

THE SPIRITUAL HERALD;

A

RECORD OF SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS.

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VOL. I.

INCREDULITY DISCREDITED.

MR. ANDERSON, Professor of Legerdemain, whose services in advertising the question of Spiritualism we would here duly acknowledge, as indeed we have already recognised by forwarding him a circular of the present undertaking, though, of course, we cannot positively say whether he be a believer or not—we speak advisedly, perhaps he himself hardly knows—sent the following challenge, on the 27th May, 1853, to the Spiritualists of New York:—

I challenge the whole Spirit-rapping League, from Maine to California, for five thousand dollars or ten thousand dollars, that not one of them can produce a knock on my table, or on any other, in my presence, which I cannot account for by natural causes, consistent with the well-understood laws of natural philosophy.—J. H. ANDERSON, Wizard of the North.

It was accepted by the first two mediums, Miss Fox and her sister, who went with Mr. Partridge to confront the "Wizard" in his lair at the Metropolitan Hall. But the wily juggler was not to be so easily taken at his word, and it now appeared that, true to the principles of his slippery art, he had certain restrictions to impose—ifs, of which he had suppressed all mention in the challenge. For he insisted that the table should be placed in the middle of the pit, surrounded by four or five thousand persons, while the mediums, if our information be correct, were not even to have access to it. Really this looks as if he almost believed in their power; for if he was afraid of their approaching the table, why challenge them at all? Why not rest satisfied that the whole was a delusion, because

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tables are not continually rapping under all conditions? Every phenomenon involves prerequisite conditions; but with these the Professor, wise in his generation, cared little to comply, his object being only to make money, as indeed might be expected, and as he himself once avowed to a medium, whose services he hoped, as Barnum did those of Mr. Home, to have enlisted on his own side—that of deception. The matter consequently dropped, and we shall presently allude to the reasons which induced Mr. Partridge to decline any further dealings with Mr. Anderson.

But passing over this, let us consider the terms of the challenge itself, as it appears to us entirely to overlook the question at issue; for the mediums claim no power to “produce” the manifestations at will, or to *summon* the spirits. They only profess, as the name suggests, to be a means of communication between spirits in the flesh and spirits out of the flesh—a door through which access to, or impression on, the senses may be made. That they are subject to these impressions their own experience testifies. They may or may not themselves believe in the possibility of spiritual intercourse either in their own case or in any case; they may or may not be wholly ignorant of the alleged occurrences taking place elsewhere in relation to it; yet they exhibit spontaneously like phenomena, and show themselves involuntarily attended by like influences. But who shall say that there are no conditions under which such influences are promoted or disturbed? It is found by experience that the mere presence of some persons is sufficient to interrupt them, and that the requisite conditions, whatever they may be, are, like the case of a man in armour inspecting a mariner’s compass (to borrow an able illustration from the *Clerical Journal*), counteracted by the introduction of new laws. Thus Mr. A. prejudices the whole question, and presuming it to be an occult phase of his own art, ignorantly applies tests, which may, for aught he knows, be totally incompatible with the phenomena in dispute. Is this the way to investigate a fact? Is this the man to whom the public yield a willing ear—the champion and leader of the opposition? We think he has a claim to be called so, for many are of opinion that he has exploded spiritualism, and he professes to think so himself; for in a letter to the *Morning Advertiser*, and also in a small publication, he would have us believe that his challenge was never accepted.

What, then, would have been the result of a public exhi-

bition, conducted in full subservience to Mr. Anderson's demands? We are at a loss to conceive what object would have been gained or end promoted by this means. Either the usual manifestations would have occurred, or they would not. In the first case, we see no reason for supposing that they would not have been ascribed to imposition, as they have already been ascribed; and it is contrary to all experience to expect a simultaneous assent from so miscellaneous an assembly as the one proposed. Would not some have derided? others doubted? all have been puzzled? We are forcibly reminded of an instance, not merely of spiritual, but of divine manifestation, recorded at the termination of Gospel history—an event in which it is almost inconceivable that unbelief should have prevailed—yet we read, “They worshipped him; *but some doubted.*” And is any one so ignorant of the human heart as to anticipate that, in the present case, incredulity would have been dispelled? Even if the whole concourse of people had been convinced at the time, but few, we hesitate not to affirm, would have retained their conviction on the morrow. Forced convictions are unavailing and transitory, because the feelings and consequent opinions suggest a contrary conclusion—in a word, the evidence of the senses, unsupported by the evidence and conclusions of reason, affords no satisfactory or abiding proof. And no wonder; it is the most unreliable evidence we know of. It would make us believe that the sun rises and sets; that the earth is a boundless plain; that pleasure is happiness, appearances reality, and fallacies truth. It were no vainer an attempt to fill a sieve with water, than to satisfy the mind with sensuous demonstration *alone*;* there is no fitness, no basis to retain it. It is only where a preparedness pre-exists in the mind that any such demonstration is of permanent value. In illustration of this, we would crave our reader's permission to make a short digression. The incident, to which a hundred similar ones might be furnished, is related in Townshend's lesser work on Mesmerism:—

A doctor, at Antwerp, was allowed at a *séance* to impose his own tests, the object of which was to demonstrate vision by abnormal means. He said beforehand, “If the somnambulist tells me what is in my pocket, I will believe.” The patient, having entered into somnambulism, was asked by him the question, “What is in my pocket?” She immediately replied

* Sir Benjamin Brodie is an edifying example of this, and we are no longer surprised at his saying, “He would not believe a mesmeric cure if he were to see it!” Verily, seeing is *not* believing.

"A case of lancets." "It is true," said the doctor, somewhat startled, "but the young lady may know that I am of the medical profession, and that I am likely to carry lancets; and this may be a guess. But, if she will tell me the number of lancets in the case, I will believe." The number of lancets was told. The sceptic still said, "I cannot yet believe, but if the form of the case is accurately described, I must yield to conviction." The form of the case was accurately described. "This is certainly very singular," said the doctor, "very, indeed—but—still—I cannot believe! But, if the young lady can tell me the colour of the velvet that lines the case that contains the lancets, I really *must* believe." The question was put; the young lady said directly, "The colour is dark blue;" and the doctor allowed she was right. Yet he went away repeating, "very curious! still I cannot believe!"

Yet another example of the inadequacy of the senses to produce conviction where intelligence is wanting. It is related in the same work. The clairvoyant is a young man, the experimentalist Mr. Shiel, present some fifty persons, narrator Mr. T.:—

A large silk handkerchief was brought, which according to Mr. Shiel's particular request was black, because he said that this was more satisfactory and shut out the light better. This was tightly bound round the eyes of the somnambulist, till his nose (not a very prominent one) was almost painfully flattened. Then Mr. Shiel plugged both above and below with cotton, which took him a long time to arrange. At last he declared himself satisfied that vision after the ordinary mode was impossible, and he gave a playing card to the somnambulist, who held it above his head, and told what it was in a moment. Mr. Shiel examined the cotton, and declared it had not moved. But, said he, "I would rather have black cotton if such a thing is to be had, for I think that white cotton admits the light." We asked for black cotton, and, to my surprise, the young ladies of the house brought down from the mysteries of their wardrobe some wadding, which, if not quite black, was at least very dark gray. This was arranged, and still all the cards that were presented to the somnambulist were correctly told. Mr. Shiel said, "This is very wonderful, I admit. But the somnambulist is himself permitted to hold the cards, and though he tells them most rapidly, still he holds them for an instant either below or above the bandage; and though I am satisfied it is next to impossible for him to see by the usual means, I own I should be more satisfied if you would present a card, without letting the young man touch it, immediately in front of the bandage. If only *one* experiment (so conducted) succeeds, I then will believe. Only you will see he will not do it." *But he did.* I conducted the experiment strictly as I was told. I held the card with its back to the somnambulist and its face towards Mr. Shiel, till the moment when it was directly opposite the bandage, then turned it, and it was instantly and correctly named. But did Mr. Shiel believe? He was silent a moment, and then made a singular sound of surprise (at his own unbelief probably), which ended in, "I cannot believe!" When all was over, and the guests were departing, Mr. Shiel said to me, "That young man has done wonderful things. He has done what none of us could have done. Still I cannot believe!"

Cannot indeed! the sieve-like incapacity is manifest. And

who can doubt that such would have been the general result of a public exhibition, had the usual manifestations occurred?

But supposing that from want of observing the proper conditions, or any other cause, our unseen friends had declined, or were prevented making known their presence, their silence on that occasion would have proved nothing against their alleged manifestation on any previous or subsequent occasion, any more than an empty purse would prove the coinage of counterfeit money, or justify a suspicion that it never held gold.

We trust, then, that the invalidity of any such test as the challenge and its restrictions impose is sufficiently clear, as well as the injustice of our opponents in imposing any conditions of their own at an *experimentum crucis* of this kind, seeing that in case of failure, no definitive conclusion can be arrived at—the test is not exhaustive. In reference to which we find Mr. Townshend complaining in a like strain. This shuffling in of conditions, says he, is a “peculiarity of conduct expressly reserved for the benefit of [spiritualism]. Who ever dreams of telling Faraday, ‘You must perform your experiment; but you must use *such* an acid; or you must not on any account bring into play *that* galvanic battery?’” We submit that this imposing of conditions betrays a foregone conclusion, which our opponents are determined to establish, and are half afraid that facts will contravene.

