

# The Spiritualist,

## AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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## GENUINE AND IMITATION SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

Some two or three years ago, at a public meeting of Spiritualists at 38, Great Russell Street, London, we exhibited and explained an imitation of those phenomena, in which materialised spirit heads are seen at *séances*, moving about, and faintly illuminated by a light held in the hands. Our light consisted of a large-sized Spiers and Pond's flat brandy flask, containing a little phosphoric oil, made by dissolving a very small quantity of phosphorus in olive oil, by the aid of heat. The flask was but one-tenth full of oil, which by turning the flask was made to wet its sides to expose a large oily surface, so that when the cork was drawn out, the air thus allowed to enter mixed with vapour of phosphorus in the flask, and induced luminosity by a low form of combustion. Curiously enough, if pure oxygen instead of air be allowed to enter the flask, the luminosity, instead of being increased, is extinguished. The light may also be extinguished by the presence of the slightest trace of vapour of turpentine.

In the real manifestations of the class thus imitated, the conditions are different. By reference to most of the *séances* reported in these pages, it will be seen :—(1.) That the medium is off his own premises, in company where he cannot introduce a confederate. (2.) That his hands are held on both sides by responsible and respectable witnesses; his feet are also sometimes secured. (3.) Under these conditions the manifestations occur: living spirit forms are sometimes seen floating about, heavy furniture moved from one part of the room to another, and so on.

The reports of *séances* regularly printed in *The Spiritualist* give a fair idea of this class of manifestations, in which class, it may be remarked in parenthesis, it is the rarest thing in the world to get any evidence of spirit identity, or any proof that the spirits at work are those of departed human beings. Evidence of spirit identity is best obtained from another class of phenomena. The Mrs. Makdougall Gregory mentioned in many reports,



is the widow of the late Dr. William Gregory, Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh University; and Captain John James, at whose residence many reported *séances* are held, is usually careful that the hands of the medium are held by himself and other responsible witnesses. What conjuror will go without a confederate, without apparatus, and in evening dress to a private house, and let his hands be held throughout the *séance*, as regularly done by Messrs. Rita, Williams, Husk, and other mediums?

#### THE PROSECUTION OF AN AMERICAN MEDIUM BY A SPIRITUALIST.

From "The Daily News," January 29th, 1881.

Susan Willis Fletcher, 32, of 22, Gordon-street, again surrendered to her bail, at Bow-street Police-court yesterday, before Mr. Flowers, the sitting magistrate, to answer the charge of being concerned with her husband, John W. Fletcher, in unlawfully obtaining a quantity of jewellery, lace and other property, by means of false pretences, from Mrs. Juliet Ann Theodora Heurtley Hart-Davis.

Mr. St. John Wontner conducted the prosecution on behalf of the Public Prosecutor; Mr. S. B. Abrahams watched the case on the part of Mrs. Hart-Davis; and Mr. Humphries and Mr. W. B. Richardson appeared for persons interested.

Mr. Druiitt, clerk to Mr. E. D. Lewis, who has on the previous examinations appeared for the defence, applied for an adjournment of the case on the ground that Mr. Lewis was ill and could not attend.

Mr. Wontner opposed the application, and

Mr. Flowers said his own impression was, after the examination on the first day, that he had no alternative but to send the case for trial. He could not postpone the case now.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF DR. MACK.

Mr. James M'Geary was then called and examined by Mr. Wontner. He said he was what was termed a healing doctor, and he was known in America by the name of Dr. Mack. He was now living at 37, Upper Baker-street. He was at the Spiritualists' camp meeting at Montague, Massachusetts, in August last, and was there introduced to the prosecutrix, who was known there as Mrs. Heurtley. She made a communication to him in reference to Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, and gave him a power of attorney to act for her. He procured a search warrant, and went with it to the hotel where the defendant and her husband had been staying. He found the defendant in her room, and she referred him to her husband, whom he found in another part of the hotel, and asked for Mrs. Heurtley's money, jewellery, and other property. Mr. Fletcher said he was tired of the darned stuff, and would willingly give it up, and he accompanied him to his wife's room, and took from a bureau a few jewels and handed them to him; also 100 dols. in money, and a bill of exchange for £57 odd. He said he could not give up any more jewels because they were at his wife's mother's, at Lawrence, and he wrote out a list and an order for the delivery of the articles in the list and gave it to the sheriff. The following day witness received a box from the sheriff, which was taken to his room at the hotel, and Mr. Fletcher opened it and took out and gave him some jewels and some clothing, which he said belonged to Mrs. Heurtley. He asked him for more, and he said he

could not give him more, and that his wife had found fault with him for giving up any. Witness took the articles to Boston, where the prosecutrix deposited them in a bank, and the matter was placed in the hands of some detectives. He went to Lawrence and searched the house of the defendant's mother but found nothing. He afterwards went with the detectives to the defendant's house in Washington-street, Boston. They found some articles belonging to Mrs. Heurtley. A person who was with the defendant assaulted him, and she was taken into custody, as was also the defendant. He afterwards went to Lawrence again and saw Mr. Fletcher, and told him his wife was arrested. Mr. Fletcher said, "Good God, what next?" and asked him how long they would give him to restore the rest of the property. Witness told him the matter was not in his hands. Mr. Fletcher then stated that there were two large trunks containing the prosecutrix's goods at Barnard's Hotel, Greenfield, Massachusetts, and that he would accompany the officers there and give them up. He did not do so. He was arrested next day, and taken to Boston. The proceedings against him and his wife lasted some time, and proposals were made for a settlement, which were declined. Afterwards witness was arrested on the charge of obtaining these goods by false pretences, and it being further alleged that he was going to leave the country he was bound over in his own recognisances in 40,000 dollars to appear when called upon. He took legal advice and came to this country on the 2nd of October. The prosecutrix came a week after. He introduced her to Mr. Abrahams, and went with him and her to the house of the defendant, and was present when a quantity of property belonging to the prosecutrix was removed from there to the Pantechnicon.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF MR. JAMES MADDOCKS AND OTHERS.

