

THE  
Spiritual Magazine.

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Vol. I.]

JUNE, 1860.

[No. 6.

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PUNCH'S CARTOON OF THE SPIRIT HAND.  
ILLUSTRATED BY THE PAST AND PRESENT.

We have always been admirers of *Punch*, both in his working diagrams in the street, and in his broad sheet of the press. His shrill and well-known voice never fails to bring us up, in our sober walks about London, at the street corners which he selects for his exhibition, and we stand with the little boys to have another dish of his never-varying, never-flagging humour. We only feel uncomfortable when his friend with the hat comes round and finds us copperless, though he has no reason to complain that he gets an unwilling sixpence instead. We love his little mangy dog, and Judy; but the best part of the treat is that jolly ghost, which never fails of its effect either upon *Punch* or his audience.

*Punch* is not frightened of ghosts! Not he! until one appears, and then, like the rest of us, he is in a mortal funk. His hair stands on end, and his screams are dreadful. In fact, he might almost be a Christian from the way in which he takes it. And not less so, that soon after it has vanished, he recovers his equanimity somewhat, and gradually his boldness, though it is with occasional hasty glances over his shoulder, that he may be sure that the unwelcome visitor is not again close behind him. Even the boys observe this, and his weakness only heightens their fun. It is all so life-like, and so true to human nature. We shall have an opportunity of seeing the same little play performed on higher boards, and before ourselves, the serious readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, before the close of this article.

Let us now turn to the *Punch* of the press!—the weekly sheet whose destinies are presided over by Messrs. Bradbury and Evans as its proprietors. “William Bradbury, of 13, Upper Woburn Place, and Frederick Mullett Evans, of 19, Queen’s Road West, Regent’s Park, both in the parish of St. Pancras, in the County of Middlesex.” They have secured the services of those able hebdomadal writers who float on the top of literature,

and whose forte is to give us always smart, sparkling, and pleasant paragraphs; who reproduce for us the jokes which fly out with the champagne corks. Plenty of clever and not ill-natured nor unneeded satire do we find, and we always feel glad that it applies to our friends, and not to ourselves. It is the wholesome censor of the manners and morals of the day—and, on the whole, it performs its office well; and, no doubt, its contributors are happy men, for it is very pleasant to be always picking holes in our neighbours, and giving them good advice.

One thing, however, may be noticed through its long and prosperous career—it is never more than a week in advance of the time. It always “goes in” for the steady and respectable, and shapes its literature for the masses who contribute the threepences. You don’t find it run counter to its bread and butter, by taking up new things, although they may be true things. The troublesome persons who are always boring respectable-dom, by new facts and new discoveries, find no favour here. Indeed, they rather find petty martyrdom, and are held up as good jokes and caviare for the multitude. It is all they can do with them in *Punch*, for it wouldn’t suit their readers to treat these new things seriously. It might end in “Heavy exchanges, and both down,” and a considerable reduction of the threepences.

Suppose, for instance, that *Punch* and its proprietors, Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, were firm believers in the phenomena of Spiritualism. Do you suppose they would dare to tell their readers it was true? No, it would even be well if they did not imitate too many of their brethren of the press, and still continue to deny it, and to make a jest of it. At this moment we could furnish the names of some such, amongst the teachers of the press. But we hope for better things from *Punch*, and that he will henceforth be either a supporter, or silent. Hitherto, like our old friend, Mr. Dickens, who is formed somewhat after the *Punch* model, *Punch* has neither been able, thoroughly to take up Spiritualism, nor to let it alone. It has so frequently been peering out in his pages, that we may be sure it has been acquiring uncomfortable dimensions with him, and that he did not feel quite at ease in his denial of it. Besides, we send him an early copy of the *Magazine*, and he sees its facts put forward month after month by willing and unwilling witnesses, many of them giving their names to guarantee their truth. *Punch* must feel that a number of such witnesses pressing forward such plain facts, at the cost of obloquy, and at a pecuniary loss to themselves, is itself a fact of some import; and that to believe that they are all either fools or impostors would of itself involve a phenomenon not less wonderful than those which we ask the world to receive.

When we inserted the article on “Spiritualism at the

Tuileries," we took care to have our facts from one of the four persons present, and we gave his name, and we again vouch for the truth of the narrative; and we affirm that a hand did appear before the Emperor, the Empress, the Duchess de Montebello, and Dr. Home, and did take up a pen and write the word "Napoleon" on the autograph of the Emperor, and that such writing is still in the possession of the Emperor Louis Napoleon.

We will give *Punch* another fact about the Emperor. Our readers are familiar with the autographs and other writings obtained through the mediumship of the Baron Goldenstubbé, consisting of a series of the names of kings, queens, and princes of the royal houses of France and of other eminent persons. These were obtained by placing blank pieces of paper on their hands or statues. The Emperor sent for the Baron some time ago, and gave him a private audience of an hour, during which, he examined these writings, and afterwards compared them with the real autographs in the royal archives, and found them to be *ex similes!* He also granted to the Baron access to the archives, and he, too, has made the comparison with the same result. The priests at St. Denis will not allow the Baron to deposit his paper there, because they say, "*it disturbs the souls of the departed.*" We have seen recently the whole series of these wonderful writings.

And now to come to *Punch's* cartoon, which is the "leading article" of his number of the 12th May, and which, of course, all the world has seen; we affirm that *Punch's* version of the story is not the correct one. The hand did not assume the attitude which is popularly known as "*taking a sight*" at the Emperor's nose; neither was it a stuffed glove, as *Punch* apprehends, moved into that position by machinery. We tried to show in that article that the Emperor was a person at the least of moderate capacity, and as able to detect a hoax as any of the *Punch* writers, but that point seems to be doubted by the cartooner. We must leave the public to decide between us. But we have an affection for *Punch*, and shall be glad to help him to a belief in spiritual phenomena, for he is a good fellow, and deserves to be right, if only that he may avoid misleading his readers in future with his clever drawings.

Is it impossible, dear *Punch*, that a spirit-hand should appear? You seem to think so. Has one *ever* appeared? You seem to think not. You are mistaken in both these ideas of yours. A spirit-hand has appeared, and has been seen by human eyes; by some faculty of man's soul which survives in his organism to this day. Even you are endowed with this same organism, but conditions do not appear favourable to its exercise in you just now. Nevertheless, it is there; and either in this state or the next you

will be sure to see the spirit-hands and to have them too. Let us now become serious, for we will take you back to a book, which our mothers, dear *Punch*, taught us is divine, and that it is God's message to us and His inspired word to man. It contains many things—hard of belief in this age—when men have over-eaten themselves at the tree of knowledge, and have blinded themselves to spiritual perceptions; and doubly valuable, therefore, now, are all facts of the soul, which show these hard things to be not only possible of occurrence in the older days, but show them to our wondering eyes to-day.

We will read together that fifth chapter of Daniel, which tells us of Belshazzar the king, who "made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand." He was so elated, that he "commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein;" and "they drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. *In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, AND THE KING SAW THE PART OF THE HAND THAT WROTE.* Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against another." The words which were written by this hand, now so well known, were sorely mysterious to Belshazzar and his court. Dr. Blank, who, in the last number, gave us his experience of the direct writing in his presence, complained that it was written in a sprawling hand all across the paper; but this famous handwriting could not be read at all by Belshazzar and his court, and he fruitlessly "cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans and the Soothsayers" to read to him the writing, and to shew him the interpretation thereof. The queen, however, remembered Daniel, and said to the king—"There is a man in thy kingdom, on whom is the spirit of the holy gods, and in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him." This Daniel reminded him of his sins, and of his worshipping of other gods, "and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified. THEN WAS THE PART OF THE HAND SENT FROM HIM, and this writing was written." "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain."

You see now, that spirit-hands and spirit-writing are possible things in the conformation of man, and that they have been in divine history. This possibility, and their being facts to-day, is now demonstrated also in our profane times. The story of their

appearing at the Tuileries is true, but it is not all the truth. *They frequently appeared there.* In another article in this number we give an account of their appearing before nine persons at a well-known house at the West-end of London, on the first of May last. Take it for truth, friend, and if you have any doubts, we will furnish you with the names and other particulars, which will fully satisfy you. In like manner, the instance we have seen in Daniel is not the only one to be found. In the tenth chapter he speaks of a wonderful vision of "a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz." "*And behold an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.*" In another verse he says "*Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.*"

The possibility being then established, the fact itself is reduced to a question of ordinary evidence, and we assert, that spirit-hands have within the last few years been seen and felt by hundreds of persons, perfectly competent to settle the question once for all. Have we a less belief in the Bible-miracles, or one that is better founded, for such knowledge? Nay, they receive demonstration in an age, which sad to tell, needs such proofs. And we are striving in the interest of man to make such facts known, at the cost of certain odium and satire on our heads and hearts. Is it a noble chase to hunt us down, that we are giving proofs of the immortality of the soul of man, of his spiritual body, and of his divine faculties and endowments, as a king over material things? Come and help us, friend, for we seek good ends as you do, though we take another, and an inner road. The press has been dead beaten in America, in trying to write down these facts, and you will have no better chance here. We have good men and true amongst us, not only willing, but well able to try a fall with you, or yours, in any branch of negation which you may take up.

But now for another reason why you should not publish any more such cartoons, to bring denial of what you will henceforth know as a truth. You will as soon dare it, as you would dare to publish a similar one, of the hand which Belshazzar saw, for we will bring it very near home to you. It shall be your own sons, the fruit of your loins, who shall teach you that you have been wrong.

Mr. Dickens, too, who has never omitted an opportunity of gibing at these phenomena and their asserters, will be heard no more on his favourite theme. His next Christmas story must be based on other facts than that these phenomena are not true, for his son, too, has told him that he has been mistaken throughout. Good faith, all these things can be, and are, for I have seen and heard them, father!

Mr. Dickens must moderate his earnest wish to see the Cheshunt ghost, now, that his own stalwart son shrinks from grasping one of its hands. It was a mercy both for father and son that they did not find a ghost, when they thought they so wanted one, and could so well bear the sight.

In the beginning of May, Mr. Evans, jun., the son of one of the firm of Bradbury and Evans, the proprietors of *Punch*, was introduced at dinner to Mr. Squire, and during the evening was a witness of several of the striking spiritual phenomena similar to those which are recorded in the paper of Dr. Blank in our April number. This was enough to raise the anger of Mr. Punch, and it was found that when the wonders were narrated to another son of Mr. Evans, and to Mr. Dickens, jun., they, after the manner of their parents, began to scoff, and to suggest that their informant was not quite sound in his head. However, on his asseverating the story, it was determined that the Messrs. Evans and Dickens, jun. should go together to discover the hoax, which they had no doubt they could easily do. The evening was arranged for Friday the 11th of May, at a house in Russell Square, and thither they repaired, accompanied by the gentleman who had a few nights before witnessed the phenomena in the presence of the other son of Mr. Evans.

The result was entirely satisfactory for those who believe in Spiritualism, and also to the gentleman who had been laughed at for repeating what he had seen on the previous occasion. Both Mr. Dickens and Mr. Evans carefully scrutinized the table in search for some of the occult mechanism which Mr. Leech depicts in his cartoon, and which these gentlemen generally wildly suppose to be the cause of the knocks and table-movings. They were, however, unable to find any, and were assured by the owner of the table that he had bought it some years ago of Messrs. Herrings, in Fleet Street, who had made no charge for any such machinery, and he, therefore, did not suppose any was put in. Notwithstanding, the knocks were uncommonly loud and various in their tones, and intelligent replies were given to questions. The table, a very heavy one, was raised from the ground, and, as a good test, the two outer cases of Mr. Squire's watch were opened, and the cap taken out, and the cases re-closed, without the possibility of human agency. A search was made for the cap by the party present, but it could nowhere be found, and by raps it was indicated to lower the gas. A complete circle of hands was formed, when the cap was heard to fall on the table in the midst of them, and there it was found when the gas was again turned on. The two sceptical sons of sceptical parents were rather more than convinced, and looked at each other in wonderment.

It was now proposed by Mr. Dickens that above all things he

would like to be touched by a spirit hand, and on the question being asked, if his hand would be grasped by one, it was answered in the affirmative by three loud, measured, and meaning knocks on the table. He wished it, he said, above all things; and was then told to put his hand under the table, which he did a little way, but hastily drew it back. Again he put it under, but not so far, and again, but more hastily withdrew it. Once more he essayed, but all his courage had now vanished, and he gasped out that he "*would rather not—he could not stand it!*" He was reminded of his father's Cheshunt ghost-seeking, and of what he would have suffered had one really come to him. It was, indeed, a mercy that he was spared the trial. However, Mr. Evans was nothing daunted, and wished that his hand might be grasped, and again the three loud mysterious knocks gave the promise, on his putting his hand under the table. Alas! for the honour of Mr. Leech and his cartoon, which had appeared but two days before, as if to give him courage for the handling; his hand, too, was put under, but very hastily withdrawn, and after two or three attempts to keep it under, it would not stay, and he, too, "*couldn't stand that.*"

Poor Punch! and has your philosophy come to this? Are your sons so degenerate, and are your views so little practical? Truly this is a poor commentary on your "taking a sight" with a spirit-hand. You would as little like one of them at your nose as these gentlemen did in their fists. How can you expect the public to believe in you, when you cannot convince your own sons?

There were other manifestations in their presence, which did not at all make the matter better. An oval table, weighing seventy-five pounds, was several times lifted a somersault in the air, and thrown on a bed, the left hand only of Mr. Squire being placed on it, and his other hand held by Mr. Dickens. At the request of Mr. Dickens, this was done on both sides of the bed, and afterwards from the foot, having to pass over a high foot-board in the way.

One leg of the table was broken off, and the table was lifted successively on to the heads of Mr. Squire and Mr. Dickens, and Mr. Squire and Mr. Evans, whilst Mr. Squire's hands and feet were tied to prevent the possibility of his, in any way, assisting it. The two gentlemen hurt their hands in trying to prevent the table rising, and sent it out of its course by their efforts, but down upon their heads it came, nevertheless. Should *Punch* wish for a true picture instead of a false one, for one of his forthcoming numbers, we would suggest his making a cartoon of this little incident.

