

# The Spiritualist

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As the traveller, in ascending a steep hill, pauses occasionally to see what progress he has made, and to survey the path left behind, so is it interesting on the present occasion, when a fresh volume of *The Spiritualist* has just been begun, to take a short survey of the past. Ever since *The Spiritualist* newspaper was started, in the year 1869, it has held its ground as the oldest and chief journal connected with the movement, and has never ceased to increase in circulation. From the first it has been the recognised organ of the educated and scientific Spiritualists of this country, and of late years its foreign circulation has made very great progress, so that English-speaking Spiritualists in all the nations of Europe, now use this journal as their organ of communication. For a time its flow to America was checked, because the sending of boxes of Spiritualistic literature to that country was in the hands of a trade monopoly. *The Spiritualist* was consequently excluded from the parcels—just as, for a long time, orders sent to the same quarter from different parts of England by the Liverpool Psychological Society and others, were refused to be executed. Some six months ago we first began to take the trouble to break through the trade artificial impediments which retarded the flow of this journal to America, so that it has begun to make headway there, and at the present time *The Spiritualist*, practically speaking, reaches all the educated and intelligent Spiritualists to be found wherever the English language is spoken, a few in the United States temporarily excepted.

This is no slight result when it is considered that for the last six years the public funds of Spiritualists, to the extent of thousands upon thousands of pounds, have been used without the knowledge of the donors in most desperate attempts to extinguish *The Spiritualist* by underselling. Had it not been for the injury thus inflicted upon it by the unequal distribution of the public funds, it would have been self-supporting and enlarged in size long ago, but Spiritualists at large have unknowingly and unintentionally prevented this. The money which has done us so much injury was for the most part subscribed by our personal friends and by the warm supporters of this journal, in response to incessant demands, the donors not knowing the effect of the method of expenditure. We preferred to keep silence, and to pay out the expenses inflicted, rather than to make the injury and injustice matters of contention and inharmony.

A thousand halfpence equal a little more than £2; hence, if a journal with a circulation say of 4,000, injures its neighbour by reducing its price by one halfpenny per copy, that involves a loss of £8 per week, or £400 odd a year. Somebody of course has to pay this, and in the case now under notice the expense has been shifted on to the back of the Spiritual movement for six years. The persons who thus get a journal under its natural price do not want the aid; poor Spiritualists

are too independent to desire to receive a halfpenny per week out of charity.

*The Spiritualist* was first started in the year 1869, at a time when there was no newspaper in the movement—nothing but monthly periodicals devoted to magazine literature; regular shorthand or other reports of meetings were altogether unknown. In the April of the following year, 1870, the first number of the *Medium* newspaper was published, and it connected with itself the name of *Daybreak*, a little monthly sheet previously devoted to religious and Spiritualistic essays of a magazine character.

The following are extracts from the first leading article in the first number of *The Spiritualist*, and it is for the public to say whether the promises therein made have been fulfilled by the work actually done:—

“Spiritualism in England has long been represented by three periodicals, all published monthly, namely, *The Spiritual Magazine*, *Human Nature*, and *Daybreak*. *The Spiritual Magazine* was first published in January, 1860, *Human Nature* in April, 1867, and *Daybreak* in June, 1868. *The Spiritualist*, issued for the first time this day, is not started for the purpose of competing with the three journals just mentioned, but is intended to occupy new ground, and to meet a want as yet unsupplied. At the Gower-street Conference last winter several of the speakers mentioned the want of reports and records of public meetings connected with Spiritualism, and one chief object of this new journal is to chronicle the proceedings of such assemblies. Another feature of *The Spiritualist* will be its scientific character. . . . At first this journal will be published fortnightly, to “feel the ground,” before its transformation into a weekly paper; a step which, together with other improvements, is likely to be taken before long, should all go well. Much care will be taken to make *The Spiritualist* useful to the pioneers of the greatest movement of modern times, so it is hoped that it will meet with a friendly reception from all engaged in the noble work of strengthening the chain of communication between this world and the spirit-land, and of clearing away the mystery which ignorance throws over the life beyond the grave.”

Looking at the results which have been achieved since the above sentences were written, there is every cause to be thankful; the said results furnish evidence that something more than money is required to make a successful journal, otherwise the two or three thousand pounds of the supporters of this journal, which have been used for six years without their knowledge in the effort to extinguish it, would have blotted it out of existence long ago, but *The Spiritualist* has been piloted through all the opposition; and the expenses continuously inflicted upon it for six years by the public funds of Spiritualists have been paid, although the enforced sacrifices have been of no trifling nature.

## THE PERSECUTION OF SPIRITUALISTS IN PARIS.

SEANCES WITH MR. FIRMAN BEFORE HIS IMPRISONMENT.

To the Editor of “*The Spiritualist*.”

SIR,—I continue the journalised account of these Firman seances, my last having included July 10th.

THE CONDITIONS INFLUENCING SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

July 11th.—11.30 P.M.—Just returned from another seance with Comte de Bullet alone, and Mr. and Mrs. Firman—a seance beautiful in all its details, and splendid as a success, and yet prompting the exasperating thought that all this came only to us who needed no further evidence, while to M. Carraby and his friends, whom we were all so anxious to convince, nothing scientifically satisfactory has been as yet exhibited—nothing but either failure or imperfect success,—and the constant regret that they, and the *Procureur de la République*, and the Judges, whether robed in black or in red, were not there to see what we were witnessing with such a beautiful profusion of manifestation. And yet not alone, we and Firman, but the very spirits themselves, according to their own declarations, had been also desirous that they should see, so as

to be able to testify, and to act in his favour. On what conditions does it depend? If we could but know, so as to be able to command or regulate them! Setting aside the atmospheric conditions, such as the electric storm of last Wednesday, it seems to me that there are two principal causes which have militated against our wishes, viz. :—

1. Spirits (especially, perhaps, those timid and shrinking young girl spirits) seem to need to become gradually familiar with the spectators—to enter into sympathy, to acquire confidence, with them—to come to feel sure that they will not be exposed to a violation of the conditions, nor be met with a repulsive, hostile, ridiculising temper of mind. It seems that the more an individual, or a small circle, persists continuously in a course of seances, the better and the stronger and the surer become the manifestations obtained by them. See how gradually progressive were the successes obtained, and scientifically tested, and recorded by Mr. Crookes, with the spirit called “Katie King,” or “Annie Morgan,” through the mediumship of Miss Florence Cook. How different the results finally obtained by Mr. Crookes, after the slow building up of familiarity and confidence, not to say affection, from what he could obtain when he was only an abstract scientific investigator—candid, right-minded, well-meaning, indeed, but still not yet fully in the confidence of the medium. And look at Comte de Bullet, never now failing to get beautiful manifestations from some or others of a group of spirits well known to him now in their present life, as they had been before in that of the flesh (*he has seen as many as nine of them at one seance*, through Firman’s mediumship, all walking forth out of the cabinet, in one case three at a time), whereas it had begun with him with slow and doubtful gropings in the dark, many a failure, redeemed by only partial, while encouraging, successes, half repelling, half leading him on. Look at the case of his Russian friend, a man of rank and wealth—who came to Paris expressly for this object, on the encouragement of Bullet’s letters—who spent a month in persistent trials, constantly discouraged, often to despair and disgust, but who was at last rewarded with the supreme happiness of receiving the clear and full materialisation of a deeply beloved sister, when a strong, tall, bearded man burst into tears, as brother and sister *kissed and embraced each other again*, after many years of separation to the senses, though never to the souls. (That sister, the Alexandrine of my last letter, I have seen this evening.) Consider, too, how the manifestations of these spirit-friends of Bullet’s, with me present as a spectator and close observer, seem to improve as acquaintance, confidence, sympathy grow with successive seances. And yet with M. Carraby and his friends (the best of people, yet strangers to those delicate and timid girl-spirits), notwithstanding every effort, and the most earnest desires and entreaties from Bullet himself, we have as yet had nothing, I repeat, but either failure or only partial and unsatisfactory success. And so M. Carraby remains incredulous, because ignorant of these facts in regard to which seeing alone is believing, after having kindly yielded to the request of his ex-client to be allowed to show him. It is clear that this is one of the essential elements of the question, namely, familiarity, confidence, and sympathy, which must be first and gradually established between the spectator and the spirits present, unseen, or established, at least with those of the refined order with which it seems we are now dealing.

[I may remark, in passing, that Mathilde, Carmita, and Alexandrine are probably a very different fashion of persons now, as in the flesh, from your great, strong, bold John Kings or ex-pirate Morgans (I mean him no disrespect, since he seems to have grown into a good spirit enough in the course of about a couple of centuries of spirit-life), who seem to be not less ready to face a roomful of strangers at Williams’s, in London, than once to defy the battle and the breeze in the prosecution of a profession which was not quite so disreputable then as now—it being no longer the fashion for gallant and even noble English adventurers to buccaneer patriotically against the galleons and colonies of Spain. Some of your readers may do well to remember this historical discrimination when they talk of (or to) the now again famous “pirate,” who had at least that handle of “Sir” to his name which is some title to British consideration, and whose daughter certainly flieg fair and sweet colours on Mr. Crookes’s pages, even if her sire did possibly once fly what was equivalent to a black flag in the waters of the Spanish Main. But as this is a sort of aside, I put it in brackets.]

