

*R. H. Higgins*

THE  
SPIRITUAL TIMES

A WEEKLY ORGAN DEVOTED TO THE FACTS, PHILOSOPHY, AND  
PRACTICAL USES OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

WE HOLD THAT GOD IS OUR FATHER, MAN OUR BROTHER, IMMORTALITY OUR DESTINY.

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

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

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Spiritualism unfolds to our internal senses substantial realities, presenting us not only with the semblances, but the positive evidences of eternal existence, causing us to feel that the passing shadows we speak of belong not to the spiritual, but 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.

### PROFESSOR FARADAY AND SPIRITUALISM.

"Lord Bacon, were he now living, would be the man to solve the mysteries that branch out of mesmerism or (so called) spirit manifestations, for he would not pretend to despise their phenomena for fear of hurting his reputation for good sense."—SIR. E. BULWER LYTTON.

The above is a worthy text for a sermon on the shortcomings of the leaders or "learned ignoramus" who move supinely on the surface of life. Its application may be adopted by very many (so termed) great men. There can be no mistaking its applicability to the majority of our scientific students, devout theologians, and literary savans. They will not hear, although the truth thunders in their ears. They will not see, although the truth, like the rising sun, dazzles their sight. None are so deaf as those who will not hear, and none so blind as those who will not see. Considering the mighty interests in the way of advancement, we are not surprised in the least that such men as Professor Faraday should hold aloof from the investigation of unpopular truths. It would, on the contrary, cause us to wonder, did they exercise an independent judgment apart from all considerations of social distinction. We, as a nation, are conservative in character, hence we bow to authority with an ease of manner quite charming. Conservatism runs through the finest threads of our social fabric. It looks out of our eyes, gives speed to our legs, and quite an external polish to our manners. It is not according to English caste for the people to act in any weighty matters before the great chiefs of fashion have nodded approval. Nothing succeeds out of the charmed circles of conservatism. The Honourable Lady L— will not attend Madam M—'s evening party unless the Duke and Duchess of K— are at the head of the list of invitees. Smiles Green, the village grocer, if asked by his neighbour, Thomas Jenkins, tailor, to attend a public meeting for the purpose of hearing what Parliament is about to do in the ensuing session, or what it has not done in the one past, will be sure to be too busy. But if Squire Wilson, who owns half the village and occupies the best house in the county, calls, Smiles Green honours his condescension by accepting an invitation to listen to a discourse upon any subject, whether he is interested in it or not. We, of course, don't wish to intimate that all individuals are like Smiles Green. Thank God, we know there are many true, noble beings whose brows bear the impress, not only of divinity, but individuality. But, by illustrating the patent fact that we, as a people, set too high a price on conservatism, we get at one of the strong reasons why new truths press themselves into service through fierce conflicts and formidable arrays of selfishness and prejudice.

Professor Faraday, in a lecture on "Mental Education," delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, before the late Prince Albert, gave utterance to these words,— "If

we are led, either by simplicity or vanity, to give an opinion upon matters respecting which we are not instructed, either by the knowledge of others, or our own intimate observation; if we are induced to ascribe an effect to one force, or deny its relation to another, knowing little or nothing of the laws of the forces, or the necessary conditions of the effect to be considered, surely our judgment must be qualified as presumptuous!"

This is all, in our opinion, excellent; but why does Professor Faraday fail to profit from his own wisdom? In the lecture mentioned, he endeavours to shew that table-lifting is effected by a natural force supplied by persons sitting round it. But the misfortune for Professor Faraday's theory is, that he gives "an opinion upon matters respecting which he is not instructed." Had he taken his own wise advice to himself he would not have proved himself "presumptuous" by attempting a hasty elucidation of causes which were not within the scope of his knowledge. His involuntary muscular theory has been so often laid bare, and shown to be utterly puerile as a solution to the physical phenomena of table-movements, that we will not occupy space by doing over again a work which has been so often and well done in most of the published works on the phenomena of Spiritualism. Some time since, Mr. Home gave a *seance* at Cox's hotel; several gentlemen of note were invited, amongst them Mr. Faraday; but on the morning of the day the *seance* was to come off, the Professor sent for a programme of the proceedings, and not receiving one, made it a plea for staying away. Mr. Home, like many other mediums, finds that he cannot have what manifestations he desires, but what the Spirits like to give. Professor Faraday, in this case, did not act with a matter "respecting which he was instructed," but from "simplicity or vanity" he became "presumptuous," "knowing little or nothing of the laws of the forces or the necessary conditions of the effect to be considered." It would not be necessary to run over the career of Professor Faraday and show up his assumed infallibility in these matters, were it not for the conservative spirit which we have alluded to. Thousands hang upon the words of Professor Faraday (not thinking for themselves), and the mischief to mind and morals is incalculable. For, once prove to a demonstration that spiritual manifestations can have no possible existence, and you close the doors of immortality upon the Atheists and Materialists, and give rein to men's evil passions. We do not say Professor Faraday is conscious of this, but we cannot help perceiving that his policy regarding Spiritualism has a tendency in that direction.

Well, he asked Mr. Home for a programme of the *seance*, and Mr. Home could not give one, therefore Professor Faraday presumed to consider Mr. Home a trickster, or something worse, and without being sufficiently "instructed," stayed at home.

At the private *seances* of the Davenport mediums, which took place recently at the house of Dion Bouicault, several gentlemen of high standing testified, as far as they could see, and they scrutinised the mediums, changed the ropes and musical instruments, shifted the cabinet, and adopted every conceivable precaution against humbug, to

the genuineness of the manifestations. Professor Faraday was invited, but he did not ask this time for a programme, or he might have had one, but he sent the following:—

Royal Institution of Great Britain,  
8th October, 1864.

GENTLEMEN,—I am obliged by your courteous invitation, but really have been so disappointed by the manifestations to which my notice has, at different times, been called, that I am not encouraged to give any more attention to them, and therefore leave those to which you refer in the hands of the professors of legerdemain. If spirit communications, not utterly worthless, should happen to start into activity, I will trust the spirits to find out for themselves how they can move my attention. I am tired of them. With thanks,

I am, very truly yours,  
M. FARADAY.

The Brothers DAVENPORT.

We really don't see why so much care should be taken to force upon Mr. Faraday invitations to *seances*; the subject is evidently distasteful to him; therefore, he is not in a right mind to follow out a course of patient investigation. Besides, how is it to be expected that Professor Faraday, having already, before the late Prince, spun out a theory which does not account for the phenomena, and which was elaborated without "instruction" in "presumption," will run about to prove the falsity of his own theory.

Spiritualism, through phenomenal aspects, must appeal to individuals personally to be of real service to them. They cannot be expected to comprehend such strange realities upon mere hearsay. All that can be expected of them is that they maintain silence whilst they remain in ignorance. The common-sense faculties of the humblest sane individual serve him in matters of spiritual phenomena, especially of the physical character, equally as well as the common-sense faculties of Professor Faraday would serve him. It does not require a course of scientific training, a thousand a year, and a great name, to settle the matter whether tables rise without contact or not. The merest child can settle, satisfactorily, such a question. But the how, why, or wherefore, is another matter; there wants thought to philosophise. His note, although it has been eagerly seized upon by the press as a "settler" to the Davenport mystery, is, after all, not very creditable to a man who ought, on account of his position, to be the exponent of the advanced physical, if not spiritual, truths of his age. His assumption that the Davenport manifestations belong to the domain of legerdemain is quite unworthy of him. Why does he not first witness and then pronounce judgment? Supposing them to result from legerdemain, we should think Professor Faraday, with his knowledge of chemical and physical laws, would be the very man to "find it all out," and he would do society a service by so doing. But supposing them to result from spirit agency, which we believe they do, what a "presumptuous" man he must be to hand over the question to the professors of legerdemain, at any rate, until he has, for himself, witnessed the peculiar manifestations of the Davenport mediums! It is highly probable that he is not sufficiently "instructed" by getting rid of the difficulty so unceremoniously. The Professor's joke about trusting the Spirits to find out for themselves how they can move his attention passes current for good coin. But why should the Spirits trouble themselves more about *him* than they do about any other case-hardened sceptic who is minus a professorship and a name?

