

EXPERIENCES
IN
SPIRITUALISM

WITH

MR. D. D. HOME.

BY

VISCOUNT ADARE,
[Windham Thomas Wyndham-Quin 1841-1926]

WITH

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

BY THE

EARL OF DUNRAVEN.
[Viscount Adare's father]

[Excerpts only]

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[The copy from which this was digitized was damaged physically and was produced by a photolithography which was human readable but only very poorly machine readable. Thus only a small sampling of the seances are given to show a flavor of what the book contains. A special effort was made to include the extended channeled content when it appeared. As noted in the introductions, no stenographer was present.]

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The subject of Spiritualism was first brought under my notice about fifteen years ago, by reading two or three accounts of the occurrences which were taking place in America. To some extent I was prepared for the fair consideration of very strange and startling phenomena, from having previously examined fully into the subject of mesmerism. The result of this enquiry, carried on for several months, under most favourable circumstances, was a thorough conviction of the reality of the phenomena of mesmerism, from the simple sleep up to clairvoyance. At that time, scientific men in general, and the medical profession in particular, were loud in condemnation of what they considered sheer imposture; and one of the most eminent of the profession, the late Dr. Elliotson, lost a considerable portion of his very extensive practice by his bold and uncompromising assertion of the truth of mesmerism and its great importance as a curative agent. Since then a great change has taken place in the opinion of the public on this subject. Judging by the literature of the day, as well as by the remarks current in society, the general phenomena of mesmerism, are widely accepted as true; and even those who believe in the higher phenomena, including clairvoyance, are no longer necessarily considered to be the victims of imposture.

When table turning became one of the amusements of the day, I witnessed and tried various experiments which clearly demonstrated the inadequacy of Professor Faraday's explanation of the manifestations by involuntary muscular action. I was also present at a *seance*, where Mrs. Hayden was the medium, and an attentive examination of what took place sufficed to satisfy me

that the subject was worthy of careful examination, to be made whenever an opportunity should occur for a full investigation into a class of phenomena, opening a new field of research of a very strange and startling description. This opportunity has been afforded by Lord Adare's acquaintance with Mr. Home, which commenced in 1867. I soon perceived from his letters, that the manifestations were so remarkable that they deserved to be duly chronicled and preserved. At my request he has carefully noted, as fully as could conveniently be done, the occurrences of each day, and has permitted me to print the whole series for private circulation. Publication is out of the question, as much that is interesting and a valuable portion of the record, relates to private domestic affairs, and to near relatives or intimate friends.

Even after the unavoidable suppression of some curious and instructive details, it was not without much reluctance that we made up our minds to give even a very limited circulation to this series of *seances*; but, after full consideration we have deemed it best to print—as nearly as we possibly could venture to do—the entire record; notwithstanding the pain, to ourselves and others, which necessarily accompanies the mention of communications professing to come from those whose memories call up the deepest and tenderest feelings of our nature. It is obvious that the chief value of such a record must depend upon the trustworthiness of the narrator. Fidelity of description is very rare, even where honesty of purpose is undoubted. I believe that in the present case scrupulous accuracy, a retentive memory, and an unexcitable temperament are combined in an unusual degree, forming just such a combination of qualities as is indispensable for one who undertakes to record phenomena of this exceptional and startling character. In several of the latter *seances*, portions of them have been written by both Lora Adare and myself, and then carefully compared; some were looked over by more than one of the persons present: thus everything has been done to ensure the greatest accuracy. In addition, each of those mentioned as present at the *seances* (except a few who are not within reach) has received a copy of the printed account, and replies have been received from all,

affirming the accuracy of the reports. A list of these names will be given further on, and thus the following pages, it is hoped, will be found to contain the fullest and best authenticated account of the phenomena of Spiritualism which has as yet appeared in this country.

It must be borne in mind that an actual record of facts, and not the adoption or refutation of any particular theory, is the main object in view. Spiritualism, will, therefore, in the ensuing remarks, be regarded chiefly in its scientific or phenomenal aspect, and I have purposely avoided expressing any decided opinion on questions so complicated, and about which at present such conflicting opinions prevail, as upon the character of the phenomena, the source from which they proceed, and the tendency of the teaching to be derived from them.

The whole subject of Spiritualism is one which must soon command the attention of thoughtful men in this country, as it has very fully done in America, and to some extent in France and other countries of Europe. In America, the belief in Spiritualism may be considered as a *fait accompli*. Its adherents are said to be reckoned by millions; varying from three to eleven, according to different accounts; but even should the lowest calculation be beyond the exact truth, as is probably the case, there can be no doubt that a considerable portion of the people of the United States, including many men eminent in science, literature, politics, &c., (among whom was to be reckoned the late President Lincoln) believe that a means of communication is now open between the inhabitants of this world and intelligent beings belonging to a different state of existence; thus affording a new and astounding evidence for the reality of another life, and of a spirit-world. It is remarkable that this new source of evidence should be discovered at a time when materialism, and the denial of a future state are on the increase, apparently in all parts of the world, and are said to prevail to an alarming extent in America, the country, be it remarked, where first these manifestations occurred on a large or striking scaler. The timidity or apathy of men of science in England on this subject is to be deplored. A remarkable example of the former was seen in the case of the late Sir David Brewster. He was present at two

seances of Mr. Home's, where he stated, as is affirmed on the written testimony of persons present, his impression that the phenomena were most striking and startling, and he does not appear then to have expressed any doubt of their genuineness, but he afterwards did so in an offensive manner. The whole discussion may be read in Mr. Home's book entitled, "Incidents in my Life." I mention this circumstance, because, I was so struck with what Sir David Brewster—with whom I was well acquainted—had himself told me, that it materially influenced me in determining to examine thoroughly into the reality of the phenomena. I met him one day on the steps of the Athenaeum; we got upon the subject of table-turning, &c.; he spoke most earnestly, stating that the impression left on his mind from what he had seen, was, that the manifestations were to him quite inexplicable by fraud, or by any physical laws with which we were acquainted, and that they ought to be fully and carefully examined into. At present I know of only three eminent men of science in England, who have gone fully into the subject; and in their case the enquiry has resulted in a conviction of the genuineness of the phenomena. I allude to Mr. De Morgan the mathematician, Mr. Varley the electrician, and Mr. Wallace the naturalist, all, as is well known, men of high distinction in widely differing departments of science.

In investigating this subject, the greatest patience is required. As in the somewhat analogous case of clairvoyance, the recurrence of similar phenomena is most uncertain, owing partly to the varying physical conditions of the medium, partly to the physical state of one or more of those present, or even to the state of the atmosphere; partial or even total failures must, therefore, occasionally be expected. I remember at a *seance* held to witness the clairvoyant phenomena of Alexis, how the effect of the presence of one lady sufficed nearly to obliterate his; power; she, fortunately for us, left the room in disgust at what she designated as humbug, as Alexis's power returned almost immediately after her departure, and we had a most interesting and beautiful *seance*. A very analogous example in the case of Spiritualism will be found at p. 110 of the following *seances*, Great caution must, therefore, be observed, and great allowances

made, wherever a *bona fide* desire to arrive at truth is the real object of the enquirer.

Taking a general view of the subject, there are five hypotheses, three of them widely accepted, for explaining the so-called spiritualistic phenomena. The first, adopted by the world at large, maintains that they are the result of tricks or clever contrivance; in other words, that the mediums are impostors, and the whole exhibition humbug. According to the second, which is advocated by some scientific and medical men, the persons assisting at a *seance* become, then and there, the victims of a sort of mania or delusion, and imagine phenomena to occur, which have no real objective existence. The third maintains that the manifestations are referable to cerebral action, conscious or unconscious. This theory is evidently incapable of embracing the whole of the phenomena, and is not very, widely advocated. The fourth, adopted almost unanimously by Spiritualists, is that the manifestations are caused by the agency of the spirits of departed human beings; and, generally speaking, by those who profess to be present. According to the fifth, which is held chiefly by believers in dogmatic Christianity, and also by many of the Low Church and Calvinistic school, the phenomena are supposed to be due to the agency of evil spirits or devils, personifying departed human beings, who have obtained this new power apparently for the purpose of undermining that conception of Christianity which has hitherto been almost universally received.