The gentlemen acted in a perfectly frank and candid manner

throughout, Mr. Dickens taking notes, which, no doubt, his father has seen and will make use of. We do not feel that any apology is needed for giving the above account, with the names of the two gentlemen, identified as they are with the most prominent deriders of the facts of Spiritualism. We do not find either that Mr. Dickens or *Punch* are very squeamish in attributing falsehood and foolery to those who say in all seriousness that they have witnessed similar facts; and we know of no patent which any one enjoys to witness these striking phenomena, without being made to testify what he has seen before the public. Hitherto we have rather scrupulously avoided giving names; but it is only fair that the world should have the benefit of such testimony as names can give, and it may be that they will not be concealed for the future. We have already a goodly list, a perusal of which would electrify some of the quiet people who think that "All's well in Badajos."

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#### A FEW WORDS ABOUT SHELLEY.

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THAT Shelley had visions\* and dreams of immortality—that he had "ministering spirits" upon his earthly track, ever and again creating within him bright gleams of heaven, we have gratifying concurrent testimony. His habits were well known at Great Marlow, and permit me to affirm, upon undoubted authority, that notwithstanding an assumed materialism in his early poems, and a metaphysical bewilderment in "*The Revolt of Islam*," composed at his house in West Street, Great Marlow, Bucks, he had also at that time set periods of the day for reading and studying the Scriptures; † and often did he rise from a perusal of the sacred word and go forth with melting tenderness to help the poor and the needy. His brotherly love and benevolence have been fully attested by the dwellers in that locality. Nay, like Robert Owen, he longed earnestly and worked for the progress of human perfectability. He loved his neighbour as himself; and he not only went his daily rounds among the poor, helping them from pure singleness of heart; but he had a list of the most industrious among them, who drew, periodically, from his bounty, as from a bank. But, as to the warm, earnest aim, and active labours of Owen, so to the gentle aspirations and benevolence of Shelley, *material* perfection had no abiding sunlight. Praised be God, that Robert Owen outlived all his toil and care to die a Christian-

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\* See page 209.

† Subsequently, when passing the frontiers of Italy, his English Bible was seized and *confiscated* by the Papal officers.—W.



spiritualist! The metal was well tried, and it proved to be true gold at last. He saw the light and declared it—happy moment! “His name liveth for evermore!”

Shelley was a believer in the curative uses of mesmerism, and was on more than one occasion magnetised. It was after being operated upon by a lady that he wrote some verses entitled “*The Magnetic Lady to her Patient*,” beginning as follows:—

“ Sleep on—sleep on—forget thy pain,  
My hand is on thy brow,  
My spirit on thy brain,  
My pity on thy heart, poor friend,—  
And from my fingers flow  
The powers of life; and like a sign  
Seal thee from thine hour of woe,  
And brood on thee, but may not blend  
With thine.”

We read of Mrs. Shelley being awakened by the poet walking in his sleep towards a window; but, for many reasons, the details of such circumstances have been veiled from the public eye. An intelligent medium, in spirit trance, would certainly be at home with Shelley in some of his glorious visions, when, as he tells us:—

“ Earth’s distant orb appears  
The smallest orb that twinkles in the heavens;  
Whilst round the chariot’s way  
Innumerable systems rolled,  
And countless spheres diffused  
An ever-varying glory.”

Indeed, we may conclude that he was undergoing a change for some time previous to his lamentable end. He was being gradually spiritualised. Captain Medwin informs us that he mesmerised him in the presence of Mrs. Shelley and another lady, and says:—“During his trances (the experiment was repeated more than once), he always pitched his voice in the same tone as mine. He also improvised verses in Italian, a language in which he was never known to write.” With what high “spiritual gifts” Shelley might have been endowed had his earthly tenure been extended, we may not say; but we can be happy in thinking that, for some time before he was called away, his mind was in some measure free from error, and the spirit prepared for its wondrous change. Byron, at that time writing to Murray, related how that himself and others were sitting at a window looking towards a wood much frequented by Shelley, and they all distinctly saw Shelley walk into the wood, although they were confident he was several miles away at the time. “And,” says Byron, “alas! this was but a few days before poor Shelley died.”

B. W.

15, Claremont Place, Kensington, W.

## A VISION.

IN the summer of the year '53, a kind friend, who is now a dweller in the Land of Promise, had kindly procured my admission to a theological institute, situate on the banks of the Hudson. I was not a student of theology, and I frankly confess, that a slight intimacy with those who were, led me to be thankful that I was not. The institute was built on an eminence, commanding a view of peculiar beauty; below lay the city; on the right, the river was lost in its windings among the rocky hills surrounding West Point; on the left, it lay in expanse, and could be traced for a distance of many miles; behind, spread out the country, with its pretty little farm-houses dotted here and there. I have sat for hours of an evening, watching the feeble flickering lights, and endeavouring to picture in my imagination the life-emotions which must from time to time have crossed those thresholds. Now, fancy pictured a young girl, on whose form time and care had passed but as an evening breeze; and a little further off it was, perchance, a mother whose little one was suffering, and every beat of whose feeble pulse she had counted with that hope which only a mother may know as she prays God to spare the pure, gentle, and loving little one whom He has given her. Anon, it was one bowed down with age and sorrow; all that he had loved had gone to their rest, and he was alone in the world. Bright pictures of his youth flitted before him, but these only augmented his loneliness, for the light of the past had brought out in deeper contrast the shadows of the present.

These and similar trains of thought often occupied my idle hours; and, at times, these fancied scenes became as it were real, and furnished ample resource to a mind, naturally inclined to dwell on subjects beyond the little narrow circle of every-day life.

One evening, I had been pondering deeply on that change which the world calls death, and on the eternity that lies beyond, until wearied I found relief in prayer, and then in sleep. My last waking consciousness had been that of perfect trust in God, and a sense of gratitude to Him for the enjoyment I received from contemplating the beauties of the material creation. It might have been that my mind was led to this by the fact of my having watched a beautiful star as it shone and twinkled in the profound stillness of the night. Be this as it may, it appeared to me that, as I closed my eyes to earthly things, an inner perception was quickened within me, till at last reason was as active as when I was awake. I, with vivid distinctness, remember asking myself the question, whether I was asleep or no? when,

to my amazement, I heard a voice which seemed so natural, that my heart bounded with joy as I recognised it as the voice of one, who while on earth was far too pure for such a world as ours, and who, in passing to that brighter home had promised to watch over and protect me. And, although I well knew she would do so, it was the first time I had heard her voice, at least—with that nearness and natural tone. She said, "Fear not, Daniel, I am near you; the vision you are about to have is that of death, yet you will not die, as your spirit must again return to the body in a few hours. Trust in God and his good angels: all will be well." Here the voice became lost, and I felt as one who at noonday is struck blind; as he would cling even to the last memories of the sunlight, so I would fain have clung to material existence—not that I felt any dread of passing away, nor that I doubted for an instant the words of my guardian angel; but I feared I had been over presumptuous in desiring knowledge, the very memory of which might disturb my future life. This was but momentary, for almost instantaneously came rushing with a fearful rapidity memories of the past; even thoughts bore the semblance of realities, and every action appeared as an eternity of existence. During the whole time I was aware of a benumbing and chilling sensation which stole over my body, but the more inactive my nervous system became, the more active was my mind, till at length I felt as if I had fallen from the brink of some fearful precipice, and as I fell, all became obscure, and my whole body became one dizzy mass, only kept alive by a feeling of terror, until sensation and thought simultaneously ceased, and I knew no more. How long I had lain thus I know not, but soon I felt that I was about to awaken in a most dense obscurity; terror had now given place to a pleasurable-feeling, accompanied by a certitude of some one dearly loved being near me, yet invisible: it then occurred to me that the light of the spheres must necessarily be more effulgent than our own, and I pondered whether or not the sudden change from darkness to light might not prove painful, for instinctively I realized that beyond the surrounding obscurity lay an ocean of silver-toned light. I was at this instant brought to a consciousness of light, by seeing the whole of my nervous system, as it were, as thousands of electrical scintillations, which here and there, as in the created nerve, took the form of currents, darting its rayons over the whole body in a manner most marvellous; still this was but a cold electrical light, and besides, it was external. Gradually, however, I saw that the extremities became less luminous, and the finer membranes surrounding the brain became as it were glowing, and I felt that thought and action were no longer con-

nected with the earthly tenement; but that they were in a body in every respect similar to the body which I knew to have been mine, and which I now saw lying motionless before me on the bed. The only link which held the two forms together seemed a silvery-like light, which proceeded from the brain; and, as if it were a response to my earlier waking thoughts, the same voice, only that it was now more musical than before, said, "Death is but a second birth, corresponding in every respect to the natural birth, and should the uniting link now be severed, you could never again enter the body. As I told you, however, this will not be. You did wrong to doubt, even for an instant, for this was the cause of your having suffered, and this very want of faith is the source of every evil on your earth. God is love; and still His children ever doubt Him. Has He not said 'Knock and it shall be opened unto you: seek and ye shall find?' These being His words, must be taken as they were spoken. It is not for men to give any interpretation they may believe or desire to believe, to what God has said. Be very calm, for in a few moments you will see us all, but do not touch us, be guided by the one who is appointed to go with you, for I must remain near your body."

It now appeared to me that I was waking from a dream of darkness to a sense of light; but such a glorious light. Never did earthly sun shed such rays, strong in beauty, soft in love, warm in life-giving glow, and as my last idea of earthly light had been the reflex of my own body, so now this heavenly light came from those I saw standing about me. Yet the light was not of their creating, but was shed on them from a higher and purer source, which only seemed the more adorably beautiful in the invisibility of its holy love and mercy,—thus to shower every blessing on the creatures of its creation; and now, I was bathed in light, and about me were those for whom I had sorrowed, for although I well knew that they existed, and loved and cared for me, nevertheless, their earthly presence was not visible. One that I had never known on earth then drew near and said, "You will come with me, Daniel." I could only reply, that it was impossible to move, inasmuch as I could not feel that my nature had a power over my body. To this he replied, "Desire and you will accomplish your desires which are not sinful, desires being as prayers to the Divinity, and He answereth the every prayer of His children."

For the first time I now looked to see what sustained my body, and found that it was but a purple tinted cloud, and that as I desired to go onward with my guide, the cloud appeared as if disturbed by a gentle breeze, and in its movements I found I was wafted upward until I saw the earth, as a vision, far, far

below us. Soon, I found that we had drawn nearer, and were just hovering over a cottage that I had never seen; and I also saw the inmates, but had never met them in life. The walls of the cottage were not the least obstruction to my sight, they were only as if constructed of a dense body of air, yet perfectly transparent, and the same might be said of every article of furniture. I perceived that the inmates were asleep, and I saw the various spirits who were watching over the sleepers. One of these was endeavouring to impress his son where to find a lost relic of him which the son much prized, and the loss of which had greatly grieved him. And I saw that the son awoke and thought it but an idle dream, and three times this impression was repeated by the spirit; and I knew that when morning came, the young man would go, out of curiosity, where he had been impressed to go, and that he would there find what he sought for. In an adjoining room I saw one who was tormented by dreams, but they were but the production of a diseased body.

I was most deeply interested in all this, when my guide said, "We must now return." When I found myself near my body, I turned to the one who had remained near my bed, and said, "Why must I return so soon, for it can be but a few moments I have been with you, and I would fain see more and also remain near you longer?" She replied, "It is now many hours since you came to us; but here we take no cognizance of time, and as you are here in spirit you too have lost this knowledge; we would have you with us, but this must not be at present. Return to earth, love your fellow-creatures, love truth, and in so doing, you will serve the God of infinite love, who careth for and loveth all. May the Father of mercies bless you, Daniel!"

I heard no more, but seemed to sink as in a swoon, until consciousness was merged into a feeling that earth with its trials lay before me—and that I, as well as every human being, must bear my cross. And when I opened my eyes to material things I found the little star had given way to the sun, which had been above the horizon about four hours; making in all about eleven hours that this vision had lasted. My limbs were so dead, that at least half an hour elapsed before I could reach the bell rope, to bring any one to my assistance, and it was only by a continued friction that, at the end of an hour, I had sufficient force to enable me to stand upright.

I merely give these facts as they occurred; let others comment on them as they may. I have only to add, that nothing could ever convince me that this was an illusion or a delusion; and that the remembrance of those hours are as fresh in my mind now, as at the moment they took place.

D. D. HOME.

## SPIRIT-MANIFESTATIONS IN THE WESLEY FAMILY, AND THEIR CRITICS.

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THERE is in some men an ignorant impatience of Spiritualism. Speak to them of its phenomena or philosophy, and they shrug their shoulders and smile as though from some Alpine height of wisdom they looked down with pity on your infirmity. It never occurs to them that their pitying scorn may arise, not from a greater wealth of intellect or information, but from a destitution of knowledge in relation to the subject; or, a more than average share of that unwisdom which attaches more or less to all men.

Much of this supercilious treatment of Spiritualism, we think, grows out of their belief that its alleged phenomena run counter to the experience of at least all civilized and enlightened ages. They will tell you that idle stories of the kind were indeed admitted as true in pre-enlightened and pre-scientific times, and that similar stories may even be credited in our own time by the ignorant and superstitious; but the reality of any modern facts evincing the direct action of spiritual agencies is to them utterly incredible. Nevertheless, such facts exist, attested by the unquestionable evidence of persons having the highest reputation for veracity, intelligence, and good sense; and could they be induced to pay a little more attention to facts of this kind, and the evidence supporting them, in past as well as in present times, they would be better prepared to arrive at just and reasonable conclusions upon the subject.

Without at present going back farther than the beginning of the past century, and selecting only one instance out of many, what can be better attested than the spirit-manifestations in the Wesley family, at the parsonage house, Epworth, Lincolnshire. "The accounts given of them," says Dr. Adam Clark, "are so circumstantial and authentic, as to entitle them to the most implicit credit. The *eye* and *ear-witnesses* were persons of strong understandings and well-cultivated minds, untinged by *superstition*, and in some instances rather *sceptically* inclined." They used "the utmost care, scrupulosity and watchfulness to prevent them from being imposed upon by trick or fraud. . . . That they were *preternatural*, the whole state of the case and supporting evidence seems to show." A diary of these occurrences was kept by the Rev. Samuel Wesley: we have also separate narratives of them by Mrs. Wesley, Susannah, Emily, Mary, and Nancy Wesley, in their letters to Mr. Samuel Wesley, jun., who was then from home; as well as the statements of Robin Brown, the man-servant in the family, and of the Rev.

