

# THE SPIRITUAL RECORD.

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## *THE TESTIMONY OF EPES SARGENT.*

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**M**R. EPES SARGENT, author of "Planchette, or the Despair of Science," "The Proof Palpable of Immortality," and of "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," has but recently departed this life, leaving behind him, in the above works, and especially the latter, a worthy monument and a noble testimony to the cause of truth.

Surely there can be none more worthy. The highest gift to man is truth, and the most important truth, to him, is the fact of his own immortality. The greatest benefactor is one by whom "life and immortality are brought to light."

In his latest work Mr. Sargent took for his motto the saying of Alexander von Humboldt, which we translate—"A presumptuous scepticism which rejects facts without examination is more deplorable than the credulity which as hastily accepts them." A good motto for all Spiritualists and all Materialists—for those especially who cry "impossible!" without the least examination of the phenomena they deny.

Mr. Epes Sargent was an American, born in or near Boston, educated to the legal profession, but by choice a poet, dramatist, and journalist—a man of a clear head, a warm heart, of refined taste, good judgment, and above all a lover and brave champion of the truth.

In the preface to his "Scientific Basis" Mr. Sargent says—"What is Science but a collection of truths suggestive of an inference? According to John Stuart Mill, the language of

Science is—'This is or this is not.' This does or does not happen. Science takes cognizance of phenomena, and endeavours to discover a law."

This is true science, but what our self-styled men of science—our Tyndalls, Huxleys, etc.—with some very rare and therefore most honourable exceptions, have done has been exactly what Humboldt and Mill have denounced as specially unworthy. They have utterly denied the facts, and have refused to give them the slightest examination—their only excuse, so far as we can see, being the most base and unscientific one, that the facts, if discovered to be true, would upset all their theories, and deprive their past labours of any value. Shutting one's eyes to truth is a very unworthy act, but doing so from selfish motives is a very base one.

The horrors of the persecution of witchcraft in the middle ages, and even down to the last century, were due to the unscientific spirit which accepted or rejected principles or facts without examination. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" was the sole warrant for burning thousands of unfortunate men and women, the phenomena of whose lives were never properly examined. If there were nothing "supernatural" in their lives, if the abnormal powers they were supposed to possess did not exist, they were either lunatics or impostors, who needed medical treatment or were deserving of some mild punishment. To burn or hang many thousands, and then assert the unreality and impossibility of the crime of which they were accused, was precisely on a par in principle with the course taken by pretenders to science in respect to the spiritual phenomena of the last thirty-five years.

In the same spirit that animated the witch-finders of two centuries ago, only that they believed in witchcraft, Slade was prosecuted at Bow Street, and it was left to a German Professor of Astronomy, by a careful scientific examination of the facts, aided by his fellow professors of a great university, to demonstrate the genuineness of the phenomena, of which Professor Zöllner said :—"The physical facts observed by us in his (Slade's) presence negatived on every reasonable ground the supposition that he, in one solitary case, had taken refuge in imposture. In our eyes, therefore, he was innocently condemned—a victim of his accuser's and judge's *limited knowledge*."

Nothing is so astounding, nothing so humiliating, as the folly

of the wise. Even so generally clear minded and fair minded a man as the late Ralph Waldo Emerson said :—" There are many things of which a wise man might wish to be ignorant, *and these spiritual phenomena are such*. Shun them as you would the secrets of the undertaker or the butcher." One can understand that the secrets of butchers or undertakers might be distasteful to a transcendental poet and philosopher ; but why spiritual phenomena should not be examined, tested, and valued by men of science—men with whom truth should be supreme, we quite fail to see.

The truth is, in this case, as with the others, Mr. Emerson had his theory of the spirit-life, and did not wish to have any facts that would disturb it. In the same way our Materialists have their theories of the impossibility of a life beyond the grave, and utterly refuse to examine the facts which prove the falsity of their theories and the realities of spirit life and power.

There are brilliant exceptions to the unphilosophic spirit in men of science. The names of Crookes and Zöllner in Europe, as of Hare, Mapes, Edmonds, and Sargent, with many more in Europe and America, will shine like stars in the future, when scientific men will cease to act like bigots or idiots.

Dr. John W. Draper, of New York, to whom the present writer has listened for many an hour, said, " God has formed our understandings to grasp all these things. I have no sympathy with those who say of this or that physiological problem, 'It is above our reason.'" He held that it was the true mission of exact science to "demonstrate the existence and immortality of the human soul." So the German philosopher Fichte said, just before his death, "I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent."

These quotations are from the *preface* to Mr. Sargent's last testimony as to the Scientific Basis of Spiritualism, in which he says, finally :—"The time has gone by when the facts of this volume could be dismissed as coincidences, delusions, or frauds. The hour is coming, and now is, when the man claiming to be a philosopher, physical or metaphysical, who shall overlook the constantly recurring phenomena here recorded, will be set down as behind the age, or as evading its most important question."

In 1878 Mr. Gladstone wrote on the subject of Spiritualism : "It is a question, in the first instance, of evidence ; it then follows to explain, so far as we can, such facts as may have been established." It may be doubted if the Prime Minister, more and

more heavily weighted with the cares of State, has ever found time for investigation. But scientists like Dr. W. B. Carpenter know better, and declare that no amount of evidence, not even of their own senses, could make the facts of Spiritualism credible. Dr. Carpenter, who would not believe his own brother Philip, nor his own senses, would of course reject any amount of testimony as contrary to common sense and the "well known laws of nature." Of course the most economical, trouble and thought saving philosophic method is to sturdily deny all facts that might upset your published opinions.

But let us to the *facts*, which, however familiar and needless now to confirmed Spiritualists, are of the last importance to those who are only upon the road, or who have not begun their investigations. But why give testimony to those who are sure to reject it, and with whom even seeing is not believing, nor yet feeling the naked truth? Because it is our duty to offer men the truth whether they accept it or not. That is *their* business. And every clearly stated fact has a certain force and makes a certain impression, as a constant dropping of water wears away the rock.

"What pretence have I," said John Wesley, "to deny well attested facts because I cannot comprehend them? Did you ever see an apparition yourself? people ask. No; nor did I ever see a murder, yet I believe there is such a thing." Wesley lived to see what he believed to be an apparition or ghost on three occasions.

"One good experiment," said Sir Humphrey Davy, "is of more value than the ingenuity of a brain like Newton's." Here is an experiment made by Mr. Sargent:—

"I took an entirely new unused slate, which I had bought twenty minutes before, to the medium, Charles E. Watkins, in Boston, Sept. 1877. It was a book-slate, enclosed in stiff paste-board covers. After manifesting his clairvoyance by telling me what was written on some dozen slips of paper, rolled into pellets, which I could not distinguish one from the other, he dropped a piece of slate-pencil, half as large as a grain of rice, into my slate, which, after examining, I held away from me, and beyond his reach. Instantly there was a sound as of writing in the slate—in a few seconds, a rap. Opening the slate, I found written the name of a departed friend—*Anna Cora Mowatt*.

"This experiment," continues Mr. Sargent, "I repeated several times, getting names and messages from friends quite unknown to the medium. In one instant I got a message of fifty-two words, written with preterhuman celerity. The medium and myself were the only persons present, and the noonday sun streamed into the

room. No hypothesis of jugglery was within the reach of reason. There was no confederate (in the flesh, at least), and the conditions could not have been more exclusive of possible fraud."

The curious thing is, that the less one knows of the possibilities of jugglery, the more he is disposed to attribute to it what he does not understand. His father, mother, or child writes him a message in his or her unmistakable handwriting, between two slates held in his hand, or in a box of which he holds the cover, and he talks of jugglery. When a juggler does such a thing, the hypothesis may be considered.

Mr. Sargent quotes the late George Henry Lewes as saying—"A deep longing for some direct proof of existence after death has made hundreds of people accept the grossest impostures of Spiritualism—impostures which contradicted the most massive experiences of the race." That was what constituted them gross impostures, and would be a perfectly good argument against every new discovery of science. The telephone contradicts the "most massive experiences of the race" quite as much as Spiritualism.

Mr. Sargent gives a clear relation of his experiences with the Rev. Joseph Cook, who agreed to report the result of a séance with Mr. Watkins. Under five gas-jets, in the presence of nine persons watching closed slates brought by one of the party, and carefully examined, and, while their hands were upon the slates, they heard the sound of writing, and Mr. Cook found written upon the slate a correct answer to a mental question. A similar message was written when the slates were held together by metal clasps. Names were correctly read which had been secretly written on paper-slips and rolled into pellets. Mr. Cook signed with the four other witnesses the statement—"We cannot apply to these facts any theory of fraud, and we do not see how the writing can be explained, *unless matter* (in the slate-pencil) *was moved without contact*;" and this fact, Mr. Cook argues, "overturns utterly the mechanical theory of matter, explodes all materialistic hypotheses, and lays the basis for transcendental physics, or a new world in philosophy."

In a subsequent séance with Watkins, after writing was done simultaneously on two enclosed slates, held by two ladies, Mr. Sargent says:—"It was then proposed that my book-slate should be used. It already had writing on both sides—on one, a letter of sixty words, got in previous séances. I finally consented to have the shorter message on one side obliterated, if it could be

done by the unknown force. Taking the slate on which the writing, in large unfaded letters, still stood, I shut the leaf, and placed it in the hands of the medium, who instantly held it out before us all. The scratching sound of a pencil was heard, and in less than twelve seconds he handed the book-slate to me. I lifted the leaf, the surface, on which was the old inscription, had been thoroughly cleaned, and on it were the words—‘My dear brother : I rub this all out.—LIZZIE, your sister.’”

It seems impossible for better experiments to be made than those Mr. Sargent has described so clearly—experiments hundreds of times repeated, and examined by men of science and of common sense without number.

