

# THE SPIRITUAL TIMES

A WEEKLY ORGAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF SPIRITUAL AND PROGRESSIVE TOPICS,

A REGISTER OF PASSING SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA, AND A MISCELLANY OF SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.

Spiritualism unfolds to our internal senses substantial realities; it presents us not only with the semblances, but with the positive evidences of eternal existence, causing us to feel that the passing shadows we speak of belong not to the Spiritual, but to the Material world. It is easy to imagine that we are dealing with the absolute and enduring, because we associate our thoughts with the external and apparently lasting, but, on reflection, we discover that the only absolute and enduring facts are beyond the tomb.

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"The life that now is shapes the life that is to be."

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

## The Spiritual Times.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1865.

### EDITORIAL ITEMS APPERTAINING TO THE DAVENPORTS.

A private seance was given by the Davenports at the house of Sir H. Fleetwood, Brighton. During the progress of the manifestations in the dark, Dr Ferguson's hand was made to strike a light, which was extinguished in an instant, but brief as the space of time was which elapsed between the striking of the match and the extinguishing of the light, it nevertheless was long enough to disclose a full-sized figure of a being not of mortal mould. Had Dr Ferguson only witnessed this peculiar phenomenon, we might say, for the sake of a "settler" to the mystery, that he was labouring under some psychological disease, and his eyes were made the "fools of the other senses."

But Sir H. Fleetwood, their host, and five others, testified to having seen the same appearance. Dr Ferguson informs us that he heard a voice, which plainly told him that the mysterious appearance was made known to him for his own especial benefit. This extraordinary fact is worth noting; we say extraordinary, because it is not of common occurrence, yet, if we analyse all the phenomena which take place in the presence of the Davenport Brothers and Mr Fay, from the apparently simple to the most difficult of explanation, we shall find "extraordinary" not a very large word to express the feeling which, like any genial spirit, will possess us. There is as great a difficulty in understanding how the slip-bolt of the middle door of the cabinet is drawn from the inside, the instant the door is closed upon the corded brothers, as there is in understanding how the musical instruments are made to fly about and discourse notes at the same time, or how Mr Fay's coat is relieved from his person whilst his hands are secured in soiled knots, or how the objective spiritual representation at the house of Sir H. Fleetwood was produced. Truly, we live in an atmosphere of marvels; we inhale mystery from the very breezes of heaven; we think we comprehend marvels past finding out, whilst in reality we only see the crust—not the kernel—of things. We stand gazing at the material sun, and seem to realise only a passable conception of its power to warm and enliven both the creature and the forms that surround him. "The sun! ah, yes; it is a very common appearance, every day it is visible;" and so we speak and feel. How rarely do we ask ourselves what in reality we know more of the sun than we know of spirit!

Of course, the remark is anticipated by us—"Why, the sun is with us almost every day?" And is not spirit, pray? "Ah, but we see the sun." Yes, with your spirit; not your physical eyes; they are but the windows that admit objects to the soul. Dr Ferguson and Sir H. Fleetwood saw with their spirits through the instrumentality of their eyes the *objective appearance* mentioned, as plainly as they ever saw the sun. Who can call in question their capacity to judge of things they see? Suppose some great Sir Sceptic replies, "I *know* they saw nothing but what they fancied they saw." Then suppose they turn round to Sir Sceptic and say, "We *know* you never saw the sun, only an image created in your brain by fancy;" what difference would there be between the two statements?

Suppose the parallel is rejected on the plea that the surrounding conditions are unequal, viz., the sun is visible in open day, whilst the manifestations of the Davenports are produced in the dark. We answer, but, in the special case, we are considering, the *objective appearance* was only visible in the light. A candle was lighted and blown out by some invisible agent. Candle-light, it is true, is a very small apology for sunlight; nevertheless, it was enough for a room, although it would have been lost in a universe. The candle was lighted, the *appearance* seen, and the light extinguished. Those who witnessed the phenomenon would find it quite as difficult to believe they did *not* witness it as a person who had gazed upon the sun would find it to believe he had *not* gazed upon it. Facts are stubborn things, they cannot be ignored; learned "know-nothings" may beat their hard heads against them, but they can only succeed in bruising their heads.

It is no small compliment to the Davenports to say that their muffin-bells, guitars, fiddle, tambourine, and trumpet have turned crazy such men as Mr Lucas of the *Star*, not on the side of spirit, but matter. We like reversing the order of *pressing* this spiritual question. Mr Lucas, under the false impression he knows all about how the "imposition" is effected, Tolmaque having shown him, has all at once become so crazed, that he is determined to print all he can against the mediums, and nothing whatever in their favour. Surely they must be devils incarnate, or Mr Lucas must be doing them great injustice. We have lately given our readers the benefit of a few rejected letters, which, we venture to say, would not have disgraced the columns of even the *Star*, had they been admitted, half so much as the crazed editor disgraces himself by omitting them. We think a man need not be a Spiritualist to be crazed; in reality, his intellect is never so sound as when he is prepared for truth, let it come from whence it may. Mr Lucas represents a very large band of sturdy, but nevertheless, crazy opponents, who have all been psychologised by a few wooden and brass instruments; and the noise made by this party is certainly more *base* than the loudest discordant notes ever heard from the instruments.

On the other hand, Spiritualists are on the increase. These ordinary looking Brothers, and the heavy "inevitable" Mr Fay, with the "Evangelical Showman" at their head, are

overturning with the aid of muffin-bells and fiddles—the philosophies of ages. What a strange truth! those who have expended long lives on material planes, who have settled the great problems of life and death for themselves, find out they have much yet to learn even in dialectics, and is it not strange a few old fiddles and bells should be the necessary means of attaining knowledge in the true direction. Every day brings some fresh convert to our ranks, albeit the Lucases are dead set against us. Strange, is it not, “the rope-trick” should fail to trick the Davenports and Mr Fay, whilst conjurors of high and low degree are performing it nightly?

What a brilliant career is in store for the prestidigitateur who shall enter the Davenport arena, and fasten the heroes so that they are not released! He would be the Olympus of the game! How is it no single conjuror accepts the high post of honour? he might become a veritable St George without the dragon, and win the plaudits of a world.

We have looked in vain for a conjuror who would risk his reputation by accepting Mr Palmer’s challenge; surely there must be something not altogether above board that no one of all the fraternity of conjurors has appeared in true St George style, to wrest the laurel-crown from the heads of the mediums! But with only one or two honourable exceptions, they have all said, before their own patrons, *their* rope-trick was the sole solution to the Davenport problems. But there they halt—they dare not put the matter to a fair test. Why? because they know without confederates they would, to a man, inevitably fail even in presenting the most bungling imitations of their own tricks. The other day, one of these conjuring gentlemen wrote a laboured account of how the Messrs Davenport and Fay manage the flying-fiddles—stating that Mrs Fay, whom he saw sitting in a front seat could easily leave her seat in the darkness, and perform the miracle. She would be a miracle if she did.

*Once a Week* presented its readers with some diagrams showing how easy it would be for the Brothers to perform the “tricks” with moving seats. But *Once a Week* is many weeks behind its age in this matter. The seats are fast and cannot be shifted without the cabinet is taken to pieces. Whilst the conjurors and the Lucasonians and the *Once a Week* scribes are playing their game of speculation, the Brothers Davenport and Mr Fay with their bells and guitars, their fiddle and trumpet, are knocking down the temples of Materialism to make room for the eternal tabernacles of spiritual truth.

