the first time I have seen

Dr. Monck. I may add, that though the number of sitters must be limited to six or seven to have powerful manifestations, I consider him one of the best test mediums in England.

T. N. TIEDEMAN MARTHEZE.

Brighton, 20 Feb. 1875.

SEANCE WITH MRS. CORNER (FLORENCE COOK).

SIR,—I was at Mrs. Edward Corner's last night; Mr. and Miss Cook, and Mr. Crookes, also Mrs. and Miss Corner, were there. We had no materialisations, but a very powerful dark seance occurred. Six of us joined hands; one of the guitar strings soon bound my wrist to Florrie's, the string being managed by a powerful brawny pair of hands, thus fastening us both to the guitar. Whilst this was being done, other hands were busy playing on the piano; others had the tambourine, also the accordion in the air near the ceiling, whilst books and papers were in profusion tumbled into my lap. Shortly the instruments fell, one hitting Mr. Crookes on the skull; the table also leaped much about. We then, on my side of the table, were pushed from our seats on to the floor, thus the chain of hands became broken; a light was struck, showing Mr. Crookes and myself on our beam ends; in this position Mr. Crookes pulled out his knife, and cut the guitar strings which bound me and the medium together at the wrists. We gathered ourselves up and sat again in the dark, something similar being done, hands feeling our faces, and the tambourine battering my head more than I liked. I then asked for an iron ring which lay on the table to come on my arm whilst I had hold of the medium's hand, and it did so; it had previously done so on Mr. Crookes's arm. We then closed the seance, which was the first dark seance Mr. Crookes ever had with the medium; he studying more the materialisation phenomena where light is used. CHAS. BLACKBURN.

Parkfield, Didsbury, near Manchester, Feb. 17th.

PRIVATE SEANCES IN MANCHESTER.

SIR,—It may be interesting to your readers who remember my previous statements of the striking proof given of identity, by the same spirit through five different mediums, to have another instance added, which seems to confirm the conclusion that not always unconscious cerebration, but absolute independent intelligence may account for certain facts. On Thursday last, when I returned home to dinner, I found to my surprise and delight Dr. Monck in my room; he had just arrived on a visit to Manchester. After exchanging a few words, we found ourselves in perfect harmony, which extended even to an equal amount of appetite for our dinner, and so we sat down to discuss material matters with knife and fork in hand; but a volley of raps, increasing in strength and rapidity, surprised us, and, on inquiry, the name of our invisible guest proved to be the name of my constant spirit-guides. This would not appear remarkable but for the positive assertion of Dr. Monck that he *did not* know the name before, and, moreover, when I asked for the peculiar signal (a certain rythmical succession of raps), it was, after some time, correctly given, and in so loud and joyous a manner as to express pleasure in being able to manifest through so powerful a medium. After this successful introduction, I anticipate good results from Dr. Monck's expected next visit, which may prove of immense influence in this town, where the want of good professional mediums accounts for the slow progress. C. REIMERS.

Ducie Avenue, Oxford-road, Manchester, Feb. 21, 1875.

PREVISION AT OXFORD.

SIR,—I came across a curious case of clairvoyance in dreams the other day, which I think may prove as interesting to others as it was to me. I have not the least doubt of the genuineness of the circumstances. The clairvoyant from whose lips I heard the story is a quarryman working in one of the stone-pits in the neighbourhood, and I know enough of him to feel sure that he is perfectly honest and truthful.

Some years ago, whilst working in another quarry near here, he had a dream three nights in succession, in which he saw a large block of stone fall down and crush another man, whilst he himself escaped uninjured. Exactly three weeks after the last dream he was unexpectedly called away from his work at the quarry one afternoon, and heard on his return that the fellow-workman whom he had seen in his dream had actually been killed by a fall of stone a few yards from the spot there represented.

A short time after this occurrence he dreamed on Thursday night that a fall of stone had taken place whilst the workmen were out of the quarry, and had buried all the wheelbarrows and such tools as were left behind. This dream he told to his employer on the Friday morning, and on the ensuing Sunday the occurrence took place as foreseen; there was a heavy fall of stone on all sides of the quarry, and the wheelbarrows and other implements were buried beneath it and smashed to pieces.