No amount of written or oral testimony seems to be sufficient to carry conviction on this mysterious subject to the minds of the vast majority of persons; yet a candid enquirer, reading a record such as that contained in the following pages, embracing so great a variety of phenomena, witnessed under varying circumstances and conditions, and attested by so many persons, can hardly avoid, without putting aside the narrator's testimony as utterly untrustworthy, admitting the possibility that some of the occurrences here recounted are the work of an agency beyond that of the persons present. The examples are so numerous that it would be difficult to make a selection for illustration; but the reader's attention may be called to those

instances where Mr. Home had never before entered the room in which the *seance* was held; as for example, at No. 5, Buckingham Gate, mentioned in p. 8; or where, as in *Seance* No. 1, and indeed many of the others, he had no possible opportunity of making any preparatory arrangements. It is perhaps as well here to mention, that we have not, on a single occasion, during the whole series of *seances*, seen any indication of contrivance on the part of the medium for producing or facilitating the manifestations which have taken place. The larger has been our experience, and the more varied the phenomena, the more firmly have we been convinced that a large portion of them are but explicable on the hypothesis that they are caused by intelligent beings, other than the persons in the room; the remainder being probably due to the action of physical laws as yet unknown.

The phenomena may be divided into two classes:—Physical manifestations; and communications or messages. The former are divisible again into those which are solely or partly due to physical forces acting by a law—not yet ascertained—and those which imply a power exercised by an invisible and intelligent agent. To the first division of the physical manifestations, certain movements and vibrations of the table, or other articles of furniture may be referred; and perhaps the cold currents of air so often felt at the commencement of *seances*. As an example of the second may be mentioned the case of the table rising above our heads, described in page 131 ; but a more decided illustration is afforded at page 137, where a table was raised (no one touching it) and placed most carefully upon another table; also may be cited those occasions on which the accordion was played, when not held or touched by mortal hands. One very curious example of vibration of the table will be found at the end of *Seance* No. 51, p. 100, where the manifestation can only be referred to an intelligent agent, or to fraud on the part of some one present. I was so struck by the synchronism of the vibration with each stroke of the clock, as indicating an intelligence at work somewhere, that I examined closely but failed to detect any indication that it was caused by any one of those sitting at the table.

The communications may be divided into six classes: those which come through the alphabet; through the planchette; writing by the influenced hand; direct spirit-writing; audible spirit-voices; and, lastly, by the medium in a trance. The first and last methods are those employed in the following *seances*. Those delivered by the medium in a trance are obviously unsuited to convince persons of the existence of spirits; generally they afford no actual proof of the utterances being other than the thoughts of the medium; there are, however, exceptional cases, as where a communication is made to some person present, detailing circumstances unknown to the others, and of which the medium is almost certainly ignorant. Generally, but not always, these examples may be referable to the powers of mind-reading, similar to that manifested by clairvoyants. A genuine message, spelled out by the alphabet, is best suited to produce conviction that a communication is really from a spirit, especially where the raps, indicative of the letters which compose the words, are made at a distance from the medium, or are of such a nature as to have rendered it impossible for him to have caused them. The most striking cases are those where the mode of marking the letters is unknown to the medium or to any one present, except the person addressed. Examples will be found at pp. 111, 112, and 121, where the letters were indicated by my being touched on the knee. Not only are the two modes of communication of very different value as to their power of producing conviction in the reality of the phenomena, but likewise as to the reliability of the messages sent; and this must be carefully borne in mind when judging of the tendency of, or teaching derived from the communications. When Mr. Home speaks in a trance, there is no certainty whether his utterances are those of a spirit alone, or how far they may be mixed up with his own ideas or principles. Sometimes the communications are striking, at other times vague, sometimes trivial. Messages through the alphabet, on the other hand, carry at least a strong probability that they convey the thoughts of a spirit; although even they too in some cases exhibit indications of being affected by the medium, and are therefore not quite reliable.

The foregoing remarks will suffice to shew that in my opinion the first of the five hypotheses is utterly untenable. The second is disposed of by such cases as are detailed in pp. 137, 141. In the first example, the table lifted up and placed upon that at which we were sitting remained in the same position after the *seance* was broken up. In the second, the traces of the snuff which had been poured out on the shelf under the window were visible after supper. The third hypothesis requires no particular comment, being held by a very limited number among those who believe in the reality of the phenomena. Only two, therefore, need occupy the reader's attention, namely, that by which the manifestations are supposed, to be caused by deceased human beings, or that which affirms them to be entirely due to the agency of lying spirits or devils. It is worthy of notice how the majority of the communications can be pressed, into the service of either hypothesis.

The probability of the latter of the two theories being the correct one, extravagant and repulsive as this must appear to so many in the present day, results from the difficulty of reconciling the announcements of Spiritualism with the belief in certain doctrines hitherto uniformly maintained by all portions of Christendom. The necessity of a sacrificial atonement through Christ to obtain our salvation; the separation of mankind at death into two classes, the saved and the lost; the former destined to live for ever in union with God and happiness, the latter in perpetual separation from Him, in punishment and misery; and the existence of a personal devil, and of fallen angels, whose unceasing efforts are directed to procure the loss of men's souls, are beliefs or doctrines which have been universally held by all churches. Now, the first and most important of these doctrines, one which has been regarded almost as the basis of Christianity, is seldom if ever alluded to in the following *seances*, while the two others are absolutely denied by Spiritualists in all countries. Thus, too, the miracles of the old and New Testament are referred to natural laws, as exemplified, p. 74, in the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea; and in p. 83, where the phenomena which occurred on the day of Pentecost are imitated. More might be cited having the same

tendency, as for example the views put forward in p. 56; but, as has been already stated, the principal object here is to place on record a series of actual occurrences and communications, and then to indicate very slightly such points as are most worthy of the attention of an enquirer into their bearing upon the prevailing opinions of the day, on questions of social and religious importance. It should, however, be borne in mind that the majority of the statements here alluded to were made by the medium in a trance, and cannot be regarded as so probably the sayings of spirits, as if they were derived from messages through the alphabet. I must also observe that I have read many communications received through writing and drawing mediums which are distinctly Christian in their teaching, they are full of reference to our Lord and to his office as the Mediator of mankind; but all, as far as my knowledge extends, have a latitudinarian character about them. Most fearful pictures are drawn of the consequences of sin, and of the way retribution must be made for evil done in this world. Many Spiritualists affirm that communications coming from these sources are of a higher kind than those conveyed through the ordinary physical means, such as raps, table tiltings, &c.

In other important particulars there is an apparent contrast between Christianity and the tendency of Spiritualism. In the New Testament, submission to authority and child-like obedience are inculcated as qualities peculiarly appertaining to the Christian believer, whereas the teaching of the spirits, as here recorded, seeing rather to bring everything to the test of our reason. The spirit of Christianity has generally been antagonistic to the spirit of the world, and frequently to what may be called the spirit of the age. Latitudinarianism; opposition to ecclesiastical rule and authority; and dislike of forms as well as dogmas, are characteristic of the present day; and these principles are in accordance with the general teaching of Spiritualism, which is decidedly latitudinarian, and in harmony with the spirit of antisacerdotalism, as opposed to that of dogmatic Christianity.

The reader of the following pages will not fail to perceive that a high and pure morality is taught in them; that the love of God, the value of prayer, and the importance of cultivating a truthful

spirit are strongly inculcated; the terrible effects of sin, and the necessity of leading a good life in this, in order to occupy a high place in the next world, are forcibly pointed out. But what must perplex an orthodox Christian reader of these *seances* is the startling fact, that all reference to our Lord's office and work, as the sole passport to heaven, is practically omitted, and that He, whom all Catholics and most Protestants recognize as the sun of their religion, and the centre of their worship, seems to form so small a part of the thoughts or teaching of the spirits that here speak to us from beyond the grave.

