

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.

CLEVER KNOTTINGS NOT SECURE.

How wonderfully clear-sighted are our public journalists. They prophesied that the Davenports were "on their last legs," and would never, at least, re-appear in London. Liverpool, Huddersfield, Leeds, and Cheltenham, had all done mob-duty in true English style, and those "impostors" must for ever vanish. But with indomitable sang-froid the Davenports are exhibiting again at the Hanover-square Rooms, to large remunerative audiences. How this fact must put to shame the false prophets of the press. And after all where is the secret of the brothers' success? And where is the secret of their manifestations? Echo answer. At this hour the mediums stand before the British public unexposed, and free even from the shadow of legitimate suspicion—without it be considered right to suspect everything not understood. During the past fortnight several *séances* have been given with marked success. On Thursday week a trifling circumstance caused another knotty point to be settled. After the committee, one of whom was the Rev. M. D. Conway, had been elected, and had been a little puzzled at the instantaneous appearance of hands, and the ejection of the trumpet, a tall gentleman rose and desired to be allowed to tie the brothers. Of course Dr. Ferguson refused to allow any interference with the order of the entertainment. This refusal caused a rather strong feeling on the part of a few sceptics, which tended to disharmony throughout the two *séances*. The usual manifestations were presented, nevertheless. Mr. Conway had tied Ira Davenport so tightly that he complained of being hurt, but the knots were not loosened by Mr. Conway, yet they were untied by John King. When requested to examine his knots, after an exhibition of force and intelligence, Mr. Conway, like Sir David Brewster said of the table, stated that they appeared to be undisturbed. At the dark *séance* a regular hubbub ensued, through the tall gentleman requesting again to tie one of the mediums. However, in spite of insult and disturbance, the *séance* came to a successful close. Then Dr. Ferguson said—"If that gentleman who has so strenuously demanded liberty to tie up the brothers, will do so now, I am desired to inform him that they will go into the cabinet again for the purpose." This met with general approval, Mr. Conway clapping his hands with the rest. But no sooner did Dr. Ferguson ask the gentleman to tie the brothers in the cabinet, where he had first made the request to do so, than some few genteel sceptics demanded very authoritatively that the tying should be performed on chairs; but finding that Dr. Ferguson was about to dismiss the meeting, all parties consented to allow the tying to take place in the cabinet. Accordingly, William and Ira Davenport took their seats; then the tall gentleman took up a piece of rope, put his

foot on one end, and pulled it until he got red in the face. He then, in a most skilful manner, commenced the operation of tying William Davenport; no sooner had he used one piece of rope than he took another, and repeated the process of stretching and straining; after about a quarter of an hour had elapsed, he declared his satisfaction with the tying, and looked very exhausted from the effects of operating. Now commenced general cries for Ira Davenport to leave the cabinet, which he did. The doors were closed, and everyone waited patiently for some seven minutes, when the doors flew open, and out walked the medium, free from all the complication of knots—the ropes were examined and found without a tangle. The applause on all hands was great. Turning to Mr. Conway, who sat behind us, we said—"Mr. Conway, is it your opinion that any conjuror could get loose from such knots as those?" He answered that he did not believe he could, adding, "I, myself, was tied up by that gentleman before entering the hall in the same manner." William Davenport, whom we have often supposed to be the weakest medium of the two, was chosen for this demonstration; and heroically submitted to be tied and to sit alone. We must do justice to the tall gentleman; he did not inflict pain in the process of tying, thus behaving as a gentleman. But having been gratified in being allowed to tie one of the brothers, and having found that even his skilful knots were untied, he did display something akin to cowardice to refuse his name, and even to say no word other than to express his desire to be allowed to tie the medium again with a single rope, which desire, he was told, could be gratified on another occasion. William Davenport, in our estimation, is at least as powerful a medium as either Ira, or Mr. Fay; we are glad we have had occasion to think so, because all along there has been on account of hands being seen mostly from the side of the cabinet where Ira generally sits—a general feeling that William must be a less powerful medium than his brother. Those who can possibly witness the Davenport Brothers' and Mr. Fay's *séances*, will find something to think about in what they witness for a life time. It is not merely in the fact that a guitar sails round the room without visible hands, that an old trumpet is ejected from an aperture, whilst the brothers are bound hand and foot, where the marvel lies, but in the deeper mysterious fact that an intelligence, extraneous to flesh, directs the whole proceedings. Once satisfy a human soul of this fact, no matter how low the conditions which are necessary to its proof, and the killing creed of Materialism will for ever lose its baneful power over that soul. If we did not feel this, we could never care to sit for a single hour to witness the Davenport manifestations; because, take from them their spiritual origin, their utility would be almost nil. But we are assured, not only from the facts presented at numerous public *séances*, but from others at a private one, which has been given in our presence, where the audible voices of John King and Katie kept up a clear and intelligent conversation with us for a half-hour, and from the testimony of friends, whose words are unimpeachable, that a spiritual agency presides over all the doings of

these remarkable brothers; and that that intelligence is destined to shake the temples of materialistic science to their foundations, "until the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the deep." We by no means infer that the Davenport Brothers are the only mediums to be used by the spirit-world in the great work of regeneration—God forbid. We feel that even our enemies are designed to aid that work, and thus the wise of this generation are confounded by the evidence of a power divinely ordained to give the spirit life and freedom.