I may mention that our conversation was led on to the subject of dreams by the man telling me that he was in some distress from a dream which he had had a few nights ago, in which he saw his mother, wife, and some other friends in a coffin. He was naturally afraid that this vision also might shortly come true. If I can gather any further particulars from this man himself, or his family, I will send them to you.

FRANK PODMORE.

Pembroke College, Oxon.

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK.

SIR,—It must seem very strange to those Spiritualists who retain the Christian faith, and to others, that in the Bible there is but one instance of the spirit of a dead person appearing, and that one the result of witchcraft. I think but one instance, though spirits there were in plenty, but not the spirits of the dead; nay, St. Paul declares, that those who say that the resurrection is past already, make shipwreck of the faith, and that their words eat like a canker. (1 Tim. i. 19; comp. 2 Tim. ii. 18.) It is clear, then, that Christ was not a medium or Spiritualist in the modern sense; but that He had a remarkable gift of healing is certain, still it is not true, as many Christians have asserted, that all His cures were instantaneous, and therefore miraculous. As I have shown in my letters to Miss Martineau (Letter XVIII., in reply to the Rev. George Sandby) in these words, "There are many most distressing cases of purely nervous condition which I have cured almost instantaneously." Nor is touching always requisite, as Mr. Sandby supposes. In the case of the man who was dumb, and had an impediment in his speech, it is described that Christ took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into his ears; and He spat, and touched his tongue, &c. This is clearly a mesmeric process; and we know not how long the process occupied; the patient was taken aside for the purpose. In another case, Christ spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and then bade him go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. Again, in the case of the man with the dumb spirit, after his fit, he becomes "as one dead," or in a mesmeric sleep; and Christ took him by the hand, and he arose. Again, in the case of blindness, the influence is clearly not instantaneous; for, first, there is a partial recovery, the seeing persons like moving trees. The operation is renewed before the complete sight is restored. But I need not continue these instances, which nothing but professional blindness in one aware of the nature of mesmerism could overlook. Compassion for the sufferings of the people seems to have been the ruling impulse of most of the great founders of religion, as so pre-eminently exemplified in Christ and Buddah, and the desire to invest with a divine sanction their wise laws and benevolent precepts, and deeds of charity seem ever to have been the noble basis of true spirituality. Thus religion seems rather to spring from morality than morality to be derived from religion, and Christ, the great physician and philanthropist, will ever remain a glorious example to be followed, even though we may not believe Him to have been the God that has been supposed, and we may be sure that His compassion and sympathy would have been excited in respect to that poor sleeping girl at Turville.

No doubt Mr. Ashman is a good healing medium, but a lady would be more fit in the present case, for reasons I need not explain, but which may be easily supposed. It was by the aid of a lady that I cured Miss Martineau, when she was given up by the physicians after five years' confinement to the sick room in the most distressing condition; and a year after the cure she was standing on the top of the great pyramid of Egypt, and there was no relapse. HENRY G. ATKINSON.

Hotel de la Gare, Boulogne-sur-Mer.

THE ENTRANCE TO SPIRIT-LIFE.

SIR,—You have inserted many kinds of spirit messages in your journal, but I do not remember to have seen one purporting to be descriptive of the first entrance to spirit-

life. I therefore send you the following, given to me by the spirit of my loved grandfather, the Rev. Stephen Morell. The account of the "spirit visitations" referred to in this message, was given to your readers some months ago:—

"I have no distinct recollection of the exact time of the freeing of my spirit from its earth-body. It was so gradually drawn away during the sleep of nature; no pain; not even that of separation from loved ones on earth. S— had told me my time was over, and had been with me whilst I was preaching to my beloved people, that last Sunday I spent on your earth. But, whilst unconscious of the passing away, my child! would that I could describe to you, in the faintest degree, the joyful surprise, the intense delight, that awaited me in my spirit-home, my home of rest!