That every variety of religious opinion, and all forms of Christianity are taught by spirits, is fully shown in an excellent book on Spiritualism, designated by rather an ill-chosen title, "Planchette; or, the Despair of Science." This, however, is quite in accordance with the general belief of Spiritualists, namely, that spirits hold various views because they retain in the next world their complete individuality, and to a certain extent their ignorance; they do not therefore know for certain that one system is better than another. They teach immortality; a living Providence; the possibility of communicating with us; that God has condemned no one to an eternity of punishment; and they usually imply that a good life in itself, rather than as springing from our union with Christ's merits, is the passport to a happy position in the next world. If what Spiritualists affirm be true, that the spirits are really those of departed human beings, and not demons, no harm can be done by narrowly scanning the tendency of some of their announcements in an opposite direction; and on the contrary, if they are demons or devils, the importance cannot be overrated of warning those who are interested in the subject, lest they find themselves implicated in the adoption of a system, which must on that hypothesis be looked upon as a very formidable conspiracy against the Christian religion, as hitherto believed in all countries.

It must, however, be evident to a thoughtful peruser of these pages, (and still more should he extend his reading to larger works on Spiritualism; such, for example, as the "Life of the Seeress of Prevorst,") that the evil-spirit or devil hypothesis is

surrounded by such formidable difficulties, that hasty judgments and rash conclusions cannot be too strongly deprecated. Not to go so far back as the opposition made to Galileo and others, when their discoveries appeared to militate against the letter of Scripture; how many of us remember the sensation caused, and the alarms expressed by pious and learned persons, when the discoveries in geology demonstrated the impossibility of the world being created in six days, a few thousand years ago, but that it has existed and been peopled with animals for millions of years. Again, the universality of the Flood, so clearly declared in the words of Scripture, is found to be incompatible with the results of careful observation of the actual state of the surface of the earth. Among the beliefs exploded by geological research, may be mentioned the doctrine that pain and death, not only in man but in animals, are the result of Adam's sin. The fact being that the remains of animals, fitted to prey upon and kill each other, are found in strata formed millions of years ago, and in many cases the smaller creatures which were devoured are found within the stomachs of those by whom they were killed and eaten. Later still, the short amount of time during which man has existed on the globe as deduced from even the longest Scripture chronology, is irreconcilable with recent researches in geology, in archaeology, and in philology; the accuracy of which is every year more and more confirmed by additional observations, clearly indicating that man has inhabited this world for a period, not to be reckoned by thousands but by tens of thousands of years. This subject might be pursued much further, and additional illustrations given, tending to inculcate the necessity of modifying preconceived opinions on questions of great importance. To mention only one—that of miracles;—certain phenomena which have been universally considered as miraculous, or, to use the current expression, supernatural, are identical with those which are manifested by clairvoyants. How far this may extend cannot at present be known, but sufficient is established to render it advisable to pause before denouncing those who deny that certain phenomena are miraculous; some of which are, and others may be referable to physical laws that have only recently been

included within the domain of natural science, and which are as yet only partially understood. I would also point to the wonderful healing powers of certain mediums, as affording a subject of most serious consideration and reflection, but which need not be entered upon here as not bearing upon the following *seances*.

Arguing by analogy, it need not surprise us to find, as must be the case should the announcements of Spiritualism be true, that the conceptions hitherto held by Christians of all denominations, of the state of existence in the next world, may require considerable modification. We are informed that the spirit-world is very analogous in some respects to this; that it is one of continued progression; that we are not suddenly brought to the full knowledge of religious truth; that the belief we hold here we shall in all probability, at least for a time, retain there., in proportion as we are more bigoted in this life, and consequently more difficult to teach in the next. We are told, p. 38. "*There is a contest*" going on, "*same as on earth;*" but, "*purity when freed from the mortal is strongest, as truth overcomes error.*" At different epochs of the world, the same subject is regarded from very different points of view. For example, the idea of the punishment of hell being a material fire was for many ages almost universal; it certainly is not so at present, even among the most orthodox believers in the doctrine of eternal punishment.

A difficulty of another kind, one not easily got over, stands in the way of the adoption of the evil-spirit theory, namely the fact that conversions have been made by the agency of Spiritualism, from Atheism and from simple Deism to Christianity. To take one instance; Dr. Elliotson was a strong materialist, and unbeliever; he was converted, through Mr. Home's manifestations, to Christianity. In accordance with this fact we have a message from a spirit purporting to be his, (vide *seance No. 10*) "*I now know that my Redeemer liveth,*" &c. Again others, among whom are four or five of my own acquaintance, have been lead by the same means from Unitarianism to a belief in the divinity of Christ. Still more striking are the cases where persons have been brought into the Church of Rome, several examples of which have occurred in America, and a few

in England. The case of Dr. and Mrs. Nichols (Americans) affords a most remarkable instance in point; and it would be strange could any of these individuals be brought to believe that their advance from a lower to a higher religious creed was due to the agency of the devil; nor can the express testimony be overlooked of some pure-minded, earnest persons, as to the elevating effect of the belief in Spiritualism upon their hearts and souls. Take for example the interesting and striking account of the closing years and death of a very beautiful character, the late Mrs. Home, as described by Mrs. Howitt and Mrs. S. C. Hall,* where the happiness and the blessings which Spiritualism has produced, not only in her case, but in their own, are portrayed in a tone strikingly earnest and yet quite free from anything like excitement or exaggeration. To ascribe such peace and joy in believing, such love of our Lord, and resignation to His will as led the Bishop of Perigueux—who administered the last sacraments to Mrs. Home to remark, "Though he had been present at many a deathbed for heaven, he had never seen one equal to hers;"—and she a professed Spiritualist, and the wife of one of the most noted mediums in the world!—To ascribe, I repeat, such results to the agency of the father of lies and the arch enemy of mankind, must appear as impossible to many, as it must be revolting to the two gifted writers whom I have quoted, and who bear such strong testimony to the blessed influence which Spiritualism has exercised upon their own lives and faith. Attention should also be called to the *seances* at Homburg, especially Nos. 19, 21, 22, where the action of the spirits was decidedly exercised in various ways to promote bodily health and comfort, and also to inculcate and reiterate the advantage of good practices, such as examination of conscience at night; still more striking was the evident anxiety on their part to prevent and counteract grievous sin, as must be quite clear to those who read these accounts with attention. Remarks upon this subject might be considerably amplified; but enough has been pointed out to indicate some of the difficulties which surround the adoption of the evil-spirit hypothesis. Indeed the only answer

* Vide Mr. Home's "Incidents in my Life," chap. xii.

which can be given, by those who maintain this view, is that Satan is allowed an unlimited power, of which he makes copious use, of transforming himself into an angel of light.

Setting aside the religious question, and admitting even that the spirits are those of departed human beings; the difficulty of identification renders the whole subject in its present stage rather unsatisfactory. This opinion, I know, is to a considerable extent shared in by persons who have been for several years believers in Spiritualism. Among those who took part in the following *seances*, some seem to find little or no difficulty in believing that the spirits in communication with them are the relatives or friends they professed to be. I confess in this confidence I cannot share. To take an extreme case, the idea that the former possessor of Adare Manor should be present at a *seance*, and yet only manifest that presence by shaking his son's chair (No. 57, p. 116), seems as improbable as absurd.*

Whatever view be taken of the source of the phenomena, the subject is one deserving serious treatment, and careful investigation. The tone of levity which prevails in some amateur *seances*, and the fashion now prevalent among young ladies of playing with planchettes, cannot be too strongly deprecated. A power, which practically may be looked upon and treated of as new, has almost suddenly been developed among men; a power which may be fraught in many cases with serious consequences. Are we in a position at present to pronounce from what sources this power proceeds? The veil which separates this world from the next is partially raised; can we say why this partial unfolding of the future is permitted; into what extent it may be developed, or what is the main purpose for which this unexpected source of knowledge, or deception as the case may be, is revealed? A partial but decisive answer may be given to some of these questions. A proof, derived from a physical and material source is opened to men of an existence beyond the grave. The tendency of the present age being materialistic and sceptical,

* Since these *seances* have taken place, communications have been made to Lord Adare (vide p. 164) which, if genuine, would account for and explain why none were given at the time from the source mentioned; the probability, however, of identity is scarcely strengthened, in my mind, by the terror of these later communications.

the evidence of the senses is required as a ground for belief, to a degree far surpassing what has hitherto been the case; that evidence is now afforded for the most important of beliefs, namely, that of a future existence. The true answer to those who require the *cui bono* of Spiritualism would appear, therefore, to be, that through its instrumentality an incontrovertible proof is afforded to all who will fairly, fully, and patiently investigate a world of spirits. This teaching stands out clear and unmistakable above any conflicting theories as to the kind of spirits who are the source of the communications.