James Maddocks, examined by Mr. Wontner--I live at 27, Elliott's-row, St. George's-road, Southwark, and am a house decorator. I know the defendant and her husband. I became acquainted with Mr. Fletcher three years ago, at the house of my brother-in-law, Mr. Poole, of West-square, Lambeth, who at that time was investigating Spiritualism. Mr. Fletcher was a medium at some *séances*, and I believe my brother paid him 30s. for each *séance*. I attended as a spectator. We became intimate, and he used to address me as "Jimmy." The *séances* were what is called clairvoyant. Mr. Fletcher used to appear as if in a trance. He said he was controlled by two spirits, one called "Fidelity" and the other "Winona." On the first occasion "Fidelity" came first and delivered a sort of sermon, or lecture of a religious character, which lasted half-an-hour. Then Mr. Fletcher went through some few spasmodic jerks, and that sort of thing, and then "Winona" came.

And what did Winona do?—Winona used to admire the jewellery Mrs. Poole's youngest sister was wearing. (Laughter.)

Did you see "Fidelity" or "Winona"?—I did not.

But how did you know they were there?—Because he called himself by those names in his trance.

How did they speak?—They spoke by the mouth of Mr. Fletcher. They used Mr. Fletcher's organ of speech. He was under the spirits' control.

Used his organ?—Yes; Mr. Fletcher's own spirit had left his body. (Laughter.)

Did Mr. Fletcher ever tell you the names of the spirits that controlled him?—Yes; Fidelity and Winona. I first became acquainted with Mrs. Fletcher about six months after I became acquainted with Mr. Fletcher.

Did she become entranced?—Yes; she was giving



Mr. Poole a private *séance* in one room, and Mr. Fletcher was giving some of my friends a *séance* in another room.

What was the name of her spirit?—It was called Dewdrop. I had been acquainted with Mr. Fletcher about 12 months when he asked me if I had been to Williams's and had seen any physical manifestations, and I said I had. In consequence of that conversation I went with him to his home. He was living then in Bloomsbury-place.

For what purpose?—To take part in a mock *séance* or rehearsal.

Did he tell you for what purpose?—He said other media were doing extraordinary physical manifestations, that he must compete with them and do the same or lose some of his friends, and that he had some titled people coming who would believe anything; and he said, "Do you know about the John King business, and all that?"

What is the John King business?—A materialised spirit, with a bass voice.

Were you acquainted with the way by which John King is produced?—I had been at Williams's *séances*, and I said to Mr. Fletcher that, with the same materials, I was sure I could imitate it.

How did you propose to imitate it?—With a bottle of phosphorescent oil, and with a white handkerchief over the head, and a beard, but the spectators must be in the dark, and have their hands fastened together. That conversation took place at his house in January or February, 1879. He said he would get me to assist him. I agreed, and he sent me a letter, then fixing the time, and I went, but it did not come off. It came off on the 19th of February. I had taken with me two bottles of phosphorescent oil, and he had a musical-box, which he had borrowed of Mr. Poole. When I arrived at the house he asked if I had brought the phosphorus bottle and the beard, and I said I had brought a small bottle that would produce spirit lights. He said, "Very well; that will do; on this occasion Mrs. Fletcher will arrange things." She put on the table some note paper, pencils, candles, and bells, and a pasteboard tube.

What was that for?—For the spirits to speak through. (Laughter.) Mr. Fletcher then brought in the musical-box and placed it on a side table, and said, "You understand the winding up of a musical box. I had better leave that to you." He also said, "I will place you between Mrs. Fletcher and me, and when the light is out I will release your hand and you can wind the box up." I agreed to do that, and he then went into the next room.

Was the coal-scuttle to take part in the performance?—Yes. After Mr. Fletcher had left the room Mrs. Fletcher said, "When I ask the spirits at the latter part of the *séance* to do something extraordinary, you must put the scuttle on the table," which I did.

What were you to represent?—Oh, I had not got the apparatus to do the materialisation, so I was to wind the box up.

How were you to be represented to the rest of the visitors?—I said "But I may not sit between you and Mrs. Fletcher," and he said, "All right; we shall represent you as a sceptical gentleman."

How many people came to the *séance*?—Five or six besides Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher.

What was done?—I sat near the end of the table with Mr. Fletcher on my right and Mrs. Fletcher on my left, and the rest of the company sat round the table, joining hands. Mr. Fletcher put the lights out. They were candles. He then released my hand, and I got up and wound up the musical-box.

It was a very large one and the winding-up made a noise.

Did the people say anything?—Yes; they said, "How marvellous! what power the spirit has!" (Loud laughter.)

What happened then?—One of the gentlemen said, "I can feel the spirits draw me."

What else happened?—The tube was used to tap the guests with. On touching some of them with it they said, "Thank you, dear spirit," and others said, "Oh, I am so nervous, don't touch me." (Laughter.)

Who used the tube?—I did sometimes, and when I was standing up using the tube I accidentally trod on some matches. They ignited and showed my face. I thought the people would discover who I was, and I sat down, but to my surprise a lady said she recognised me as the spirit of her uncle or cousin, I forget which, and was highly delighted. (Loud laughter.)

What happened then?—The bells were rung and all that sort of thing, and Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher touched me and I touched them.

Who rang the bells?—We all took turns to keep the thing afloat.

And then you did something with the coal scuttle?—Yes; Mrs. Fletcher asked the spirits to do something, and I placed the coal scuttle on the table, and then I took one of the candles from the candlestick and touched them all round with that. (Renewed laughter.)