Does not Professor Faraday assume that no spirit-communications have, as yet, been received but what are utterly worthless? And further—does he not say that he is tired of them? In this temper it is hardly likely that the Spirit within him will yield to any spirit-whispers from without. We do not, we confess, see the wonderful importance that some see in converting Professor Faraday to Spiritualism. We say this, knowing that such an almost impossible thing would stagger thousands of those who are continually quoting Faraday as an infallible authority. If, however, the iceberg of scepticism should melt, and prejudice die out in his heart, we should gladly welcome him as one more added to the phalanx of converts to the old-new truth, which is daily blessing the earth. On the other hand, should Professor Faraday remain where he is, in the shadow-land of doubt, it will not retard the glorious march of spiritual fact, or cause one true Spiritualist to falter in faith.

Conservatism of that which is good and true is one of the highest aims of social life but we doubt very much whether the

conservatism which causes men to bow to title and glitter, to self-elected popes and petty monarchs of the schools of philosophy and science, or to Faraday-sical plausibleness, is calculated to do other than subjugate individuality.

#### NICODEMIANS AND THOMASIAN.

By WILLIAM HOWITT.

In the gospels we find the types of almost every human character or spiritual condition that we can possibly meet with in life. Amongst the disciples themselves what a variety of representative natures! We have Peter the impetuous, ready in his zeal to imagine himself capable of any trial; the first to fail, the first to repent of his failure; and drawing from his better experience a grave strength that is admirable. We have in Matthew, the taxgatherer turned Spiritualist, and martyr for the truth; John the loving, simple soul, caring little for the chopped straw of mere dogmas, placing all merit in love, and yet having conferred on him the most sublime and prophetic visions of any of the apostles. We have Paul the learned persecutor converted by miracle into the teacher of the natives. Philip, who had walked for years with the God-head and did not know it, yet made capable, by the same power, of the flight of angels whilst in the body. We have Thomas, the doubter, and Judas, the black sheep of the flock, the traitor of all traitors. We have in the counsellors of a whole nation one sole Gamaliel giving the counsel of true wisdom; and we have Nicodemus, who, though he was drawn towards Christ, only ventured to approach him by night. We have the sons of Zebedee, who desired to have granted to them, as the price of their discipleship, to sit on the right hand of Christ in heaven!

Who cannot point to men of our own day who are the exact followers of one or other of these representative men? In many cases they are not individuals, but whole classes. How perfect is the coincidence of those Catholics of the present day who kidnap children, and draw daughters, by incessant arts, from their mothers, and bring contempt on their Church by such despicable conduct, and those zealous to whom our Saviour said:—"Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

I have frequently drawn attention to the disciples of Nicodemus of our day, and have dubbed them Nicodemians, a name which is likely to adhere to a very numerous body. Who does not know amongst his acquaintances, sometimes no few, who are at heart confirmed Spiritualists, but would not for the world that the world should know it? They love the truth, but certainly not with a deep and perfect love, for "perfect love casteth out fear," and fear is their great tyrant. These persons love Christ, no doubt, and expect him to acknowledge them in his kingdom, though they have not acknowledged him here. They are willing to forget his explicit words:—"Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my word in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." They would draw near to the persecuted truth, only they don't like persecution. They would acknowledge that faith which has always been distinguished by its martyrs, but that they have no fancy for martyrdom.

They forget the inevitable conditions of discipleship:—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." They cannot follow Christ, or Christ's truth, who are not prepared like him, to be "the despised and rejected of men." None can do this but the truly wise and heaven-illumined who remember the grand condition of apostleship. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose (or is willing to lose) his life for my sake, the same shall save it." The true disciple knows that the very highest rewards of discipleship are inseparably bound up with persecutions:—"Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundred-fold more in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." Mark xi. 29. But the Nicodemian, who would like to have the hundred-fold, does not like the price at which that is to be purchased, and he comes to Christ by candlelight; and, no doubt, he will receive a candlelight reward.

The Nicodemians would proclaim the present persecuted truth of the gospel, the manifestation of the world and the life of ministering spirit, if it were only *not* persecuted; he would be very valiant if there was no danger of ridicule from friends and loss from other quarters. He would be a rose-leaf hero; a martyr amid the very flames, if they were but the flames of a genial fireside and applauding thousands. But these were not the martyrs and heroes of other days! We look back on times when Christianity was rudely persecuted, and those who believed in it did not believe under a cloak or in the chamber with blinds drawn and doors locked. They stood and heard the sarcasm of the streets, the bloody rush of soldiers, the amphitheatre of hungry wild beasts, sawing asunder, boiling in oil, and the like experiments. From age to age those terrors and others were renewed, and the believers met them not as sculkers but as men,—

"Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride  
Or nobly die, the second glorious part."

Where is the land which has not been drenched with the blood of martyrdom? Where the axe, and the prison, and the stake have not done their dreadful work on the hoary head, the tender woman and the tender child; and these have stood like the rocks in their firmness; mothers have come forth unto the place of execution, not to say "abjure your faith children, and escape the horrors of this death," but to stand by their beloved ones in the public amphitheatre, and bid them suffer and die like him who died for them.

Glorious days! glorious men, mothers and children! Europe had such days and such people at the Reformation; England and Scotland had

such days then and since. The days of Smithfield, of the iron boot, and the brave covenantor; the days of Quakerism and Wesleyism; the days of undaunted hearts, and hideous dungeons, and branding with hot irons, and of ransacked houses, and dragging through horse-ponds, and pelting with mud and stones. Those days are gone, but is the faith gone, too? Was it the truth that the brave men, and braver women and heroic children suffered and frequently died for? Or was that truth a vapour which has exhaled. No, here is the truth, the ancient imperishable truth, but where are the men? Here is the grand old truth come forth on the wings of heaven, and with the words and inspirations of God, through his spirit, begins crying "down with this accursed materialism; down with this foul and deadly heresy, which has broken up the union with heaven and spread a thick veil over the entrance to the region of souls, and declared that man has nothing better to live for than making railroads and building steam-engines, and poring into the properties of matter. Down with this insidious doctrine which broods over the naturalist in his forest rounds, over the crucible of the chemist; and has spread a thick cloud over the pulpits of the Church and Dissent. Down with the demon philosophy which is on all sides sapping the foundations of historic truth in the Scripture, which would give us gospel maxims without a gospel mediator, who in himself is 'the truth and the life.' Down with that metaphysical machinery which would sift out the wheat and feed you on the chaff. It is no longer a question whether you shall have religion, but whether you shall have souls; whether there be a Christ, but whether there is or ever has been a Creator? The philosophy of to-day has triumphed over these faiths already in millions, and its profoundest researches are leading you to—Nothingness."

Such is the proclamation from the inner regions of the universe, carried by myriad spirit-voices through all civilized lands; and what is the response? The ancient truth of God is up and about again in this shape and for this need—but where are the heroic men and women? where are the days of Godlike martyrdom? Has the earth lost its steel and sinew? Have the nations become feeble and degenerate? Have we effeminated in our silken saloons, and on our smoothly-gliding iron paths, till we shrink from the voice of heaven because we are told that it calls us to stand forth and suffer? If it be so, let us confess it, if we dare not confess the great truth itself. Let us say frankly that truth is still truth; but this is no age for embracing it to the death. Let us confess that there were once in the world men, women, and even little children, whose spirits and deeds we can admire, even with tears, but whom we dare not imitate. That tears and homage are all we have strength to give—we are no longer what they were; we stand crouching, trembling afar off, and admit that we are but pigmies to our Christian forefathers, and that this is truly a day of very small things.