That Spiritualism is not unaccompanied by danger is allowed, even by its most earnest believers. This chiefly springs from the great power of deception which may be exercised by spirits, while the power of identification remains so unsatisfactory as it is at present. For example, messages are sent, or communications in the trance state given, purporting to come from deceased members of a family, commenting on family affairs; it is obvious that this may be a source of serious mischief. If, as is allowed by all Spiritualists, bad and lying spirits can and do communicate, what is to secure one from being deceived by them in a particular case? A friend of mine believed that a spirit present at a *seance* was a gentleman who had been lately poisoned; he asked if B—— was concerned in the matter and was answered in the affirmative. This he appeared to believe, who lives in his pariah, to some extent lies and thus B—— I under the imputation of being concerned a murder; and this on the declaration of a spirit whose identity seemed to me to rest on no solid ground.

One of the most remarkable features in these *seances* is the frequency of Mr. Home's trances. This peculiar phase of his power has become much developed of late; while others, such as his being raised in the air, have comparatively diminished. To those who are familiar with mesmeric trances, the genuineness of Mr. Home's is easily admitted. To me they are among the most interesting portions of the manifestations which occur through his mediumship. The change which takes place in him is very striking; he becomes, as it were, a being of a higher type. There is a union of sweetness, tenderness, and earnestness

in his voice and manner which is very attractive. At first sight much might appear to be skilful acting; but after having so frequently witnessed these trance states, I am fully convinced of their truthfulness. Sometimes his utterances are most impressive; the language beautiful, conveying his thoughts in the most appropriate words. That he is possessed by a power or spirit, not his own, and superior to himself, a very little experience will suffice to render manifest. I can most fully endorse the statement in Lord Adare's preface—of the very imperfect conception of the impressiveness of some of these *seances* as conveyed by our meagre reports. They are, as it were, mere skeletons, as for example, No. 55; no one could imagine the beauty and interest of that *seance*, from the very inadequate account given there of what occurred. To be appreciated or realized they must be witnessed, and that under favourable circumstances. Those who have been present will, I am sure, agree with me that some of them are very touching and beautiful. A pure, lofty, and religious tone more or less pervades them. The solemnity which is always manifested at the name of God is remarkable. After reading Mr. Chevalier's pamphlet I was anxious to apply the test of using the invocation of the Trinity. I never mentioned this to Mr. Home; but it was unexpectedly suggested by him when entranced during the *seance*, No. 59, and with a totally opposite result, as the reader will see.* The effect produced upon Mr. Home by Pressence's "Life of Christ" was very striking. I have never seen such reverence paid to the Bible in real life; it reminded one of the devotion exhibited by a Catholic to the Blessed Sacrament.

Another very remarkable feature and well worthy of attention, is the account given by the spirits of the mode by which they are able to make manifestations, as is detailed in pp. 54, 126, and other places; also the extreme difficulty experienced in making them, and the slight causes which interrupt the power. In fact, when one considers the number of favourable conditions

* Mr. Chevalier states that when he asked the spirit who it was, using the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the word "Devil" was spelled out.

necessary in order that manifestations should succeed, the wonder is that they do not oftener fail. Nothing can be plainer than that the power of spirits over matter is one of degree, varying each night, and indeed almost every minute. This is the answer to those who are constantly remarking "If they can do this, why cannot they do that? If a spirit can raise an object an inch, why not a yard? If Mr. Home could float in the air last week, why can he not to-day?" and so forth. The causes of failure are well exemplified in the last *seance* at Garinish, No. 63, when apparently, numbers were present, and evidently they had intended giving us a series of manifestations as a wind up to the *seances* in Ireland; but this design was partly frustrated by the state of the weather and Mr. Home's health, as well as our own rather unfavorable condition.

A very common misconception on the general subject ought to be here pointed out. The idea seems very prevalent that Mr. Home invokes or evokes spirits. This notion is totally destitute of foundation. Neither Mr. Home, nor any medium, as far as I know ever professes to call up spirits. Several persons sit round a table, and Mr. Home, while deprecating levity, desires to promote cheerful and social conversation on general matters, without any premeditated design or wish expressed that particular things should happen or particular spirits be present. Some Spiritualists begin every sitting with prayer, and generally with a chapter in the Bible. I was at one lately, where, as soon as the presence of spirits was announced by raps, they were asked, should we begin by reading a chapter; "Yes," was the reply; and they were then asked, what chapter it should be, and they rapped out, "Acts, xi. *chapter verses 5 to 18.*" One more appropriate could not readily be selected.

Before concluding these introductory remarks, I would remind the reader, that the primary object of this little work is to place on record a series of observed facts upon a very mysterious and startling subject. It is only by such means, pursued under varying circumstances, as to time, place, and mediums, multiplied by different observers, that a conclusive answer can be hoped for to the question, *Will the result of Spiritualism be good or evil?* is the tendency of the movement as

a whole to the glory of God, and the happiness of mankind in the next world, or, is it a great system of deception, carried on by the powers of darkness, and fraught with danger to our souls? Setting aside the great majority of the world, who refuse all enquiry into a subject which they consider to be imposture, or ridiculous nonsense, unworthy of serious thought, many shrink from it as the work solely of evil spirits; others, from a fear of the danger derived from the difficulty of identification, and the consequent deception which may be practised; and others again from an instinctive dread of communing with the departed, and from an intense pain caused by the idea that the state of those whom they have loved should be so widely different from, and apparently so much lower than what they have fondly believed in, through the traditionary teaching under which they have been brought up. Nor can we omit in fairness the opinion of many of the opponents of Spiritualism who maintain, that the examples of its being productive of good effects are exceptional, and that the system must be judged by its general results, which, as developed in America, are, they say, drifting away from anything like orthodox Christianity. This statement I am not in a position to be able to pronounce upon one way or the other.

Without attempting to conceal my own state of doubt as to the source from which the phenomena of Spiritualism proceed, and my decided impression of the danger which in some respects seems possibly to accompany its pursuit or adoption, I have been most desirous not to bias unduly those who are anxious to investigate a very interesting and most curious subject of enquiry; especially as Lord Adare takes a more favourable view than I can at present conscientiously hold, of the points about which such opposite opinions are entertained by men of earnest and truth-loving character. Why then, it may be asked, take any part in enquiring into a subject, the tendency of which seems so difficult to determine? The answer is simple:—Chiefly, to examine for my own satisfaction; next, to enable others, who may consider a similar spirit of enquiry, advisable or interesting, to have the benefit of the experience derived from the following *seances*; and also, to shew to

those who are already struck by, or much occupied in, the pursuit of this mysterious subject, the dangers by which it is surrounded, through the possible tendencies of its teachings, or the deceptions practicable by bad or mischievous spirits. I maintain that we are entitled to investigate all the physical phenomena which may come before us, provided we do so earnestly and with a desire to arrive at truth. Acting upon this principle, I enquired into the remarkable phenomena of mesmerism and clairvoyance, when the propriety of so doing was doubted by some for whom I entertained the highest respect. Upon the same principle I now avail myself of the opportunity which Lord Adare's acquaintance with Mr. Home has afforded, of investigating the still more interesting and startling phenomena of Spiritualism; content that time will clear up that which is at present so perplexing, and enable honest enquirers to decide whether the subject is one which they can with propriety continue to pursue, or one which they feel themselves bound, as sincere followers of Christ, and for the safety of their souls, to abandon.

DUNRAVEN.

NAMES OF PERSONS PRESENT AT THE SEANCES.

All the persons present at the following *seances* with the exception of three or four to whom access cannot be obtained, have received a copy of the account of the *seances* which they witnessed, with a request that if the report coincided with their own recollection of what took place, they would kindly allow their names to be appended, as testifying to its accuracy. Every answer has been in the affirmative as to the correctness of the accounts; but a very few have, for prudential reasons, preferred that their names should not appear. By accuracy is meant, that nothing has been inserted that did not occur, or has been exaggerated. A great deal has necessarily been omitted.