Did the table move at all?—Oh yes, we moved the table backwards and forwards.

Did you use the phosphorus?—Yes. I walked about the room with a bottle of phosphorescent oil to show the spirit lights, and Mrs. Fletcher made some small lights. I showed a phosphorus light about the size of a half-crown.

What did the people say?—They said the lights were produced and that everything was marvellous.

How long did the *séance* last?—An hour and a half, I should think.

Did the Fletchers say anything to you when the people had gone?—They asked me what I thought of it, and I said I did not think the people would be such fools as to believe it. I asked them what they thought of my part in it, and they seemed perfectly satisfied, and said it was all right.

Was anything said about outside criticism?—There was a gentleman there who Mr. Fletcher said was connected with an American paper, and who would write a flaming account of what had taken place.

What did Mrs. Fletcher say?—She asked me what I thought of her spirit box and the match, and I said I thought it was done very well.

Was another *séance* arranged on that occasion?—Yes; as I was going away Mr. Fletcher asked me not to say anything to Mr. Poole about this, and I said I would not, and he said he would write to me when he wanted me again.

Did a second *séance* take place?—Yes, on the 22nd February.

At that *séance* was there a medium called Katy Cook?—They called her Miss Cook. I do not know her Christian name.

And did you all sit round the table as before?—Yes; Miss Cook sitting next to me, and Mr. Fletcher on her right. When the lights were put out Miss Cook took her hand from me and took the cork out of a phosphorus bottle which she had so as to admit the air and make it luminous, and she got up and went to the other end of the room and put a piece of muslin over her face.

What was her appearance then?—She did what they



usually do. She appeared as a spirit, and I believe she spoke, but I could not tell what she said.

And the John King business, was that done in a similar way?—Yes, and the musical box.

And was there the same enthusiasm on the part of the people?—Oh, yes.

Were there some flowers?—Yes, Mr. Fletcher bought a few pennyworth in the Tottenham Court-road, and threw them on the table and they were supposed to come from the spirits.

I believe you did not come here voluntarily?—No, Sir.

And you gave no information to the police, but the police came to you?—I gave no information whatever.

Mr. Reginald Poole, who was next called, said, I live at 3, Allen-terrace, High-street, Kensington. I formerly lived in West-square, Lambeth. The last witness is related to me by marriage. I know the Fletchers. Two or three years ago I was investigating Spiritualism and Mr. Fletcher came to my house as a medium when we had *séances*, and the defendant came as a visitor. Mr. Fletcher had a spirit called "Winona," which was supposed to be the spirit of an Indian, and he had a second spirit called "Fidelity," which, as far as I remember, was a doctor spirit. Those spirits were supposed to speak through him when he was in a trance. I was aware after Mr. Fletcher had been at my house that Mr. Maddocks went to his house in Bloomsbury-place and took part in *séances* there. I had been with Maddocks to Williams's *séances*. It was there that the spirit of John King was produced.

Had you made yourself acquainted with the mode by which John King's spirit was made to appear?—I had. At least, I could produce the same effect with phosphorescent oil and a white handkerchief on the head. Maddocks was acquainted with the method of doing this, as well as myself.

Have you seen the spirit lights?—I have seen the spirit lights at *séances* produced by means of phosphorus on the fingers. The Fletchers and Maddocks were on intimate terms.

Police-Sergeant George Phillip Shrivès stated that he received a warrant from this court for the apprehension of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, and from what he heard he went to Greenock and found the prisoner detained there by the police. He told her he was a police officer from London, and that he held a warrant to arrest her and to detain any quantity of jewellery and other articles he might find on her. He read the warrant to her. It mentioned three strings of pearls. She smiled and said, "I am rather amused about those pearls. I was charged with stealing them in America, and am now charged with obtaining them by false pretences. I suppose they have them, as they have been to my house in Gordon-street and taken away what they thought proper. I left the pearls in London when I came away."

Mr. St. John Wontner: Perhaps upon that you will give us an order to look over the things at the Pantechnicon, that we may ascertain whether the pearls and some other things that we miss are there. They refuse to let us have access to them.

Mr. Flowers.—Yes, you can have the order.

The Witness, in continuation, said he arrested the defendant and brought her to London, and took possession of her papers, amongst which were the deed of gift and the draft of it, and also a letter of the 29th August in which the prosecutrix requested the defendant to accept all her things. He also found two memoranda. After the examination at this court on the 3rd December the defendant said she wished to speak to him, and

he went to her, and she said if he searched a black chest of drawers deposited at the Pantechnicon she had no doubt he would find the pearls there. He went there yesterday, but they refused to let him examine the drawers. He held a warrant for the arrest of Colonel Morton and Mr. Fletcher, but he had not been able to apprehend them.

Mr. Wontner said this was the case for the prosecution, and upon this evidence he asked that the prosecutrix should be bound over in her own recognisances of £1,000 to appear and prosecute at the next sessions but one at the Central Criminal Court, to be held on the 27th February, and that the witnesses should be bound to appear.

The prosecutrix and the witnesses were then bound over accordingly, and the case was adjourned till the 11th February, to give Mr. Lewis an opportunity of continuing the cross-examination, and the defendant was again liberated on bail, which, however, was increased from two sureties in £500 to two in £600.

#### THE GENESIS OF THE SOUL.

"What is called regeneration is not attitude of mind or state of feeling, but an organic life, beginning as all bodily life begins, from minutest germs; and proceeding, if undamaged or not stifled, to fullgrown perfectness."—*The Spiritualist*, 21st January, 1881.

Weightier words than these of Mrs. Penny were never written.

Man, only potentially a child of God, is a being in process of creation.

This being has in him gained the highest bodily form nature is capable of producing.