2. The mental, nervous, psychic condition of the medium (call it what you will) seems to be another of the essential elements for these marvellous manifestations. I am told by those

who knew Firman before I did that at times none would occur, because he, the medium, was disturbed in health—he had a *stomach-ache*, forsooth! He must be in a tranquil, comfortable, normal state. His part is simply passive. He is unconscious in his semi-cataleptic or somnambule sleep, which is called “trance.” If at any *seance* he cannot go into this abnormal sleep, or can go into it only in an imperfect degree, there will be little or no manifestation. On what all this depends, who shall tell us? What influence may promote, what prevent or impede, his passing into this indispensable condition, who shall make us understand? Darkness, just as in the photographer’s developing den, seems to be one of the necessary conditions of this mysterious psychic, vital, nervous chemistry, through which the spirits seem to be able to act. Firman, we have seen, has to pin black muslin over all the whiteness of the lining of the curtains of his bed, which has to serve him for a cabinet. This evening, on account of the heat, he took off his coat (a grey one), which was oppressive, and was about to go into it, with the upper half of his body presenting the broad expanse of whiteness of his shirt and sleeves, but on reflection he recognised that that would not do, and he put on a thin black coat, because the light entering at the lozenge-shaped window in the curtain, even from the half-light outside, would probably make too much light inside to permit the spirits to “materialise.” Darkness inside the cabinet seems certainly to be one of the necessary conditions, in the present stage of the ability of the spirits (though Col. Oleott’s book holds out the prospect that on Sunday, Sept. 19th, 1875, they expect to be able to materialise in full light on the open platform, in the midst of spectators, whom they will then and there address). (*Nous verrons*, let us “make a note of it.”) But the medium’s own tranquil and comfortable condition of mind and body seems certainly to be another not less (perhaps still more) essential element. Now, Firman, in regard to his *seances* with M. Carraby and his friends, is entirely out of that condition. He understands his fate to depend largely on the result. He is over-anxious, over-excited, over-nervous, over-what you please. His wife we have twice observed to be all in a tremble. He does not get asleep, or more than half asleep. This cause operating on him—or this cause cumulated with the one suggested above as operating on the spirits themselves—perhaps explains why we have thus far succeeded so little with and for M. Carraby and his friends, whose kind patience has been so little rewarded—why we get from the cabinet, after our failures, the words “no power”—while on the same day, at another hour, Bullet alone, or Bullet with me as another witness, have got some startling and beautiful results. Put this and that together, the two causes above indicated—the one affecting the spirits, the other the medium—and both combining to prevent the result desired alike by all—medium, spectators, and spirits; and you will probably have the explanation of our failures for M. Carraby, side by side, within the same twenty-four hours, with our signal successes by ourselves. I am at least as cool, and close, and sharp an observer as any of them, keeping strict watch and ward over imagination, illusion, or delusion; and whatever I state as a fact is a fact, so far as I state it; and my readiness to testify under oath may be understood as accompanying all these letters.

Pardon this dissertation upon conjectured reasons for a fact so perplexing and vexatious, and every way so regrettable, into which I have been led as a sort of preface to what I now proceed to relate about the *seance* from which I have just returned. I have before said that in these mysterious matters the failures are not less instructive than the successes. We must take them together, and harmonise them as best we may; and that is what I have been attempting—I hope not to the too great waste of your space or exhaustion of your readers’ patience. Let us come now to the facts, which I repeat that I like and swear by as much as a great poet “hated” and scoffed at them.

#### APPARENT PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER UNDER NOVEL CONDITIONS—SPIRIT-LIGHTS.

July 12th.—My recollection is no less clear this morning than it was last night of what I had just returned from witnessing. I shall not give needless details of how things succeeded each other. It will suffice to state in a more summary way the phenomena which did present themselves.

A dark *seance*, as usual, was first held, Firman being seated at the table with us, where he again got half asleep. Test conditions established as before. A small musical box was brought by the Comte, about 4 or 5 inches long by 2½ deep (this being according to request given him in the morning by

the spirits). We promptly heard plenty of raps. Then we heard the musical box being wound up, and start playing. In the course of the evening it was thus wound up at least a dozen times, and was floated about the room abundantly, playing all the time. At times the sound would become strangely faint, as if it were muffled, much more faint than could be caused by its being at the farthest corner of the ceiling—just audible and no more. I expressed a wondering question whether it might have been passed through the partition wall or the door, and was heard from the other side—all but not heard. It must have been either that or its being wrapped round in the folds of the curtain, or something else unknown to me. It was once carried through the top of the table, the under-side of which was strongly rapped by it. The Comte remarked that it had been carried through it. Sceptical I, who must always have proof, observed that it must have been carried under by the same hand which had been floating it about, not through, but round the edge of the table. “No,” was instantly rapped from beneath. “Do you mean that it was carried *through* and not round?” “Yes,” strongly. “Well, please bring it up again.” And it was instantly again on the top, sounding of course much louder on it as a sounding-board than it had done when below and held by a hand in the air. At one time, while the box was floating about, Bullet asked if they could not make it visible to us as it moved. I fancied that they might then make it phosphorescent, or somehow luminous. But it was not so; and yet the request was complied with. A spirit light was indeed formed, of irregular shape, and the box was moved to and fro and up and down *in front of* it, showing its black oblong outlines perfectly against the light, somewhat like the moon passing blackly over the sun in an eclipse. Another thing about the box. While it was floating about, our heads being occasionally touched with it, I asked to have it laid on the top of my head, and left to play there. There was not instant compliance, but after a few minutes precisely that thing was done—as also to the Comte. At one time again, while the box was floating about overhead, sometimes slowly, sometimes swiftly, and a hand at the same time playing about my face, I asked, “Oh! bring your hand to my lips and let me kiss it.” Instead of that, the hand, or another hand, brought the box to my lips, and pressed it several times upon them, as though to say, playfully, “No, not my hand; but there, kiss that if you like.” I took it in good part, and a little later did not go unrewarded. Not only was there at various times in the course of the *seance* a cordial shaking of my hand, and a good deal of patting of my head and face, regular caressing and playing with the flocks of my hair, a parting of them, and pulling them down over my forehead, all by very soft and gentle fingers, but at one time when they were playing over my face they moved down, and did rest upon my lips quite long enough for me to prefer them decidedly to the cold, hard polish of a musical box. A thing that occurred to me several times was the having the cuff of my coat-sleeve taken hold of and drawn upward (my hand still holding Mr. Firman’s, as always the case throughout, so as not to “break the chain”), until we were both drawn up to our feet and our arms raised up to their utmost height—the hand above still drawing us upward till I was about to get up on my chair—and then the same hand would push my hand downward again back to the table. This also occurred to the Comte.

Spirit-lights showed a good deal, sometimes gleams, sometimes in greater size and duration. There was chiefly one, not vertical as before, but of an irregular crescent shape. We again had, as on the former occasion, the phenomenon of the spirit which bore it descending through the table, as shown by the light sinking down and finally disappearing through it, and again emerging through it and rising to its former level. This was twice done. When the spirit was underneath, it rapped strongly on the underside. We asked earnestly for a repetition of the phenomenon which had been twice seen by the Comte, of the table-top being vaporised into transparency, so as to show the spirit underneath as we looked down from above; but it did not take place, though they had said that they would try to do it. The lights would float about the room, as before. As before, the door was locked and the key in my possession, and the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Firman securely imprisoned in ours. We several times remarked to the spirits that they were in excellent force to night, to which they would rap assent, and at once proceed to do something else. We heard Frank’s little voice, but there was nothing worth notice in the little he said.

Before we got through, a pushing of the table denoted the presence of another spirit—for these never do that. When

asked who it was, the reply (by alphabet) was H-u-e-r-t-a. "Ah, my old friend, I am very glad to meet you again," said the Comte, who explained to me that he was an old man, and an old musician with whom he had been familiar. He shook hands with the Comte, who begged him also to do the same with me. This was presently done, with cordiality, and my head was raised up again as high as I (on my feet) could stretch my arm towards the ceiling, by a man's hand this time, not by the coat-sleeve as before. The Comte hoped he would be able to show himself at the light *seance*. "Yes" was answered. But he did not. The Comte told me that he had but little power, and had never been able to make himself visible.

#### SPIRITS AND THEIR MEDIUMS SEEN TOGETHER.

Omitting minor matters, I have here given you the substance of this dark *seance*. The cabinet was at last asked for. Firman took his place in an arm-chair placed on the bed. The curtain was drawn upon him, and we had not long to wait.

I will cut short the account of this light *seance*. The curtain was frequently drawn aside, and there was Firman, always visible seated asleep in his arm-chair in the middle, and one or another, and sometimes two, of the girl spirits in their white gauze-like drapery visible by his side, behind, or partially in front of him.\*

#### INTERESTING MANIFESTATIONS BY MATERIALISED SPIRITS. †

The spirit playing the most conspicuous part was Alexandrine, the sister of the Comte's Russian friend. Her features and expression were entirely different from those of Mathilde and little Carmita. It was curious that they did not seem to be always quite the same, while yet always substantially the same. It was the same face, with the same sweet, kindly, and bright expression, but less pretty on some occasions than at other times, just as such variations appear on living human faces. At one time her features seemed to be more finely drawn, at others less sharply defined, as though less perfectly materialised, a little more vague, a little swollen as it were, yet with the identity always unmistakable. She would come forward into the clear light (a half-light, yet quite sufficient for very distinct sight) and again recede, and presently again come forward and recede, and so on, as though having to retire to gather power. Three times she came forth outside of the window in the curtain, and rose upward, drawing her drapery after her. Once, after she had done this, Mr. Firman observed that she had raised her head up to the ceiling. I questioned whether she had quite reached the ceiling. She presently came forth again, and this time unmistakably did touch it, remaining there a few seconds. Her forehead bore a golden circlet, or what seemed such. Long dark hair hung down on both sides. Above her forehead, like a jewel stuck in the hair, a little on the right, was a curious round gleam, that looked less like a gem than like a piece of coloured light or fire (dark yellowish). A stone emits varying flashes; this was a steady and pervading glow. Bullet told me that that was her "order." I have seen the same, in the same position, on the head of Mathilde—not on that of the little Carmita. What it is or means I do not know. Bullet seemed to be acquainted with this "order," but has not explained it to me further, according to whatever knowledge about it may have been imparted to him. At times she would thrust forward a good deal of her gauze-like drapery, which would come evolving billowing or forward of itself, so to speak. Once nothing appeared but this drapery, coming forward out of the lozenge window, and descending nearly to the floor, and then again drawn up and back into the cabinet—no face nor hands appearing. She would sometimes show her face, as above described, at the window, and then again down at the side, the curtain being drawn aside from within so as to show the sleeping medium in his chair; and then again it would be dropped, and she would presently reappear at the window. At one time the following occurred. She was looking straight forward down upon us from the window, with a particularly kind and benignant expression. I exclaimed—"See how affectionate she looks; she is evidently overflowing with affection. I am sure we return it to her." The smile on her face brightened still more, and she brought forward her fingers to her lips, and wafled kisses to us. At another time the two faces, of herself and Carmita, appeared together, and presently turned towards each other, approached, and kissed each other several times, with the pretty music of that pleasant performance. Of course when the curtain was down and they appeared only at the window, Firman was not in view, but every time (and it

was full a dozen times) that they drew aside the curtain, now on the right side and now on the left, there was Firman seated in his trance, his head thrown rather back. We saw him thus several times, and with the two girls by his side, sometimes both on the same side, sometimes one on the right, the other on the left.