Mr. Hiram Sibley, a wealthy gentleman of Rochester, New York, and Judge Shurat, had some ten sittings with Watkins, with similar results. Mr. Sibley wrote to Mr. Sargent :—“I offered Mr. Watkins a large sum of money, which I proposed to settle on his wife and children, if he would disclose the trick (if trick there were) by which the manifestation was produced ; and furthermore, I offered to give bonds, if he desired it, that I would not divulge the secret. I am ready to repeat the offer now to any person that can explain the trick, if trick it be.”

This offer has never been accepted : and a similar one made by a well known gentleman of Liverpool, is still open to the “exposers,” and still unclaimed.

Mr. Sargent gives a pretty writing manifestation, given in the presence of Hon. John O’Sullivan and Dr. J. R. Buchanan. Sitting with a young medium in New York, they got independent or direct writing on slates, under the strictest test conditions—and, among others, several Latin quotations—one a translation of Jane Taylor’s “Twinkle, twinkle, little star.” The writing—small, close, back-handed, and certainly not on the slate some moments before—was :—

“Mica, mica, parva stella,  
Miror quonam sis tam bella  
Splendens eminens in illo  
Alto velut gemma cœlo.”

Mr. Alfred Wallace, our greatest living naturalist, in the *Spectator*, of Oct. 6th, 1877, gives his confirmation of the phenomenon of direct writing by some unknown force, guided by some unknown intelligence. He says :—“I myself cleaned and tied up the slates ; I kept my hand on them all the time ; they never

went out of my sight for a moment ; I named the word to be written, and the manner of writing it, *after the slates were thus secured and held by me.*" Our friend, Mr. Edward T. Bennett, confirms this statement. This was with the medium Monck.

Mr. Wallace's testimony as to the manifestations with Slade are equally clear and emphatic. He says :—

" Writing came upon the upper part of the slate, when I myself held it pressed close up to the under side of the table, both Dr. Slade's hands being upon the table in contact with my other hand. The writing was *audible* while in progress. This one phenomenon is absolutely conclusive. It admits of no explanation or imitation by conjuring.

" Writing also came on the under side of the slate while laid flat upon the table, Dr. Slade's hand being laid flat on it, immediately under my eyes.

" While Dr. Slade was holding the slate in one hand, the other being clasped on mine, a distinct hand rose rapidly up and down between the table and my body ; and, finally, while Dr. Slade's hands and mine were both on the centre of the table, the further side rose up till it was nearly vertical, when the whole table rose and turned over on to my head.

" These phenomena occurred in broad daylight, with the sun shining into the room, and with no one present but Dr. Slade and myself. They may be witnessed with slight variations by any of our men of science, and it is to be hoped that those who do not take the trouble to see them will, at all events, cease to speak disparagingly of the intellectual and perceptive powers of those who, having seen, declare them to be realities."

Prof. Zöllner, and several of his fellow-professors of the University of Leipzig, witnessed similar phenomena with Slade, and later with Eglinton, of which they published accurate reports with photographic illustrations.

Mr. Sargent also gives in his very thorough and comprehensive volume of testimonies an account of the wonderful direct-writings given to the Baron Guldenstubbé in Paris, in the Hall of Antiques in the Louvre, in the Cathedral of St. Denis, and in his own apartments. " More than five hundred such experiences," he says, " have been had by the author and his two friends, Count D'Ourches and Gen. Baron de Bréwern. More than fifty persons, supplying their own paper, have been able to verify the astonishing phenomenon of direct-writing by invisible intelligences."

This enlightened nobleman believes as we do in the importance

of *facts*. He holds that "the science of invisible causes can only become a positive science by the method of experiment. Only by that—the solid facts of Spiritualism"—he says, "can we beat down the arrogance of the physicists."

This Baron most earnestly desired to be instrumental in proving the immortality of the human soul. He locked some paper and a pencil in a locked box, and, after watching and waiting, he found some characters written. Ten times in one day he had the same result—each time with fresh papers. Later he got messages, of which he gives sixty-seven fac-similes in his book, at his own room, at the Louvre, and other places. He believes the spirits do their work by the mere force of will, on account of its celerity. Mr. Sargent says:—"I have known a message of fifty words to be written on a slate in less than fifteen seconds." Some of the writings and drawings, of which fac-similes or engravings have been given in the *Spiritual Record*, have been done with equal celerity; but as the sounds made by lead or slate pencil, though extremely rapid, were *distinctly* heard, they must have been mechanically produced, by a force able to write or draw in total darkness, between two slates firmly held together, in a closed box, or between the leaves of a closed and weighted book. "Will power." Yes; but there is the black lead, the ink, or the torn surface of the slate, on which the microscope will show mechanical or chemical action.

Watkins, the medium, was an illiterate man who could hardly write decent English; but Mr. Sargent gives satisfactory proof that a Greek gentleman in Massachusetts "obtained from Watkins, upon a slate, in original characters of Romaic, the name of his grandfather, and three lines of Greek words, correctly spelled, and with accents and breathings correctly placed. His grandfather's name was very peculiar and almost unpronounceable by English lips. The slate was in full view all the time, and Watkins merely touched one corner of it with his fingers."

Mr. Sargent gives also the testimony of his brother. Five names were written on papers and these rolled into pellets while Watkins was out of the room. Then messages were written (signed with these names) on closed slates, which Mr. Sargent held closely in his hand.

Here is another curious case. Mr. Giles B. Stebbins of Detroit, being at Chicago, had a séance with a medium—a French woman from New Orleans—to whom he was an entire stranger. To him





came this message, signed with the name of his uncle, who died—a thousand miles away—in Massachusetts :—

“ I find no hell or babies’ skulls, as we used to talk of. I find over here common sense and justice. Each man makes his own destiny. God has not destined any one to heaven or hell. Ah ! Giles, the abyss is bridged, and we are fortifying the arches under the bridge daily, daily.”

“ All this,” says Mr. Sargent, “ was far above the capacity of the medium, and so characteristic that it was impossible for Mr. Stebbins to believe that it came from her unassisted mind. He got writing while he himself held the slate under the table, the medium merely touching the projecting end, so that her hand was in full sight.”

What can sceptics do with facts like these? They can only deny them—though the evidence be sufficient to hang them fifty times over. “ Human testimony is worth nothing in such a case,” says Dr. Beard. “ We must not believe our senses,” says Dr. Carpenter. And what comes of science if every new fact is to be rejected as incredible?

The testimony of Dr. George Wyld, of London, in his “ Theosophy and the Higher Life ” (Trubner & Co., 1880), quoted by Mr. Sargent, is clear and vigorous. He says :—

“ With regard to slate-writing, there is no order of spiritual phenomena which impresses me more powerfully. Slade and his slate-writing were to me objects of absorbing interest. All was done in the light and above-board. The evidence that the writing was produced by a spiritual intelligence, without the intervention of human hands, was overwhelming ; and in his presence the materialism of three thousand years was refuted in five minutes. When, therefore, brutal and intolerant ignorance seized Slade, and dragged him into a police court, I felt prepared to run any risk, and incur any responsibility in his defence.”

Alas for time and space ! We have skimmed over 67 pages of a book of 372 pages, rich from beginning to end in similar testimonies. What can we do but cut and come again—and we can hardly do better ; for Epes Sargent was a clear-minded as well as entirely honest man, and he was as skilful in selecting and presenting his facts as he was in making his own experiments and observations.

For those who *can* receive the testimony of men and women as clever and as honest as themselves, there could scarcely be a better or fuller treasury of facts than “ THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF SPIRITUALISM, by EPES SARGENT ” (Colby & Rich, Boston, U.S.A.).

## SPIRITUAL VISION.

No. II.

BY A. M. HOWITT-WATTS.

*(Continued from page 607.)*

BEFORE I venture to give an account of the unfolding of the faculty of vision through the spiritual eye in my own case, the commencement of which was in 1856, it may be well to make fuller mention of the striking experiences, already referred to, of two writers in the columns of the *St. James's Gazette* for February 10th and 15th, 1882.

A paper by Mr. Galton, entitled, "The Visions of Sane Persons," appears to have called forth a narration of the following deeply interesting experiences, bearing the title of

## "FACES IN THE DARK."

"In this article," says the contributor to the *St. James's Gazette* (Feb. 10th), "Mr. Galton brought forward cases which he seems to think remarkable, of persons who, when they were in the dark, saw apparitions. Not that these persons imagined that what filled their vision existed anywhere out of it. But these phantoms had all the appearance of external objects, and were certainly not produced by any effort of memory or imagination, but quite involuntarily. One lady told how she used to see in this way, from time to time, showers of red roses, which presently turned into a flight of golden speckles or spangles: the roses being presented in her vision as distinctly as real flowers in broad day might be. And not only so, but the lady says she used to smell their perfume too; but there's nothing like that in my own experience. And there were stories of faces seen in the dark in like manner: not pictures in the memory, but seemingly standing off upon the air for the eye to gaze upon, and coming and going as with a will and purpose of their own.

"What struck me most about all this when I read it was, that Mr. Galton should think it strange enough to lay before the world as a curiosity. For all my life I had myself been familiar with phantoms of this kind, and, without much thought about the matter, had assumed that many if not most other people were equally at home with them. The golden spangles I too used to see when I was a child; only instead of turning into showers of roses, in my vision they were transformed into flocks of sheep running rapidly down hill, as in a distant landscape. When the sheep got to the bottom of the hill they faded into the darkness; and then the tiny bright yellow spangles appeared at the top again,

to be again transformed. . . . But as to the faces that appear to my vision in the dark, after having been haunted by them in a civil, quiet way for many years, I still find them very interesting indeed.