It gained this form by passing progressively through advancing stages of existence, in which the well-being of self was the single aim of each successive state, self-seeking its actuating impulse.

Owing to this, man, through whom this being passes to its next state of existence, is naturally self-seeking and selfish.

Hence, man is not responsible for the selfishness of his nature, which is due to the process by which his form was developed; to which process all the evils attendant on the order of nature are also due, for all of these can be traced to some form of self-seeking action.

Man thus constituted is perishable, because to transfer him with his self-seeking impulses to an imperishable state would be to ensure him an eternity of misery.

Now, man was created for happiness, as his every aspiration shows.

Hence, since he was created by a process which brought him to his present state as a self-seeking, perishable being, he must have been so created in order that in him a physical bodily form might be gained for the psychical



being that was to be transferred through him from a perishable to an imperishable state.

This being is the human soul.

It follows from this that man is a matrix duly prepared by nature, that in him the human soul may be generated; through him the being under process of creation may be transferred from a perishable to an imperishable state.

But to make the generation of the human soul possible something is required of man, for he must co-operate in the work.

Hence, certain conditions are offered to him, certain "conditions of being for which omnipotence can find no substitute." And as his is a natural creation these conditions are offered to him through his nature and natural surroundings.

These conditions are not far to seek; and it is only because, losing sight of the meaning of the working of the natural around and within himself, man has attended to misleading suggestions and yielded to misleading influences that he fails to grasp them, fails rightly to read the import of that through which they are expressed.

The impulse that has produced the human form is an impulse tending to self. The motive actuating it is self-love, whose expression is self-seeking.

This impulse has produced a being prone to think self its first object.

Now, happiness is only for those who seek it out of self, for those who seek not the happiness of self, but the happiness of that which is outside self, the happiness of others; for is it not more blessed to give than to receive?

Therefore the required conditions must be such as will so change the being under creation as that from making self its first object, it will seek that object outside self.

Hence, to produce from this thus constituted being one not only not prone to make self its first object but ready to prefer that which is other than self to self, and wholly to disregard self in this preference, an impulse must be given to it whose tendency is from self; whose actuating motive is the contrary to self-love; whose expression the contrary to self-seeking.

Only one such impulse can be found.

That impulse is love.

Now, love is essentially a selective principle, acting through preference by way of elimination.

Hence, love counteracts self-love by substituting the love of another for the love of self; and counteracts self-seeking by sacrificing self for the object of its affections.

Charity, that general feeling of benevolence which should be extended to all, though promoted by, is not, although it has been ingeniously substituted for, love—since by it no selection is made, no preference shown, no elimination effected.

Friendship is the harbinger of love. By it some are selected from and preferred to the many, and become friends.

Affection is its handmaiden. From the chosen circle of friends it elects a few intimates, for whom a special attachment is formed.

Amongst these love attracts to one, who is preferred to all others; and who is specially preferred to self.

Such a love is rare. Such an object seldom found. But where such a love exists and is mutual, there the natural transmutor, which prepares the human for the action of the divine, is at work.

Such a love gradually roots out every tinge of self-love, and makes meekness, self-denial and self-sacrifice habits of the life; and thus so identifies them with the nature that to those so influenced their contraries become impossible; and this is why the "Thou shalt not"—given as a command for the better ordering of the world—becomes the "Thou canst not" to those so actuated: for these, in whom love is the fulfilling of the law, would have to break away from and renounce their actuating motive and yield to its contrary before they could thus act, and so doing would at once destroy the very foundations of the nature their uses of life under the influence of love had been building up.

In those who live under the influence of love—and all affection that produces these fruits exercises this influence, each in its degree—this meek, self-denying, self-sacrificing nature is slow built up; and while it is being built up, and in those in whom it is building up, the generation of the soul takes place.

The generation of the human soul, viewed as a germinating process, is a passive generation, one of "God's still, creative operations:" for the individual in whom it is going on is wholly unconscious thereof. But the process by which it is carried on, though owing to this passivity it is unknown, must be as natural as the previous successive steps in the creation which ended in the production of man, since it is the continuation of a natural operation. At the same time it is more directly a divine act, because an unrecognised energy capable of changing the perishable into the imperishable



is operating: and therefore the created soul, whose birth is the death of its human parent, is rightly termed the Child of God.

The only co-operation of which man is capable in this generation is that of using his life under the impulse whose motive is love: unselfish love.

The fruits of a life so spent are the several qualities known as charity, meekness, self-denial, self-sacrifice, and so forth—which have been termed virtues.

Hence, in theological and other systems these virtues have been set before man doctrinally as objects to the attainment of which he should devote all his energies. And hence some have even thought that they are the efficient causes, so to say, of the generation of the human soul.

But this is a mistake: for, when charity, meekness, self-denial and self-sacrifice are practised for the sake of the influence they exercise in the development of self, their motive impulse is centred in self, and this at once disqualifies them as co-operators in the work, because from this work every form of self-seeking is excluded.

Love should be the generator of all virtues—as it is of hope and trust.

When these spring from other sources and have their root in doctrinal precepts they cannot fail to nourish self-love, even if that self-love only shows itself in the self-seeking that seeks the generation, or, as it is technically termed, the salvation, of the soul of the self so seeking its own well-being.

Love is the generator of all virtues because it is of the essence of God—God is love—and therefore attracts the divine love to those actuated by it. It acts by guiding and controlling the natural use of the natural life of man, because He, of whose essence it is, as the creator of the universe, is the author of that natural life and its natural surroundings.

This is why nature is the only safe guide. Why all teaching that comes from outside the natural life and its natural surroundings is, necessarily is, untrustworthy. M.D.

THE Hon. Alexandro Aksakof, of St. Petersburg, intends to visit London in a few months' time.