#### DR. FERGUSON’S BENEFIT.

On Saturday last the Davenports and Mr Fay gave their usual seances at the Hanover-square Rooms for the benefit of Dr Ferguson, who has so ably and worthily introduced them at the various public and private seances which have been given in this country. We were much gratified to see a *good* audience. The cabinet seance was one which, in some particulars, excelled others of the kind we have, at various times witnessed. Some six or eight hands and a long naked arm were visible at the same time. We saw distinctly a hand, with a naked arm attached to it, project the trumpet, whilst only the shadow of darkness was thrown on to it from the centre door, which was being closed at that instant. Once or twice phosphorescent lights in the cabinet were seen by us; on making inquiries we find others saw similar luminous appearances. At the dark seance, in addition to Mr Fay’s coat being taken off, and another gentleman’s placed on his back, Mr Ira Davenport’s waistcoat was taken from him whilst his coat remained on his back and his hands were corded behind him.

To afford incontestible evidence that the phenomena take place independent of the active agency of the mediums, Mr Wm. Howitt and Sir Charles Nicholson were called from the company to hold Mr Fay, the Davenports being held fast by members of the circle. Still, the thrumming of the instruments was heard as they made their wondrous evolutions. The encouragement given to Dr Ferguson was no slight testimony to his worth. He gathered around him many of the principal active Spiritualists of London. May he realise a continuance of kindly feeling and continue as heretofore in well-doing.

#### SUPRA-MUNDANE FACTS.

We understand Dr T. L. Nicholls is engaged on a work to be entitled “Supra-mundane Facts in the Life of J. B. Ferguson.” The work is to contain 500 pp.; the price to the public to be 10s, to subscribers, 7s 6d. We look forward to the issue of “Supra-mundane Facts” with interest, feeling assured it will be an epitome worth retaining of the principal actions of one who has won the esteem of all friends to the cause of progress with whom he has been brought in contact. We shall gladly receive the names of subscribers.

#### MODEST, NO DOUBT.

“PIERRE GRINGOIRE.—We think, upon consideration, that no more should be said about the Davenport Brothers. We have determined not to insert our reply to Dr Sexton, and your letter may evoke a useless controversy. We are now sorry that you troubled to write it.”

The above paragraph is from the “Answers to Correspondents” in the *National Reformer*, and is pleasing, no doubt, to “Pierre Gringoire.” Has Dr Sexton fixed the editor of the *National*, that his reply seems to himself not worth printing? We rather incline to this idea. The Davenports surely need not shed tears because the *Reformer* ignores them; has it not done so with Deity itself?

#### SPIRITUAL DRAWINGS OF NATURAL OBJECTS.

(Continued.)

“Sept. 4th. The drawings are greatly admired. In the group of flowers I am getting much play of light and shade.\* After a while the spirit-power tells me that I am to execute what are to be called shadow-pictures, where the stems, leaves, flowers, and insects will often cast shadows on other parts, without interfering with the natural appearance of the specimens. Were I more free from the cares pertaining to the natural life, I should be able to produce drawings much in advance of my present ones. As it is, the Spirit advised me last week to begin with birds so soon as the drawing I am now engaged upon should be completed. I have been re-drawing the specimens sent to London, in fresh grouping. On seven sheets of drawing-paper I have nearly one hundred butterflies, moths and flowers. Whilst re-drawing a beautiful blue butterfly with curious map-like markings upon the under-wings, the other day, my hand was suddenly dashed along, and, in the twinkling of an eye, the form of a spirit in the position of the one which I saw at Lynn, and referred to in the *Spiritual Magazine*, was produced. The figure is very exact, though diminutive.† I could not copy it. Since then, a bird of the pheasant kind, but without eyes, has been similarly produced upon the leaf of a plant.

“Sept. 10th. I have completed by far the best group which I have yet attempted. There is richer colour and perfection in the flowers and insects, one of which is partly worked in silver. Also this group contains my first bird—a humming-bird, and not bad for a first attempt. I have never before felt the power so strong as during the past week. One day I felt that, had I had time to work at so many things at once, that I could have painted landscapes or anything else whatsoever, excepting the human figure. I am rendered so happy through the progress which I am permitted to make. Much astonishment is felt in the minds of all who have witnessed these things.

“October 24th. I rejoice to say that the class of power, that of landscape, which I have long been expecting, came on Monday week. I

\* It is curious to observe that effects of light and shade are never attempted in the earlier stages of spiritual artistic development. The same rule holds good in the history of the gradual development of the schools of painting. I am convinced that an entire correspondence will be found to exist between the spiritual development of an art-medium, and the unfolding of art universally—the one being but the microcosm of the other, both being governed by law universal.

† Here may be recognised, possibly, the commencement of Mr Rippon’s development from the natural towards the internal plane. A seer gifted with what Harris would term the degree of “aromal” sight, which I understand to be a perception of the spiritual existences pervading the sphere of nature, frequently perceives minute and exquisitely beautiful beings, in human and other forms, hovering around and dwelling upon natural vegetation, and probably connected in some occult manner with the spirit of the life of plants—probably, in fact, forming the *aura* of the plants. May not these be the fairies of the poets, and of popular superstition—itself one of the greatest poets—and the “sylphs” of the philosophers of the “Rosy Cross”? A drawing-medium, if developed into the spiritual-natural degree of art, though possibly unendowed with “open vision” of the same degree, would draw, by magnetic movement of the hand, groups and crowds of such minute forms clustering over leaf, bud, and blossom. I have seen such drawings made frequently by a medium, herself greatly averse to the belief in the actual existence of the fairy-world.

have, as yet, done but one sketch, and of course it is crude; nevertheless, it promises well, especially as every day I feel increasing power. I shall make use of the landscapes as backgrounds to the flower and insect groups. For the first few days after the new power developed the power of insect-drawing diminished greatly, and I was very much tried; nevertheless, later on it returned in fuller strength. Several remarkable phenomena have developed themselves lately in regard to the insect-drawing. I make the outlines now in the evening, colouring my sketches in the daytime; and it is frequently the case that a simple butterfly will trouble me for a very long time; for so soon as the lines are drawn in, by a mysterious process they will move out of their places; no matter how careful the measurement may have been, within a few minutes they will all have moved themselves out of place, even visibly to my eyes. At another time my pencil will be pushed further than I want it to go. If I desire to alter a line after it is drawn, the pencil will not always follow that line. Then the compasses will frequently open and close of their own accord whilst I hold them in my hand to measure with. Thus it has taken me, when thus spiritually opposed, two or three hours even to sketch in an exact outline from a specimen which ordinarily would have taken me ten or twenty minutes. Whilst colouring I frequently lose the power, the loss announcing itself by a sense of lassitude in myself and perspiration. Every attempt has been made to mar the beauty and perfections of my specimens by evil spirits, sometimes with success. Thus, although I have advanced beyond my own early expectations, and expect to advance into other departments of the art, great anxiety attends the exercise of the gift.\*

"Dec. 22nd. On Sunday night last I had the first germ of portraiture given me. It was apparently an imaginary face, but expressive. It resembled a New-Hollander. Last night it was intimated to me that I should be enabled to draw and colour minerals—a difficult task to do well.

I still suffer from opposing influences. I hope that this evil wave will soon pass away again for the present. The progress now appears to be towards landscape. During the wave of opposition one day, six weeks ago, whilst drawing some markings upon a moth, the whole raised itself up, and became reversed so as to necessitate going over it again. After this, markings appeared on the paper made by no human hand.