Look round you and say what is the condition of Spiritualism. In fifteen years it has worked on to its present state, and it is said that twenty millions of people have embraced it. In America millions have freely and honestly avowed their faith in it; in France vast numbers, especially in the southern cities, claim as openly to be Spiritualists as they do to be Catholics or Protestants. They are not ashamed of the solemn sentiments of their hearts, and they dare to wear their faith on their lips as frankly as in their bosoms. In Spain even when an Archbishop burnt the spiritualist books; the common people hissed and groaned at him. But in England—who shall say how many are its Spiritualists? How many are they? Who shall tell us? Will they tell us themselves?

Here and there stands forward a bold man or woman. Here we see a little group who own their convictions, and yet they live unmolested. We have none of the old dragonades enacted against them; no houses burnt down, no fields laid waste, no prisons open for them; none thrust or hooted even from society. Yet, with this public and palpable fact, it is certain that of the Spiritualist body the Nicodemians are the great majority. We meet them on all hands and in all places. They are in the court; in the ranks of the aristocracy; in the pulpit, and in the law; yet they do not deem it prudent to avow themselves. One says, "I should lose caste;" another, "I should lose my practice;" another "my relatives are connected with me in business, and I cannot injure their interests;" one says, "my master would dismiss me," and another "my husband or my wife would be furious."

Is this then really such a persecuting age? With all our boasts of British freedom and British tolerance of opinion, are we yet such bigots and such slaves? That is a question which affects the character of England, and should be settled. In the mean time, it is not to be denied that it is a serious thing for many to dare to be honest. It is a serious thing to risk in many cases domestic peace, position, or even the means of existence. Let all such be then content not to be heroes or martyrs, but to be humble Nicodemians. But, on the other hand, nothing is more certain than that there are vast numbers whom nothing but a false and fashionable timidity restrains from avowing their opinions. For them no loss of interest or advantage, no question of domestic rupture has any real or positive terror. The sole bugbear is the fear of being termed superstitious. In the Nicodemians of this class, of what real value is the truth? They rate it at something less than a well-shaped coat or bonnet, for their fear of wearing the truth openly is precisely the same as that which they have of appearing in a dress out of the current mode.

Now, I would wish to tell these secret believers what it is that they do. It is they who make it hard for others to speak out. It is they who throw the burden of disingenuous concealment on others not so independent as themselves. Though they prize the truth thus lightly, yet I believe that many of them are, at the same time, generous and benevolent. Many a man who shrinks from a sneer loves his neighbour, and is glad to lend a helping hand to a weaker brother or sister. Let me implore them, then, if they will rot avow their real sentiments for the sentiments themselves, that they will do it to open the way for less fortunate ones who would. If every one who believes in Spiritualism would avow it, what a power would be thrown into its cause! It is the littleness of a visible army which encourages the enemy and invites attack. Let a gallant force appear and the scene changes. Now, I am persuaded that the Spiritualists of England amount to a number which, if known, would strike the cavillers and opposers dumb. The weak would hold up their heads,

the strong would become stronger by the *esprit de corps*, and by the force of extended sympathies, and the enquiry would be quickened by the very fact of the imposing aspect of the adherents of the cause. But what shall be said for a cause where three-fourths of its disciples recoil from its banner when borne in the daylight? How shall a cause advance while its tactics are those of retreat, concealment, and cowardice? Let the whole body of English Spiritualists cast away their unworthy, and for the most part, groundless fear, and they will find themselves the members of a body which, for numbers, position, character, and intelligence, any man may be proud to belong to, and which will strike the opponent and the silly sneerer with respect. Let the name of Nicodemian retreat into the night to which it belongs; let it perish for ever from the spirit and the tongues of men.

And what of the Thomasians or Thomasites? These are a particular class of opponents. They are men who would have you think them extremely liberal. You encounter them every day. They are none of your rude and ignorant men of letters, who attend *seances* only to hoot and jeer and quibble; only to show how much men may write, and yet remain behind the age; how much they may assume to teach, and yet how greatly they need teaching. These Thomasites profess a desire even to believe, but, then, they must see. That, they say, is quite reasonable. It is foolish, they assert, to believe upon anything short of actual personal observation. They must see the very body of truth, and put their hands into its wounded side, and put their fingers into the very prints of the nails of crucifixion. They forget, or do not believe, the emphatic words of Christ to Thomas, the head of their sect—"Blessed are they who believe and have not seen."

Surely, if it be only reasonable that a man should see before he believes, it must be more reasonable to believe on the testimony of true men. There is such a thing as EVIDENCE, and the reasonable man is he who believes on reasonable evidence. On what is it that, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, these very gentlemen themselves do believe? It is on evidence. On that public evidence of trustworthy journals and their reporters, which the whole civilized world has agreed to confide in. These gentlemen themselves believe in the American war, in the Maori war, in the last comet, and scarcely a man of them has seen any one of these things. They believe a vast volume of the events of history on the evidence of men of whom they know nothing whatever, for the channels by which those events reached the printed page of the historian, are and must for ever remain unknown to them. They believe, every hour of the day, facts on which it is most important that they should not be deceived, on the private evidence of individual men. How, then, do they presume to call themselves reasonable men, exercising only a reasonable caution when they refuse to believe facts attested by millions of living people of all civilized countries, thousands of them of the highest intelligence, probity, and truth? There can be no objection to these Thomasites seeing, though by a singular fatality they seem never to get to see what they so much profess a desire to see, and which such millions besides somehow see most readily. But if they mean to retain the character of reasonable men, they must either take prompt measures to see or they should believe not merely good, credible evidence, but a concentration and concurrence of evidence which must convince all really reasonable men, or must leave no place for evidence in human affairs.

Now, these very reasonable men, who only believe what they themselves see, what is it they believe? Surely their articles of belief cannot amount even to thirty-nine? Did these gentlemen see themselves born? If not, do they believe that they ever were born? Do they believe in their father who happened to be dead before their birth? Do they believe in any relative or friend, who is, I do not say at the Antipodes, but round the next corner? Do they believe in King Potatau, or the existence of the Tacypings? In all the vast body of history, sacred or profane, do they believe anything at all? If they do, they are very credulous and incautious men, according to their own favourite axiom. If they believe only what they see or have seen, their real knowledge is disgracefully small—they are the most stupendous know-nothings that the world ever saw.

It is time that the Thomasites cast to the dustman this dustiest rubbish of a pretended liberality. It is, in a word, an hollow and untenable sham. He who renounces the laws of fair and credible evidence, such as the whole of the world's transactions are based upon, himself unworthy of credit. In the words of Dr. Johnson,—

"Who drives fat oxen, should himself be fat."

He who expects to be credited on anything that his hearers have not seen, must not drive those hearers off the established highways of evidence, or goad them beyond the limits of a natural patience. It is time that the hollow cheat of Thomasite reasonableness should end. Let every such stickler for believing only on sight, be consistent. Let him really believe *nothing* that he does not see, in which case he will not believe beyond the moment, and the narrow circle of his vision—or let him believe that others have seen even if he have not. The Thomasite doctrine of belief in nothing but seeing and feeling, is a libel on a man's own understanding and power of inference; a gross libel on his neighbour never yet convicted of an untruth, and is a principle of action worthy only of an unreasoning animal. However high he may rate his mingled caution and liberality, our Saviour has already settled his grade in creation, and has pointed his attention to a class of men far nobler than himself; to those who have not seen and yet believe, that is, on the evidence accepted by all mankind in all ages and centuries—the consentaneous averments of honourable and truth loving people.