One thing was evident, *only the upper part of their bodies was materialised*, down to and including the arms, below being gauze-like white drapery, sometimes straight and abundant, so as to present the appearance of a form in full stature, but at other times thin and shadowy; once this slight drapery was bent backward below the bust—as might be the case if the solid bust were moved forward against an opposite wind—so as to make it perfectly unequivocal that there was nothing more of her there than the head and bust, and as though it were meant to make that plain to our eyes. In my letter published by you on the 9th I spoke of them as having seemed to sit upon Firman as he lay, for it is only recently that he has taken to an arm chair placed on the bed. I now think that that appearance was produced by the cause just stated—that they were then, as now, only materialised to the bust, and were in the air over him, their drapery partly covering him. When Mathilde on that occasion showed a pretty little foot (in compliance with Bullet's request), protruding it out of a cloud of drapery and shaking it, the first alone was, probably, specially materialised *ad hoc*. At this *seance*, I repeat, there was manifestly *nothing of them below the bust*.\*

It is needless to give further particulars of this *seance*. Mathilde—the most beautiful in face of the three—did not appear. We were afterwards told that she could not show herself, being occupied in helping the others.

The signal of all being over was their "Good-bye, good-bye," spoken behind the curtain (in English this time), with a faint voice, which I had to strain my ear to catch. Some phrases of affection were interchanged with Bullet; again, "Good-bye—good-night."

July 14th.—There was a *seance* the day before yesterday morning, at which were present, besides the Comte and myself, the Comtesse de Bullet and two persons of the company which had before witnessed at M. Carraby's nothing but the lamentable failures above related. We were, of course, extremely solicitous that the latter two should have a good *seance*, with a view to the report of it reaching M. Carraby, at least at second hand, through his own intimate friends. The force was not indeed strong nor the manifestations many, but enough was shown to constitute what I think ought to have been regarded as satisfactory and sufficient, though we have so much experience to the effect that repeated and often repeated success is required to produce a decisive effect upon distrustful incredulity. There was evidently difficulty in materialising. We would at first for some time see *formless white forms* rise to the window, with vague outlines of a head, which would presently sink back again; no features distinguishable, and no coming forward to the full light. In answer to questions and pressing we were told, by the alphabet, that they were *trying*. At last a head did come forward to the window, but veiled with white gauze—probably unable to face the light, or unwilling to show imperfectly-formed features. It presently came down to an opening drawn at one side of the curtain, still veiled, notwithstanding the Comte's protest against the veil. After a time, however, it did come forward *without* the veil—Carmita. Of the two strangers the one could see plainly; the other, unfortunately, was near-sighted, and had forgotten to bring a *lorgnon*. Carmita then reappeared several times, and Firman, asleep in the chair, was plainly visible behind her. There also appeared distinctly at the window the two faces of the two sisters, Mathilde and Carmita, who presently turned to each other, approached, joined their lips, and the sweet familiar little sound was heard, not loud, but unequivocal. The one of the two strangers "thought" she saw the motion of the lips. I did not, having at the moment turned my eyes a little off in bending my best ear forward to hear the sound that promised to come. Of course the near-sighted stranger could not. At the dark *seance* there was not very much. No lights appeared, only the musical box floated and played overhead, and all present had their hands touched. Remember that the "chain" of hands in contact with each other on the table all round was always maintained. All this constituted what I have above said I thought ought to have been regarded as satisfactory and sufficient—the essential point having been there of *simultaneous view* of the sleeping medium and of the white-draped

\* Was Mr. Firman's face clearly seen? To make good evidence the living features of medium and spirits should be seen at the same time.—Ed.

\* Were the faces unmistakably living and breathing, and did they have mobile features? What was the amount of light? Spirits sometimes make up faces and busts having no life in them.—Ed.

forms and faces; besides the pretty passage of kissing between the two sister girls. And yet so much was asked for that was not responded to with performance that it left much to be desired. Another appointment was gladly accepted by the two strangers for the next (yesterday) morning. At this second *seance* with the two strangers, there was simply a total and unexpected failure. The dark *seance* was suppressed, the spirits having promptly called for "cabinet." Then after protracted waiting, with similar white cloudy appearances seen within as above described, looking like attempts and failures, we were told (by the alphabet) "*We cannot materialise.*" "Well, rest awhile," said the Comte. "We will wait a quarter of an hour. See if you cannot gather more force." "Yes;" and the full light was restored. But after the resumption, still nothing came, and we had to break up chagrined and disappointed.

At the former dark *seance* witnessed by one stranger, the little Indian, though unseen, talked pretty freely with his peculiar well-known voice, in German and French as well as English. When pressed to show himself, he said he could not. "Why?" "I ain't allowed." "Who don't allow you?" "The great God." This was uttered in a tone of solemnity I have never before heard from him. (To him, I presume, as with men and nations in history, the *something immediately above*, whose control and power he felt, was probably "*the great God.*")

I have since conversed with one of the two persons above referred to—the one I was most desirous to convince, but the one who was unfortunately near-sighted. *Not fully satisfied*—could imagine modes in which there might have been deception by Firman. "Did you not see him asleep in his chair while the white forms and faces were there distinct from him?" "Yes," but suppose they had been images which he had stuck up?" "But we had seen that there was nothing concealed upon him and nothing in the bed." "Ah, but Houdin does such wonderful things." "But Robert Houdin, on his own stage, provided with all his elaborate machinery and confederates, could never have made those two pretty young faces kiss each other. You saw it and heard it." "Yes, but—" "And your friend saw their lips move." "*Thought they did; is not since sure of having seen.*" "Well, your hand was touched when all the human hands round the table were prisoned by being kept in contact in the chain." "The contact between Firman's and mine was simply that of our little fingers." "Mine with my neighbour's was more firm, but for that purpose was not a little finger enough?" "It might have been detached for a moment and I not have noticed it. I wish I could have seen a foot." "Well, I have seen three feet in the most conclusive manner." And I related it. But it is never of much use arguing. Seeing, and much and manifold seeing, is what is required in this matter, so hard at first to accept. "You shall see a good deal more when Firman comes out of his prison. My own conviction only follows after strong mental resistance, and such convictions are alone worthy of respect." So much for our efforts to bring conviction to M. Carraby's mind, directly and through those of his friends. No very splendid success, as you see. And my interlocutor on this occasion did certainly see what ought to have wrought conviction. Even if the two girl-forms and faces were mannikins stuck up by poor little Firman in that empty cabinet, searched beforehand—and mannikins provided with such wonderful internal machinery as to kiss each other with an audible kiss, *who drew the curtain to again*. Could mechanical puppets?—Firman, seated, being in our view. I suppose that argument would have been met by some theory of invisible threads worked by unobserved movements of his feet. The person referred to is of an intelligent and perfectly honest mind, and well disposed to belief, having read somewhat on the subject (even Wallace's, Crookes', and Olcott's recent books). So hard is it to reach the inner citadel of conviction—so infinitesimally little in the way of an imaginary possibility of an objection, that can be formulated in words even though it will not bear a moment's test of discussion, is sufficient to keep out all the power of the evidence of a new truth against which stand opposed strong social and other influences. Food may be taken in, but it is a process of *time* to digest and assimilate it.

I must curtail, but must not omit, the two evening *seances* of those two days, which—the two persons referred to unfortunately not being present—were in very deed *splendid*. All the manifestations before described were reproduced, with variation. The two sister spirits seemed stimulated to successful effort by the presence of their sister still in the flesh, the countess, who was the object of no end of caresses from

them. And the way in which I, for my part, was treated and played with was, as we Americans say, a caution! Pattings and strokings; my hair (rather long from neglect) pulled about into a very hornet's nest; my hands and face touched and retouched with the feathery-feeling drapery; my face and head once beaten about gently and playfully with this same soft drapery, with, perhaps, a dozen quickly consecutive little blows of what seemed regular exuberant fun. A charming kissing performance occurred between Alexandrine and Carmita. They kissed three times in quick succession—three quite loud kisses; and, seeming not satisfied, their lips came together again and *again*. There were three or four plainly visible and audible kisses between those two young creatures, who, from what I am assured, were not less innocent and sweet in the human than now in the spirit life.

One incident I cannot omit. Alexandrine was looking down on us from the window with so bright and kindly an expression that I was prompted to exclaim: "Oh, how happy you are in the spirit-life! When shall I go and enter it too? I hope it may not be long before I may. You will then, I trust, feel as kindly to me as you do now. We shall then know you all more closely. You will welcome us all there, will you not?" The sweet face bent forward and nodded distinctly—evident assent—and with such a benignant smile!—and in a moment or two its hand moved up to its lips and wafted forth a kiss—two kisses—to us. Thus, in very truth, did this incident pass. Was not this some approximation towards human intercourse with angels? It left behind it a singular glow of the soul. The feeling rose strongly in my mind that "it is good to be here."

The showing of the foot of Mathilde (on request) was very satisfactory. At first the curtain was but little drawn aside on the left, where the Comte sat. He saw it better than I could, though I had a glimpse of it. He then asked for it on the other side for me, and again I saw it, but too briefly to be sure that it was not a hand instead of a foot, and so I said. In a few moments it was again shown, this time further advanced to the light, and laid square and flat on the sole upon the black railway rug, and left there several seconds for inspection—a slender, delicate, high-insteped girl's foot, of pinkish flesh colour, visible to the ankle, toes and all—and no mistake. No lovelier little foot in the flesh was ever sculptured or painted; it well corresponded with the singular beauty of Mathilde's face. She is indeed the beauty of the three *par excellence*.