On the Sabbath evening, 30th January, Mrs. S. E. Hall left earth-life, at Devon Lodge, East Moulsey. She was a prominent and very intelligent Christian Spiritualist, and an occasional contributor to these pages.

At the last meeting of the Council, at 38, Great Russell Street, reporters were excluded by special vote. Mr. W. H. Coffin was the only member who had the honour of voting for the public transaction of the public work, in the usual way.

## THE MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MESMERIC SENSITIVES.

A CURIOUS DEFENCE.

A strange law case, which has been commented upon by various London daily papers, is published in *Galvani* of January 28th last. It says that some curious experiments in somnambulism took place on the preceding Wednesday in the Court of Appeals from the Correctional Tribunals. A man named Didier was arrested some time back and was condemned to three months' imprisonment. He appealed against the sentence, denying his culpability, and amongst the witnesses who appeared in his favour were Drs. Mottet and Mesnard, of the Sainte-Anne Asylum, under whose treatment Didier had formerly been, and who deposed that from his physiological constitution he was unconscious of his acts. The man is a somnambulist, and during his stay in the hospital, Dr. Mottet had made him a special study, and now offered to repeat before the Court experiments to prove his subjection to mesmeric influence. The judges consented, and all the parties withdrew to the rooms behind the Court. Dr. Mottet first mesmerised Didier, and then retired to another room separated by a passage, the door of which was kept by two gendarmes. Some of the judges remained with Didier, while the others accompanied the doctor. Dr. Mottet then said, "Come here!" in a low tone which could not have been heard in the other room. But immediately the door was opened by Didier, who forced his way past the gendarmes and stood before the doctor; the latter made him perform different acts, and undress and dress himself again to show the control possessed over him. Another doctor tried other experiments after throwing Didier into a mesmeric condition. He made him sit down and write afresh a letter he had written to the Court three months before. This he did, and the two letters being compared were found to be exactly similar. The doctor next plunged a pin into the man's neck, but without producing any signs of sensibility. One of the judges then asked the doctor whether he could not make the man repeat the acts which had led to his arrest, and which he alleged had been misinterpreted by the police. This Didier did with some reluctance, and they appeared to confirm the explanation given. The judges then returned to the Court and quashed the sentence on Didier on the ground that he was not responsible for his acts.

This we believe to be the first instance in



which a court of law has been so enlightened, as to recognise the difference between mesmeric sensitives and other people, in the matter of moral and legal responsibility.

*The Standard* of January 28th, has the following telegraphic report of the Didier case:—

PARIS, THURSDAY NIGHT.

The Court of Appeal in Paris yesterday was the scene of a most curious and remarkable spectacle. Last August a young man named Didier was arrested for an offence in the Champs Elysées and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. His friends, considering him innocent, advised him to appeal, and engaged Maitre Reitlinger as his counsel. The learned gentleman at once demanded that his client should be submitted to medical examination, and the Court appointed for that purpose Drs. Mottet and Mesard, two well known specialists in mental diseases, under whose surveillance the young man was placed for three months in the Hospital Saint Antoine. At the end of that period the doctors made the following report:—

"Didier suffers from a most remarkable nervous affection. He lives in a state of constant somnambulism, the attacks of which can be provoked at will. The numerous doctors who have watched him at the Hospital have proved that he is entirely destitute of any will of his own, and submits to all injunctions in the most automatic manner. When he is in a state of somnambulism he can be made to write letters and perform other things without being conscious of what he is doing. In addition, these acts may be accompanied by very strange phenomena. Thus, for example, if, having two sheets of paper before him, the one on which he has begun to write is taken away, he will continue his letter on the second sheet without perceiving the change. Individuals of this category are so singular that they may remain no matter when or where, in a state of trance, which may last three or four hours. They remain motionless, entirely unconscious of place or time. One day, while on the Place de la Bastille, he was seized with a fit of somnambulism, and his comrades had to carry him to a lodging-house for the night. A student at the Hospital saw him get out of bed one night, dress himself, and copy several pages of music. He was sleeping all the time. The next morning he was quite astonished at the work he had done. Various experiments were made on him. On two occasions he divined the secret thoughts of the doctors. One of these may be mentioned. A student

said to him, in the night time, 'Look, Didier; there's a pretty woman.' It was pitch dark, and, of course, there was no woman present, Didier replied, 'No, no; she is ugly; she has a child in her arms.' This remark corresponded exactly to the thoughts of the student. Didier then rushed forward to save from falling the child which he imagined he saw in the arms of the imaginary woman."

The prisoner, who is about twenty-two, appeared in Court, accompanied by his counsel and the doctors. His appearance aroused great curiosity, and all eyes were turned on him as he tottered rather than walked to the bar. Maitre Reitlinger, having addressed the Court in his defence, the Judges were about to withdraw to consider their verdict, when the doctors offered to confirm the statements made in their report by practical experiments on the spot. The Bench consented, and then occurred the following painful scene.

Doctor Mottet, followed by the magistrates and the prisoner, retired into a side room. Here, by the usual means of rapid passes of the hands before his eyes, and a strong fixed gaze, the unhappy "subject" was mesmerised. Didier was then left in charge of two of the Municipal Guards on service, the doctors and the judges returned to the court, and the door of the room was shut. Doctor Mottet now called the prisoner by his name. The next second a fearful noise was heard. It came from the sick young man. A few minutes before a touch of the finger would have almost knocked him over, so feeble and emaciated was he. Now, under the influence of mesmerism, he was like a raging lion. Upsetting the guards who held him by the wrists, he rushed at the door, broke it open, and, knocking down everybody in his path, ran up to Dr. Mottet. Here he suddenly stopped, and, fixing his eyes on his mesmeriser, trembled from head to foot in a manner terrible to see. Shrieks of horror ran through the court. The Doctor then set to work. "Undress yourself," said he to the Prisoner. In a few seconds Didier stripped himself of nearly all his garments. "Dress yourself again," said the Doctor, and again the prisoner obeyed with the same lightning rapidity. The experiment appeared conclusive. Doctor Mottet then awoke his "subject" by blowing on his face. Didier fell to the ground as if shot; the doctor, however, soon brought him round again. "Why did you undress yourself before these gentlemen?" asked Doctor Mottet, "that was very im-



