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GLEANINGS IN THE CORN FIELDS OF  
SPIRITUALISM.

By WILLIAM HOWITT.

No. II.

THE PERSECUTIONS OF REICHENBACH FOR HIS DISCOVERY  
OF ODYLE FORCE.

Ὡς ἂν σὴν ἀρετὴν βροτὸς οὐ τις ὄνοιο  
Ὅς τις ἐπίσταιτο ἧσι φρεσὶν ἄρτια βάζειν.  
ΟΔΥΣΣΕΙΑΣ Θ.—VIII., 239.

"This man would not blame thy merit if he could speak from as wise a mind  
as thine."—*The Odyssey*, Book viii.

Or, as Pope has paraphrased it,—

"Fear only fools, secure in men of sense."  
*The Odyssey*, Book viii, l. 272.

"As to the cry of fraud and imposture, it is in a scientific investigation utterly  
inadmissible. Let us bear in mind that this accusation is commonly and reck-  
lessly brought by those who have never investigated the subject, not only against  
those who have done so, but against persons of great ability, and of unblemished  
character and honour; and generally without a shadow of evidence. Let us do  
this, and we must come, I think, to the conclusion that such a line of argument  
is as irrational, unjust, and dishonest in itself, as it is void of all cogency in  
opposition to observed and established facts."

*Dr. William Gregory on Odyle Force.*

In the late discussions on Spiritualism every one must have re-  
marked how kindly and completely the medical and scientific  
opponents have taken to Reichenbach and what they call his od  
force. It is the last new principle amongst the imponderables  
which they have accepted, and by that they are now swearing  
lustily. Being the last discovered principle which they admit,  
they assume it to be the last imponderable agent that God has  
by him. Whoever attempts to introduce anything of a subtle  
kind beyond that, is set down as a dreamer and a fanatic. They  
forget that this odyle force—for such is its term, there is no such

word as od force—that is medical slang; has been at least six thousand years undiscovered in this planet, and that six thousand years hence other laws and principles of nature will still be in process of discovery in consequence of a six-thousand-years' advance in science, and the apparatus of science. For God is infinite in that direction as in all others, and will not be shut up in his own creation, and have his laws annihilated by the ignorance and silly pride of so-called scientific men.

And would any one believe that this discovery which they now admit is only about sixteen years old, and has been introduced into this country only about fourteen years? Still more, would any one believe that this discovery has been as violently assailed, as much ridiculed, and the author of it as vulgarly denounced as a charlatan and impostor, by the scientific, and especially the medical men, as Spiritualism and Spiritualists are now? Yet this is the case. It is not Spiritualism, but every new discovery, or old discovery newly introduced, that is compelled to undergo its term of insult and abuse from those who would persuade the world that they only are the men, and that wisdom will die with them. It will be particularly edifying just now to review a little the ordeal through which this now-accepted and applauded principle had so recently to pass. To hear its now venerated discoverer called all that is foul and reproachful; to hear his mediums, or his sensitives as he calls them, execrated by a committee of twenty-three medical men as liars, cheats and impostors, and the very existence of the odyle scouted as a ludicrous myth. For, in fact, the history of the ridicule and the abuse of the odyle force is a perfect *fac simile* of the history of modern Spiritualism. What is not a little funny, moreover, is that this odyle force is pronounced by its discoverer to be neither more nor less than the mesmeric force—the animal magnetism, so long and so bitterly the butt of all medical men. Yet this is the force which medical and scientific men are now deifying; and not contented with giving to it its own proper qualities, which they once so derisively denied, they are now investing it with the powers and properties of Spiritualism, with intelligence as well as activity, making it thus as fabulous as they once pronounced it inexistent.\* They are, in fact, confounding Spiritualism with the Aurora Borealis, for that Reichenbach declares is the grandest exhibition of the odyle force in this planet.

It is curious too, to recall the fact that a committee in France appointed by Government was formed to examine the merits of Mesmer's apparent discovery. That this committee in 1778 was composed of physicians, members of the Academy of Sciences,

\* See an admirable ridicule of this fact in *The Confessions of a Truth-Seeker*, p. 65.

with whom was associated Dr. Franklin; and the result of their examinations was a report very learnedly drawn up by Bailly the astronomer, afterwards Mayor of Paris, and one of the chief leaders of the Revolution, which was triumphantly announced completely to expose the humbug of animal magnetism, and the quackery of its author! Yet, here we have this very humbug now not only accepted, but most affectionately embraced by the medical and the scientific,—for they are not always the same—as the great truth of the age, under the new name of odyle force!

Baron von Reichenbach is a scientific Austrian nobleman, living at the Castle of Reisenberg, near Vienna. His life has been devoted to scientific enquiry, based on a thoroughly scientific education, and a mind which has gathered extensive knowledge in various directions. It has been, in fact, devoted to science, and to its practical application to the benefit of mankind. He is known as a distinguished improver of the iron manufacture of his native country. He is a thoroughly practical chemist; and by his well-known researches on tar acquired a very high position. In geology, physics and mineralogy, he has been equally active. In particular, he is the highest living authority on meteorites or aërolites, of which remarkable bodies he possesses a magnificent collection, besides having access to the richest collection of these stones in existence, that of the Emperor of Austria, in the Burg Schloss.

Baron Reichenbach had observed that downward passes made by strong magnets of a supporting power of 10 lbs. along the persons of from fifteen to twenty individuals, but without touching them, always affected one or more of the number in a peculiar manner; some of them so strongly as to throw them into fits and spasms. In March, 1844, Baron Reichenbach was introduced to a young lady of Vienna, Mademoiselle Nowotny, who, on being operated upon by the magnet in a dark room, saw light proceeding from it. It was found by repeated experiments that this perception of the light was common to those sensitive to the magnet. So long as the experiments were confined to magnets, little or no difference was observable betwixt the magnetic force and the odyle force; but it was soon discovered that the same attraction and light existed in crystals, in which condition it would not attract iron filings, though it would attract the human body. Here was an essential difference; and still further experiments showed the relation of magnets and of crystals to the animal nerve to be entirely alike; while, on the other hand, the relation to iron, to the electric current, to magnetic poles, and to the magnetism of the earth, was in magnets and in crystals totally different. That the force of the magnet was not, as had hitherto been taken for granted, one single force, but consisted of two;

since to that long known, a new, hitherto unknown, and decidedly distinct one, must be added, namely, that which resides in crystals. To this newly-discovered force Reichenbach gave the name of odyle force. By a steadily continued series of experiments on above a hundred persons, and on the light of sun, moon, fire, on the air, on plants and metals, on almost every object in nature, he identified this force as existing throughout nature, as that of a vital principle, as identical with the Aurora Borealis and Aurora Australis; and he gives in his work, a host of the most beautiful phenomena as observed under such tests and repetitions as established them as great and positive facts. What was the result? Did the scientific world examine and receive this new knowledge with the joy and enthusiasm which one would suppose it calculated to inspire? By no means. This brilliant discovery was destined to receive its bitter baptism from professional conceit like any other new truth.

A Dr. Dubois Reymond, of Berlin, very soon attacked the discovery and the author of it, in *Karsten's Progress of Physiology*, in 1845. This learned doctor, as we have it on the most undoubted authority, namely his own, followed the invariable course of medical and scientific men on such occasions. He made no examination whatever of the details of Reichenbach's statement. He made no experiment, but dashed off the most dogmatic criticisms. He declared the whole to be "an absurd romance, to enter into the details of which would be fruitless and to him impossible." Reichenbach drily observed, that he "had no doubt of the truth of both his statements. It would be fruitless, because he did not understand the work; and a foolish judgment on that which we do not understand, must be fruitless. Impossible, because he did not even read the work, connectedly, and it is impossible to enter into the details of a matter of which we have taken no pains to acquire an insight."

Dubois Reymond termed Reichenbach's work "the New Testament of Mesmerism," and he made the enormous blunder of accusing Reichenbach of patronizing the "magnetic *baquet*," when he had actually exploded for ever the *baquet* and its wretched magical trash!

Reichenbach observes, "That ever since science has existed, ignorance has assumed the right of judging and condemning that which it could not understand. The polite and well-bred Berlin physiologist," he says, "is then pleased to cast in my face a few common-places, such as—my work is one of the most deplorable aberrations that has for a long time affected the human brain. My statements are fables which should be thrown into the fire," and many similar learned vulgarities. Indignant at this condemnation without examination, Reichen-

bach observes, that "it is far easier and cheaper to pass with unworthy superficiality only over the outside of a subject, daubing it here and there with mire, to lower it in the public estimation, and then to run away under cowardly and hypocritical pretences."

How exactly the tactics of the learned mob of this present moment. The Faradays and Brewsters are becoming very sore at the rubs they get, and Dr. Kidd, in the *Morning Star*, kindly suggested on their behalf, that it was about time to let their names drop. Let him not believe it. Whoever builds himself a fool's monument, and endeavours to do it at the expense of truth and its advocates, must stand like another Simon Stylites on his self-raised column till the winds and rains of scorn have wasted him to the bone.

Reichenbach refers to the *Manual of Human Physiology* of the celebrated Johannes Müller, for an example of the effect of professional prejudice in the most able men. Müller, speaking of "the so-called animal magnetism, of magnetic passes, of laying on of the hands, and of the passage from one person to another of the so-called magnetic fluid," uses the following words:—"These histories are, however, a *deplorable labyrinth* of lies, deceit, and superstition; and they have only proved how ill qualified are most physicians to make an empirical investigation, and how little they know of that principle of testing a subject which in all the other natural sciences has become the universal method."

"But," says Reichenbach, "what now, if it should appear that it is, on the contrary, M. Müller who himself lives and moves in that *deplorable labyrinth*? What if it be precisely in my work that there are to be found adduced those very testings that he recommends, pursued exactly *according to the method universally followed in all the other natural sciences*? And what, lastly, if by these very testings, hundreds of facts, proving the actual existence of such a fluid or imponderable, or dynamic, or influence, whatever name be given to it, which by means of *passes*, of *laying on of hands*, and of *transference*, or *communication*, produces astounding physical and physiological effects? What, I say, if hundreds of such facts have been exhibited, and as fully demonstrated as any other physical or physiological truth can possibly be, and by that very identical method of search?" This, Reichenbach has most abundantly proved to be the case.

And, by-the-bye, what a reformation of learned treatises and encyclopædias there will be needed in awhile. In everything concerning such spiritual subjects as have been pleasantly got rid of as superstitions; what a rewriting there must be. Open any biography or cyclopædia, written within the last sixty or eighty

years, and what facts now proved to be real are set down as superstitious fooleries. Lavater, because he had spiritualistic perceptions, is gravely said, in the *Penny Cyclopædia*, "to have firmly clung to his peculiar religious views, which were a mixture of new interpretations with ancient orthodoxy, of philosophical enlightenment with extreme superstition. One leading article of his faith was a belief in the sensible manifestations of supernatural powers. His disposition to give credence to the miraculous led him to believe the strange pretensions of many individuals, such as the power to exorcise devils to perform cures by animal magnetism," &c.

Here to-day what are thus coolly called superstitions and empty pretences, are seen by thousands to be simple matters of fact, and Reichenbach has demonstrated that the powers of animal magnetism are real powers; and the medical men are admitting this under the new name of odyle force. The same cyclopædia, speaking of mesmerism, under the name of animal magnetism, calls it "a pretended agent of a peculiar nature, supposed to be capable in some mysterious mode of producing the most powerful effects on the human body. The use and progress of animal magnetism affords one of the most striking examples on record of the influence, through the imagination, of the mind upon the body, and at the same time, one of the most curious cases of knavery and credulity in the history of the delusions of the human mind."

Here again we have Reichenbach proving that so far from its being imagination, it is a universal and most important agent in the maintenance of the life and operations of nature. Here again we have mesmerism, rejected rudely and violently under its own name, acknowledged and caressed under the name of odyle force, and under the patronage of Reichenbach.

But at this period the learned Baron was no such authority. The committee of Viennese doctors were down upon him. "An association of Vienna physicians," he says, "gave us a deplorable instance of such things as material doubts; for there is an *absurd* incredulity, and there is also an *evil-minded* scepticism. These gentlemen, after an examination, *lasting half a year*, came to the edifying conclusion that Mademoiselles Reichel, Krüger, Nathan, and others, were merely impostors and liars! There were twenty-three of these gentlemen who, in no less than twenty-two sittings, did not know how to get nearer to the truth, but by degrees lost themselves and their sensitives in such a labyrinth of confusion, that the whole investigation resolved itself into mere lies and imposture."

It is curious that the odylic sensitives, like the spiritual mediums, are some of them delicate women, but others, strong

and robust men. It is another curious parallel that *only* the odylic mediums, like the spiritual mediums, see or perceive the phenomena. The odylic sensitives feel the influence of magnets and crystals when they do not see them, even through stone walls; *they* only see the luminous atmosphere of magnets and crystals, so that it is so particularly inviting to the non-sensitives to deny that anybody sees or perceives these effects. Precisely so it is with spiritual mediums; they see spirits, hear spiritual sounds and voices, see spiritual pictures and objects, but the non-mediums seeing these not, are tempted to pronounce all that does not strike their senses, delusion and fancy, or worse, imposture! It matters not to these dense gentlemen, whose spiritual senses, if they have any, are closed down under a horny coat as thick as the coat of a pachyderm, that those mediums have been tested over and over separately, and have always proved themselves truthful and correct—the dim-eyed pronounce the clear-eyed liars. Let us see what trouble Reichenbach had with these pachydermata of the human race, and then we shall not wonder at what we are seeing around us to-day. After giving some extraordinary proofs of the accuracy of one of his sensitives, he says:—

“On this, as on all former occasions, we see the accuracy of the statements made by Mdlle. Reichel. And this is the same Mdlle. Reichel whom her countrymen, the Vienna physicians, formerly mentioned, have not been ashamed publicly to brand as a liar and impostor. She is a simple, but intelligent and well-principled girl, belonging to an order of nuns: and during three months which she spent in my house, her conduct was entirely blameless, and such, that all of us felt attached and kindly disposed towards her. Nothing,” continues Reichenbach, and I recommend these remarks to many in this country, “is easier and more convenient, as a cloak for ignorance, than to get rid of, by declaring it to be an imposture, a phenomenon which, for want of knowledge, we cannot understand, or for want of dexterity in investigation, we cannot lay hold on. But then, I must say it openly, there is nothing more unmanly and dishonourable than abusing our superiority, recklessly and unconscientiously to deprive a poor, sick, defenceless girl of the only treasure she has, her good name, and to brand her with disgrace.”