"Jan. 1st, 1865. Yesterday afternoon an increase of power for landscape came. Whilst sitting in the dark I felt as if suddenly brought into the midst of two bodies, one body walking through beautiful scenery beneath a most glorious sunset sky, the colours being most vividly perceptible to me. Portions of the scene were, I felt, to be embodied into the background of the next group which I shall commence. I am now engaged upon a group containing a magnolia with butterflies on and around the leaves. A caterpillar upon one leaf, a shell upon another, and a chrysalis hanging from a third. The next group will have the landscape background referred to, and the following drawing promised me is to represent an antique vase or basket illuminated, hanging by golden chains from a ceiling containing flowers with these insects around them."

It now simply remains for me to say a few words with reference to the artistic quality of such of Mr Rippon's drawings as we have seen. Of the earlier specimens various Spiritualists in London, have been able to judge, and that their judgment was highly favourable may be inferred from the fact that these friends being aware that Mr Rippon's pecuniary resources were most limited, presented him with colours and other needful materials for the commencement of his artistic career. These early drawings to which I refer, were detached sketches of butterflies, executed chiefly in pencil with much delicacy and accuracy. These first drawings were already so far perfected as to have been worthy to illustrate any work upon entomology. They were executed upon small pieces of paper without background or any ornamental accompaniment. Mr Rippon's object was evidently to produce exact delineations of entomological specimens such as he had probably been accustomed to refer to in his scientific studies.

I have now several drawings lying before me, 14 inches by 10, recently executed, drawings mentioned by Mr Rippon in his letters, and I still observe the same strongly marked characteristics, great as is their development in freedom of drawing, richness of colouring, power of arrangement, and in the introduction of beautiful floral forms, and in one instance also of a humming-bird. There are drawings of Audubon and Gould, faithful, loving, transcripts of beautiful natural

\* All experimental investigators of Spiritualism speedily become conscious of that mysterious antagonism which they variously term "undevelopment," "evil," "untruth," "destruction," &c., and none more so than the drawing-medium, especially if delicately organised. After years of careful observation of these phenomena, I am inclined to believe that these distressing experiences invariably occur in what may be termed the ebb of the tide of magnetic power. Probably careful observation would lead to the discovery of kindred phenomena in the exercise of the mental faculties upon the natural as well as the spiritual plane. Thus, that all mental power comes to humanity in tides, with flood-tide and ebb-tide, with a gradually persistent advance and increase up to a certain point, when, as gradual and persistent, a decrease and flowing backward will set in, until a temporary cessation of action arrives, only for the tide again to re-commence its return. And this not only simply forward and backward, but rather with a triple movement, one within the other, with the spring and neap-tides, as well as the daily-tides, and with a ceaseless advance and retrogression in every individual wave. Possibly this law, in operation throughout every phase of mediumship, may, during the periods of retrogression, be the parent of the bewildering, distressing, untruthful, and dark side of Spiritualism, whether regarded generally or individually. Let us all, therefore, cast anchor in our little vessels of mediumship, each one of us, when the ebb sets in, waiting in rest, hope, and faith, until the flood-tide shall again surely return to bear each brave little vessel safely towards the strand of Truth and Perfect Beauty.

objects rendered from the naturalist's rather than the artist's point of view. But it is precisely on this account that the drawings are specially remarkable, since it was towards this end that Mr Rippon aspired; and upon the natural plane again and again essayed and failed, and now through spiritual influx has attained the longed-for goal of his desire. These drawings to which I refer, consist each one of a spray or mingled sprays of rare flowers, frequently exotics, drawn carefully from nature, with gorgeously tinted butterflies and beetles settled upon or fluttering around them: the accurate blending of beautiful tints and delicate markings upon the wings, and the freedom and graceful drawing of their fairy-like bodies and antennae which appear instinct with life, being beyond praise. The metallic lustre of the wings, the whimsical blotches of colour upon the insects, combined with the graceful and frequently quaint and brilliant flowers and foliage forming together most pleasant objects for the eye to rest upon. To the scientific student their excellence cannot for a moment be gainsaid.

I can conscientiously say that I see no reason to doubt, but every reason to anticipate, that this remarkable gift will develop, under favourable circumstances, into results no less satisfactory than those of Audubon and Gould, taking always into account the peculiar scientific bias, study, and experience of Mr Rippon. Having already paid one visit to the tropics to collect specimens of Natural History, Mr Rippon's inclinations lead him to desire a return with the same object in view, where his newly-developed artistic power would doubtless be felt by him as an invaluable acquisition, even as the wants of it was upon his former visit much deplored. But whether he may or may not revisit these wonderful regions, teeming with objects so specially attractive to his imagination, surely at home some means may be discovered for the useful and profitable employment of his remarkable talent, either in the illustration of scientific works or in making drawings for collectors of specimens? As Mr Rippon is entirely dependent on his own exertions, and as yet almost unknown in London, any suggestion or assistance from friends of Spiritualism would I am confident be felt by him as a great boon, and would be bestowed upon a worthy and singularly gifted young man.

With reference to the landscape-backgrounds introduced into three of these later drawings, I must say that as yet they are considerably inferior in execution and colour to the flowers and insects—but of this, as we have seen, Mr Rippon is fully aware. As yet they are out of harmony with the groups, nevertheless there is sufficient originality in their composition, accuracy and detail of drawing, to foretell more perfect results by and by. There is a certain Chinese or Japanese character about them both in their excellence and defects which it is curious to remark, and which is also to be observed in much of the spiritual art of the present day, in this the earlier section of its history. It will be a matter of interest to observe whether Mr Rippon's development will continue to progress in the hard-outlined, scientific direction in which it has so markedly commenced; or whether should he later come into contact with the art of the painter rather than with that of the scientific man, his drawings will assume the fuller and softer characteristics of pictures, through the harmonising influence of atmospheric effects, through the mysteries of shadow, and the glory of light, through the magical blending of colour with colour and form with form. Once brought within this sphere of pictorial art, its special charms of beauty would, I fully believe, be soon wrought out through him, by Spirit, the Creator, and the Quickener.

A. M. H. W.

#### MR HOLYOAKE, THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS, AND SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—I wish to add a little to your criticism of Mr Holyoake's comments on the phenomena developed at the Davenport seances and elsewhere, and hope you will allow me the opportunity of doing so through the SPIRITUAL TIMES.

Let me premise that I cordially sympathise with you in your appreciation of Mr Holyoake's many admirable qualities, especially in that confidence in his candour which led you to invite him to witness the phenomena referred to. Nothing of old so won my esteem as his respect for opponents, and the chivalrous fair play which he allowed them in argument: and I almost resent as a personal grievance anything which casts a doubt upon his ingenuousness. Nevertheless, I cannot resist altogether the evidence before me which impugns either his intellect or his conscience, and, much to my chagrin, the doubt will force itself upon me, whether my admiration was not wasted on the semblance rather than devoted to the reality, whether the aid he gave the incompetent debater by respectfully re-stating and strengthening his argument before replying to it was not merely done to give more lustre to his own opinions, was not the rhetorical artifice of a special pleader trying to gain private ends rather than the judicial statement of a true philosopher seeking only the truth. I struggle against the doubt, but in the face of Mr Holyoake's own utterance, I confess to a certain difficulty in maintaining my ancient faith unimpaired. If it be so with one inclined to generous interpretation, the fact ought to give Mr Holyoake pause, and lead him to review the course which has given rise to it. Certainly, he need not be surprised if others take a less charitable view of his literary action, and find themselves compelled to cast him on the horns of a dilemma from which one or other side of his mental nature must come off seriously wounded. And yet, just as he acknowledges 'delicate thought, refinement, tenderness and sincerity' in Dr Ferguson, though he 'cannot understand how one who can write' as the doctor had written to him 'can be

otherwise than shocked or pained at the pretensions of the cabinet,' and finds it 'difficult to believe that any persons with a true respect for the sanctities of the grave' (which Dr Ferguson had just unsurpassably exhibited) 'would connive at such an exhibition as the Brothers Davenport, even if true, in a spirit sense,' so must we, notwithstanding its difficulty, acknowledge that Mr Holyoake, though he presents one phase of the subject as if it were the whole, and exaggerates and distorts even what he does present, may nevertheless do so in perfect sincerity as a lover of truth, and be utterly unconscious of the injustice he has committed. If Mr Holyoake finds a difficulty on the one side, we find no less difficulty on the other. It may not be unprofitable for us to exchange ideas with each other in relation to these difficulties; and to this for our side of the case in all kindness and courtesy I now proceed.