“These faces are never seen except when the eyelids are closed; and they have always an apparent distance of four or five feet. Though they seem living enough, and not mere pictures or reflections, they look through the darkness as if traced in chalks on a black ground. Colour sometimes they have, but the colour is very faint. Nothing more than a face is ever seen; and except for a fraction of a moment, perhaps, not all the face at one time. Here and there their lines waver, fade, and return, as if drawn with a pencil of phosphorus; but there is no phosphoric appearance about them: their general aspect is as if their substance were of pale smoke. These faces in the dark always confront the vision. Only one have I ever seen in profile; and this also was singular in bearing a certain resemblance to someone whom I knew in real life. For (to me) the most remarkable thing about these visionary faces is that while they are always of a strikingly distinctive character, they are like none that I can ever remember to have seen in life or in pictures. Passing through the streets, we see hundreds of people with unfamiliar faces, of whom yet we could not say that we have beheld nobody like them before. But occasionally some very strange, or striking, or what is called original face, meets our view and excites our wonder. Now my faces in the dark are all of that character. As I look at them—for there they are, plain to be looked at—and ask myself who was ever like that?—I find no answer except in a fancied resemblance to some historical or mythological personage. Possibly Blake’s visions were some such faces as these, presented to his eyes in broad daylight: I am inclined to think it may have been so because his wonderful and dreadful drawing, ‘The Ghost of a Flea,’ is precisely such a transcript as I could have made by the score, had I possessed the artist’s skill and his memory for transcription. That Blake actually saw this ‘ghost’—that it was not, like many things of the kind, a deliberate effort of imagination—I do not for a moment doubt: for under my own eyelids I have seen many a face of the same awful family: some even more dreadful still, and all the more dreadful for being astir with animation. My faces in the dark are much more often of men than of women: they are rarely quite agreeable, but they are all extremely interesting (when they can be endured), because they look like the fleeting embodiments of some passion or some mood of the mind: usually not the best of moods. There are some very noble faces amongst these apparitions—I rather mean, expressive of great nobility; but I have never seen amongst them the mask of pity, or love, or of any tender emotion. Grief the most despairing, scorn, pride, hatred, greed, cunning inquiry, envious or triumphant mockery—if Blake

really did see these faces either in daylight or in darkness, he must have had much more than his imagination to draw upon when he depicted the passions.

“These apparitions are entirely independent of the will. You may be awake with your eyes closed, thinking of the weather or the last change of Government in France, and, as a wreath of smoke might rise, there is a face in the dark. It is useless to seek to retain it for contemplation, or to attempt to recall it when it has faded out. This you may greatly wish to do; for sometimes the phantom has a profoundly meaning, or appealing, or revealing look; but all your arts of imagination fail to project it on the air again when it has once died away. Only for a few seconds does it ever remain, and it never returns. But what frequently happens is, that one face changes to another after the manner of ‘dissolving views.’ And the change is almost always for the worse. A face that begins by being strange and interesting, ends by becoming something awful or hideous beyond the power of description and the will to describe. Open your eyelids and the apparition is gone. This also strikes me as remarkable,—that these phantoms only appear when the eyelids are closed; and that if you want to get rid of a particularly disagreeable one, you have only to open your eyelids and it dissolves. . . .

“All that I need add, perhaps, is, that though these faces have been my familiars for many years, they have become neither more nor less numerous; nor are they more frequent than I have observed, nor do they change in character. They appear pretty often, but they have never given me any disturbance, and I do not know that their coming and going depends in any measure on varying conditions of health or ease.”

Here is the experience of the second contributor to the *St. James's Gazette*, February 5th:—

“‘FACES IN THE DARK.’

“I had read Mr. Galton's essays, and, like your contributor, I was surprised that he should have thought the comparatively simple phenomena he described so remarkable. The experiences detailed by your contributor are, however, of a much more complex nature; and their special interest to me lies in the fact that I might have written the article myself, so exactly, with a few important exceptions, does it describe the singular phantoms of the night, which are my very constant and familiar friends. I have no experience of anything like a stereotyped picture corresponding to the shower of roses or the flock of sheep; on the contrary, I have never known any one phantom to repeat itself. Your contributor says that his faces are never seen except when the eyelids are closed. My experience differs here somewhat; for although this is also with me the most favourable condition, the apparitions

become manifest to me with open eyes in a room absolutely dark. The distance of these pictures is apparently some few feet from the eye ; but sometimes faces will advance from their misty background, until their eyes look straight in mine, apparently only a few inches away. Your contributor says that his faces 'look through the darkness as if traced in chalks on a black ground ; colour they sometimes have, but the colour is very faint.' Here is the first important difference I have to note. The process of development is with me always the same. At first, after lying quiet for some few minutes, with closed, or, if in absolute darkness, with open eyes, there floats in front of me, and apparently a few feet away, a fleecy white and slightly luminous cloud. From this, sometimes gradually, but generally with startling suddenness, the picture starts forth ; the cloud rolling away from it, often to form background, often disappearing entirely, in which case the background is of intense blackness. But whatever appears to me does not seem to be traced in chalk ; on the contrary, the colours are vivid and intense, the outlines and proportions absolutely life-like, and generally the illumination of the object is produced as if it were thrown by a lime-light. Your contributor's almost invariable experience is that these phantoms present themselves in full face ; mine observe no rule, and sometimes—not infrequently, indeed—they turn round from a profile gradually to a front view. The distinctive character of these faces as described in the article in your paper is absolutely the same as that which I should give ; they are like nothing I have ever seen in life or art. As a rule the expression they wear on their first appearance they retain unaltered during their brief stay ; sometimes it changes, and extraordinary animation lights up every feature. They very seldom smile, and the expressions marked upon the faces are generally those of indifference or contempt ; or, as in the case of your correspondent, grief, despair, hate, avarice, or fiendish mockery, are strikingly depicted. And here is one of the curious features of this strange phenomenon. The rapid series of transitions described so accurately (to fit my experience) by your contributor always begins with a face, be it that of man or woman, of transcendent beauty ; then changing second by second—but in each change retaining a resemblance to the preceding phase—it becomes more and more degraded, till in the end so hideous a phantom is before you, that you open your eyes to obtain relief ; or you stare it out until it disappears, and the fleecy cloud rolls up again preparatory to another series.

"But I would mention a further development which is also of interest. It happens as often as not with me that the phantoms are not those of faces only, but of single figures, of groups of figures, of animals, landscapes, etc., all perfectly harmonious in their composition and colour, and generally

brilliant in their illumination. Let me give one or two examples. Out of the fleecy cloud emerges an enormous book, closed, and held by two hands; the hands open the book, and the pages lying exposed are covered with curious written characters; then it disappears. Again the cloud rolls away, exposing the brilliant sunlit street of some Eastern city, but like none I have ever seen in pictures. The hard black shadows strike the ground and walls; the foreground is baked and arid, the distance bathed in a golden haze. Groups of people stand about—women veiled, and men all clothed in white and bright colours. Then through an archway rushes a tumultuous mob of people, whose features, despite the numbers, are all painfully discernible. Those coming first bear all the impress of noble characteristics, and are wonderfully attractive to look at; but as they file away, disappearing round a street-corner, the succeeding ones are less pleasing; and the curious process of degradation goes on until there pours out of the archway a seething rabble such as a morbidly imaginative painter might draw escaping from hell. Again, a broad stretch of brown moor with a road winding over it, cut up deep into ruts, and frozen hard, with snow lying about here and there in bright relief; on one side of the road a clump of trees; a powerful chestnut horse with a lady on his back, in a black habit, tall hat, white collar and cuffs, and gold-headed whip, riding away from me; riding towards her from across the moor, a groom in livery, with one hand extended, pointing to something lying on the moor.

“I could multiply examples indefinitely, as no picture ever repeats itself, and, as I said before, they are pretty constant visitors. But I have noted three which have come first to my recollection as being typical. . . . Unquestionably these phenomena have a scientific interest. After many years' careful investigation and observation, I have failed to arrive at any explanation that is satisfactory. I will formulate some of the leading characteristics of these appearances. Their coming and going are undoubtedly independent of the state of health; they are frequent but not regular visitors, coming sometimes night after night during a month, and then ceasing for several days, and, very rarely, for several weeks. They are entirely independent of all efforts of will: this is quite clear, since very many times I have concentrated my whole power of will in the determination that one class of phantom should appear; the invariable result being that nothing would come, or that the appearance was of a wholly unexpected character. . . . Pictures of animals or of landscape change it is true. As regards the former, the alterations are frequently grotesque, but never hideous. As concerns the latter, they are generally pleasing, often of surprising beauty; but, like the faces, they do not belong to earth. The apparent distance from the eye of the face-

pictures is generally the same—some five feet ; but, as I said before, they occasionally approach quite close, though they never recede far. In landscapes the distances stretch away for miles. The marvellous rapidity with which every detail of the transient picture is seized is remarkable. If it be a parterre of flowers, the form and colour of every petal, the hues and movement of every gaudy butterfly, are appreciated ; if it be a shipwreck, the set expression of agony, indifference, despair, or calm in each face, as well as every detail of the storm-beaten vessel, is taken in in a moment." . . . . .

(To be continued.)

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### AMERICAN MEDIUMS AND MANIFESTATIONS.

HARRY BASTIAN.

(Continued from page 616.)

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RETURNING from a very successful visit to Holland, we find our friends, Bastian and Taylor, again giving séances in London in January, 1875. Mrs. Woodford gave an account of some satisfactory materialisations in the *Medium and Daybreak*, and Mr. John Lamont says:—"The writer has seen a pair of arms and hands, not attached to a visible body, carry objects about the room, and touching the sitters. The guitar is played, and a heavy musical box also playing is whirled over the heads of the sitters, while persons are touched at their mental request." Captain James, so well known to Spiritualists, the friend of Dr. Elliotson, and recorder of Mesmeric phenomena, also gives his testimony in the *Spiritualist*. In that paper Mr. James Regan testifies that he distinctly saw the materialised spirit of his wife's brother, who died in Australia, who bowed, smiled, and both visibly and audibly kissed his hand to his sister, and also that three other spirit friends of persons present were seen, heard, and fully recognised.