Mr. H. Jencken, Barrister-at-Law, Temple.
 Mrs. Hennings, 9, Thicket Road, Norwood.
 Mrs. Scott Russell, Norwood.
 Miss Gallwey, 7, Lower Belgrave Street.
 Mr. S. C. Hall, 15, Ashley Place.
 Mrs. S. C. Hall, " " "
 Mr. H. T. Humphrey, 1, Clifford's Inn.
 Mr. Hamilton, Sundrum, Ayr.
 Mrs. Hamilton, " " "
 Miss Hamilton, " " "
 Mrs. Cox, Stockton House.
 Miss Brooks, " " "
 Mr. Ion Perdicaris 2, Heathcote Villas, Twickenham.
 Mrs. Mainwaring, Ashley House, Victoria Street.
 Countess De Medina De Pomar, Grafton Hotel, Albemarle Street.
 Mrs. Honeywood, 52, Warwick Square.
 Dr. Gully, Malvern.
 Mr. Jones, Enmore Park, South Norwood.
 Mrs. Mackdougall Gregory, 21, Green Street, Grosvenor Square.
 Lady Fairfax, 45, St. Georges Road.
 Major Drayson, 6, York Crescent, Woolwich.
 Mr. Hart, 30, Duke Street, St. James's.
 Mr. Sarl 45, Cornhill.
 Mr. J. Collins, Royal Military Academy, Woolwich.
 Miss Smith, Adare Manor, Ireland.

Miss Bertolacci, Vine Cottage, Fulham Road.
 Miss E. Bertolacci, " "
 Hon. F. Lawless, Maritimo, Black Rock, Ireland.
 Capt. Chas. Wynne, Lissadell, Sligo.
 Mrs. C. Wynne, " "
 Mr. B. De C. Nixon, 1, Queen's Gate Gardens.
 Mrs. B. De C. Nixon, " "
 Mr. James Gore Booth, R.E., Aldershot.
 Sir Robt. Gore Booth, Bart., 7, Buckingham. Gate.
 Miss Gore Booth, " "
 A. Smith Barry, M.P., 26, Chesham Place.
 The Hon. The Master of Lndsay, 9, Grosvenor Square.
 Major Blackburn, 35, Beaufort Gardens.
 Mrs. Blackburn, " "
 Mrs. Wynne, Corris, Bagnalstown, Ireland.
 Miss Wynne, " "
 Mr. J. Bergheim 34, Hill Street, Knightsbridge.
 Mr. H. A. Rudall 17, Langham Street.
 Mr. F. Fuller, 12, St. James's Place.
 Miss Douglas, 81, South Audley Street.
 Dowager Duchess of St. Alban's, 4, Princes Gate.
 Mr. Chas Blackburn, Park Field, Didsbury, Manchester.
 Capt. Gerard Smith, Scots Fusilier Guards, 13, Upper Belgrave Street.
 Mr. Stanley J. Mackenzie, 32, Bernard Street.
 Mrs. Stopford, 7, Grosvenor Gardens.

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PREFACE.

BEING personally acquainted with Mr. Home, and having resided for some little time with him in London during the autumns of 1867 and 1868, and having travelled in his company in Germany in the summer of 1868, I have had considerable opportunity of witnessing the phenomena of Spiritualism, not only at regular *seances*, but also at times when we were quite alone, and without any premeditation on our part.

My father, being interested in the subject, requested me to write him a short account of anything remarkable that occurred.. I did so, and of the letters so written the following narrative is composed. At the time I wrote them I had not the slightest notion that my letters were destined to be printed; had I thought so, I would have endeavoured to express myself with greater clearness. Frequently remarkable incidents followed each other in such rapid succession, that without transgressing the bounds of ordinary correspondence, I had scarcely time or space to give my father a full account of what took place. In preparing the letters for the press, I have found the statements in many instances much curtailed and embodied in language not so carefully chosen as it should have

been had I known that they were to be submitted even to private circulation. I have however thought it better not to interfere with the originals, and the following pages are printed nearly word for word from the letters that I wrote to my father immediately after each occurrence took place. There are four things I wish to mention:

1st.—It has been my object throughout to divest my accounts of all the sensational element; and partly for the sake of brevity, partly from a fear of exaggerating in any particular, in writing to my father—I simply recorded the bare facts I witnessed. I know that in so doing, I have not treated the subject fairly. Take any interesting and exciting incident, a shipwreck—or a fearful railway catastrophe—put down the bare facts on paper, that a goods train ran into an excursion train, so many people were killed, and so many legs and arms broken, and the story seems very prosaic. Hear it recounted by an eye-witness and participator in the danger, and you will carry away a very different impression. For this reason, the reader may consider the following accounts rather stupid and uninteresting, and sometimes they may appear even trivial. I can assure the reader that to those engaged in the investigation, they did not appear so, and were they clothed in language sufficiently powerful to produce upon the mind of the reader the same impression that was produced at the time upon those who witnessed the phenomena, they would appear not trifling, but full of interest, and worthy of the deepest attention.

2nd.—To put down on paper accurately, even the substance of what Mr. Home says when speaking in a trance, is extremely difficult. Unless a writer be acquainted with some method of short-hand writing, it is impossible to keep pace with a speaker delivering a long discourse with ordinary rapidity of utterance. This difficulty is further increased by the fact, that in many cases the addresses were delivered in a partially darkened room. I am well aware that in some cases I have represented Mr. Home as talking with little connection between the sentences, and sometimes the meaning is obscure, and the ideas badly expressed; this is the result of the impossibility of transmitting his utterances accurately to paper without the assistance of a short-hand writer. In all cases of trance-speaking witnessed by me, Mr. Home has expressed himself with perfect clearness, his language has been remarkably well chosen and to the point, frequently interspersed with truly poetic ideas and symbols. In some cases when my notes were very imperfect, I have contented myself with merely saying that Mr. Home spoke on such and such a subject. On other occasions I have endeavoured to write down, as well as I could, the substance of what he said. In one case, I have requested Mr. Jencken to write out some sentences delivered by Mr. Home in a trance, as I was quite unable to make out the meaning of the notes that Mr. Jencken succeeded in taking at the time.

3rd.—Even in the original letters to my father, I was obliged to omit a few circumstances of great

interest; in some cases on account of their having reference to persons who did not wish those circumstances mentioned; in others, because the communication, although referring to myself, was of such a private nature that I preferred making no mention of it. In looking over the letters previous to sending them to press, I have found it absolutely necessary to suppress certain other facts and communications. Owing to this, the reader will find some passages incomplete; in two cases I had an explanation given to me of a long train of puzzling circumstances; the reasons for certain occurrences that took place were told me, the object to be gained, and the result. I was as it were let behind the scenes, to see the "reason why" for a number of strange events that I could not previously account for. I am unable to mention either of these cases because other people are much involved in them. Some of the events however are mentioned, and must appear meaningless to the reader, as they did to me until I was furnished with the explanation of them.

4th.—It may perhaps appear strange to some that I did not, at the commencement of my investigations, take greater pains to determine that the manifestations were not the result of trickery, collusion or mechanical contrivance. From what I had heard from reliable sources, I had come to the conclusion that the phenomena were the result of some power or intelligence, other than that of the medium, or any of the persons present. I had therefore little difficulty on this point, and the scrutiny that

I did make was more to satisfy Mr. Home, and to be able to tell others that I had done so, than to convince myself. My father had early opportunities of testing for himself, and soon arrived at the same conclusion. I therefore in writing to him have generally omitted all mention of the various tests I had seen used, in order to save myself useless labour. It is, however, as well now to mention, that I have witnessed many persons make, at their first *seance*, every effort to account for the phenomena by trickery and mechanical contrivance, and failing that, to reduce them to the effects of some unknown force. I have invariably found them (provided of course that the *seance* was successful) very soon obliged to admit that these phenomena cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition that they are caused by an unseen but active and reasoning intelligence. I have printed names in full whenever I have obtained leave to do so, knowing how little value is generally attached to statements unsupported by the testimony of more than one person. It will be noticed that spirits rarely give their names. In some instances, however, they do so, and occasionally they fix upon some sign by which their presence is to be recognized. It would be out of place in a narrative of this kind were I in each case to enter into a discussion as to the probability of the identity being correct. I have merely recorded that which I heard and saw. The persons mentioned in the following pages are not, therefore, to be identified with any particular belief about Spiritualism; but are only witnesses, if necessary, to the correctness of the facts I have stated. I myself

make no attempt here to offer any explanation of the following phenomena, or to build up any theory upon them, I only say that they occurred as I have stated them. Many books have been published on the subject by able and thinking men in England and America and on the Continent, which can be referred to by those who are anxious for information.. The object of placing my letters in this their present form is simply to preserve a series of well-authenticated cases of the occurrence of very wonderful phenomena. Interesting as they are now, they are likely to become either as recording of still greater value in the future, a very marvellous and transitory condition of things, or as marking the first faint indications of a great and permanent change.