Mr. Hoole, rector of Haxey, whom John Wesley describes as "an eminently pious and sensible man;" lastly, a narrative of these transactions was drawn up and published in the *Arminian Magazine* by John Wesley, who went down to Epworth, in the year 1720, and carefully inquired into the particulars; and, he tells us, "spoke to each of the persons who were then in the house, and took down what each could testify of his or her own knowledge." So that if testimony is worth anything, it is here ample and conclusive.

Philosophers and critics have exerted all their ingenuity to explain the phenomena described by these witnesses on purely natural principles, but in vain; their theories, like the Dutchman's *oyster*, are very hard to swallow. The one which, perhaps, has found most favour is that of Coleridge, who considered the cause of them to be "a contagious nervous disease;" "and this indeed," he says, "I take to be the true and only solution." In exposition of this "true and only solution," he remarks:—

First the *new* maid-servant hears it, then the *new* man. They tell it to the children (lads and grown-up women), who now hear it; the children the mother, who now *begins* to hear it; she, the father, and the night after he awakes, and *then* first hears it. Strong presumptions, first, that it was not objective, *i. e.* a trick; secondly, that it was a *contagious disease*, to the audital nerves what vapours or blue devils are to the eye. Observe, too, each of these persons hears *the same noise as a different sound*. What can be more decisive of its *subjective* nature?

Now we would remark on this, that even were the facts correctly stated (which they are not), the theory does not go quite far enough. If the new man got it from the new maid, where did she get it from? If the world stands on the back of a tortoise, what does the tortoise stand on? But, unfortunately for the philosopher of Highgate, he has accommodated the genesis of the facts, and the facts themselves to the exigencies of his theory. It appears from John Wesley's Narrative, that when the noises were first heard, December 2nd, 1716, the man and maid-servants were together, and *both* heard the knockings, which, at intervals, were several times repeated, though they could not discover the cause of them; and, what is more important, though these knockings were then first heard by them, Mrs. Wesley did not when told of them, *then begin* to hear them, for, as we shall see presently, she had heard them *many years before*. Nor did Mr. Wesley, after hearing of them, awaken the next night and *then* hear the knocks; on the contrary, his words are, "that night I was *awaked* a little before one by nine distinct very loud knocks, which seemed to be in the next room to ours, with a sort of pause at every third stroke;" nor do the narratives warrant the assertion that "each person heard the *same* noise as a different sound," though some of these noises might be described in a

slightly different way, and with different comparisons by different auditors, as would very naturally happen with any "objective" noises of an unusual nature; but *all* heard and speak of the same knocks, and most heard footsteps, &c. Mrs. Wesley writes concerning the knockings, "All the family has heard it together, in the same room, at the same time, particularly at family prayers. It always seemed to all present in the same place at the same time; though often before any could say it is here, it would remove to another place." But, beside the knockings and footsteps, there were other peculiar noises, varying from time to time, "strange and various," as Mrs. Wesley called them. The *differ-entia*, therefore, were in the sounds themselves, not in the different "subjective" states of their auditors. There are "thirteen general circumstances" enumerated in the narratives, of which "most, if not all, the family were frequent witnesses."

But not only the "audital nerves," but the optic nerves of the family and their sense of touch also must have been diseased, for various objects were *seen* to move, sometimes, for "a pretty while" together, though no agent was visible; and thrice an apparition was *seen* by different witnesses. Emily Wesley and her father were each, at different times, *pushed against* with great force by an invisible power; the latter, once with such violence as to be nearly thrown down by it; and, "the bed on which sister Nancy sat was lifted up with her in it." (The writer knows a similar instance to this in his own family). The "contagious nervous disease," too, must have extended to the "stout mastiff" who was brought into the house as a protection, but who was more sensitive to the approach of the "contagious nervous disease" than human creatures, giving them, indeed, notice of its presence by whining, trembling, and seeking shelter before anything was either seen or heard by the family;—and also to the *sleeping* children, for, "when the noises began, a sweat came over the children *in their sleep*, and they panted and trembled till the disturbances were so loud as to awaken them."

Again, even admitting the possible existence of a "contagious nervous disease" capable of these results (although I am not aware that it is known to medical science), the witnesses in this case were not at all the kind of persons likely to be affected by it. They were not like the servants in Dickens's *Haunted House*, who came there "to be frightened, and infect one another." They were not nervous, hysterical hypochondriacs; there was no "contagion of suspicion and fear" among them; no predisposition to regard the disturbances as supernatural if they could be otherwise accounted for; quite the contrary. "For a considerable time all the family believed it to be a trick." This belief extended even to the servants: when the two servants who



had first heard the knocks and groans told their fellow-servant what they had heard, and that one of them, Robin Brown, on going to bed, had seen on the top of the garret stairs, a hand-mill whirled about very swiftly, she only laughed at them, saying, "What a couple of fools are you!—I defy anything to fright me." And when, the next night while engaged in her work, she also heard the knocks, she took the candle and searched the place from whence the sounds came. "Sister Molly" (about twenty years of age), as she was sitting in the dining-room, reading, "heard as if it were the door that led into the hall open, and a person walking in, that seemed to have on a silk night-gown rustling and trailing along. It seemed to walk round her, then to the door, then round again; but she could see nothing." So she—what?—screamed and went into fits? No, nothing of the sort; but she "rose, put the book under her arm, and walked slowly away." Mrs. Wesley, when told of the noises, in the same quiet way, remarked, "If I hear anything myself, I shall know how to judge."

In one of the letters to her son, she writes: "I was a great while ere I could credit anything of what the children and servants reported concerning the noises they heard in several parts of our house. Nay, after I had heard them myself, I was willing to persuade myself and them that it was only rats or weasels that disturbed us; and having been formerly troubled with rats, which were frightened away by sounding a horn, I caused a horn to be procured, and made them blow it all over the house. But from that night they began to blow, the noises were more loud and distinct, both day and night, than before, and that night we rose and went down I was entirely convinced that it was beyond the power of any human creature to make such strange and various noises." When she told her husband of these "strange and various noises," he, too, like all the rest of the family, incredulous, said to her, somewhat reproachfully, "Sukey, I am ashamed of you. These boys and girls frighten one another, but *you* are a woman of sense, and should know better. Let me hear of it no more." However, he could not help hearing more of it; but, unable to find out what caused the disturbance, he was so angered that he was in the act of firing a pistol at the place whence the noise came, when his arm was caught by Mr. Hoole, who dissuaded him. He then challenged the "contagious disease," or "Jeffrey," as the family began to call it (Jeffrey was the name of one who had died in the house), to come to him when alone in his study, which it did, though for the first time. When, several weeks afterward, the disturbances continuing, he was advised to quit the house, he constantly answered "No, let the devil flee from me; I will never flee from the devil." A brave old man, surely, though we think a little mistaken as to the character of

his visitor, for Jeffrey was found to be "a harmless goblin." Miss Emily Wesley told her sisters: "You know I believe none of these things. Pray, let me take away the candle to-night, and I will find out the trick." It was not for the want of courage that she failed to "find out the trick," for she once saw in the house an apparition in something of an animal form; and in a letter to her brother narrating the circumstance, she declared, "I would venture to fire a pistol at it if I saw it long enough." In one of the letters to her brother giving him an account of what occurred, she writes: "I am so far from being superstitious that I was too much inclined to infidelity; so that I heartily rejoice at having such an opportunity of convincing myself past doubt or scruple, of the existence of some beings besides those we see. A whole month was sufficient to convince anybody of the reality of the thing, and to try all ways of discovering any trick, had it been possible for any such to have been used. I shall only tell you what I myself heard, and leave the rest to others," &c. Even the youngest sister, so far from having any morbid apprehensions regarding this mystery, would pursue the noises from room to room, saying, "she desired no better diversion." Priestley remarks: "All the parties seem to have been sufficiently void of fear, and also free from credulity, except the general belief that such things were preternatural." The *animus* of Coleridge is sufficiently obvious in his making the term *objective*, synonymous in this case with *trick*.

Priestley thought it "most probable" that it was a *trick of the servants*, assisted by some of the neighbours; but the servants were frequently all together with the family when these things occurred; and, as Southey remarks, "many of the circumstances cannot be explained by any such supposition, nor by any legerdemain, nor by ventriloquism, nor by any secret of acoustics." But what most completely nullifies all suppositions of the kind, is the fact, that the visits of *Jeffrey*, or, the *contagious nervous disease*, though neither so frequent nor so violent, began *long before* and continued *long after* this time. John Wesley says, "the first time my mother ever heard any unusual noise at Epworth, was *long before* the disturbance of old Jeffrey. My brother, lately come from London, had one evening a sharp quarrel with my sister Sukey, at which time, my mother happening to be about in her own chamber, the door and windows rang and jarred very loud, and presently several distinct strokes, three by three, were struck. From that night it never failed to give notice in much the same manner against any signal misfortune or illness of any belonging to the family." Dr. A. Clark tells us that these phenomena continued with some of the members of the family for *many years*; and Emily Wesley (then Mrs. Harper), in a letter

to her brother John, from *London, thirty-four years after*, writes: "Another thing is, that *wonderful thing*, called by us *Jeffrey!* You won't laugh at me for being superstitious, if I tell you *how certainly that something calls on me against any extraordinary see affliction*; but so little is known of the invisible world, that I at least am not able to judge whether it be a *friendly* or an *evil spirit.*" These facts, we think, overturn both Coleridge's theory of the *subjective* character of the phenomena, and Priestley's supposition that they were a trick of the servants.

Priestley, indeed, was compelled to fall back on the old question, *Qui bono!* There are some judicious observations in reply to this by Southey, in the extract we append; but we may quote here the remarks on it of Dr. George Smith, in his *Wesley and his Times.*

The word of divine revelation cannot be believed, in its plain and obvious sense, nor can we admit the truth of evidence which, in respect of every other matter, would be regarded as irresistible, if we refuse to allow that, in numerous cases in ancient and modern times, *visible* and *palpable* phenomena have been manifested, which can only be accounted for by supposing the immediate action of supernatural agency. And whatever such writers as Dr. Priestley may say, as to the absence of an object in such extraordinary manifestations, it is clearly the grand end of divine revelation, and the first object of God's providential government, to impress the mind of man with the great fact of the certain existence of a spiritual and unseen world; and, to this fact, such cases as the one before us, when authenticated by unquestionable evidence, bear ample testimony.

But whatever may have been the cause of these phenomena, it was something invisible that could respond to questions and observations, and its movements were heard about the house like the footsteps of a man. It could imitate Mr. Wesley's particular knock at the gate, and other sounds; repeating them any particular number of times according to request. It was "easily offended," could be made "angry," even "outrageous," and, in particular, "was more loud and fierce if any one said it was rats or anything natural." It could forewarn of impending affliction, and had decided Jacobite predilections. We note these little peculiarities, as probably some disciple of Dr. Rogers and President Mahan may proclaim that it was all *od* force, that being now the latest development—the very last thaumaturgist of anti-spiritual philosophers. We would very humbly ask them, does *od* possess these idiosyncracies and infirmities of intellect and temper, and is it a political partisan?

Spirit-manifestations, similar to those in the Wesley family, have now spread over both continents; but even in the last century they were not so uncommon as is sometimes thought. Dr. Adam Clark says: "The story of the disturbances at the parsonage-house in Epworth is not *unique.* I, myself, and others of my particular acquaintances, were *eye* and *ear witnesses* of transactions of a *similar* kind, which could never be traced to any source

of trick or imposture, and appeared to be the forerunners of two very tragical events in the disturbed family, after which no noises or disturbance ever took place." And Coleridge alleges that he "could produce fifty cases at least equally well authenticated (as that of the disturbances in the Wesley family), and, as far as the veracity of the narrators, and the single fact of their having seen and heard such and such sights, or sounds above all rational scepticism."

The following condensed summary of the occurrences at Epworth is from Stevens's *History of Methodism*. Those who wish for fuller details are referred to the documents in Clark's *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*.

Writers on Methodism have been interested in tracing the influence of Wesley's domestic education on the habits of his manhood and the ecclesiastical system which he founded. Even the extraordinary "noises" for which the rectory became noted, and which still remain unexplained, are supposed to have had a providential influence upon his character. These phenomena were strikingly similar to marvels which, in our times, have suddenly spread over most of the civilized world, perplexing the learned, deluding the ignorant, producing a 'spiritualistic literature of hundreds of volume and periodicals, and resulting in extensive Church organizations.' The learned Priestley obtained the family letters and journals relating to these curious facts, and gave them to the world as the best authenticated and best told story of the kind that was anywhere extant. John Wesley himself has left us a summary of these mysterious events. They began usually with a loud whistling of the wind around the house. Before it came into any room, the latches were frequently lifted up, the windows clattered, and whatever iron or brass there was about the chamber, rang and jarred exceedingly. When it was in any room, let the inmates make what noises they would, as they sometimes did on purpose, its dead hollow note would be clearly heard above them all. The sound very often seemed in the air, in the middle of the room; nor could they exactly imitate it by any contrivance. It seemed to rattle down the pewter, to clap the doors, draw the curtains, and throw the man-servant's shoes up and down. Once it threw open the nursery door. The mastiff barked violently at it the first day, yet whenever it came afterward, he ran whining, or quite silent, to shelter himself behind some of the company. Scarcely any of the family could go from one room into another but the latch of the door they approached was lifted up before they touched it. It was evidently, says Southey, a Jacobite goblin, and seldom suffered Mr. Wesley to pray for the king without disturbing the family. John says it gave 'thundering knocks' at the Amen, and the loyal rector, waxing angry at the insult, sometimes repeated the prayer with defiance. He was thrice pushed by it, with no little violence; it never disturbed him, however, till after he had rudely denounced it as a dumb and deaf devil, and challenged it to cease annoying his innocent children, and meet him in his study if it had something to say. It replied with 'a knock as if it would shiver the boards in pieces,' and resented the affront by accepting the challenge. At one time the trencher danced upon the table without anybody touching either; at another, when several of the daughters were amusing themselves with a game of cards upon one of the beds, the wall seemed to tremble with the noise; they leaped from the bed, and it was raised in the air, as described by Cotton Mather, in the "Witchcraft of New England." Sometimes moans were heard, as from a dying person; at others, it swept through the halls and along the stairs, with the sound of a person trailing a loose gown on the floor, and the chamber walls, meanwhile, shook with vibrations. It would respond to Mrs. Wesley if she stamped on the floor, and bade it answer; and it was more loud and fierce whenever it was attributed to rats or any natural cause.