It is now nearly twelve years ago since Mr Holyoake distinguished himself by a verdict upon Mrs Hayden, the first public 'medium' who appeared in London, similar in gentlemanly candour to that which he has just delivered upon the Davenports, so far as the vindication of her moral character is concerned. Mr G. H. Lewes had done for Mrs Hayden what the Flaneur has done for the Messrs Davenport and their friends. With that superlative acuteness which ever overreaches itself, Mr Lewes imagined that he had convicted Mrs Hayden of imposture. In the *Leader* of those days he gave a full account of his process and its results, just as the Flaneur has done in these days in the *Star*. With a magnanimity which it would have been well for the character of the *Star* if it had followed, the *Leader* inserted a critique of Mr Lewes's 'experimentum crucis,' as he had vainly imagined it, which completely exploded his conclusions; and since then Professor DeMorgan has set his unimpeachable seal to the verity of the phenomena, as exhibited through Mrs Hayden's mediumship, and by consequence to that lady's integrity, which Mr Lewes had impugned. But to Mr Holyoake belongs the honour of having publicly testified his belief in the uprightness of Mrs Hayden at the time it was assailed by Mr Lewes in his incomparable style, just as he has now done for the Davenports, while he then, as now, utterly repudiated the hypothesis thought to be supported by the facts exhibited. Then, as now, too, Mr Holyoake experienced the same difficulties in admitting the possibility of 'spirits' having anything to do with the manifestations. It is, indeed, almost pathetic to observe that whilst the phenomena have so widely spread in this country since then, and knowledge of the subject has expanded and become so much more general, Mr Holyoake, with reference to it, remains in the same infantile condition of mind as before. He still staggers at difficulties which very slight reflection might remove, is repelled by facts whose place he might long ago have found, ignores the presence of other facts which even his reverence for the dead, tender and sacred as it may be, need not shrink from associating with the greatest and best of those who have passed from his earthly circle, and yet withal, giving himself the airs of 'a master in Israel,' assumes to know what the spirits have and have not done, can and cannot do!

Let anyone who may think this statement overcharged read again the two concluding paragraphs of his article, before he introduces Dr Ferguson's letter. There, passing beyond the Davenport phenomena, he speaks of the facts of Spiritualism in general. He says 'None of the spirits have added anything to our knowledge, which they would be able to do if they were spirits.' 'The spirits who have pretended to come hitherto are rather a nuisance. They remove food, break crockery ware, and do all that the household cat used to do. They can eat, they can drink, they have strong muscles, and know how to behave unseemly. If they could be put to work they might become useful. We are invited to receive visitants from Goethe's "calm, pensive spirit land," and we are assailed by the perilous caprices of the rowdy population of the spheres, whom the world is better without. Instead of a gate in heaven being opened, you rather suspect that a trap-door in purgatory has given way, and the blacklegs have escaped.' And this, and such as this, Mr Holyoake wishes his readers to believe is positively *all* that modern Spiritualism presents as evidence of its validity! Such is his representation of the facts. And, not content with the positive statement, he must needs back it up with the following negative implication, 'If messengers ever come to us from the Silent Land, may we not expect they will come with gentleness and speak with wisdom, revealing the wondrous experience of untold life; exciting no fear, affecting no mystery, doing no capricious, purposeless, cruel, or ridiculous thing?' Now, in all kindly sincerity, I ask, is it in vain that we must tell Mr Holyoake that this, which he implies is not done, is precisely what is done in thousands upon thousands of cases, and that what he has represented as the sole facts of Spiritualism—the physical manifestations, numerous as they are, bear really a very slender proportion to the other facts which he ignores? Is it wholly vain to remind him that the physical manifestations themselves are of a mixed character, beneficent in the hands of beneficent agencies, and only otherwise in the hands of less developed natures? that they appear to be given mainly where the more refined evidences fail to bring conviction, or, by their very nature, are unfitted to reach the materialized and sceptical

minds of modern days? that they have succeeded where everything else has failed in demonstrating the presence of intelligent, voluntary, affectional Powers distinct from visible organization, and therefore independent of the conditions which physiologists have laid down as the essential pre-requisites of mental manifestations? that they are therefore a condescension to the dense condition of misbelief, so prevalent amongst men of one-sided culture? Is it in vain to suggest that to a true philosopher no manifestation which demonstrates a fact such as this, can be simply ridiculous? It may have its humorous side, but a sincere lover of truth, a man of real science, will never allow his sense of the ridiculous to overbear his sense of right, or obscure his perception of other relations. Be the action done as ridiculous as you can conceive, if still it demonstrates an intelligent, voluntary, affectional agent, invisible to the outward sense, the *fact* surely remains when the risibility it may have caused has been exhausted? Mr Holyoake, feeling himself apparently under the necessity of saying smart things, has indulged his propensity thereto until he has lost his judgment. Suppose it *were* 'a trap-door of purgatory' which had 'given way, and the blacklegs escaped,' would that not demonstrate the other state of existence which Mr Holyoake denies? For this end it is just as good as the manifestations which Mr Holyoake craves; to some persons far better; and I am doubtful whether even to Mr Holyoake himself, notwithstanding all he has said, the ruder phenomena which the 'blacklegs' exhibit would not be more convincing things than the 'gentleness' and 'wisdom,' and 'wondrous experience of untold life,' which captivate his imagination, and answer finely to turn a period with, but which I fear, in the crucible of his sceptical and critical intellect, would very soon melt into nothingness, and be accounted simply a hallucination, or the 'baseless fabric of a dream.'