"I was first conscious only of wonderful peace and happiness; sense of rest, repose, and calm, loving assurance of the immediate presence of love. I did not see anything, but I thought I was just arousing from a long refreshing sleep, and was about to awake, as usual.

"I was bathed, as it were, in floods of melody and joy. The sweet voices of my 'lost ones' were near me, uttering words of welcome. Thus was my spirit sense of hearing the first opened to me. Then were my eyes opened, and I found myself, no longer the weak aged pilgrim of earth, but, freed from the ensnacklement of the body, my spirit had arisen young, joyous, glad.

"My spirit vision first opened to see around me the atmospheres, and then the beloved forms of my children. They were standing by me, ministering to my spirit's wants, as I was lying on my couch of rest, which was in a most beautiful garden. The couch was formed by living flowers and fruits, and was canopied over by a graceful vine-tree.

"I stretched forth my hand to gather these fruits and flowers, and as my touch came to them, I received nourishment and strength by the aromal essence that was at once infused into my spirit-life in all its senses of tasting, hearing, seeing, and smelling; for there came forth tones of music, and the air was all responsive to the joyous songs of welcome from my loved ones by my side.

"It was some time before I could realise that this was no beautiful dream from which I should awake, finding myself on my bed of weakness in the old home at the manse.

"My joy was all too great, when the consciousness dawned upon me that I was in the presence of divinity, and that I had reached the home of the blessed.

"Much did my loved ones tell me as I held converse with them in their spirit language; and intense was my wonder now that the reality of all that dear S— had taught me in his spirit visitations, was proved to me by actual presence and sight.

"Each of our dear ones have a home, and one was prepared for me. A house built of precious stones, glowing beneath the wondrous atmospheric hue surrounding it, radiant also with living verdure. Carpets, where needed, were formed of growing grass, sparkling and beautiful, as has been described to you, my child; and as all the houses described to you have been wondrously beautiful, spiritually ethereal in all the various appointments, so was mine, unworthy as I was.

"As my vision opened, I read God's word upon the walls of my rooms; there also I beheld a review of my earthly career, with the interpretation, all clear, of God's mercy, even shown in the darkest hour.

"I found how greatly I had cause to rejoice, inasmuch as that He had afflicted me—most especially and deeply in the removal of my children from my hearth. Ah! my child, the lightest as well as the heaviest sorrow is sent for a specific purpose, and is truly a blessing."

I asked, "Did you at once know your children in the spirit home?"

"Yes, I knew them. When necessary for recognition, a spirit can always assume the once familiar appearance. This is not always necessary, as spirit communion alone can reveal the knowledge, independent of external appearance. It is a mesmeric drawing of spirit to spirit. But I beheld my children first as they had been to me, so dear, so beautiful, in their youth and health, ere their bodies were so reduced by the consumption that took them from me. Gradually their full spiritual beauty was opened to my sight, in which was lost the earthly beauty. Thus, my fatherly yearnings were doubly granted,—by seeing them first, as of old; and then seeing all the wondrous power of the spirit-life expansion that had gone on since we parted. My child, grieve not, but rejoice, when a loved one is transplanted to the gardens of our Father God.

"My great and ever-increasing delight in studying God's word, as given forth in every path, in every leaf and flower, in the ever-conscious presence of Divinity, without a veil between, is beyond power of expression.

"The Infinite Love is displayed in all things—the beauty which lives around, and gives expansion to all the innate love of the spirit-life. *This is truly living!* Such life as the germ-like life on earth can give no conception of—God in Christ walks in our midst, and converses with us, setting His mark upon us all. As we attain the sphere of spirit-life, freed from the last taint of earthliness, then we are clothed upon and receive the mark of Christ's life and love upon our bodies, our spiritual bodies.