In the *Spiritualist* of February 19, 1875, Captain James gave the following account of the manner in which he was able to test the manifestations with Mr. Bastian. He says :

"Toward the close of the dark séance, the spirit 'George' said—'Light the room, and let Captain James sit with the medium.' This was a privilege I had long desired. I seated myself close to Mr. Bastian in a corner of the room, holding his

hands, my left foot pressed against his right, and can truly certify that he never once moved during the whole time we sat together. A dark cloth was then hung before us. I could distinctly see the whole space down to the carpet. The musical box began to play. The bell rose, flew past my face, and fell in the middle of the room. Hands of various sizes glided over my left shoulder, and were plainly visible to the whole company. Some of the hands I observed to become materialised about half way between my left shoulder and the floor; some came from behind the medium—some from behind me. A bare arm and hand were seen above my head. Sometimes a hand would rise, play with the medium's shirt-collar, and then suddenly melt away. They were quite human in appearance, but their motions were very peculiar. I can only compare them to the lambent motion of an advancing flame. I observed a marked difference between them—two being like the hands of females, one with long delicate fingers, and the wrist covered with silk or velvet. I observed also a man's hand, long and bony, much larger than the medium's.

"I requested a gentleman present to come close to me and hold a ring on the palm of his hand. I then said—'Please take the ring.' A hand then suddenly darted over the curtain and carried off the ring. 'Please return it.' It was instantly replaced. The bell was placed on my shoulder, and then carried away. I then said—'Please pull my ear.' I immediately saw a hand materialised, which, gliding upwards, pulled my ear and patted my face, which was observed by every person in the room. Holding the hands and feet of the medium, and watching these intelligent movements, the experiments were to me absolutely satisfactory."

This testimony from a most honourable and intelligent officer ought also to be satisfactory to our readers.

"A special correspondent" of *The Northern and Eastern Examiner*, whose letter was published March 27, 1875, gives some of his observations at No. 2 Vernon Place, Bloomsbury.

"Mr. Bastian," he says, "was in a deep trance, exactly as we left him. The seals on the cord that bound him to the chair were unbroken, the nails by which he was tacked to the floor had not been drawn, and these were absolute proof that he had not stirred an inch from his place, which was four or five feet behind the curtain from which the spirits had emerged. I examined rigidly, and am satisfied that any personation by Mr. Bastian was simply impossible, and assistance by confederates equally so.

"Some hands and faces were shown at the opening of the curtain, but the real spectacles were the full forms that came, looked us full in the face, and shook hands with us, and spoke to us. . . . I particularly remarked that on each successive



appearance of the spirit he grew apparently less timid, and more confident of his power to exhibit himself. He shook hands with one of the ladies, and then with one of the gentlemen present—a solid shake of the hand, they said; he raised a small hand bell from the table, spoke in a faint whisper to a lady, and then retired. Next came a fair female form in a long white robe, which we distinctly heard rustling on the carpet. The third visitor was a man of noble and commanding figure, with a fine head, and a long, thick, black beard. ‘Oh, Tom! that’s you,’ exclaimed one of my neighbours, and the brothers exchanged most friendly greetings. ‘Yes, here I am; look at me. You see I have kept my promise.’ It was a hearty natural voice. The brothers shook hands. After retiring into the cabinet he again came forward, and, at her request, shook hands with a lady, and then receded from our view. But it was no sudden vanishing. As he regained the curtains that tall commanding figure dwarfed into a little form, preserving all its proportions—a conclusive evidence that there was no personification either by the medium or a confederate. No living man could so retire within himself or dwarf his stature—say from six down to four feet six inches. As to optic delusion, there was no contrivance for anything of the kind. I distinctly observed the shadows of these spirit-forms as they passed in front of the gas light. I simply narrate what fell under my observation.”

A clear, good statement, specially valuable as describing absolute test conditions.

The *Medium and Daybreak* contains an account of a *séance* dated March 13, 1875, signed by ten witnesses, also given under the most stringent test conditions, “not,” as “George” said, in directing them, “to please the rabble, but to vindicate the honesty of his mediums, as also to bring forward another proof of the continued existence of the spirit after the change called death; not buried in the grave, but risen, active, useful, loving, and full of sympathy with mortals left upon this earth.”

Two gentlemen, one a physician, were selected to examine the apartments. Strips of paper were gummed over window frames and doors. Mr. Bastian was placed in a bag, made of dark material, which was tied closely about his neck, and the knots sealed with a private seal, and the string tied to the chair, and also sealed. So secured, Mr. Bastian was placed four feet behind the curtain.

A voice said—“You have forgotten something.” “What?” “To nail Mr. Bastian’s sack to the carpet.” These gentlemen went and securely fastened the sack to the floor with tacks. A

few moments after two beautiful hands were seen at an opening in the curtain. Then the face of a young girl, recognised. Then a man who spoke to his brother, saying :—"Write to George that I want him to see me. I am coming out, friends! We come to prove that we have an immortal existence. We are not dead but living."

The spirit withdrew, and "George's" voice said—"Come in and examine my medium." Those who went reported that the conditions were unbroken. Then came a spirit in Oriental robes, who bowed assent to recognitions, and took the hands extended to him. A female figure, after several efforts, went across the room and took the hand of Mr. Taylor. Other materialisations appeared and were recognised, after which the seals, knots, and sack nailed to the floor were examined. A carefully recorded and most satisfactory séance.

In April, 1875, Mrs. Catherine Woodforde describes the materialisation of a nun in full costume, with a white cross suspended from her girdle. "At my earnest solicitation she raised her cross for me to kiss, while she laid her other hand in blessing on my head. I glanced up at her face. The features were regular and delicate—the face calm as an angel's. She was Sœur St. Séraphine, from the Convent of the Ursulines, in Louisiana, where I received the greater part of my schooling. She was the Mother Superior, and had visited me some months before in my own chamber."

A correspondent of the *Leamington Chronicle* at this date makes a good point. He went to a séance of Bastian and Taylor, but very little was done, though there was a good company—"so it is obvious that they would have manifested if they could. Fancy going to a theatre—house full—curtain rises, but no actors and no play, or to a conjuror's and his not doing a trick." When Mr. Sims Reeves disappoints an audience he loses a hundred pounds, it is said. A medium who disappoints a large circle may lose what he values much more—but some of the best mediums have been subject to many such disappointments.

The *Medium and Daybreak* of April 23rd, 1875, published "A Great Triumph for Spiritualism." It was at a séance at Mrs. Woodforde's, and Captain James was one of her guests. After the cabinet room had been examined the spirit "George" said—"Friends, 'May' is trying to give you a new test. She wishes to bring the medium out of the cabinet with her, that you may see

the spirit form and the medium at the same time." The curtains parted, and there stood "the fairy-like form of a woman robed in pure white—the smallest and most delicate female form we had yet seen before the black curtain of the thirteen that have appeared since we began our séances. After several times appearing we at length saw, a little above the head of the spirit, the white shirt front of Mr. Bastian. She advanced leading him by one hand, making the most graceful bows and salutations, like a successful actress. She advanced two or three feet before the curtains, so that both were clearly seen against them, when the medium, evidently controlled, fell upon one knee at the feet of the spirit; then, making him rise, she bowed almost to the ground, and took him behind the curtain. Responding to our murmurs of delight, 'George' said—'We have achieved a great triumph for Spiritualism, friends. This ought to do away with the idea that the materialised spirit form is the double of the medium.'" The dress of the spirit "May" is described as "of white silk, with an over-robe of lace, a long lace veil, and a diadem of jewels." At this séance a materialised spirit, recognised by some of the company, sat at a table and wrote a note, which he then folded and gave to a lady. A gentleman recognised his deceased wife, and a lady her husband. The brother of Colonel S.— appeared in his native Scottish costume and family crest, and after being thoroughly recognised, "raised his glengarry in salutation, waved it, and disappeared." This was, in many respects, a very remarkable séance, and no one, perhaps, was more astonished or better pleased than the medium when he was told what had occurred while he was in unconscious trance.

A very clear and accurate account of this remarkable séance was also given by Captain James in the *Spiritualist*, and also by Colonel S.—, who is described as a military gentleman of high scientific attainments, in *Human Nature*.

The phenomenon of a materialised spirit-form, sitting at a table writing a letter to one present, is so remarkable and satisfactory a manifestation, when the hand-writing and matter are also tests of identity, that we give another testimony. A lady, who signs her name "Musah Ann Loder," writes in the *Medium and Daybreak*, April 9th, 1875:—

"Mr. Bastian was most thoroughly and satisfactorily bound and fastened to the bedpost.

"Our next visitor was 'Mr. Thomas Ronalds,' who is getting so

strong, so like one of us, that it seems almost as if he might stay with us altogether. He walks out amongst us with a firm step, handles objects, talks aloud, and sits down like a common mortal. A lady of our circle had placed paper and pencil on the table, and had begged 'Mr. Ronalds' to write something for her as a memento. After several attempts, and going back to the medium for more power, he walked out with a firm step, took his seat, and, arranging the writing materials, began to write. It gave one extraordinary sensations to see this tall form, in a long, white robe, sitting at the table quietly writing, knowing that he was a man who, three or four years ago, had died and was buried as usual, and here he now sat, clothed in temporary flesh, and writing what seemed to be a longish epistle. In total silence we sat gazing in the dim light upon the 'ghost,' divested of all the old superstitious terrors for childish minds, and sitting amongst us like a familiar friend. Our visitor covered three sides of a sheet of note paper, and must have maintained his form, while writing, firm and unmoveable, except hands and fingers, for more than five minutes. He then folded the note most carefully, and, rising, presented it to his brother, saying in a firm voice—"Take that home with you and read it in private." 'Am I not to show it to any one, Tom?' 'Not to read.' I have since learned that the letter was a good test. The spirit then went to the curtains, and turning round, said, 'I must go now—good night.'