After this manly protest, the Baron refers these caluminators to a living list of aristocratic persons, who have witnessed and testified to the same phenomena. But the conduct of the doctors of Vienna with the conduct of some at home does not close its parallel here. Let us see how they set about their investigations to disprove the Baron's discoveries. Let it be understood that the odylic flames can only be seen by the sensitives in the dark;

and that cross and reverse passes with magnets will throw them into convulsions.—“My worthy friends, the doctors and professors of the self-styled committee, prepared a dark chamber, of which they themselves tell us, that the chinks of the door were hurriedly stopped with handkerchiefs. (*See Journal of the Society of Physicians in Vienna. Year III, p. 138*). He who has worked long in the dark can easily imagine what sort of darkness that was which was thus extemporized! In the confined space of a small room, the sensitive patient was always crowded along with ten to fifteen young men; and sometimes one, and sometimes another, *went in and out*. But we know that by the momentary admission of light, even through the smallest chink, the eye becomes, as far as the odylic light is concerned, dazzled and almost insensible for more than half an hour. What then must happen when such prodigious blunders are committed, as opening a door to let people out and in? This is more than enough to make the results of such gropings in the dark, under the name of experiment, utterly useless and worthless. If Mdlle. Reichel, under such circumstances, saw nothing, as according to the protocol, she often declared, she spoke the truth, for she *could* see nothing, under arrangements so perverted, not because she had not the power to do so, but because experiments made blunderingly and without knowledge of the subject, made it impossible to exercise that power. But at the last, she now and then saw something, gave confused statements, and was therefore called a liar and impostor. Let us examine the statements of these gentlemen, and see where lies and imposture can be found. Mdlle. Reichel was from three to six paces from the magnet, and had generally on each side a doctor to watch her: and these guards often had hold of both her hands. Opposite to them was another doctor holding the heavy horse-shoe magnet in his lap, and moving it backwards and forwards. Close to him on each side, stood a fourth and fifth doctor, who were to control the motions of the magnet. The sensitive girl was now required to tell how and where the magnet emitted light, and when it was shifted now here, now there. She was urged to show her art; she was laughed at, and treated with scorn when she failed. She was in this way irritated and exasperated, insomuch that she struck out at the doctors, and was on the point of administering to one of them a box on the ear. Now, in the first place, it is quite impossible that a sensitive of moderate powers, as Mdlle. Reichel at that time was, could see any magnetic light in a darkness often interrupted by the going out and coming in of spectators. In the second place, three to six paces is far too great a distance from the magnet. Such a sensitive cannot with certainty perceive magnetic light at a



greater distance than forty inches. In the third place, the magnet, a heavy nine-bar horse shoe, was between the hands of the doctor, and held close to his person. The light was consequently utterly extinguished to the eye of the observer. All this made it a three-fold impossibility for her to see any luminous emanation from the magnet. Three enormous blunders were therefore made, each of which was alone sufficient to render impossible the sensitive perception of light. The girl, thus tortured, was expected to justify the reckless statements of the ignorant person who had placed her in so false a position, and whom every negative answer from her exposed to shame. She was likewise expected to satisfy the excited expectations of those assembled, who incessantly irritated her by expressions of abuse and scorn."

But we should possess no adequate idea of the vulgarity of this so-called scientific enquiry without the following scene:—  
 "Dr. Von Eisenstein led Mdlle. Reichel, in the supposed magnetic sleep, into a large room, where he made her sit down on a sofa, and tried by passes with his hands, and with the bar magnets to raise her state to that of clairvoyance, and at the same time to destroy the influence of the sun upon her, and give the preponderance to the magnets. When he brought the magnets into the region of the heart, and Mdlle. Reichel, as if involuntarily, shuddered or was affected with slight spasm, he exclaimed, 'Aha! Here, then, resides this filthy sun! Thou hast him in thy heart! Wait a moment, I shall soon expel him;' and now he made spiral tours near the heart with great energy," &c.

The translator is involuntarily reminded, and so must be the readers, of parallel cases that have occurred in England. Miss M'Avoy met with precisely similar treatment; so also the patients of Dr. Elliotson—the Okeys; so also the maid of Miss Martineau, whom Dr. Gregory says he examined, and found perfectly honest and truthful. "There are," he says, "the same predetermination to find all these impostors, the same utter absence of all cogency in the evidence adduced, and the same rash and unjustifiable, as well as unmanly accusations of imposture, brought against persons of whom no evil was known, apparently because the authorities chose to assume the fact to be impossible."

These surely are edifying records. Only sixteen years have passed over, and the absurd and insulted odyle mediums are justified; the author of these remarkable discoveries is accepted by the scientific world as one of the great discoverers of the age, —one of the lights of advancing science—and is quoted as authority against the claims of another new and therefore absurd truth. Not only is odyle force accepted, but under its friendly

mask the long spurned power of mesmerism is acknowledged. In sixteen years more, what fresh truth shall Spiritualism be propelled against, as a spiked target to push it back? It will be well for those who are now ridiculing and execrating it as a myth, a brain-sick fancy, as a spawn of the devil, to think a little on this.

But there is a great teaching for the Spiritualists themselves in these details. There are those who say, if your assertions be true, admit us to your *séances*; let us test your mediums. Before any Spiritualists do this, let them recollect the committee of twenty-three Viennese doctors, and their proceedings. Let them reflect on the words of Baron Reichenbach: "Science cannot thus be promoted, but folly may be shown in making such experiments with such men." Ay, folly of the gravest kind: for if cavillers will violate the plainest laws and conditions of the required phenomena; if they will only exhibit ignorance and insolence, the result can only be confusion. To quote once more Baron Reichenbach's words: "When experimenters do not know how to put their questions; when awkwardness and clumsiness cannot use the tools; when ignorance cannot arrange the necessary conditions of experiment; when want of tact cannot comprehend the answers; and when want of acuteness or intelligence is unable to discover the mutual relations of the phenomena;—then begin confusion and perplexity. The results being misunderstood, or misinterpreted, contradict each other; and the ill-qualified observer, rather than admit to himself or to others his own deficiencies, will sooner a thousand times adopt the dishonest expedient of accusing the observed person of deceit. But the deceiver, in regard to nature and science, is no other than himself, who, in his incapacity, has the impudence and the folly to brand truth with the mark of falsehood."

These are admirable observations, admirably in keeping with the spirit of the present time. They are words of wisdom drawn from dear-bought experience: and when Spiritualists receive challenges to give proofs of their faith, by persons of the stamp of the twenty-three doctors of Vienna, let them simply point them to the millions who have now satisfied themselves on this head, and say, "Go ye, and do likewise." The divine principle of Spiritualism is co-extensive with the human race; it is not the monopoly of any man or any woman: those who seek as the millions already convinced have sought, will, if in earnest, be sure to find it. It is the principle of the Gospel promised by Christ, possessed by the apostles, testified to by the martyrs; professed by all saints. It is neither confined to moving tables, nor to rapping sounds, to accordions played by invisible hands, to spirit-writing, nor spirit-drawing—to spirit-touch, nor spirit-sight—but it lies in the power

of God manifested directly from Himself in the still, small voice, and in the peace that surpasseth understanding; in the refreshing that comes from the presence of the Lord, and causes the old to renew their strength, and the young to mount up as on the wings of eagles. On it comes from the great Creator of all forces—odyle force flickering and dancing around the northern and southern poles; electric force speaking amid dark clouds in thunder in the summer noon, or sending man's thoughts along the world-spanning wire: on it comes through his ministering angels, through enfranchised souls gladdened by the affectionate mission to train, and warn, and lead heavenwards those they best love on earth. It is the mind of some great hero or artist glorified amid the celestial ages, breathing marvellous visions on the wrapt painter or entranced poet.

Along the vanward coasts and cliffs of heaven,  
 Piercing with outshoots bold this darker sphere,  
 Stand great ethereal powers from age to age,  
 Showering down life and love from God to us;  
 New art, new science; dreams of vast design;  
 High resolutions; hero-thoughts and strengths,  
 Fresh fires to patriot and morn-winged souls,  
 Devotion to the death for love of men,  
 Making the fames of Time.

That is Spiritualism! Hallowed of God; exercised by angels: conferred on good and great men: continually speaking in the lives, the deeds, the words and the sentiment of great men. That which, in India, shouted in the soul of Sir Charles Napier, "Truckhee! Truckhee!" That which animates Garibaldi in his hero course, simple, sublime, unselfish, meek and Christlike. That which enables the forgotten and dying orphan in some obscure and famine-haunted nook to look up to heaven, and seeing such sight as king or kaiser never saw, smiles and says, "Father! mother!" and dies. That is Spiritualism! Let him who has it thank God for it, as the great warrant of eternity. Let him who is ashamed of it, perish in his shame. If the petty, pert phrases of a swarm of little wittlings—mosquitos haunting the swamps of literature, or the solemn sarcasms of the horny-souled journalist disturb him, he has not the lion nerve of the hero, or the heart of the martyr, and cycles of disembodied discipline must pass over him before he can look worthily up to Him who wrought great miracles before unrecognized eyes; and gave no sign to a generation who sought only a sign,—not salvation; who, instead of wasting arguments on mammon-souls, applied the scourge to their backs, their only sensitive portion; and who, walking with angels and with God, stooped to endure earth's deepest ignominies, and died for man and truth. That is Spiritualism! Not maimed or crippled; not found in odyle force, or in chloroform,

as Dr. Kidd, of Sackville, amusingly imagines;\* nor yet in hasheesh, with its wild visions; nor in nitrous oxide, and its sensations; nor in the dreams inspired by morphine, or nicotine, or any other drug, though these may curiously impinge on the spirit-life within us,—Spiritualism, not distorted by demoniac art; not in crumbs or fragments, but in its august completeness.

There is one thing which has particularly struck me in these reminiscences of Reichenbach, whilst passing through the purgatory of doctors and pretenders. It is a great and common objection to Spiritualism that only certain persons are mediums, as if more than certain persons are true poets, or philosophers, or artists. The same objection would destroy the odyle force, now so much idolized, for only certain persons are sensitives. But all sensitives agree in their testimony to the specific phenomena of odyle force, and all mediums to those of Spiritualism. The characteristics of these phenomena are so uniform and positive, that on meeting with them anywhere, you instantly recognize their truth. They are as settled as the green light in burning copper, or the pupil-dilating properties of atropine. The shepherd knows the face of every sheep in his flock, be they a thousand: the Spiritualists know every essential mark of the revelations that have once dawned upon him. The moment you read a work, though not professedly spiritualistic, which deals with the true psychological facts, you know that the author has graduated in the school of what George Fox so aptly called **THE TRUTH**. There let the experienced mind stand calmly and abide. You shall have every true philosopher, every true poet abiding with you. Young, in his *Night Thoughts*, says:—

“ Smitten friends,  
Are angels sent as messengers of love ;

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\* By-the-bye, Dr. Kidd says: “ Any one with a thimblefull of chloroform and one-tenth of his Houdinism might do all that Mr. Home does.” If this be true, Dr. Kidd has only to take Hanover Square Rooms for a few evenings, invite all the world there; get a good fellow of some fifteen stone weight, give him a thimblefull of chloroform and apply a little touch of Houdinism, which may easily be procured in this clever little London of ours, float his man up in the sight of the company; let him sail all round the ceiling of the room, and then be brought and laid down on the table in the midst of the spectators, as Mr. Home was on one occasion, in the presence of people as medically educated, and as wide awake as my friend Kidd, and if he does not thereby explode Spiritualism for ever, I, for one, will never after say, that—“ he is no conjuror.”

If, as Dr. Kidd says, it is so easy, that *any one* may do this with these simple means, he will be inexcusable if he deprive the London public of so astonishing a sight. But as neither he nor any other man will ever do it by chloroform and Houdinism, let me say that Dr. Kidd in thinking of weakening Spiritualism by chloroform has added new strength to it. Chloroform, as Sir John Herschell in his lecture at Leeds on “ Sensorial Vision,” now published, has shown in his own person, *does* produce clairvoyance. But clairvoyance is not Spiritualism any more than the telegraphic wire is electricity. The doctor has simply mistaken the telegraphic wire for the man and his intelligence at the end of it.

For us they languish, and for us they die:  
 And shall they languish, shall they die in vain?  
 Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades  
 Which wait the revolution in our hearts?  
 Shall we disdain their silent, soft address—  
 Their posthumous advice and pious prayer?"

Mrs. Hemans says:—

"Hast thou been told that from the viewless bourne  
 The dark way never hath allowed return?  
 That all which tears can move with life is fled—  
 That earthly love is powerless on the dead?  
 Believe it not."

But this gleaning in the golden corn fields of Spiritualism tempts us on and on: for the present, let us bind up our booty, and once more—home!

#### A FEW FACTS REGARDING "FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARIES OF ANOTHER WORLD."

I WAS brought up in the house which had been that of my maternal grandfather, who died before my birth. It was a house of four stories; and I occupied at different times the bed room adjoining the dining room, on the second floor (while my grandmother occupied the one immediately above it), and the two attics.

1. After the death of my mother, abroad, I was one night in the act of lying down in bed, when my eye was arrested by an unaccountable appearance. A tall old gentleman, in his night dress, was feeling for something along the mantel-piece; and as he moved, he passed *between* me and the candle which I had left to burn out, and momentarily obscured it. The figure then, without seeming to observe me, turned towards the bed which was on the left of my own and unoccupied, raised his knee as if to climb in, and *sighed* at the same time, leaving no trace of his presence while vanishing. I sprang from bed and opened the door which was close at hand on the *right* of my bed, and to prevent any mischievous person escaping, I stood in the doorway and called loudly for the rest of the family. All came, and the room was thoroughly searched, but nothing was found, and the matter was treated as a joke.

It was then, on enquiry, that I was told that my grandfather had died in that very room.

2. In the same house—in the year 1823—as two aunts were standing at night at the attic window, they were alarmed at the apparition of the husband of their sister, holding in his hand a pen.

They ran from the room and informed the rest of the family

of the circumstance. In the course of a few days they received a letter from their married sister, in Yorkshire, acquainting them of the death of her husband on that very night. He had signed his will before expiring.

3. Another aunt, on going up the stairs to the attics, one afternoon late, was *jostled* by an aged woman who carried a bunch of keys, and passing her, entered one of the rooms. My aunt followed, but on finding no one there, and no means, save by the door, of egress, became seriously alarmed.

4. On another occasion—about 1838—an uncle had just arrived from abroad. It was late, and one of his sisters, with her nephew and a servant, went to one of the unoccupied attics, and on opening the door they were terrified by observing the whole palliase and mattress of the bed violently thrown upwards and turned. They rushed out, taking care to lock the door after them, for they fancied it might be a robber. The rest of the family then returned with them and searched the room, but nothing was found, and no traces seen of any one having been there. The *smoke board* was closed, and the *window barred on the inside*.

5. Two grown-up members of the family occupied two beds in another room—one faced the fire, and the other was beside it. During the night, they were simultaneously awakened by a noise, and looking up, asked each other, what was the matter? Each thought that it was the other who was moving to and fro before the fire in the grate. After stalking violently about for some time, there was a rushing noise, as of wings, and nothing more was seen of the figure. The occupants then rose, and examined the door, but it was locked on the *inside*, as usual.