"All spirits have great responsibilities and duties allotted to them, according to their tastes and acquirements, which vary here as on your earth; as it was always my delight to expound, to the extent of my power, the love of God and the gospel of Christ on earth, so do I now have classes of spirits, and am taught to teach. Yes. I mean that Christ, having received me as a member of His society, teaches me what to teach others. It is always thus here. Our lives blend with the God and Christ life through the pervading spirit-life around, which imparts to us all knowledge, high, holy, pure, so different to the mingled knowledge of good and evil on your earth.

"My child, shrink not from the passing on at the death of the earth body to birth into spirit-life. Abide patiently God's time; bear cheerfully His will; live in prayer, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Then shall your peace on earth be great, and your everlasting joy here beyond expression, beautiful.

"It is not in the nature of spirit intercourse—if carried on in the spirit of prayer—to undervalue or depreciate the high and holy Spirit of God, the One Ruler over all. Were such to be the tendency in any especial mind, be sure the influence is from a low, evil, or undeveloped source.

"We, the God-spirits, are embodied mediums, employed by God, and allowed thus to draw aside the veil of dark humanity. But we, of ourselves, could no more teach of good and God, without the direct workings of the high Spirit of God than your earth could shine in the beautiful light of heaven without the sun of the firmament.

"It is an inseparable condition, and always must and will be."

F. J. T.

St. Leonard's-on-Sea.

THE CURE OF DISEASE BY MESMERISM.

SIR,—I think of sending a little of my past experience, of twenty years, as a lecturer on mesmerism; I have given more than 3,000 demonstrations on the subject, so I flatter myself that I have had much experience in every form. You will see by the circular accompanying this that some good and wise men have attended my lectures at different times, both in and out of London.

On some occasions, I have operated on sensitives, sometimes by the touch, at other times when quite unconscious of doing anything. In the case of a young lady in Manchester, who was quite blind, I have merely entered the room in which she was sitting, sometimes going to its opposite side without speaking, and without her knowing I was present; in a short time she would begin to move on her seat, then get up and come across the room towards me, and would express her surprise when she found me there.

Another time when at Preston, in Lancashire, Mr. J. J. Myers, coroner, denied the doctrine of mesmeric attraction. One day each of us was in a room, in which a subject of mine was also present; she was putting on her bonnet, at the other side, with her back to us; she came back until she was close to Mr. Myers; he then gave in and said it was wonderful; this looks like something like an electric current passing between us.* I have known Dr. Hitchman for many years; I am not acquainted with Mr. Varley, but I am glad he has taken up the cause: I am happy to say whatever the power is, I have been enabled to cure three cases, by its benign influence. One lady who had been in a lunatic asylum for five years, is now quite well and attending to her business; and a lady, afflicted with extreme weakness, internally, quite recovered; the last case was that of a boy who was very bad with St. Vitus's Dance. He is now well.

H. HUDSON.

Swansea.

* It is evidence of mesmeric rapport, but no evidence of the presence of electricity. If electricity were present it would not be competent to produce such effects.

A SEANCE WITH SECULARISTS AT BIRMINGHAM.

STRANGE things are now taking place in Secularist circles in Birmingham. Towards the end of last year Mr. G. H. Reddalls, Mr. John Russell, and other leading local sceptics, anxious to investigate Spiritualism, applied for permission to attend seances at the Spiritual Institute, Suffolk-street. It seems, however, that their presence was not desired. They were informed, at all events, that their request could not be complied with. But Mr. Reddalls and his friends were not the men to be easily turned aside. About the beginning of December they commenced to hold seances for investigation in St. George's-hall, Dean-street, which, as our readers are aware, is the head-quarters of Secularism in the Midland Counties.

According to their own account, remarkable things were witnessed almost from the first. Night after night the manifestations increased in power, variety, and marvellousness. Latterly, therefore, a public character has been given to these Secularist seances, which are now two in number weekly, namely, on Thursday and Sunday evenings, at half-past eight; and, for convenience, the place of meeting has been changed from St. George's-hall to the house of Mr. Reddalls, 136, Digbeth, who, it should be stated, is generally regarded as the leading Secularist in these parts. Mr. Reddalls, indeed, is pretty well known as editor of the *Secular Chronicle*, a weekly journal, established to promote free inquiry into social, political and theological questions, and as a record of free-thought progress. He carries on an extensive business as a printer and newsagent at 136, Digbeth, and is generally a leader in all local movements connected with free-thought and questions specially affecting the working classes.