We have alluded to a doubt, not exclusively our own, whether the author of the challenge be really a believer or not. His unwarrantable assertions before his nightly audiences that spiritualism has added some 7,500 to the number of lunatics, and caused some hundreds of suicides in America,* betray so great a disregard for truth that the question naturally arises, Is he serious at all? Is he not the same humbug as ever? Is he not merely pandering to the inclinations of his audience? the voluntary organ of their delusion? the self-appointed

* “The truth is, a paragraph in the *New York Herald* (1853) stated that there were 75 spiritual lunatics in Blackwell’s Island Asylum in America. Mr. C. Partridge, of the firm of Partridge and Brittan, Broadway, immediately went over to the Asylum to ascertain the fact on the spot; he was told by the physician, who had seen the paragraph, that it was false; that there was not one; and that he had written to the editor to contradict it. Meanwhile, however, Anderson made use of the fact, and like an honest man added nothing (0) to it, by calling it 750—instead of 75—and, now, being three thousand miles off, he acquires courage and makes it 7,500.”—*Family Herald*.

But, supposing insanity is produced, what then? “Men are likewise continually being rendered insane by various religious excitements, as well as by close application to study, and unremitted attention to mercantile business in our large cities.”—*Hayden on Spiritualism*.

medium of their gullibility? and that because it suits his pocket? Possibly, he may protest against the charge, and affirm that he "cannot believe." Yet if he be only one of those who have not been presented with sufficient evidence to stimulate intellectual conviction, and not one of those stout unbelievers of whom it has been suggested that when they open their eyes to another life, their senses, in which they trust so much, will fail to convince them they are really there,—we crave his pardon for our suspicion, while we plume ourselves on the thought that he may interiorly believe. This thought is useful and consolatory to the friends of spiritualism, and affords our opponents grounds for reflection and caution. We therefore make no apology for taking an illustration of this double-sidedness or two-fold consciousness of our nature from Mr. Townshend's valuable other work :—

During the Antwerp carnival, a lady, who took a sincere interest in Anna M——'s welfare, advised her not to go to the masked ball which is usually given at that season. The night after the ball Anna came to be mesmerised, and though complaining of fatigue would not own that she had acted in opposition to the advice she had received. When, however, in sleep-waking, she acknowledged of her own accord that she had been at the masked ball, and said that she felt she had done wrong in practising concealment, though her motive had been to avoid giving pain to her kind monitress.

* * * In the mesmeric state the character of a sleep-waker (E. A.) presented generally a strong contrast to its waking exhibition. Good talents and a good disposition had in him been warped by an unfortunate education; and, young as he was, he had imbibed at Paris certain infidel opinions of the worst kind, which he scarcely studied to conceal. I asked him once in his waking state what he thought became of us after death; and his answer was, "Dès qu'on est mort, on n'est plus rien du tout."—"After death one is no more anything at all." This extreme ignorance on most subjects was accompanied by a vain belief that he knew a great deal; and if one stated to him the commonest facts of philosophy (the distance of the sun from the earth, for example), he suspected a design of playing upon his credulity and intrenched himself in absolute unbelief.

In sleep-waking all this was changed. His ideas of the mind were correct, and singularly opposed to the material views he took of all questions when in the waking state. He once chided me for calling the soul "une chose" and said, "Ce n'est pas une chose, c'est une pensée." "Can the soul ever die?" I asked. "Certainly not. It is the soul which is the only true existence, and which gives existence to all we apprehend." "Whence came the soul?" "From God, who by his thoughts created the universe." "Is there a future punishment for evil-doers?" "Undoubtedly, a great one." "In what will it consist?" "In seeing themselves as they are, and God as he is."

On another occasion I mesmerised E. A., when a lady of great talents and feeling, and an author well known to English literature, were present. The latter had recently lost a beloved daughter, and the tone of mind induced

by that bereavement naturally inclined him to question the sleep-waker on subjects relative to a future state. The conversation I cannot accurately detail, but the general impression that it left upon my mind can never be effaced. The sleep-waker rose into eloquence which seemed unearthly. It was simple, it was beautiful, it was like an inspiration. He spoke of the never-dying nature of the soul; of its ransomed beatitude; of its progress through various eras of existence, during which he asserted (for I here remember his very words), "Elle conserve la mémoire du passé, et des amitiés faites sur la terre; et elle a l'envie de revoir ceux qu'elle a chéris autrefois. Tout le bien de l'âme s'en va avec elle, et dure après la mort; et les justes qui se sont pleurés ici-bas seront réunis devant Dieu." Every one present was affected; some even to tears. It was indeed beautiful to see the young prophet, whose countenance had retaken an expression of candour and of childish innocence, speaking so calmly the words of holiness and comfort, and the older listener humbly stooping to drink of the waters of refreshment from so lowly a source.

The same sleep-waker, thoroughly unsentimental in his natural state, seemed always, when mesmerised, to take a pleasure in losing himself in imaginations of another world. Beautiful are the things he has said to me respecting the soul's recognition of those it loved on earth, and of the privilege of departed friends to watch over the objects of their solicitude while toiling through the pilgrimage of life; but, were I particularly to record these *speculations*, as they would be called, I should probably be deemed a visionary, or branded as an enthusiast. It is enough to say that under mesmeric sleep-waking all the hard incredulity which characterised E. A. when awake was gone. His wilfulness was become submission; his pride, humility; and in precise proportion as he seemed to know more, he appeared to esteem himself less. Often would he regret the errors of his waking hours, and speak of his natural state as of an existence apart. Often would he exclaim in sleep-waking, "How I wish I could always see things as I do now!" There is not a person who saw him in the mesmeric state but remarked the change for the better that his physiognomy underwent. His affections were also enlarged. Egotistical in general and displaying but little sensibility, he in the mesmeric state showed all the warmth of a kind-hearted nature. Shortly before leaving me I mesmerised him. Immediately on passing into sleep-waking, his countenance assumed an expression of the deepest sorrow, and he seemed scarcely able to speak. When asked the cause of his sadness, he said, "I am going away; how deeply I feel it!" Restored to his waking state, he laughed, and talked, and seemed as unconcerned as usual.—*Facts in Mesmerism*, p. 117—121.

In reference to this truthfulness of our interior nature, a philosopher, who was also a seer, has the following remarks (cited, like the foregoing extract, by Professor Bush):—"In the natural world, the speech of man is twofold, because his thought is twofold, interior and exterior; for a man can speak from his interior thought, and at the same time from his exterior thought; and he can speak from his exterior thought and not from his interior, yea, contrary to his interior thought, whence cometh dissimulation, assenting flattery, and hypocrisy; out in the spiritual world, speech is not twofold, but single;

a man speaks there as he thinks." In further elucidation of this psychological fact we have only to contrast *speaking from our sentiments and speaking from our professed opinions*. This is often exemplified in public preaching. In the first case the substantial realities of another life are brilliantly portrayed, and brought home to the feelings and intuitions of the audience.

All that is most beauteous—imaged there
In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;
Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

In the other case all is shrouded in mystery, and boarded up in the narrow grave, whereon

Black melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence, and a dread repose.

Or if the "silence" is momentarily broken, it is only the shriek of scepticism, hovering, like the bird of night, with "blue-fringed lids" upon the surrounding gloom.

Therefore, it is that we would not lay too much stress on a mere profession of incredulity, seeing that it is often merely intellectual, and arising from secondary causes.

In conclusion, we have seen that the mediums claim no power to summon spirits at will, or to force them to manifest themselves on all occasions ; it is, consequently, beside the question to impose conditions and offer to abide by the result—an offer which, by the by, is never fulfilled.

We have seen that the test of a public exhibition would be eminently inconclusive, that the mere proposal throws doubt on the good faith of our opponent, and that there is no such thing as general simultaneous enlightenment, because there is no equality in minds ; or, in the words of our most distinguished novelist, "as long as the world lasts, the sun's rays will gild the mountain-tops before they shine upon the plain ;"

We have seen that miraculous evidence *per se* is inadequate to produce permanent conviction, as might further be abundantly proved from the Sacred Narrative, where we read, According to your faith be it unto you ;

And we have ventured to console ourselves with the thought that under the garb and semblance of stubborn incredulity there frequently lies a believing heart.

We will now impress upon the students of legerdemain, that their exhibitor has done nothing to prove spiritualism a delu-

sion, since all things admit of imitation, without their genuineness being destroyed; and we will conclude by submitting the following axiom to our reader's consideration: "That all the difficulty in intellectually admitting these things, lies in the nonadmission of an Internal Causal World *as absolutely real*. It is said, in *intellectually* admitting, because the influence of the Arts proves that Men's Feelings always have admitted, and do still admit, this Reality."*

COMMON SENSE FROM LAPLAND TO ENGLAND.

THE following remarks on supernatural occurrences are quoted from the continuation of Læstadius' *Journal of Missionary Travels in Lapland, from 1828-1832* (pp. 192-194). They are marked by strong sense. We will premise that the book itself, from which we translate, is one of the wisest and most interesting accounts of a country which has ever been penned; and though it may bide a time, yet will assuredly gain a European circulation some day.†

"Hoar antiquity," says Læstadius, "continues still in Lapland, in its old-fashioned shape, sometimes inviting our veneration, and sometimes awakening our horror, buried in its deep forests and dells, with few traces of human cultivation, with all its wonder or superstition still about it, whereby invisible beings are brought into nearer relations to mankind. This nearer relationship may belong either to imagination or to reality, or it may be the produce of the mutual working of both. What is the just boundary line between the real and the ideal? Has the deepest investigation yet found it? And if it be laid down, may it not be like Pope Alexander VI's definite boundary line in an undiscovered world? Is indeed that alone actual that we see with these bodily eyes of ours, and grasp with these hands of ours? Former times would have sworn that there were no inhabitants, antipodal to ourselves, on the other side of the earth: the present time might also be ready to swear that no invisible world exists with beings of its own. But as the since-discovered and therefore so-called New World existed in spite of the former oath, so also the invisible or so-called Spiritual World can also exist in

* Ghost Belief of Shakspeare, by Alfred Roffe.