These noises continued about two months, and occurred the latter part of

the time every day. The family soon came to consider them amusing freaks, as they were never attended with any serious harm; they all, nevertheless, deemed them preternatural. Adam Clark assures us that, though they subsided at Epworth, they continued to molest some members of the family for many years. Clark believed them to be demoniacal; Southey is ambiguous respecting their real character; Priestley supposed them a trick of the servants or neighbours; but without any other reason than that they seemed not to answer any adequate purpose of a 'miracle,' to which Southey justly replies, that with regard to the good design which they may be supposed to answer, 'it would be sufficient if sometimes one of those unhappy persons who, looking through the dim glass of infidelity, sees nothing beyond the narrow sphere of mortal existence, should, from the well-established truth of one such story—trifling and objectless as it might otherwise appear—be led to the conclusion that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in their philosophy.'\* Isaac Taylor considers them neither 'celestial' nor 'infernal,' but extra-terrestrial, intruding upon our sphere occasionally, as the Arabian locust is sometimes found in Hyde Park. Of the influence of these facts upon Mr. Wesley's character, this author remarks that they took effect upon him in such a decisive manner as to lay open his faculty of belief, and create a right of way for the supernatural through his mind, so that to the end of his life there was nothing so marvellous that it could not freely pass where these mysteries had passed before it. Whatever may be thought of this very hypothetical suggestion, and of its incompatibility with the disposition of this writer, and, indeed, of most of Wesley's critics, to impute to him a natural and perilous credulity, it cannot be denied that in an age which was characterized by scepticism, a strong susceptibility of faith was a necessary qualification for the work which devolved upon him, and less dangerous by far than the opposite disposition; for though the former might mar that work, the latter must have been fatal to it.

T. S.

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A NOTICE OF US BY THE PRESS.—"The *Spiritual Magazine*.—No. 5.—We hope we shall never see another copy of this most harmful publication. It must be edited in Colney Hatch, and printed in Bedlam."—*Lloyd's Weekly Payer*.

CASES OF INSANITY.—So much has been said, first and last, about Spiritualism and its excitements as being the predisposing cause of insanity, that it is well to look these loose statements in the face. In a recent number of the *Woonsocket Patriot* we find the following facts and figures, which appear from an examination of the reports of sixteen Insane Asylums, in different States, for the year 1856:—Made insane by religious excitement, 417; by Spiritualism, 34. There are many other causes of insanity, a few of which are given below. The following is an extract from a report of the State Lunatic Asylum at Worcester, giving the causes from 1833 to 1857:—Excessive labour, 79; disappointed love, 98; politics, 3; fright, 25; Millerism, 10; religious excitement, 161; infidelity, 1; Mormonism, 1; Pathetism, 1; Mesmerism, 1; pecuniary anxiety, 23; pecuniary difficulty, 63; pecuniary loss, 53; strike for wages, 1; California fever, 2; poverty, 1; fear of poverty, 36; giving up business, 1; change of business, 1.—*Banner of Light*.

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\* Southey further remarks, "By miracle, Dr. Priestley evidently intends a manifestation of divine power, but in the present instance no such manifestation is supposed, any more than in the appearance of a departed spirit. Such things may be preternatural, and yet not miraculous: they may not be in the ordinary course of nature, and yet imply no alteration of its laws."

“FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER  
WORLD.”

[*With Narrative Illustrations.* By ROBERT DALE OWEN. Formerly Member of Congress, and American Minister to Naples.]\*

To say that this work is the best that has been published in relation to the subject of which it treats, would but inadequately express our estimate of its merits. Indeed, we know of no other, that can be put in comparison with it. It is specially valuable on two grounds:—first, it treats of those spirit-manifestations only which are of what may be called *spontaneous* origin, which have come unsought, and generally undesired. It is evidently advisable, and in the natural order, to give these, wherever practicable, the prior investigation, “just as the geologist prefers first to inspect the rock *in situ*.” “By restricting the inquiry to these, all suspicion of being misled by epidemic excitement or expectant attention is completely set aside;” and the discussion is also at once freed from all question as to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of seeking after spiritual communion, a question which so frequently interrupts and embarrasses our consideration of the main issue, *i. e.*, whether these manifestations and this communion exists or not. In such instances of spiritual manifestation, as Mr. Owen brings before us, they have nothing to do with our volition, they are as much beyond our control as the comet or the aurora-borealis, and therefore may, without scruple, be as freely studied as the phenomena of astronomy or meteorology. As he remarks:—

“We may condemn as pythonism, or denounce as unlawful necromancy, the seeking after spiritual phenomena. But in so doing, we dispose of a small branch of the subject only. How are we to deal with ultra-mundane manifestations, in case it should prove that they do often occur not only without our agency but in spite of our adjuration? Grant that it were unwise, even sinful, to go in search of spiritual intervention: what are we to say of it if it overcome us suddenly and unsolicited, and whether for good or evil a commissioned intruder on our earthly path? Under that phase also (if under such it be found really to present itself) are we to ignore its existence? Ought we, without any inquiry into the character of its influence to prejudge and to repulse it? Let it assume what form it may: are we still, like the Princess Parizade of the Arabian tale, to stop our ears with cotton against the voices around us?”

Secondly, the narratives in Mr. Owen’s book have been selected with a more careful regard to evidence than in any former work of the kind, so far as we know. The great drawback on such works usually is, the almost haphazard and indiscriminate way in which the stories in them are got together. If any

\* London Agents: Trübner, Paternoster Row; White, 36, Bloomsbury Street.

principle has governed their selection, it would seem to have been a preference for the romantic and the marvellous. In the *Fairy-falls*, on the contrary, there is no entry without a voucher; most of the instances are of recent date, well authenticated, resting on direct and reliable testimony, some, taken from the lips of living witnesses, and others, with commendable diligence, verified by the author from official and other documents. One valuable result of this careful scrutiny has been to get rid of many of those melo-dramatic elements which we find so abundantly in legends and tales, by writers of the Monk Lewis and Victoria Theatre school. Speaking of the "disturbances, popularly termed hauntings," Mr. Owen remarks:—

"In winnowing, from out a large apocryphal mass, the comparatively few stories of this class which come down to us in authentic form, vouched for by respectable contemporary authority, sustained by specifications of time and place and person, backed sometimes by judicial oaths, one is forcibly struck by the observation that, in thus making the selection, we find thrown out all stories of the ghostly school of horror, all skeleton spectres with the worms creeping in and out, all demons with orthodox horns and tail, all midnight lights burning blue, with other similar embellishments; and there remain a comparatively sober and prosaic set of wonders,—inexplicable, indeed, by any known physical agency, but shorn of that gaudy supernaturalism in which Ann Radcliffe delighted, and which Horace Walpole scorned not to employ."

Intensely interesting as are the narratives in this work, they become still more so in the connection in which they are here given: each stands in some relation, either of evidence or illustration to the main question, or to some one or more of its collateral issues.

Among the many minor excellencies of this volume are its lucid style, its admirable classification and arrangement, its careful citation of authorities, and, if indeed we may call it a minor excellence, its freedom from all narrowness and dogmatism, on the one hand, and from all levity and irreverence on the other. Throughout, it displays the master-hand of the literary artist; nothing is left crude or unfinished, and its composition is almost faultless. In his summings up, the author at once seizes upon all the salient points of the case, *pro* and *con*; we perceive in them the workings of an acute and logical mind familiar with the principles of philosophy and the laws of evidence, weighing contending probabilities, and, in the words of Cicero, seeking only "to admit those opinions which appear most probable, to compare arguments, and to set forth all that may be reasonably stated in favour of each proposition, and so to leave the judgment of the reader free and unprejudiced." While clearly indicating his own conclusions, he is less anxious to enforce these, than to awaken attention and excite independent thought in relation to the facts and evidence on which they are based. In his concluding chapter, in answer to the question which he supposes the reader

to put to him, whether he considers the reality of occasional spiritual interference to be conclusively made out? he answers:—

“ I prefer that he should take the answer from his own deliberate judgment. In one respect he is, probably, better qualified to judge than I. It is not in human nature to ponder long and deeply any theory—to spend years in search of its proofs and in examination of its probabilities—yet maintain that nice equanimity which accepts or rejects without one extraneous bias. He who simply inspects may discriminate more justly than he whose feelings have been enlisted in collecting and collating.

“ Yet I will not withhold the admission that, after putting the strictest guard on the favouritism of parentage, I am unable to explain much of what my reason tells me I must here receive as true, on any other hypothesis than the ultra mundane.

“ Where there are clear palpable evidences of thought, of intention, of foresight, I see not how one can do otherwise than refer these to a thinker, an intender, a foreseer. Such reference appears to me not rational only but necessary. If I refuse to accept such manifestations of intelligence as indicating the workings of a rational mind—if I begin to doubt whether some mechanical or chemical combination of physical elements may not put on the semblance of reason and counterfeit the expression of thought—then I no longer perceive the basis of my own right to assume that the human forms which surround me have minds to think or hearts to feel. If our perceptions of the forest, and the ocean, and the plain, are to be accepted as proofs that there really is a material world around us, shall we refuse to receive our perceptions of thoughts and feelings other than our own, as evidence that some being, other than ourselves, exists, whence these emanate? And if that being belong not to the visible world, are we not justified in concluding that it has existence in the invisible?

“ That the rational being of which we thus detect the agency *is* invisible, invalidates not at all the evidence we receive. It is but a child's logic which infers that, where nothing is seen, nothing exists.”

It will probably interest the reader to learn the circumstances which preceded and produced the volume under consideration. Mr. Owen, in the preface, thus states them:—

“ To an excellent friend and former colleague, the Viscount de St. Aman, Brazilian minister at Naples, I shall ever remain debtor for having first won my serious attention to phenomena of a magneto-physiological character and to the study of analogous subjects. It was in his apartments, on the 4th of March, 1856, and in presence of himself and his lady, together with a member of the royal family of Naples, that I witnessed for the first time, with mingled feelings of surprise and incredulity, certain physical movements apparently without material agency. Three weeks later, during an evening at the Russian minister's, an incident occurred, as we say, fortuitously, which, after the strictest scrutiny, I found myself unable to explain without referring it to some intelligent agency foreign to the spectators present—not one of whom, it may be added, knew or had practised anything connected with what is called Spiritualism or mediumship. From that day I determined to test the matter thoroughly. My public duties left me, in winter, few leisure hours, but many during the summer and autumn months; and that leisure, throughout more than two years, I devoted to an investigation (conducted partly by personal observations made in domestic privacy, partly by means of books), of the great question whether agencies from another phase of existence ever intervene here, and operate, for good or evil, on mankind.”

A part only of the results of this investigation is before us in the present volume; we hope that ere long, in another, Mr. Owen will present us with the results he has arrived at in investigating that side of Spiritualism which follows from the voluntary



and mutual effort of the dwellers on this, as well as of those on the other side the veil. Meanwhile, his present book may be regarded both as a sign, and, in some measure, as a consequence of the large and increasing interest, among all classes, in the facts of modern Spiritualism. The eminent position he has so long occupied enables him to speak with authority, especially with regard to the upper ranks of society, on this point. Spiritualism is spreading extensively, especially among the educated and what are called the *élite* of society: in America, among its public advocates are judges, senators, and statesmen; in England, as the *Westminster Review* reminds us, there are "at its head, men and women whose intellectual qualifications are known to the public, and who possess its confidence and esteem;" and now we have Mr. Owen telling us,—

"I found, in Europe, interested and earnest enquirers into this subject in every rank, from royalty downward; princes and other nobles, statesmen, diplomatists, officers in the army and navy, learned professors, authors, lawyers, merchants, private gentlemen, fashionable ladies, domestic mothers of families. Most of these, it is true, prosecute their investigations in private, and disclose their opinions only to intimate or sympathising friends. But none the less does this class of opinions spread; and the circles daily enlarge that receives them."

We allude now to these facts that critics may have no excuse to treat this book as if it were a solitary phenomenon of its kind,—as furnishing the only instance, in our time, of a man of high standing and great abilities endorsing the verity of spiritual phenomena. The book may certainly be regarded as the representative of a class; and as such, and as an important contribution to psychological science, it merits serious attention from those who profess to instruct public opinion; but we hope that its critics will *read* before they criticise it. This suggestion is not *superfluous*; we venture it as we know that it is not uncommon for periodical writers to *review* spiritual phenomena when they have never viewed them. We cannot, indeed, expect that that portion of the press which has recently filled its columns with details of a brutal prize fight that reminds one of the gladiator combats of degenerate and pagan Rome can find in enquiries of this nature a congenial theme; but, of that portion of the press which appeals to the human rather than the brute element of our nature,—which recognizes man as a spiritual being, and deals with topics relating to his duty and his destiny, we have a right to expect that the subject of this volume—so long shamefully ignored, or still more shamefully derided—will meet with a more earnest and respectful treatment than it commonly receives. A grave question of religion and philosophy, and a faith embraced by millions, after investigation, and on the evidence of facts is not to be bantered away. It cannot be disposed of by cheap jokes and clever sneers. If Spiritualism is to be dislodged from

its position, a heavier artillery must be brought to bear against it: the time for squibs and crackers has gone by. It must be shown either that such alleged facts as those in Mr. Owen's book are no facts, or, that though facts, they furnish "no clear palpable evidences of thought, of intention, of foresight;" or again, that these do not either involve a "thinker, an intender, a foreseer;" or, "that such thought, intention and foresight, though existing outside ourselves, is nevertheless, in some way, of mundane origin. Will hostile critics deal honestly and intelligently with the facts and reasonings in Mr. Owen's book?—dare they? We shall see. Meanwhile, it cannot fail to ventilate the subject in many new quarters, and secure for it in others a more respectful hearing.