When all was over, and we were talking it over, I suggested, *apropos* of the *all but* total extinction of the sound of the musical box at times, to try the experiment of how it would sound at the furthest corner of the room, up or near the ceiling. This was done by standing on a chair; the sound was clear and distinct. It was then taken out of the room, and the door closed. It then sounded exactly as it had sounded at the times when we had fancied it must be *out of the room*. It was pretty evident that it had indeed been carried *out through the shut and locked door*, and through the wall. The sound—if that faint ghost of its music could be called sound—had always seemed to come from that direction.

July 15th.—I must complete this record by a short account of the *seance* of yesterday evening, which was the farewell meeting, since Firman was to go to his prison this morning at eleven—such being the pleasure of the gods (of the *perquet*). If he could have shown a good *seance* to M. Carraby this fiat might possibly have been modified, but *Dis aliter visum*.

#### EXTRAORDINARY MANIFESTATIONS.

There were present the Comte and Comtesse de Bullet, myself, and the Firmans. All three, Alexandrine, and the two sisters Mathilde and Carmita, made themselves visible. The old musician Huerta, though not made visible, proved his presence; he may be said to have entered an invisible appearance. So did Frank, in a characteristic way. I will not touch on manifestations which were only varied reproductions of what I have before mentioned, but please refer back to what has been above said about the musical box seeming from the sound to be carried through and out of the door. A doubt remained on my mind whether that effect of the sound being thus deadened almost into silence might not have been caused by the box being well muffled up in the thick double cloth of the bed curtains. As though to clear up this question in my mind, the box several times, while sounding loud on the table, would shoot off to the right, and become thus instantly all but inaudible. A sharp knock on the inside of the door accompanied this. I said, "It is certainly now outside; let us observe its return." Then another knock on the outside of the door, and it was again in an instant in our midst, full-sounding on the

table-top. It reminded me, in its quickness, of the sudden dart of a bird from the ground to a neighbouring bough, and back again presently from the bough to the ground. "They want to show us that it did indeed pass in and out through the door," I said. "Yes" was answered in loud raps under the table. The sharp knock which was heard on the door did not appear to be necessary to the operation of its passing through, but rather to have been meant to call our special attention to the door, for this knock on exit and re-entrance only occurred once, whereas the rapid displacement from the table to the door and *vice versa* (indicated by the sound, as above explained) occurred a number of times without the accompaniment of the knock.

The evening before we had had, as above mentioned, a perfect show of the foot of Mathilde. This evening we had the same from Alexandrine and Carmita, not less unmistakably than in the former case. Alexandrine first showed her foot in a sitting posture. When asked for it, she thrust it forward, but under her drapery, which it raised up to a point. "No, no, without its being hidden by your dress," said the Comte. It was then put forward by itself, outside of the drapery, as requested. But it was not flesh-coloured, as that of Mathilde had been, but dead-white, apparently in a stocking or slipper. "But can't you show it naked?" It then *was* shown naked, pinkish colour, toes and all, and a little higher this time than the ankle. "See," I exclaimed to the Comte, "we can see the outline of the leg above." It was indeed already distinguishable under the thin drapery, nearly to the knee, and very perfect in outline too. She presently went to the other side, and again (this time standing) showed her foot as she stood, her face at the window, and then thrust forward her hand at its proper height. We thus saw all three together—face, hand and foot. The little Carmita's foot was not less distinctly shown. "*Mira, mira,*" exclaimed the Countess to her husband, "*el pie de familia!*" (Look, the family foot!) "Yes," he answered. He afterwards explained to me that this referred to the peculiarity of the great toe lapping a little over the next one, and that it existed in the whole of her family (daughters of the Marquis d'Arcos). This circumstance may seem minute, but it was curious, as being so identifying.

Another little circumstance in this *seance*. The light was moving about, now outside of our circle, now within it, as though borne by, or shining from the face of, a person moving about on the table. I could not distinguish features, but the folds of drapery below it were manifest. From its relative position to the drapery beneath it, it seemed to be light shining from a face. The vertical plaits of the drapery beneath looked as though gathered at a neck. Bullet said it was Carmita. Presently, as though to certify who it was, there appeared in front of the light, and dark against the background of light, a slender girl's or child's hand held up, with the fingers spread out and playing backward and forward. It thus passed and repassed two or three times before the light. "Ah, that is Carmita's dear little hand," Bullet exclaimed. Three raps of assent followed immediately. Whether they were raps on the table or little pats on my hand I do not now remember, for it frequently occurred that the assenting raps were thus given, not on the table, but upon my hand, as though to satisfy the constant—I will not say doubt—but critical vigilance of observation on my part, I, from my habit of mind, being ever attentive to the point of sufficiency of evidence.

At one time the little Indian's familiar voice was there in our midst. His childish talk is not worth repeating. But I said: "Ah, Franky, you may be an ignorant little boy, as they say, but you are a good-hearted little one, and you know I always stood up for you." "Yes; thank you." And a hand (different from the soft, gentle little fingers I was by this time accustomed to) was in the midst of my hair, pulling it about very freely, as in play. My head was thus pulled forward to near the middle of the small table, and another head bumped or knocked rather sharply, though not so as to hurt, against the top of my forehead. I said: "I declare, Franky has knocked heads with me." Immediately came his little laugh, and his little voice said: "Yes, which is the hardest, Sully-Sully?" "I don't know; I rather think yours, Frank." My spectacles were also taken off and transferred to the face of the medium, who, when he afterwards woke up, was evidently unconscious of having them on.

Are these trifles worth relating, or not? It strikes me that they are. I will mention one more.

My hand was taken, as it had been once before, by a *man's* hand, and raised as high as I on my feet could stretch up my arm. "I think that is Huerta's hand," I said, for I thought I recognised its feel. Then followed, not raps of assent, but

over our heads, three sounds of fingers snapped together; and then, circling round, the same sound of fingers snapped together was continued, producing something like the effect of castanets, keeping time to, and artistically accompanying, the air which the musical box was playing on the table. "Oh, yes," said the Comte; "that's Huerta—you remember (addressing his wife) that was a favourite performance of his."

At this *seance* again occurred what we have frequently before seen, though I have omitted to mention it, that the girl spirits would gather up drapery and hold it up as a sort of pillow on which they would recline their heads and cheeks, in a very pretty, graceful fashion.

It is worth noting that at this farewell *seance*, of intimates (for such I seemed to have become), with no strangers present upon whom conviction was to be wrought, the curtain was not once drawn aside, as it had been a score of times before, to show the sleeping medium simultaneously with the spirit-forms. It had been done often enough before, and no feeling of doubt in any of our minds now called for or suggested it. We none of us thought of it or cared for it at the time. But I now recall and mention it, whether it may be taken by others as making for or against. When a thing has been well shown and thoroughly proved some twenty times, I see no particular use in a twenty-first, when nobody present needs or asks for it. Its omission then becomes rather a fresh confirmation of the good faith and simple truth of the whole. I had not even, for this farewell and intimate *seance*, thought of attending to the usual test conditions of search of the person of the medium, of the bed, &c., nor of locking the door.

I will not speak of the leave-taking of these spirits addressed to their sister and brother. They were profuse in their various caresses, as was manifest from the responsive exclamations and speeches.

When all was over, "Light out" was said through the alphabet, and presently a sort of farewell address was made from inside—in English this time—and in a low whispering voice which we could not easily, yet did distinctly, catch. It was to the effect that they had done their best, in the short time they had had, and under great difficulties. That it would be some time before they could meet us again, but that before long they would do a great deal more. Some loving expressions to their brother and sister, and then "God bless you, good night, good night, *adios, adios.*"

#### THE IMPRISONMENT OF MR. FIRMAN.

Firman surrendered himself this morning punctually to appointment, and the gates of St. P. Lagie closed on as honest and innocent a victim as they have ever imprisoned for the crime of supporting a conscientious truth, at variance with the ideas of the authority of the day. And that is saying not a little.

After all that I have thus faithfully chronicled as having passed under my own very wide-awake and attentive observation, and after what I before told you of the little Indian having been seen by M. de Veh, the Comte de Bullet, and Mr. J. H. Gledstones, on four occasions *simultaneously with the medium* (since the M. Huguet row, but before the trial), when two of them floated up in the air, once so as to touch the ceiling with his feather head-dress, and once up and down several times, your readers may judge for themselves whether at M. Huguet's the little Indian was or was not "Firman on his knees," masked, &c. It is worth mentioning that since the trial the little Indian has not once been made visible, though frequently heard and requested to show himself. He would always reply that he could not. On one occasion he said he was not permitted by the *great God*. On another he answered that his "medy (medium) was *cross with him,*" though he "wanted to show himself," and it is a fact that Firman has more than once said that he did not want to have anything more to do with him; that he had got into all his trouble through him. It is curious that this state of the medium's mind or feeling about him should frustrate his wish to materialise, though he was frequently there, to speak, hold up the curtains, and do some of his little tricks. But we could readily dispense with his appearance when we were receiving such beautiful manifestations as I have just described from such lovely and loving spirits of a higher category as Alexandrine and the two sisters Mathilde and Carmita.