It has suited Mr Holyoake's immediate purpose to imply the non-existence of such 'messengers from the silent land' as 'come with gentleness, and speak with wisdom,' &c. Yet twelve years ago I presented him with a volume entitled 'Modern Spirit Manifestations,' written by Adin Ballou, and added to considerably by myself, which I venture to say leaves his present course with respect to this subject wholly without justification. It would be impossible for him to rise from the perusal of that book and say that his representations and implications of the facts of Spiritualism are anything like fair. Very likely he never did me the honour, or himself the justice, of reading it at all. And judging from his article under notice, it would appear very doubtful whether he had ever read any other book of a similar kind. It is within my knowledge, however, that he has heard statements, which, had his mind been in the mood of doing justice, had it not been led away by a peurile wit, and perhaps the necessity of writing to suit the demand of the market, could not but have qualified his representations. He has heard from a friend, whose word on any matter of pure fact he cannot but accept as almost, if not quite, equal to the evidence of his own senses, that in that friend's presence an accordion, suspended by the bottom, was played without mortal touch on the keys, and discoursed more exquisite music than that gentleman had ever before heard from such an instrument. He has heard from the same friend the statement, that in the same house where this took place, paintings are to be seen, alleged to have been produced without mortal agency, in as many seconds as an expert painter would take hours; that one, displaying autumn leaves, said to have been produced in one hour by a medium under spirit influence or guidance, so perfect in finish that a most distinguished living artist, well-known in the world of letters, has said of it, that it contains certain stereoscopic effects which he should expect in vain to get produced from any painter of his acquaintance, and that to have a copy, even without this peculiarity, he would require to give one if not two days for the execution of the task. Thus, at least, in the world of art, it has come within Mr Holyoake's knowledge that such things are affirmed by credible witnesses. He has had from myself allegations of analogous things occurring in other relations of mind. He has reviewed Robert Dale Owen's 'Footfalls on the Boundary of Another Life,' which abounds in similar cases. Let him discount as much as he pleases from these assertions, and still enough remains to render unjust the *suppression veri* of his present article. By what psychological chemistry is it that he assimilates all things rude, low, peurile, and preposterous, or capable of being rendered so, and repels, or lets pass unnoticed, the very ailment he would be thought to seek? In relation to this subject his mental stomach appears to digest, and his general constitution to assimilate only the garbage and refuse, and let all healthy nutriment pass away. From anyone in this abnormal condition it is vain to expect wholesome results. It is easy to see how, from such a state, he 'cannot understand' how one like Dr Ferguson, who exhibits 'delicate thought, refinement, tenderness, and sincerity,' can yet 'be otherwise than shocked or pained at the pretensions of the cabinet.' He never will be able to understand this, so long as he imagines that Dr Ferguson is like himself, fed only upon the husks and garbage of Spiritualism. Yet, it is surely one of the marvels of human nature, and ought to make us very charitable in our judgments of one another, that a man of the acknowledged ability of Mr Holyoake should be obliged to confess to such a dilemma. Mr Holyoake has looked out upon human life in this planet, I should judge, for somewhere about fifty summers. He has seen its varieties of high and low, cultivated and ignorant, refined and rude; knows somewhat of the purlieus of the Old St. Giles's, the present Holywell Street, and other localities of still darker infamy, squalor, and vice, and on the other hand the streets, terraces, squares, and parks bounding them, and stretching far away, the abodes of thrift and opulence and aspiration; and of all the intermediate degrees of human virtue and refinement. These things co-exist. Nay, they are often to be found in the same household; and Mr Holyoake is not



the man to say that, under due fostering conditions, the one cannot be transformed into the other, the vicious and depraved elevated and ennobled, the innocent and virtuous cast down from their high estate. He sees no difficulty in admitting these contrasts and gradations in human life, in this 'best of all possible worlds;' he acknowledges a common humanity between himself and even the 'black-legs' and 'ticket-of-leave-men' of ordinary society here, and, I believe, would be as ready as any man to hold out a brotherly hand of aid to help them to better lives, given only the probable conditions of success. Yet when these Davenport and other manifestations come before him, demonstrating, in opposition to common dogmas which Mr Holyoake himself has spent a great part of his better life in imperfectly attempting to refute, that there is hope for even such offshoots of humanity in the life beyond the grave, he, of all men, must assume the pounce-box and pray that the odour of such things may not come between the wind and his nobility! *'It lowers, says this philosophic exquisite, your idea of the future life, and makes it ridiculous and undesirable.'*

Does it lower your idea of this life that rowdies, blacklegs, and ticket-of-leave men are to be found here? Does their existence put out the existence of the humane, upright and honourable, the patriots, and philanthropists, saints and martyrs, to say nothing of the great hosts of intermediate humanity filling, in infinite gradation and complexity, the places between? If there be a future life at all, are all the forms of humanity not likely to be found in it? That there is indefinite depth as well as height surely adds only to the grandeur of the conception. Mr Holyoake need not go among the rowdies if he does not like them; neither need he invite them to his own domicile. Let me whisper to him, however, that he may invite them without thinking of it, and that the mood of banter and *suggestio falsi* in which he indulged while penning the article under notice was just the kind of attraction which the disembodied whilom rowdies of the press would consider invitation for them to come and assist at his scéance. He seems never to have considered the law of spiritual affinities; and never to have realized the doctrine of spiritualism, even as a possible hypothesis, in explanation of the phenomena of human life. Had he done so, the juvenilities and injustices of his present essay could have found no place in it; and the incomprehensibilities, moral and metaphysical, which stagger him would have been non-existent. Verily we do 'see nothing but that which we bring the power of seeing.'

'If the denizens located in the other world,' says Mr Holyoake, 'were to intrude in this and mix themselves up in our affairs, they would frighten, confuse, and drive us mad.' To this it is enough to reply that they do mix themselves up in our affairs, and do neither frighten, nor confuse, nor drive us mad. The proof of this is before Mr Holyoake, but if he brings not the power to see it we can only say that the fault is not ours.

He says 'Mr Binney has told us how to make the best of both worlds. No one, however, has told us how to live in both worlds at once. We can't do it.'

In the concluding page of the little book I sent him, a writer of more poetic and philosophic insight expounds a very different doctrine. Summing up an argument on the subject he says, "It is certain that within the outward visible universe there is an internal and to us invisible universe, and that we all exist and have our influence in the one as much as in the other. Even without this knowledge of the internal world we act in it, and affect it, as it does us, but with the knowledge of it how much more effective our internal life may be made! A mere thought, an aspiration, or motion of the will changes for better or for worse, the whole spiritual atmosphere. That it begins in our immediate circle, and acts most forcibly upon those between whom and us a special relation exists, is also certain, but who shall say where it stops?" But this letter has already been extended beyond right limits and I must reserve for another opportunity what else I have to say. Meantime,

I am, Sir,

Yours respectfully,

ANDREW LEIGHTON.

## OCCULT SCIENCE AND SPIRIT POWER—MEDIUMSHIP AND ITS DEVELOPMENTS.

Article I.—Continued.

### DREAMING AND SLEEP.

To the Editor of the SPIRITUAL TIMES.

SIR,—As I intend these series of articles to be phenomenal and psychological, I will give a resumé of the phenomena of sleep and dreams as experienced in the organisation of man. In my last communication I referred to the ancients and the occult sciences of the Magi and Chaldeans. I recommend the division given by Macrobius as a special proof that the early writers of the Christian era were not short of scientific data for their superstition in reference to the philosophy and phenomena of dreaming. We may now take a cursory view of the Modern theories admired by the more advanced seers of the 19th century; we will take that of A. J. Davis as the most exact, lucid, and definite of any theory on dreams ancient or modern. Few people reflect upon the operations of the internal spirit, and yet everyone realises a difference in his feelings and experiences. One class of sensations when the sun shines from the firmament, and another when the dreamy folds of approaching night close in upon the brain and the senses. The mind cannot think as clearly when the sun shines as in the twilight hour, because that portion of the brain which controls all the agents of superior thought is the chief ruler of all that takes place in the physical economy. It directs all muscular action,