ADARE.

No. 1 Seance.

Malvern, November 1867.

Yesterday, Mr. Earl, a total disbeliever in Spiritualism, Home and I, went to spend the evening with Mrs. Thayer, an American lady, a friend of Dr. Gully's. We were shown into the back parlour, a small room, the furniture consisting of a heavy round mahogany table, without any cover, with one leg in the centre, and of a piano and several ordinary chairs. The room was lighted by a fire, a large lamp standing on the piano, and two wax candles on the table.

After Mrs. Thayer came in we sat and talked for a few minutes by the fireside, until at Home's suggestion we sat round the table, which was in the middle of the room. Home was on my left, Mrs. Thayer opposite me, and Earl on my right. The room was perfectly light. After talking on ordinary subjects for perhaps ten minutes, raps were heard by us all in various parts of the room, on the table and on the floor and walls. Home requested the raps to be made in various places and it was done. He asked that they would rap under my feet, and I not only heard the noise, but distinctly felt the jar while the raps were taking place. I repeatedly looked under the table, as did also Mr. Earl to satisfy ourselves that, however they were done, it was not by any movement on Home's part. It was quite impossible that Home could have made them, for while they were distinctly audible, I looked under the table and could have detected even the slightest movement of his legs or feet; Mr. Earl watched his hands and arms. Similar raps were occasionally heard during the whole *seance*. At the commencement of the *seance* we all felt cold currents of air passing over our hands. The table began to vibrate with the greatest rapidity, and then was moved about and tilted up in various directions. Mrs. Thayer had previously to this placed pencil and writing paper on the table. The table was repeatedly tilted up, I should say greater than 45 degrees. The surface was smooth polished mahogany yet the candles, pager, and pencil, did not move. Home asked that the candles might slip (as they naturally would) and they did slide down the table until near

the edge when at his request, they remained stationary. While the table was tilted up very high, Home said to Earl, "Take a candle and look under the table." He took one of the candles on the table, and in lifting it said, good gracious, how heavy it is! I afterwards tried the same thing, and found that when the table was tilted up there was a difficulty in removing the candle from the surface that made it appear very heavy. The table was moved up against my chest, and as I pushed back my chair, it followed me up until the back of my chair was against the window, and I could go no further; the table was then pushed close up against me. I now felt cold currents of air passing across my face and hands, and a chair that was standing against the wall, at a distance of perhaps five yards, came suddenly and quickly out from the wall, and placed itself beside me at the table. The effect was startling. There was a lady's cloak on it, which was pulled off under the table. Mrs. Thayer said, "She could see a shadowy form standing between Home and me." I saw nothing, but was touched lightly on the head, and distinctly as with a sharp tap of the finger on the knee. I do not think it possible that anybody at the table could have touched me. I could see all their hands, and had it been done by a foot I must have perceived the difference of touch, and have seen the motion. Some time previously to this Mrs. Thayer had sent out the servant to ask a friend for an accordion, and it had been placed upon the table. The alphabet was called for (by five raps) and the following words were spelled out (I am not sure that I remember the exact words but they were to this effect):—" *I could not come the other night because of H—, Yours ever, Fred.*" Mrs. Thayer understood the meaning of this message it had reference to a previous *seance*, the first one, I believe, at which she had been present. After a few minutes the alphabet was again called for, and the following words were spelled out:—" *My boy, I am near you.*" I naturally referred this to my mother.

After this, the accordion was moved about on the table. Home took it, holding it by the lower part, with the keys hanging down over the edge of the table. It is manifestly impossible for a person so holding an accordion either to touch the keys, to inflate the bellows, or to expel the air from it. Almost immediately the keys were touched in an uncertain manner, and then the accordion began to play. It played something resembling a voluntary on the organ: the melody was perfect, and the expression beautiful. I am sure that if I had heard it so played, anywhere, under any circumstances it would have occurred to me how like the music was to that I had often heard my mother play, when running over a few chords on the

piano. While the accordion was being played, I looked at it two or three times under the table. Home was on each occasion holding it as I have stated, and the instrument was pulled out horizontally from his hand. I could see the bellows drawn in and out, and the keys move. At one time it was pulled violently under the chair at my side towards me. Home asked me to name some air. I wished to think of one that might help me to identify whoever was playing the accordion, but I could not. Earl asked for "The Last Rose of Summer." It was beautifully played: first, the air quite simply, then with chords and variations. After this Mrs. Thayer took the accordion, and Mr. Earl also, but it did not play again. During what I have narrated, the table was occasionally moved, and raps were now and then heard in different parts of the room. All manifestations ceased when the accordion stopped playing. My hands during the whole time were as cold as ice: when the manifestations ceased they became suddenly warm. I said? "Dear me, my hands have become quite warm!" Home said, "Oh, then I am afraid there will be nothing more." We waited perhaps five minutes; and, finding there were no more manifestations, we got up and moved the table over to the fire. Home began reading, to us some poetry. The last thing he read was descriptive of the passing away of a poor old widow; and, after a passage speaking of the love of Christ for her, strong raps of approval—that is, three raps in succession—were heard on the floor behind him. We then said Good night to Mrs. Thayer, and went back to Tudor House. I turned into the dining room and sat down by the fire alone. A few minutes after, Home came in and sat down by me, and we talked I about ordinary subjects. We heard a sound that I thought was the door creaking. He said it was not that, and asked that the sound should be repeated, and it was. He then asked that it should rap where I usually sat at dinner; and it did so right at the end of the table. We were both sitting with our backs to the table. Then came a noise as if furniture was moving. I turned but saw nothing move. Home looked and said a chair had moved up to the table. I looked again at the other side of the table, and saw that a chair was standing against it; all the others were against the wall. I did not see it move. We then heard a sort of whistling sound flying up and down the room; then a sound as of something rushing up and down, and then, laughter, unmistakable but not pleasant rounding laughter. After this one of the servants came in, and nothing more occurred. When in the dining room, Home asked whether the spirit that was there in the room was one that loved me. It answered "Yes." By answered, I mean that three raps were given, which means "Yes," He asked if the spirit would like me to have another *seance* with him in London. "Yes," was answered.

No. 9 Seance—July 26th, 1868.

Present: Mrs. Jencken, Mrs. Hennings, Mr. Jencken, Home, and myself. Physical manifestations very slight, Home passing almost immediately into a trance, in which he delivered the following address, purporting to come from the spirit of Dr. Jencken; to prove identity several tests were given.

Dr. Jencken, during the last few years of his life, had been quite blind, and was in the habit, when dictating, of going through the form of writing with great rapidity on his knee with his finger; he also had a peculiar habit of clasping his hands together, and speaking with his head bent very low down. Home imitated him in both respects to the very life, and also mentioned some circumstances that had occurred many years before at Mayence.

The first words Home spoke were in a very low voice, telling us to go on talking. He then got up, threw away a silk cushion he had been sitting on, and said, "Remember, Dan must not sit on a silk cushion while this very hot weather lasts." he remained silent for a few minutes, and then commenced speaking with a clear voice, and in a very impressive manner. Part of the discourse was in verse, but owing to the partially darkened state of the room and the rapidity of his utterance, it was quite impossible to write it down. The following notes taken by Mr. Jencken are for these reasons very imperfect.