Having received an invitation to attend the seance held last night, our reporter, who was present, thus describes what occurred:—

"The company numbered fifteen, including myself, and the meeting took place in a room behind Mr. Reddalls' shop. The two mediums were Mr. Reddalls and Mr. Russell. I was told, upon inquiry, that four of the gentlemen present were Spiritualists, the others being unbelievers. The only lady in the room was a young niece of Mr. Reddalls. The mediums stated, in answer to a question, that they would cheerfully submit to any test which might be imposed. The doors, which open outwards, were securely fastened, the handles being tied with ropes to the legs of tables in the room. Every person present was searched, and I, like the others, had to turn out the varied contents of my pockets. The sitters, forming themselves into a circle round a plain deal table, were next tied to one another. The right wrist of one person and the left wrist of the sitter next him were tightly joined together by means of a string, and so on all round the room, until it was impossible for Mr. Reddalls, Mr. Russell, or any one else to do anything with his hands without the person next him being painfully aware of the fact. Each sitter was further required to let his legs and feet touch those of the person next him, so that any movement on their part might also be detected. All this having been done, a unanimous opinion was expressed that no other precaution could be adopted against the practice of fraud. A general movement among the sitters was necessary—so closely were they bound together—before one of the company could reach the gas to turn it out. That difficult operation having been performed, however, Mr. Russell asked us to sing something as a means of bringing those present into a state of harmony. Such songs as 'Home, Sweet Home,' 'Annie Lisle,' 'John Brown,' 'Rule Britannia,' and 'Beautiful Star' were sung at intervals.

"Hardly had the singing commenced when a small hand-bell, previously lying on the table, began to jingle as it seemed to be floating through the air, high over our heads. Several of us—myself amongst the number—were struck about the shoulders, hands, and face, apparently by paper speaking-tubes, which also occupied a place on the table at the time the light was extinguished. Immediately afterwards, what felt—and eventually was seen—to be an egg, was gently pressed into my left hand. Another gentleman was equally fortunate. A triangle was lifted from the table, and went floating about, beating time to our singing, which, I must confess, was far from first-class. The table seemed to be upset, falling heavily on the floor; but when the gas was relighted, a few minutes later, it was found that the table had in the meantime been got on to its legs again. Having examined and explained what had taken place as best we could, the circle was re-formed, and once more we went to work, as before, in the dark. The phenomena which followed turned out to be more wonderful still."—*Birmingham Morning News*.

THE Marylebone Society of Spiritualists gave a pleasing concert last Monday, in aid of its funds.

At the next *soirée* of the National Association of Spiritualists, Mr. Algernon Joy will preside, and Mrs. F. A. Nosworthy will give a reading.

FATHER IGNATIUS is not a Spiritualist in the sense described in the *Christian Spiritualist*; he believes all Spiritualism to be a delusion wrought by evil spirits.

ON the last Thursday evening in March next, a paper will be read before the members and friends of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, by the president, Mr. Henry D. Jencken, M.R.I., F.R.G.S. (Barrister-at-Law).

MRS. EVERITT writes that she has received £1 1s. from Mr. A. Calder, and £1 1s. from Mr. A. Thorn, contributions to the fund to aid Mr. Wallace, the medium, which is all the information on the subject which has been sent us for a fortnight or more by anybody.

LAST Friday a private seance, through the mediumship of Mr. Williams, was attended by Mr. Charles Blackburn and friends. At another interesting private seance last Saturday with Miss Showers, the same gentlemen were present, also Mrs. Showers, Captain J. James, and Mr. James, junr.

A BAZAAR will shortly take place in connection with the British National Association of Spiritualists; full particulars will be found in our advertising columns. As the value of advertising in *The Spiritualist*, in order that the attention of a superior body of readers may be gained is now more generally recognised, interesting news in relation to Spiritualism may often be found on examining the advertising pages carefully every week.