guides the body in the discharge of all its voluntary functions, and dispenses energy to all the various physical dependences; consequently it is too much engrossed with the cares of the body to do much thinking, and besides all this the sun renders the brain too positive, deep, for clear, and pleasing contemplation. When the heavens are tranquil, and the vesper star is seen above the clouds, when all the vast landscape glimmers on the sight, then the mind sees burning thoughts and words, so eagle-like that it cannot but be exalted to science. The twilight hour is the time of repose, of tranquillity and thought, because then the front brain is less positively charged with blood and nervous energy, and the whole internal being is abandoned to a most luxurious exercise of its various affections and faculties. But let us examine the state of sleep. What a fair counterfeit of death is sleep! It is almost death. The brain is not so fired with life, all the portions of the front, brain are quieted, and the back brain, the cerebellum, is the guardian of the night. It keeps the blood flowing through the dependent organism, causes the heart, liver, lungs, &c., to perform their appropriate office, and thus maintains the connexion between the body and the soul, whilst the larger or front brain, with all its numerous dependences, is permitted to rest in undisturbed slumber. This is perfect sleep. What is the state of the soul in this perfect sleep? I answer, It is folded within itself, the brain and body are wearied and weakened by the activities of the day; hence the mind draws its faculties together, as the sensitive plant folds its leaves against the human touch, and passes quietly into the more inward recesses of the human economy and mental structure. The mind in perfect slumber finds a retreat from all sensuous disturbances in the back portions of the brain. The cerebellum is the dormitory of the soul. But the faculties of the mind are not altogether destitute of action; the soul cannot be in a perfect state of rest and inertia. The laws of the mind are association, progression, and development. Its happiness and felicity consist in the harmony of all its parts with each other. We come now to the phenomena of dreaming. There are two classes of dreams. First class, earth-land; second class, spirit-land. For those of earth-land I refer the reader to the preceding classification taken from Macrobius, in the 5th century: a better classification cannot be found, even in the 19th century. It is an old notion that dreams of a certain class occur in the transition between the sleep and waking states. We are told by Lord Brougham and his class that dreams are nothing more than the indefinite wanderings of the mind during the repose of the material organisation. Taking a comparison from Homer and Virgil, they call sleep the half-brother of death, but they forget how vast is the difference between death in the old philosophy and the same in the new philosophy now dawning upon the benefitted millions of the human race. So far from the notions of Lord Brougham, and his class of reasoners, being true, the very reverse is the case. The more profoundly we sleep the more perfectly we dream, for the degree in which the spirit is remitted into freedom, and into the exercise of its proper faculties, is proportionate to its separation from the body, or if the body remain active, as it is in some cases of clairvoyance, to distinct consciousness. In this distinct state the faculties of the mind are elevated to a superior condition of mental illumination and enlightenment, and knowledge transcending the natural state, and so distinct that the natural memory in some cases does not retain the slightest trace of the knowledge imparted in this state, and yet on again returning to the "superior state" all things are again brought to the memory as fresh and vigorous as when at first they were impressed on the mind. This proves two distinct memories, natural and spiritual. (For a more distinct explanation see Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell.") This brings us to the dreams that emanate from the world of spirits. In this we refer to no fancy of the mind, or freak of the fancy; no scheme of the imagination, but to a sublimely beautiful truth—Dreams from the spirit-land. What poetry can be more poetical than truth? What more romantic than reality? Who would willingly resist the flowing in of high sentiments? the influx of divine privileges? We read in the New Testament how the angel appeared unto Joseph in a dream. When a person is sleeping a perfect slumber, whether common or magnetic, he is high unto the state of death.

The higher departments of the mind are not occupied by thoughts. The strong and splendid elements of holy feeling are at rest, gathering vigour for the future sphere. The entire cerebrum or front brain is now a tranquil domain; and there is no sentinel at the gate of the temple but the vigilant Cerebellum. Hence the spirit of man may be called into harmonious play by a judicious spirit touching of the various faculties in the superior brain, as in phrenology and phrenomesmerism (or magnetism.) Thus the mind is ready for a dream of a spiritual and high order. In this state our angelic friends can approach, and, by the exercise of the will, desire to impress a dream upon the sleeper's mind. It would spiritually act upon the various organs of the front brain; upon such organs, I mean, as would develop or elaborate the dream designed by the visiting spirit or circle of spirits. Hence the mind can be called into play by the action of the will of the spirits from the spirit plane. Hence in this state the sleeper's mind would unfold any dream which the spirit might will, just as when the musical instrument is skillfully played upon, it emits the sounds in the performer's mind. This species of dreaming is not clairvoyance, but simply dream vision, next in degree to clairvoyance; and in some cases impressions of scenes, places, and localities are left upon the dreamer's mind that are a species of clairvoyance resulting from the will of the spirit that controlled the elaboration of the dream. Now and then our guardian spirits come from a fairer and serener home than ours. Those happy children of the Father, beautiful as the mind can imagine—they come to inspire our souls with comfort and consolation in distress, with kindred thoughts and higher joys—they come to make us better, wiser, and happier, angels of mercy and benevolence from our Heavenly Father. Thank God for such a blessing in the dark hour of earthly woes.

Yours respectfully,

D'ESPÉRIT.

## AN INDIVIDUAL REPORT RESPECTING THE MESSRS. DAVENPORT.

So much has been written both in the *SPIRITUAL TIMES* and the *Magazine* upon the subject of the gentlemen above named, that it would almost seem a work of supererogation to increase the volume of recorded observations; however, in my own case, I have to plead the performance of a promise to Mr Palmer and Dr Ferguson as briefly as I may I now fulfil it.

Upon the second of last November; shortly after the appearance of Mr Palmer's challenge to the miserable crew of conjurors—Anderson the Downy at the apex of their phalanx—I posted to that gentleman the following communication.

"To H. D. Palmer Esq.

"Sir,—I have little doubt that you see the *SPIRITUAL TIMES* in which articles on Spiritualism, written by me, occasionally appear. I have, for some years, given very careful attention to the subject, and my opinions are avowed in favour of the truth of these phenomena. It so happens, however, that my experience of physical manifestations has been limited, and the peculiar phase shown by Messrs. Davenport is utterly unknown to me save by report.

"As the cause of Spiritualism in which I am bearing my small part, is dear to me, I should esteem it as a great favour if you could arrange for me to be present on some occasion, and I undertake to write a fair and dispassionate account, for publication, with my name attached to it, of whatever I may be permitted to witness. I wish to add that I should employ such means as are known to occult philosophers of checking deception (which I am not prepared to impute) on the part of any exhibitors. Should the test I should apply fail, I will frankly inform you of my course of action.

"Permit me to say that I do sincerely desire this unhappy turmoil of ignorant writers to be set at rest. I have read your letter in to-day's *Telegraph*. Yours truly,

KENNETH R. H. MACKENZIE.

My object in addressing the gentleman who superintends the business arrangements of Messrs Davenport and Fay was no other than a cordial desire to be able to elicit the truth or falsehood of the phenomena, and the test I intended to apply, had the seance been private, was similar in character to one I had successfully employed some years since, when satisfying myself of the truth or falsehood of another medium.

I copy Mr Palmer's reply:—

"308, Regent Street, Nov. 4, 1864.

"Dear Sir.—The Messrs Davenport do not intend to give any more private seances at present. They will shortly appear in public and I shall then be happy to send you an invitation.

I am, Yours truly, H. D. PALMER.

At the time I wrote, I subsequently observed that Messrs. Davenport were in the north for a few days. Here I must confess that, for the moment, I felt somewhat disappointed at the tone of the reply. I erroneously conceived that Messrs. Davenport declined to be "tested," and as I had been, in common with many others, somewhat incredulous on the subject of the phases of phenomena put forward by those gentlemen, I was disposed to put it aside altogether, and take the view of the general public and the press. This was manifestly a prejudice on my part, for being so thoroughly aware, from the experience of years, of the utter unreliability of newspaper writers, as a rule, I ought to have known better than to trust to the articles that supplied the printing community with bread and cheese. I wrote a letter which I afterwards destroyed, and then awaited the fulfilment of Mr Palmer's promise without further notice.