† Fortsättning af Journalen öfver Missions-Resor i Lappmarken, innefattande åren 1828-1832. Af P. Læstadius. Stockholm, 1833.

spite of the latter oath. True ! the imagination of man may create for itself worlds ; but it cannot annihilate any other worlds, save and except those which it has itself created. These are said to be imaginary, because they exist only for and in the fantasy that gave them birth, without themselves having any consciousness of their own being, and without being able to manifest themselves to any second person. People in general choose to place the Spiritual World, with all its phenomena, in this class ; and they trow that they cannot deserve to be pronounced enlightened unless they deny the said World. This denial, however, according to my thought, is no proper proof of a true enlightenment ; and neither is the contrary acknowledgment of a Spiritual World a proof of a want of enlightenment. It is no use trying to produce a complete proof against the possible existence of a Spiritual World, so long as that one sentence stands—*with God all things are possible*. Plenty of phenomena, that some have deemed supernatural, may indeed be explained in a natural manner ; and many, and even the most, of stories* about ghosts, apparitions, and all that realm of things, are but the children of the imagination. This proves that the said ghosts, apparitions, &c., &c., did not exist on those occasions, but not that they don't exist at all. If two trustworthy persons have seen any such ghost, and witness thereof, the testimony stands good at the bar before that of ten thousand, founded only on their own persuasion, and maintaining that it is not true. The testimony of the ten thousand amounts to no more than that they saw it not ; but as they were not all-seeing, it cannot show that it was not. I myself have never seen or experienced any supernatural phenomena, though born, bred, and long resident in this old weird-country ; moreover I am accustomed to doubt of all things in which I cannot see reasons : but then it belongs to the nature of such a principle of doubt, as little to deny as to affirm what one cannot explain. But facts that are related by trustworthy persons must be accepted as true and real : explanations and conclusions each gentleman can make according to his own pate. Meanwhile, I am convinced, 'that there are many things in heaven and earth which the schoolmaster knows nothing of,' as the proverb says. Much lies in unknown realms : fantasy fables and old story prattles much : one has

* I do not see reason to agree with this statement, which is neither fact, nor argument, but a mere opinion. It is the only weak point I discerned in the able prologue which opened your last number.—V.

to believe some of it ; to regard some of it as fiction (for example, the relation in Herodotus of the metamorphosis of men into wolves, and then back again into men) ; and some we may take no notice of ; as, for instance, the story Tacitus tells of the Oxiani and Hellusii, who were reported to have the faces of men, but the limbs of animals." VERAX.

MANIFESTATIONS IN ENGLAND.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPIRITUAL HERALD."

SIR,—The publication of a series of letters in a morning paper, emanating from gentlemen of character and position, who came forward to give evidence of the truth of spiritual manifestations, as witnessed by them in England, has given birth to the *Spiritual Herald*, and I trust it will meet with liberal support. It will probably excite the minds of qualified men to explore the long-neglected fields of psychology. No harm can possibly accrue from laying bare the truth ; on the contrary, infinite good may be the result, under proper guidance. There is a class of minds always active to oppose the introduction of anything that does not happen to harmonise with their preconceived ideas. A man may have written a book on magic or sleep, which has extended his fame for wisdom ; he is naturally sensitive, and not ready to surrender opinions that have earned favour in the eyes of the world ; but nevertheless, error must die, and so must its authors.

It would be a curious investigation to trace the history of bigotry, impartially given. Such a work may one day appear. Of one thing I am quite sure—that to find a solution for these marvellous manifestations that have produced a literature so peculiar, it is necessary that men enter upon the study with minds free from prejudice and conventionalism.

When forks were first introduced into England, some preachers denounced them "as an insult to Providence not to touch our meat with our fingers." The establishment of the Royal Society was opposed, because it was asserted that "experimental philosophy was subversive of the Christian faith." In our own day, many good people oppose the emancipation of the Jews, pleading that it is an attempt to controvert the will and Word of God, and to revoke his sen-

tence on the chosen people; and yet we have a Jew Lord Mayor! Even this month, so stubborn is prejudice and bigotry, that in the face of 400 painless operations, many of which could not possibly have been performed under chloroform, we have a Dr. Sullivan, of Ilford, coming forward in the *Critic* denouncing mesmerism as a sham. How necessary it is that people examine for themselves, especially in the path of science to which the *Spiritual Herald* is devoted! With Verax I urge that you have no overmen in these matters.

In May last, being at the house of a gentleman of distinction, I met there an English lady, a visitor, whom I discovered to be what is usually termed a medium. I sat down with her to a large library table, on which we placed our hands. She enquired if the spirits were in attendance, and was answered by three very distinct taps, that appeared to proceed from the centre of the table. She then put several questions, to which she received intelligent answers, by means of the raps and by the help of an alphabet and pencil.

I ventured to ask the name of the spirit in attendance, and received for answer, "Afflick." I desired to know where a deceased relative had died a few months previous. The reply was, "Devonport." As none in the room but myself knew this, I was certainly surprised. The position of this lady places her beyond the suspicion of any contrivance to deceive. About a fortnight after this I met Mr. Home at the same house in the country. Mr. Home had then only just arrived from America. After dinner, at about nine o'clock, Mr. Home proposed that himself, I, and a gentleman present, should go upstairs in the dark. We did so, and stationed ourselves in a tapestried chamber. We stood and *joined* hands, remaining some time in silence. At length, on being questioned by Mr. Home, "the spirits" made us aware of their presence by very loud raps and *thumps* all about the room, on the furniture, oaken ceiling and floor. We moved into the state drawing-room, *our hands joined*, and, standing there, these extraordinary noises were more remarkable and more manifest. Scratching on the furniture, raps and *thumps* on the tables and ceiling, sounds as of many feet, which gradually approached us, until we were literally encompassed with these *tramping sounds*. Mr. Home received a blow on the shoulder, and my companion on the thigh. We adjourned to the library, and numbering seven, two of the party, ladies, sat down to a large and heavy round table, placing our hands on it; we had loud raps from all parts

of this table, and from the oaken bookcases. We spelt out that "they did not come to hold conversation, but to make manifestations," and they asked that "we would investigate with fairness and candour. I desired to know if they would give us some music. Reply, "Yes." One of the ladies brought a guitar, and placed it under the table; as the table was large, it was easily seen; presently the strings were faintly agitated, the sounds became gradually louder, *and a tune was fairly played out by invisible means.* I observed the instrument to move twice, but I am sure no one touched it. After this the heavy table at which we were sitting gradually rose from the floor, our hands resting upon it; *it rose at least six inches, and remained in a state of suspension some time,* then tipped backwards and forwards; this was succeeded *by a vibration in the table,* that was communicated to our bodies and the chairs upon which we were sitting, as if some powerful fluid were escaping. The sensation, as of the grasp of a hand, was felt on the knee of two of the party successively, followed by very loud raps from the table. A little before twelve o'clock we removed to a room upstairs, and took our seats at a large square table; here we had loud raps on the table, and from some parts of the room. The lady, to whom I have before alluded, was sitting next to me, *and we were both of us, with the chairs on which we were sitting, forced violently from the table, nearly to the end of the room, and then drawn round. I tried to resist this, but without success; the table followed us, leaving the rest of the circle behind it.* Our host, who is a learned and most accomplished gentleman, watched the phenomena with a jealous eye, and he has since tested Mr. Home, and is satisfied that there could have been no trickery; *he leaves it for science to explain.* I am convinced there could have been no collusion or delusion. The Vicar of Ealing published a sermon attributing it all to Satanic agency: this has been most ably answered in a pamphlet, "Thoughts on Intercourse with Spirits," published by White, 36, Bloomsbury Street.

The Rev. William Lambert, of Ealing, in a letter to the *Dispatch*, Oct. 7, says, "Although I readily admit that on one evening, at Mr. Rymer's house, I witnessed facts which surprised me, and excited my curiosity, I never expressed any opinion as to the agency which produced them." Probably the opinion spontaneously expressed by Sir David Brewster to Mr. Cox, "Sir, this upsets the philosophy of fifty years," is nearly the truth. Sir David's ungenerous attack upon Mr. Home has

been well answered by Mrs. Trollope. Some of your readers may remember the cruel persecution of Elizabeth Squirrell, at Shottisham, in 1852, who exhibited phenomena that have not yet been explained. There was another girl in a similar state of disease, near St. Malo, a cataleptic, who had passed six months without taking food. There is now a girl at Prickwillow, near Ely, a cataleptic, who has occasionally exhibited phenomena analogous to those produced by Mr. Home: she falls into trances; during her sleep loud noises have been heard in her room in the night, lasting many hours. Her case appears in the *Zoist*, of October last. The effects of table-turning upon a young lady in 1853 are still remembered. These four sensitives are undeveloped media.

Great Malvern,
Feb. 11, 1856.

I am, Sir,
Yours obediently,
JOHN JAMES BIRD.

THE LIGHT AND SHADE OF SPIRITUALISM.