6. One night in 1843, when sleeping in the room where I had previously seen the curious figure, I was awakened by a fearful uproar in the room occupied by my grandmother overhead: it sounded as if every piece of furniture had been broken to pieces and dashed about the floor. The house was alarmed, and we ran to my relative's assistance. Her hand grasped the bell pull, but she appeared paralysed with terror, and unable to ring it. She had started up in bed. She never mentioned the subject, except to one of her children, who, however, refused to betray the secret, whatever it was; but my grandmother never again slept alone.

7. An uncle, who was in the army, dreamt that he had got his captaincy by a person called ——. There was no such officer in his regiment, and it was treated lightly; but in the course of a month, when the packet arrived, he found himself gazetted *vice* a Captain ——, who had been brought in from the half-pay.

On another occasion, the same uncle, on returning from

foreign service, went to pay a visit to his old schoolmaster at —. On entering the yard, he observed the Doctor *limping* into the school; on entering which, after him, my uncle, surprised at not seeing him, was told that he had broken his leg, and had not been out of his bed for three weeks.

The house just described had been built by my grandfather, and it was sold about 36 years after his death, but has never been long tenanted by any one, from what cause I am unable to explain.

The servants about the house used continually to complain of terrifying *sounds moving* about them unaccountably.

My own bed-room door faced a flight of stairs; and night after night, when all became quiet, I used to be kept awake by the noise, as of a small pea rebounding step by step, and ultimately striking the door. This used to be continued for hours.

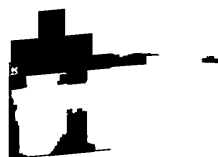
For months my rest has been disturbed by the sound of scratching on my pillow, and of footsteps and garments pressing continually around my bed. So great was this nuisance, that it has often led to my keeping late hours and sleeping longer in the morning. I must not, however, omit to add, that I have sometimes heard these sounds during the day.

8. While living in a house at Chelsea, I was one night disturbed by a violent blow against my door, which, from local circumstances, could not have been delivered by any *recognised* agency.

9. Once in —, while occupying a room with two windows raised twenty feet from the ground, my servant, as well as myself, were alarmed at a tremendous blow struck against the venetians, as if they had been violently "slammed to" by the wind—but they were closed, and there was not a breath of air.

10. In an *opposite* part of the world to where the above occurred, I was living in a citadel, —. My rooms, on one side overlooked an inaccessible precipice, and on the other side of the passage, they faced the square. I occupied a bed room looking on to the latter, while my wife slept in one of the former. On the 19th —, I found my rest disturbed by the sound as of some one sawing wood close to my head, and *in space*. It was incessant, but on going into another room, it ceased. My wife also heard gravel thrown up against the windows on the *face of the precipice*, and fancied that it was a practical, though *unaccountable* joke.

These things continued till the night of the 25th —, when, on entering my wife's room, about 11 p.m. (I had been at a party), she said that she had been disturbed by the same unknown causes. I laughed, and walked up to the dressing-table, when suddenly a *stunning blow*, like the concussion of railway *buffers*, was struck



in empty space close to my head. My wife also heard it, and cried out, while I sprang away from it, and involuntarily exclaimed, "My old enemy, —, is dead!"

We heard no more disturbance; but on the 3rd of the following month we received intimation of my old enemy's death on that very night—and after a series of *fits*, which had *commenced* on the 19th.

Is this to be explained by any known agencies?

We had *noted* the occurrences when they happened, and told them to friends; and when the letter came, we referred to our memorandum and found the dates to correspond.

Winchester.

E. A.

### SPIRITUALISM IN SWEDEN, IN 1842.

As a fitting pendant to the articles on Spiritualism in the churches which have appeared in previous numbers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, and in further illustration of its varied phases, we subjoin an account of the wonderful movement in Sweden, in 1842, which has been variously christened by our friends the doctors, and other learned persons, as—"The Preaching Epidemic," "The Preaching Malady," and "The Preaching Disease." This account, given by Mary Howitt, first appeared in *Howitt's Journal*, in 1847. Before quoting it, we would point out that, like the spiritual manifestations in America, and the recent Revival movement in Ireland, it appears to have commenced with one individual. Count Gasparin, who has written on this subject, says:—

The signal seems to have been given by a young girl sixteen years of age, Lisa Andersdocter, who all at once felt herself compelled to sing canticles, and who soon joined preaching to singing. She often fell into trances or into a state of vertigo. She pretended that every word she uttered was by direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that she could neither add to, nor take anything from it. Lisa soon had a multitude of imitators, especially among the young of both sexes. In vain did the Government and the clergy oppose the contagion; their intolerance, which was perhaps one of the principal causes of the movement, was not able to check it. The people generally took the part of the inspired ones, who even found a certain number of partisans among the ministers.

We now proceed with Mrs. Howitt's account, from which it will be seen that there are many striking analogies between this "Preaching Epidemic" and the spiritual manifestations in the present time, especially as seen in the recent wide-spread religious Revival. The quaking—the trance, spontaneously induced—the preaching by persons who in their ordinary state have no gift of utterance, and even by children—the graceful action—the rapt



expression—the recognition of an intelligent and controlling influence—the altered phraseology—the marked attraction, in this state, to certain persons in preference to others—the beneficial change of character which often follows these experiences, are all familiar to those intimate with spiritual phenomena. In the heroic struggle of the Camisards, too, phenomena of the same generic character as in Sweden was witnessed, including the inspiration and marvellous utterances of children, “some too young to speak naturally, to the astonishment of hundreds of spectators.”\* It is instructive also to note the tendency, even of the good bishop of Skara, to regard any unusual operations of spiritual forces as the action of disease—to be properly treated only by drugging the body into a state of insensibility. We sometimes wonder how our bishops and physicians would have treated those who on the Day of Pentecost spoke in tongues they had never learned. Judging by their avowed principles and acts, they would have regarded that great spiritual outpouring as an “Epidemic,” a “Disease,”—and for its cure, a blue pill or a “smart cathartic” would have been prescribed as the proper remedy. Mrs. Howitt’s account is as follows:—

A case of psychological sympathy has recently occurred in Europe.

That portion of Southern Sweden formerly called Småland, and which now comprises the provinces of Kalmar, Wexio, and Jön Kopping, though one of the poorest parts of the kingdom, is inhabited by a laborious and contented people. Their lot, which is of one of extreme suffering and privation, is rendered endurable to them by their natural simplicity of character and deep religious feeling. About sixty years ago, a very strong religious movement took place among them, which, for political reasons or otherwise, Government thought fit to put a violent stop to, and with great difficulty it was done. Whether there be a predisposition among these simple but earnest people for religious excitement, we cannot tell; but certain it is that, at the commencement of 1842, the singular phenomena, of which we are about to speak, made their appearance among them, and from its rapid spread, and apparently contagious character, and from the peculiar nature of its manifestations, it was popularly called the Preaching Epidemic.

Dr. J. A. Butsch, Bishop of Skara, in Westgöthland, wrote a long letter on this subject to Dr. C. F. Wingård, Archbishop of Upsala, and Primate of all Sweden, which letter is considered so perfect an authority on the matter, that it is published in an appendix to Archbishop Wingård’s *Review of the Church of Christ*, an excellent little work, which has been translated into English by G. W. Carlsen, late Chaplain to the Swedish Embassy in London, a gentleman of great erudition and accomplishments. To this letter we shall have frequent occasion to refer.

The reader will naturally ask, as the Bishop himself does, what is the Preaching Epidemic? What it really was, nobody as yet has been able to say. Among the peasantry, the most general belief was, that it was an *immediate divine miracle*, in order to bestow grace on such as were afflicted with the disease, and as a means of warning and exhortation to those who saw and heard the patients. Among others, somewhat above the class of peasants, many denied altogether the existence of the disease, *declaring the whole to be either intentional deception, in the desire of gain or notoriety; or else self-delusion, produced partly by an over-strained religious feeling; or by that passion of imitation which is*

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\* William Howitt’s *Prophets of the Cevennes*.

common to the human mind. The Bishop himself was of opinion that it was a disease *originally physical, but affecting the mind in a peculiar way*: he arrived at this conclusion by attentively studying the phenomenon itself. At all events, bodily sickness was an ingredient in it, as it was proved from the fact, that although every one affected by it, in describing the commencement of their state, mentioned a spiritual excitement as its original cause, close examination proved that an internal bodily disorder, attended by pain, had preceded or accompanied this excitement. Besides, there were persons who, against their own will, were affected by the quaking fits, which were some of its most striking early outward symptoms, without any previous religious excitement; and these, when subjected to medical treatment, soon recovered.

The Bishop must have been a bold man, and not afraid of ridicule; for, though writing to an Archbishop, he says that though he will not give the disease a name, still he will venture to express an opinion, which opinion is, that the disease corresponds very much with what he has heard and read respecting *the effects of animal magnetism*. He says that he carefully studied the effect of sulphur and the magnet upon several sick persons, and found the symptoms of the Preaching Epidemic to correspond with the effects of animal magnetism as given in Kluge's *Versuch einer Darstellung des animalischen Magnetismus als Heilmittel*. In both cases there was an increase of activity of the nervous and muscular system; and, further, frequent heaviness in the head, heat at the pit of the stomach, pricking sensation in the extremities, convulsions and quakings; and, finally, *the falling, frequently with a deep groan, into a profound fainting fit or trance*. In this trance, the patient was in so perfect a state of insensibility to outward impressions, that the loudest noise or sound would not awaken him, nor would he feel a needle thrust deeply into his body. Mostly, however, during this trance, he would hear questions addressed to him, and reply to them; and, which was extraordinary, invariably in these replies applied to every one the pronoun *thou*. The power of speech, too, in this state, was that of *great eloquence, lively declamation, and the command of much purer language than was usual, or apparently possible for him in his natural state*. The invariable assertions of all the patients, when in this state, were, that they were exceedingly well, and that they had never been so happy before; *they declared that the words they spoke were given to them by some one else, who spoke by them*. Their disposition of mind was pious and calm; they seemed predisposed for visions and predictions. Like the early Quakers, they had an aversion to certain words and phrases, and testified in their preaching against places of amusement, gaming, excess in drinking, may-pole festivities, gay clothing, and the crooked combs which the peasant women wear in their hair, and which, no doubt, were objects of vanity and display.

There was *in some families a greater liability to this strange influence than in others*; it was greater also in *children and females than in grown-up people and men*; and amongst men, those of a sanguine, choleric temperament were most susceptible. The patients invariably showed a strong desire to be together, and seemed to feel *a sort of attraction or spiritual affinity to each other*. In places of worship, they would all sit together; and it was remarked that when a person afflicted with the Preaching Epidemic, was questioned about the disease in himself individually, he always gave his answer in behalf of them all; and thus said *we*, when the inquirer naturally expected *I*.

From these facts the learned Bishop infers that the Preaching Epidemic belonged to that class of operations which have been referred to animal magnetism. He says, that 'whatever may be the cause of this singular agency or influence, no doubt exists of its always producing a religious state of mind, which was strengthened by the apparently miraculous operations from within.' He goes then into the question, whether the religious impression produced be in accordance with *the established notions of the operations of 'grace on the heart,'* and decides this not to be the case, *because the excited person, immediately after he begins to quake, experiences an unspeakable peace, joy, and blessedness, not on account of new-born faith, though atoning grace, but by a certain immediate and miraculous influence from God*. These are the Bishop's own words. But with the polemical question we have nothing to do. However, the Bishop goes on to

that, whatever the origin of the disease may be, it characterises itself by stian language, and makes its appearance with many truly Christian thoughts feelings; and that 'probably the disease has universally met with some-; Christian, previously implanted in the heart, to which it has, in an exciting allied itself.'

With respect to the conduct and conversation of the patients during the of their seizure, he says he never saw anything improper, although many ge rumours to the contrary were circulated and believed, to the great dis- atage of the poor people themselves. In the province of Elfsborg, where e disease prevailed to a great extent, bands of children and young people under e influence went about singing what are called *Zion's hymns*, the effect of which singularly striking, and even affecting. He says, that 'to give a complete detailed description of the nature of the disease would be difficult, because, 'animal magnetism,'—we use his own words—'*it seems to be infinite in its sention and form.*'

In the above-mentioned province of Elfsborg, it was often said, 'such and a person *has begun to quake, but he has not as yet dropped down, nor has seen u, nor has preached.*'

his quaking, of which so much is said, appears to have been the *first and sign of the influence*, the inward vision and the preaching being its umination; though, when this consummation was reached, the fit mostly uenced by the same sign, Nevertheless, in some patients, the quaking ased in proportion to the strength which the disease gained. These ings also seem to have come on at the *mention of certain words, the introduc- ain ideas*, or the *proximity of certain persons or things*, which in some erious manner appeared inimical or unholy to the patient. Sometimes, also, e very things and words which at first affected the patient ceased to do so as dvanced to the higher stages of the disease; and other words or things hitherto had produced no effect, began to agitate him in the same way.

of the patients explained this circumstance thus—that according as his tual being advanced upwards, 'he found that there existed in himself, and e world, many things which were worse than that which previously he had dered as the worst.' In some cases, the patients were violently affected by mple words 'yes' and 'no;' the latter word in particular was most painful mpulsive to them, and has frequently been described by them as 'one of the e demons, tied with the chains of darkness in the deepest abyss.' It was rked also that they frequently acted as if they had a strong temptation to k falsehood, or to say more than they were at liberty to say. They would, efore, exhort each other to speak the truth; and so frequently answered ously, and even said they did not know, when a contrary answer might have onfidently expected, that an unpleasant impression was frequently pro- on the mind of the hearer; and some persons imbibed from this very umstance unfavourable ideas of their truthfulness, when, in fact, this very tion and hesitation was a peculiarity of the disease.

In the province of Skaraborg, the Bishop says he has seen several persons *at once into the trance, without any preparatory symptom*. In the province of eborg, the patients preached with their eyes open, and standing; whilst in his province of Skaraborg, he himself saw and heard them preaching in a re- dulent posture, and with closed eyes, and altogether, as far as he could discover, a state of perfect insensibility to outward impressions. He gives an account hree preaching girls in the parish of Warnham, of ages *varying from eight to ice*. This account, but principally as relates to one of them, we will lay ore the reader.