"Other spirits appeared, and gave convincing tests of their identity, and the medium was found firmly bound, while Mr. Taylor had been sitting with the others under continual observation. The gentlemen present could not untie the knots, so the lights were extinguished, and in a few seconds Mr. Bastian was released."

The *Medium and Daybreak*, of April 30th, 1875, gave a plan of the rooms in which many of these séances were held, No. 2 Vernon Place, with a photographic *fac simile* of direct spirit writing, and also of a piece of tissue cut from the white drapery of one of the spirit-forms.

We cannot better close this portion of our notice of Mr. Bastian than with the testimony of Captain James, given in the *Spiritualist*, May 21st, 1875, which seems to us clear and conclusive. Captain James says:—

"At the séances of Mr. Ronald's circle, held every Tuesday evening for many weeks, there appeared five or six spirits who were fully recognised by their respective relations. There could be no mistake, for they were all different in form and features, and not one had the slightest resemblance to Mr. Bastian.

"1. There was the very remarkable form of Mr. Ronald's

brother, six feet high, who allowed me closely to scrutinise his features, and pass my hand down his luxuriant beard. I saw this spirit sit at a table and write a long letter to his brother, who told me that he recognised the writing.

"2. Mr. Regan's brother-in-law frequently recognised by Mr. and Mrs. Regan.

"3. The brother of Colonel S——, whose features I distinctly saw, and who bore the family crest on his Scotch bonnet.

"4. The wife of Mr. Cottrell, unmistakeably recognised by that gentleman.

"5. The husband of Mrs. W——, whose features I have described in the *Spiritualist*.

"These recognitions were by witnesses whose testimony would at once be accepted as conclusive in any court of justice, when affecting the lives or property of their fellow-citizens."

The testimony of men and women of entire honesty and high intelligence is indeed abundant, cumulative, and overwhelming. No facts in the domain of science were ever more carefully observed, thoroughly tested, or satisfactorily proven than those of spirit manifestation in the presence of Harry Bastian.

*(To be concluded in our next.)*

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## HOW I CAME TO BELIEVE IN MATERIALI- SATIONS.

By MRS. MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

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**I**N 1876 I first saw WILLIE EGLINTON. He was the invited guest of a lady residing with us at Aldwyn Tower, Malvern. I went into his room and introduced myself to him. Soon after I was seated raps came on a small table placed between him and me. I said, "Those are raps." "I think not," he replied; "it is some noise out doors." I asked him to lay his hands on the table with me. He did so, and the raps spelt out this message: "J. B. Ferguson wishes W. Eglinton to have a séance with Mrs. Nichols, and he will materialise."

I was very sceptical as to materialisations. It seemed to me the one impossible thing in Spiritualism.

Mr. Eglinton said, in answer to the message, "I cannot have a séance with Mrs. Nichols, as all my time is engaged till I leave town. Just then the door bell rang, and a letter was brought to

Mr. Eglinton from a person who was obliged to give up a séance he had engaged, and Mr. Eglinton at once said, "You can have the time;" and I also promised to attend a séance given to the lady whom Mr. Eglinton was visiting, and then came my first sight of materialised forms. To partially isolate the medium, he was placed behind a shawl, and just after he was seated, a child, seemingly about two years old, appeared before the shawl. It is not my purpose to give a full account of this séance, but only its prominent incidents. First came this baby, then the husband of the lady. He came in a good light, and moved a heavy table. Then the light was put out, and he brought his own light and illumined his face and head very vividly. He came close to me and looked into my eyes. I begged him to go to his wife, which he did, and was fully recognised.

After this we had a good light again from the gas, and a little Indian girl, called "Daisy," came, looking as natural to me as possible, I having seen much of the North American Indians in my childhood. She came to me, took my hand, kissed it, and said, "I love you. I love your hand that gives."

At the séance Mr. Ferguson's spirit had asked for, we had a most harmonious circle. It was in the day time. We shut out some of the light, and hung two shawls before the medium, with an opening in the centre. "Joey," Mr. Eglinton's familiar control, came to us visibly materialised. He said he wanted to increase the power, and asked for some pins to better fasten the shawls together. He was told that he would find pins on the mantelpiece. He got them, and pinned the shawls together in front, and then replaced the pins where he had found them, saying, "A place for every thing, every thing in its place, is my motto." On my speaking to him he came over to me, and kissed the top of my head. He was dressed in white, and bore some resemblance to Mr. Eglinton, but was taller, less stout, and he had a moustache, which the medium had not.

When all was prepared, there came a tall man, some inches over six feet high. A lady present said, "I think that is my husband, but the light is not good enough for me to be certain." The form went over to the window and raised the curtains, letting the full light of day fall on him. When he had been perfectly recognised, he gradually dematerialised, growing shorter, till a small globe, about six inches across, remained near the floor. Then this snapped out—suddenly collapsed, leaving nothing

visible. Again he grew up from the floor to his full height, and again shortened, and went out. This he did several times, and finally disappeared.

Then my friend, Mr. Ferguson, came—*his very self*—a tall, broad chested man, of great strength and most decided energetic movements. He wound up a heavy musical box and laid it on the table with a bang. He then moved a very heavy table, and took a large easy chair, drew it in front of me, and sat down, and took my hand. He was as much his own self as ever I saw him in his earthly life.

All this time he had not spoken. I think he could not have had power to speak and also to do all he had done. I asked him, as he held my hand, if my daughter were present. She had been a great favourite of his in this life. He rose, and went back to where Mr. Eglinton was sitting behind the two shawls, and we heard three loud raps. Almost instantly, my daughter appeared, dressed in white, just her own slight form and graceful movements. She came and knelt before me, took my hand and kissed it. I was so overcome by this manifestation that I am unable to give any farther account of the séance.

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### REMARKABLE CURE OF M. LEON FAVRE.

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**I**N a former number of the *Record* (page 317), we gave at some length the experiences in Spiritualism of M. Leon Favre, Consul-General of France, and promised to supply our readers with the Wonderful Cure of M. Favre's complaint of forty years' standing by a spirit physician. The article originally appeared in the *Revue Spiritualiste*, and was reproduced by the late William Howitt in the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1869.

The whole of this article, which is a long one, presents an able exposition of the characteristics of Spiritualism: its difficulties, obscurities, contradictions, defective evidence of identity in the spirits communicating and other features, which he contends are but the inevitable attendants on a dispensation not new, but new to a scientific and analytic age. He anticipates the steady clearing away of its present uncertainties, and its advancing through better knowledge both of fact and method into a future of the greatest brilliancy and importance. "Even now," he says, "it possesses a practical and immediate utility, for the super-terrestrial world being composed of a hierarchy of intelligences, resem-

bling our own, and precessional links connecting it with our sympathies, we are able to appeal to its love, and without pre-occupying ourselves with an identity not always demonstrable can profit by its lights, its announcements, and the succours of all nature which good and happy invisibles are always desirous to afford us. In this department, especially, we are spared those disappointments which we meet with in other branches of these researches. One sole fact of a positive nature outweighs a hundred abortive attempts, for it is the proof of possibility, whilst the non-success of these attempts may proceed from the defect of our method or some obstacle in the medium."

M. Leon Favre now proceeds to give two facts of an indisputable character. The first is that of Count L——, of Corfu, who succeeding to the domain of his father, found himself immediately involved in legal difficulties by the absence of certain deeds and in danger of losing the whole. This his father, through the table, prevented, not only by spontaneously informing him where he would find the indispensable documents, but added such advice for the conduct of the affair that he was speedily in full and quiet possession of his estate.

But the most remarkable relation, and it is one of the most remarkable ever recorded, is that which regards himself. He says :—" I was in 1826 at Livorno. I was there poisoned by eating of a large sort of lobster, probably cooked in a copper vessel in bad condition. I was saved by medical energy, but the poison left the most terrible effects on my stomach, the most singular symptoms seized me. I had a gastric complaint which lasted seven years, and which was succeeded by nervous maladies, strange lethargies and morbid effects which defied every scientific remedy. The crises were marked by the most frightful circumstances. Sometimes my eyes were convulsed, the pallor of death overspread my features which were distorted by the most painful contractions; my cheeks instantly sunk, all my limbs became rigid; my body was stretched out like a corpse, I often fell with my head against the wall, and I lay in this state of catalepsy. Sometimes the attack seemed to come down on me like a bird of prey; my intestines, stomach, and chest seemed wrenched and twisted violently. The paroxysm lasted for an hour at most, but it left a fearful havoc in the system. Frequently it produced aberrations of vision which caused me to see every object triple, always followed by a prostration and temporary exhaustion of all my forces. My digestion was disordered, difficult, and, take what precautions I would, it was impossible to ward off the attacks. I was everywhere subject to the invasion, in repose or in agitation of mind and body, at Paris or on the summit of the Cordilleras, without apparent or appreciable cause.

"Still in Bolivia, where I resided nearly nine years, the com-



plaint seemed to have somewhat abated its intensity, though it occasionally manifested itself at moments of relative tranquility. I was transferred to Tampico, and the necessity to subdue a mortal fever occasioned considerable doses of quinine to be administered to me. I recovered, but the old complaint re-appeared with its original intensity.

“On my return to Paris I combated without success this cruel malady. The crises increased in duration. Formerly they did not exceed one or two hours, they now extended to twelve or fifteen. The cramp announced itself suddenly; sometimes in the stomach, sometimes in the chest, more rarely in the head. All my nerves were contracted to such a degree as to form a chaplet sensible to the touch, and which moved with the undulations of a serpent. Then the spasms seized me, bringing on vomitings so terrible that they seemed to make certain the breaking of some blood-vessel. The scene was awful to witness. The visage livid, the surface distorted, I rolled in convulsions, whilst a cold perspiration bathed my limbs, and to the spectators, I appeared in the crisis of dissolution. By degrees the symptoms abated, the cramps gradually ceased, but leaving a horrible prostration. A general soreness internal and external made my whole body one agony; speech was impossible, the throat continued inflamed, the eyes swollen and bloodshot. This condition of misery, which appeared supportable only by comparison with that of the crises, continued from three to eight hours, including a gradual return to the normal state.