We propose in future numbers to let some of Mr. Owen's facts speak for themselves.

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## TWO EVENINGS WITH MR. HOME.

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WE have received from two correspondents, well known to us, the following account of manifestations on the evenings of the 1st and 7th of May last, each evening in the presence of nine persons whose names have been furnished to us, and which we are permitted to supply privately to any inquirer who feels that the knowledge of the names is necessary for his belief. In the meantime we can vouch publicly for the perfect confidence which the narratives inspire us with, having heard the whole account from the lips of the narrators, previous to receiving the MS. from them.

May 1st, 1860.

The party was composed of Mr. and Mrs. Home and seven other ladies and gentlemen. We sat at the round table in the large drawing-room. Mr. Home's hand was moved to write:—"The spirit of John is one who was kind to your father during the voyage to America." No one understood this; but Mr. — entering the room a minute afterwards, expressed his conviction that it was intended for him, as his father had been to America. Three loud raps gave assent to what he said. The table then moved away from us, and we enquired if they wished us to draw it to the window. It was answered:—"Yes." We accordingly did so, leaving a vacant space against the window, unclosing the shutters, and by their directions extinguishing the candles. The fire burned brightly. It was spelled out:—"There is a little too much light." Mr. — and — screened the fire as much as possible, and the moon and gaslight from the street then alone lighted up the table; but did so completely as the moon was very bright. My dress was pulled, and the accordion was played upon. I asked if it was the spirit of N— who had pulled my dress a few nights ago when I sat alone; he answered:—"Yes," by pulling my dress strongly three times. A little baby pulled Mrs. L—'s dress—the spirit of a child very dear to her. The spirit of Albert then took the accordion and played a beautiful air of unearthly harmony. Mr. Home and I held the accordion together under the table, for the power was very strong, and

the music loud; and the instrument at times was nearly carried away from us. Then came a pause: we thought the power was gone; but there were raps for the alphabet, and it was said:—"The reason we do not do more is that we are waiting for another, more powerful, who will have the power to make his hand visible for at least five minutes."

After a short time there rose slowly in the space made by the window a most lovely hand of a female—we saw also part of the beautiful arm as it held it up aloft for some time—we were all greatly amazed. This hand was so transparent and luminous, and so unearthly and divine, that our hearts were filled with gratitude towards the Creator for permitting so wonderful a manifestation. The hand was visible to us more from the internal light which seemed to stream as it were out of it, than from the external light of the moon. As soon as it slowly vanished, Mdlle. —, who sat next to the open space, saw another hand forming itself close to her; and a man's hand was raised and placed on the table, far more earthly and life-like in appearance, and one that I thought I recognized (we were subsequently told that I was right in my conjecture). Then came a dear baby-hand; then the baby (Mrs. L——'s adopted child) showed its head; and finally, spirit-hands held up the little child so that all some of us saw her shoulders and waist. After this, a hand and arm rose luminous and beautiful, covered with a white transparent drapery; and this hand remained visible to us all for at least five minutes, and made us courteous and graceful gestures.

Then spirit-hands held up to us an exquisite wreath of white flowers. I never saw any wreath made by human hands so perfect in form and design; and calling for the alphabet they said:—"The spirit emblem of William's mother." Then we were told they would shew us "The emblem of superstition; and a black shrivelled hand arose. On some of us remarking that we could not see it well, the curtains were at once moved aside and the blind drawn away from the top of the window. It was beyond the reach of any of us; and they then showed us the hand again so that we all could see it. The "emblem of death" was then shewn. This was more beautiful than all the rest—a fairy-like fountain of apparently clear sparkling water which threw up showers of silvery rays, vanishing from our sight like mist, and dwelling on the memory as perfection. After this it was rapped out:—"We can do no more."

Mr. Home was put into a trance, and as he fell back in his chair a gleam of the most vivid light fell upon me. This light fell over my shoulders and gleamed on my right hand, and came from a direction whence no earthly light could have come. It came from a part of the room where the spirit of one who was a friend of mine when on earth has often stood before, and from whence he has communicated to us. This light was seen by no one but myself; but as I turned round in hope of seeing the spirit, Mr. Home said to me:—"Yes, he is there;" and added a communication from him. He then told us that the first hand that we saw had been that of his own mother; the second was my father's, as I had silently expected; and the hand and arm in drapery that remained so long, came for Prudence, and was the same that she had seen one night when alone, several years ago, at Paris, before she had ever heard of spirit-manifestations. He also gave us the full name of the "spirit John," who had gone to America with Mr. A——'s father; and added some private information, which Mr. A—— confirmed as true.

The events of this evening having been so wonderful, I have begged my friends present on the occasion to read over this account, and to sign it as witnesses to the truth of what I have stated: \* \* \* \* \*

9th May, 1860.

Mingling with those interested in witnessing evidences of spirit power, I gladly accepted an invitation to meet a few friends on Monday the 7th of May, 1860, at a house at the West-end. At a quarter after 8 o'clock, we went into the adjoining back drawing-room, and sat down at a lloo table. There were nine of us—Mr. Home being one of the number. Immediately the table commenced vibrating and gently lifting itself off the floor. I say lifting *itself*, because no human beings in human clay were the actors. Nothing occurred

for a few minutes, during which conversation was kept up, and then the table gradually rose up *off the floor* about four feet, or rather more than a foot beyond our outstretched arms, the hands of which had rested gently on the table before its ascent. It then descended. The accordion was asked for by the raps. Mr. Home took it in his right hand, by the rim at the bottom of the instrument, leaving his left hand on the table, and then were played some beautiful voluntaries, exquisitely attenuated, yet clear and melodious. They then came out gradually fuller, and yet more full, till the room seemed filled with the volume of sound like a pealing organ, still no false note. A friend, sitting next me, forgetting himself, exclaimed "My God, how wonderful!" and after a breath, asked "if they would give us some air we knew?" and having asked for "God save the Queen," it was played at once.

A lady present, whose little boy had recently died, had indications of her son being in the room; and the accordion suddenly commenced playing a well-known air, which on earth the little boy was very fond of, as tallying with his mamma's name. Reader, was not there a truth of *life* and of *love* in the incident? The mother thought so, and her tears betrayed her thoughts.

The detonations on the table, and sometimes under my hands, were as sharp, and as clear, and as loud, as if struck vigorously with the edge of a penny-piece.

It was then rapped out by the sounds—"Go to the window;" we rose, and moved the loo table to about eighteen inches from the window. I may in passing, state that, the room was about thirty-seven feet long, by about twenty-five wide, and about fifteen feet to the ceiling, bountifully supplied with the usual drawing-room furniture. We sat down again, but more closely, so as to allow a vacant space at the side of the table, *opposite* the window. The sounds then gave out "Put out the lights," which was done. We found that though the room was dark, yet the light from the window was sufficient for us to faintly see each other. The window-blind then commenced moving up and down—~~on~~ one near it—evidently to tone the light; and while we were remarking the singularity of the phenomenon, and how high it went, all looking at it—suddenly it sprung up to the top, and then came gently down to its original position. Mr. Home felt something on his head, and found it was a leaf. Suddenly the leaf of a geranium was taken and dropped into the lap of a lady sitting at the table. We heard the snap as if breaking off the stem of a flower, and immediately came down past the left ear of my friend, and on to his knee, a sprig of geranium; while he held it up for us to see, I expressed a wish to have one, when a sprig came past my right ear on to *my* knee, I picked it up, and while showing it, another came past my face as if from the ceiling. The geranium plant was in the room several feet from any of us, and the sprigs came down both on the right and left of me.

After a pause, Mr. Home said he felt as if he were about to be lifted up; he moved from the table, and shortly he said, "I am rising"—but we could not see him—"they have put me on my back." I asked, will you kindly bring him, as much as possible, towards the window, so that we may see him; and at once he was floated with his feet horizontally into the light of the window, so that we all saw his feet and a part of his legs resting or floating on the air like a feather, about six feet from the ground, and three feet above the height of the table. He was then floated into the dark; and he exclaimed, "They have turned me round, and I am coming towards you." I then saw his head and face, the same height as before, and as if floating on air instead of water. He then floated back, and came down and walked up to, and sat on the edge of the table we were at, when the table began to rise with him on it. He asked a lady to sit on the table, and perhaps the spirits would take them both up; the table moved a little and then was still. Mr. Home was then taken behind to the *settee* next to me; and while there, we heard sounds several times as of some one giving utterance to a monosyllable in the middle of the room. Feeling a pressure against my chair, I looked, and saw that the ottoman had been brought along the floor about six feet, no one touching it, and close to Mr. Home. He said, "I suppose it is for me to rest on."—he lay down, and the ottoman went back to its original position—"Oh! I am getting excited, some-one come and sit with me." I went, and sat beside him; he took my hands; and in about a

minute, and without any muscular action, he gently floated away from me, and was lost in the darkness. He kept talking to let us know where he was. We heard his voice in various parts of the further end of the room, as if near the ceiling. He then cried out, "Oh! they have brought me a cushion to sit upon—I am sitting on it—they are taking it away." Just then the tassel of the cushion of another ottoman in the room struck me on my hair and forehead as if coming from the ceiling, and the cushion was deposited at my feet on the door, falling as if a snow flake. I then saw the shadow of his body on the mirror as he floated along near the ceiling. He said, "I wish I had a pencil to make a mark on the ceiling. I have made a cross with my nail." He came down near the door, and after a pause he was again taken up; but I did not see him, but heard his voice as if near the ceiling. Again he came down, and shortly returned to the table we were at; and the sounds on the table bade us "Good night."

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### GHOSTS.\*

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ALL arguments against there being spiritual appearances, called ghosts, must necessarily be merely indirect. It is impossible, from the little knowledge we have of the spiritual world, that it can be proved, either that no such spiritual beings as are said to appear, exist—or, that being such, they cannot make themselves visible to human eyes. All negative evidence must, therefore, be indirect; and further, as we shall hereafter see, such evidence only goes to disprove the truth of the particular appearance affirmed, and not to disprove the possibility of any, or all, of such appearances. Further, the arguments of a general nature, usually urged on the negative side of the question, do not go to prove the non-existence of ghosts, but tend, merely, to weaken the evidence for their existence, and to lessen the probability of the general truth of their appearance. Or, if it be preferred, such arguments may be stated to come within the description before given of negative evidence, *i. e.*, they only go to disprove the truth of the particular appearance in question, at a particular

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\* "Ghost, (Anglo-Saxon *gast*, German *geist*,) shews its physical meaning in the cognate word 'gust,' as 'a gust of wind;' also in the term used to designate the æriform substances called 'gas.' In Old German, the grand-parent of English, *geisten* signified to blow. In a German Bible of the year 1483, 'the breath of life' is translated '*der geist des lebens*.' To 'give up the ghost' is literally, to surrender the breath; the 'Holy Ghost' is literally the breath of the Lord, as implied in his own words, when 'He breathed on his disciples, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' Where the English version of the Scriptures has 'ghost' and 'spirit,' the Anglo-Saxon reads '*gast*.' Wiclif, in his New Testament, spells 'the holi *goost*.' The 'gist' of a subject, like the 'spirit' of a book, or the *animus* of an action, signifies its soul or inmost principle. In German, *geist* continues to be used in many of the meanings which, with ourselves, are conveyed by 'spirit.' Thus,—

Was der *Geist* verspricht leistet die Natur.—*Schiller*.

'What the Spirit promises, Nature performs.'

GRINDON'S *Life—Nature, and Phenomena*.

time. These negative general arguments are, firstly, that ghosts are optical illusions caused either by the state of the seer's health of body or mind, or by some mesmeric or other analogous influence; and, secondly, that there is no sufficient motive for the appearance of ghosts; and that, therefore, they do not, or cannot appear. It is impossible that these arguments can disprove all the current accounts of ghostly appearances, for, in the first place, the health or diseasedness of the seer's body or mind is in most, or many of these cases, unknown; and the mode of operation of mesmeric and other like influences, we are still ignorant of. But if the state of body and mind were always known, and these operations fully understood, and it could be shewn, which in many cases we believe it would be impossible to do, that all the so-called appearances of ghosts could be explained as naturally resulting from, or as being consequent upon such peculiar state of body or mind, or from such operations of mysterious influences, yet such arguments would only tend to prove that certain known natural causes could produce appearances that might be taken to be ghosts; and that they *may have* done so in each particular case, and *not* that they *must* have done so. For two causes may produce a like effect: There may be merely the appearance of, or likeness to a ghost, arising from the above mentioned natural causes; or there may be the actual presence of a ghost, notwithstanding the operation of such causes; and even such presence may be possible only through their very operation. For it is possible, and many believe it to be even certain, that it is necessary for a person to be in a particular state of body or mind to see a ghost, even though the spirit be present. And should it be a doubt amongst believers in Christianity and the Bible, that spirits are always present with and around us, though, from the impediments of the senses, their presence is generally concealed? Much of the evidence that goes to prove the actual appearance of ghosts, goes to prove this necessity also. But, secondly, the negative argument, urged from the apparent absence of motive, is even weaker than the other one mentioned. We know little of the state in which departed spirits live, their connection with the earth after their separation from the body,—nor either, in many cases, the actual motive which may urge or allow a spirit to appear to man,—or, in any case, the power of any such motive to cause a particular appearance. Departed spirits may continue, for some time at least, to take as strong an interest in the affairs which interested them before their separation from the body, as they did before such separation; and as these affairs were frequently of the most trivial character in this world, similar trivial motives may be enough for such to come back for. The motive for a spirit's appearance might, therefore, if we knew

more of the connection between the visible and invisible worlds, appear to us sufficiently powerful to cause such appearance; and even the apparent motive may not be the real one; but may, in God's providence, have a much higher and wider object. But, even if we knew the actual power of the motives for every asserted appearance, the argument to be drawn from the insufficiency of such motives could only be used to disprove the truth of the particular actual appearances asserted, unless it could be demonstrated also that no motive could possibly be sufficient for any such appearance, which would be impossible, unless we knew intimately all the connections and operations of the visible world.