A SOMEWHAT Rembrandtical picture is Spiritualism—deep shadows and small lights, aerial and imaginative—leaving much undefined, and much room for fanciful details. It is a rich poetical subject; but the prose mind that is accustomed to count, measure, and weigh, like the chemical analyzer of the contents of a poisoned stomach, will make little of it. Such a mind investigating such a subject, is like a mathematician reading “*Midsummer Night’s Dream*,” and then asking what it is all about, and what it is intended to prove.

Every man of taste loves a picture with broad, massive, and deep aerial shadows. Queen Elizabeth wanted her portrait done without any shadows at all; and there it hangs, in Hampton Court Palace—but every body laughs at it—as meagre and tame a thing as if it had been woven into a tablecloth with a Jacquard loom.

Light and shade are everywhere; they are types of what we call good and evil; and good and evil are as necessary to creation or existence as light and shade to a picture. It is impossible for us to imagine a being all good or a being all evil. The vulgar talk of such beings unthinkingly; but the idea, if idea it is, cannot bear cross-questioning. It disappears as soon as logical criticism casts a ray of light upon it. With God, we must get over the difficulty only by saying, “God is good; *but* (there must be a *but*) evil exists in his creation.”

And you may say it is not evil, if you like. All highest truths have two apparently contradictory aspects. The Scriptures say, “No man can see God;” they also say, “Men shall see God;” and Moses

and Aaron and seventy of the Elders "saw God." We see God in nature, and yet we don't see him ; we are saved by faith, and yet we are not saved by faith ; we are saved by works, and yet we are not saved by works ; we shall be rewarded according to our deserts, and yet we shall not be rewarded according to our deserts ; saved by our own righteousness, and yet not by our own righteousness ; by the blood of Christ, and yet not by the blood of Christ ; according to justice, and yet not according to justice, but by grace or favour. All these, and a thousand such contrarieties, are truths. But they are only truths to the spiritual mind : the sectarian and one-sided mind takes one or other of them, and antagonizes the opposite with quibbles, corrected versions, and other twistings and perversions, because it cannot understand the language of high poetry, which is spirit.

It must be so. God is an infinite and eternal spirit, and all first principles in nature are infinite and eternal mysteries, like their living source. They lead us into a circle of reasoning when we try to comprehend them. We are lost in contradiction.

Spiritualism is nearer the source than materialism or superficialism is. It is more allied to the infinite and the eternal. We must look for mystery, therefore ; and mystery is contradiction. Wonder not then if spirits contradict themselves, and one another. They would not be true and genuine spirits if they did not. Swedenborg says that spirits are all addicted to falsehood ; but they are only so to those who are not spirits like themselves and do not understand spiritual language. All revelation is false to the material mind. When the spirit of prophecy says in Isaiah, that the mountains shall be melted with the blood of men, it is not true, and the materialist laughs at it with good reason ; and when the same spirit says, "the sword of the Lord shall be filled with blood, and made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats," another roar of laughter from the materialist is heard, and with reason ; for he does not understand it : to him it is false. And when the same spirit tells us that Christ shall come again exactly as he went, it tells a contradiction, for he went with two men in the clouds to receive him, and he comes again with the trump of an archangel and a host of saints ; and yet he comes neither way, for he comes within us ; and he comes as Bacchus, "his eyes red with wine, and his teeth white with milk, binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine ;" and yet he comes in neither of these ways, for he comes as a man of war ; and yet he does not come as a man of war, for he comes "like dew on the mown grass, and like showers that water the earth." Charity believeth all things ; for charity is a poet, and has a poet's soul. It can reconcile contradictions ; the prosy mind cannot.

Spirits delight in contradiction, because they are spirits. They tell you all sorts of incompatibilities, and the novices in spiritualism are bewildered. There is scarcely any, if there be any, doctrine whatever, or any religion whatever, that they will not sanction or deny. A

spirit comes to you and says, this or that is wrong; but another has a spirit that says that it is right. Moses gives a revelation; St. Paul rejects it. The olden times said that, the modern times say this. The spirit speaks to the times, or the inquirer, or the medium; and spirit language may be spiritually true, whether it be scientifically true or not. When you say a man has a crack in his head, or a flea in his ear, or a wasp in his brain, you speak falsely as spirits do, or as St. Paul says of the Apostles, "As deceivers and yet true." But when men have learned your language they are not deceived by you.

Did you understand spirit language, you would not be deceived by spirits; but you ever will and ought to be deceived by them unless you learn their speech. But why do they not speak our language, and thus enable us to understand them? Because they won't. Why do you not speak the language of donkeys, and bray, when you go to Black Heath or Hampstead Heath? Why don't you speak the language of dogs and cats? Because you won't—a woman's reason, and therefore a good one. Your language is a one-sided, paralytic language. Why should a spirit become a paralytic merely to please a fumigated brain like yours? Better mystify you, and bother and tease and torment you, until you learn your spirit grammar and vocabulary. And bother you they will: for sectarianism and all its villanies will flourish until that grammar and vocabulary be learned.

A nice, cheerful spirit paid us a visit the other day, in the person of a lady medium. The spirit said it was not a departed spirit, and that none of the spirits that now manifest themselves are departed spirits. It denied the whole doctrine of modern spiritualism, and yet it rapped very nicely. We took up a book from our table and asked it to rap on that, and whilst we held it it rapped very clearly. We took up a sheet of paper; it rapped upon that, but it would not rap on the table. It went, however, in amongst our books and rapped from the bookshelves; sitting there like a cat, though we did not see it, and rapping out, "I love these books." This creature said it was the medium's second self, and would be united with her spirit when the medium died; and that the doctrine of departed spirits coming to manifest themselves was false and absurd. It is a capital rapping thing; it also moves articles, and throws them about the room; it raises up tables in the air, throws pillows, gloves, and other light substances at persons, without injuring them; and if you throw your handkerchief down on the floor below the table, it will tie a knot on it; and it cannot bear (so it says) to hear about ghosts, for it is as much afraid of ghosts as we are! churchyard skeleton ghosts it means, perhaps. This *thing* that is not a spirit calls itself an intelligence!

Now, what are you to make of all this? You can make little of it, unless you understand the Song of Solomon, the nature of the spiritual world, and the grammar and syntax of the spirit language. You think it contradicts all other spirits: no more than steam contradicts water, or an English Bible a Hebrew and Greek one.

When a spirit tells you that it has just paid a visit to the moon, you open your mouth in expectation, and say you should like to have a description of it. In a few minutes another pretended spirit comes and says, "It is all false! that spirit never was in the moon." Which can you believe? You are puzzled. But we like to believe them both; just as we believe, and also disbelieve, John Milton, when he describes the creation of the world thus :—The Word omnific

On the wings of cherubim
Uplifted in paternal glory rode,
Far into chaos and the world unborn :
For Chaos heard his voice ; him all his train
Followed in bright procession, to behold
Creation and the wonders of his might.
Then stayed the fervid wheels ; and in his hand
He took *the golden compasses* prepared
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe and all created things.
One foot he centered, and the other turned
Round through the vast profundity obscure
And said, "Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O world !"

Now we have held intercourse with spirits and talked with them as we imagined for years, and we never heard them tell a greater lie than this of John Milton's; and yet no Christian ever finds fault with him for it. Why should poets, who are spirit men, be permitted to tell lies, and spirits not? It is the privilege of spirits to lie, and they ever will; but they lie as poets lie, for their lies will be proved to be truths in the end, as easily as John Milton's divine compasses.

The knowledge of this spirit speech is real education, greatly wanted, and spiritualism will do great service if it teaches it; and without the spirit lies it cannot be learned. They are the grammar and syntax, the declensions and conjugations. For want of the knowledge of this language sectarianism rages, and learned dulness wastes its brain in endeavouring to explain one half of a mystery of Revelation by annihilating its other and legitimate counterpart. For want of this the theological disputants twist and torture language, and torment themselves, to explain the Mosaic account of creation, like John Milton's compasses turning

Round through the vast profundity obscure,

and are mad with infidels because they laugh, or with their own sheep because they won't eat those tufts of long, rank weed that have been cultivated with classical, scholastic, and antiquarian compost, and are left to bloom on the broad meadow of popular divinity, like huge thistle-tops, that no other grazing or browsing creature but a donkey can digest.

It is high time for this language to be learned, and we rejoice to see, in the Providential management of events, a means to accomplish this end. But man always looks most aghast at unexpected or exploded novelties; and then the next generation blames the last for laughing

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at that which itself has accepted, as we do the old Jews for stoning the prophets and crucifying Christ, though there can be little doubt that all the Jewish prophets and apostles would be treated by Christendom as vagabonds and impostors.

CATHOLICUS.

(To be continued.)

LITERARY NOTICES.

SWEDENBORG: HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS; by William White, pp. 156. White, 36, Bloomsbury Street. One Shilling.

Of the dozen lives of Swedenborg which have come from the press of late years in England and America, and which show the growing interest felt in that great Seer, this book, singularly cheap, and beautifully got up, is for present purposes undoubtedly the most available and useful. No fact of importance in the Seer's life is omitted. Moreover, there is an excellent analysis of his several works, and a very thorough exposition of his doctrines. And, if we are not mistaken, the author, besides being a loyal disciple of Swedenborg, is a man of progress, not alien to the grand spiritual movement at the modern beginning of which stands Swedenborg.