#### EXPERIENCES OF THE COMTE DE BULLET.

I again record that Comte de Bullet, after perusal, fully confirms all the above, and authorises these letters to be regarded as coming from us both. And though neither of us is accustomed to discriminate between the *word* and the *word of honour*, we both pledge the latter in the

strongest manner to the exact truth of all they contain. I may also mention that he says that all these phenomena which I have witnessed with him are but little in comparison with those he has before frequently obtained through the mediumship of Firman, he sitting alone with him for the twofold motive of investigation and of the enjoyment of this intercourse with the spirits of those not less beloved still than they were in their life. He has had as many as nine walk forth from the cabinet to him at one *seance*, and three together at the same time. They have shown their feet, raising them up to the edge of the sofa. He has taken them in his hands very freely. He has felt different parts of their bodies. They have come sometimes, not merely in the gauze in which I have seen them draped, but in robes of the most exquisite of laces, such as he has never seen elsewhere. Among them have been grand forms of his father and an uncle. The mother of Mathilde and Carmita, as of the Countess (who died under thirty) is the most beautiful of all. Another, not known to him in life, named Nathalie, has been brought by Alexandrine, whose intimate friend she was and is. There has been also a mulatto girl, an old servant of the family. He has been often allowed to go into the cabinet, and has witnessed the gradual condensation of different forms into the result we call materialisation, feeling the different portions of the body that were materialised, and the absence of palpable substance in others. He has also no end of times in the cabinet witnessed the converse process of their gradually dissolving away. He has had some photographed, by the light from the window, as they stood for the purpose in front of the cabinet, and the photographs remain to speak for themselves, including the photograph of a sister of his own, who is *still living and in health*, at Baltimore, in the United States, the unexpected appearance of whose *double* in this way suggested to him at the time that an early steamer must bring him news of her death. Buguet was, indeed, the photographer, but Buguet away from his own *atelier* and his draped mannikins; and very much frightened he seemed when he was first called upon to photograph a real spirit-form which had walked forth into the light. No wonder the Count stood by and sticks to Firman, whom he does not wish to separate from him for years. These spirits of his are all good spirits, overflowing with warm affection. He is admitted into this intimacy of frequent intercourse with them, in part, doubtless, from the facility arising out of almost daily habit, and in part because he is so good and kind-hearted a man himself, as well as an educated and intelligent, cool and totally unenthusiastic one. He has no mediumship himself. He remains, as he was brought up, a Roman Catholic; but the priests had better let him alone about Spiritualism, for if he *believes* in his religion, he *knows* the spiritual faith. He has kept notes of all his experience, and talks of some day writing it out, but I doubt whether he ever will. I give this summary of it from his own lips (and have read it to him as usual), because, though it has been witnessed only by himself (he preferring it so and his fortune permitting it), I have now also been admitted to witness so much of the same order of facts, and to do so under test conditions, and with a close vigilance of accurate observation, that my own testimony to what I have *seen, heard, and felt* reflects back upon the much more not actually witnessed by me, and satisfies me fully of its correctness, as, in his simple, quiet way, the Comte has several times recounted it all to me, when I would cross-examine his recollections.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

Paris.

SUNDAY LECTURES AT CAVENDISH ROOMS.—An able discourse was delivered on Sunday last at the above hall by the Rev. F. R. Young, on the "Old and the New," Dr. Sexton being absent on a lecturing tour in the provinces. The attendance was small, but all present seemed much pleased with the lecture. On Sunday next Dr. Sexton will again resume the platform, to deliver an address on "Sincerity." Service at seven o'clock.

SPIRITUALISM IN BIRMINGHAM. — A correspondent says:—"Dr. Monck is still in Birmingham, where he has been residing for some time past, holding successful *seances*. Last Monday a *seance* was held at Mr. Perks' house; some twenty-four persons were present; spirit hands were felt, spirit lights were seen, tambourine and bells were played and floated about the room, the table was taken up from the floor, and several tests were given of a satisfactory nature. The Birmingham press has given descriptions of Dr. Monck's *seances*, which have been puzzling even to the newspapers. Dr. Monck remains in Birmingham a week or two longer.

POWERFUL SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS ON BOARD H.M.S. *MONARCH*.

H.M.S. *Monarch*, Arosa Bay, Coast of Spain, 7th July, 1875.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—About nine months ago, by what would appear to a casual observer the merest chance, a copy of the *Medium and Daybreak* came into my possession.

I had heard Spiritualism and the doings of the Spiritualists spoken of occasionally when in England, but was one of those, of whom there are so many, who, without any investigation of the subject, or without reading any of the books written by those who had investigated, *credulously* imputed the whole thing to His Satanic Majesty, because I was aware that it was stated in the Bible that in the last days should come lying spirits seducing from the faith.

I did not, in my innocence, suppose for a moment that the spirits alluded to might be wearing fleshly garments, walking our streets, preaching materialism, and writing the God-dishonouring books with which our literature has for some years been flooded. I thought they must be disembodied.

I have reason to thank God that my eyes have been opened since. From the time when the above-named paper came into my hands, I have made it my *duty* to study the subject (it being of such vital import) and sift the evidence, and I am glad to find that I have the power to believe in human evidence. I have not had to depend though entirely upon the evidence of others for my conviction.

Believing that the facts might be demonstrated on board a ship as well as on shore, although with less facility, I induced three others of my brother officers to investigate with me. To our surprise we *all four* proved to be mediums, and very soon found that conjuring had very little to do with Spiritualism.

Such being the case, I feel it to be a positive duty not to keep to myself the knowledge of a truth which may be useful to others, if it only induces them to investigate for themselves. I therefore forward herewith for you to publish, if you think it worth while to do so, a few notes of our *seances* taken at the time.—I remain, dear Sirs, yours faithfully,

WILLIAM WATSON,  
Spiritualist, late an "Investigator."

*Seances held in H.M.S. "Monarch."*

No. 1, May, 1875.—Sitters: Messrs. C. K., R. B., and W. S. W.

The manifestations were of the usual simple nature. The table tipped, and one or two feeble attempts were made to answer questions.

No. 2, May.—Sitters as above.

The manifestations as usual, with the exception that the table was raised from the ground. It tipped over on to C. K.'s knee, and succeeded, by pressing down upon it, in raising its feet into the air. After a short time, in compliance with our expressed wish, it threw itself off the knee and floated for two or three seconds in the air. Then with our hands still upon it it shuffled up on to C. K.'s knee and attempted to mount on to his shoulder, but the leg missed, and the table then stood with one leg pressed inside his waistcoat. After coming to the ground it coolly got on to my bed and lay down, the top of the table resting on the pillow. We took it down, placed it on its feet, blew out the light, and waited for further manifestations. The table, however, as if it were a thing of life, would lie down on the deck and glide into a corner.

We picked it up two or three times, but the intelligence seemed to get angry.

The table gave a slight jump and off flew one of its legs. C. K. caught hold of the table, but with a jerk it got away, and off went the other leg.

We then lighted up and concluded the *seance*.

No. 3, June, 1875.—Sitters as before, with the addition of Mr. D.

The introduction of Mr. D. into the circle seemed to wonderfully increase the power. We had been sitting but a very few moments when the table commenced to roll about. It tilted over until it went down on the floor. Somebody remarked, "He's got a lazy fit again," when the table instantly sprang up on to its feet. Shortly after it leaped right out of the circle over the heads or shoulders of Messrs. D. and B. Soon after it had been brought back into the circle again it rose perpendicularly into the air, and to keep our hands on the top we had to rise up on to our feet. Presently Mr. D.

observed that it was dangerous to have such a heavy object floating and jumping about in the dark, as it might fall on one's head and injure him. I had just said to him "There is no cause for fear; the spirits can guide it all right, and will take care of us," when he exclaimed, "Oh! it's jumped at me." We struck a match, and found his head nicely fitted between the two legs. This would have been a neat shy, if done by one of us in daylight. At this *seance* raps were heard for the first time, and a penholder was thrown into the circle. When this was thrown, our hands were all joined on the table, as we were *testing* the raps.

No. 4, 7th June.—Sitters as before. Progress made in such a short time, truly wonderful. Immediately upon sitting, we noticed the great powers possessed by the table. It danced in capital time to the tune being played by the band just then. We asked the spirits if the power was sufficient for them to dance the table if we stood round and joined hands a foot or two over it. The answer being "Yes," we did so, and the table, untouched by us, danced in capital time to a waltz then being played by the band. Two or three times it bounded off the deck against us, but did not hurt us in the least.

Upon resuming our seats, I asked our visitors if we placed paper and pencil on the table, would they write? They promised to do so, so we provided the materials. We joined hands as before. Presently we heard the pencil writing. We asked our unseen friends to rap when they had finished, so that we could light up and see what they had written. This was done, and we found three words and a half written, "Ars longa vita bre—" The "brevis" was not finished. We again blew out the light, and put the paper and pencil on the table. The paper was taken up and rattled about. After a short time it was thrown out of the circle, and the pencil was pitched into my lap. After this we made a piece of paper up into an envelope, and placed the pencil inside. A hand was seen at work, and the pencil rolled out, but there was nothing written. The pencil was then placed inside, and the paper gummed up. We desired that it should be taken out without the paper being unfastened. This they could not or would not do, but the paper was pitched away into a corner. It was brought back to the table again by us. It then disappeared, and although I have searched everywhere for it, it cannot be found. The spirits told us that they had taken it, and were not going to give it back again. During the evening the raps were frequent, both on the top and underneath the table. They were of all descriptions, and might have been produced by tapping with finger-nails, rapping with knuckles, and bringing the fist down with very decent force. Three of us were touched during the evening. A hand clasped my waist, and having requested to be touched on the face, the fingers and thumb of a small warm hand, apparently, were lightly pressed over my mouth. The *seance* lasted for about an hour and a half. We asked for a good night before we broke up the circle, and were told to "be off." D. then got a rather heavy knock on the back of his neck to enliven him up, upon which we quickly struck a light to avoid getting the same.