**FAITH.**—Faith is not only a means of obeying, but a principal act of obedience. It is not only a needful foundation: it is not only as an altar, on which to sacrifice; but it is a sacrifice itself; and, perhaps, of all the greatest. It is a submission of our understandings, an oblation of our idolized reason, to God; which he requires so indispensably, that our whole will and affections, though seemingly a larger sacrifice, will not, without it, be received at our hands.—Dr. Young.

### PECULIAR SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS IN AFRICA.

At the commencement of the rainy season of 1860, Mr. Beale, a staff assistant surgeon, was seized with malarious fever. The "Dover" arrived soon after, bringing a Mr. Campbell to relieve him. Mr. Beale was taken on board the "Dover," shook hands with the captain on deck, went below, and expired almost immediately.

Mr. Trestrail, his colleague, sat down to write out the case. It is still preserved in the medical report book at the surgeons' quarters. Toward the end the handwriting changes, becomes uneven, and sometimes scarcely legible. A few hours afterwards Trestrail was a corpse. The two surgeons were buried together.

Mr. Campbell wrote out a report of Trestrail's case. He slept alone in the quarters, in the same bed in which the others had died.

Mr. Savage is a trader on the island. A few days afterwards Campbell came to him and asked him to give him a bed. Savage complied with his request.

"Don't you like your quarters?" he said.

"No," replied Campbell, "I have seen Beale, and," he added, "I shall never see my poor wife and children any more."

Dr. Campbell also soon died. No importance was attached to his words—"I have seen Beale." It was supposed to be merely a dream of which he had spoken. The words themselves would have been quite forgotten had it not been for that which afterwards occurred.

The commandant's quarters, a detached building, stands about fifteen yards from the surgeons' quarters, also a detached building. A sentry is stationed over each. Capt. Wilcox and Dr. Bradshaw were sitting one evening in the piazza of the commandant's quarters, when they heard a shriek from the other building, and a soldier, livid with fright, and without his musket, rushed into the piazza. Capt. Wilcox, supposing him drunk, put him under arrest.

The next morning, being examined, he declared that while on guard at the surgeons' quarters, a gentleman dressed in black had come towards him. He had never seen him before. He challenged him, and got no answer. The gentleman continued till he was close to him. The sentry threatened to run him through if he did not answer the challenge. Getting no answer, he thrust, and saw the bayonet pass through the body. The figure gibbered at him and turned away. It was then that he had shrieked, dropped his musket, and ran away. Examined by Dr. Bradshaw, he described the figure closely; the face, height, and dress tallied precisely with those of Dr. Beale, whom the sentry had never seen.

Drs. Bradshaw and Hind slept in the building in separate rooms. They heard noises, the cause of which they did not know, but to which they paid little attention at the time.

Drs. Macarthy and Fox came up. They heard nothing. Dr. Macarthy remained there a month, and during that time had a severe fever. He went to Bathurst, and returned in company with Dr. Duggan. Both of them were in good health at the time. Neither of them had heard the ghost story. They slept each in an end room (there were three *en suite*), and Dr. Duggan's servant, a boy of sixteen, in the centre one.

Dr. Macarthy—from whom I had these particulars—now heard peculiar noises in the night. In the piazza outside there was a table on which they placed their tea-things after they had done with them. He would hear the cups and saucers clash together, and the plates, as it seemed to him, dash forcibly to the ground. Several times he went out in the morning, expecting to find everything broken; but in no instance had the position of the things been altered in the least. He ascribed these noises to some mischievous fellow who had climbed into the piazza unobserved by the sentry below.

He heard also noises in the middle room, as if heavy pieces of furniture were moved about. And often all night long he would be annoyed by a pattering sound on the floor round his bed. He thought at first that these were bats which had fallen on the floor and were unable to rise. But he could never find them in the morning. Then he supposed that they were mice.

One night, instead of going to bed, he kept his candle alight, and sat on a chair, with a stick across his knee, waiting for these mice to come out. He heard a sound at the further end of the room; it was like a man walking cautiously on tiptoe. The sound came towards him, but he could see nothing; he strained his eyes, but could see nothing. Then the footsteps passed close to him, yet he could see nothing.

Doctors are essentially materialist. Dr. Macarthy knew that the strangest sights and sounds can spring from a disordered stomach or a checked secretion. But when he mentioned his hallucination to Dr. Duggan, and Duggan replied that he had been troubled in the same manner they became perplexed. Still it did not occur to them that these sounds were supernatural. The mind of man is averse to believe that which it cannot grasp.

In the course of conversation they happened to speak to Savage about it. He replied as if it were a commonplace

matter:—"Oh, don't you know the house is haunted?" and related the affair of the sentry.

On returning to their quarters, Dr. Duggan observed that his boy was looking ill, and asked him what was the matter. The boy said he did not know, but perhaps it was his sleeping in the open air. On being asked what he meant, the boy replied, with some reluctance, that he had gone to sleep on the flat roof of the house, because a tall man in white used to come and wake him up, so that he could get no rest. This boy I afterwards examined myself. He told me that it came and pulled him by the ear, and said, "Wake, wake." When he awoke he could see something white moving off in a manner which he said was not walking, nor running, nor flying, but something different from what he had ever seen. I offered him five shillings (which to him would be a large sum) if he would sleep there that night, even offering to keep him company. He looked frightened, and refused.

Drs. Macarthy and Duggan, after that, slept in the same room. And now, which is very extraordinary, these two men, materialists by education, lying broad awake, with a light burning in the room, would both hear those noises, and would call each other's attention to them at the time: the heavy bodies moved in the centre of the room, the plates rattled in the piazza, and the light tiptoe footsteps passing between both their beds!—*W. Winwood Reade's "Savage Africa."*

### WHAT IT IS TO BE A SPIRITUALIST.

By THOMAS BREVIOR.

In its broad, liberal, and modern sense, a Spiritualist is one who believes in the manifestations of disembodied spirits to men still in the flesh; but this definition gives no idea of the character of the believer, or of the significance and value of his creed. It includes the Shaker celibate and the Mormon polygamist, the African obi-man, the Hindoo Fakir, and the Christian saint; the sensual idolator and the pious mystic; it may mean only table-turning, or spirit-seeing; or it may mean the communion of the devout soul with its Creator. It is true, that even in its rudest form, the belief in spiritual powers and an unseen world, which man is destined to enter, is better than no belief in spiritual existence, it raises its possessor above the brutes—above his merely animal nature, and it contains within it the possibility of correction and expansion; but in taking the name of Spiritualists we should do so with discrimination, and so define our aims that we may clearly perceive, and convey to others, the position we occupy, and the ends we would attain.

Every Spiritualist should consider for himself where he is—where he wishes to be in the ascending or descending scale,—the kind of Spiritualism he is working to advance,—in what direction it tends and whither it is conducting him. This is the more necessary as Spiritualism is a term often employed in different senses, our newspapers and the public in general, show in what they think it chiefly consists, in calling it "spirit rapping," and even Spiritualists seem to understand by it only a more extended range of phenomena than this phrase implies,—direct some outward manifestations of spirits to the senses through human media. M. Kardec and his followers in this view call themselves "Spiritists," and thus limited, rightly so. To others, again, Spiritualism means attending seances seeing spirit manifestations and receiving their communications and teachings. To others, again, it means the supposed scope and tendency of the general body of teachings by spirits, or by those who believe in the reality of spiritual communion.