To the spiritualists, this work is an invaluable boon, for it contains the substance of a hundred volumes, and may be carefully read through in three or four days. We need scarcely say, that Swedenborg is, of all Seers, the most commanding, both in the persistency of his special gift, and in his moral and intellectual stature. To pursue the spiritual movement without him, were to omit the leading fact of all out of the new sciences. The book is timely—born in the same month with the *Spiritual Herald*.

THE ZOIST; 13 Vols., demy 8vo. Baillière.

The Zoist has ceased to appear: like all good books brought to a fair end, it does not die, but lives in its services, and in the grateful recollections of mankind. It had its unlucky crotchets, and even its maladies, among which we may reckon a too lasting rancour against its unscrupulous opponents, and a narrow denial of the spiritual half of God's creation; yet has it fought a noble fight, and won a victory which will be dear to the future. In truth, its work was accomplished. It has established mesmerism for ever as a settled fact, and as one of the most ready and beneficial of all the means within

the power of medicine. For this it has toiled through the long pages of thirteen laborious years; and there it now stands, occupying a very prominent place in the archives of literary usefulness. This result, we believe, is mainly due to Dr. Elliotson, a man whose faults and shortcomings are far eclipsed in his generation by his fearless honesty of purpose in regard to mesmerism. In retiring from his labours here, we trust that length of days, and new works as useful, may reward and crown these thirteen vigorous toils. And for ourselves, carrying on as we do the work of *The Zoist* in a higher realm of facts, we only hope that the mantle of the manliness, perseverance, diligence, shrewd observation, and humane intentions of that departed periodical, may be some of the qualities which may rest upon our shoulders.

REVIEW.

AN EPIC OF THE STARRY HEAVEN. By Thomas L. Harris. Upwards of 200 pages. H. Baillière, 219, Regent Street.

This remarkable poem is a production that stands foremost amongst the specimens of spirit literature which have yet appeared, excepting only the two subsequent productions, by the same medium, entitled "A Lyric of the Morning Land," and "A Lyric of the Golden Age."

There are three points in its character to which we would direct attention and investigation:—

- 1st, Its intrinsic merit and beauty.
- 2nd, The truths it conveys.
- 3rd, The manner of its production.

We will begin by considering the last division, being the most important and apposite to the cause we boldly come forward to proclaim and attest; viz., the power of spirits to communicate with man.

The "Epic of the Starry Heaven" (which claims to have originated in the world of spirits) is a poem consisting of 4,000 lines, and, according to the evidence and testimony of able witnesses, was delivered by Thomas L. Harris, when in the trance state, on twenty-two different occasions, during a period of fourteen days. His general appearance and manner was at the time like that of a person in an ordinary magnetic sleep—the eyes closed, but the face highly animated and expressive—varying with every change in the rhythm, and visibly influenced by the slightest modification of the theme.

Some parts of it were chanted in a low, musical strain, though the medium had never been known to make the slightest attempt to sing before.

To doubt this statement on the *score of impossibility* is incon-

sistent with a knowledge of the marvels we see daily occurring under our particular observation, and even within the limits of our own home. Whilst we witness the phenomena of uninstructed persons writing fluently on subjects with which they are wholly unacquainted; whilst our ears are greeted with the most brilliant and artistic specimens of instrumental music, from others almost as well as *totally unacquainted* with the art in their ordinary state, we are prepared to receive any new and further development of spirit communion of a character more or less similar.

The improbability, as well as impossibility, of Mr. Harris having practised an unworthy and useless deception, by counterfeiting spiritual influences, and presenting his own thoughts as an emanation from the spiritual world, is so fully and ably discussed in the introduction and appendix to the work, that we will refer our readers to the facts there narrated, and extract what the spirits themselves announce respecting its history:—

Seven great diversities of human genius enter into the composition of the votary of High Art; the sacerdotal, the mathematical, the synthetic, the analytical, the poetical, the inductive, and the intuitive. The production of artistic *chef-d'œuvres* depends upon the happy combinations and sevenfold harmonies of these distinctive elements.

There is at the present time a grand refining process operative from the heaven of spirits, and quickening as well as purifying the natural ultimates of human organisations. Organisms, by means of the operation of this refining process, are being prepared to serve as artistic instruments through whom the sacerdotal, the mathematical, the poetic, the synthetic, the analytical, the inductive, and the intuitive revelations, combinations, and productions of divine harmony shall be communicated from the world of causes, which is spiritual, and gloriously made manifest among men in the world of effects, which is the natural or external earth.

The medium through whom the work of which this is the preface is given, though still in an exceedingly feeble condition, is inborn into the spirit world, by means of which birth he is enabled to occupy a mediatorial position between the world of causes and the world of ultimates. And because his interiors are of a sacerdotal character, he is permitted to be impressed from Societies of Hierophants, who discharge the priestly function in the heaven of spirits. And because in his interiors he takes delight in celestial mathematics, he is permitted to receive impressions from societies of spirit men, who meditate deeply upon the science of forms, number, degrees and their correlatives, though externally his knowledge of mathematics is limited. And because of poetic genius of an interior character, which he has externally cultivated to some degree, relations are established between his mind and the children of immortal song, who are known as lyric angels. The work which this statement is designed to preface originated in the interior. It is given through the agency of a circle of mediæval spirits, who inhabit a classic domain in an ultimate dependency of the heaven of spirits, which corresponds in many of its features to Lower Italy. It is their delight in that serene realm to weave epic poems, which, while they are divinely true in the internals of thought, are externally beautiful with the embellishments of melody, and thus resemble the virgin daughters of the sky, whose spiritual forms are garmented with robes of light, whose abundant tresses exhale the very fragrance of Elysium, and whose brows are crowned with undying flowers.

It was permitted to a spirit greatly beloved among the inhabitants of the ethereal abode, to induct the medium into *rapport* with the general sphere of their

society, which sphere is extended into all the lovely regions visited by the inmost spirit of the medium, and shadowed in the poem.

Permission being obtained from superior authority, the various forms of wisdom and beauty which the poem describes were imaged from their varied localities upon the sensorium, by the process of transition and visitation, and the organ of language quickened and made use of for the harmonic reproduction of these forms of truth and loveliness in the external dialect of the earth.

This Poem, however, is a production adapted to the spiritual childhood of the medium, and when his interior faculties shall have been more highly vitalized, and more harmoniously expanded, he is designed as an instrument for the production of works of a nature correspondentially exalted.

Breathe gently, reader; attune thy heart to pure and loving thoughts, while perusing this spiritual utterance; for thus alone the interior life, which is the living soul thereof, shall find entrance into thine own interiors.—*From the Lyrical Paradise of the Heaven of Spirits.*

Returning to the other points we would consider in regard to this Poem, we will glance at the *truths it conveys to us*, for these are but another key to its wondrous history.

Very numerous are the gems of light with which it is interspersed, of which each individual mind should form its own critique; for, after frequent perusals, they dawn upon you with fresh life and beauty, as they happen to vibrate in unison with some inner chord of feeling.

But we believe the true key to the appreciation of the epic is to be found in the glorious realities of spirit communion, and in the grand facts of spiritualism, without a knowledge of which there will be found little meaning in the words—(Page 65.)—

I can no more control
The mighty Thoughts which visit me, than can
The dust rebel against the kingly man.
My nature like a harp is overswept
By Angel-fingers.

and the unbeliever will find nought but blasphemy in these lines from the “Lyric of the Golden Age:”—

He who heard
The thoughts that in these measured pages are
Through adoration offered to the Lord,
Beheld th’ unseen, held communion with the far.

Shelley has thus expressed the yearnings of a poet’s soul:—

The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

It has ever been a favourite thought with us, that “imagination is often prophecy, and the poet a seer.” The world we view around us is mere matter; the world of mind is invisible to mortal eyes. We see not things, but only their material coverings. The whirlwind is only visible when it carries a thousand particles aloft, and then we do not see it, but merely the effect it produces. In the same manner the soul testifies to its own existence by the body which expresses it.

The soul’s inmost yearnings are indicative of objects that may satisfy

it, and our desire for communion with the departed, points to the possibility of our wish being realised.—For (page 88.)

God's thoughts of love, like steamships filled with food
Of life for earth's despairing brotherhood,
Already touch the shallows : and ere long
Immortal mariners, with angel song
Shall land, all visible, in eager haste,
Outreaching heavenly fruit for mortal taste.

A prophecy of that blessed communion with our departed loved ones, which all may now enjoy, if they desire, for pure and holy purposes—(Page 133.)

Creation, like a new-born infant, lies
Near to His heart. Sight, sense, the inward eyes,
The Moral Reason—all declare how dear
Creation is to the great Father Soul.
Its little pulses from His bosom roll,
O'erflowed and harmonized. Its lips are fed
From God, and on His breast it pillows its young head.

Those only will imbibe fully all the refreshing draughts of truth from this spring of genuine poetry, who see behind its sparkling waters the real and actual figure of spiritualism, white-robed in garments of truth, and standing, like an angel of peace, with arms extended, ready to embrace all sorrowing and fallen humanity, and sent by God to awaken them to a sense of their high and holy destiny. This is no mere poetic imagery; the veil of truth is becoming in this our day more and more withdrawn, and her face dawns upon us with resplendent beauty and love. The purest glow of imagination can but feebly and faintly portray the love of our Creator, and His willingness to redeem and save mankind; and the fair imaginings of the poet, when scenes of Nature's loveliness pass before his ecstatic vision, are all transcended in the scenery and life of the spirit world; and his inspirations about the love of our angel watchers, are surpassed when we learn the real and tender ministry of our guardian spirits, and the most loving heart on earth, still wrapt in the cold environments of sense and time, is comparatively all unconscious of the eternal providences by which it is every moment sustained and preserved. We want an angel hand to touch the silent chords of our heart's lyre, that it may give forth some faint notes of praise, that may ascend heavenwards and vibrate with the angelic chorus:—(Page 99.)