"There are laws which govern, the approach of spiritual beings to earth, and their organic life, and there are epochs of darkness when the spiritual spheres are far removed from the earth; when the approach of spirits is all but impossible. These epochs have been called by those on earth the *dark ages*; they mark the absence of spiritual intercourse. There are also times of near approach, not unlike your winter and summer seasons. This alternate action is a great law; great principles rule all things. There was such an epoch of easy approach at the time of the Ancient Egyptians. They knew this and understood the laws better than you do. Before that time spirits had not taken sufficient pains to encourage the invention of means for the perpetuating of knowledge. There was no printing, nor mechanical contrivance, in those days. Since then, during the period that their approach to earth was more difficult, they have turned their attention more to those matters, so that now knowledge can never be so lost again. You are now entering upon a period of very near approach.

It is coming like the tide in a river—irresistible, overriding the current, overcoming all; it is coming grandly and Godly. What has already been seen is but the smallest wavelet of the tide that is coming upon the earth. Some of you here present will see it; others among you will have joined us, and will be helping on the great work we have in hand. The echoes of it are coming; they sound like the notes of the organ rolling up the aisles of those grand old cathedrals that men have built—notes signifying the heart-felt prayer of an earnest soul ascending to the throne of God; never lost but echoing on for ever. Spiritual truth must come; truth is a lighthouse, a beacon, a speck, a point, leading onward to realms of love. We have no power, we can do so little, that we often wonder that we are able to do anything for you. Language is too imperfect, we cannot convey to you our meaning; you cannot understand us ; our state is so different from your material state, that is it with great difficulty that we can work upon it to make our presence known; not that it is painful to us—no, no, it is a labour of love. But still it is an actual labour to us. The earth is still so imperfect—so undeveloped—that we have much difficulty in dealing with material objects. Why, even such a little thing as the silk cushion that Dan was sitting on, prevented us from making physical manifestations to-night; yet we did succeed in giving you each a token of our presence, though it was very slight. Henry, the floor vibrated under your chair. Adare, your chair was touched. Amelia and Mary, you both felt the current of cold air pass over your hands." You all felt something.

"The earth is as yet very immature, but progressing. A period of very near approach is at hand; after that there will be one, probably two epochs of darkness. We are entirely dependent upon atmospherical conditions. Now, to-night, the atmosphere is so surcharged with electricity, that it appears to us quite thick, like sand. It is so unlike our own, that it is almost impossible for us to get near you. We feel like men wading through a quicksand—slipping back as fast as we advance. At other times, when your earthly atmosphere is in a natural state, it is more like our own, and we have no difficulty in being near you. You wonder if we wish you to be better than you are. You are all good. The germs of good are in all. We can see further than you can; and know all your trials, all your doubts and difficulties. Were we not once mortals as you are? We see the troubles and the thorns that beset your path. Stretch forth your hands—thrust them through the brambles—draw them not back or the blood will flow—stretch them out and let them remain, there shall they find rest. We know not of time; to us yesterday, to-day, to-morrow are all one. Had we hours, days, years, even ages, like you, we should say time passes slowly, or time passes fast. We never tire; we are eternity. Happiness is not idleness.

Labour is joy, the labour of love. Even on earth it is not the spirit that wearies of a labour of love ; it is the poor weak body that tires, that faints, that falls to sleep. We have work to do to elevate ourselves, and to draw you onward and upward. We constantly watch over you, and sympathize with all your cares. We never weary; we do not judge you; we were as you are. God alone is the Judge. You ask why we always speak of love; it is love that brings us to you. God is Love. Spirit messages are always breathing love for God. God is Love.

Henry your father is pleased that you are engaged upon his work; he too has his work to do. He was aided in writing, and knows now that higher spirits aided him. Do you remember at Mayence, how he was affected? (Here Home imitated his peculiar mode of writing upon his knee, and manner of speaking). An inferior spirit had got influence over him. I see him now, he had great self-esteem, and was very opinionated, and only wanted his own ideas to become prominent; this is very dangerous and must be guarded against. Truth, truth—worship truth: particle by particle build up the temple of truth ; be consistent, for God is Truth. Here we have no narrowing creed, no four church walls, with a cushioned pew for the rich, and a plain board for the poor man, to limit the worship of truth. The great four walls of eternity; the blue ether, set with sparkling stars, gems made by the hand of God, ever lustrous diamonds of the heavenly orb, peep-holes of heaven; it is there we worship, and through them we peer in our search for truth.

One great objection made to Spiritualism, is, that we do not disclose all the truth—if true, why not tell all? Are you capable of perceiving the truth? The man has not yet been formed upon the earth fitted to know the whole truth. Immortality is before you! Immortality gleams upon earth—gleams like a lighthouse, like a beacon to you. The future is not even understood by all of us, but we draw nearer and nearer to God, for here there is no one to hold you back, to say you are mad; peals of angel voices call you onward and upward; cheer you in your struggles, and aid you.

There are great laws of development that draw the organic and the inorganic together; you on earth witness the onward course of all things in the organic world, rising to higher conditions, as, for instance, the development of the child into manhood. Onward is the progress; onward and upward. Search,—search for truth,—be true, be brave, be prayerful ; ye are all children of God created by Him. The time is rapidly coming for a great change in spiritual life; we are nearing the cycle, so near that some of you here present will witness the change, others will have gone to their home, to their rest, to the blessed. Are you weary of life? weary of the earth? The soul tires not, it is only the body. (In answer to question by H. J.) You are right, Henry; your father is clearer in his views now, more to the point, sees things clearer than he did when on earth. Oh, how much he wished to know Daniel; had he but known him! You remember how anxious he was about him."

from No. 25.—Seance at Ashley House, October 20th.

...There is no such thing as evil in your sense of the word. Evil is but good perverted and distorted, gnarled and twisted out of shape. As a blade springing up through the ground if it meets with a stone that obstructs it, is forced out of its course, stunted and thwarted, so is good changed by circumstances into what you call evil. If evil was as you think, you would have to say that the devil had made the world to answer his purpose but it is not so; God has made the world to answer his ends. You may not be able to see how all this evil can ever harmonize and resolve into good; but it is nevertheless so. Because the sun rises in the midst of clouds in the morning you do not know that it will be cloudy all day; no; so it is that though all may be dark and cloudy now, it will end in brightness.

It is wonderful to stand as it were above and outside the world, and to watch the great wheels revolving; the cogs look all black and broken, covered sometimes, with blood, and disfigured; but yet they all fit in and work on smoothly, though, to you it appears otherwise. Yet a time will come when there will be peace and knowledge on the earth about all those matters that so much distract it now. The world revolves in its sphere, turning on its axis, and will enter upon a region of greater peace and knowledge.

You do not know the difficulties that have to be overcome in communicating with you. Supposing now we want to make manifestations, four spirits would perhaps take possession of the four corners of the room, and would begin, as it were, to throw across to each other, and weave together their harmonizing influence, so as to get everything equalized and prepared for the adoption of whatever they want to do. One spirit will remain in the midst who will manage and direct all that is to be said—of course, if one of the other spirits wish to communicate he would let him do so, they are not selfish, but one must have the direction of the manifestations to ensure unity of purpose.

That is why it is so bad to wish for the presence of any particular spirit; that spirit might come, the others not being selfish would admit him into the circle, and he not being in harmony with the others, would destroy the whole thing. You may often notice, especially at the commencement of a *seance*, a whole volley of taps let off, that is a spirit discharging the electricity to equalize the current; often until the whole is harmonized we cannot stop ourselves from making raps and cannot control them; so that a spirit might at first, if you wanted them to communicate before they were ready themselves, answer "Yes" for "No" and "No" for "Yes." If you put your ear also against the table while communications are being given by raps, You will generally hear a number of little ticks going on; that is, some spirits are discharging the electricity to keep the current in equilibrium, while the others communicate.