SPIRITUALISM IN LIVERPOOL.—On Sunday last Mr. George Farmer, late editor of the *Pioneer of Progress*, delivered two lectures in the Islington Hall, afternoon and evening. The audiences were good, and the lecturer was listened to with attention. His subject in the afternoon was "Relations between Ancient and Modern Spiritualism," and in the evening "The Old Faith and the New: a Parallel and a Contrast." At the close a vote of thanks was given to the lecturer by Mr. John Lamont, on behalf of the audience. On the following evening Mr. Farmer delivered an address at the Farnworth-street Hall on "Glimpses at the World's Spiritualism," which was also well received.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—There was a strong muster of members at the ordinary weekly seance of the "Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism," on Thursday evening last week. The circle was formed by the members seating themselves round the front room, and Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen was elected circle president, in the absence of the president elect. It was arranged to first have a light test seance, in accordance with directions obtained through the mediumship of Mr. James Webster, at the previous week's sitting. When he was entranced, the medium gave short addresses to the following persons in the order named:—Mrs. Wood, Mr. Standen, Mrs. Amelia Corner, Mr. Thos. Blyton, Mr. Tredwen, Miss Carrie Corner, Mr. Black, Miss Graham, and Mr. Playfair; the remaining sitters were not dealt with in consequence of the late hour. An exceptionally large proportion of the statements made through Mr. Webster by an Indian spirit named "Zoud," were confirmed by those persons brought in contact with the medium; while the descriptions of various spirits, known or related to several of the members, were so accurate as to enable them readily to be recognised. In some cases the controlling spirit gave evidence of his ability to obtain information of a private nature affecting several members, which afforded additional proof of the operating intelligence, being other than that of the medium. To those who recollect the earlier stages in the development of Mr. Webster's mediumship, it is very pleasing to note the great improvement made by his several spirit guides in their present mode of controlling his organism.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

E. M., Edinburgh.—The publication of your letter would stir up personal dissensions of no interest to the public; the principles at issue should be courteously stated, so as to cause no annoyance to individuals.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND, by BENJAMIN COLEMAN. The author gives some important facts connected with the early movement in this country with which he was identified, and an account of some of the most remarkable of his personal experiences. E. W. Allen, Ave Maria-lane; George Farmer 4, Kingsgate-street, Holborn. Price One Shilling.

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER, the GREAT AMERICAN SOMNAMBULIST AND CLAIRVOYANTE, whose reputation is well known throughout Europe and America, can be consulted on either Medical or Business Affairs connected with the Living and Dead. Hours 1 to 8 (Sundays excepted.) Terms, One Guinea. Address, 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury-square, W.C.

MR. CHARLES E. WILLIAMS, Medium, is at home daily, to give Private Seances, from 12 to 5 p.m. Private Seances attended at the houses of investigators. Public Seances at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, on Monday evenings, admission 2s. 6d.; Thursday evenings 5s.; and Saturday evenings, for Spiritualists only, 5s.; at 8 o'clock each evening. Address as above.

ANNIE EVA FAY has the honour to announce that she will resume her LIGHT and DARK SEANCES on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday Evenings, at 8 o'clock, at her Residence, 21, Princes-street, Hanover-square, W. She is also prepared to give seances at the private residences of the nobility and gentry.

ANNIE EVA FAY'S EXTRAORDINARY LIGHT and DARK SEANCES. Tickets, 10s. each, may be had of Mrs. Fay, 21, Princes-street, Hanover-square; also at Mitchell's, 38, Old Bond-street; Ollivier, 38, Old Bond-street; Bubb, 167, New Bond-street; Lacon and Ollivier, 168, New Bond-street; and all agents.

MRS. WOODFORDE, TRANCE MEDIUM & MEDICAL MESMERIST, will give Sittings for Development under Spirit Control in Writing, Drawing, Clairvoyance, or any form of Mediumship. Disorderly Influences removed. French spoken. At home Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Private Seances attended. Address, 41, Bernard-street, Russell-square. W.C.