It was shortly before the Christmas of 1842, when he went, together with a pectable farmer of the neighbourhood, the Rev. Mr. Zingvist, and the Rev. t. Smedmark, to the cottage where a child lived, who by all accounts had ad- anced to the highest stage of the disease. Many persons besides himself and friends were present. As regards all the three children, he says, that for eir age, as is generally the case in Sweden, they were tolerably well-informed e religious matters, and could read well. They were naturally of good disposi- on, and now, since they had been subject to the disease, were remarkable for

their gentleness and quiet demeanour. Their manners were simple as those of peasant children, but being bashful and timid, were not inclined to give much description of their feelings and experience; still, from the few words they spoke, it was evident that, like the rest of the peasantry and their own relatives, they considered it a divine influence, but still asserted that, they knew not exactly what to think, either of themselves or of their situation. When in the trance, they declared that they were exceedingly well; that they never had been so cheerful, or felt so much pleasure before. On being awake, however, they complained, *sometimes even with tears, of weakness in the limbs, pain in the chest, head-ache, &c.*

In the particular case of the one child to which we have referred, the symptoms were precisely the same: there came on, in the first place, a violent trembling or quaking of the limbs, and she fell backwards with so much violence as to give the spectator a most painful sensation; but no apparent injury ensued. The patient was now in the trance, or state of total unconsciousness; and this trance, which lasted several hours, divided itself into two stages, acts or scenes, totally different in character. In the first place, she rose up violently, and all her actions were of a rapid and violent character. She caught at the hands of the people round her; some *she instantly flung aside, as if the effect produced by them was repugnant to her*; others she held gently, patted and rubbed softly; and these the people called 'good hands.' Though she was but a simple, bashful, peasant child, clad in her peasant's dress—a sheepskin jacket—yet all her actions and movements were free, and full of the most dramatic effect: powerful and vigorous when representing manly action, and *so indescribably graceful and easy, and full of sentiment*, when personating female occupations, as to amaze the more cultivated spectators; and, as the Bishop says, 'to be far more like the motions of an image in a dream, than a creature of flesh and blood.' Another circumstance is peculiar: although these children differed from each other in their natural state, yet, while under the influence of the disease, their countenances became so similar, as greatly to resemble each other.

The child next passed into the second stage of the trance, which was characterised by a most beautiful calmness and quietness, and with her arms meekly folded she began to preach. Her manner in speaking *was that of the purest oratory*; her tones were earnest and solemn, and the language of *that spiritual character which, when awake, it would have been impossible for her to use.* The Bishop noted down her little discourse on his return home, and an analysis of it shows it to be an edifying practical address, perfectly conformable to the pure spirit of the Gospel, and suited to an unsophisticated audience. During its delivery *the child had something saint-like in her appearance.* Her utterance was soft and clear, not a word was retracted or repeated; and her voice, which in her waking state had a peculiar hoarseness, had now a wonderful brilliancy and clearness of tone, which produced great effect. *The whole assembly observed the deepest silence, and many wept.* Many of the patients were cured by medicines administered by the Bishop, who concludes by saying that the phenomenon lies out of the sphere of human knowledge, but that its extraordinary character has produced a great religious movement, and wrought much good. It has sent multitudes to church who never went there, and many have been thereby reclaimed from the error of their ways. Many passages in their history will strikingly remind the reader of the early Quakers. The number of persons affected in the province of Skaraborg alone, where the disease did not prevail so generally as in other parts, amounted in 1843 to 3,000; but in many places impostors affected the disease to gain a livelihood, and brought the real patients into discredit. *The clergy and the doctors everywhere used all their endeavours to extinguish the movement, and by the end of 1843 it had almost ceased.* Nothing of the kind has since appeared; *but the good effect it produced on the mind of many a hardened sinner remains to testify of its truth and reality, although no one, whether learned in the science of physical or spiritual life, can yet explain the cause and nature of this extraordinary mental phenomenon."*

T. S.

## SINGULAR DISPLACEMENT OF COFFINS.

THE following account of a series of displacements of coffins in Barbadoes, was given to me by a gentleman who resided in the island at the time of their occurrence. Those of your readers who are acquainted with Mr. Dale Owen's *Footfalls on the Boundary of another World*, will see in this story a resemblance to, and perhaps a confirmation of his "very remarkable account of the disturbances in a cemetery at Ahrensberg."

The notes and dates which follow, were copied *verbatim* from original memoranda in the handwriting of the Rev. Thomas Harrison Orderson, at that time rector of Christ Church, Barbadoes, in the burying ground of which parish the vault was situated.

31st July, 1807.—Mrs. Thomasin Goddard was buried in the vault, which, when opened to receive her, was quite empty.

22nd February, 1808.—Mary Anna Maria Chase, daughter of the Honorable Thomas Chase, was buried in the same vault in a leaden coffin. When the vault was opened for the infant, the coffin of Mrs. Goddard was in its proper place.

6th July, 1812.—Dorcas Chase was buried in the same vault, and the two first coffins were in their proper places.\*

9th August.—The Honorable Thomas Chase was buried in the same vault.† Upon its being opened, the two leaden coffins were removed from their situation, particularly that of the infant, which appeared to have been thrown from the corner where it was placed to the opposite angle.

25th September, 1816.—Samuel Brewster Ames was buried, and when the vault was opened, the leaden coffins were removed from their places, and were in much disorder.

17th November, 1816.—The body of Samuel Brewster was removed from the parish of St. Philip, and was buried in the vault, and great confusion was discovered among the leaden coffins.

7th July, 1819.—Thomasin Clarke was buried, and much confusion among the coffins.

18th April, 1820.—The vault was opened in the presence, and at the request of His Excellency Lord Combermere, and the gentlemen of his staff, namely, the Honorable N. Lucas, K. B. Clarke, and R. Cotton, Esqrs.

The coffins were in great disorder, some turned upside down.

\* Note (not by the clergyman). This person starved herself to death.

† *Idem*. This man died by his own hands.

The coffin of one of the children was on the steps that led to the bottom of the vault, &c., &c. The plate represents:—

- 1.—The position of the coffins as they were left after the last interment.
- 2.—The coffins as they were found, when the vault was opened, in the presence of Lord Combermere.

The vault, in which these disturbances took place, is twelve feet long by six and a half wide, and had been formed by hewing through the flinty rock. Its only approach was by a door or opening, from which steps led down to the bottom. After each opening for a new interment, the displaced coffins were placed again in proper order, and the opening, or entrance to the vault, having been regularly closed by masons, was secured by a massive stone; to move which the strength of six or seven men was required.

The builder and first owner of the vault was a gentleman of the name of Elliott, who, with his wife, was buried in it. After a lapse of many years, there being no representative of the Elliott family, Colonel Thomas Chase took possession of the vault. At that time the skulls, bones, and fragments of wooden coffins, which were all that remained of the Elliotts, were huddled together in a corner. It is said that these were, after the disturbance swept out, kicked and beaten, as “the rascals who had done this,” by the negroes on Colonel Chase’s estate.

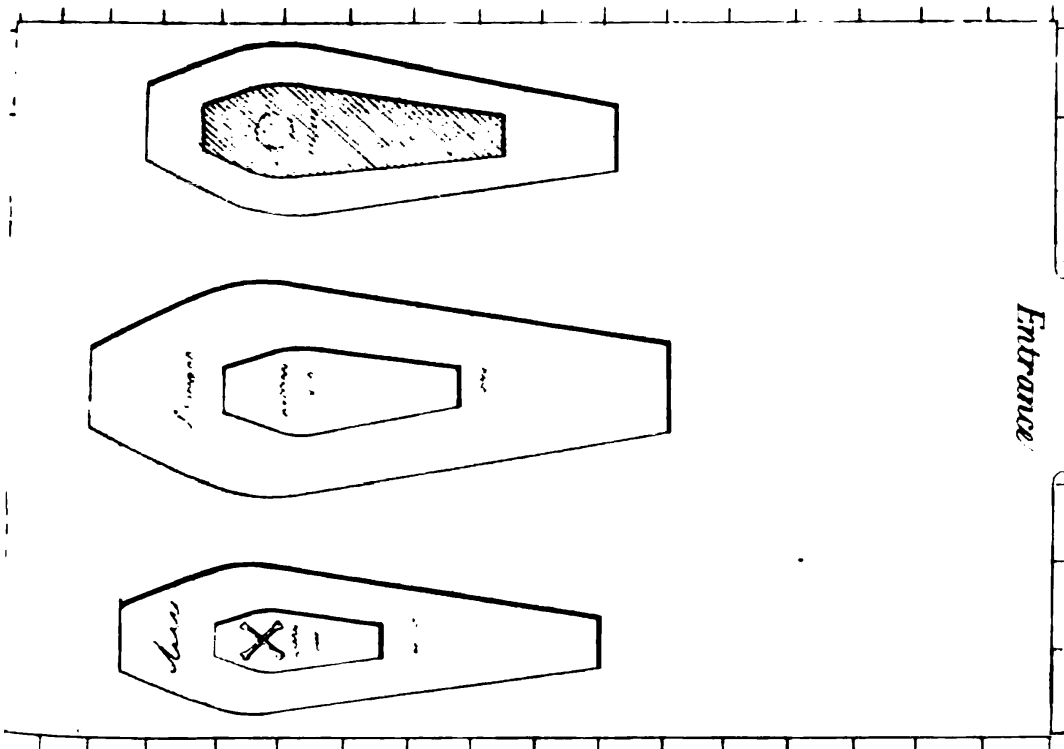
An account of these occurrences is given in a work entitled *Transatlantic Sketches*, by Captain Alexander. London, 1833. Vol. I., p. 161. The writer says, that they could be the work of no human hand. The other vaults in the same churchyard were undisturbed, though liable to the operation of any natural cause which could have affected the one in question, and the black people were far too superstitious to have ventured on such a trick.

The surviving relatives of Colonel Chase were most indignant at the liberty which Lord Combermere had taken in ordering the vault to be opened without asking their permission, and when the news reached them, one of the family came to the spot, and had every coffin taken out and buried in the earth, leaving the vault quite empty, as it remains to this day.

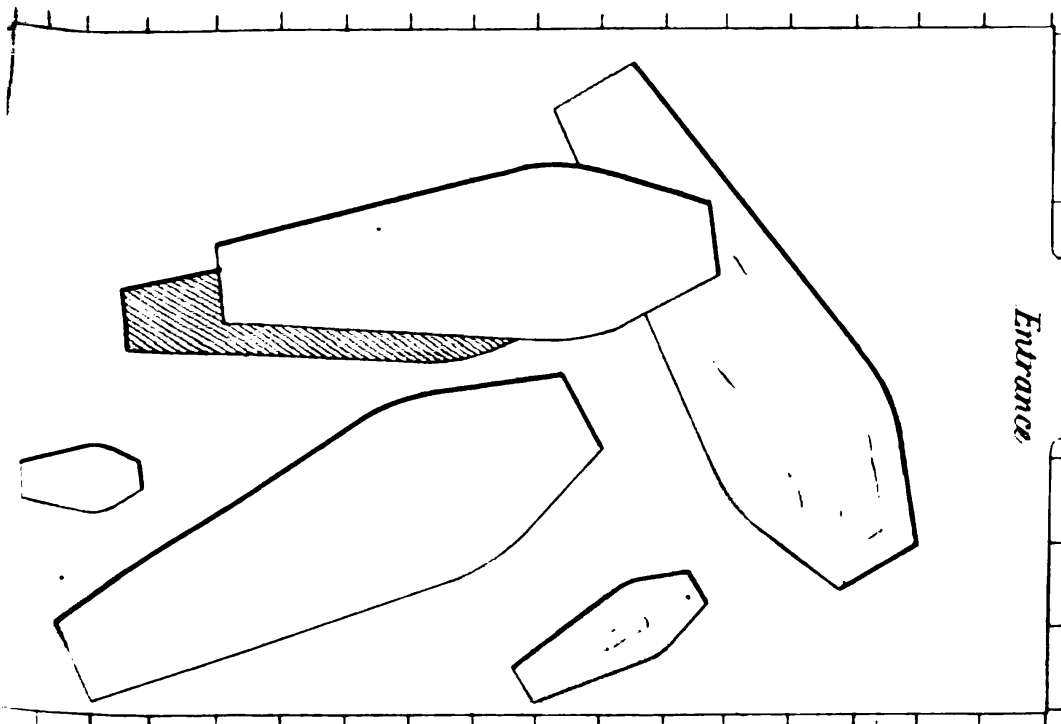
It is a singular coincidence, if it be only coincidence, that the disturbance in Barbadoes first occurred after the interment of a person who starved herself to death, and of another, Col. Chase, who died by his own hand, while, in the vault at Ahrensberg, the coffin of a suicide was found open and the arm of the corpse extended.

S. E. DE M.

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The position of the coffins, as they were left, after the last interment.



Their position as they were found when the Vault was opened in the presence of Lord Combermere.





THE CAPTAIN SAVES HIS SHIP BY A DREAM; AND THE  
COMFORTABLE OLD GHOST AT THE IRONING TABLE.

NEW AND FULLY AUTHENTICATED FACTS.

In the number of the *Spiritual Magazine* for October, the editor copied my dream on the voyage to Australia. Had I been aware of his intention, I could have added another incident of it, which escaped me at the moment of writing that account hastily in a letter to my wife. It might be supposed that I had had a description of my brother's house, and of its locality, before the dream occurred. This was not the case: all that I knew was that he lived at Melbourne. But there was a circumstance in the dream, which contradicted every thing that we had heard at the time. The news was, that on the discovery of the gold almost everybody had rushed away from Melbourne; that the town was nearly deserted, and that workmen of any kind were not to be had. The governor, it was said, had only an old woman or two in his offices: the chief justice had his boots blacked by his sons, and being paralytic, had to be drawn by them to Court in a Bath chair. But in my dream, some thousands of miles off at sea, I saw and told my friends in the ship that I saw the streets thronged with people, and men in working dress sitting on door-steps as wanting work. This was precisely the case when we arrived. Numbers had returned from the gold fields disappointed, and men were actually seen by me sitting on door-steps wanting to be engaged. The streets, too, were exactly as seen in my dream.

My dreams, like every other person's, are in general not at all significant, but occasionally I have such as by their clearness and lifelike impression, mark themselves out as special, and are sure to be fulfilled to the smallest particular. Whilst living at Heidelberg, twenty years ago, we became necessarily and unpleasantly cognizant of the violent quarrel of two families. The lover of one of the daughters of one of these families was suddenly discarded, and wrote to me a letter, still in my possession, full of the most energetic abuse and of charges of baseness of the mother of the young lady. The quarrel was to all appearances mortal, and never to be healed. But one day, taking an after-dinner nap in my easy chair in my study at the back of the house, where I had only the prospect of some hills and vineyards, my eldest daughter suddenly entered, and with a face full of astonishment, said, "Papa! what do you think?" I replied, "I know what you would tell me: W—— and P—— (the dis-

carded lover and the brother of the jilting young lady) are walking arm in arm in the public walk in front of the house."

In still greater astonishment, my daughter said, "How could you know that?" "Because," I replied, "I have just seen it in a dream." And that was the fact, surprising as the reconciliation seemed, and that I should see it though at the back of the house with no possibility of seeing it actually. The two young men were walking there to show us the fact of their reconciliation.

The late discussion in the *Morning Star* has occasioned the receipt of the following letters, which, it will be seen, I have procured the full attestation of from the parties immediately concerned.

"Times Office, Sunderland, Oct. 20/60.

"Dear Mr. Howitt.—Reading the other day Mr. Parker Snow's letter in the *Morning Star*, on the communication made to him relative to the search for Sir John Franklin's party, I have thought that the following facts, on another subject, may be interesting to you and others:—

"In 1852, my brother was in command of a vessel, which sailed with emigrants from this port for Australia. Many of the passengers being natives of this town, were personal acquaintances, and some of them intimate friends of my brother.