Spiritualism, in short, has different meanings and is variously regarded by different men according to their several characters and states. Here, as elsewhere, it is true that the "eye only sees what it brings with it the power of seeing." The man who is accustomed to regard things from the external will see only outward manifestations, while the philosophic thinker will look beyond, and discover the principles and internal truths, of which these are but the expressions:—he will seek to gain from these new insight into the laws and affinities of spirit and matter, and to trace their bearings on the speculations of philosophy and on what are generally regarded as established truths in science, but which he may conclude will need to be rectified to meet the new facts and the evidence of a "new force" now disclosed. To the student of human nature, again, the facts of Spiritualism will give a new element in his consideration of many obscure passages of history—of many of the records of "popular superstitions." To the physician, it will throw new light on the causes of insanity and disease; to the artist on the sources of inspiration; to the jurist on the value of testimony; to the theologian it will supply new demonstrations of the great truths of religion, and furnish new and conclusive answers to what have hitherto been among the most formidable objections brought against it. Indeed, he will see that more or less directly it bears upon all the great questions of theology and metaphysics, on Providence, moral freedom, temptation, punishment, the future life, intuition, illumination, inspiration, prophecy, miracle, prayer. As in most subjects so in this, the earnest student will find that the more carefully and thoroughly it is investigated, the more its horizon opens towards the infinite.



But Spiritualism has other than a mere speculative interest, it is more than a theme for the exercitation of the intellect, and the gratification of an intelligent curiosity; in its full and true sense he alone is a Spiritualist whose life is in entire harmony with the great truths which its facts demonstrate; in whom these are wrought in the character, and its effects visible in the home, in business, in social intercourse and the daily affairs of common life. Such an one, so far as he realises Spiritualism, is all of a piece, of the same web and woof throughout; the heir of all the ages to come; and as he knows that the life that now is shapes that which is to be, he is not a mere creature of time, and he cannot regulate his conduct by merely temporal considerations; he has a higher ground of action than mere worldly prudence; he subordinates his lower perishable appetites to the nobler spiritual faculties which alone are his his true permanent endowment; he is thus—whatever opinions may cling around the surface of the intellect, in the central point of character, Christian—Christ-like, working according to his highest ideal in the sphere of duty.

While, therefore, for the truly Catholic mind, Spiritualism has its important lessons in science, philosophy, and history; in its ultimate issue, its crowning development, it reaffirms the central truth of the Christian faith; in its highest aim it is the life of God in the soul of man. To realise this, in my judgment, is, in its truest, highest sense, to be a Spiritualist, and here, in its moral and religious aspects, its lessons and its influences are open not to a class, but to all, the lowliest as well as the loftiest mind may be taught, counselled, strengthened, purified by it, made fitter not only for the present life, but for that fuller, that eternal life, for which God created man in his own image.

#### THE LATE DR. GREGORY ON SPIRITUALISM.

Amongst the believers in Spiritualism few men's opinions may be considered more valuable than that of the late Dr. Gregory, professor of electricity and chemistry, in the University of Edinburgh. We present the following extracts from his last private letter, bearing date, October 29th, 1857:—

I have been much amused by the proceedings of the Cambridge Committee so perfectly analogous to those of all similar bodies of whom I have any knowledge or experience. I have long been convinced that it is a waste of time and labour to try to convince such a body of leaders in science, inasmuch as they are always averse to new and startling truths, and, in my experience at least, are invariably strongly prejudiced, although they may not have paid the least attention to the subject. They constantly insist on improper and absurd conditions, such as no one who is acquainted with the phenomena, or has any conception of the numerous sources of error and failure, can think of accepting. If, as is highly probable in such circumstances, failure does occur, they instantly proclaim that the whole thing is due to imposture and collusion, but without producing any evidence of this. I have not met with one such body who seemed even to have a glimpse of the truth that, in questions of fact, failure—in other words, a negative result—cannot possibly prove more than that the experiment has failed. Nor have I seen any one who had any acquaintance with the probable causes of failure when we experiment on such a subject as the sensitive human nervous system—of the powers of which, or the laws that regulate them, we know so little. The rational inquirer will soon find that there are innumerable cases of failure—such as the state of health of the subject; the state of the weather; the state of body or mind of the experimenter; and last, not least, the influence of the bystanders, above all if they be sceptical, prejudiced, or excited, by controversy. Whether in magnetism, in clairvoyance, or spiritual manifestations, we, who have experimented know these things, but the scientific committees never do; and hence they must unreasonably expect, and indeed some observers as unreasonably promise, uniform success, as the test of truth.

For many years past I have never accepted any such challenge or test, nor have I made any attempt to convince, in this way, men who are capable of expressing decided opinions previous to their having examined the subject. All that I ever consent to do is to make the trial, on the express understanding that failure proves nothing as to the disputed truth. And even then I reject all dictation as to conditions, as I will only experiment under the conditions presented by nature, to whom the sceptics have no right to dictate. Our duty is to study nature as she presents herself, and to take the facts as we find them. We may alter the conditions if we please, but we have no right to insist that the facts shall be produced under such altered conditions as the uneducated judgment may dictate or fancy suggest.

On the other hand, when the trials have been successful, the body of sceptics, so far as I have observed, is never convinced, but always either explains away the facts by some groundless hypothesis or hints at imposture. The committees tell us they will believe if we can do so and so; but they never do. How-

ever, I always repudiate such an arrangement. It is of no importance whether they believe or not. Their testimony cannot be better than that of hundreds which has had no effect on their minds. How then are we to expect that when they believe, others are to accept their testimony? They will be treated as they have treated those who were convinced before them. All such scientific bodies, and all individual leaders in science who set so high a value on their own testimony and so low a value on that of others, must be left to time to deal with. If we observe with care, and report our facts conscientiously, the future will not fail to do us justice.

The essential question is this: What are the proofs of the agency of departed spirits? And although I cannot say that I yet feel the sure and firm conviction on this point which I feel on some others, I am bound to say that the higher phenomena, recorded by so many truthful and honourable men, appear to me to render the spiritual hypothesis almost certain. I have, indeed, still a lingering feeling that some other explanation may possibly exist, but I cannot point to any one that is at all satisfactory; and I believe that, if I could myself see the higher phenomena alluded to, I should get rid even of this feeling, and be satisfied, as are all those who have had the best means of judging of the truth of the spiritual theory.

Admit, then, that departed spirits can communicate with us, they must do so through some subtle agent, capable of reaching our nervous system. It is this agent, which is perhaps the nervous or vital force, which I think may also prove identical with that through which mesmeric influence is conveyed and clairvoyance effected. . . . This would explain many points of analogy and relation between clairvoyance and mediumship, while it in no way interferes with the fact of spiritual agency, if that be admitted.

#### SPIRIT-LIFE.

From trammels of the flesh set free,  
Our dead friends live in spirit-spheres;  
Unseen by us, on life's rough sea,  
They mingle in our joys and fears.

The fleshy vestments of the soul,  
Like bark upon the forest tree,  
Decay, while time doth onward roll;  
But soul itself must ever be.

Oh, pleasing thought! angelic lights  
Shine brighter than earth's brightest star;  
They beam upon our darken'd nights,  
And shed their lustre near and far.

Whilst worship pure the soul uplifts,  
For God's rich blessings daily given,  
We praise Him most for His best gifts  
Of soul, and soul's unending Heaven.

Our finer feelings cling around  
The spots where home-born joys increase;  
And there our spirit-friends abound,  
To guide our feet and give us peace.

They teach us more than Learning's peers  
Or proud philosophers can teach:  
From them we learn that hidden spheres  
Are orb'd within the Spirit's reach—

From them we learn that Death breeds life,  
Life for the Spirit—life for love.  
When life in flesh has conquer'd strife,  
The Spirit lives and loves above.