But arguments in favour of the affirmative of the question under discussion are, however, not only indirect, but direct also. However, the indirect affirmative arguments are equally strong as the indirect negative arguments, the question must be decided in the affirmative. The principal indirect affirmative arguments are two. The first arises from the fact, that man's spirit, which is the real man during his life in this world, does not really die, but merely enters into a new state of existence, disencumbered of its material body; and the second is, that not only is it probable that a spirit should appear to man, but that spirits have appeared to him throughout all recorded history, sacred and profane.

Firstly, then, disbelievers in ghosts will not, generally, deny that after leaving the body, man's spirit still lives a man. It is, although invisible to us, as indeed it was invisible when it was in the body; but why may it not become visible, under certain conditions? The negatist asserts, either that a spirit cannot become visible, or can do so on special occasions only—or that only particular spirits can become visible to human eyes. But what proofs are given to support these assertions? None! It is merely stated to be contrary to nature for ghosts to be seen. But it is not proved to be contrary to all nature, as a visible ghost is merely a visible existing spirit, and the argument only amounts to this:—"Spirits are not always seen, and therefore they cannot be ever seen!" But why not? We may take for granted that spirits are intensely visible to one another. A human being is but a spirit inhabiting a body; and is it absurd to suppose, that under certain conditions, of which mesmerism, clairvoyance, and Spiritualism furnish us with numberless instances, the body may lose its gross influence, and the spirit see spirit? On the contrary we know that it does so, and that the mesmerist obtains control over the mind and body of his patient, and the clairvoyant sees objects at a distance from her, and through obstacles which her natural vision could not pass through. These mysterious

agencies show, conclusively, the innate power and faculties of the spiritual being which the body encloses, and also its susceptibility. May not a disembodied spirit be able to obtain the same influence over an embodied one, as the mesmerist has over his patient, and may not the spirit so influenced see, as the clairvoyante sees things distant from her? But it may be said that if ghosts appear, they appear to the bodily eye. It may be so in some instances, but it is by no means certain. It is common that many persons have affirmed that they have seen spirits, whilst others present at the same time were unable to see them. But, if it be granted that the bodily eye must be the organ of vision, cannot spirits make themselves visible to the eye of sense? It has been suggested, with extreme probability, that some of the vibrations of light, or of ether, the motion of which conveys the impression of light, are so feeble as not to impress the human retina, and yet are sufficiently powerful to effect the retina of the eye of some of the inferior animals. It has often been observed that horses, and other of the inferior animals, have exhibited terror when nothing was visible to man to account for it; and the case of Balaam's ass will be a sufficient example of this to the believers in the truth of Scripture history. Does it not then appear that the eye is, in these cases, affected by the operation of some agent which does not affect the eye of man, and may not that operation be the interior vibration of the luminous ether to which we have just referred? It is contrary to all our ideas of the nature of mind, or at least of finite mind, to suppose that it can exist without some covering of substance, although that substance need not be material in the common acceptance of the word. We cannot imagine that mind, alone, can have station, or that it can become visible to the human eye without the intervention of something material to operate on the matter of man's sensible organs. In other words, it must be born out of its spiritual world into this sensuous world, and have a power of clothing itself for the moment in some material form. We are led to think of the spiritual body spoken of by St. Paul which seems to be the state of the spirit after death. We would ask, may not that spiritual body be to us of as subtle and invisible a substance as the luminous ether that pervades space? This ether is invisible to us, and yet it penetrates all other matter. If it be so, the presence of this body might be made visible to us in some manner corresponding to that in which the presence of the luminous ether is made visible, *i. e.* by vibration. But the intensity of light depends, ether on the length of the wave of light, or on the rapidity of vibration; and the luminousness of the spiritual covering might depend on the same law. It is very easy to believe that spirits have the power, in some way unknown



to us, of vibrating the matter of which their bodies are thus composed, so as to make themselves visible to the human eye under conditions also unknown to us. This theory might possibly explain the cause of the luminousness of most of the spirits which are said to have appeared, and further, point to the reason why spirits are usually invisible to man. Their vibrations seldom affect his retina; when they do affect it, the spirit ceases to be invisible.

This leads to the main point that the spirits of angels and also of known men have, undoubtedly, appeared to human beings. The inspired history of the Jews, and the early inspired records of Christianity contain numberless accounts of these appearances. Now, if these accounts be true, it follows that, under certain circumstances, spirits *may* become visible to the human eye. It cannot be said that these particular appearances were miraculous and therefore exceptional. Miracles are never performed by forcing nature to act contrary to its laws, but merely by bringing into operation certain higher laws of God. Nature cannot act contrary to its laws, and if therefore spirit cannot in its nature be seen by the human eye, spirits *can never* have become visible to it. But they have become visible to it; and we must therefore account for their appearance by some higher spiritual law—by virtue of which the spirit acts, and by virtue of which there is a suspension of the law of invisibility, whatever it may be. We have no right to account for any event by supposing a miracle, when it can, by higher knowledge, be accounted for as being the consequence of the operation of a larger law of nature. Nor can it be urged that the ghosts said to have appeared were the spirits of angels and not of men; for there is no warrant to suppose that there are any angels who have not been men. The word angel signifies messenger, and is frequently applied throughout the Scriptures to such appearances. There is no mention made of angels being a distinct race, nor is it easy to conceive of such, whilst it is distinctly proved that some of the ghosts or angels who appeared both in the Old and the New Testament were men. The spirits of men have, therefore, actually shewed themselves in the forms which we call ghosts. If these spirits then did become visible, it must have been by the operation of some law of their nature or of ours, or of both conjoined; and they may do the same now, or we must conceive that some essential part, either of their or of our organism, has been removed or changed, and that we or they are now less men or less spirits than in former and not far remote ages.

This brings us to the direct evidence in favour of the appearance of ghosts. Before entering on this portion of the subject, however, we will shortly compare the indirect evidence on both sides of the

question. On the negative side, we have arguments drawn from the illusions created by disease of body or mind, or the operations of the laws of mesmerism and other like agencies, and the absence of sufficient motives for the appearances. On the affirmative side we have arguments drawn from the spiritual nature of man and its conditions after leaving the body, the existence of the spiritual world, and the actual appearance of spirits in the early ages of the world, and the first days of Christianity down to the present, as our pages abundantly testify. The indirect evidence on both sides is merely probable; but when the direct evidence in favour of the appearance of ghosts is added, such evidence is perfectly conclusive. In all ages, from the very earliest to the latest—in all nations, from the most savage to the most highly civilized—in all classes, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, has the belief in ghosts prevailed, and the fact of their appearance has been asserted throughout the pages of sacred and profane writers. The truth of the stories related of their appearance at various times has not been and cannot be disputed, and there should be no wish that they should be disproved. Wise and sober men have not hesitated to affirm their belief founded on actual personal experience, and the national archives of nations contain the most perfectly authenticated accounts of these appearances. No motive for such wholesale misrepresentations and frauds, as must have been perpetrated, if all these accounts are false, has been shewn. The evidence on which they are received is at least as strong as that on which other natural appearances have been believed, and why should credence to that evidence be refused? It can be traced but to one source. The material elements of man's nature too often preponderate over the spiritual. It is because the spirit does not aspire to the companionship of its invisible kindred, and it either refuses to believe its intimacy with man on earth, or it strives to disbelieve such intimacy. A fear of the truth, however, lurks in most breasts, and the loudest asserter of disbelief is generally the first to take alarm, and to shew, if not in words, yet by actions, his lurking fear. Rapid advances in all knowledge are now being made. The veil that hides from us the operations of the unseen world seems to be already partially raised. Perhaps, before the end, the veil will be rent in twain, and man will commune once more with the glorious beings who now dwell in invisibility, and are clothed "with light as with a garment."

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[As a fitting pendant to this chapter on ghosts, we make the following selections from Mr. Owen's book on the same subject.—ED.]

"It is within my knowledge, that a few years since, at one of the chief English universities, a society was formed out of some of its most distinguished

members, for the purpose of instituting, as their printed circular expresses it, "a serious and earnest inquiry into the nature of the phenomena which are vaguely called supernatural." They subjected these to careful classification, and appealed to their friends outside of the society to aid them in forming an extensive collection of authenticated cases, as well of remarkable dreams as of apparitions, whether of persons living or of the deceased; the use to be made of these to be a subject for future consideration.

The society referred to was formed in the latter part of the year 1851, at Cambridge, by certain members of the University, some of them now at the head of well-known institutions, most of them clergymen and fellows of Trinity College, and almost all of them men who had graduated with the highest honors. The names of the more active among them were kindly furnished to me by the son of a British Peer, himself one of the leading members. To him, also, I am indebted for a copy of the printed circular of the society, an able and temperate document, which I subjoin. The same gentleman informed me that the archives of the society had resulted in a conviction, shared, he believed, by all its members, that there is sufficient testimony for the appearance, about the time of death or after it, of the apparitions of deceased persons; while in regard to other classes of apparitions the evidence, so far as obtained, was deemed too slight to prove their reality.

The society, popularly known as the "Ghost Club," attracted a good deal of attention outside its own circle. Its nature and objects first came to my knowledge through the Bishop of —, who took an interest in its proceedings and desired himself to obtain contributions to its records.

*"Circular of a Society, instituted by Members of the University of Cambridge, for the purpose of investigating Phenomena popularly called Supernatural."*

"The interest and importance of a serious and earnest inquiry into the nature of the phenomena, which are vaguely called "supernatural," will scarcely be questioned. Many persons believe that all such apparently mysterious occurrences are due either to purely natural causes, or to delusions of the mind or to wilful deception. But there are many others who believe it possible that the beings of the unseen world may manifest themselves to us in extraordinary ways, and also are unable otherwise to explain many facts, the evidence for which cannot be impeached. Both parties have obviously a common interest in wishing cases of supposed "supernatural" agency to be thoroughly sifted. If the belief of the latter class should be ultimately confirmed, the limits which human knowledge respecting the spirit-world has hitherto reached might be ascertained with some degree of accuracy. But in any case, even if it should appear that morbid or irregular workings of the mind or senses will satisfactorily account for every such marvel, still, some progress would be made toward ascertaining the laws which regulate our being, and thus adding to our scanty knowledge of an obscure but important province of science. The main impediment to investigations of this kind is the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of clear and well-attested cases. Many of the stories current in tradition, or scattered up and down in books, may be exactly true; others must be purely fictitious; others, again—probably the greater number—consist of a mixture of truth and falsehood. But it is idle to examine the significance of an alleged fact of this nature until the trustworthiness, and also the extent, of the evidence on which it are ascertained. Impressed with this conviction, some members of the University of Cambridge are anxious, if possible, to form an extensive collection of authenticated cases of supposed "supernatural" agency. When the inquiry is once commenced, it will evidently be needful to seek for information beyond the limits of their own immediate circle. From all those, then, who may be inclined to aid them, they request written communications, with full details of persons, times, and places; but it will not be required that names should be inserted without special permission, unless they have already become public property: it is, however, indispensable that the person making any communication should be acquainted with the names, and should pledge himself for the truth of the narrative from his own knowledge or conviction:

"The first object, then, will be the accumulation of an available body of

facts: the use to be made of them must be a subject for future consideration; but, in any case, the mere collection of trustworthy information will be of value. And it is manifest that great help in the inquiry may be derived from accounts of circumstances which have been at any time considered "supernatural," and afterward proved to be due to delusions of the mind or senses, or to natural causes; (such, for instance, as the operation of those strange and subtle forces which have been discovered and imperfectly investigated in recent times;) and, in fact, generally, from any particulars which may throw light indirectly, by analogy or otherwise, on the subjects with which the present investigation is more expressly concerned.

"The following temporary classification of the phenomena about which information is sought may serve to show the extent and character of the inquiry proposed.

" I. Appearance of angels.

- (1.) Good.
- (2.) Bad.

" II. Spectral appearances of

- (1.) The beholder himself, (*e.g.* "Fetches" or "Doubles.")
- (2.) Other men, recognized or not.
  - (i.) Before their death, (*e.g.* "Second-Sight.")
    - (a.) To one person.
    - (b.) To several persons.
  - (ii.) At the moment of their death.
    - (a.) To one person.
    - (b.) To several persons.
      - 1. In the same place.
      - 2. In several places.
        - i. Simultaneously.
        - ii. Successively.
  - (iii.) After their death. In connection with
    - (a.) Particular places, remarkable for
      - 1. Good deeds.
      - 2. Evil deeds.
    - (b.) Particular times, (*e.g.* on the anniversary of any event, or at fixed seasons.)
    - (c.) Particular events, (*e.g.* before calamity or death.)
    - (d.) Particular persons, (*e.g.* haunted murderers.)

" III. "Shapes" falling under neither of the former classes.

- 1. Recurrent. In connection with
  - (i.) Particular families, (*e.g.* the "Banshee.")
  - (ii.) Particular places' (*e.g.* the "Mawth Dog.")
- 2. Occasional.
  - (i.) Visions signifying events, past, present, or future.
    - (a.) By actual representation, (*e.g.* "Second-sight.")
    - (b.) By symbol.
  - (ii.) Visions of a fantastical nature.

" IV. Dreams remarkable for coincidences

- (1.) In their occurrence,
  - (i.) To the same person several times.
  - (ii.) In the same form to several persons.
    - (a.) Simultaneously.
    - (b.) Successively.
- (2.) With facts
  - (i.) Past.
    - (a.) Previously unknown.
    - (b.) Formerly known, but forgotten.
  - (ii.) Present, but unknown.
  - (iii.) Future.

"V. Feelings. A definite consciousness of a fact.

- (1.) Past,—an impression that an event has happened.
- (2.) Present,—sympathy with a person suffering or acting at a distance.
- (3.) Future,—presentiment.

"VI. Physical effects.