"One evening, then on his outward passage, he had a dream, the outline of which was as follows:—He dreamed that he was in command of a larger vessel than the emigrant; that she had a poop deck; and that he was entering a port—a place which, *he had seen previously*, but could not remember the name of. There was a mole at the entrance. He saw many soldiers standing thereabout. After he had been there some time, he wanted to get away, but those soldiers on the shore seemed inclined to prevent him. He did, however, sail out, and while doing so shots were fired, and came flying all about the vessel, but he and his crew escaped unhurt.

"This first dream was treated as an ordinary one, and not mentioned to any of his passenger friends. Next night, however, he had precisely the same dream again. This seemed to him so singular, that he mentioned it to his friends, but further than that he should have a repetition of the same dream neither he nor they thought that there could be 'anything in it.'

"In 1853 he returned to England, and the vessel being sold, he was offered by a member of the firm to whom the ship was chartered, Smith, Sundins, and Co., London, the command of another vessel, which they were then expecting to arrive. My brother accepted the offer, and on the arrival of the vessel, he was forcibly struck with the fact that this ship *had a poop like the one he had seen in his dream*. He took in cargo for Con-

stantinople, and thence he was chartered to Odessa for grain. After his arrival at Constantinople, affairs between England and Russia began to assume a threatening aspect. However, he proceeded to Odessa, and now comes the second coincidence between his dream, and the reality then before him. On entering the mole, he saw before him the place he had seen in his dream, and he remembered that he had been there once before when an apprentice. Yet he had no thought then, on his second visit, that he would be exposed to any danger. While, however, he was there, the Russian war broke out. Previous to the actual declaration of hostilities, it being known that a war was threatening, he and other captains of British ships were naturally anxious to complete cargoes and get away. Amongst others, there were some Sunderland and Shields ships, between the captains of which conferences took place, as to what they should do in case of any hostilities at Odessa. My brother communicated his singular dream to several of them, whose names he has given me, and who could be referred to in testimony of the fact. From his dream then, he considered that he should attempt to get away, and that he would probably succeed in so doing.

“Matters remained in this state until one morning British vessels of war appeared off the port, shortly after which the bombardment of the forts began by the ships. The hour had now arrived when the attempt to ‘cut and run’ by the merchant ships must be made, with what peril belonged to it, or to remain with the probable alternative of a Russian prison. Relying upon the hope, excited by his dream, my brother had determined to escape. There was at the moment a favourable wind out. Several vessels were lying in a line behind each other, the second being my brother’s vessel, the first outwards a Shields vessel. Away starts the first, followed by the second, third, and so on. Some indecision as to what was to be done was apparent amongst the soldiers on shore. It was subsequently understood that a messenger was despatched into the town to the officers in command for orders. Speedily the messenger returned, and a discharge of musketry followed fast and thick; some boats were manned and put off after the ships in all directions; but all the vessels which attempted to escape (there were seven, I believe) did so without the loss of a single life. Hence were realised, as my brother thought, the whole of the extraordinary incidents of his dream.

“The events made a powerful impression on his mind. As to the truth of the whole, my brother who is now in London, about to sail for Calcutta, would give you, or any friend who might choose to seek it, additional evidence and more exact details. My brother’s ship is the ‘White Eagle,’ owned by A. G. Robin-

son and Co. She is, I believe, lying in the London Docks at present. His address is 5, Havering Street, Commercial Road, but at the present time he will be almost continually at his ship. I should not like any public use to be made of this until my brother was seen, and the details were accurately obtained from him, as I am writing from memory, as the matter was told me in 1854 or 1855.

I fear I have dwelt too long upon this matter which, in the presence of more wonderful facts that you have before you, may appear unimportant.

“ I am, dear Sir, yours very sincerely,

“ William Howitt, Esq.

“ J. WILLIAMS.

“ P.S.—My brother sails, I believe, on the 25th or 26th.”

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Immediately on the receipt of this very interesting letter, I requested a friend to seek out Captain Williams, and obtain the necessary certification. He found him on board the “White Eagle,” in the East India Docks, in the bustle of preparation for sailing, but having carefully read over his brother’s letter, he took a pen and wrote upon it:—“This is correct, except that the dream occurred *three* times; and that I was on my homeward passage from Australia.—R. Williams. 25th Oct. 1860.”

He also requested my friend to write down then and there, which he did, these additional particulars:—“Captain Williams states that he related these dreams at Constantinople *previously* to going to Odessa to Captain Crutwell, now of the ship “John Baring,” of London, belonging to Messrs. Swann Brothers; and to Captain Lawson of the barque “Martha Kay,” of Sunderland, who were with him subsequently at Odessa, and escaped with him.”

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A little before the receipt of Mr. Williams’ letter, I received the following. I omit the name of the lady concerned for a reason which will appear:—

“Dear Sir,—I have seen a letter from you to the editor of the *Critic* in which you avow yourself a believer in spiritual appearances, and refer to two haunted houses—one situated at Cheshunt, the other at Willington, in the North of England. I happen to be well acquainted with the details of a third instance, and I shall furnish you with them as briefly as possible,—it being well understood that I am not a believer in ghosts, and that I relate as dispassionately and minutely as possible the particulars which I received from the lips of the person who, next to the ghost, was the principal actor in these extraordinary occurrences. The names are genuine, and you are at liberty to make what use you please of this letter.

"About twenty years ago, Mr. Joseph Y——, a well-to-do Yorkshire manufacturer, inhabited with his wife and family, an old-fashioned stone house situated in the village of C——, which lies about half-way between Leeds and Bradford. Mr. Y—— was a sufficiently matter-of-fact man, rather disposed to scepticism in most matters. Mrs. Y—— was a remarkably quiet, and unimaginative person, who perhaps never read a work of fiction in her life, and whose wishes and ideas were bounded by her home and children. They had lived a year or two in undisturbed quiet in the comfortable but old-fashioned dwelling, when the first of the series of strange occurrences, which afterwards became the talk of all that part of the country, took place.

"One fine afternoon in Spring, Mrs. Y—— was left quite alone in the house, her husband being absent at the London wool sales, and the servants having gone out with the children for a walk. She went into the kitchen, which was clean, bright and cheerful—like most Yorkshire country kitchens—and busied herself at the ironing-table which stood near the window through which the afternoon sun was streaming. She was intent on her work, and was rather startled, on raising her eyes to the clock, to find an old woman standing at the end of the table.

"Her surprise did not partake of the nature of alarm; many people came into the kitchen daily to purchase their spare milk, and she concluded that the old woman had entered noiselessly through the open door while she was busy with the ironing, and had come for milk. She noticed with curiosity the neat, old-fashioned style of her dress—her flowered chintz gown, the close-fitting muslin cap, and the spotless white handkerchief crossed over her bosom. She was in the act of opening her lips to tell her visitor that it wanted an hour to milking time, when the figure flickered, wavered, and died off into empty space.

"On the return of the servants she told them what she had seen, and communicated the matter to her husband on his return, but he only laughed at her, and the doctor assured her that her nerves were at fault.

"Some months elapsed; the house remained quite undisturbed, and the matter was rapidly becoming forgotten, even by Mrs. Y——, when she received a second visit. It was towards dusk in the afternoon, and she was awaiting the arrival of a lady friend who was coming to spend a few days with her. She had gone up stairs for the purpose of seeing that the spare bed-room was properly arranged for the visitor, and was descending, when, looking down, she perceived the old woman in the same dress, standing perfectly motionless on the flight of steps below. She did not wait for her disappearance, but now really alarmed, ran back into the bed-room, and rang the bell for the servants. They



came and found nothing ; and poor Mrs. Y—— could obtain no credence for her story.

“ Some weeks passed away, and the old woman appeared again : this time by the light of a rush-light which Mrs. Y—— kept burning in her chamber. Her face was pale and composed; her eyes cast down : her hands folded over her breast. She appeared to Mrs Y—— so frequently in the bed-room, that she ceased to be terrified at her visits, and found presence of mind to awaken her sleeping husband, who had just time to see the skirts of the visitor disappear through the door. Convinced at last that his wife was not labouring under an optical delusion, he applied for advice to the clergyman of the parish ; at that time, I believe, a Mr. Redhead,—probably the same mentioned in the *Memoirs of Charlotte Brontë*.

“ He visited Mrs. Y—— ; talked seriously to her ; and tried to persuade her that her imagination had deceived her : but finding her persistent in her faith, he finally recommended her to address her spiritual visitor, and enquire the reason of her appearance.

“ The matter, of course, became noised abroad, and old inhabitants of the place, on hearing Mrs. Y——’s account, identified the apparition as that of an old maiden lady who had inhabited the dwelling many years before the Y——s came to live there.

“ Her visits now became more frequent, and were accompanied by various noises, which alarmed the servants and children so much as to compel the master to give notice to quit. Paper was rustled violently close to people’s elbows ; money was counted down on tables near at hand, and heavy footsteps crossed the floor, and mounted the stairs ; unseen hands uplifting the bed-clothes, awakened the sleepers almost nightly. Many people came to see the house, and hear the accounts of the dwellers ; and numbers were convinced by the simple, unvarying narrative of the mistress. The last visit occurred a few days before they quitted the house. Mrs. Y—— awoke at the dead of night with that peculiar feeling which warned her of the presence of her ghostly visitor, and beheld her standing at the foot of the bed, gazing in her face, with a sad, earnest look. She strove to speak, but her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth. The figure moved slowly round the bed ; stood close to her at the head, still gazing, and then disappeared behind the curtain. When she was out of sight, Mrs. Y—— found courage to awaken her servant sleeping in a bed at her side, but, as before, the visitor had gone and left no trace behind.

“ Such are the facts of this singular case, as nearly as I can remember them. You can verify them by applying to Mrs. Y—— herself, who is now living at E—— Hill, near Bradford, York-

shire. This letter was began many months ago, but illness and domestic affliction prevented my finishing it until this date—  
Oct. 8th, 1860. With the assurance of my respect,

“I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely,  
“EMMA LETHERBROW.

“Grove Street, Ardwick Green,  
“Manchester.”

There can be little doubt that the ghost of the poor maiden lady was anxious to disclose some hidden money, had Mrs. Y— been self-possessed enough to have interrogated her. To obtain confirmation of this well-written account, I wrote to Mrs. Y— and received the following reply:—

“M— P—, Oct. 24th, 1860.

“Sir,—In answer to your letter received this morning, respecting the appearance you mention, I should wish to know your reason for the application; as I should not wish my name to be made public. *It is certainly a fact* that I did see a woman in a house in which we once lived, C— Lodge,—but not lately: I think almost sixteen years ago. She seemed to be turned fifty years of age; rather stout; dressed very plain, and had a very nice and placid countenance. She appeared to me several times, and I yet remember her very well. She was a person I never knew; but by the description I gave of her, it was thought to be the woman that had lived and died in the same house previous to us going there. Some people are apt to ridicule such things, but I can assure you it *was the case*. I really did see that woman in different dresses, both by day and night. Why she appeared to me is not for me to say; but it was very remarkable. I have felt a delicacy in answering your letter lest you might publish my name, which I hope you will not.

“I remain, very respectfully,  
“MARIA Y—L.”

In writing to Mrs. Y—, I gave her no particulars whatever communicated by Mrs. Letherbrow, except that of her having seen an apparition; therefore, the facts which she states according so fully with those of Mrs. Letherbrow (except as to the precise number of years), make the confirmation complete. More remarkable or better related and attested facts of this kind, and by persons still living and well known, have scarcely ever been recorded. I have left the name of the lady concerned, and the place of her abode, in initials, at her request, but they are given in full in the letters in my possession.

WILLIAM HOWITT.

## THE "DISPATCH" AND "LEADER" ON SPIRITUALISM.

WE are so accustomed to the scorn and ignorant contempt of the press, that we have come to regard it as "the usual thing" and have borne it with tolerable complacency, feeling assured that ere long the subject must needs be discussed in a very different spirit; facts "winna ding," and though they may first have to run the gauntlet of derision and antagonism, they may in the end be recognised for what they are. Already there are symptoms that a more fair and healthy spirit of investigation abroad than has been hitherto witnessed in the treatment of Spiritualism by the press. The *Morning Star* has opened columns to its discussion of the question *pro* and *con*, and the *Dispatch*, of November 4th, in a review of this Magazine, and of the *Cornhill* puts the evidence in attestation of Spiritualism before its readers in a very forcible way.

After transcribing some passages from "Stranger than Fiction," the reviewer, says:—

The witness who sets his hand and seal to all this is no other than Ed. Bell—the astutest of commentators—the most sceptical and lynx-eyed of editors—one of the most successful *littérateurs* in his line, and that line chiefly devoted to the comparison of probabilities, the weighing of evidence, the minute sifting of facts. The same phenomena were witnessed at the same time by Dr. G. the eminent physician of Malvern; by Dr. Collier, of London; and by other persons distinguished for the social position they have attained by learning, genius, ability, and vigour of mind. William Howitt has seen and would marvels equally startling. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, a Minister of State under Louis Napoleon, who sustains Europe on his Atlantæan shoulders; New Crossland, one of our most successful lecturers and acutest annotators; Paul Snow, of the Arctic expedition; Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Sir David Brewster, Dr. Bird, Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, and Lord Brougham have also witnessed them. We have confined this detail entirely to the transcription of the narrative of *physical* phenomena, palpable to the bodily senses—to appearances frequently seen, often heard, sensibly felt. Dr. Collier exhibited to the editor of a daily journal very visible discolourations of his leg caused by the grasp of an unseen hand. . . . . These phenomena are manifested, not in Judea 1800 years ago but in England, London, now—daily. Every witness is living, moving, voicing for them, by pen and tongue;—they are to be seen and heard, not in a corner but in the midst of three millions of the most civilised people in the world who are not embarrassed by superstition or rendered credulous by mystical views of a special providence. . . . . The witnesses are legion in every town in Europe and America, chiefly among the middle and higher classes, including prime statesmen, philosophers, and men of science, with their magazines, *sciences*, and the very wonders themselves, the paper written over by the unseen hands, the predictions fulfilled, the answers to questions about unknown circumstances confirmed by the result, the pencil with which words were written, the accord played upon, the articles that moved, the persons who were upborne on air. There they are all seen, heard, felt, re-wording every detail, producing the sensible proofs, speaking, writing, reiterating—

Their pulse as ours doth temperately beat time  
And makes as heathful music.