Oh, glorious hope, that cheers our faith!  
When earthly fetters fall away,  
We, too, shall live, despite of death,  
In spirit-land thro' endless day.

The sceptic's jeer and scoffer's scorn  
Before the spirit-truth must fall;  
The Christ of spirit-life is born,  
And spirit life is all in all.

J. H. POWELL.

Mr. F. PITMAN, 20, Paterno-ter-row, has issued a small, but useful, little work,—“The Life and Doctrines of Jesus and John the Baptist, an Answer to ‘Reman.’” We have only had time to read the Preface, which, we are pleased to observe, has all the marks of “our philosophy.” The author has omitted his name, from what considerations we know not; yet it appears to us he need not fear to father his book. It is a gratifying fact worth noting, that spiritual philosophy is becoming woven more and more into the web of literature. As an example, take the book before us.

## SHAM CLEVERNESS.

Considering that unwillingness to receive new and unapparent truths inherent to most minds, and placed there with the evidently wise purpose of guarding them from the evils attending unlimited credulity quite as much as unthinking scepticism, it may be said that the legitimate position of a person, on his first introduction to the startling truths of Spiritualism, is one of extreme doubt; a doubt for which we have not a shadow of right to blame him, with this one proviso,—that he does not attempt to throw ridicule and contempt upon a matter he thinks to be dishonest, by means which he knows to be dishonest.

In this stage of his inexperience let him, by all means, dwell upon the many arguments against the claims of the Spiritualist, and fairly and honestly describe that condition of mind, not a very novel one, which sudden contact with a new set of facts, apparently opposed to all former experience, may be naturally expected to engender; and then let him, with equal candour, acknowledge that he has had no practical experience of, and knows nothing at all about the matter. Such a man is generally on the high road to further knowledge, and in due time by exercising his shrewdness in the right direction; by making use of the eyes and ears which God has given him, and his powers of reflection, (which we suppose he derives from the same source, in spite of certain bishops' protest against the free use of them) he will probably find out that he has lighted upon a great truth. He will then soon obtain a satisfactory proof of his independence by being called a fool by not a few learned and justly celebrated men, and by a host of others, who most undoubtedly, and quite apart from any opinion they may entertain upon this subject, would be laying claim to fraternity in the use of the epithet.

But there are certain modes of opposition, even to a subject confessedly blameworthy, which neither common sense nor common morality can tolerate, and the object of these observations will be, not to offer any proof that Spiritualism is based upon truth, so much as to shew how little worthy of respect are some of the forms of criticism to which it has been exposed, even assuming that Spiritualism is false.

The cunning and literary trickery which have been employed in dishing up facts in a form palatable to prevailing popular prejudices, would be well and legitimately employed in the detection of trickery, if trickery there be, but they are *not* legitimately employed in the composition of newspaper articles expressly intended to confirm popular prejudice, even at the expense of truth, where that seems convenient. Set a thief to catch a thief, by all means, but do not invest him with the higher authority of administering justice.

The main difficulty of the position of the Davenport Brothers, for instance, arises, not from any inability on their side to offer proof and to submit to tests which must be conclusive to any impartial mind, but from the wilful inattention to details of some, and the wilful misrepresentation of others. "Humbug," said Mr. Tolmaque, very truly, "is the Conjuror's best friend;" and, we would add, the Spiritualist's worst enemy.

We have heard it insinuated that the presumption is very strong against the honesty of mediums who receive a guinea for a *séance*. The argument (such as it is) weighs with equal force against the sincerity of opinions written at a penny per line and upwards, in papers that would never sell were they to embrace the cause of any truth while still in an unpopular stage of development. Be it as it may, we will defy any one who has really studied this subject with the same attention he would devote to any matter, say of scientific or historic interest, without a feeling of despondency at the false impression which some gentlemen of the press feel themselves justified in conveying to the public upon matters where there is a diverse popular opinion. Where does this system of literary trickery end? These writers must know, for the little art required even to make a pun would enable them to see, that in calling the Davenports' performance a clumsy trick, and extolling *per contra* the imbecile efforts of an illiterate mountebank, in ignoring the instantaneous nature of the effects and repressing some of the most marvellous and puzzling incidents of the dark circle—they must know, we say, that in doing this they are deliberately giving false impressions to the public, even if they believe that after all it doesn't much matter, because the Davenports themselves must be certainly humbugs, too. Heaven help us if all our ideas of art, science, social topics, politics, based upon statements of facts in journals, are distorted in the same way!

The idea is alarming, but in passing we will just advert to a consideration which we think somewhat reassuring. The term "gentlemen of the press" is rather a vague one, as was abundantly shown by the behaviour of not a few of that fraternity at the first press meeting given at the Hanover Square Rooms; and is equally applied to the loungers about theatres, who seem to have nothing to do but to get admission into all the entertainments of London gratis, and write short notices of them afterwards, not always gratis; and to those graver representatives of the press of this country, men of sound education and intellectual power, who are able to bring to bear real knowledge and real critical ability, in the discussion of the important topics that from time to time excite the interest of the world.

The investigation of the Davenports, and similar manifestations is for the most part, unfortunately delegated, not to the latter really superior class, but to the former versatile class; men whose friends believe, and who believe themselves, that they are capable of much higher achievements, and are only waiting for an opportunity of shining in the higher walks of literature. Good fellows they are, too, no doubt, and capital things they often say when the play is over and they discuss next morning's copy over the evening's grog, and gaily they fly over the surface of things in general, and confidently they talk about the laws of nature, (a very, very superficial knowledge of which has sufficed to make some men, unfortunately for themselves, profound philosophers in their own estimation)—but, alas, for Spiritualism, when they try their hands at that!

We would not wish, however, to be understood to include in this class, all the writers of adverse criticism in the newspapers. Many of

these adverse criticisms have been made, we fully believe, in all candour and sincerity, although nearly all give signs of those strange eccentricities of memory which so often occur in such cases, and seem to shew that it is not so easy a matter, after all, to give a correct description of occurrence a little out of the common way. Those who have watched the changing, uncertain tone assumed by some of the newspapers will know where the graver charge of deliberate falsehood may be made, and will understand what we mean by saying that in many quarters the Davenports have to cope with the effect, not of mere ignorance, nor of false reasoning, but of downright and deliberate deception.

But there is still another somewhat unlooked-for stumbling block to the establishment of these new and startling truths, (or rather to the re-establishment of very old truths in a new garb), and this we will designate, for want of a better title, "SHAM CLEVERNESS."

You are a contributor, we will say, to a journal that depends for its large circulation upon a certain knack of echoing the opinions of the many flippant, unsettled, would-be profound minds, so rife in society now-a-days, and whose effect upon the tone and moral progress of the present generation will be a curious study, doubtless, for future historians. You are deputed to write an article upon what you and many others, sincerely, perhaps, believe to be an attempt to saddle a vile imposture upon society. In many other cases, with apparently much less opportunity of easy display and immediate conquest, you have distinguished yourself by the terse prickly sentences with which you have heaped ridicule upon assertions and theories obnoxious to the general spirit of your periodical. And now, with a subject so easily attacked, and labouring under the disadvantage of much popular prejudice already, you feel that you ought to make short work of it, and great things are expected of you, and you expect great things of yourself. It is with no small confidence, therefore, that you seize pen and smooth paper for a short triumphant sally, which is to settle the question (once again!) for ever, when the idea suddenly occurs to you, and is dismissed, with the usual facility, from your mind, that really after all you know nothing about the subject whatever. It would be an insult to your well-known address and fluency to say that you suffer one moment's inconvenience or delay by this transient misgiving. Courage! If you can't go into the subject, you can go round and round about it, and if you take one or two things for granted, it probably won't much matter. If you have not seen enough of the subject, if what you have seen has been ill digested and very superficially considered, you can at least write a half funny, half serious article; just funny enough to make certain departures from truth admissible on the plea of pleasantry, and just serious enough to hint that beneath the humour of the writer lie a profound wisdom, a peculiar familiarity with all the difficulties of the subject; an intimate acquaintance with the laws of evidence, and a power to trace errors to their source; all which qualities, though they *might* be exhibited in a very marked degree, are purposely suppressed out of sheer contempt for the matter on hand. In fact, you can bring to your aid that greatest of all boons to semi-comic philosophers who deal in winks and nods, and have shrewd guesses; who think more of the figures they are cutting before the public than of the truths it is their duty carefully to consider,—“Sham Cleverness.”