The test I had proposed to myself was the reply to a mental question then of some moment to me, and which I knew it would be afterwards possible for me to verify. I wished to be present at some *private* interview, knowing how difficult it is, in crowded audiences, to obtain proper magnetic conditions for truthful responses.

Shortly afterwards a ticket of admission was forwarded to me by Mr Palmer, and I repaired, full of anticipation, to the place of assembly. Arrived there, I found a company of ladies and gentlemen gathering together, and among the latter I, at once, recognised my friend Mr Lowe, whose able conduct of the *Critic* newspaper, and whose antagonism to Spiritualism are equally and widely known. Anxious to strengthen my want of scepticism in any manner, I ventured to seat myself near the gentleman who had "fathomed it all," but who, prudently, declined or avoided, I should say, to communicate the results of his observations. To sit "cheek by jowl" with such a Gamaliel, I thought would be as sceptically profitable as it was really pleasurable.

Over the phenomena themselves I may lightly pass. So fully described as they have been by others who have witnessed them far oftener and earlier than I, that the repetition would only take up too much space. I shall mention, therefore, only the salient and peculiar facts of the evening. The tying, untying, bell-ringing, and instrumentation all took place as usual, together with the appearance of hands, arms, &c. The committee was that evening composed of two gentlemen, one a stranger to me, the other a friend of some years' standing, on whose word, both as a man of honour and keen observation, I felt able implicitly to rely. He is a fellow of the Astronomical Society, and distinguished for his services to, and knowledge of, that science. This gentleman, I may add, was shut into the "cabinet," and gave exactly the same account of the pattings and hair-pullings that other committee-men have done. He declared openly on the platform that he had never seen any of the gentlemen connected with the seances before, and I knew that his declaration was trustworthy in every sense.

The literary gentleman near whom I took my place advised me to look at the Davenports' hands, as, he said, by a twist they dexterously detached themselves from the cords, and put them in again. I ascended the small stage in the lecture theatre, and I remarked that Mr Lowe had evidently mistaken the size of the wrists, for men of the slight build of the Messrs. Davenport they have rather large wrists, and the mode in which they were bound precluded the possibility of any "slip," as maintained by the editor of the *Critic*. This, too, was when they were bound by the spirits, and not by the committee. However extraordinary the phenomena, I perceived that the two gentlemen were passive instruments in the production of them.

After the "light" seance came the "dark" circle, in which I again obtained a seat close behind my literary "guide, philosopher, and friend." He took a front seat; I sat in the second row. So much has been said as to the nature of these phenomena in the dark that their general characteristics are well known to all. I only take leave, therefore, to record my individual experiences. The lights being out, the hand-bells, guitars, &c., began to move, and ere long I experienced something thrust beneath my left-arm sleeve. I caught it at once, a hand-bell ringing at the time. The light being struck, I found that it was one of the hand-bells deposited on the table a few seconds before and was ringing while firmly secured under my arm. I handed it back to Dr. Ferguson, with some jostling remarks about bearing away the bell. Again the light was extinguished, and I then thought of my mental question, of which, in the strangeness of the phenomena so new to me, I had, for a time, lost sight. I put it firmly, strongly, and decidedly, and awaited the result, neither with impatience nor any special belief that in that crowded circle I should obtain the counter-sign I wished to have. Be it remembered that I sat in the *second* row, and beyond the reach of "list-slipper" agency; be it also remembered that my question was mental; that at least seventy, or perhaps one hundred persons were there present—let any advocate of the "collusion" or "deception" theory therefore compute arithmetically the chances of my being answered by the floating guitars and other instruments or the list slipper—if the list slipper were really at work. My question was slowly, distinctly answered by the certain number of slight blows from an instrument upon my head, as I had asked; and since that time the events that have passed around me have verified the predictive power of the occult intelligence that evening present. My "test" was applied unknowingly to any one present, and I could only accede to the truth of the claims of these three young American gentlemen to be really able to promote communication between the two worlds.

Mr Palmer afterwards asked my opinion, but I declined to give it, as I told him, for the reason that I was desirous to record it deliberately upon the immediate cerebral excitement consequent upon spiritual manifestations had passed away, rather than at the moment, when I was labouring under mingled emotions of astonishment and gratitude. I am writing nearly two months later, and the impression is as vivid as at that time.

A singular circumstance occurred at this seance, of which I was an immediate spectator. It is known that all the persons in the inner circle, and often those behind, join hands. Suddenly, a lady on my left screamed out that she was hurt by some instrument, and a gentleman behind her also felt a blow subsequently, evidenced by a slight wound on the forehead. On the light being struck, (it had occurred just after the guitars had been phosphorised,) Mr Lowe confessed that he had broken the chain to brush a fragment of phosphorus from his next neighbour's trouser knee. At the same moment the exclamation was heard, a little further to the left, as I have recorded.

The other circumstances varied in no marked degree from those quoted by others, and I left that room strangely moved with the singular things I had seen, so utterly different from all other spiritual phenomena it has fallen to my lot to witness.

A long period occurred, from various causes, during which I was unable to attend the receptions of the Brothers Davenport. At last on Friday the 13th instant, I again visited Messrs Davenport and listened to the admirable lecture of Dr Ferguson. Nothing very marked occurred to me; the room was crowded during the first seance, and when the dark circle commenced, I was far behind all the rest of the visitors in the fourth or fifth row: yet (confusion upon the list-slipper theory!) at that remote distance I received from the floating instruments by slight blows upon my hat, the solution of another mental question, which I put on the impulse of the moment—without any of the so-called "jugglers" being aware even of my presence at that time in the room.

I have, therefore, in conclusion, to state that so far as I am able to judge—as I would judge in other matters—these phenomena are produced, as stated, by means beyond the control of the gentlemen stigmatised as "humbugs and cheats" by the *wise* press, gentlemen who I believe personally would esteem subterfuge a disgrace, and who are introduced to Englishmen by another gentleman who abandoned a lucrative and congenial appointment in his native country to undergo contumely, and even coarse, unmannerly abuse for the sake of the sacred Truth, in a country that boasts (God save the mark!) to be the leading land in liberality of thought and largeness of heart!

With this testimony I conceive that I have fully performed my promise to the gentlemen who so kindly allowed me to act as a critic upon their performance, not for gain, as the press sneeringly says, but for the sake of Truth and religious freedom.

KENNETH R. H. MACKENZIE.

Chiswick, January 20th, 1865.

## DR. FERGUSON'S SPEECH.

(To the Editor of the "Spiritual Times.")

Dear Sir,—The "National Reformer" (London) in noticing the auspicious opening of the Lyceum, of 11, Newman-street, thus speaks of Dr Ferguson: "The star of the evening was certainly Dr Ferguson,

whose address was received with repeated "Hear, hears," and applause. His speech was replete with arguments and anti-theology, repudiating all 'isms,' even Spiritualism. The learned doctor was grand and eloquent in his enunciation of the truths of the sovereignty of the individual. His fine perception of words, and his ready method of dealing with anticipatory opponents, renders his periods and perorations finished, and of the Fox stamp. We took copious notes of the doctor's address, and can only say it would well repay the conductors of the institution to print it for circulation. Dr Ferguson possesses a power of thought and method of speech that would attract and fill a larger edifice, and we should like to hear him address a larger English audience before he leaves for America."