Assume that we had not to filter the "Christian Evidences," as Paley calls them, through the mists of six thousand or eighteen hundred years—that the Evangelists, that the "twelve Apostles," stood before us, with their Oriental conviction that everything that happened was by a special providence—that they had a Divine commission prefigured by national prophecy—that they would have signs from heaven in attestation of the truths they proclaimed—tell us candidly, as a question of mere human credibility to facts palpable to the senses, what reason can you, reader, give for believing a miracle attested by Paul, and rejecting one vouched by Bell or Brougham, or Howitt or Louis Napoleon, or Dr. Gully? Is Howitt manifestly a visionary carried away by Spiritualism? Pray what do you make of the Apocalypse? Is not Howitt's exaltation, although infinitely inferior in degree, in heat and intensity, yet of the same kind as Paul's? Am I bound to believe that Paul heard a voice from Heaven, and saw a glory as he fell from his horse, at his conversion, and to hold that Howitt is an impostor or a lunatic when he says he has seen a heavy man float in the air, felt him as he floated, struggled with both hands in broad daylight to hold an accordion, discoursing music that moved all to tears, which was torn from him by an invisible and wholly inexplicable attraction—the same phenomena in divers manners and in sundry places being attested by many learned and scientific men of astute scepticism and most anti-mystical turn of character—the Felixes, Agrippas, and Pilates of our time and country. Are all these princes, philosophers, judges, ministers of state, scientific men, physicians, in a conspiracy to hoax or deceive the world without object, to the injury of their own intellectual status? Then what are we to say of the credibility of the handful of Jews eighteen hundred years ago who had a spiritual purpose to serve by what they said, and whose religious fervour was intensified by prophecy and persecution?

Totally unable to escape from this line of reasoning in a direct manner, objectors say:—Oh! I don't mean to say that all these persons in Europe and America are liars or cheats. I am ready to admit that they *believe* they have seen all they describe; but for all that, the phenomena they describe never really happened. They were illusions incident to well-known laws of the nervous and cerebral system—the witnesses were all somnambulists, mesmerised, rendered ecstatic at the same time, and under the same circumstances. True, they are conscious of no such process, true it is rather improbable that not only Bell, but Gully, Collier, and seven others should all be seized with this ecstasy at the same moment, and should vouch exactly the same delusions. But let that pass. Were mesmerism, somnambulism, epidemic nervous illusions less likely or prevalent in Judea 1800 years ago when all the Jews were looking for a deliverer? Were there fewer mystics, less delusion, less credulity? Were these paroxysms less likely to deceive ignorant fishermen than astute modern *illuminati*? Try another hypothesis—that the phenomena are all optical delusions—seen indeed, heard, truly felt; but they are produced by legerdemain and conjuring apparatus, and have been outdone by Wiljaba Frikel and Robert Houdin. It is true that these artists have witnessed the marvels of Home and are unable to account for them on any theory of their art. But is it the opinion of the witnesses that deception was possible; that the wonders they saw were not unfolded as they *believed* they were? Are they not as firmly convinced, awe-struck with the solemn conviction, that what they have witnessed is fearfully real, as Paul when he heard the voice, or the guests at Cana who tasted the wine which had been water? If the senses of Brewster, Bell, Napoleon, Howitt, Hall, Brougham, Gully, Collier, are deceived *now*, on what formula of logic do the objectors depend for escaping the conclusion that the Evangelists and other disciples were deceived *then*? To humour the case, as put by Catholic priests and Calvinistic fanatics, if the harmless and innocent wonders now attested by pious and God-fearing men are the work of the Devil (!) what right have the objectors to assume that the same agency was not competent to call the buds upon Aaron's divining rod, or stimulate the voracity of the serpent of Moses?

As a question of dialectics, will it any longer do to accept and believe the Scripture miracles as true and genuine, and to set aside the phenomena we have described as *inherently* incredible? as *à priori* impossible? Idiots in the journals say *Cui bono*? what is the *use* of these latter-day marvels. We cannot believe

that they can be true, because we cannot see that they have any *object*. Common sense might have suggested that the most precious legacies of science were totally unapplied for centuries after they were made. The facts we have detailed will speedily find out their own application to human happiness if they be true. But as a question of evidence, testimony to an objectless wonder is infinitely more reliable, because more disinterested and less liable to willing self-deception, than witnesses to phenomena which obviously suit a moral purpose, which fit in to a previous expectation, the failure of which would be the failure of a life's mission—the success of which aids a national mythology, and adds Divine authority to the worker of the wonders.

No doubt, sufficient as it is, a much fuller answer to the above question than this might be given; nor can we assent to the affirmation that Spiritualism is an “objectless wonder;” the foregoing, too, may serve to indicate to clerical and other opponents how their objections may, with equal force, be applied by modern infidelity against the Scriptures themselves. But let another “gentleman of the press” now occupy the stand. The *Saturday Analyst and Leader* writes somewhat considerably in advance of the tone taken by Mr. Lewes in the *Leader* some three or four years back. In a leading article, October 27th, headed SPIRITUALISM, the editor referring to the correspondence on this subject in the *Star*, says:—

Mr. Howitt's letter was calm and manly in its manner; as sober and serious a letter as ever was penned by a sensible man, under a thorough and honest conviction. In it he positively refutes the charge made in many of the journals, that the *séance* people had never challenged the presence of scientific and disinterested persons; he mentions the names of some of the shrewdest and best known men in England, asserting that they have been present at *séances*, and have been utterly unable to account for the phenomena which they have there witnessed. One of our most distinguished and eminent mathematicians is said to be a thorough convert; with many this will go far, because cool reasoning, and a demand for demonstration, are generally supposed to be the mathematician's characteristics. We do not think so, necessarily; indeed, Dugald Stewart has observed, that men accustomed mainly to the step by step processes of positive science, are often like children and the vulgar, when subjected to the influences of imagination—a faculty with which they are little in the habit of dealing, either in the way of exercise or control, *valeat quantum*.

As for ourselves, we confess we have been much staggered by a communication made to us by a personal connection, an officer, a man of practical science, and a man of honour; and, till very recently, a thorough disbeliever in spiritual manifestations. He has given us, in words, communications made to himself and his wife, when no third party was present, and in lodgings at the sea-side, where no trick or machinery was probable, or even possible. There were no little hands, no magical phantasmagoria of nosegays, &c., but by raps on the table, with distinct pauses at certain letters, intelligible answers were given to important questions respecting his own well-being, and that of his household; advice so important and remarkable respecting the past, that it led him to make an important change in his present arrangements, in obedience to what he deems the supernatural injunctions. *The messages were all of a beneficial, and nearly all of a scripturally religious character, and he declares they have produced a permanent change for the better in his own.* This gentleman, we repeat, is a man of honour, and holds a most responsible and important and scientific public post; he is not a man easily to be fooled, and is, we are thoroughly convinced, incapable of fooling us, or of giving us anything but an honest record of his impressions. He has not authorised us to give his name, indeed, we did not ask him for his permission, not having, at first, any intention of penning this article. As far as

we are concerned, we solemnly assure the reader that we write in all good faith, with still a lurking prejudice against these manifestations, for we have not, as yet, had an opportunity of being present at one of the *séances*, though such an opportunity is promised us at no distant time.

The editor is not, however, quite satisfied as to the utility of some of the reported manifestations; nor, indeed, are we, if we regard merely the things said and done, but if we go beyond these to the consideration of the facts and principles which a careful study of them will indicate, we shall find probably that they, in this light, have another and totally different value. The editor's friend, in the passage we have given in italics, has shown that, at least, the manifestations are not always frivolous and productive of no good effect upon those who witness them; and a better acquaintance with the history of Spiritualism would show him that spirits have many times "performed a service useful and charitable" both to the bodies and souls of men. Doubtless; as his friend testifies, a want of seriousness and sincerity on the part of inquirers is, in many cases, the cause of the frivolity and foolishness of which these parties are often so ready to complain.

Since the foregoing was written, a second notice of "Spiritualism" has appeared in the *Dispatch* of Nov. 11th, which we think is even an advance upon the first. Our readers by this time must be pretty well accustomed to our mode of treating it, and we therefore gladly present them with the view taken of it by an independent writer. It is written in a "bold Roman style," which may usefully serve as a model to many writers of the press, whose weak, tremulous hand is too painfully apparent. Most truly does this writer say, that, "there is a profound practical scepticism at the bottom of the minds of the most orthodox people," and that "a 'living faith' in the substantial elementary principles of religion is the rarest commodity of our day and generation. The mind of the million has been led away from religion to theology—the substance of faith to the shadows of mythology—until the glorious Gospel of the blessed God has been depraved and metamorphosed into a sort of logical paganism." And he asks:—

If the resurrection of Christ be the symbol of our own, why do we not reason the analogy out, and know that all who have died live and think and feel? What is a spirit but a man who has thrown off the encumbrance of his flesh and blood—what is a man but a spirit in its clothes? A ghost, an apparition, a disembodied spirit! Why should it inspire me with mysterious awe—why should I be afraid of it, "being a thing immortal as itself?" What is death but a fitting to the next town—rejoining the society of those who have gone before me—leaving that of those who come after! "Why should it seem a thing incredible among you that one should rise from the dead?" He has but been to see his father and mother and comes to look upon his children, perhaps to watch over them, invisibly guide them—"comfort them."

We have never seen a table turned, heard a spirit rap, felt a hand pinch,

listened while without apparent agency an accordion "discoursed most eloquent music." The silly, impossible, altogether disingenuous and stupid solutions of these phenomena, hitherto attempted by Faraday, *Once a Week*, and others, only convince us of the trite aphorism that no *gobemouche* is so omnivorous in his credulity as the man who believes that there is nothing to be believed. Our especial desire has been to place and keep ourselves in the position of our readers in this discussion—to treat it purely dialectically, and with reference to the credibility of human testimony. We have never entertained for one moment the idea that the Author of Nature ever tolerated any violation of it—that the order of the universe was ever interrupted or suspended—that the laws of causation are ever interrupted. It does not, in our view, in the least follow that, because phenomena are eccentric and unaccountable that, therefore, they are supernatural—or that, because a man does what no other man has done, therefore is he preterhuman. The distinction which has been raised between a general and a special Providence is really purely gratuitous. The God who ordains the one ordains the other—where is the difference? "He upholds all things by the word of His power"—He said, "Be light!" and light was. He numbers the hairs of our heads, and marks the fall of the sparrow—and it is totally unphilosophical, and nothing but a mere theological assumption, to pretend that He has two ways of governing the world—one by winding it up, and setting it to go by itself without more interposition on His part; another by stopping the pendulum, turning back the hands, and striking twelve when the index marks six. . . . .

Whatever there may be in this spirit-rapping, table-turning, deviation from the apparent rigidity of the law of gravitation, we assume, therefore, to be in conformity with the real uniformity of sequence. It would occur at all times, and in all places, under the same circumstances. It would manifest itself through all persons having the same natural gifts; or, if you will, the same spiritual gifts, which *are* natural, as congenital as the complexion or the constitution. There is nothing preterhuman about the phenomena whatever they are—there is nothing miraculous—nothing is or ever was miraculous—nothing that would not occur for ever under the same sequence of antecedents. . . . .

It is strange how stupidity repeats itself. Gaping fools insist upon it, after all the revelations of history and science have prepared mankind by ten thousand examples to find that "truth is stranger than fiction," that whatever they cannot account for, must be miraculous; and that as miracles have ceased, nothing that is marvellous has ever happened. A goose that quacks in the *Lancet*, finding that his blunderbuss misses fire, takes the usual alternative of trying to knock down truth and fracture inquiry with the butt-end. There is not, for example, a better authenticated phenomenon in physiology than what is called clairvoyance—so far as human testimony can vouch for anything. It was conclusively established by the Report of the French Academy of the 21st and 28th of June, 1831, composed of the most eminent physiologists and natural philosophers of their time, and has been witnessed by thousands since. By what law it acts is still undiscovered. What the conditions are essential to its development we are as yet imperfectly informed. But nobody but an idiot would attempt to overbear all reasoning on the subject by maintaining that no person ever saw without eyes, else they would be sure to decypher the number of Sir Philip Crampton's note enveloped at the Dublin Bank. If there be any truth in the second sight attributed to Spiritualism, this learned Theban contends, Home will let *me* see it. Why doesn't it tell people whether their speculation will be lucky for half a crown? There can be no truth in *any* manifestations, because every medium fails to keep on *always* manifesting. Why doesn't Mrs. Marshall become a police inspector if she can get spirits to be communicative at a *séance*. Mr. Howitt is a liar in all he says, else he would at once reveal the Road murder! And this in a periodical pretending to science—to Wakley philosophy, and Finsbury refinement. These are just the sort of coarse-minded natures who have in all ages persecuted truth and clung to absurdity; who have disbelieved every wonder they could not comprehend; who are so destitute of observation, so deficient in knowledge, so utterly unteachable and unobservant, that their minds have no preparatory excogitation to train them to accept the probability of new phenomena. They would have argued that blindness and lameness were

ver cured by faith in the patient and mesmeric power in the Emperor, because  
 spasian did not cure every disease in the whole Roman Empire. They would  
 ve contended that all the witnesses to the sanative wonders wrought at the  
 ub of the Abbé Paris were knaves and dupes, because they could do nothing  
 the sort in Cripplegate graveyard or Norwood Cemetery, or at the grave of  
 Reverend Alexander Fletcher. The logic is not new. The rabble of  
 usalem jeered the Messiah with the self-same dialectics—"He has saved  
 ers, Himself he cannot save." Because of men's unbelief Christ would do  
 miracles—your *Lancet* logicians would call the latter the sure sign that there  
 is none, and that the Devil and the Pharisees were very much in the right.  
 The *Lancet* stupidities proceed on the assumption that the manifestations  
 cribed are preternatural gifts, entirely at the command of those who indicate  
 m and producible by causation of which they perfectly know and understand  
 eries, sequence, and principle. No wonder that ever occurred in connection  
 human agency might not be disproved by such logic. If one somnambulist  
 ad with the pit of his stomach, or see into a box with his eyes blindfolded,  
 are not all somnambulists *clairvoyant*?—If the telegraph can work across  
 editerranean, or carry messages up the Red Sea, why can't it fly across  
 Atlantic? The plain answer is—nobody knows. Because the laws and  
 iples of physics which regulate the phenomena are not understood even by  
 who develop them, they do not comprehend why they reveal themselves at  
 times and do not at others. "One thing I know, whereas once I was blind,  
 I see." We must wait upon Nature, reverently listen to what she chooses  
 us, and in the way it pleases her to utter it, and deal with the facts that are  
 listed without ignoring them because others are not manifested. We must  
 ad to learn her lessons on the conditions she chooses to prescribe, thankful  
 cept such insight into her arcana as she vouchsafes to grant. Our minds  
 be open and ready to receive *facts* when they are creditably attested, and  
 eir own sake, without prejudice and presumption. When Newton saw the  
 ball fall, he asked, why did it not rise? If we would attain to his knowledge,  
 will keep our intelligence equally divested of foregone conclusions.  
 We thought that Bacon had long since exploded *a priori* objections to the  
 of attested facts:—"Man, the servant and interpreter of nature, does and  
 stands as much as his observations on the order of nature permit him, and  
 knows nor is capable of more." Her miracles burst upon us with every  
 ay; why should we wonder at and doubt the lesser marvels of a medium?  
 law which bound the needle to the pole existed when God made the earth  
 tic; Adam would have thought it incredible or miraculous; the crew of  
 Ambus saw magic in its divarication; the Chinese knew it for centuries after  
 rope was dodging along the shore for want of it. The law of gravitation had  
 made the order of the spheres since ever they had "pealed their first notes  
 ound the march of time;" yet it had to wait for Newton to reveal it, and if he  
 kept it to himself and predicted by it the phenomena of the planets, who  
 ld have hesitated to reverence him as a prophet? The principle of the  
 loon, the photograph, the steam engine, the telegraph, was in action at the  
 tion—we have had to wait for 6,000 years to unfold their secrets. Who a  
 adred years ago would have thought air through pipes could give us light and  
 at; that we could procure flame by instantaneous friction, or kill at six miles,  
 draw portraits and landscapes, absolute reflexes of life, by a moment's glance  
 the sun? My thought takes the spinal column for its telegraph wire, and  
 mails my foot to walk. Two souls dwell 3,000 miles apart—they never saw,  
 y knew nothing of each other—to each other they are only *thoughts* that  
 not even make themselves mutually manifest, except through a material  
 dium. The Atlantic cable is their spinal column—they calmly speak through  
 e-roaring sea, the fathomless deeps, an eighth part of the "thick rotundity  
 the world." Had David Hume been told this *fact*, without being made ac-  
 ounted with the scientific economy which produced it, would he not have  
 ealed the attestors of it as puerile impostors? We know the law which, in  
 instant, sends the lightning speech three thousand miles from hand to hand—  
 ve we yet discovered the law which sends the thought to the hand at the one  
 nd, and the eye and ear to the thought at the other end? The telegraph is the

medium of those two—the body is the medium whereby each soul manifests itself to every other. Are not immortal creatures spiritual beings—if our souls are spiritual and never die, where is the improbability that the souls of the departed, by a normal law, by a principle of the ordinary operation of nature, should telegraph to us as we do to our limbs? Are we asked why, if this be so, it has never been observed from the Creation until now—the answer is easy. All ages have asserted its existence—our instincts involuntarily favour the belief even in spite of the dogmatism of the understanding; but if we had not these intuitive feelings even, the express declarations of every people, in all ages, in affirmation of spiritual communion with the living; the alleged discovery keeps company with the sun-picture and the telegraph, which *might* have worked millions of years ago, but have only been made manifest within the lives of the present generation.