No. 5, 9th June.—Sitters as before. The last time we sat we, for the first time, were gently touched. To-night the blows on the face and head were, to say the least, violent. D. and B. fully expected to have black eyes, and I must say I was made to see more stars than I bargained for. Upon sitting down, we asked our spirit-visitors if the presence of a stranger we had admitted into the cabin would interfere with the manifestations. The answer being given in the negative he remained; but not for long. Our friends evidently wanted to astonish him, for we had not been sitting many minutes when we heard a pretty hard blow, and he exclaimed, "Oh! it isn't fair, it's below the belt. Where's the door? As I can't see anything in the dark, I'll be off." After the laugh following his egress was over, we had not long to wait to discover that the force present, psychic, or any other, was decidedly a force of some kind. We all clasped hands round the table. I was the first victim, and was heartily laughed at, but the old saying of "Laugh not until you are out of the wood" proved to be good advice. Blows and slaps came thick and fast, and the laughter of one moment was the laughter at the next. I think, however, that I received the most attention. I was not the least hurt though, and in fact D. and B. were the only ones who received blows which appeared to be at all vicious, and these a very small child could have administered. There were more forces than one present, for while one was drumming on the top of B.'s head, apparently with knuckles, some very gentle force was touching the back of my head, and another, almost imperceptible, was moving C. K.'s hair about. After some time some one proposed to

cover heads by putting our caps on. All but myself did so. C. K. then asked if they could take his off. It was taken off. He then asked that the same might be done for the rest, which was also done. We heard the caps falling on to the floor in the corner of the cabin. B. suddenly exclaimed, "Mine is put on again," then, "Now it's taken off." I had hardly got the exclamation of "By Jove!" out of my mouth when the cap was flung full in my face. Then I put my own cap on, but it was immediately taken off, and we were then pelted with caps. Afterwards we asked if the table could be taken out of the circle if we took our hands away entirely. Being answered in the affirmative, we all joined hands. Presently the table floated over our arms and pitched into the corner. The noise made in its descent might have been caused by its being somewhat hastily lowered, but there was most certainly no reason to suppose that it fell altogether unsupported. Presently it came back into the circle again with less noise, if anything. We asked our friends what they had done with the rough paper envelope, with pencil inside, which disappeared at our *seance* on the 7th, and they told us that they had taken it to a private house in Lisbon (we were at anchor in the Tagus at the time), and that we should not see it again.

WILLIAM S. WATSON.

## THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

### MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

ON Tuesday evening last week a Council meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held at the rooms of the Association, 38, Great Russell-street, London, under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder. The other members present were Mrs. Makdongall Gregory, Mr. Morell Theobald, Mr. Henry Withall, Captain J. James, Mr. Samuel Chinnery, Mr. Thomas Everitt, Mrs. Wood, Mr. George R. Tapp, Mr. D. H. Wilson, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. Malthy, Mr. Joseph Freeman, Mr. E. Parkinson Ashton, and Mr. Edmands.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

### NEW MEMBERS.

The following new members were then unanimously elected: Mr. W. Arbutnot, Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. J. J. Herfst, Mr. W. Meredith, and Dr. J. Dixon.

The Secretary remarked that Mr. Herfst was formerly the President of Oromase, the Society of Spiritualists at The Hague, but had taken up his residence in London and expected to remain for a year.

The following ladies and gentlemen having written to the Association accepting honorary membership, were accordingly elected: The Baroness de Gildenstein; M. de Bassompierre; M. Anthelme Fritz, President of *l'Union Spiritisme et Magnétisme*, Brussels; Mr. Luther Colby, Editor of the *Banner of Light*, Boston; and the Rev. S. Watson, Editor of the *Spiritual Magazine*, Tennessee.

It was resolved to invite the following Spiritualists to become honorary members of the Association—Mr. Isaac B. Rich, of the firm of Colby & Rich, and Colonel P. Jacoby, of Brussels.

### ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

Mr. Dawson Rogers said that, according to the rules and constitution, the Association ought to have had a president long ago, but, as it did not know whom to elect, nobody had yet been appointed. The subject was more especially brought up at the present moment because information had been received from the United Spiritual Societies of the kingdom of Belgium, that directly the British National Association of Spiritualists had a president he would be elected a honorary member of the Belgian Union. He thought there would be but one opinion about the gentleman whom he would suggest as the most suitable for the office, for they must all regard Mr. Martin Smith as a good worker and warm friend to the cause, so that they could not do wrong to invite him to become president. (Applause.) He knew that Mr. Smith had one objection, and perhaps more, to take the office: he thought that it would involve greater attention to the business of the Association than he was able to give; but if he gave in the future that attention which he had given in the past the Association would be amply satisfied—there was no cause for fear on that ground. He would propose that the Council invite him to become president of the Association, and perhaps it would be well to send a deputation to him on the subject. (Applause.)

Mr. A. Calder said that he had much pleasure in seconding the motion.

This was carried unanimously with acclamation, Messrs. Rogers and Calder being appointed as a deputation to invite Mr. Martin Smith to act.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Mr. Morell Theobald read the Finance Committee's report dated June 30th, showing a balance in hand of £137 13s. 6d.; bills for payment (consisting of rent from the time the Association had taken possession of its new premises, salaries, and miscellaneous items) amounted to £73 9s. 5d., leaving a balance in hand of £64 4s. 1d. The outstanding liabilities of the Association amounted to nothing.

It was resolved that Mr. E. T. Bennett be requested to apply at once for the payment of the rest of the guarantee fund, to prevent the finances of the Association from getting too low.

The Secretary stated that during the present year £192 had already been paid in subscriptions, although forty or fifty members had not yet made their remittances. Last year the total income of the Association for the whole year was only £190.

A letter from Mr. Tod was read in which he said that he could not at present accept a seat on the Council because he was not sufficiently acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, but that he was inquiring into them whenever opportunity offered; he hoped that the time would come when he should have much pleasure in accepting office.

THE PUBLIC FUNDS OF SPIRITUALISTS—WORKERS IN SPIRITUALISM.

The Secretary then read the following letter from Mr. W. H. Harrison.

*The Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office,  
38, Great Russell-street, London, W.C.  
July 18th, 1875.*

*To the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—During the last sixteen years Mr. Cogman has continued a series of free Sunday services in connection with Spiritualism at the East-end of London; he has also held free week-day public seances, at which much knowledge of the subject has been diffused, and the powers of Mr. Morse, as well as of other mediums, were developed in the first instance; several of these mediums have since done work of much value to Spiritualism. For the last three years Mr. Cogman has continued to give regular Sunday services at 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile End, E., in a respectable neatly-furnished house in a quiet street. The work is made self-supporting as much as possible, the mainstay, I believe, being Mrs. Cogman's needlework. Now and then persons who visit the meetings give five or ten shillings towards their support, but such instances are rare; there is a collecting box at the door, in which, after each meeting, a sum total of two or three shillings is usually found, with an occasional peppermint-drop or piece of tobacco pipe. The services are of good quality, Mr. Cogman being an excellent trance medium. Several other trance mediums, little known as yet, frequently speak at the meetings.

Although this is a bad financial year for the National Association, because it has had to pay £200 to furnish its new offices, I think that Mr. Cogman should not be overlooked; for as it is true that those who make the most clamour are not always the best workers in the Spiritual movement, it is equally true that Mr. Cogman and Mr. Blyton have done steady work for Spiritualism for many years, to an extent but little appreciated, because they are so quiet.

As a private member of the Association, I therefore write to ask you whether you do not think it would be right to offer Mr. Cogman regularly one guinea a quarter towards the expenses of his establishment, the said guinea to be paid at the termination of each quarter, and on condition that free public Sunday services have been held regularly on his premises during the preceding three months. If this is done, I think that the regret might be also expressed that under present circumstances the Association is not well able to do more to help him.

I have now to ask the Association for a further boon and privilege to myself, which I do not think it will object to grant, because my work in Spiritualism has been especially arduous in consequence of the unequal distribution of the public funds in aid of spiritual literature. During the last six years £500 a year has been given, mostly by my personal friends, to one branch of our spiritual literature, making a total of £3,000, whilst to that section with which I am connected rather less than £600 has been contributed in the same time in a semi-public way. This

inequality arises from the fact that from the first I have had conscientious objections to the introduction of the subscription system in aid of private individuals into Spiritualism. I think it would have been better for the movement had it left readers to pay a halfpenny or a penny more each for their journals, rather than that a very few friends should have been burdened with the enormous expense of £3,600 during the last six years. Still, as a balance of public capital amounting to £2,400 has been spent during the past six years for the benefit of the movement, but unintentionally in such a way as to injure me severely by underselling, I have been left to pay out in money all the heavy losses thereby inflicted.

The boon I have to ask the Association is this: New mediums often come to me asking for reports of their manifestations, and the movement at large desires to receive particulars relating thereto. I therefore wish the Association to allow me the free use of the seance-room occasionally for private circles at which no money is taken by the medium or by anybody else, and upon evenings when the seance-room is not required for any other purpose. The number of evenings upon which it might be so granted to me could be limited, that is to say, it might be a rule that I could not have it more than two evenings per month. I do not think that upon an average I should ask for it more than once a month.—Truly yours,  
WILLIAM HARRISON.

Mr. Everitt remarked that Mr. Cogman deserved help, but he was afraid that the Association was not affluent enough to do anything for him just now.

Mrs. Maltby said that she thought Mr. Cogman had done more good to the cause of Spiritualism than almost anybody else she knew.

Mr. Morell Theobald said that it would not be well to pledge the Association to continuous expenditure, but that something might be done now, and the subject might be brought up again at a future time. He would move that the Association give Mr. Cogman a donation of £2 2s.

Mr. Chinnery seconded this, and it was carried unanimously.

Mr. Everitt said that the Association should not give up one privilege after another, and that Mr. Harrison had an office on the premises in which he could hold seances.

Mr. E. D. Rogers said that he should object to surrendering a room even for one evening as a matter of right; he thought that on every separate occasion it should be asked for, and that application should be made to a committee.

Mr. Morell Theobald said that Mr. Harrison's suggestion was eminently calculated to benefit the Association, and he wondered that any question was raised on the point.

Mr. Harrison said that he fully agreed with what Mr. Rogers had said, that the Association should keep all its privileges constantly in its own hands. Mediums had come to him asking to have their powers examined, and he had not found it convenient to do so, one impediment being the want of a room, since his office had been tried, but was too small for the holding of seances. The Association could not of course at once recognise new and unknown mediums, or those freshly arrived from foreign countries. Consequently, unless some arrangements were made, all such who called at the office of the Association, and wished their powers made known, went away without being assisted: thus the doors of the establishment were, practically speaking, closed against them.