- (1.) Sounds.
  - (i.) With the use of ordinary means, (*e.g.* ringing of bells.)
  - (ii.) Without the use of any apparent means, (*e.g.* voices.)
- (2.) Impressions of touch, (*e.g.* breathings on the person.)

"Every narrative of "supernatural" agency which may be communicated will be rendered far more instructive if accompanied by any particulars as to the observer's natural temperament, (*e.g.* sanguine, nervous, &c.,) constitution, (*e.g.* subject to fever, somnambulism, &c.,) and state at the time, (*e.g.* excited in mind or body, &c.)

"Communications may be addressed to  
Rev. B. F. Westcott, Harrow, Middlesex,

[Our correspondents who send us so many incidents for publication, would greatly assist us in carrying out the inquiries to a scientific result, if they will be particular in noticing and recording the conditions prescribed by this excellent circular. —ED.]

## DR. FORBES WINSLOW ON SPIRITUALISM.

THERE is an article on "Modern Magicians and Mediomaniacs" in the last number of Dr. Forbes Winslow's *Journal of Psychological Medicine and Mental Pathology* which we have lost time in reading, in the hope that we might have fallen upon, at all events, some clever hits at Spiritualism, and some fair dealing with its facts. Dr. Blank, who has now favoured us with his observations of the facts in the two last numbers of the Magazine, is a gentleman of quite as high a reputation as Dr. Forbes Winslow, and in the special branch of medicine too, in which Dr. Winslow has obtained his fame, and it is in the face of Dr. Blank's solemn affirmation of the facts of Spiritualism, that Dr. Forbes Winslow can allow his journal to be the medium of such a paragraph as that which follows.

Our readers must remember that this is one of the few high-class journals in Europe, which devotes itself to the study of Psychology. What a state science must be in when its best teachers are so utterly at fault as to facts which are now the A B C of millions! We know that we are monthly teasing our readers by a repetition of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, but they must see the necessity of our doing so, when a

man, in the position of Dr. Winslow, dare stand up before the public, and flatly deny the whole range of them.

"It can need only a hint to our readers (if the thought has not been painfully present to them during the whole of their reading) to direct their attention, and to lead them at once to apprehend that the principles and practices taught by M. Levi are but a phrase of *that pseudo-scientific delusion—animal magnetism which has settled into a chronic state amongst us, as well as of the epidemic delusions of table-turning and spirit-rapping, which have so recently prevailed in this country.* We are too apt to forget that the cessation of the two latter delusions as epidemics by no means implies their total cessation. It would be easy to prove if it were needful that both delusions, as well as that of animal magnetism, exist in a chronic form . . . . ."

*We assume that the substratum of these wide-spread delusions and their congeners chiefly results from a fundamental error of education, both of the emotions and intellect in early life, and that this substratum and the causes engendering it are pretty much the same in every case. We are not going to dogmatise on the precise nature either of the substratum or its causes."*

Now what can be done with this good man who thinks he is doing science and the world a service by his insane lucubrations? Can it be that one of his patients has substituted the manuscript for the real one written by Dr. Winslow? It would be a charity to think so, for it is evident that Dr. Winslow's mind is in an unsound or insane condition, when he denies facts which exist, and says they are delusions. His mind is hallucinated and . . . ; but he must supply the definition.

In our wonderment at his mental state, we unconsciously turned over other pages of the same number of his journal, and there, to our amusement, we found another article, which is in some degree a practical refutation of his own arguments. This is no uncommon case. Generally after a little talk with one of these bold gentlemen, you will have to listen to some ghost or dream-story, which they know to be true, and which is enough to make your hair stand on end, and so it chanced that we had turned to a review of Mr. Morell's translation of *Fichte's Contributions to Mental Philosophy*, of which there was a somewhat exhaustive and not entirely complimentary notice in our first number.

Fichte talks largely of "the preconscious powers of the soul" as accounting for many of the wonders of Spiritualism, which is only another phrase for Dr. Carpenter's "unconscious cerebration," and for Mr. Morell's "reflex action of the mind;" but it sounds well and has no definite meaning, and is therefore very philosophical; but when Dr. Forbes Winslow, or his contributor, comes to this portion of Fichte's work, he illustrates it the wrong way by a fact in his own knowledge, which destroys his settled idea of delusion. It is a case of *felo de se*, in which he has fortunately the power to drive the stake through his own body, and to bury himself in the four-cross-roads of publicity, as a warning to others whose theories are killed by their own facts.

His story is a pretty little one, very well told, and evidently true; and our readers will be much obliged to him for it.

"The writer of this article, some years ago, called upon a widow lady, whose only son was then in New Zealand. The writer was received by the lady's daughter, who stated that her mother was too unwell to see visitors, having been much distressed during the previous night by a very painful dream. She dreamed that she saw her son pursued, struck down, and killed by two New Zealanders, whose countenances were pictured to her with perfect distinctness, and she related her son's dying exclamation. In due course the mails from New Zealand brought intelligence that verified this prevision in a general way. The young man was last seen by his companions flying for his life from two of the natives, who were believed to have killed him immediately afterwards, and that at the very time of his mother's dream. In this case, neither the faces of the murderers, nor the last words of the victim, could be compared with the details of the vision; but the general coincidence was remarkable, and the writer relates it because the dream was brought under his notice so long before its verification was received. He is able to state, moreover, from personal knowledge, that the lady was not one of those habitual dreamers, who are almost certain to meet with a coincidence in the course of a lifetime."

We should be glad if Dr. Forbes Winslow will tell us, whether the belief of his contributor of the fact of this dream "*chiefly resulted from a fundamental error of education, both of the emotions and intellect in early life,*" and whether that "*substratum of these wide-spread delusions*" was the cause of the Emperor Louis Napoleon and his Empress, and the Duchess de Montebello seeing a spirit-hand take a pen from the inkstand and write the word "Napoleon" in the autograph of the Great Emperor, and another hand appear at the same sitting, and write "Hortense" in the autograph of the Emperor's mother? Was it a fundamental error of education in Dr. Blank, which broke his table, threw a chair from one side of the room to the other, and caused the "*grotesque phenomena*" which so puzzled him? Is Lord Lyndhurst still so oppressed by the errors of his early education that he cannot give a correct opinion as to his table being raised without contact nearly to the ceiling, and a leg broken in its descent? Or, that an accordion played a tune in his own hand, without his touching the keys? What was the precise want in the education and present powers of perception of the nine gentlemen and ladies, who vouch for the marvellous appearances which happened this month of May, and are recorded at page 266 of the present number?

Was the late Robert Stephenson unqualified by his education to examine and pronounce a positive opinion on the phenomena of Spiritualism? What is the "*substratum*" which interposes a veil before the eyes and mind of Sir Bulwer Lytton?—or of the Emperor of Russia?

Who are these critics, and what was their early education, which they appear to think so much of? Dr. Winslow is pretty well known to a large circle, as a person of average competent

understanding, but he by no means comes out as a shining light, even in his own selected branch of study and research. The truth is in the old fact, that no man is clever beyond his knowledge, and that even Dr. Winslow cannot write with advantage, either to himself, or to the public, on phenomena which he has not observed. We happen to know that he has received private warning against pledging himself to a denial of the facts of Spiritualism, but he has unfortunately disregarded the wholesome advice that was given to him. We judge that, had he availed himself to the full of his early education, he would not have been now in the unfortunate case of denying the existence of those spiritual forces which are the lower out-croppings of those higher manifestations on which Christianity is built up.

It would be almost irreverent to apply Dr. Winslow's diagnostic allegations to the spiritual appearances and phenomena recorded throughout the Old and New Testament, but in reality they apply with equal force to the dreams, visions, apparitions, and spiritual teachings, which make up the written Word—to its miracles, and to the possibility of any acting by Providence in the affairs of this world. If those things be true, they are not only possible, but are promised as the highest inheritance of the race; and if they be not true, the Bible must fall with them, a result which would be but inadequately compensated by having Dr. Winslow for our teacher.

It is a curious psychological problem "how a man who admits the spiritual marvels of the Scriptures, as Dr. Winslow does most fully, should conclude that other events of the same kind in all ages, not recorded in Scriptures, have been and are purely natural, and the results of nervous agitation and disease."

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THE HON. ROBERT DALE OWEN arrived in England in the middle of May, by the *Vanderbilt*, and at once proceeded *en route* for Naples. He expects to return to England in the middle of June, and to make some stay amongst us. "*The Footfalls*" has now reached its fifth edition of 2000 each, and is still selling fast, as it well deserves to do. We would advise all our readers to buy it, and when they meet with a particularly sceptical person (he will sure to be an F.R.S.) to lend it to him, and insist on his reading it.

Mr. Owen mentions, that he does not expect to publish his next work till the 1st of January, 1862. We hope that, even at the risk of less polish, we may have the substantial benefit of his work on the evoked phenomena of Spiritualism, at least twelve months earlier than that long day.

JUDGE EDMONDS has sent us an article on the position taken up by Mr. Harris in his well-known sermon, and in which he entirely vindicates both the men and the cause in America from the impulsive diatribe of Mr. Harris. So much, however, has already appeared in the Magazine on this now worn-out subject, that we fear to weary our readers by pursuing it. The more so, as we have now received the second and concluding article of Mr. Howitt on the Three Phases of Spiritualism, which will appear in our next number.



## LEAVES FROM A SPIRIT DIARY.

## LEAF THE FIRST.

UNDER the above heading I purpose to offer to the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* some of the results which I have obtained during the last few years by various modes of spirit-communion, and at present, I shall more especially present such replies as I have received from spirits by means of the faculty of writing mediumship. It seems to me that chronological order is scarcely necessary—where any curious fact dips up from the ocean of investigation, it will be recorded—and as the date is proposed to be always rigidly given, such persons who may think the order of time more interesting to them, will be enabled to check and compare passages—indeed, by that means, individuality may be more evidently seen and the verity of the whole subject confirmed.

It is necessary to state that these papers are commenced under feelings of a sad and sombre hue. They are begun in the hope that a recent grief may to some extent be effaced by their composition; and that, in their usefulness, they may form a resting-place for the thoughts of others, as well as for mine.

Having premised thus much as to the origin of these papers, let me proceed to briefly state the mode in which it became possible for me to receive the results contained in them.

My attention had been drawn to the phenomena now known as *Spiritualism* in the year 1853, at which time I read some reports in relation to the subject, and subsequently purchased a volume very astounding to me, and probably to others. I mean the first volume of Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter's *Spiritualism*. I read the volume with avidity, for, in common with most persons, I longed for some proof beyond mere innate suspicion of an eternal life beyond the bounds of matter. I was not, and am not, one of those who are continually thinking that other men want, upon grave and serious topics, to deceive, or to give aught but their honest testimony—especially in such cases, where worldly interests are not only not bound up with the advocacy of certain religious doctrines—as is unhappily the case now in many sects and parties of the Christian commonwealth—but where worldly advancement, personal character, even rights of property under lunacy statutes, might be impeded, lost or abrogated, by the illiberal classes. I felt, in the perusal of Judge Edmonds' book that I was reading a faithful recital of what, no matter whether in itself true or false, was, at any rate, *firmly* believed by that gentleman. I knew that on all other questions his opinion would

have due weight; his integrity stood unimpeached among his countrymen. Then, why was I to lower him to unreliability? The gratuitous assertion of such marvels would have done him no good, but when such things become matters of duty, and duty self-imposed, to hurl deception, or even insincerity in the teeth of such as labour for truth is worse than unkind.

I therefore accepted this honest testimony as to the extraordinary matters related in the book. I reserved to myself the right of an opinion upon their intellectual value, their tendency, their ultimate designs. I held myself free to judge them in every way—save to *judge them out of existence*. That would have been worse than folly, for even if forgeries, they were, in the emphatic American term "*thar*'."

I own that they first dazzled me—that they even now, in some passages, as my annotated copy would show, raise interesting speculations in my mind—but there was to me, and is still, a theatrical glare in them, as a whole, which caused me to doubt that they came from such spirits—represented as of the highest of the intellectual order—men like Bacon and Swedenborg. I was then very superficially acquainted with the latter author, and certainly, had I then read any of the earthly works of the learned Swede, I should have acquitted him of any personal share in the communications published by the Judge.

It was therefore to the personal testimony of the joint authors upon earth that I most directed my attention. Here I found store of wonders indeed, though common enough among us now—aye, and transcended in every respect.

I thought these knockings, these table-turnings, these phenomena, if they can be produced in America, can they not also be brought about here? and if so to be brought about, why not by such as form my own family?

Upon these ideas I and a few others acted and obtained results, indeed; but results which only led to a final abandonment of the matter, and a recurrence to other and more terrestrial pursuits. These results, scouted then, I recognize as spiritual phenomena—"true grit," now. They consisted in tables turned, tables upset, tables tilted, and by tilts, words, and sentences spelt out amidst the recriminations and mutual accusations of all present.

The subject did drown my mind for a space—as in winter plants die down to burst into floral splendour in the early spring—died down, as uncertainty brings on scepticism, and scepticism reflection—and reflection, if patient and continuous, a glorious solution. I purchased other works:—Hare's *Investigations*; Linton's *Healing of the Nations*; *The Great Harmonia* of Andrew Jackson Davis, but still thought little of the matter; nor

would it have been anything to me further than a matter of literary interest, if the following circumstances had not taken place.

Among the few real friends I have ever had, I numbered one who, had he spared himself and been spared, might at one time have attained high position among us. His name is well known to many—Theodore Alois Buckley—his end best hidden from the knowledge of all. But long before his death, when I visited him at Oxford, and ere I had entered on the studies which these papers will, to some extent, illustrate, we had spoken of such solemn matters as death and future life; and, as others had done before, made a “compact of appearance,” and a sign to be given by the first who departed to the survivor. Mr. Crosland has given in his pamphlet on apparitions, the best account of his first apparition to me after death, which I had written in a letter to him not a month after the occurrence, and which, therefore, will be fresher than anything else I can give now. The death occurred on the 30th of January, 1856. Mr. Crosland thus writes:\*

“On the night of the 2nd of February, about twelve or half-past twelve o’clock, Mr. Mackenzie was lying in bed, watching the candle expiring, preparing his mind for sleep, and *not thinking of his departed friend*, when he felt placed over one eye and his forehead a cool damp hand. On looking up he saw Buckley in his ordinary apparel, and with his portfolio under his arm, as in life, standing at the bedside. The figure, as soon as it was recognised, retreated to the window (through which a gas lamp was shining into the room), and after remaining plainly in sight for about a minute, disappeared.”