“It may be imagined that I had tried everything—allopathy, homœopathy, hydropathy, magnetism, somnambulism, electricity, shampooing, warm baths, empiricism. I had tried all with a persistency and a scrupulosity of application which proved the inefficiency of all the medicaments employed. I endured a life of the most sickly wretchedness, when I was conveyed to Corfu. The climate had no beneficial effect on this terrible condition of my nerves. Heat and cold were all the same to me. The cramps continued to torture me. I had attacks of fifteen, seventeen, and twenty-six hours of duration. Ice, taken at the commencement, sometimes tempered the crisis. I tried also, with some success, chlorodyne; but I had quickly exhausted these remedies—palliatives for a brief time, but quickly becoming powerless. I succeeded occasionally in delaying the attacks, two, four, eight hours; but the malady only paused, as it were, to collect its forces, and then rushed on with a violence which nothing was able to resist.

“That which alarmed my friends was that the attacks lessened their intervals. So long as an interval of two or three months separated the formidable attacks, there was time for my forces to rally, and I prepared for the conflict; but anxiety seized me when, between the principal paroxysms, I perceived a succession of lesser

ones intercalate themselves, which took away all possibility of resistance. It became perfectly clear to me that if no remedy for this state of things could be found, I must inevitably enfeeble and succumb.

“I had naturally availed myself of the skill of eminent medical men, who are not rare at Corfu. One of the chief of these, known for his science and for his writings, Doctor Cogevena, was at the same time my physician and my friend. He lamented his inability to cope with an evil so redoubtable, but his science might well prove ineffectual after the fruitless trials that I had everywhere made. He saw me continually worse,—a prey to attacks less violent, it is true, but which recurred every three or four days, and left me disarmed before one still more formidable.

“Dr. Cogevena belonged to that order of inquiring minds whom nothing fully satisfies, and who are continually making fresh researches. He was one of those medical men whose independence casts off the yoke of the schools, and appropriates to itself every means of cure, whatever may be its origin. He had already manifested those tendencies in a learned work on magnetism written in conjunction with the celebrated Professor Orioli. A conscientious magnetiser, he could not remain insensible to therapeutic mediumship, and his attention was arrested by the possibility of utilising these new forces for the accomplishment of cures. Immediately on my arrival he put himself in communication with a medium inspired by a spirit physician. I followed his directions for some time without finding any benefit, and, after having consulted him twice, I abandoned altogether his prescriptions.

“A year later this medium died, and the spirit which influenced him passed to his niece, a young woman, gentle and modest, living laboriously from the profits of a little primary school for young girls. Proud and benevolent, Catarina was happy to do good, and was offended by the least offer of remuneration. She placed her mediumship at the disposal of all who suffered. She wrote mechanically without the least consciousness of what she wrote. She often wrote in French of which she knew very little, and in English, of which she was entirely ignorant. Her honesty, her delicacy, her sincerity, have never been called in question by any one. I had only seen her once in a soirée of experiments.

“Dr. Cogevena consulted her about a year after I had ceased to follow the prescriptions of the spirit, and one evening as he was speaking of one of his patients, the spirit all at once interrupted him :—

“‘Friend,’ he said, ‘I have found a remedy for your client Leon,’ and he proceeded to explain to him that I must use the apparatus of Mansdorf, but reversing the poles and putting the negative on the upper part instead of the positive as directed by the inventor. A drowning man catches at straws. I accepted

the information of the spirit, whose personality is sufficiently curious to merit some words. He declared his name to be Giacomo Giaferro; that he was born at Venice in 1418, and died in 1510, at the age of 92, at Verona, where he practised medicine.

"Generally, medical healers proceed on the system of the somnambules. They inspect the patient and prescribe their remedies without the subject being required to give any explanation. Giaferro acted as a living doctor. The patient gave the history of his complaints without omitting the smallest detail. Giaferro listened scrupulously to the present diagnosis, but he rarely foresaw that which might unexpectedly arise. I assembled often with me three or four physicians to act as a check upon him. I have heard them dispute with him, make fresh consultation of the patient according to his indications, find that they were wrong, and that he (Giaferro), the invisible, was right! His appreciations were marked by an exactness remarkable, and nearly always I have seen the doctors adopt his opinion in the treatment of the case. His character was impetuous and of an extreme susceptibility. Overflowing with affection for those who sympathised with him, he could not endure irony or doubt. He admitted fully contradiction made in good faith, but the moment that he perceived the slightest raillery or incredulity on the part of those in discussion with him, he disappeared, and no effort, no solicitation could prevail on him to return.

"It was under the direction of this invisible doctor, at first watched by my friend Cogevina, that I placed myself, as I have said, on the 5th of March, 1868. Reversing the method of Mansdorf, he placed the silver on my stomach, and the zinc under the soles of my feet, commencing by an application of ten minutes, which augmented every day by as much additional time, arrived finally at nine hours. During three months, examining me every week, oftener twice than once, at first with the concurrence of Dr. Cogevina, then by himself alone, he alternated the poles, placing on the stomach sometimes the positive, sometimes the negative, varying the duration of the applications, suspending them occasionally for some days, and taking as the principal basis of his internal treatment bismuth, calcined magnesia, and the codeine of Berthé. At the end of three months he declared that I was cured of my cramps, and that they could never return. He continued, however, till December, the use of the apparatus, increasing progressively the intervals between the applications. He ended by suspending them altogether. In fact, I was well.

"Cured by an invisible hand after having suffered forty-two years, and having exhausted all known medical remedies! It is impossible to retrace here the minute cares, the extreme tenderness, the expression of love which accompanied this prolonged treatment. The soul of this man seemed to follow me everywhere,

to watch over me, and, let the sceptics smile, to knit up with my own a holy and fraternal relation which my gratitude has sealed for eternity.

“But this was not all; I have to give an account of another phenomenon which will meet with still greater incredulity. I refer to a mysterious magnetising performed upon me by the spirits. I have explained at the commencement of this article the effects which followed, when concentrating my attention on myself, I called on the great concourse of the invisibles. I then became conscious of a magnetic current identical with that which streams from the hand of an earthly magnetiser, and more than once my mother assuaged my pains. Giaferro counselled me to recur to this aid, and every day I caused myself to be thus magnetised. I perceived three distinct currents; one sweet, cooling, caressing but superficial; another penetrating, infiltrating, so to say, to the very marrow of my bones; a third more material, if I may so express myself, but irresistibly powerful, pouring over me like a torrent. Was this the beneficent work of three different friends, or was it an alternating mode applied by one only? I know not; but Giaferro attributed to himself the last influence, which compelled me to stoop my head from the ardour with which he sought to relieve me.

“Now, whenever the *avant-couriers* of the cramp presented themselves, I called on my magnetisers, and their goodness never allowed me to call in vain. They flew to my aid, and in proportion as the nerves of my stomach and the chest were swelled and racked and twisted, they poured on them their magnetic currents with a correspondent vigour, and maintained the conflict till they became the victors. I perceived at the same instant what would appear incredible, the double action of the physical torture and of a certain moral repose coming to the aid of the magnetic action, and which so far subdued the nervous tension as to feel distinctly the joy of being so protected.

“It was not possible to attribute to the imagination the expression of my sufferings. Those who had tended me so often could not be deceived in the terrible contractions which testified to the violence of the pain which they knew in the ordinary course of things to be without remedy. Another proof there was, to them unanswerable. All the attacks, whatever might be their duration, were followed by a period of depression proportioned to the violence of the shock. This second phase never varied in its symptoms. Well, the cramps which disappeared, under the influence of the invisible magnetism, left after them the inevitable traces of their action, in the condition of external and internal traces, identical with that which followed the more formidable attacks, I felt the consequence of the evil which I should have endured, but of which I could only affirm the singular assuagement. I

submitted every day to this magnetic action. The cramps, violent at first, gradually relaxed in their force, and became less frequent till Giaferro said, 'The cure is complete. Take off the *plaques*.'" (The metallic plates.)

M. Leon Favre gives some curious incidental facts occurring during this course of cure. This was one :—"One evening, when alone with my wife, a sudden attack of cramp came on. It was about ten o'clock. I lay down on the sofa and called upon Giaferro ; at the end of ten minutes I was affected by the current, which I attributed to his action. In a quarter of an hour I arose perfectly relieved, and took my tea with my wife. The next morning I received a note from Catarina, in which she said that the evening before, in the midst of a séance in which she was consulting Giaferro for another patient, he suddenly wrote—"I must leave you to go to my friend Leon, who calls me.' And Giaferro disappeared. It was ten o'clock." M. Leon Favre says that that day he had not seen Catarina, and did not know before that she consulted Giaferro for other patients.

This case of spirit-cure is undoubtedly one of the most important on record.

The position of the patient—Consul-General of France, brother of the celebrated orator and statesman, Jules Favre, and himself, as evidenced by this narrative, a man of clear, logical, and vigorous intellect, is such as to place the case beyond all doubt or denial. The record and description of it being from his own pen and his own publication, and its occurrence so recent as the close of 1868, it combines the most perfect elements of positive evidence ; its authenticity is, in fact, unassailable.

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### EDITORIAL NOTES.

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We have a special interest in converting people to Spiritualism, because every fact in nature is interesting, and may be useful. The use of Spiritualism to many is two-fold. They lose the dread of death, and the perhaps greater terror of annihilation. Calvin's hell, to which even infants a span long were fore-ordained from all eternity by a God whose "mercy endureth forever," because Eve ate an apple, and coaxed Adam to take a bite, has no place in Spiritualism, while it admits that all may suffer for wilfully bad "deeds done in the body."