Mr. Morell Theobald moved that the chairman of the Seance Committee be empowered to grant the use of the seance room free, not more than twice a month, to Mr. Harrison, and that in the absence of the said chairman the room might be granted for the purpose by the secretary.

This was seconded and carried unanimously.

The Secretary reported that sometimes Spiritualists write to her asking for cheap pamphlets and leaflets to distribute among the public. It would be well to have some printed.

MR. MORSE'S RECEIPTION.

The Secretary read a letter from Mr. Morse, announcing that he would be glad to give an account of his work in America on his return to England, at any meeting held under the auspices of the National Association of Spiritualists.

ALLIANCE WITH FOREIGN SPIRITUAL ORGANISATIONS.

The Secretary said the United Spiritual Societies of the Kingdom of Belgium had invited the president of the British National Association of Spiritualists to become a honorary member of the Belgian Union, and had expressed a wish that the said Union should enter into regular alliance with the British National Association; she would therefore suggest

that the National Association should enrol itself as an allied society as proposed. She also recommended that the Association should enter into an alliance with the Oromase Society at The Hague, with the Austrian organisation at Pesth, with the *Société Spirite* at Paris, with the chief of the Spanish societies, and with a few other national institutions. The secretary to the principal Spanish society had written to Mr. Harrison asking whether English Spiritualists would help them to have the literature of Spiritualism fully represented at the Philadelphia exhibition. If all these societies were allied and in regular correspondence with each other, united and prompt action in any matter would be facilitated.

It was then unanimously resolved to invite these societies to enter into an alliance with the National Association.

It was next resolved that various foreign societies of Spiritualists should be invited to send their journals to the National Association, and that for each journal thus applied *The Spiritualist* should be sent regularly in return.

#### CONSTITUTION AND RULES.

Mr. Dawson Rogers produced printed proofs of the constitution and rules as adopted and passed by the Council. He had only one fresh proposition to make respecting them, and that was, that life membership should be abolished, for its establishment had not been found conducive to the interests of the Association. He would also suggest that before more copies were printed off, the members of the Council should examine the rules well, to see if they required any further alteration. It would not do to delay the printing of them, for they had been so well considered and amply discussed that there were applications for printed copies for examination from all parts of the world.

It was then resolved that the full number of copies should be printed off that day week, provided no suggestions were sent in to the committee recommending more than verbal alterations. Any suggested alterations involving a principle were to be submitted to the Council.

#### SUBSCRIPTION SEANCES.

The Secretary reported that Mr. Blackburn's plan for holding *seances* on the premises of the Association would be carried out, and that sufficient subscriptions had already been entered to cover the expenses of the first series of *seances*. It would begin on the 10th September through the mediumship of Mr. Williams. If more *seances* were wanted, would-be subscribers should send in their names, and another series could be arranged.

#### THE PERSECUTION OF SPIRITUALISTS IN PARIS.

Mr. Samuel Chinnery said that he had not much more information to give about the legal proceedings against certain Spiritualists in Paris than had been published in the *Spiritualist*. He had not heard whether M. Leymarie intended to appeal against the decision, but he had advised him not to do so, because he (M. Leymarie) was the "point of attack" of the Jesuits, and the only result of the appeal would be that he would get five years' imprisonment instead of one. Still M. Leymarie had been advised by other of his friends to appeal. When Bugnet's letters to Leymarie—proving that Leymarie knew nothing about his tricks—were produced in court, they almost made the President and others start to their feet, but they had no effect upon the sentence; no doubt the judgment had been arranged beforehand. In reference to Mr. Firman, Mr. O'Sullivan told him he might run away if he liked and forfeit his bail, but Firman refused, for which reason probably his sentence was made shorter than that of either of the others. Several persons told Mr. O'Sullivan that he was in danger in advising Firman to avoid his trial, but such was not the case according to the law of France. He (Mr. Chinnery) had received a letter that morning saying that probably Firman would be in England in a few days, and would give some *seances*. Firman asked English Spiritualists to do a little for his wife, since he was going to prison for the good of the movement. While he was in prison he would have to keep himself, so he asked for some trifle both for himself and wife while he was there. It was a very startling thing that the garment said to have been captured from Firman by Madame Hugnet had never been found; why it was never produced in court nobody could tell. When help for Messrs. Leymarie and Firman from the National Association was talked of in Paris, he (Mr. Chinnery) told them that the Association was not rich, and was overburdened by expenses during the present year. M. Leymarie thought that the *Société Spirite* had some claim on the English one, since it was going to publish translations of Allan Kardec's works in the English language at

an expense to itself of about £600. The French Society was a rich one, richer than the English, and received very large subscriptions; in ordinary times it flourished, but recently it had had heavy expenses. Looking at all the circumstances of the case, he thought that all he could recommend was that something should be done to help Firman, who sooner or later would come to London and give *seances*. He was a good medium, and would submit to any test.

Mr. Calder said that if a private subscription list were opened the amounts could be collected by the secretary of the National Association. He thought that more money would be obtained for Firman in that way than by any direct appeal to the National Association itself under present circumstances.

After some little discussion, it was resolved that a subscription list for the benefit of Mr. Firman and his wife should be opened, and that the secretary of the National Association should act as secretary to the fund.

#### MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS.

The Secretary reported that Mr. E. T. Bennett and Mr. Kenigale Cook had given notice that at the present meeting of Council they would move that a subscription should be given by the Association in aid of Dr. Sexton's lectures, but Messrs. Cook and Bennett were not present.

The matter was therefore deferred.

Mr. Rogers proposed that the secretary should have every year a month's holiday of two fortnights each, since she could not be spared for the whole month at a time. During her absence Mr. Selwood would be on duty most of the time, and Mr. Harrison would be at the offices more frequently than at present, so that no doubt the expense of appointing somebody to do the duties could be avoided.

This was agreed to.

Mr. Everitt was appointed a member of the Offices Committee in place of Mr. Harper, who was unable to attend in consequence of absence from town.

#### THE ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS.

Mr. Everitt gave notice that at the next meeting of the Council he would move that the National Conference of Spiritualists be held in October.

Mrs. Makdougall Gregory suggested that it should be later, since everybody was out of town when it was held last year in the middle of the dead season.

The proceedings then closed.

**THE COST OF A SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION.**—The regular annual expenses of the permanent establishment in London of the National Association of Spiritualists at 38, Great Russell-street, amount to about £400 a year, out of which the secretary receives £150 a year, and a residence rent free. The premises are the finest connected with Spiritualism in any part of the world. The establishment derives no profits in any way from trade, but is managed by a purely public body, which confines its attention to public work.

**SPIRITUALISM IN LEICESTER.**—The first quarterly report of the Leicester Society of Spiritualists presented at the quarterly meeting, held in the society's meeting-room, Silver-street, July 8th, 1875, set forth that Spiritualism has had an existence in Leicester for a long time, and that private circles have been formed as the subject gained popularity. Among the pioneers in bringing Spiritualism before the Leicester public were Mr. and Mrs. Muir and Mr. J. K. Smith. The latter gentleman held a public *seance* at his residence in Bond-street, and proved the truthfulness of Spiritualism to the minds of many. He also introduced Mr. Morse, the trance-speaking medium, to the public of Leicester. Later on public *seances* were opened at the houses of Mr. W. Burdett, Noble-street; Mr. Grimes, Grove-street; Mr. Hawkins, Gower-street, and in other parts of the town. Dr. Sexton visited Leicester, and delivered three lectures in the Temperance Hall, in November of last year, ably demonstrating the truthfulness of Spiritualism. These resulted in the formation of the society, which all along has had to work in the face of difficulties. Through religious bigotry and other causes, it has had to remove twice from rooms it had taken, but now the committee has secured a very suitable room in the centre of the town for the society's meetings. It has also elected a good working committee. The society sustained a great loss when the late president, Mr. Wonfer, resigned his office, for he was a thorough worker in the cause of Spiritualism. A few weeks ago Mr. and Mrs. Hitchcock, and Mr. and Mrs. Mortin, of Nottingham, visited Leicester; excellent trance addresses were delivered, and test communications were given of great value to members who attended the meetings. The secretary is Mr. Charles Burdett.

## ALLEGED INSANITY OF MR. ROBERT DALE OWEN.

THE *Daily News* of last Tuesday contained the following paragraph:—

The *Chicago Tribune* publishes a despatch announcing that Mr. Robert Dale Owen has become insane. It appears that he had unhesitatingly accepted as supernatural some "manifestations" at Philadelphia, and had lived some time there in order to miss none of the *seances*. A certain "Katie King," who was the principal agent in producing these manifestations, afterwards confessed that they were a fraud. Mr. Owen had in the meantime written an article upon them in the *Atlantic Monthly*, in which he spoke of them as furnishing an undoubted proof of a life hereafter. The day before the article appeared the fraud was exposed. Mr. Owen wept bitterly, it is said, when a conviction that he had been made a dupe forced itself upon him. He telegraphed to Boston to cut out the article, but it was too late. The *Magazine* was already printed. A thin slip of paper, disclaiming any editorial responsibility, and thus increasing that of the author, was prefixed to the sketch. And thus it came to pass that Robert Dale Owen's syllogistic proof that "Katie King" was a spirit, and "Katie's" own confession that she was a fraud, were published together throughout the country. The blow was too heavy, and Mr. Owen's mind gave way under it. Commenting upon the news, the *New York Tribune* says: "Mr. Robert Dale Owen's insanity, in consequence of the recent exposure of some spiritualistic phenomena which he had accepted, will be heard of with regret by a wide circle of friends and admirers, of whom very few have the least sympathy with Spiritualism, or in general with Spiritualists. Mr. Owen was a man of singular purity and sincerity of character. His intellectual integrity was as unquestionable as his literary skill, and his conversation was as fascinating as his writing. Few of his friends attached much importance to his judgment, and most of them gently laughed at the strange notions to which he devoted so much time during his later years."

Mr. Harrison sent the following letter to the *Daily News* immediately upon the publication of the above:—

To the Editor of the "*Daily News*."