This doctrine to
The dark earth seemeth strange, and yet 'tis true.
Angels their endless perfectness renew
Only in labouring for the world below.
Their added labours added loves bestow;
Each soul is an Evangel
To kindred spirits of inferior grade.

In the primeval age, when man, we believe, still walked with his Creator, ere the strife and tumult of the money-change and city mart had broken in upon the peaceful seasons of that golden age, how

beautiful must have been man's advance from time to eternity, while celestial visions of the blest hereafter were ever and anon granted to cheer and lead him onwards; when eternal truths and teachings were revealed to him through angelic messengers; when the laws of progression implanted in each soul at creation, unobstructed by all the obstacles sin and ignorance have thrown in our way, made man's sojourn here but the first stage of his angelic life.

Let us look up through all the bitter discords and jarrings of time, that alone make the earth dark and dreary, and joy in the thought that the same creative power, to whom both past and future belong, is for ever perfecting the work of his own creation, and preparing the way for that blessed time, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." The coming of our Lord had for its object the restoration of man to the beautiful order of his creation. He was the embodiment of the divine *word* of truth; and both are for the light and life of men. In a pure and holy state death would lose its sting, and man's onward progression be one of joy and peace. All, therefore, that restores joy and peace to the human race can only be derived from a return to the laws of peace and order, established at our creation— (Page 103.)

Yes, golden bands,
Thy desert sands,
Oh! earth, shall interfuse,
And into thee
From heaven shall be
Inpoured celestial dews
Of amber light
And liquid flame,
And these in turn shall be
Cups, lifted for
The diamond rain
Of immortality.
The sands shall glow
All rosy white,
And streams of silver dew,
From out the land
Of morning light,
Shall flow thy heart into.

Like a charm'd maid
That sleep o'ercame,
Of old thy desert lies;
But she shall wake
To life again,
Like Eve in paradise;
And sit upon
An ivory throne,
While all celestial flowers,
By angels thrown
Through heaven's blue dome,
Become terrestrial bowers.
The brindled lion
Then shall be
Mild as the mourning dove;
And the coiled serpent
Splendidly
Become a winged love.

Out from the dust
The stately palms
Shall lift their feathered plumes,
And angels breathe
Immortal balm,
Through all thy covert glooms.

These are some of the prophetic announcements contained in the epic. Yet we regard spiritualism not as a new revelation, but a confirmation of eternal truths, now, being permitted to penetrate through the veil of sense, and in reply to the leading objections that it is either "USELESS or EVIL," we will state some of the primary

truths which it DEMONSTRATES to an age of scepticism and infidelity beyond all DOUBT and DENIAL :—

1st. The existence of man after death.

2nd. That those we have known and loved on earth continue to love and minister to us after they have left the body, and that by our purity of life we may be reunited to them.

3rd. That we are by death only changed to spirit-men, and retain all the faculties we possessed on earth, without waiting in a state of inanition for the resurrection of the material body.

4th. That we enter at once into a state of indescribable happiness or misery, according to our life on earth.

5th. That our most secret thoughts can be known to, and revealed by, the intelligence which is surrounding us and communing with us.

6th. It demonstrates also to a great extent what the state of existence really is into which man is ushered, after the life on earth; and thus, by divine permission, it is being revealed to us in what that life consists, and how, either by disregarding the divine laws concerning the regeneration of our life on earth, or endeavouring to make them the guide of our conduct, it will become indescribably sorrowful or inexpressibly happy.

Every earnest mind will welcome any means which Providence appoints to bear evidence to millions of our fellow men of these glorious truths. May all those who enjoy the blessed privilege of seeing and hearing those things, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see and have not seen, and to hear and have not heard, show forth in their lives and acts the blessed effects of this new outpouring of light and truth, and become thereby true mediums for transmitting this heavenly influx of love divine to all their doubting fellow men!

We will conclude the prophetic utterances with the following quotation, which may awaken some suggestions in thoughtful minds as to whether it may or may not ever receive a literal as well as moral fulfilment—(page 94.)

Earth, that now in wide extremes,
E'er flushed or frozen seems,
Like the human soul shall be
Modulated harmony!

In page 112, there occurs a most interesting disquisition respecting the relation of mind to matter:—

All things in heavens and planets pure are symbols
Of forms of love and truth within the breast;
And though the type its antitype resembles,
Yet still the form within the soul is best.

All things that God hath made are grand and glorious,
According to the meanings they suggest;
White-thoughted spirits, o'er decay victorious,
Risen through perfect love into their rest

Of weariless existence, in the golden
 Spheres of eternity thou seest afar,
 By thy interior sense of sight beholden,
 Teach the great truth—all living things that are
 Form outward shadows of a pure ideal,
 Fashioned from heaven within man's inner thought :
 Man is himself the actual and real,
 And nature but a picture-world out-wrought
 To image far in space the tones and numbers
 Of loves and wisdoms that within him lie ;
 The worlds and spheres are but the antechambers,
 But man the temple, of Divinity.
 Sayest thou, oh ! mortal man, these are but fancies ?
 Sayest thou, the greater subjugates the less ?
 Call'st thou our angel-teachings bright romances ?
 The musings of the spirit's idleness ?
 Sayest thou that man we cheat, deride, and flatter,
 Thus guileful, seeking to enslave his mind ?
 Say on ! but answer first, What end hath matter ?
 Is it a substance that doth spirit bind ?
 Was matter before all ? Did matter make
 God, men, and angels ? * * *

The measured lines swell onwards into thoughts that burn and truths that seem to awaken a chorus of praise in the very air around. They should be read in an earnest, melodious voice, and in a prayerful spirit ; and we think the purchaser of the little volume will not regret having made it his own.

The wonderful Providence of God, working by love, is beautifully described in pages 130—133 :—

God ever worketh everywhere.

That charity must be the fundamental principle of Christ's true church, is shown in page 184, commencing :—

So long as human lips remain unfed,
 Men starve their Christ for lack of coarsest bread.

In page 74, there is a reference to the doctrine of the indwelling Divinity in man, which constitutes his responsibility and makes him immortal :—

Man knoweth not how near God is to him.

But the soul of the poem consists in the allusions that occur throughout to the Divine Humanity—the truth of truths divine—“that God was in Christ,” “and that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory (the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth”—page 75 :—

“Listen, mortal !”

The Angel answers : “God himself shall speak.”
 I see a Man bowed down and very weak :
 It is a vision of the ancient time.
 That Man—the very truth of love divine—

I hear Him speak. His calm, sweet smile I see—
 "All that the Father gives shall come to Me,
 The Father gives all things into my hand."

I hear another utterance, loud and grand,
 Sung from the heavenly portal,—
 "To him shall every spirit bow the knee!"

See also, pages 26, 27, 168, 169, and many others.

We promised to consider further,—The intrinsic beauty of the epic.

Perhaps, to the reader who has accompanied us so far in our review of the work, it is almost unnecessary; for, as Colton remarks, "that is true beauty which has not only a substance but a spirit;" and truth must ever be the soul of beauty—it can even impart a celestial halo to common forms and things, but when allied with music and song, it seems to elevate the mind from earth to that pure sphere where truth, love, and beauty ever dwell supreme. Beauty is an incense that should be offered upon the shrine of truth in the temple dedicated to heaven and God.

One of the beauties of the epic is the appropriate variation in the rhythm, which gives a peculiar sweetness to many parts; also, the simplicity, and yet grandeur, of the language and metaphor, which, though frequently shrouded in the spiritual language of correspondence, is always powerful, poetical, and significative.

What more we have to say respecting the beauties of the epic, we will reserve for our next, when we hope to notice more particularly its sister poem, entitled the "Lyric of the Morning Land," which is full of melody, and peculiarly addressed to the heart.—I. N. A.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

TABLE-TALKING AND TABLE-TURNING. REMARKS ON DR. MAITLAND'S SUPERSTITION AND SCIENCE. By Clericus, B.D., F.A.S., &c. James Ridgway, Piccadilly, London. [Dull and learned trifling.]

A LYRIC OF THE GOLDEN AGE. By Thomas L. Harris. New York, Partridge and Brittan, 342, Broadway. 1856. Balliere, 219, Regent Street. pp. 381. Price 9s.

HEALING.

A correspondent of the *Special Universe* writes to that paper as follows:—

For the past twelve months there have been in St. Louis some astonishing healing developments in addition to the numerous philosophical manifestations that have been occurring for the past three years; and perhaps the general mind has been more particularly directed to the demonstrations of spiritual power, as a remedial agent in the physical world, than to any other of its beneficial charac-

teristics. And, indeed, it begins to be apparent, that our healing mediums are yet to be most effective in the conversion of the masses to an acknowledgment of spiritual agency in the affairs of the earth. In a moral and philosophical point of view the sceptical mind is too apt to imagine some other hypothesis than the one claimed for our manifestations; but when they witness speedy eradications of disease, and perhaps the hand of death, as it were, arrested in its very grasp upon some beloved forms, even the most material are checked in their scepticism, and the "Angel Reflection" at last comes to the relief of most minds thus circumstanced.