MESMERISM AND CLAIRVOYANCE.

PROFESSOR ADOLPHE DIDIER (30 Years established) ATTENDS PATIENTS from Two till Five o'clock, at his residence, 10, Berkeley-gardens, Campden-hill, Kensington, W. Consultations by letter.

MR. W. G. SCOREY, MEDICAL MESMERIST AND RUBBER, having successfully treated several cases, is again open to engagements.—Mesmeric Institution, 85, Goldhawk-road, Shepherds'-bush W. Please write.

MISS GODFREY, CURATIVE MESMERIST AND RUBBER, AND MEDICAL CLAIRVOYANT, 1, Robert street Hampstead-road, London, N.W. To be seen by appointment only. Terms, on application by letter.

J. V. MANSFIELD, TEST MEDIUM, answers Sealed Letters, at 361, Sixth Av., New York. Terms, Five Dollars and Four Three-cent Stamps. REGISTER YOUR LETTERS.

MR. J. J. MORSE, INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER, is now on a Lecturing tour in the United States. He will return in or about the month of June next. All letters sent to the following address will be forwarded to him in due course:—Warwick-cottage, Old Ford-ad, Bow, London, E.

DR. M'LEOD AND SIBYL—MAGNETIC HEALING AND CLAIRVOYANCE—Are prepared to receive engagements as above. References kindly permitted to patients and others who have been benefited. By letters only, under cover, to W. N. Armfield, Esq., 15, Lower Belgrave-street, Piccadilly, S.W. Dr. M'Leod is also prepared to receive engagements to lecture.

MESRS. HARRY BASTIAN AND MALCOLM TAYLOR, Physical and Mental Test Mediums, from America.—PARLOUR SEANCES every evening except Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday, at 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury-square. Tickets, 5s. each; hour 8 o'clock. For private seances, address as above.

SEALED LETTERS ANSWERED by R. W. FLINT, 39, West 24th-street, New York. Terms, Two Dollars and Three Stamps. Money refunded if not answered. Register your letters.

MESRS. PECK and SADLER, TRANCE and PHYSICAL MEDIUMS, are OPEN to ENGAGEMENTS in any part of the Country, for Private or Public Seances. Terms, as per arrangements. Seances (when at home), Wednesday, 2s. 6d.; Saturday, 5s. Address, No. 1A, Nelson-terrace, Cardiff.

TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP FOR FAMILY BUSINESS and Other Tests, Healing or Development, by Spirit Mesmerism, &c. Mr. Olive, 49, Belmont-street, Chalk Farm-road, N.W. Six years practice. Terms—21s. per private seance. A public seance at above address on Tuesday evenings, at 7 o'clock, admission 2s. 6d. Also at 15, Southampton-row, Holborn, on Mondays at 3 p.m.

F. PARKES, SPIRITUALIST PHOTOGRAPHER. Sittings à la seance by appointment, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The magnesium light used in dull weather or when required. Fee, one guinea per sitting. Address, 6, Gaynes Park Terrace, Grove-road, Bow, E.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COPIES OF THE ILLUMINATED ADDRESS recently presented by the Spiritualists of Great Britain to Judge Edmonds, of New York, may be obtained of Messrs. Negretti and Zambra, Crystal Palace, Sydenham. Price—Large size, 3s.; small size, 1s.

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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. Berghelm, 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 Hannah, Esq., F.G.S.; Jenner Gale Hillier, Esq.; Mrs. J. G. Hillier; Henry Jeffery, Esq.; Albert Kisch, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Joseph Maurice, Esq.; Isaac L. Meyers, Esq.; B. M. Moss, Esq.; Robert Quelch, Esq., C.E.; Thomas Reod, Esq.; C. Russell Roberts, Esq., Ph.D.; William Volekman, 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. Swepston, Esq., Solicitor; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.; Josiah Webber, Esq.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

ENQUIRERS 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 swooping 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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