A writer in "All the Year Round" thinks the subject is adequately disposed of by a silly burlesque, entitled "Lufton on Davingpodge," where an attempt is made to cover mediocrity of idea and inaccuracy of statement by the not very novel expedient of mis-spelling.

A contributor to "Once a Week" commences work with a very confident air, indeed, and does not say how he thinks the thing is done, but how it is done. It seems, according to him, that the Davenports loosen the seats, and then walk about the cabinet and perform all the marvels themselves; a surprising explanation to those who have really closely watched the phenomena in all their details. The powers of the human month, when sufficiently cultivated to play fiddles, slap committeemen on the back, and fling about a heavy trumpet, seem to be marvellous, indeed, and we trust this writer will soon come into the field and compete for Mr. Palmer's £100.

Some time ago the *Standard* wanted to beg the question with a vengeance, and apply the Davenports' ropes in what seemed to her a more appropriate manner.

J. Scoffern, M.B., in the *St. James's Magazine*, endeavours, with very little success, to give the idea of a fine massive intellect, unbending to the consideration of very puerile matters, merely for the benefit of his weaker minded and less enlightened readers. His ideas of the aims and purposes of science are thrown off, as usual in such cases, with an air of being able to say much more if he chose, and we hope any of our readers who wish to contemplate the difference between little and great, between sham cleverness and real knowledge, will do us the favour to compare Professor de Morgan's preface to "From Matter to Spirit," with the lucubrations of the sapient doctor. His ideas about Mesmerism, and his wish to dictate the nature of tests to forces of which he knows nothing, will be good fun, we imagine, to Dr. Elliotson and others; men of professional eminence, though they would be disinclined, doubtless, to enter into any rivalry with the doctor in his dexterous application of a stethoscope to a wooden chest.

The professed object of this article is a consideration of Baron Reichenbach's Theories, but the real intention to say injurious things of the Davenports, at the same time that he gains a little ephemeral notoriety by clinging desperately to their coat tails, is remarkably apparent. At the very commencement he relieves his mind a little about them, and takes firewell of them in a dignified way:—"Enough of these individuals."

He soon returns to these individuals, however, and is evidently much pleased with his invention of the term, "Phantom fiddle flying." After some more strictures upon the Baron's experiments, he trots back to them again, and having already favoured us with his conception of what a true philosopher ought to be, he ends by exhibiting his notion of gentlemanly conduct:—

"Although these very cautious gentlemen, keeping their company select, refuse me the opportunity I had longed for, of being present at a small *séance*, when, as a matter of experiment, I had resolved on

throwing a little iodide of nitrogen over their floor, or of grasping their luminous hands in mine, through the intermediation of a pair of gloves studded with fish-hooks, or sending a charge of small shot at the apparition—they may come to grief for all that."

Before this, while yet wearing the mask of philosophic gravity, he says:—

"Science is shocked at the very idea of a *sort* of physical force, a modification of physical force. Nature is so clear and sharply cut in all her primary divisions, that such words as 'nearly,' 'a modification of,' 'a sort of,' in reference to a physical force, imply the existence of an imperfection—an indecisiveness such as there is no example of in the laws of nature."

In other words, he will have nothing to do with a science in its early stage of development, and until it is put, ready made, into his hands. All we can say is, if science is shocked, science will have to be shocked, until those who so frequently use her name seek truth as earnestly as they now seek personal display. A little reflection would have shewn this journalist that, where there is only a partial comprehension of the nature of a force, the active operation of which we nevertheless have no doubt of, the imperfect adaptability of our vocabulary to an entirely new subject would naturally drive us to the expedient of terms already familiar, and bearing the nearest possible resemblance to the idea in our minds. Indeed, this necessity always obtains where our conception of a thing is incomplete and unsatisfactory; as one would say, "Some sort of a doctor," "Some sort of a philosopher."

The sorriest sight connected with this controversy is that of a man of Dr. Ferguson's mental calibre, (with whom, in a fair stand-up argument, Dr. Scofield would be about as powerless as a flea in the hand of a giant), exposed, by his peculiar position, to the public insults of a person as infinitely his inferior in intellectual capacity, as in courtesy of demeanour and gentlemanly feeling. Those, however, who have the advantage of Dr. Ferguson's personal acquaintance, who know how clearly he sees through and through this style of opposition, and from what an altitude he looks down upon the little peckings of little men at a great subject, will agree with us that we scarcely need offer him any sympathy on this score.

An article on Sham Cleverness would be manifestly incomplete without a few extracts from the *Saturday Review* on Spiritualism. The criticism on Dr. Nicholl's book contains no new suggestion, either on one side or the other, and is evidently "made to order," but we do wonder that prudence did not suggest to the reviewer the expediency of suppressing his quotation,

"Coxcombs vanquish Berkeley with a grin,"

so exquisitely suggestive is it of his own mode of treating a subject he is quite as ignorant of as the coxcombs were of Berkeley's Theories. He charges Dr. Nicholls with being "unable to discriminate between his inferences and the perceptions on which they were grounded;" but what shall we say of a critic who draws inferences, and pompously publishes them, from facts which he has never seen, or, at any rate, never sufficiently examined to have any perception of them at all?

A favourite trick with the *S.* reviewer is to beg the question, assume the whole thing to be a fallacy, and then gravely to philosophize as to the peculiar causes which allow such errors to prevail in society now-a-days. To this newly discovered expedient we are indebted for an article entitled *Popular Logic*, which appeared in an earlier number, and from which we cull an extract, that our readers may see how cunningly the writer hides his ignorance, and postpones the consideration of the point upon which the whole argument turns, *sine die*.

"You wish to account for a table running up and down like a dog. You say that it has got a spirit in it. But all that you know about the spirit, and all that you ever expect to know about him, is summed up in the fact that he makes the table run up and down. Hence the statement is very little better than an identical proposition, or like the celebrated explanation of poppies sending you to sleep by the fact that they have a soporific power. The utmost that it amounts to is, that the table's peculiarities are caused by some unknown quantity, X or Y; with, perhaps, the further assertion (rather a rash one, to say the least of it), that the cause is something whose action can never come within the sphere of our senses. It may be said that, when spirits take to communicating with us by raps, we may learn something of their natural history, and make intelligible statements about them. But there is always a fatal breach in the argument here, even granting the accuracy of the facts observed. The intervention of the spirit always remains an arbitrary hypothesis, and, generally, a highly improbable one, to account for the possession of knowledge which is more easily explained in a different way. *But on this point we cannot now enlarge.*"

Save us at all times, and on all subjects, from such sham cleverness as this, and leave us rather the good old stupidity of the *Standard*!