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The horrid old theology which made it a part of the happiness of the Saints in heaven to see the torments of the wicked, whom

it was their duty to love in this world, and is their delight to hate in the next, has no place in the teachings of Spiritualism, which cannot, for a temporary fault, a mere misfortune, in this life, admit of an eternal punishment in the life to come.

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No: the life of the spirit-world is a continuation and a consequence of this. A good life here begins a better and happier one over there. A selfish, bad life here, brings its natural consequences of pain and remorse. But the right way is never closed on any. "His mercy endureth forever." It is not limited to any phase or condition of being. The "lamp holds out to burn" brighter and brighter, and "the vilest sinner may return" when he gets tired of his comfortless career.

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Aside from all this, the continuance of human life, thought, action, and love, after the death of the body, is a fact of observation very interesting to know. Absolute certainty is something better than the strongest belief. Take the recent departure of a Royal Personage, whose funeral filled the Illustrated Journals. The amiable and clever Prince was, like some, if not all, his nearest relatives, a Spiritualist, not from hearsay only, but from personal observation of spiritual manifestations. What an entirely other thing must be the burial of one who has been near and dear by a family of Materialists! A clod of earth—and a memory. Nothing to love—nothing to hope for but speedy and utter annihilation.

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Is it not easy to conceive of the difference it must make in the characters, thoughts, feelings, and motives of men,—this certainty of a life to come? An intuitive, instinctive, or acquired belief in a future existence counts for much, and must have a great influence; but how much more a scientific certainty resting upon demonstration. It is good to believe, but it is infinitely better to know. When Thomas could not trust his eyes, he was allowed to confirm their testimony by the more solid sense of feeling. He wanted a test. It was his right, and it was given him. So now, in these days of spirit manifestation, every one may have a test of their reality. All who will may come. Those who will not, must wait until the tests come to them, as they come to all in due season.

“Then why trouble about it?” you may say. “Why seek for what must come to all?” Because it seems to us more comfortable to know. Because uncertainty may lead to apprehension and needless sorrow. Because it is a source of perpetual joy to *know* that our loved ones still live, and that we shall soon join them in the happy realms of endless life. To hope—to trust—to believe is a blessing; but to know with absolute certainty is, after all, a quite different condition. Therefore, we are always glad to bring this knowledge to any, or to point out how it may be gained. Therefore we give so much space to the facts—the phenomenal aspect of Spiritualism.

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The LONDON SPIRITUAL ALLIANCE, gathered by the well known “M.A. (Oxon.),” will hold its first public meeting at St. James’s Hall, May 5th, at 8 p.m. As there are more than a hundred members, and each can invite friends, there should be a very pretty gathering. It will be a social meeting, but its organiser will explain things, the why and because of the Alliance. The address of “M.A.” will doubtless be responded to, and in the course of the evening Mr. Eglinton will sit at the famous “trick table” gravely sworn to be such by Mr. Maskelyne at Bow Street, though no other mortal has been able to discover the trick.

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Mr. Eglinton hopes to get some spirit-writing—psychography the learned call it. What a stale, flat, and unprofitable world this would be if we were all obliged to write plain English, and could not now and then deviate into polysyllabic Greek! Well, Mr. Eglinton will do his level best, in spite of the sceptics, to get some examples of spirit-writing, which, we quite agree with “M.A. (Oxon.),” is one of the most satisfactory of all the manifestations of spirit power.

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When you think of it! A force, guided by intelligence, acting between the internal surfaces of two slates, firmly held together, fastened and sealed sometimes, writes a message, sometimes in different handwritings, sometimes in several languages. You listen to the sounds made in writing—you find the bit of pencil worn down in the process. You see the written words, often in the well known hand of some dear departed friend. What stronger test of spirit power could be desired?

Materialisations of spirit forms under perfect conditions no doubt are more satisfactory to many. To see, hear, and feel one you know is not now living this present earthly life, under conditions that give no room for fraud, and no doubt as to identity, is as perfect proof of continued existence as one can well desire. But there is this about the writing: the written words remain. In our little treasury we keep, and can look at any time at, the handwritings of some of the nearest and dearest, of whose continued existence and love we have this visible evidence.

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But both may be combined. We have seen a materialised spirit take a sheet of paper and a pencil and write a note to a friend then present, which he gave to her, and then vanished. In another case we sat in the centre of a room holding two slates fastened together—a materialised spirit holding one end of the slates and the present writer the other. Sitting thus we heard and felt the process of writing. The materialised spirit, whom we had just seen, heard, and felt, vanished into invisibility. When, in the presence of seven witnesses, we removed the fastenings of the slates, we found handwritings well known to us, and messages in three languages. The slates, with the messages in English, French, and Greek, are in the drawer of the desk at which we are writing.

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Spiritualism is the knowledge of facts like these and the recognition of all their significance. It is a faith resting on knowledge. If His Eminence holds that a spirit of evil comes to assure us of the great truth of a life beyond the grave, he is welcome to his opinion—but why Satan should be “casting out Satan” in that fashion—why he should be so busily at work all over the world fighting Materialism, Agnosticism, and Atheism, possibly His Eminence can explain to us; but “if Satan cast out Satan,” or even upset Huxley, Bradlaugh, & Co., “*how* can his kingdom stand?”

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“Clergymen of all denominations,” from His Holiness the Pope to the smallest preacher at the smallest Bethel, must have some difficulties with Spiritualism. The Anglicans have for a century or more denied that there have been any miracles of spirit manifestations since the days of the Apostles, though plenty can be found in their own writers in the 17th and 18th centuries. How could the theologians who defended the hanging of witches



deny Spiritualism? Of course, the early Methodists and Quakers were all Spiritualists, or they could not have believed in Wesley or George Fox.

The Catholic position is more difficult than the Anglican. A Broad Churchman like the late Dean Stanley, or Matthew Arnold, may deny all spiritual manifestations, at any time or anywhere, in the Bible or out of it. "Miracles never happen," says Matthew Arnold, "never did, never will, never can." That is his *non possumus*. The narrower school stops short with the Apostles, or what they may consider the apostolic age. Miracles did happen from the Creation, through Old Testament times, and in the first century of the New Dispensation, and then suddenly ceased. The signs that were to follow them that believed followed them no farther. The "greater works" are still waiting to be done, and for seventeen centuries miracles have not happened.

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But through all these centuries the Catholic Church records an unbroken line of saints and miracles. At the beatification and canonisation of every saint, who has not won his or her place by martyrdom, testimony is given, sifted, and recorded, as to miracles and spiritual manifestations, and this down to our day, and in our day perhaps as much as in any other. In the face of this what is the Catholic position? Of course, it is the only one that can be logically held. There can be one only true and infallible Church. Out of that all pretences to miraculous powers—all spiritual manifestations are either impostures or diabolical.

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The Roman Catholic clergy are not alone in this. Probably three-fourths of the Anglican and Presbyterian clergy would give a similar opinion. It is the only one consistent with the professions of the last two centuries, in which faith has been dying out, and men tending more and more to Materialism and Atheism. Spiritualism has come in our time to check this tendency in the only satisfactory way—by the demonstration of solid facts, which have been observed, examined, and carefully tested by thousands of competent, unimpeachable witnesses.

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We beg to assure His Eminence Cardinal Manning, and all other eminent persons, that the *facts*, as facts, are beyond all question. The miracles *do* happen. Every fair-minded man can examine them, and be satisfied of their reality. If they can be

shown to be the work of the Devil—that also is a matter, not for assertion, but for demonstrative proof. If the Devil has set to work to prove to men the reality of a life beyond the grave, and to upset the Materialism of the age, he is certainly not so black as he has been painted.

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Charles Reade, who has just left us, was an admirable novelist, a masterly dramatist, and a great-hearted, tender-hearted, thoroughly good man. A little girl who died at the age of fourteen, and had read all his stories, and one of them—“It is Never too Late to Mend”—many times over, wished to see her favourite author just before she died. He came to her at once, and they had a most affectionate interview, tenderly kissing each other farewell. Is it unreasonable to believe that her bright, pure spirit will be one of the first to welcome him in the world of spirits?—and that we may hope, in our turn, to see and enjoy the society of those we have in this life admired and loved?

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Mr. W. J. Colville, the Trance Speaker, so favourably known in both hemispheres, began a series of Sunday meetings on April 6th, at Neumeyer Hall, Hart Street, Bloomsbury, with a discourse on “What the World needs to make it Happy”—an eminently practical subject, in which people are taking more and more interest. Mr. Morse and Miss Dale Owen are also giving great satisfaction. The latter certainly inherits the finest intellectual and moral elements of her distinguished father and grandfather, and is a very pleasing speaker.

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Mr. Moncure D. Conway, in his lecturing tour around the world, *via* New York, San Francisco, and Australia, writes to the *Glasgow Herald* that he has arrived at India, and visited the headquarters of the Theosophists, in the Madras Presidency, where he saw Madame Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, Mr. Brown of Glasgow, a recent convert, and others, but was disappointed in his hope of seeing marvels, other than the signs about him of the progress and success—worldly success at least—of the Theosophists.

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And this success is sufficiently striking. He found the Theosophic chiefs living in a splendid palace, in a park of a hundred acres, with all the appointments of rank and opulence. He learned

that Col. Olcott, in his visits to Indian princes, travelled *en prince*, with his train of elephants, and was received and treated like a sovereign, with the formalities due to the highest rank, and received gifts in proportion, for which he gives his receipt for the Society.

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Better than that, Mr. Conway heard of marvellous cures by Col. Olcott,—cures of the blind, the deaf, the hopelessly paralytic—of the five thousand recorded cures during his missions in India and Ceylon—cures which remind us of the miracles of St. Francis Xavier, the most wonderful, beautiful, and beloved Christian missionary that has visited the East since the days of the Apostles.