Piety is shocked that we should have challenged comparison in testimony to sensuous observation, to visible scientific facts, of the witnesses to the wonders of the New Testament, with those to mesmerism, table-turning, and the marvels of Mr. Home. “Not to speak it profanely,” were the apostles and the first Christians more than immortal—their souls more than spirits—their parentage higher than that of our common Creator? Are our contemporaries less the children of God, more finite, more grossly material, crudely physical, less metaphysical than were the disciples? Are they not infinitely better educated, more scientific, less credulous, and more observing? We are assured that the age of miracles is past. If there ever were miracles, where is the pretence in reason or revelation for saying when they began, or when, where, or whether they have ended? On the contrary, the plainest canons of dialectics lead to the inference, that what *has* happened *will* happen, and that the past existence of a fact justifies the expectation of its future reappearance.

We have, we own, another solution of the enigma. We do not believe the phenomena now passing before us *are* miraculous; we do not believe those which astonished the disciples *were* miraculous. Both were normal—in conformity to, not in violation of, the order of nature—obedient to the uniformity of causation—links in the chain of the regular sequence of the universe—examples of the ordinary operation of the laws of the Creator, of which, simply, mankind had not discovered the principle. Christ himself tells us the Almighty is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living; *we* are as much subjects of His spiritual economy as the Hebrews 1,800 years ago. We refuse to believe assertions without evidence—we decline to reject testimony merely because it vouches what is new or strange. It is not in the least impossible—it is not even improbable—it is probable—reasoning from the past it is even certain—that real phenomena should reveal themselves totally inexplicable by any known law—apparently a violation of physical laws—perhaps new principles pregnant with marvels to which the fictions of the past are prosaic. What Paul ever thought of making the sun paint?—What Joseph or Elisha could ever converse with a friend three thousand miles across the ocean? Talk of prophecy! Why Halley predicted the very day and minute of the appearance of a comet myriads of miles away, scores of years after he was in his grave. There is no event better authenticated in history than Swedenborg's vision of the great fire of Stockholm. The perfectly ascertained facts of mesmerism, clairvoyance, and electricity, prepare us to wait with reverence and candour upon the unfolding of such phenomena as are attested by Bell, Gully, and Collier; and we shall never be ashamed to own, that as truth in all ages has owed very much more to credulity than conceited scepticism and self-sufficient prejudice, so there is no phenomenon, however marvellous we should *a priori* reject as impossible, in the face of cognate facts, and accumulated, intelligent, and unexceptionable testimony.

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## SPIRITUALISM IN CALIFORNIA.

[From the *California Chronicle*, 19th Nov, 1859.]

CARPING at themes is easy; the most uncultivated intellect can overthrow the most stupendous fabric of the imagination. But grappling with facts is another and different thing. That portion of these essays which is theoretical, your readers may receive or not, just as they deem most consonant with reason and experience. I did not intend, however, in writing them, to permit myself to be led off from the main design by side discussion with opponents, no matter how fairly they deal with my arguments. Your correspondent, therefore, who subscribes himself "Fair Dealer" must excuse me, if I should not deem his remarks of sufficient importance, to notice more particularly and at length.

Spiritualism is an experimental science. Facts prove conclusively that disembodied spirits can and do commune with human beings, through the medium of the mental fluid. How these facts are to be tested, each for himself, I now proceed to shew. Before doing so, however, a word or two may not be out of place to those who are desirous of entering upon the examination. The spirit of each individual acts in two ways upon his organization, by volition and by involition. Hence a theory has sprung up, with John Bovee Dods at its head, that the human mind possesses voluntary and involuntary powers. It is not wise to dispute about terms, or definitions; nor is it worth my while at this stage of my argument, to shew Professor John Bovee Dods's mistake, in confounding the operations of the spirit with those of the mind. Let us examine, then, the Professor's own account of the matter, and admit *the mind* to possess voluntary and involuntary power. It cannot be denied that much of the error connected with Spiritualism, is traceable directly to this source.

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," and many an ignoramus sits down to the "table," or joins the "circle," whose eagerness outwits itself, and who rises up the victim of self-delusion, and the fool of his own fancy. The greatest care, and the nicest discrimination are in all cases requisite, in order to determine between the involuntary operations of the mind of the experimenter, and those of the spiritual acts, which proceed from influences beyond, and outside of the individual. And this from the very nature and necessity of the case: for when a table is charged with mental fluid, perfect passivity is indispensable amongst those whose hands are in connection with it, because it is *only* then that a disembodied spirit *can* act. In each case, the mental fluid, is the conductor so to speak—of the spiritual impressions, and the spirit in the body can operate upon that fluid, quite as perceptibly as one out of the body. This fact accounts for all those absurd, illegitimate freaks of the imagination, printed and published under the denomination of spiritual communications, and which are worthy only of the derision and contempt of every sensible man. No one can despise them more heartily than myself; and few, I think, can cherish feelings of such utter ineffable scorn for that band of male and female old women who nightly draw out the table, and set it a-tripping to the tune of folly and futurity. Let those, then, who are sincerely desirous of testing Spiritualism, select their own circle; let them choose no man who can be led by his nerves or his ears, to believe anything; let no dishonest person be admitted, and let the examination be conducted silently, solemnly, and truthfully. Some patience, too, would not be out of place; but, above all, and beyond all, let each one avoid that state of mind called by a recent sceptic "expectant attention," that hurried *anticipation*, which just as surely leads into error, as it does into folly.

I have stated more than once that my design is not to philosophise and theorise. I deal with facts, and have no time to debate whys and wherefores. I shall not therefore attempt any explanation of the peculiar physical phenomena attending the sittings of a spiritual circle.

Let us suppose, then, that four persons, two gentlemen and as many ladies, have agreed to investigate Spiritualism, and they prepare to begin. A small table with a polished surface, and a parallelogram in form, is most convenient and proper. The sitters place themselves opposite each other and strive to main-

tain both silence and mental inactivity. At the expiration of three or four minutes let the hands be examined, and if they are all of the same temperature, the experiment must be abandoned for that evening. If, upon the next, the same result be observed, something radically wrong exists in the constituent elements of the circle, and it would be worse than useless to prolong the attempt. If, however, on trying the temperature of the hands upon the table, those of either of the sitters be unnaturally cold, that person must remain where he or she may be, and the rest of the party must range themselves opposite. Experience has shown that it required three positives—i. e., persons having warm hands—to balance one negative, or a person having cold hands. If two negatives remain at the table, they must sit side by side, and at least three positives must be placed opposite.

When the circle is thus constituted, physical phenomena *invariably follow*. I have never yet known a failure, and I have witnessed hundreds of experiments both here and in the Eastern States. It may then be regarded as axiomatic, that no results can follow—honestly, I mean—where no mental battery has been formed.

After the table becomes charged with mental fluid, it commences moving—*ex rei necessitate*—why, I am not called upon to explain. Many *Spiritualists* have supposed that the table then acquires polarity, and in the attempt to find equilibrium, it meanders like the magnetic needle when disturbed. The fact is undisputed, and that is all I now desire to impress.

As soon as the table moves readily, and without effort, having apparently lost the force of gravitation, it immediately becomes the medium of spiritual agency. The brain of each individual charges the nerves of the hand or arm, and an impulse from the will moves it; the table, by means of the mental battery, becomes saturated with the same fluid, which the hand and arm acquired from the brain, and an impulse of any spirit's will, either in or out of the body moves it. The spirit in either case comes in direct contact with the gross matter out of which the arm or the table is composed.

A table thus charged, if perfect passivity be preserved by those in the room, readily responds to spiritual agencies. The inference that the agency is spiritual depends upon the facts proven in each individual case. Many persons, after beholding a table, move by some power other than that of the circle around it, immediately rush to the conclusion that it proceeds from spirits. As well might they argue that the needle traverses the card and settles due north by the same agency. With that class of minds I never did, nor do I now hold communion. The concatenation is wanting which enforces the reason. But there are others who have examined Spiritualism, not so easily duped by appearances; and who witnessing results coming in this "questionable form," have the manliness to "speak to them." I profess to be one of those; and before I consented to give in my adherence to THIS GREAT FACT OF THE AGE, I required tests, which would convince any *sane* mind. These tests may be attained by any one, and it is the part of fools only to deny the science before they have had an opportunity to witness the facts.

With those who declare that these things cannot be so *because they can't*, I will not stoop to argue; with those who deny them, because they are afraid of investigation, I hold no fellowship; but to all, fair, open, and well-balanced minds, I have no hesitation in saying;—Test Spiritualism, just as you would magnetism, or electricity, and you will be driven to the same conclusion which, after two years of honest investigation, has been embraced by myself—a thorough conviction of its truth.

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For my own part, Spiritualism has been to me, to my own family, and to a wide circle of relatives and friends through whom it has radiated, the most substantial blessing of existence. Before its luminous facts, knitting up the present with the sacred past, binding up the life of to-day with the spiritual life of the great-souled and great-hearted in all ages and all quarters of the world; of Plato with Moses, of Zoroaster with Bacon, every doubt, nay, every uncertainty of divine revelation, and of the immortality of man, has fled as the shades of night before the morning.—*William Howitt.*



## Correspondence.

### GHOSTS IN COSTUME.

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR.—The difficulty raised by your correspondent S. E. B., is one that has been often urged with plausibility against the ghost theory, and yet on examination it altogether disappears. That it is an important objection, however, is evident when we consider that there is no instance on record, so far as I am aware, of the appearance of a ghost in perfect "undress," all such appearances being clothed either in garments of ordinary wear, or in some sufficient substitute for them, and if it be impossible that there can be ghostly "hats and great coats," or other garments, owing to their not having their "spiritual representatives," or on any other ground, ghostly appearances must be mere illusions. I am convinced, however, that it is not so, and to strengthen that conviction in others, I would endeavour to remove the above difficulty.

The objection may be stated in the two following questions. First—How can spirits appear dressed in clothing such as that worn by human beings? and Secondly—If they can do so, why should they dress in the "costume of the period," as put by your correspondent.

The following is, I think, a sufficient answer to the first question—spirits have power to a certain extent over the elements that surround them. In the paper on ghosts in the June number of your Magazine, we are told that most probably the spiritual body is composed of the subtle ether or ethereal medium, and that spirits make themselves visible by means of the vibration of that ether or medium. The human body and the garments that cover it are composed, doubtless, of the same ultimate particles of matter; and I think all the discoveries of modern science point to the conclusion that the ethereal medium is sought but those ultimate particles in their purest or most attenuated form. If then the spiritual body be composed of the ethereal medium, may not the spiritual coverings other than the body be formed of it, and may it not be, that spirits have the power of giving what form they please to those coverings by a mere effort of the will? Angels have always appeared to man in human shape, and it has been supposed that it is by the exercise of the will they are enabled to take the human bodily form. Why spirits should require any other covering than the immaterial body we can hardly say. May it not be in deference to man's habits and prejudices? It would be a curious enquiry as to the covering worn by ghosts that have appeared to savages who were not in the habit of using clothing! The fact of ghostly coverings often being coloured is much more difficult of explanation than the mere fact of their existence, but such explanation is by no means impossible. I do not think, however, that it can be explained by the application of the received theory of colour. According to that theory the appearance of colour is merely the result of vibration, and the absorption and reflection of motion; and the application of it to the present case, even if possible, would require a spiritual mechanism much more complete than according to our own notions of the simplicity of the spiritual nature we can ascribe to it. The visibility of colour depends on light, and light on the ethereal medium; and may not that medium itself be the seat of colour or have the power of communicating it? If this be so, and the spiritual coverings be composed of the ethereal medium, what hinders it that those coverings should have colour? Their particular colour might be as much controlled by the will of the spirit as their particular form.

But the second question is put—Why should the "costume of the period," or in other words, the form of clothing worn by the spirit whilst an inhabitant of earth, be chosen rather than any other? Is not habit a sufficient reason? If a covering be necessary, what more likely than that it should take the form of that which the spirit in the body had been accustomed to? It is not probable that the inhabitants of the spiritual world give their time to tailoring, and if

they do seek after things that are new, it is very improbable that new fashions are amongst them. The evidence that leads us to believe in the appearance of ghosts leads us also to believe that the spirits which appear, continue to be strongly influenced by the places and circumstances which affected them whilst on earth. We may well suppose then that the spirit has such a strong association with the dress which it once wore, or rather the form of it, as to prefer that form of covering to any other. Again the will is dependant for its object on the imagination, and if the form of covering be the result of the operation of the spirit's will, another reason for the choice of the particular form may be that habit, or the association of ideas, brings that form into the mind instinctively; and the spirit may act on the mental perception also instinctively, or, at all events, immediately its being the first to strike the imagination. That the mind operates after separation of the soul from the body by association of ideas, in the same manner as when the body and soul are united, I think there can be no doubt; and we know how wonderfully that association works in leading us to do things without the least apparent thought about the doing of them. The performance of particular actions has become in those cases a confirmed habit. And thus it may be with ghosts. The necessity of coverings being given, those coverings take by habit the form the spirit has been accustomed to.

Apologising for the length of this communication,—I am, Sir, yours most obediently,  
C. S. W.