In the appreciation of this talented and accomplished orator, I think all who heard heartily concur, but is it not to be regretted that the published account of his remarks showed such unmistakeable marks of an imperfect report? I have seen Dr Ferguson evidently mortified in reading that report, and I heard him say, that while ready to speak on any occasion where freedom of expression was allowed, he would certainly avoid speaking again where such a report of his speech was likely to be made. I have understood that the reporter's apology is, that he was himself so interested in the speaker that he neglected his duty to hear. Cannot provision be made to have a faithful report, and thus secure the privilege of hearing another address? In the printed speech in your columns, Dr Ferguson's illustrations are frequently given where his proposition to be illustrated is left out. His words are often misplaced, words substituted for his which are not appropriate, such as "suppressed" for oppressed, "enchanted" for encharmed, "ill" for in, "icy rivers" for inland seas, and lengthening rivers, &c.

I have every assurance that this unintentional injustice to the distinguished speaker can be avoided in future, and in any event cannot he have the privilege of revising any report that may be made?

With every desire for the success of your Lyceum, and with deep interest in the "free expression of thought on any and all subjects, linked to no party, sect, or creed, knowing no duty but right"—Mr Ferguson's words—I am, respected sir, yours truly,

JUSTICE.

#### LAKE OF THE DISMAL SWAMP.

The lake of the Dismal Swamp between Alexandria and Virginia, which contains about 250 square miles, gave rise to the following beautiful little ballad, written by Mr Moore, the elegant translator of "Anacreon," &c. The story is supposed to be the exclamation of a maniac upon the death of a lady to whom he paid his addresses, and whose loss deprived him of his senses. The scene is the Lake of the Dismal Swamp.

They made her a grave too cold and damp  
For a soul so warm and true;  
And she's gone to the lake of the Dismal Swamp,  
Where all night long, by a fire-fly lamp,  
She paddles her white canoe.

And her fire-fly lamp I soon shall see,  
And her paddle I soon shall hear;  
Long and loving our life shall be,  
And I'll hide the maid in a cypress tree  
When the footstep of death is near.

Away to the dismal swamp he speeds;  
His path was rugged and sore—  
Through tangled juniper beds of reeds,  
Through many a fen where the serpent feeds,  
And man ne'er trod before.

And when on the earth he sank to sleep,  
If sleep his eye-lids knew,  
He lay where the deadly vines do weep  
Their venomous tears, and nightly steep  
The flesh with blistering dew.

And near him the sea-wolf stirr'd the brake,  
And the rattle-snake breath'd in his ear,  
Till he starting cried, from his dream awake,  
Oh! when shall I see the dusky lake,  
And the white canoe of my dear?

He saw the lake, and a meteor bright  
Quick o'er the surface play'd;  
"Welcome," he said, "my dear one's light!"  
And the dim shore echoed for many a night  
The name of the death-cold maid.

Till he formed a boat of the birchen bark,  
Which carried him off from the shore;  
Far he followed the meteor-spark;  
The winds were high, and the clouds were dark,  
And the boat return'd no more.

But off from the Indian hunter's camp  
This lover and maid so true  
Are seen by the hour of midnight damp  
To cross the lake by a fire-fly lamp,  
And paddle their white canoe.

"STRANGER IN AMERICA."

#### SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PREDICTIONS, SO-CALLED, OF ROBERT NIXON, THE CHESHIRE SEER.

John Jonathan Nixon, the father, held the lease of a farm from the Abbey of Vale Royal, in the parish of Over, near New Church, not far from Vale Royal, on the forest of Dalmere. The birth of this extraordinary person took place at Whitsuntide, and he was christened Robert. From his infancy he was remarkable for stupidity and ignorance; so that it was with difficulty his parents could instruct him in anything, even to drive the team, tend the cattle, and such-like rustic employment. His parents left the farm, and this young Robert to the care of an elder brother, and Robert was not long before he gave a singular token of that fore-knowledge which made his name so famous. As he was driving the team one day, whilst his brother's man guided the plough, Robert pricked an ox with his goad so cruelly that the plough-holder threatened to tell his master, on which Nixon said, the ox should not be his brother's three days hence; and this accordingly came to pass, for the record says that a life dropping in the estate, "the lord of the manor took that same for an heriot," or an acknowledgment which, by the tenure of some estates, is given to every new lord of the manor.

He was remarkably satirical, and what he said had generally some prophetic meaning. He once told people that Norton and Vale Royal Abbeys should meet on Acton-bridge—a thing, at the time, thought improbable enough; yet these two abbeys being pulled down, the stones were used for repairing the bridge. What was still more singular, he said that a small thorn growing in the abbey-yard would become its door. Persons said that thorns never grow large enough; but they understood afterwards what an uncertain meaning there might be attached to such a prophecy, and that what they understood one way might come to pass in another. So it happened. At the reformation in the midst of rapine and destruction, under the name of putting down idolatry, the most revered linement of antiquity sometimes perished, and when the march of havoc reached Vale Royal it happened that the identical thorn was cut down and cast into the doorway to prevent the sheep which grazed in the court from going in; so that the thorn became the door. But what renders Nixon still more notorious was that, at the time when the Battle of Bosworth-field was fought between Henry VII. and Richard III. he stopped his team on a sudden, and, pointing with his whip from one side to the other as he stood, cried, "Now, Richard—now, Harry," several times, till at last he exclaimed, "Now, Harry, get over that ditch and you will gain the day." The plough-holder related what had passed, and the truth of the prediction was corroborated by a special messenger sent to announce the proclamation of King Henry of England on the field of battle. Nixon was sent for to court, and he had no sooner arrived than the cautious monarch devised the following plan for making trial of the man's foreknowledge the report of which had caused him to be summoned before the royal presence. But previous to his being sent for, Nixon had gone about the town of Over like one wild, declaring that the king had sent for him, he fore-knew, and that he must go to court, and there be starved to death. Great, indeed, had been the surprise of the man's townspeople to hear the king's messenger, as he passed through the town, demand a guide to where Nixon was to be found. The man happened to be turning a spit at his brother in the Bark House, and he was heard to cry out, "He is coming; he is now on the road for me." But the astonishment of the family was beyond measure when Nixon was demanded by the messenger in the king's name. It was the king's desire that Nixon's foreknowledge should be put to the test. So after hiding a diamond ring which he constantly wore, the king sent for Nixon, and told him what a heavy loss he had sustained. All the answer returned was in the words of the old adage, "He who hideth can find," after which, the king, telling him that he had only done it to try him, commanded that, for the time to come, all Nixon said should be written down. It turned out singularly enough that having been locked up in a cupboard or closet to secure him from the mockings of the servants, the officer who, to prevent these insults, had locked him in, on an important message coming from the king, forgot all about his prisoner, and, though he was only three days absent when he recollected the state in which the captive was left, he found Nixon dead from starvation, as had been predicted.

Space precludes any further particulars concerning Nixon and his prophecies, such as they are; but more than a score of some very remarkable sayings of his are still in remembrance.

#### THE DAVENPORTS AT WOLVERHAMPTON.

The Davenports and Mr Fay gave a very successful seance at Wolverhampton on Monday night. The committee acknowledged publicly that the manifestations were entirely independent of the mediums, and that it was simply physically impossible that they did what was witnessed. The whole audience responded in loud and continuous applause. All well, and send to Messrs Powell and Cooper their high sense of appreciation and sincere regards. The work goes bravely on, and will reveal the God-like in man before this people in such form and power that none can gainsay.—(Contributed.)

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