A few months ago, before leaving St. Louis, I was myself raised from a bed of sickness, without the attendance of an earthly physician and the accustomed paraphernalia of the sick-room, through the medium power of a lady residing in St. Louis, whose name would be familiar to all, if given, as she was one of the first developed in the West, and has been the means of effecting a vast deal of good to humanity. On reaching the hospitable mansion of her husband, I found there a young lady of our city, who is in every way, from her accomplishments and education, calculated to be an ornament to the most elevated circles. Connected with some of our wealthiest and most respectable families, she might successfully have filled the place in society her attainments so eminently qualified her for, but that disease, which too often in the present condition of earthly organizations seems to aim for the most shining marks, had seized her as its own; and, to all appearances, but a short time previous, an early grave was her destiny. For many years she had been the victim of a combination of diseases, and for seven months she had been almost entirely deprived of her eyesight, from the affection of her brain. Her physicians, after unremitting labour, pronounced her incurable; and her only consolation was in the reflection that her sufferings might be palliated, but not eradicated. At this juncture, she received the kind invitation of the brother and sister alluded to, to spend a short time with them, and test the efficacy of spirit power. During the week I was confined to the house, this young lady returned home with renewed health, good eyesight, cheerful, grateful, and happy—restored by the agency of the angels in less than three weeks' time. I do not give the names alluded to, for obvious reasons; but the facts are well known to many of our citizens.

About the period to which I have alluded, another healing medium was growing into general notice—Mr. John Scott—the fame of whose wonderful power has since extended far and near. And so numerous are the successful applications made to him, that a literal account thereof should seem almost fabulous. From *fifty to one hundred and fifty* per day, are operated upon by him, the most of them cured, but all more or less relieved. Among the diseases recently healed through the agency of his organism, is that of a *cancer* of fifteen years' duration, which had been unsuccessfully attended by a number of physicians both in Europe and America. When he first laid his hand, under the influence, on the cancer, the effect was as if caustic had been applied to the surface. He continued his attendance; the cancer gradually healing near the body, until it dropped off, leaving a sore of about an inch in diameter, which was also healed by the same process. And just before I left St. Louis on my present trip, a physician, who had previously declined taking the case on account of its supposed incurability, informed me that the cure was perfect. I was present also myself at Mr. Scott's rooms, the day before I left, and about fifty were in attendance waiting to be healed, like those of old at the pool of Bethesda.

But perhaps I have been sufficiently lengthy for one letter, and shall close in a few words. Thus, brother, in various ways are the spirits aiming in the West, as well as in all portions of our widely extended country, to manifest their interest in humanity; and thus, notwithstanding the immense tide of opposition setting against the cause of spiritual redemption, are the angels leading minds to ponder and reflect.—Yours, in the cause of truth,

THOS. GALES FORSTER.

SPIRITUAL BIRTH OF MRS. HARRIS.

THE anticipated trial is over! After a mortal discipline of twenty-seven years, the crisis arrived on Tuesday, the 10th instant. At the midnight hour, when millions were sleeping, and silence, like an all-pervading spirit, brooded over the world, Mary, wife of Rev. Thomas L. Harris, left the perishable, earthly form and its relations. No mortal cares; no painful memories; no timid apprehensions, disturbed her last hours; but the gentle spirit, arrayed in shining vestments, went

"Calmly, as to a night's repose,
Like flowers at set of sun,"

to dwell with angels in their celestial abodes.

Mrs. Harris was admired and beloved. The destroyer has seldom laid his palsy-ing hand on a fairer form. While yet the tide of youthful feeling was unchecked by disappointment or disease, she was radiant with animation and hope. Her step was elastic and her voice musical; her brow had the light of the morning, and her cheek its freshness, while her expressive eyes revealed every earnest thought and each passing emotion, whether of pleasure or pain. Mrs. Harris added to the graces of a beautiful person, acute sensibilities and refined manners. While she was alike distinguished for delicacy of feeling and decision of character, she possessed a loving heart, and was respected and esteemed in all the relations of life. She leaves two interesting children—sons of four and eight years—to inherit the name and genius of their father, and to learn, it may be, by a severe mortal experience, the first great lessons of immortality. Not alone to the kind guardianship of their surviving parent are they left. The angel mother will yet watch over them; and we devoutly pray that her sacred ministry may cause them to grow fair and beautiful in form, spirit, and life, like living plants "beside the still waters."

During the last eight months the health of Mrs. Harris has gradually declined, but until within three or four

weeks her friends entertained strong hopes of her recovery. Brother Harris had been spending several days in this city, for the purpose of supervising the proof-sheets of his forth-coming volume—"A Lyric of the Morning-Land"—during which time Mrs. H. wrote to him in a cheerful, buoyant tone. Up to this time he had not once thought that she would pass away so soon; but on his return to Troy, about the 26th ult., he at once perceived that her disease—consumption—had made rapid progress, and that every feature contained a prophecy of certain and speedy dissolution. From that time until the hour of her departure—some fourteen days—he seldom left her bedside, but watched over her, night after night, with the tenderest solicitude and affection, anticipating all her wants, and soothing every pain by his loving ministrations.

The subject of this notice—if we have been correctly informed—was never fully assured of the realities of the Spirit-world, by any experience of her own, until her health was seriously impaired. Then, as the cords of outer life were gently relaxed, her interior powers of perception were correspondingly quickened and exalted, and the beautiful realms of the Invisible were gradually disclosed to her vision. Two days before her husband returned to Troy, the spirits of several departed friends appeared and addressed her in words of sweet consolation and immortal hope. After this visitation she expressed her entire confidence that the beloved ones were about her, and that their ministry was one of perfect love. She only regretted that they did not manifest themselves *more frequently*, though their presence was indicated by sensible phenomena at intervals during each succeeding day.

We learn that on Tuesday, the 26th ult., immediately after Mr. Harris had returned, the spirits of several relatives suddenly appeared in Mary's room, and, surrounding the pale sufferer, announced that she must soon pass away. They also instructed the friends how they

might magnetise her chest so as to alleviate the pain. The patient did not appear to apprehend the import of this communication, but was soon impressed that the hour of her departure was at hand. She observed that her views of the precise nature of the Spiritual life were somewhat indefinite and general, but that it was a life of love, of happiness, of association with kindred spirits, and of loving ministration alike to the spirits there and to those on earth, she had no doubt. At this time Mrs. H. had no fear, but expressed her willingness and her *desire* to go. "The Father," said she, "will not forsake his child. I feel borne and lifted up by a wave of His divine love." The remainder of her earth-life was characterised by the same serene and blissful state of mind.

Two days before the Spirit left the body, as the evening twilight approached, Mary relapsed for a few moments into a trance. While in that state she informed her husband that a benignant and lovely Spirit appeared to her, holding in his hand a floral crown.

"My dear child," said the Spirit, "your sufferings will soon be ended. You have but two more dark scenes to go through with. Be patient. I will always be with you to comfort and assist you, and will lead you safely. You will not see me, but you will always feel my arm around you. I have brought you a Spirit-crown. It will soon be yours."

Saying this, he showed her his right arm, which she declared seemed formed of golden light, radiant as the sun. The Spirit's allusion to "two more dark scenes" to come left the impression on the mind of Mrs. Harris that her outer life would probably terminate in *two days*, which was verified by the fact.

In a letter just received, Brother Harris thus describes the closing scene:—

"On Tuesday evening, at about six o'clock, the spirits of her relatives, in company with other spirits, to the number of about thirty, entered the room, and, while she was apparently asleep, formed a circle around the bed. I was placed at this time, by their influence, in a deep interior condition, retaining, however, full possession of all the external faculties and powers. From the

moment this circle of spirits was formed, she became free from all pain.

"We watched the ebbing life of the external form till about a quarter before twelve (midnight). Gradually we felt the pulse sinking to rest. At that time a sudden light, like a diffused silver radiation, came and rested upon her face. A wondrous smile played upon her countenance. Such divine love, such ineffable peace, diffused itself, melting into light in the air around her, that she seemed transfigured and changing into an angel before our sight.

"As her eyes began to close, kneeling by her side, I inclined my face to the pillow by her cheek, and laid my arm over her form. Heavenly bliss filled all the internals of my mind, and I passed at once into *rapport* with her spirit. Gradually I felt her spirit form arising from the external. As it arose, my own arms were lifted by it. I saw a vortex or spiral of white light, narrowing to the diameter of about two feet, just above her body, and opening above it into the SPIRITUAL WORLD. In this vortex were innumerable angelic forms, and as she entered the spiral, they lifted her from my arms. She disappeared in that transcendent light."

The spirit had departed, and only the form—still beautiful in its decay—remained to gaze upon. Refusing the repose which protracted wakefulness and physical exhaustion had rendered necessary, the watcher still continued his vigil through the long night, and morning found him by the remains of his beloved Mary. When it was light, her spirit came to him, and while her form was distinctly visible, she gave him a communication closing with these words:—*Mary's dear love to all. NEVER MORE BE AFRAID TO DIE.*

While we write, many are sitting beneath the shadow that falls darkly and coldly by the hearth-side, in the field, the busy mart, and along the highway. They feel that death is terrible. Viewed in its external aspects it surely is so; especially when it comes suddenly in its more appalling forms. When "the pestilence walketh in darkness and wasteth at noonday;" when the destroying element wreaths itself around a sleeping city, and darts like fiery serpents from every house-top;

when beneath the cumbrous shadow of night, or under the thick veil of mist, the doomed ship goes down, and hundreds, rocked by the restless billows, fall asleep together; then, indeed, is death "the king of terrors" to the sensuous man, and the graphic picture, drawn by one of our first poets, is not overwrought:—

"Come to the bridal chamber, Death,
Come to the mother's, when she
feels,
For the first time, her first-born's
breath;
Come when the blessed seals
That close the pestilence are broke,
And crowded cities wail its stroke;
Come in consumption's ghastly form,
The earthquake shock, the ocean
storm;
Come when the heart beats high and
warm,
With banquet, song, and dance, and
wine;
And thou art terrible—the tear,
The groan, the knell, the pall, the
bier,
And all we know, or dream, or fear
Of agony, are thine."