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Mr. Conway is an utter sceptic as to things out of the ordinary course of nature. He thinks, with Matthew Arnold, that “miracles don’t happen.” Also, he can “draw the long bow” upon occasion. But he was evidently “flabbergasted” by what he saw and heard of and about the Theosophists, and their revival of one of the most ancient creeds and cults of the wondrous East—the cradle of our Western races, languages, and religions; and there is a quite perceptible chuckle in his statement that these miracles and social successes of Theosophy are a great discouragement to the present Christian missionaries.

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To be successful, every new phase of religious teaching should be attended with miracles. Moses had miracles—the New Testament is full of them. Equally so are the lives of the saints. Catholic miracles are seen in multitudes in our own day. Many mighty works attended the preaching of John Wesley; and George Fox had some remarkable manifestations when the Spirit moved him.

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Defining a miracle as something beyond the usual operation of “the well-known laws of nature,” Spiritualism is full of miracles. Phenomenal Spiritualism consists of them. They are happening all the time. A hundred volumes could not contain the briefest account of them. There is no reason, then, to doubt that miraculous manifestations attend the Theosophic teachers. Col. Olcott is a thoroughly intelligent, manly character, and has given some of the best testimony ever recorded as to the reality of spiritual manifestations, which he most carefully examined and tested with

the "Eddy Boys" many years ago in Vermont. There is the best testimony as to the remarkable mediumship of Madame Blavatsky. There may be exaggeration in the accounts we get of the work they are doing in India; but there is no reason to doubt that it is extraordinary, and is attracting great attention.

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The "Centres of Spiritual Activity" in the Metropolis are increasing in number and activity. The Alliance opens its work at St. James's Hall, Regent Street; *Light*, with its Library and Reading Room, is in St. James's Street, Holborn; the "Institute" is busy with *Medium and Daybreak* in Southampton Row; Mr. Colville has had Neumeyer Hall for several successive Sundays; Mr. Eglinton is full of work at 12 Old Quebec Street, Portman Square, and giving, as far as we can learn, entire satisfaction; while Mr. Morse has a busy centre in Great Portland Street, and has taken command of the Spiritual Lyceum. Colonel Olcott is also in London reorganising the Theosophists, and has been interviewed a full page in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. This is perhaps half the record. We doubt if Spiritualism has ever been more active or more successful.

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A friendly hand has sent us a file of very interesting liberal papers from Australia, in which Spiritualism is discussed, as well as Agnosticism, and many curious facts given—for which we strongly suspect it would be difficult to find space in some "Freethought" journals nearer home. Next month we intend to find space for some extracts from our Antipodean contemporary, though how men are able to walk about and even edit newspapers with their heads pointing toward the opposite side of the universe from ours we have not the ghost of a notion. In fact we should require very strong testimony, with absolute test conditions, to enable us to believe in such phenomena.

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*Licht, mehr Licht*, the German Spiritualist paper published in Paris, gives very fairly the statements in respect to the Bastian controversy—copying Signor Damiani's and Dr. Nichols' letters from *Light* and an article from the *Record*. It is to be considered that the Archduke Johann is a youth of some five and twenty summers, and the Crown Prince Rudolph but little older; also that Princes and Archdukes, even of the House of Hapsburg, are

not always overburdened with wisdom. We have seen a very respectable Austrian Prince driving about Vienna who was set aside as not quite equal to the task of making believe govern an empire. Soon after Austria got into difficulties, and found it necessary to part with some provinces. "Why, hang it," said the dethroned prince, when they told him what had happened, "I could have done *that!*"

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The cure of Mons. Leon Favre, Consul General of France, and brother of M. Jules Favre, the French statesman, given in this number of the *Record*, from the translation of William Howitt in the *Spiritual Magazine*, will be read by all who have not seen it with great interest. It is a clear, definite statement of a disease and cure, neither of which can be attributed to imagination. From first to last it is full of the most striking phenomena. Admitting the intelligence and honesty of M. Favre—allowing that he is neither knave nor fool—what can we do but to accept his statement?

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Here is a question worth considering. Should not something be done to bring the gospel of immortality to those who need it most, and who are not able to pay for it? Poor Conklin, a good medium, twenty-five or thirty years ago in New York, who afterwards, like so many more of all professions and beliefs, went to the bad from drink, once took a room in a central thoroughfare—Canal Street, New York—put up his sign, and patiently sat for all comers, "without money and without price." Hundreds—perhaps thousands—came, saw, heard, and were, as George Fox says, "convinced." A few made small contributions toward paying rent and finding the medium. Probably it was not a financial success, but it was a good thing to do notwithstanding.

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Spiritualists might do a worse thing than to sustain honest and good physical mediums—like our blind Mr. Husk in London, for example—in doing such a work. Such a modest, simple-hearted man, with his good devoted wife to be eyes for him, might bring peace, hope, and joy to hundreds of people who need spiritual consolations all the more that they are too poor to pay for them. As to those who are able to pay, they can do as they like. If they love money better than truth, in God's name let them keep it. To such belongs the scornful rebuke—"their money perish

with them!" The mercenary spirit is contemptible, no doubt—and equally so the stingy and unjust one. The ideal position is to do the best we can for all, and take what comes of it.

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"M.A. (Oxon.);" gives in *Light* some testimony to miracles of healing at Lourdes, published by the Rev. F. G. Lee, an Anglican clergyman, in his "More Glimpses of the Unseen World." It is in a letter from Lady Gertrude Douglas, who says:—

"I have just returned from Lourdes, where I had the good fortune, or rather the great favour, conferred on me, of witnessing four miraculous cures of the most marvellous description, besides the smaller one of my own eyes getting well after washing them in the waters. I had been sent to Luchon, to take the waters for rheumatic ophthalmia with which I was threatened. I went to Lourdes first, and from the first hour I touched my eyes with the water *all* pain left, and they have gradually become quite well."

The *Lancet* finds no difficulty in accounting for these marvels. They are quite "in accordance with well-known physiological laws," it kindly informs us, and goes on about the recognised effects of nervous influence, mesmerism, etc.—as if it had not scoffed at and ridiculed all such facts—until they were needed to account for others still more incredible.

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One of the most interesting facts, to a scientific observer of spiritual phenomena, is the amount of *force* exerted by visible or invisible intelligences. Take the very frequent levitation of the bodies of mediums. Home is a light weight—probably between 9 and 10 stone; but he was seen and felt in many cases to rise to the ceiling of a room and float about in the air, and seen in one instance to be carried out of the window of a house and brought in at another. What is the nature of the force in these cases, how exerted, and what the fulcrum or point of resistance?

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A materialised spirit is so far from being a mere vapour taking form and reflecting light, that we have seen one exerting a strength which we estimated at about five times our own. We have seen a materialised spirit take a small pillar table by one of its claws, and flourish it around his head like a wand. There was, therefore, not only form, but very powerful muscles, with brain and nerve power to give action and control it. How was that?

In one instance only we have seen what seemed a dangerous exhibition of tremendous force by invisible agencies. We cannot say that they were *not* materialised, for there was no light. There was a sudden crash or thud in the perfect darkness. Striking a light, we found two mediums lying on the floor, the head of one in dangerous proximity to a fender. From what we heard, and then saw, it was evident that the two bodies had been taken up by some power and thrown with considerable violence upon the floor. Again what did it?—and how?

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Matter through matter is a still more curious problem. The fact that no two atoms or molecules of matter ever touch each other—that every atom stands from every other “far as the poles asunder,” is recognised as a physical necessity. Of the force which holds each in its place, the separate atoms of steel in the keen blade of a razor, the point of a needle, or yet sharper beesting, or the angle of a diamond which cuts glass, we know nothing—but what it does. The mysteries of the material world are quite as inexplicable as those of the spiritual.

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But the fact of matter passing freely through matter—of iron rings being placed upon Bastian's arms while his hands were firmly bound together—of a solid steel ring being placed upon the wrist of Mr. Husk, when it would not go over his wrist, and while his hand was held by another person—of a common chair being threaded upon one's arm while he is holding the hand of a medium—of knots being tied on endless cords, as witnessed by Prof. Zöllner in Leipzig with Slade, and by Dr. Nichols in London with Eglinton—is still very difficult to explain. By what force and mode of operation, in all these cases, are the atoms further separated and again “solidly” united?

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The truth is, we know nothing of the *why* or *how* of any phenomenon in nature. The formation and growth of the buds on a tree, with leaves and flowers folded and packed in their shining case, as seen best, perhaps, in the horse chestnut, because the buds are largest, are quite a sufficient study for a lifetime. Or try upon animal life—the evolution of a chicken within the egg-shell—or a moscheto. Of two microscopic cells, from one comes forth a man—from the other an elephant or rhinoceros. From

some atoms in two microscopic cells are developed—built up by added matter, an Englishman and a negro, or Australian savage—or, greater marvel, a mixture of two divergent races.

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Who has made the first step toward an *explanation* of the phenomenon of gravitation? Who knows the first word, or has got the first idea of the action of repulsive forces—those of dynamite for example? Who can explain the *modus operandi* of telegraph or telephone? Yet we hear people say, "I won't believe anything I can't understand." In that case what do you propose to believe?—for there is not one operation of nature, of which the greatest scientist in the world can give any explanation as to the *why* or *how*. In the sense of incomprehensibility, every natural phenomenon is miraculous.

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Think of the action of the sun upon the earth at nearly a hundred millions of miles away—and its control of immensely greater masses of matter a hundred times more distant. Now sweep the starry depths with your telescope and try to imagine how light travels for ages through so much of the universe as it reveals to us, and what is the nature and operation of the forces that govern and guide it with such regularity that you can learn to predict all the phases of an eclipse or occultation a thousand or ten thousand years hence to the fraction of a second—and yet be as ignorant of the nature of all astronomical phenomena as you are of—*spiritual manifestations*.

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But you won't believe anything you don't understand. Stick to that by all means. The safe way is to shut your eyes, stop your ears, and in some way get rid of the other senses. Shut out the problems of matter, force, and life, and you may have a quiet, easy time of it.

END OF VOL. I.