SIR,—Having seen a statement made on the authority of the *Chicago Tribune* in the *Daily News* of this day, to the effect that the accomplished writer and diplomatist, Mr. Robert Dale Owen, is insane, I write to ask you and your readers not to accept the statement until it is authenticated. I am in tolerably constant correspondence both with Mr. Dale Owen and with many of his personal friends, and have not heard a word from anybody about his alleged insanity. Whatever opinion any one may hold about the English newspaper press, American journalism is in a much worse state; the number of articles contributed by me to English scientific periodicals, and which have been afterwards stolen without acknowledgment and published in American journals as their own, may simply be numbered by scores; and in Chicago, the place whence the present statement about Mr. Dale Owen originated, the Spiritualistic and non-Spiritualistic journals are constantly quarrelling.

In Mr. Dale Owen's last letter to me he said that he had taken up his residence in Dansville, Livingston County, State of New York, and should be there for two or three months to come. If he has since become insane in the state of New York, how is it that a Chicago newspaper, published in Illinois, should be the first to obtain the news?

An American gentleman, Dr. Test, who has called upon me since I began writing this letter, says that when American newspapers determine to ridicule a subject, and find a victim, they show no mercy, and that dozens of illustrations come before his mind at the present moment. It is best to wait before accepting the painful rumour about Mr. Owen as reliable.—Truly yours,  
WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

The *Daily News* of Wednesday published the essential portions of the foregoing letter. It is to be hoped that the sad news cannot be confirmed.

In the course of Mr. Dale Owen's last letter to Mr. Harrison he said: "I have been quite ill for eleven days, confined to bed, and am just able to write you a few lines." He also sent his likeness, with the remark: "It is the best photograph that has ever been taken of me, and one of the best photographs ever executed in the United States."

## KARDEC'S SPIRITS' BOOK.

MISS ANNA BLACKWELL'S translation of Allan Kardec's *Spirits' Book* has just been published. It contains from 450 to 500 pages, is well printed, and neatly bound. As Kardec's speculations have obtained such a great hold among Spiritualists upon the Continent, his book is one which deserves very serious attention on the part of English Spiritualists. He professes to give true theories of nearly all the phenomena incidental to existence, and deals with the mysterious problems connected with the career of the human soul before its birth into this world, during its life in this world, and during its existence in the land beyond the grave. Soon we shall give an extended notice of the book, which has passed through many editions in France. Copies may be obtained at the Branch Office of *The Spiritualist* newspaper, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

NEXT Monday evening Mrs. Hardy will give a *seance* in connection with the Brixton Psychological Society.

The *Spiritualist* newspaper may be obtained in Birmingham from Mr. Aaron Franklin, 100, Suffolk-street.

MR. TRUBNER, the well-known publisher of works connected with advanced thought, will leave London for a tour on the Continent in a day or two.

OWING to the space occupied by the interesting news from Paris, much correspondence and several articles are delayed in publication till next week.

BRIXTON PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The half-yearly general meeting of this society, which was to have taken place on Wednesday, the 14th instant, was adjourned, in consequence of the small attendance of members, owing to the bad weather, until Tuesday, the 3rd August next. Since the formation of the society the members have not been called together to do anything, or to become acquainted with each other, except upon one occasion, of which too short notice was given.

AMERICAN SPIRITUALISTS IN LONDON.—Mrs. Susan G. Horn, a gifted medium, and author of the forcibly written work *Strange Visitors*, has arrived in London in company with her husband, from the United States. They intend to pass some time on the Continent, and Mr. Horn will act as correspondent for the *Banner of Light* during his stay in Europe. Mr. and Mrs. Hardy are still in London, but will sail for the United States on the 3rd August next; they have engagements which compel their return, but think of revisiting England. Dr. and Mrs. Hallock, two American Spiritualists, are also in London at the present time.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—Among other business transacted at the last Council meeting of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, an offer from Mr. F. M. Parkes to prepare a paper upon the "Psychic Elements of Spiritual Photography, and his Experiments relating to them," was accepted with thanks—the date for the reading of the paper to be arranged by the hon. secretary. The following presentations to the library were reported, viz.: *Mesmerism and its Opponents*, from Captain John James; *Seers of the Ages, Jesus—Myth, Man or God, Witch Poison, The Gadarene, Travels Round the World*, and *The Spiritual Pilgrim*, from their author, Mr. J. M. Peebles, per Mr. J. J. Morse; *La Réalité des Esprits*, and *Pensées d'Outre Tombe*, from the Baroness Goldenstube, per Mrs. Makdongall Gregory, and various pamphlets and papers from the British National Association of Spiritualists. Votes of thanks were accorded to the donors. After the Council meeting was over, the ordinary weekly *seance* was held. An exceptionally interesting sitting resulted, due to the trance mediumship of Mr. F. M. Parkes, who was present. Several spirits controlled Mr. Parkes, one of whom was that of Dr. Woolley, one of his spirit-guides. The spirit, in reply to questions as to the doctrine of reincarnation, stated that he could not endorse the teaching, inasmuch as he had no knowledge from experience or from associates in his sphere of existence which admitted of his accepting such ideas as true. Reincarnation appeared to him as "progressing backwards," and he was unable to understand the principles involved. The half-yearly general meeting of the Dalston Association will be held next Thursday night.

## NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

SINCE the meeting of the Liverpool Conference in 1873, when it was resolved to begin the work of national organisation in order that friendly union among Spiritualists might be promoted, and that all who were averse to dissension should have an opportunity of working harmoniously together, the progress made has been most gratifying. The National Association of Spiritualists has from the first continued to grow steadily, and has established in London reading and *seance* rooms, and public offices, which not only are a credit to the movement in this country, but are stated by those who have visited them to be better than any which have been established anywhere in the United States of America. This is not a little surprising, the movement being so much larger there than it is here.

These great results have been achieved without getting into debt. Although nearly £200 has been spent this year in furnishing the new offices, the Association at the present moment owes nobody a farthing, and what with the funds in hand, with the amount of unpaid subscriptions, and with the proportion of the guarantee fund not called up, will be able to tide over this year with a very small deficiency, if any; and that deficiency can be covered by means of not much exertion on the part of the large number of members of the organisation. Perhaps the slight probable deficiency may be covered by the ordinary steady influx of new members.

The advantage of united friendly effort being so palpable, all Spiritualists who are interested therein should become members of the Association. Although individual contributions may be small, in the aggregate they amount to a great deal; thus a vast amount of good can be done for Spiritualism without any heavy money sacrifices on the part of anybody, although at the outset some three or four well-known friends contributed large sums to aid in fairly floating the organisation. The Association has as yet been joined only by a very small minority of the regular readers of this journal, the whole of whom may be supposed to take an interest in the work, therefore the present opportunity is taken of asking the great majority to enrol themselves as members without delay, seeing how very much good for the movement can be effected by small efforts on the part of a large number of persons. In this, indeed, consists one of the chief advantages of organisation.

Before the present year closes the Association will give a public reception to Mr. Morse on his return from America. A public reception to M. Aksakof has also been suggested at one of its meetings; this also should undoubtedly be carried out, for probably no one on the Continent has done more to spread a knowledge of Spiritualism in Europe. He has started and keeps alive *Psychic Studies* (Leipzig), and one other spiritual periodical. He has also translated and published in different parts of the Continent some fifteen or twenty of the best and largest standard works on Spiritualism.

At the next Council meeting of the Association the question of holding an Annual Conference in October will have to be considered. The question at issue will be chiefly one of expense. Those held in previous years have cost from £30 to £40 each; much of the expense last year was due to the circumstance that a portion of the proceedings came off at the Crystal Palace. If the next Conference should be held in the provinces, those local Spiritualists who give the invitation will probably bear the expenses. If it should be held in London, it would do much more good to the movement, because of the far wider publicity its proceedings will gain through the press, as exemplified by the results last year. The Association, pledged as it is to live within its income, and not to get into debt, has no funds in hand for the holding of a Conference this year, so cannot be committed to it until the money is guaranteed; perhaps this difficulty may be overcome by a private and special subscription. However, this and other points will be considered at the next Council meeting, and the course of action resolved to be taken will no doubt be a wise one.

If all the regular subscribers to this journal, who must by this time be more or less interested in the great practical step of establishing friendly union among Spiritualists, were to enrol themselves as members of the National Association, ways and means over small items of outlay, such as conferences and the establishment of a philosophical department, would not have to be considered, but all moderate steps of this kind could be taken with ease without any special subscriptions by, or particular burden to, anybody. It is practically being discovered that most of those Spiritualists who have recently joined the Association would have done so before had

any member asked them and offered to propose them. The greatest good, therefore, that individual members can do for the organisation at present, is to invite all their personal friends who have not yet joined the Association to do so forthwith. By individual effort in this direction the hands of the executive, which is working so well for the good of the movement, could be much strengthened.

## VALUABLE PRESENTS TO THE SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT.

LAST Monday Mr. Alexander Calder presented two beautiful works of art, executed by a master hand, to the British National Association of Spiritualists. The particulars are contained in the following letter:—

1, Hereford-square, South Kensington, S.W.,  
19th July, 1875.

Miss Kistingbury, Secretary, British National Association of Spiritualists.

DEAR MISS KISLINGBURY,—On Saturday last at Christie's was sold a collection of oil paintings by H. W. Pickersgill, R.A., the eminent portrait painter, when two of them, half-length pictures of D. D. Home and Robert Owen, fortunately became mine. They are pronounced by competent judges to be excellent works of art, and the former an admirable likeness of our most celebrated medium.

I have much pleasure in presenting these pictures to the British National Association, not doubting that they will receive and cherish them in honour of those remarkable men.—Yours truly,  
ALEX. CALDER.

MR. MORSE IN AMERICA.—In a private letter to Mr. W. H. Harrison, dated New York, July 8th, Mr. Morse says:—"I spoke here last Sunday morning and evening with the most gratifying success. I can hardly call to mind the time when my labours have evoked more enthusiasm. On Monday the 5th, the 'glorious 4th of July' was celebrated, fire crackers, pistols, cannon, and every conceivable explosive being the exponents of popular patriotism. The din commenced at 2:45 a.m., and continued long past midnight."

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