It should be mentioned that, in the letter which I sent to Mr. Crosland, I made use of words to the following effect:—“That I had been up to see the poor fellow in his coffin that day, and, although I was not thinking of him at night, I did not know whether my imagination had been impressed by that circumstance.” This Mr. Crosland did not state to his audience when he delivered the lecture subsequently fashioned into the book. But I am glad that I made the remark, because it shews that whatever the state of my mind upon these subjects now, I was not “hallucinated” then.

On two other occasions, both remarkable and interesting to myself, the same apparition occurred, and at such time I was not in bed, but moving about in my room. The first occurrence happening when I had suddenly run up from the street to fetch something I wanted. Then the figure was seated upon the sofa, and rose and passed between me and the bright fire, obscuring

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\* Crosland's *Apparitions: A New Theory*, 2nd Ed. p. 38.

it, but presently vanishing, with an indication of something I was anxious to find, and which, on the last appearance, he shewed me in his hand. What was I, in the face of such singular circumstances, to say or to conclude? Nothing but that the pledge had been fulfilled, the future rendered to me a certainty, and the conviction induced upon my mind that I had been rescued from a state of philosophical pantheism.

The letter which I had addressed to Mr. Crosland produced an acquaintance with that gentleman, and I copy from my diary the following particulars of my first visit on Monday, March 12, 1856:—

“To-night I visited Mr. and Mrs. Crosland for the purpose of examining into the subject of spirit-manifestations; and, although the weak state of Mrs. C.’s health did not permit her to sit for manifestations this evening, I obtained the following information on the subject, always supposing that my friends are not in some manner self-deluded. Mrs. C. first heard the raps a night in her bed about twenty-three years ago, at which she was much terrified, but, by dint of prayer, she was enabled to rid herself of them, and she felt them no more until after her visits to Ealing, at Mr. Rymer’s, where Mr. D. D. Home, then recently from America, was staying. On the occasion of her visits to Ealing, she saw tables of great size suspended in the air without the persons present having any influence over them; spectral hands moving about and patting and touching various objects and persons; and, in fact, all the manifestations we have already heard of as occurring at Ealing. Miss Rymer has been developed as a medium. With reference to Mrs. C. herself, she stated that not only one sense, but several, had been made the avenue for spiritual impressions. In addition to the raps, she had smelt flowers presented to her by the spirits, had seen ‘sapphire gems, five in number, in a little cloud before her, had heard music in the air, and knew that the spirits could read her thoughts by the allusions that were made at the table on latter occasions. The spirits (of which forty had communicated with Mr. and Mrs. C.), informed them that certain conditions of atmosphere, such as dryness, were more favourable than others for communicating; that the acacia and laburnum wood were better mediums than other woods; that magnetism was the power or outer mode of inter-communication, and that the raps were caused by the gathering together or concentration of quantities of magnetism.

“Prayer appeared to them to be the only certain means of inducing truthful communications; but it may be asked here very justly, what the test of truth is? Truth can only be detected by consistency, and the American communications (if not forgeries), are quite as consistent.”

The concluding passage well shows the sceptical condition of my mind, at this period, unwilling to accept anything not proved in some manner by the means of intellect.

I visited Mr. C.'s house on many occasions, and could not but be highly satisfied with the genuineness of belief evinced by my friends, proved by their subsequent publications, and the utter impossibility of trickery on the part of the medium, a young lady of the most gentle and attractive person and mind, and more like a visitor from a better place than this earth, than an inhabitant of it.

Shaken in my scepticism I re-perused such books as I had purchased, procured others, and remained in a semi-indifferent attitude until another event occurred, which I will relate in the next paper.

K. R. H. M.

#### THE ORPHAN CHILD'S WISH.

I would I were an angel, mother, an angel bright and fair,  
To be with you in Heaven above, and dwell for ever there ;  
To hear your gentle words of love, to see your angel face,  
And nestle to your bosom in a loving long embrace.

I would I were an angel, mother, one of the shining band,  
Who wear the golden crown of love in the happy morning land,  
Cled in white robes of innocence, and garlanded with flowers,  
More beautiful than ever grow in this cold world of ours.

I would I were an angel, mother, to hear the angels sing,  
To join them in their songs of praise to Jesus, Lord and King.  
I know to me you come in dreams, I feel your warm fond kiss,  
And hear your words like music from a happier world than this.

And when I wake it seems to me as though a rich perfume,  
Did scent the air around my bed, and fill my little room.  
And I feel so glad and happy, my heart is full of glee,  
Oh! I would I were an angel! Dearest mother, may it be?

T. S.

At one of the recent midnight tea-meetings to promote the welfare of fallen women in the metropolis, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, addressing the unfortunates present, remarked in the course of his address:—"Many loving fathers and affectionate mothers at that very moment were bending from their heavenly seats, and with all their power striving to lead a fallen child back to the paths of virtue and of peace."

## Correspondence.

### FACTS.

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

SIR,—A friend of mine, my wife, myself, and a little boy sat down the other evening to a large table, and proposed "to try and get the raps."

We had not sat ten minutes before, to our agreeable surprise, we heard some very distinct raps on the floor. I directly asked the questions—Is there a medium amongst us? Rap, rap, rap. Who is the medium—is it my wife? No. Is it myself? No. Is it my friend? Yes.

He was as frightened as surprised, and if it had not been for my oft-repeated request to sit still and keep quiet, he would have several times been off and left us. But after a few words in explanation that there was no cause for fear, we proceeded.

I placed a sheet of paper and a pencil on the floor, and requested that they would write. We asked (after waiting some minutes) if they had written anything? Yes. I picked up the paper and there was plenty of scribble, although not intelligible. I asked them to move the table, and they repeatedly raised it from one foot to one-and-a-half feet off the floor! The little boy asked, if it could touch his feet? Yes. And in about twenty seconds a large hand grasped him round the thigh: he says he distinctly felt the fingers; it so both alarmed and surprised him that he burst into tears, and it was not for some minutes that he could tell us what he had felt.

We met again a few evenings after, and then heard the raps exceedingly loud on the floor. We could not get them to move the table, but they shook it violently, and pinched the toe of a friend who was sitting next to me five or six times. At another meeting we had a spirit present, who gave his name (through the alphabet), told us that he had committed suicide—told us who his relatives were, and as far as we could ascertain, the information was correct.

The same evening a spirit gave its recognizance by telling us that a skull which we had in the house was hers when on earth, and in answer to further questioning, said, that we ought not to keep it, but return it to the person who gave it us. We asked who that person was, and the name was given us correctly. We asked what he ought to do with it, and were told that he should bury it, and that it was not right to keep such things. In answer to all our questions, we had very clear and loud responses, and were one and all thoroughly convinced that Spiritualism was not a "humbug" but a reality not to be jested and played with, but seriously to be investigated and considered.

We were also pleased that there was no professional medium present, nor stranger with us, but that the power was produced through ourselves (and if we cannot trust ourselves—who can we trust?) and that quite unexpectedly.

There are some sceptics, I believe, who if they were mediums themselves, would not even then believe it. If they see any decided manifestations that they cannot say are "trickery," "humbug," "electricity," or a score more ready-invented explanations, they then tell us it must be imagination! If their minds be so weak that imagination can so easily work upon them, then I can only say that ours are better trained and not so easily deceived, but that when we see a table raised off the floor, we can believe it is off the floor; and that when we can ourselves do it, without the help of any professional mediums or strangers, we do not think we are using legerdemain for the sake of deceiving ourselves; nor do we think that imagination can write on paper, and let us keep the result to look at for any future time, and yet keep up its deception to all futurity.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

R. H. W.

London, May, 1860.

## INTROVISION.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—It has often been a matter of surprise to me, as a reader of many spiritual reports, that I have never in any of them found a mention of that great and mysterious branch of Spiritualism, which circumstances have thrown me continually in the way of. I allude to the introvisionary influence of crystals or pure waters. The operating cause of it, is as dark to me as are most other of these only just developing mysteries; but the *effect* is a reality most indisputable by any most rigorous investigation; that is, provided a sufficiently developed medium be chosen; otherwise, *demonstrative* evidence must give place to mere matter for faith.

My first enlightenment occurred at the house of a celebrated lady and spiritualist in London, where I was pleased to make the acquaintance of a very young lady, whose truthful innocent face attracted me on her first entrance. I soon heard that she was a far-developed medium, and that she possessed a power of introvision by water or crystal influences. She offered me proof of it, and gave me choice of either present or future revelations. I chose the present, thinking it soonest subject to proof; and then clasped her wrist, while she looked into a glass of clarified water. The effect of this was the description by her of all my thoughts, and a delineation of scenes which my family or friends were then presenting. The details would not be interesting to others, and they were too many and various to recount. One, however, was rather more striking to us than the rest. It was the description of a person who appeared in my family's circle at that moment:—a young man, tall, broad, very fair, with a very large beard. I knew no such gentleman; and in writing home the particulars of that evening's illustration, I recounted this last with particularity. I was afterwards told that the gentleman was introduced at home on that very day.

Besides this young lady, I know of only one or two similar mediums; and one where I have opportunity of *testing*, is my own sister, whose mediumship was found already perfect when I first excited her curiosity to try it. She has been many many times proved by sceptics, with subjects totally unknown to her, and perhaps at an ocean's distance from her; and she has never in the closest detail failed. Indeed, she far excels any other medium I have heard of. Her pictures of the *future* are equally vivid. Sometimes they are presented to her *allegorically*, and sometimes *really*. The beings and things composing the pictures are coloured and moving exactly as a life scene would be, viewed through the diminishing glass of a telescope, but appearing quite close.

Sometimes they are changed dissolvingly—sometimes distinctively. Their description is more beautiful than anything I have heard before; and the words she often uses in her descriptions are far above her own unaided or uninspired power; and we are careful to transcribe them at the moment.

The revelations are ever judiciously chosen; and there is a tone so exquisitely religious in many of them, that I have seen men glad to turn away with wet eyes whilst reading them.

I remember, a while since, we could not help laughing at the admission from a notably clever "University Don," that he had read himself into a "*thundering fright*."

I have many of these little papers at hand; but I do not see any that are not of too particular a nature for publication. None like their little future histories to be smiled at, or seen in any light less holy than their own reverence casts round their particular rights.

Oxford.

TEACHER.

[The following note in Reichenbach's *Dynamics of Magnetism, &c.*, by Dr. ASHBURSER; at p. 466, will give some information as to the mode of making experiments by the water.—Ed.]

"A phial of clear glass, containing eight or ten ounces of filtered water, or a clear globe holding a quart of water, answers the purpose well. It should be mesmerized by some person with a large brain, by darting the odic sparks from

the fingers upon the surface of the water at several hundred strokes, and by breathing on it for some minutes. The vessel then closed, should be placed in the hands of the sensitive person, who is to look continuously into it. I have placed vessels of water so prepared in the hands of numerous sensitive persons, most of them quite unaware of the object of my requesting them to look steadily at the water. Some in the course of a few minutes have seen beautiful visions of persons and things that have given them delight, others have seen objects which have terrified them. Some have described vividly charming country scenes, with elegant companies of ladies and gentlemen, gaily attired, at boat races on a river; others have seen hunting gentlemen in scarlet uniforms on fine horses; some have seen funerals and churchyards; others sick rooms, with death's-heads flitting about the surface of the bed of sickness. Some have truly predicted to me the approach to the house of friends, who were to knock at my door at stated times."

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### SIGNS BEFORE DEATH.

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

SIR,—As I have collected materials under this head, I shall be happy to communicate them, from time to time, to the *Spiritual Magazine*. My ultimate purpose is to form a volume of them, with such connecting remarks as may appear useful. At present I send you an account of its immediate interest, a slip from the *Daily Press*. It is an extract from a letter addressed to Professor Newman, and relates to the celebrated Unitarian clergyman of Boston, U.S., who has died in Italy.

"Florence, May 11, 1860.

"I have sad news to communicate. Our dear suffering friend, Theodore Parker, died yesterday evening. Yet there never was an easier end to a life but lately full of vigour. I saw him about three hours before he died, lying calmly, while life was ebbing away unconsciously to himself. He left written directions for his funeral, limiting to five persons the attending him to the grave, of whom I am one. Many Americans here are expressing their wish to appear as mourners; but it is thought right to abide by his instructions. He desired the eleven first verses of the Sermon on the Mount (the Blessings of Jesus) to be read over his grave; and then a plain grey stone, with his name and age, and nothing further of inscription. Mr. Cunningham, a Boston Unitarian minister, will read the passage. He is a sincere friend and admirer of Parker's. We hope to get a cast taken of Mr. Parker to-day. Mrs. Parker, his poor gentle wife, has hitherto borne up well. Miss Stevenson, who has so long resided with them, was also with him to the last. She thinks, from the peculiar tenderness of his manner yesterday, that he knew he was dying. He had been dreamy for some days, and talked ramblingly of two Theodore Parkers, one here, and one planted in Boston, who would finish his work; perhaps a true thought, only mystically expressed. Among his last well-connected words were these:—'Of course, you know I am not afraid to die, though I wished to live and finish much work which I longed to do. I had great powers committed to me, and I have but half used them.'

"Since writing this, I have seen him lying, O so peacefully! I have never seen death under a form so devoid of terror. The hectic colour remains on his cheek, and it is hard to persuade oneself he has passed away. He ceased to breathe without the least struggle."

Yours, &c.,

E. R.

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"At the New York Spiritual Conference in May last, Mr. Drake mentioned that he had witnessed recently, a very interesting manifestation through Mr. Colchester. A niece of his in the spirit-world purported to be present, and, after communicating, as he was about to leave, Mr. Colchester spoke of a peculiar sensation of the skin on his chest, when, on opening his shirt bosom, the word Sarah (the name of his niece) was found upon the skin; the name was in raised letters, and occupied nine inches of space from right to left across the chest."—*Herald of Progress*.