proper." Didier, gazing with vacant astonishment, replied, "What! undressed myself; impossible." And the young man clung to the doctor for protection like a child. The Bench, however, was not convinced, and appeared to look upon the whole affair as a comedy. Doctor Mesnard in his turn, now operated on the prisoner. Having mesmerised him, he ordered him to write from memory a letter addressed to him while in prison. Didier replied, "Cannot; because I am in prison." The doctor insisted, whereon the prisoner sat down to a table and wrote, word for word, the letter in question, without a single mistake. While he was writing it Dr. Mottet took a long needle out of his instrument case, and plunged it into the young man's neck, but he felt nothing. By this time, however, the Bench had seen enough of these painful experiments, and some of the audience crying out "*Assez! assez!*" the sitting came to an end. The Court, considering the Prisoner was not responsible for his acts, quashed the verdict of the Lower Court, and the unhappy man was discharged.

#### APPARITIONS SKETCHED ON THE SPOT.

I cut from *Society* of January 15th, 1881, the enclosed account of a private *séance*, together with the clever illustration of a spirit manifestation, which any one who has seen the materialisations that now appear momentarily over tables with several well-known mediums will at once recognise as giving as tolerably good an idea of what is seen, as lines on paper can afford; and which will be recognised also, by some clairvoyants, as not unlike, if less obvious than, some of the objects coming through the gloaming vouchsafed to their internal vision or second sight. I do not think we need attribute clairvoyance as the origin of these manifestations, as supposed by the writer. Those three who saw them, out of the seven composing the *séance*, were on one side of the table; two of them, those who saw the most, were on each side of the medium; and being strangers, and one a writer, were probably those for whom the *séance* was given, and whom the spirits wished to convince; the writer apparently seeing these phenomena for the first time and acknowledging himself a sceptic. That it was not clairvoyance seems evident, as all saw the grey masses which formed before the faces appeared to the naked eye. The others plainly saw the faces also with their normal eyesight, self illumined, as they are now seen at so many *séances*, and which is perhaps the most interesting and

indisputable phenomenon of the day. The medium saw nothing; she was probably more than half entranced, and answering as one dreaming. If it had been clairvoyance she would have been the first to see these faces. The three ladies on the other side of the table, who only saw the grey masses, had probably seen faces a hundred times before, and needed no convincing; and there was no time to lose, as they waited long before any manifestations occurred.

Anyhow, the account I send is interesting as coming through an independent source; and being boldly and honestly inserted in a popular periodical.

SCRUTATOR.

SPIRITUALISM OR — ?

Just two words. What I am going to relate is true—absolutely true. The illustrations were made immediately after the events herein described, and are accurate. This by way of preface.

We were a party of seven. The scene was a private house not far from the Marble Arch; the lady of the house, whom for the sake of the narrative I will call Mrs. Tracey, and her daughter, a girl of two-and-twenty, were believers in modern Spiritualism, while the rest of us were decided sceptics. To form a "circle," as Spiritualists call the persons engaged in "spiriting," it is necessary to sit round a table, hands touching each other's, and resting palms downwards upon the mahogany. The best circles are those containing four or six or eight persons.

We were seven—Mrs. and Miss Tracey; Miss Edge, the children's governess; Miss Delorme, a young lady on a visit; Mr. Wedderburn, a traveller from China; Fred Tracey, a youth of twenty; and myself. The first thing we had to do was to darken the room, and this was speedily accomplished by the extinction of fire and gas, and blinding and shuttering the windows. In the centre of the room was a large oval table, and round this we placed ourselves in the prescribed form.

It was ten o'clock at night; an hour passed away, during which time nothing unusual occurred beyond slight vibrations and an occasional moving of the table, which may be naturally accounted for—pushing a table is very human. About this time a perceptible shiver made itself manifest amongst the sitters, which was felt more by some than others. It was not the chilliness of a fireless room; true, the fire was out, but still the room retained its warmth; it was the sharp coldness of ice that



crept down one's spine, bringing sudden tears to the eyes. A cool wind was next felt, sweeping over the hands as they lay on the table; then Miss Tracey began shivering and shaking to such an extent that Wedderburn and I, who sat on either side, had some difficulty in retaining her hands in ours; the shivering grew more and more violent until she was actually flinging her arms wildly about and striking the table with her hands. This we counteracted as far as possible by taking a firmer grip and lifting her hands from the table; the shaking ceased gradually until the action became more like electric thrills. A slight chill passed over us, and it then became visible to all that the room was full of grey masses about the size of a man's head, moving slowly in the air, fading, reappearing, starting away from the table, hovering in the air, and so disappearing. They can only be described as having the appearance of faint smoke or puffs of vapour, that were slightly luminous in an intermittent manner.

It was now that a large grey mass appeared just above Miss Tracey's head, and settled in the dark exactly in front of her. This grey mass then slowly contracted into an oval shape, growing as it did so more luminous, and in another second or so the face of a sad-eyed woman was gazing at us as we sat there—a face wan and luminous upon a back-ground of black. At the time of this spectral appearance, Mr. Wedderburn exclaimed, "Look at that woman's face above Miss Tracey's head!—there!—do you see it?—looking this way!—now it's fading!" as indeed it was, but only to appear again and again, each time less distinctly, till it had faded altogether, or rather resolved itself into the grey mass from whence it sprang.