If we did not take all these careful precautions there could be no conversation, nothing but a chaos of sounds and raps. It is this same difficulty—the difficulty of encountering the materialism of all about you, that is the cause of a great deal that you call bad and evil influence. A spirit might be standing near you that loved you very much, that was not the least impure, and that wished to soothe and comfort you and yet he might only serve to irritate you, and the more anxious he was to soothe, the more he might irritate and distress, because he was not in harmony with you. You can feel that yourselves; you are not always in harmony with your best friends, and sometimes you do not feel as much at ease with them, as you would among strangers, and would have more difficulty in showing off any accomplishment, such as playing, singing &c., &c., to them than you would to strangers. Now, this case of the lady who is said to have had her hair pulled out by the roots; it might happen that a spirit that loved her very much was standing near, perhaps even her own father wished to soothe her and caress her hair, and it might have the effect of irritating intensely ; he could not stop himself, he could not withdraw in a moment the electric current that was set going, and the consequences might be painful; of course all this applies chiefly to undeveloped and partially developed mediums.

Question.—As it is so difficult to influence men are you not constantly endeavouring to do certain things and failing?

Answer.—To a certain extent,—yes. But spiritual influence has much more to do with the affairs of the world than what you dream of. All inspiration, poetry, improvising as in the case of the old Troubadours,—all that is owing to it—everything in fact, is set in motion by spiritual interference. To those who pray earnestly for and seek for light and truth, light will certainly be given; our greatest difficulty is the folly of men's hearts, and their blindness. There are thousands of men who pray that rather than that Spiritualism should be understood, men should believe it to be the work of the devil; to advance themselves one day only, they would retard the progress of the world for ages. Every prayer has its effect, and every aspiration and wish is a prayer; it is not necessary to go down on your bended knees to pray. Would that you could see as we do the great black cloud (to speak figuratively) of prayers and aspirations that is for ever rising up from a populous haunt of mankind like this great city of London. Aspiration for truth and knowledge will surely, bring its answer, and as surely does every prayer to the contrary distort and retard true progress.

Question.—I had a question put to me the other day as regards the comparative truth of different sects, which I answered according to my ability. I should be glad to know if I answered with anything like truth.

Answer.—"There is truth in every religion; even the poor Pagan, who bows down before his idol, possesses the germ of truth, inasmuch as he worships something outside and beyond himself. It is very wrong—oh, very wrong indeed, to say there is only one portal to heaven; were that the case, there would be few indeed who would arrive there. You are right in supposing that the form of religion which is best suited to a man, though it may contain a smaller proportion of truth than another form, is yet the best for him; being the most adapted to his character and mind, it is that in which he can expand and improve himself to the best advantage. A good answer for you to have given would be: 'Spirits teach individuality of spirit.' As you leave this world you are apt—oh very apt indeed—to continue for a long time. Those who seek not to raise themselves, and look not for truth, must continue as they were until they—to use a common expression—find it does not pay; then they will try to improve and will do so. There is this individuality; and a man is apt to get around him an influence agreeing with himself. Like seeks like everywhere—it is a universal law. The crow cannot consort with the eagle, or the magpie with the dove."

Question.—"Have we not better opportunities here than we shall ever have hereafter of forming ourselves?"

Answer.—"Most certainly, this is your time. If you strive earnestly and prayerfully here, you enter your true life in a state fitted for it. Seek for truth and you shall find it."

from No. 49 Seance—February 9.

Home spoke in a trance to me about the difficulties in the way of mediumship and communicating. As well as I can remember, he said: "Very strange occurrences often take place with undeveloped mediums; and you are naturally much puzzled by them. These things are allowed sometimes as wholesome trials, in order that the person may see how necessary it is to use judgment and reason, and to approach the subject with the greatest care. Mediumship is of very slow growth; people are too hasty, and expect to get everything at once. They are often also told things to make them persevere, spirits are so anxious to communicate, and it is such a joy to find people to communicate through, that they rush in, as it were, and try to encourage the medium by promises that apply rather to mediums in general, than to any one individually; promises also which may take years in their fulfilment, instead of days, as mortals in their impatience suppose. You think too much of the individuality of mediumship. Supposing a person is told that he is to be a great healer, that he is to go forth teaching the nations, and to be as a king among men; that person would consider it all as applying solely to himself: it applies rather to the whole subject, to all mediums. Mediums should be as kings, in the true sense of the word; they have a wonderful gift, a weighty responsibility, and they should, if possible, set themselves apart, and lead pure, simple, unworldly lives, that they may use their gift to the best advantage. This mistake as regards promises, viz.: supposing them to apply to a single individual instead of to mediums in general, is an important fact, bear it in mind. The discerning of spirits is important. Now if a dark, cold, low spirit came into the room Dan would know him and he could not stay; he would feel mean and out of place, and would have to go.

Another person might not perceive what he was—to use a homely simile, it is something like a man making faces at you behind your back; he would not do so if he knew there was a mirror in which you could see him; when St. Paul spoke of discerning spirits, he did not mean seeing, them only, but discerning the differences between them, judging between the pure and the impure. Living in any way in an atmosphere of deceit, holding *seances* on the sly, and having anything whatever underhand about it, is very bad and is certain to produce a bad influence. Mediums while being developed must be very cautious, very prayerful, very guarded against deceit; very patient, humble, and quietly receptive of what may come to them; very careful and pure in life, for a calm and prayerful state of mind is necessary for the influx of a high spiritual influence, while lower influences can more easily impress themselves—are more in their element as it were with natures more, disturbed, and less exalted and pure in mind and body. If those who are being developed as mediums will remember and act up to this, they will arrive it a state in which they will know at once the pure from the impure, and be able to judge of the influences about them."

from No. 58—Seance, March 5th

The human mind in its natural beauty is calm, and casts a holy and peaceful influence on all near it; it is then like a lovely flower, not only beautiful to the eye, but affecting all around with its delicious fragrance. But, when disturbed and terrified by fears and doubts, the beauty of the mind and its fragrance are destroyed, resembling the same flower crushed and unable any longer to shed abroad its sweet and natural odours. The present disturbed condition of some among you has a much wider effect than you would suppose; as, if you drop a stone into the placid waters of a lake, the ripples will spread out gradually widening and widening until they have passed over a large portion of its surface; so, in like manner, the waves emanating from your minds have a wide-spread influence upon the atmosphere around you." Home spoke to us for some time very beautifully in a soothing tone of voice; he deprecated the idea that spirits wished to interfere in matters of religion. "Do we," he said, "set ourselves up as teachers, or tell you to love God less, or to be uncharitable? Do we interfere with the every-day walk of life?"

He spoke in this strain for some little time, then saying, "the conditions are getting a little more favourable," he arose, went to the door, opened it, and appearing to invite some one to enter led the person up to Mrs. Blackburn, saying to her as he did so, "He cannot come fast." During the address Mrs. Blackburn had become slightly under influence; Home took no notice of it at the time, but he now stood by her making passes, and calmed her. He spoke to her very beautifully and earnestly on the subject of the power she possessed of being developed as a medium.

He entreated her to have trust, not in them (the spirits) but in God; he begged her to repeat after him "Thy will be done," and he seemed much pleased when she said so. He said, "Do you remember to whom these words apply? 'And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief!'" "Yes," she said, "they refer to Christ." "Then, if the highest and mightiest power had this difficulty to contend with, namely, their unbelief, how much more must it affect us. Oh, have faith and trust." Home then sat down and addressed us on the same subject of mediumship, drawing a simile from an account my father had been giving us of a fortnight night he had spent in Quarantine, in a place just like a prison. He spoke somewhat as follows: "Dunraven has been telling you how he spent some time shut up, deprived of the society of his friends. Now if you were in prison, knowing that your friends were without, separated from you only by a great impassable wall would you not yearn—oh, so earnestly—to send them a few words of love; then if you found some one who was capable of carrying a message for you, would you not think it a little hard if that person refused. Although you might know that your message would be distorted and confused by passing through the hands of a third person, that you could not possibly say all that you would wish; still would you not be intensely anxious to send—if only one word—to testify of your existence to your sorrowing and weeping friends. It is so with us; there is between us and you a great barrier, through the portals of which we have passed; we yearn to send a few words of love to the dear ones we have left beyond it, and when we find some one who could carry that message, is it not just a little hard that they should be unwilling to do so." (Turning to Mrs. Blackburn), "Do you not love your children? Will you not ever love them, even when you have passed away? Think then of others—be not selfish—God is not selfish in his love for us, trust in Him."