But the Spiritual Philosophy dissipates the gloom, and relieves by the introduction of divine lights the deepest shadows in the picture. For every beautiful human form that perishes on earth, a new star rises in the immortal firmament to shed its light and glory on our pathway for ever. When a loving mortal dies, an angel is born. Death only marks the termination of one chapter and the beginning of another, in the continuous record of an endless life. *There is no death*, in the sense sanctioned by popular usage. Material forms perish, it is true, but the vital essence is never lost. As the primitive elements of all matter are indestructible, so the essential principles of life are immortal. Autumn breathes over the landscape, the flowers wither, and the leaves of the forest are sere by the hoar-frost; but the vital elements of the vegetable kingdom are neither destroyed nor dissipated. They flow back from the surface toward the centre. In the vast alembic of Nature they are preserved until spring comes to herald the resurrection of the floral world. All

life goes upward and *centreward*. In man the individualised intelligence renders even common dust vital and beautiful. When at length it departs from the diseased forms it once inhabited, it is because they are no longer adapted to perform its functions. The human spirit, sublimated, organised and immortal, will not fellowship with corruption. But new life is born even amid the elements of decay, and immortality, in the most essential sense, begins at the portals of the sepulchre. What if thou fall and perish, O mortal!

"Like a worm in destruction's path,"
all that constitutes thy manhood—the
divinity within thee—is for ever *imperishable*.

"The stars may fade away, the sun
himself
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink
in years,
But thou shalt flourish in immortal
youth,
Unhurt amid the war of elements,
The wreck of matter and the crush of
worlds!"

Spiritualism opens a new world to our contemplation, vast and beautiful beyond the power of language to describe, or the most ambitious imagination to conceive. All material developments and human events have their ultimate causes in that world. Our friends whom, perchance, we mourned as lost, dwell there; and with them all genuine affection, all essential beauty, and all pure love are immortalised, and live for a more intimate fellowship with the Divine. As we become spiritualised in thought and life, we discover that the outer world is *merely phenomenal*, and that the invisible, which most men regard as visionary and unsubstantial, is, after all, the *REAL*. We need this positive assurance that man is immortal; that our friends can never die, or lose their identity; that love is at once the imperishable inheritance and the eternal life of all Spirits; and that angels ever watch over us for good, whether we sleep or wake. The spiritual facts and philosophy supply this demand, as no philosophical or religious system has ever done before. Who, then, need fear the ruin of material worlds? The sun may be extinguished, the earth dis-

solved, and the stars fall from heaven, like withered leaves in autumn, when the forests are swept by a mighty wind ; but the conscious spirit can never perish, nor one essential element or attribute of its nature suffer loss. Thrice happy thought !

“ ‘Man, thou shalt never die !’ Celestial voices
Hymn it into our souls ; according
harps,
By angel fingers touch’d, when the
mild stars
Of morning sang together, sing once
more
The song of our great IMMORTALITY.”

Mrs. Harris departed this life at the residence of her uncle, Mr. John Van Arnum, at whose house the funeral obsequies were conducted by the writer, on Thursday afternoon, the 12th inst. A large number of friends evinced their profound respect and sympathy on the occasion. The company of spiritual vocalists known as the “Excelsiors” were present, and their sweet music moved over the troubled tide of feeling like the Spirit that stills the storm.—*Spiritual Telegraph.*

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. V. RIPPINGILL.—Our correspondent's letter is well written, and his ideas are probably worthy of investigation at some future period. But at present we have more to do with facts than theories. He also cautions against theory ; but he is more theoretical than we are, and seems to belong to the odylic school, which, in our opinion, is a most incomprehensible one. He has also more respect for the opinion of scientific men than we have. Sir David Brewster paid two visits to Mr. Home, and he said the table appeared to rise about eight or ten inches from the ground. Now, a man, scientific too, who says, “The table seemed to rise,” cannot be in a fit state of mind for investigating anything. He did not even know whether it rose or not, or whether he was clairvoyant or not. There is as much prejudice amongst scientific as amongst any other class of men, and we are not aware that their judgment ever was looked up to on subjects above and beyond their sphere. Who cares for the opinion of a scientific man on a new poem, or an exhibition of the Royal Academy ? And who cares to ask a scientific man whether the table actually did rise or move, when it rose eight inches and moved as many feet ? Have we not eyes and ears as well as a chemist, or an engineer ? We do not ask scientific men whether Christianity is true or false, or whether Russia is in the right or the wrong. *Ne sutor*

ultra crepidam—let not the shoemaker go beyond his last. As we understand our correspondent, he wants to materialise the subject as much as possible—the play of Hamlet, with the character of Hamlet omitted—and, in his own words, “to suppress a little of its leaning to the supernatural and the marvellous”—in other words, he wants us not to be true. Perhaps, what he calls supernatural is quite natural, and what he calls marvellous is only so to the ignorant. We mean to expose the weakness, folly, and falsehood of spiritualism, if the facts naturally and logically lead to this conclusion.

ALPHA.—“Can you inform me, through the medium of your valuable Magazine, how one is to act, in order to obtain the ‘spiritual manifestations,’ and to become a medium ; also, if one person can obtain the ‘manifestations’ alone, or whether it is necessary for several to be present ? The circumstances related in your first number are most interesting, and I am desirous of testing their truth myself.”

[The modern manifestations are generally exhibited to the external natural senses, and differ in this respect from the state of “vision,” or being “in the spirit,” &c., as recorded in Scripture. Now, as spirits in the flesh cannot act *directly* upon material objects, but require the mediation of organised substances, which are graduated from the bones to the muscles, thence to the

nerves, between which and the motive will there are doubtless many links or mediatory agencies which elude our scrutiny, so it is reasonable to expect that spirits not in the flesh should employ some such latent forces through which to act upon matter. These forces they find in the cerebral organization of the *medium*. These mediums are generally young persons of nervous temperament, in whom the will part or principle predominates over the intellectual; this latter being never the source of physical power. But it is not our province to map out territories where science has never trod. We are but humble pioneers, and as such will do our best to record phenomena which truth compels us to acknowledge, leaving it to our Winslows and our Carpenters to develop the physiological principles our facts involve. Instructions how to obtain the manifestations are given in a little pamphlet, entitled "Mesmerism and Media," published by Baillière, price 3d., or, for distribution, 2s. a dozen.]

J. JONES.—The case is not complete. The clairvoyante is so far right; but there is more to be done. We want complete facts if possible; and we do not profess to teach the art of developing mediums, for we do not suppose it is known. We make no pretensions at all ourselves. We are merely spectators of the phenomena, and our periodical a vehicle for the circulation of facts. We shall be as ready to confess the weakness as to maintain the power of mediumship; and we do not mean to advocate its cause as counsel for one side, but to judge it from the bench as counsel for both sides. If Mr. Jones has any well defined cases of cure by pebbles, let us have them.

J. N. PORTER.—We thank our correspondent, and will follow his directions so far as possible. We can give no names without the consent of the parties concerned, and are well aware of the various kinds of objections started by the incredulous, who, with or without aces, will still hold out, true to their colours, as may be perceived in the leading article of this number. Names come with time as the cause grows. The *Spiritual Herald* is a vessel sent out to discover what amount of mediumship there really is in the country, and

whether the visitation is intended for us in the old world, as well as for our brethren over the Atlantic.

PHRENO.—We beg to thank E. H. for the communication with which he has favoured us; but we are of opinion that the Hebrew version of the 18th chapter of Genesis does not admit of the translation, "they" instead of "He." We cannot abide by the *ipse dixit* of a spirit, especially when unconfirmed by our own judgment.

We have to thank W. W. for the *Daily Scotsman*, the 4th February, 1856, containing an article against American spiritualism. It contains some interesting facts; but it substitutes mere invective for argument which is a style of opposition much to be regretted, as subserving no desirable end, except that of shewing the weakness of its own cause.

We thank T. A. R. for *Chambers's Journal* of the 9th of Feb., 1856, containing an interesting article on spiritualism. We cannot exactly determine whether the writer be for or against, as he reserves his judgment on the subject.

H.—A letter addressed Alexis Didier, Paris, will find him, and an English letter will be read. We do not know the author of the book, "Phrenology, Psychology, and Pneumatology;" but John Chapman is publisher.

W. H. IBBERT, Secretary to the London Occult Society, No. 15, Seabright Place, Hackney Road, advertises:—"After the discussion on the 11th of January, at the London Mechanics' Institution, a slip was given away announcing a meeting of Spiritualists about to take place in London; but owing to an unforeseen event, it has been since agreed to carry on the meetings in a private circle. We thank all those who have responded to that notice; and are anxious to increase our circle, by a few humble spiritual friends."

We are informed that Mr. Home, the medium, has formed an engagement with a Polish nobleman, and is now travelling with him in Italy, after which he will accompany him to Poland; his return to England is, consequently, indefinitely postponed.

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