Perhaps it would not be amiss to mention here that before we had commenced this sitting we were put upon our honour not to play any tricks, and that promise I know to have been religiously kept. Strangely enough, the face that had been so apparently real had not been seen by Mrs. Tracey, Miss Tracey, or Miss Edge. Mrs. Tracey and Miss Edge, sitting opposite, had indeed seen the grey masses, but had not been able to decipher any features, which Mrs. Tracey accounted for according to the spiritualistic creed, that it was only to some people that spirit faces had the power of showing themselves.

We still sat round the table, conversing on the strange occurrence, and wishing that it would return. Again the cloud of grey

appeared, again it rose in front of Miss Tracey, growing larger and more luminous, till there appeared, not a face alone, but the head of a large and heavy-featured man, a scowling face—with deep-set eyes and a hard cruel mouth.

"Miss Tracey," exclaimed Wedderburn, "can you see the face in front of you?" "No," she replied, "I see nothing; I am only intensely cold. What is it like?" I was about to reply, when Wedderburn answered, "A man with a cruel face and a large head. Do you see him?" (this to me.) "He is fading as I speak."

"Yes," I replied, "I see him just as you describe him. Now he has gone!" as the face finally disappeared, only, however, to appear again.

"There!" cried Wedderburn and young Tracey together, "it is coming back;" and again the shadowy face grew out of the intense blackness, still with the same heavy malevolent expression, still with a gravity words fail to convey. This time it appeared as if a neck were visible under the deep shadow cast by the jaw. As it came so it went, fading gradually away. The air lost its greyness, and darkness filled the room. With the fading of this last head the meeting was broken up; it was twenty minutes past twelve—midnight.

Beyond being slightly startled by these faces, which is somewhat natural, and one involuntary cry, there had been no fear, confusion, or excitement, nothing to induce a vivid imagination to take the figurative bit between its figurative teeth and race away till further orders. The whole affair was unaccountable. There were no apparent means that anyone present could have employed to produce these strange faces.

The conditions under which we sat were so severe, and yet as simple as they well could be—a dark dining-room and a locked door—that one naturally asks, "What is it? Are they the faces of disembodied spirits? Are they men and women who have lived on this earth of ours? Or must we look to science for an explanation?"

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SPIRITUALISM IN BRIGHTON:—*The Sussex Daily News* of January 27th, gives a critical description of a trance-lecture delivered in the Town Hall, Brighton, by Mr. J. J. Morse, on Mother Shipton's prophecy that "The World to an End will Come, in 1881." Did the spirits show any knowledge that this alleged prophecy was fabricated by a Brighton man a few years ago? Was the author of it present at the lecture? Did the spirits give any evidence that such a person as Mother Shipton ever existed?



## A FEW PRINCIPLES OF ORGANISATION.

Dr. Eugene Crowell, who is perhaps the most thoughtful public advocate of Spiritualism in the United States, has recently delivered himself of an utterance to the effect that he approves local, but not national organisations among Spiritualists. A multiplicity of small highly organised bodies he thinks to be good, but that all these can be systematically guided to unitedly achieve a given purpose, bad.

That centralisation of power has worked much evil in semi-civilised communities is undeniable. Some years ago, at public meetings held in England to consider the establishing of a central Spiritualistic organisation, the opponents of the scheme brought forward instances of tyranny flowing from the powers possessed by several well-known religious organisations. The reply to this was, that Spiritualists would organise upon a higher plane, and impose checks upon arbitrary acts, by making all the proceedings of any central body open to the public press. This understanding was not recorded in any articles of association, because in their singleness and simplicity of heart, the promoters of organisation were unable to conceive the possibility of the existence of Spiritualists, who would do anything but enlarge, instead of contract the public rights. Among superior men might conserves right; among inferior men might ignores right. At that time it had not been experimentally demonstrated that belief in the reality of certain abnormal phenomena is no more a guarantee that the believers are above the general level of society, than is unity of appreciation of the tricks of a conjuror upon a platform. If good public men in a central organisation could be obtained, it is easy to imagine how eager they would be to record and publish their individual votes, to abstain from delegating their powers to committees sitting in private, and to indignantly repudiate as an insult to the honour of the whole body, any attempt to trample upon the public rights by excluding the press. The constituents and not the managers of the organisation would be the only persons who had any right to vote on such points.

For a time, Dr. Crowell's ideas may be the best to foster the best public work in Spiritualism. But the time may come, perhaps, when a class of men may be found, willing to give time to public work in Spiritualism, who would never allow it to be supposed for one instant that they would contract rather than broaden the rights entrusted to their care.

Until such men are found, the sooner all would-be central organisations are allowed to die out, the better.

## A PENSION CONFERRED

ON MR. A. R. WALLACE BY THE QUEEN.

Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the distinguished writer of books and essays in support of Spiritualism, has just received a well-merited mark of royal favour, described in the following terms by the *Daily Telegraph*:—

"No man of our times more thoroughly deserves some recognition of the services he has rendered to science than Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, the author of *Travels on the Amazon*, *The Malay Archipelago*, and of a valuable book recently published on *Island Life*, besides many other important works. The news that the Queen has seen fit to confer on this distinguished man of science a yearly pension of two hundred pounds, will therefore be received with satisfaction, as a just tribute to a life spent in self-denying and painstaking investigation into the great secrets of nature. Mr. Wallace, it is well-known, was the joint or contemporaneous discoverer with Mr. Darwin of the theory of Natural Selection, and this alone would rank him among the foremost savants of our own or any other age; and all his subsequent writings have aimed at still further elucidating and illustrating the great doctrine, which many qualified critics consider to be superior in importance even to Newton's grand discovery of gravitation. There is no higher extant authority than Mr. Wallace on the question of the geographical distribution of animals. He has ere now been awarded the medal of our own Royal Society, as well as the gold medal of the Paris Society of Geographers; and her Majesty, in conferring upon him a substantial mark of national approbation, has honoured one whose claims to honour are beyond possibility of dispute."

## Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this Journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

## WHO IS JOHN KING?

Sir,—I wish to contradict an error made by a contributor of yours, in an article headed, "Spirit Names from a Swedenborgian Point of View," in *The Spiritualist* of January 21st. In this article your correspondent makes an assertion concerning myself, which is without foundation.

It is true that when an Intelligence calling himself John King first appeared through my mediumship, he gave out that he had been, when on earth, Henry Morgan, the buccaneer; but it is a mistaken statement that



before this Spirit or Intelligence made this communication, I had seen or read any book in which Henry Morgan was mentioned. Such being the case it was obvious that the name was not found in my mind as your correspondent seems to think. *The Lives of the Buccaneers*, as it happens, I have never read. A romance entitled *The Life of Henry Morgan*, I read sometime after the said "John King" had announced himself to have been the notorious buccaneer.

Again your correspondent says "That the voice calling itself 'Peter' (also a generic or symbolical name) says that he was a clown, or acrobat, and I think broke his neck. At one of Miss Showers' Séances, he declared that he had been a costermonger, and had choked himself with a carrot." "John King" and "Peter" certainly are generic or symbolical names, and it stands to reason that the Intelligences who adopt them are numerous. From the voice calling itself "Peter," with which I have long been familiar, I can only say that I have always heard but one and the same history of its owner's past life.

Be the John Kings whom they may, and the Peters departed costermongers or clowns, my own experience has been that spirits always find an earthly name for themselves.

CHARLES E. WILLIAMS.

WE believe that for many years past, Alexis Didier so celebrated as a sensitive in the days of the early mesmerists, has been earning a living in Paris in connection with the stage.

NEXT Monday evening Mr. William Tebb will preside at a meeting of the London Society for the Abolition of Compulsory Vaccination, at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, London, and will deliver an address on the Paris International Anti-Vaccination Congress.

SPIRITUALISM IN LEICESTER.—On Monday evening last week, Mr. J. Holmes delivered a lecture in the Temperance Hall, Leicester, to a large audience, on "The result of my Investigations, with other Unbelievers, into the Phenomena of Spiritualism. Does man Live after the Change called Death?"—The Rev. J. Page Hopps presided, and after briefly explaining his motives for occupying the chair, introduced the lecturer. Mr. Holmes said that he had been investigating the subject called "Spiritualism," being determined not to believe what others said, nor give credit to what they had seen or heard, but to thoroughly examine the subject for himself. He then explained the numerous and varied results of his examination, and he admitted a portion of the phenomena. He said that Spiritualism, if founded on fact, appeared to be a key to unlock the future world, to burst the barriers of the grave, and point out a better prospect beyond. It had something about it which dignified man; it told that man was not a mere chattel formed of clay. Certainty was given for suspense; knowledge for faith, and hope for doubt. After the lecture a somewhat lively discussion was opened by Mr. J. Gimson. Mr. Turner and others followed, contending that there was no proof that Spiritualism was true.—A vote of thanks was accorded to the Chairman, on the motion of Mr. Holmes, seconded by Mr. Gimson.—The proceedings then terminated.

### Answers to Correspondents.

N.—Those who are under the influence of mesmeric sensitives to the extent of deriving their ideas and supposed facts from them, are in a humiliating position. Such are usually, but not always, enthusiasts, and often innocently do more public harm than the intentional enemies of Spiritualism.

### OMINOUS BIRDS.

At different times we have met hard-headed investigators of Spiritualism, who have had strange stories to tell about crows, doves, ravens or other birds, behaving and appearing in a peculiar way, at the time of the death of some person known to the narrator. These narratives do not stand alone; others are on record in history. If such occurrences are more than coincidences; the formation of any philosophical explanation of them seems at present to be superlatively difficult. But first of all, it is well to get at the facts, so we ask for contributions on this head, reminding correspondents, however, that their statements will be nearly worthless for philosophical purposes, unless authenticated by the full names and addresses of the writers, and of every one concerned. Anonymous testimony is nearly worthless now-a-days for good practical purposes.

In Devonshire, the appearance of a white-breasted bird has long been considered an omen of death. This belief has been traced to a circumstance stated to have happened to the Oxenham family in that county, and related by Howell, in his *Familiar Letters*; wherein is the following monumental inscription: "Here lies John Oxenham, a goodly young man, in whose chamber, as he was struggling with the pangs of death, a bird, with a white breast, was seen fluttering about his bed, and so vanished." The same circumstance is related of his sister Mary, and two or three others of the family.

Several supernatural occurrences took place at the death of Lord Lyttleton, near the close of the last century. Shortly before his death he saw a white dove fluttering outside the casement. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, in his *Memoirs*, has the following passage relative to this incident:—

"Dining at Pitt Place, about four years after the death of Lord Lyttleton, in the year 1783, I had the curiosity to visit the bed-chamber, where the casement window, at which Lord Lyttleton asserted the dove appeared to flutter, was pointed out to me; and at his stepmother's, the Dowager Lady Lyttleton's, in Portugal Street, Grosvenor Square, I have frequently seen a painting which she herself executed, in 1780, expressly to commemorate the event: There the dove appears at the window, while a female figure, habited in white, stands at the foot of the bed, announcing to Lord Lyttleton his dissolution.



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## LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

FRONTISPIECE :—The room at Leipsic in which most of the Experiments were conducted.

PLATE I :—Experiments with an Endless String.

PLATE II :—Leather Bands Interlinked and Knotted under Professor Zöllner's Hands.

PLATE III :—Experiments with an Endless Bladder-band and Wooden Rings.

PLATE IV :—Result of the Experiment.

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