H. A. R.

#### A METHODIST CONVERSION THROUGH VOICE AND VISION.

Amongst the Cotswold Hills, a region famous for the religious convictions and spiritual experiences of its inhabitants, at the little village of Pitchcomb once dwelt a well-to-do grazier and butcher, whose name was William Hogg. His early life, much of which was spent in public-houses, where he shocked even his dissipated companions by his fearful new oaths—frequently invented by himself—formed a most striking contrast to his middle and later life, when he had become a follower of Whitfield, and preacher amongst the Methodists. Very early, the Holy Spirit had begun to combat with him; he for a long period struggling hard against its beneficent influence; after each conflict, sinking again into the old forlorn state of ruthless dissipation. His final union with the Divine Spirit, we understand from a memoir of him which appeared in the "Theological Magazine" of 1800, was effected in the following manner:—

"One evening, returning from market, while loudly lamenting

his condition, and conceiving the time just at hand, in which he should become a monument of Divine vengeance, a remarkable change took place; his hands were loosed, his burden removed, his fears were dissipated, and his mind filled with transports of joy

"He conceived that he was overpowered with a light from heaven; that he saw the Saviour in his sufferings; and it appeared to him as if he were addressed by an audible voice, assuring him that, in consequence of those sufferings, his sins were pardoned, and that he was brought into a state of reconciliation with God. When his mind was in its most vigorous state, as well as in his declining years, he would scarcely allow it was anything short of reality. Whenever this circumstance was the subject of conversation, he would say, 'That voice and vision concurred together to remove my burden and to seal my peace.'

"This wonderful event had such an effect on his body as almost to deprive him of animation. He was returning from market with his empty panniers, upon which he threw himself, being so entirely overcome that he could not continue to manage the rein. He therefore gave himself up to the motion of his horse, expecting that it would take him home a corpse. After this suspension of his senses he recovered himself by degrees, and felt great regret at the idea of having anything more to do with this world.

"These remarkable impressions produced a most pleasing effect upon him; his countenance appeared serene, lively and cheerful. A sanctity discovered itself in the whole of his conversation and deportment; he appeared to all around him to be, what in fact he was, an altered man."

#### A SOMERSETSHIRE MYSTERY.

The following is another of the many modern accounts which go to establish the verity of spirit-raps,—

For the last few days the good people of Yatton have discovered that a mysterious agency is at work in their parish, and high and low, clergy and laity, have as yet been unable to explain the matter.

On the road leading from Yatton to Cleve and not far from Hollow Mead, is a detached cottage, inhabited by a family named Beacham, and it appears that a few nights ago one of the children a little boy, was heard by his parents, while in bed, making a noise, as if driving away a cat or dog. He complained that something was scratching at the bed clothes, and a search was made for the intruder but its whereabouts were not apparent. On the following night the scratching was continued, and now a loud rapping succeeded that was plainly heard by all in the house. Puzzled as to the reason of the noises, the Beachams mentioned the subject to the neighbours, and they having visited the premises, heard the noise likewise, and after a rigid investigation, acknowledged themselves unable to solve the mystery. As might be expected, an affair of this nature soon spread through the village, and crowds flocked together to listen to the raps, which became louder. Nor was the excitement confined to the humbler class, for the vicar of the parish, the Rev. H. J. Barrard, and Mr. Hurd, amongst others, proceeded to the spot and having listened to the rappings and scratchings, confessed themselves in the dark as to the reason for the disturbance.

On Sunday, to crown the ghostly noises, shrieks and wild laughter were audible, while the raps continued unabated. One peculiarity in this matter is, that the sounds are more frequently heard in the morning than at night, and before breakfast time the cottage is filled by startled villagers who listen to them with breathless astonishment. It is almost needless to add that the dwelling has been well searched, and there being no other house near, the difficulty of accounting for the manifestations is increased. Sometimes there will be heard a sharp series of raps resembling the clapping of hands, and then the sounds will seem to be like violent blows with a stout stick, and the scratching prevails constantly. The boy with whom the matter commenced is regarded with mingled feelings of awe, pity, and dread, as in some measure the cause of the uproar; and sure enough where he is, although narrowly watched it would be quite idle to exclaim "Cease dat knockin'."—*Bristol Post*.

"I have seen and felt physical facts wholly and utterly inexplicable, as I believe, by any known and generally received physical laws. I unhesitatingly reject the theory which considers such facts to be produced by means familiar to the best professors of legerdemain. If it be asked what impression, on the whole, has been left on my mind by all that I have witnessed in this matter, I answer, one of perplexed doubt, shaping itself into only one conviction that deserves the name of an opinion, namely, that quite sufficient cause has been shown to demand further patient and careful inquiry from those who have the patience and opportunity needed for prosecuting it; that the facts alleged, and the number and character of the persons testifying to them, are such that real seekers for truth cannot satisfy themselves by merely pooh-poohing them."—*Professor de Morgan*.

## A LOST OPPORTUNITY.

On Friday evening last, Mons. Tolmaque, the great dispeller of delusions, enticed thirty or forty persons to the Hanover-square Rooms, by the aid of large posters, and a puff in the *Morning Star*.

Several victims, sunk in the depths of modern superstition, were waiting for admission, and willing to pay the *five shillings* demanded, to have their illusions concerning the dark circle dispelled forthwith; but unfortunately, Mr. Tolmaque had not been so precise in his advertisement as he was at the doors, as to the extra five shillings required for admission to the dark circle, and a considerable part of the company claimed admission to the second part of the dreary entertainment without further outlay. After some parley, the great enlightener said, "Well, I'll reduce it to half-a-crown." This liberality was not appreciated, and the audience, very wearied by the tedious task of waiting in their seats while Mr. Tolmaque was wriggling out of ropes behind a screen, retired in a state of deep dejection.

AFTER describing the Davenport and the phenomena which took place in their presence, the *Bradford Review*, February 4th, says:—We offer no criticism, and attempt no explanation. To us they were most extraordinary and inexplicable,—not only the most extraordinary phenomena we ever witnessed, but they went far beyond what we could have conceived possible. The utterly marvellous and apparently inexplicable character of these facts can only be realised by witnessing them.

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The Lyceum has both religious and secular aims,—religious in the highest sense of eliminating truth, from spirit-fact and duty from truth. Secular in the sense of moulding the future by a wise realisation of the present and a spiritual conception of its uses.

The growing spread of Spiritualism in England renders a central institution necessary to organize means to give distinctive life to the various methods which abound in isolated forms all over the kingdom. To effect this most desirable object Mr. R. Cooper, the Proprietor, and Mr. J. H. Powell, the Editor, of the *Spiritual Times*, have established the Lyceum. They have put the machinery in motion. (Mr. Cooper bearing the monetary, and Mr. Powell the practical working, responsibilities) and earnestly solicit aid from all friends. Many sincere and influential Spiritualists have already subscribed, some *two*, others *one* guinea each (the latter subscription being the minimum). Those who subscribe *one* or more guineas annually will be entitled to the privilege of attending all Lectures and the Reading Room free. The Reading Room is open daily from 12 a.m. to 10 p.m. and contains the principal spiritual publications of America, France, and England; besides these, the first class dailies, weeklies and quarterlies. Spirit Drawings and Works of a progressive character will be added from time to time. Mediums of recognised integrity and

power will be encouraged, and it is hoped facilities may be afforded for the development of such connected with the Lyceum.

A printing press is now in operation upon the premises for printing of the *Spiritual Times* and Tracts and Pamphlets on spiritual topics. Friends desirous of spreading the truths of Spiritualism may aid the cause materially by purchasing such pamphlets and distributing them. All works of a spiritual and progressive character can be supplied by us. Friends will therefore kindly bear in mind this fact, as by purchasing their books of us they aid the Lyceum.

We feel persuaded our work will not be in vain, being assured amongst the many thousands of true Spiritualists in this country alone there are many who will gladly aid us.

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Our readers will favour us by sending accounts of Apparitions, Hauntings, &c. We wish to give as many facts as our space will admit. Correspondents should allow their names and addresses to appear; accounts of a supernatural character should be given to the public free from all suspicion.

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