We have also received the following letter on the same subject:—

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR,—Your September number contains a question relative to the apparition of ghosts in costume, and the extract in the following number, taken from Mr. Newton Crossland's Essay, leaves room, I think, for some further explanation. In putting the question, how the apparition of a ghost will be seen, one certainly does not think that it will appear naked, for the state of nudity is agreeable to the unconscious innocence of infants only. When Adam and Eve were aware of their nakedness, they put on a dress, which means that they were naked as long as they were in a state of pure childish innocence; but that as soon as they had acquired their former knowledge incompatible with innocence, they put on a dress. I conclude, therefore, that dress, or costume, is in some degree representative of this knowledge, and garments will vary according to the various kinds and degrees of knowledge. But every conscious being is possessed of knowledge, wherefore a spirit must show his degree of knowledge by wearing a garment of some shape or other. At the same time it must be borne in mind, that he who puts on a dress, will think of those to whom he intends to show himself, and that he will adapt his dress to their degrees of knowledge. In other words, the spirit's garment must suit the degrees of knowledge of both him who appears, and of those to whom he appears. The angels who explained Christ's birth, his resurrection, &c., were messengers of the highest truth and wisdom; thus, their white garments radiant with light represents knowledge of the highest nature, and adapted to the minds of those to whom they appeared, and who were prepared to regard the clearest natural light as representing the greatest truth. The lowest, or the most perverse state of knowledge is that which leads man to sin, or to rebellion against his Creator; and this state we find represented by the appearance of the Red Dragon, which is expelled from heaven, the colour of fire and blood being considered the emblem of rebellion, war, and murder. All intermediate states of knowledge will be represented by other costumes, but the sacred writings do not offer many more examples from which to draw conclusions: we must turn, therefore, to that other great book of Divine Revelation, *i. e.*, to nature. Of this there is no need of giving further examples, as everybody knows that the dress shows the man. But let us apply to a few examples of apparitions, this idea that dress represents knowledge. As everything in the world has a mission to fulfil, there will be no apparition but it must be to some purpose, although it may be that often enough

we cannot detect its secret wisdom. Most missions of this kind will be for the impartation of knowledge, and the apparition will have a dress suited to the attainment of its purpose. If the spirit of John Wesley were to appear, his mission would probably be of the holiest nature, communicating knowledge of Divine truths and moral duties. He would speak to those who have some knowledge of his earthly career, and assume the way of teaching peculiar to him while on earth. The garment suited to such a mission would be in the style of the clergy of his time, and thus his ghost or spirit would, probably, be dressed. An analogous conclusion will enable us to understand why most spirits appear in the "costume of the period;" but not knowing the story, I cannot make the application to Mr. Owen's old gentleman, as noticed in your correspondent's letter. Turning to the "ghost in the night-cap," let us try to explain it from an example. A gay woman going to a ball, leaves her child alone at home. Coming home, she finds the child's rest sadly disturbed, and tries to lull it to sleep. But being over-fatigued she falls asleep, and the child slips out of her arms. If the mother of the woman were to appear to her, she would come, to teach her grown-up child the duties of a mother, and thus she would appear nursing her child during the stillness of the night, and to produce a more forcible contrast to the gay dress of her daughter, she would appear in her night-cap and apron. Similar conclusions are applicable not only to any apparition on record, but they likewise, in a spiritual sense, apply to the garments of the different orders of spirits in the world of immortality. Departed spirits are to a greater or less extent the victims of repentance, and mourning over the memory of their deeds done in the flesh which, to use Mr. Crossland's expressions, are photographed in the spirit-world. Their garments will show the mourning of the spirits, they will, perhaps, be of a dark colour, something like the dresses of pilgrims or of Capuchin monks. The more purified a spirit grows, the lighter becomes the garment, the colouring of which must pass from a darker through all stages and degrees of colour up to white shining with blue, or white shining with red, &c., &c., until it finally reaches the angelic "raiment white as light."

A. H. P. D.

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*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR.—The insertion of my note of the 16th ultimo induces me to present a few more facts connected with American Spiritualism, so far as I had an opportunity of gaining experience during a brief visit.

The subject seemed to be more fairly treated by the editors of newspapers, generally, than is the case in this country, as reports of public meetings are introduced and advertisements of *séances* are freely admitted—the former being frequently in company with editorial remarks of a candid and sensible character—and without respect to the particular political sentiments advocated in the periodical.

At Boston, one of these advertisements attracted my attention, issued by Mr. Huse, a "natural astrologist," who, having a brief trance, answered without hesitation, various questions. In my case, he replied correctly to a question, as I have since ascertained, and at the same time he afforded some voluntary information concerning my travelling plan, to which at the time I paid little attention, as my idea did not correspond with his upon the subject; but, subsequently, I ascertained that he was correct—owing to circumstances which were afterwards developed, and which caused me to extend my journey. I believe that Mr. Huse was one of many persons—who answer mental questions—alluded to by Judge Edmonds in the introductory portion of his work upon Spiritualism. I believe he has possessed his faculty of prescience from a very early age. In my case the question was not mental, as I asked for the desired information: the remarks which were offered voluntarily, referred to a subject not occupying my mind at the time. Travellers in America will find in the *Banner of Light* much useful information respecting the movements of mediums, and the places selected for their sojourn, &c. I ascertained this fact too late for utility, and therefore several opportunities for witnessing interesting phenomena were lost.

At St. Louis I saw the lecture room filled by an audience of both sexes, the

object of the meeting being to hear a trance lecture by a female American medium, who spoke for upwards of an hour upon subjects of a scientific nature,—and I believe that the auditors would have listened without reluctance for a longer time. The lecture was excellent: but I have mislaid my notes. It commenced by the playing of sacred music on the melodeon, and ended with a brief prayer or exhortation by the medium, which was delivered with an expression of sincerity and feeling not always to be discovered in pulpit orations. Several questions were asked by members of the audience, chiefly with respect to the scientific works of Hugh Miller; and plain answers were returned by the medium without reluctance or difficulty.

The expense of this meeting was merely nominal, as I paid ten cents only—not six-pence English. I had arranged to be at St. Louis to hear Miss Hardin, the English medium, who was advertised to lecture there on a particular evening; but the low state of the rivers,—a constant source of delay in the Atlantic journeys,—prevented. I regretted this, as I had understood that her mediumship was not surpassed by any. While passing through Louisville I had an opportunity of observing a remarkable circumstance connected with crystal. An individual who advertised herself as Doctress and Herbalist, possessed one of these oracular gems. Having introduced myself, I requested to see the crystal. The owner's daughter, who had indicated by means of numerous events to neighbours and strangers, was present; and after a short conversation, I put a query touching my travelling arrangements,—being sanguine as to the accuracy of the reply, having known previously that there was much deception, mixed up with truth, connected with crystal-seeing. A prediction was made which I did not believe; but shortly afterwards, a circumstance occurred in connection with my visit to that wonderful natural curiosity, "Mammoth Cave," in Kentucky, which convinced me that the seer had predicted with accuracy. Indeed one circumstance was alluded to by her as clearly as she had been present when it occurred shortly after her prediction. I saw several individuals advertised occasionally in America; but this was the only opportunity which I had for testing this branch of clairvoyance on predictive science. The prediction last mentioned, indirectly confirmed Mr. Huse's statement, although unknown to me that I had met him.

While sojourning at New York, I heard two trance lectures, by Mrs. O. Hatch. Several of her lectures upon subjects of public importance have been printed. Upon the occasion of my hearing her, the subject of her discourse was the physiology and the original nature of man, and his prospect of improvement in future time. Upon both evenings Mrs. H. commenced and concluded her lecture by giving an *extempore* prayer, well worded, and calculated to command the attention of her extensive audience; which, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather—December—filled the hall. These public trance lectures or orations appeared to be very popular in America; but, I believe, only in one case—there had been anything of a similar character in this country. Nature appears to have endowed Mrs. Hatch favourably for the purpose of public mediumship. There are, I believe, hundreds of mediums, more or less endowed, of both sexes, who especially cultivate this branch of spirit-intercourse. The subject is full of interest; and in the *Banner of Light* is well treated. I had the pleasure of seeing Judge Edmonds before I quitted America, having called upon him in New York to ascertain if he intended to publish a third volume of his work upon spirit-intercourse—the two first of which have obtained a world-wide reputation. I understood the Judge to state that he did not, at present, purpose to do so. He gave me, at my request, a small parcel of tracts which he has caused to be printed at his own expense, for gratuitous distribution; and which are connected with his own extensive experience in Spiritualism. The Judge stated that he would be glad to supply people upon this side of the Atlantic with copies of these tracts. I derived much satisfaction from their perusal on my return voyage. I observed in various American periodicals favourable notices of the Judge's literary works, and I hope that ere long the subject thereof may be fairly examined and discussed by the *literati* and periodical writers in this country also.

Pall Mall, London,  
1st September.

Yours faithfully,  
CHRISTOPHER COOMES

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR.—My attention has been called to Spiritualism, by the discussion in the *Morning Star*. In addition to a careful perusal of the letters on both sides of the question, I have also purchased and read all the back numbers, in print, of the *Spiritual Magazine*. The result has been that my views on the subject have undergone considerable modification, if not, a complete change. Many prejudices and erroneous impressions have been removed; and a strong desire to test, to know, and to enjoy its realities, has been created in my mind. Can such a desire be gratified? Totally ignorant of the conditions of failure or success, with friends too incredulous or too timid to give the slightest sympathy or assistance, it seems that all that any anxious enquirer can do, in circumstances similar to mine, is to stand afar off in wondering amazement; unless, indeed, we could obtain advice or assistance from qualified parties. I know, however, of no one to whom I should think of going for advice, or upon whom I could have the slightest claim, except yourself, as Editor of the *Spiritual Magazine*; and as your avowed object is "to extend the knowledge of Spiritualism," I have every confidence that my application for advice will be favourably received. My wish is simply this:—

1. To assure myself of the truth of Spiritualism; and
2. To benefit by its teaching.

If you favour me with a reply, be good enough to remember that I need "milk for babes."

Nov. 6th, 1850.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

A READER.

## Notices of New Books.

### *Spirit Rapping and Spirit Manifestations.* By a MEMBER OF THE CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH.\*

THE battle which we are fighting for the cause of truth is certainly a very lively one, and requires not only good generalship, but the most versatile powers and activity. Our soldiers must be well drilled, and be able to deploy into line, to march in single file, to form into square, or to charge the enemy in front; and at a moment's notice to wheel to either flank, or to face about to drive back a new enemy in the rear.

For several months the Magazine has been full of answers to attacks from the general press, who deny the whole range of the phenomena of Spiritualism as an utter imposture, and spiritualists, they say, are poor deluded dupes, who know nothing of "the methods of scientific investigation." Well, we have brought our forces to the front to repel this attack, and have charged the enemy horse and foot, and have succeeded in breaking his centre and putting him to the rout. While we are in full pursuit, the alarm is sounded—there is a trumpet-call to meet a new enemy in the rear. We face about, and find him, still at some distance opening his fire upon us. We advance, and are surprised on coming nearer to find that this new attack is from a set who should have been fighting on our side, and would have been with us had they understood the real grounds of the fight. They are as satisfied as we are of the reality of the phenomena. They help us by their free admission of the facts, in fighting the press, and then they attack us in the rear, by attributing them to the devil—that poor old gentleman whom we sincerely pity, for having to take charge, without any power of remonstrance on his part, of whatever the ignorance of the age may cast upon him. One can hardly conceive a greater punishment for him than this. With his immense intellect, and wish to please his subjects, and powers of ruling them, to have all the effete stupidities of every age put upon him in succession! As my uncle Toby says, "It is a shame to use even the devil so."

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Reader, do you know who this "Member of the Catholic Apostolic Church" is, who consigns all spirit manifestations to the devil? Who recognizes in the mark of antichrist, and the sign of the last days? Who sees, now, at last that "the end of all things is at hand?" Who is it who says, in large type, "It is known and established by evidence beyond contradiction, that there are, now, abroad, in the earth SPIRITS OF DEVILS WORKING MIRACLES—Spirits making known their presence by visible signs, and powers, and lying wonders, such as we have no previous example of in the recorded history of the world?"

We have met him before. His history is well known to us. It is, itself, one of the most curious chapters in Spiritualism. We have frequently had occasion to refer to it, and to observe the light it sheds on our general subject. It is full of the most wonderful phenomena of the gifts of healing, of the illumination of the Scripture, of prophecy and interpretation, of marvellous psychical phenomena, of the unknown tongue. In a word, we have now to meet in conflict one of our old friends, the Irvingites, as they are conventionally called! Only think of the phenomenon, reader, that we have to repel an attack from that side, and that the body should still be so blind and ignorant of their own position as Spiritualists!

It is the old history of sects, that in whatever great truth they may originate they soon, like the caterpillar, weave a shroud round it, and become a chrysalis almost immovable and lifeless inside. At last, when life comes again, it has to eat its way through the old truth, and emerge with new powers into a larger world.

The unknown tongue, the healing power, the prophetic gifts, and illumination on which this sect was founded were all nothing but the ordinary development of mediumship, of which hundreds of instances are known to us. These gifts and developments were much more common in the early days of Irvingism than they are now, though on the information of one of their present ministers, or angels as they term him, the unknown tongue is still spoken in their weekly meetings; but they are now so respectable, that it is kept private from all but the initiated. They have also healing mediums among them, and prophetic speaking. Did they but know the general laws of Spiritualism, they would not be quite so sure as they seem to be, that all their manifestations are by the direct power of the Holy Ghost, and all manifestations outside themselves, by the direct power of the devil. This is the old sectarian principle. This is the old ignorance in its oldest form, and with all its depressing effects. This it is which drove out of the Irvingite body one of its very best men, Mr. Baxter, who, struck by the marvellous supernatural manifestations through himself and through others, thought with these sectaries in the early days, that this supernaturalism, instead of being a normal power of the soul, was a special manifestation of the Holy Ghost, attesting the truth of Irvingism. He would have remained a convert to this faith till his latest hour, had it not been for some of the as common manifestations which don't come out quite true, and then, as he had made the original mistake of attributing them all to the Holy Ghost, he now made the equally foolish one of attributing them all to the devil. There is an universe however, namely the human soul, between these two, and through that human soul all these manifestations have to pass, partaking of its various states. This is what these persons cannot see for want of reviewing the whole ground of Spiritualism. That great good man, Irving, himself, had he lived to this time would not have been so narrow as his followers, and would have been one of our best philosophical and religious enquirers. When Mr. Baxter put out his well-known pamphlet giving his confession, and accounting for his secession, by attributing the manifestations of the Irving Church to the devil, poor Mr. Irving, in the fullness of his heart could only say, "that if the wondrous illumination thrown by Mr. Baxter in his ecstatic states, upon the Scripture, was from the devil, then the devil might have equally written all the oracles of God."

This is an instructive commentary on the present pamphlet of "The Member of the Catholic Apostolic Church," which is the name in which our Irvingite friends now recognize each other. They should be our best friends; but, alas! poor human nature!