Let it no longer be urged that the Brothers Davenport aid each other to get out of knots. William Davenport had been marvellously made the medium to prove the falsity of that too common objection. We say again, as we have so often said before, no knots can hold these men, and no conjuror can release himself, by conjuring from knots properly secured. If this be so, the question is clear. What releases the Brothers Davenport, if they do not release themselves? The answer we give at once—intelligences or spirits. Doubt it; deny it; ridicule it; say what you will about it, but pray, Sir Sceptic, study it before doing either. The Davenport Brothers are forced to obey the mandates of spirits in relation to their work before the public. Why do they always reserve their opinion, or if they do give one, say they are the mediums of spirit-power? Because they depend on that power for success, and dare not violate its instructions, without consequences. This may account for the fact, that they suffered 30 days' imprisonment, sooner than admit themselves conjurors; and that here, in England, they do not say they are conjurors, although it is plain by doing so they could make a fortune. But it is a grand evidence of the spirit-working in their lives that they remain true to themselves, and necessarily invulnerable to all selfish considerations outside the charmed circle of their mission. Take away their reliance on the power that directs them, we think the "Tom-fool's-knot" will then hold them.

DR. FERGUSON'S SPEECH.

At the Hanover Square Rooms, on Saturday, March 25th, 1865.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—We renew in your presence the "wonders" that have excited all England and called forth such varied estimates from the British press and public. In doing so I wish to call attention to a common objection urged against the merits of the manifestations. We hear on every hand, "but it is done in the dark," and "why must they have darkness?" We answer, because experience has taught us we cannot have the manifestations without darkness. Darkness is certainly as natural as light; without the one the other could not be. We cannot dictate to Nature. Dictation is not the path to progress in any department of research or investigation. As well ask, why cannot your blood circulate in the light; your thoughts be generated in your brain exposed to light; or your photograph in the light; but the power to project them does require darkness. We accept the darkness as their indispensable condition; but we so accept it and under such circumstances of caution and defence against all imposition as precludes all idea of fraud or trick. More you cannot ask, for in asking you ask not of us, but of a power superior to all human desire or dictation. Are you aware that recent discoveries have shown that by securing total darkness in a room and by clouding an aperture with certain liquids, the invisible rays of light may be brought to a focus so as to consume a book, aye, a piece of zinc placed in that focus? It is so. The disturbing power of active, reflective, visible light, to certain highly important and beautiful results, is just beginning to be appreciated. And I allude to these discoveries not to describe or follow them, for this is not the time or place to do that, however agreeable would be the task, but to show that the opposition to darkness is not grounded in knowledge but in ignorance; is not as it would appear the prompting of care for enquiry, but of arrogant assumption. Again, I have been asked by men of high repute, for a scientific theory explanatory of these strange facts. Now, I wish to do justice to this as to every demand made at my hands. Let me say that no theory can be worthy, as a scientific one, that is not based upon an induction. These strange facts must be recognised by the scientific world before they can be so classified as to give a satisfactory theory. A great number of facts have been carefully noted and propagated. I am myself wearied in the narration and in hearing it on every hand. Much material exists, but it lies scattered in comparative chaos all around us. No edifice is as yet erected. No treatise so embodies the laws of manifestation as to make them fully

intelligible to purely analytical minds. I admit, also, there is great lack of precision in the language we use when describing this kind of phenomena. There is but little order observed; no method followed, indeed scarcely a starting point recognised. A rapid growth of ideas we have all over our literature, and they have deep root in truthful experiences. Many industrious and some very intelligent workers are labouring and have laboured long to render enduring service on this greatest of subjects. Yet, however clear may be their ideas; however precise and grammatical the language used, most of what is published gives anything but a clear or exact reflection of what is daily witnessed. Discussion seems, therefore, to be endless. But whose fault is this, ye sages—savans of science? You ignore, you deny, yes, vulgar as it is, you sometimes denounce what you have not dared to examine. Come then and help us to disentangle the net of sophistry that is thrown round these strange and important facts, ere you cry out for a scientific theory. I have given you the result of my most sincere and long continued investigations. I have this week, imperfectly enough I know, put a volume to the press, with no hope of pecuniary reward but a certainty of loss, quite as much as I can bear and not become a pauper in unremitting devotion to truth and right. My theory is there elaborated; but I will yield it with joy to-morrow, or allow the book to fall still-born, for another, if a better classification of the facts will give it. What more, gentlemen of "science," can you ask?

But we must now go on with this exhibition. Select your committee. We are ready again to reflect the facts.

THE RELATION OF MESMERISM TO SPIRITUALISM.

A LECTURE BY J. H. POWELL,

Delivered in the Spiritual Lyceum Hall, on Sunday Evening,
March 26th, 1865.

"We are fearfully and wonderfully made." Not a particle of our corporeal structure, or a scintillation of genius exists but which mysteriously mystifies our conceptions. The wisest philosophers, in their wise humility, have pronounced themselves unable to solve the problems of matter even, much less of spirit. They have pronounced themselves children, gazing upon a world of mystery, who, failing to pierce the dense drapery which curtains the "beyond" must content themselves with a few pebbles, picked up from the shore. What wonder is it, then, that minds of mediocre calibre fail to grasp the infinite, and lose themselves in bewilderment, as they sail out without compass on the ocean of life? We know much and much, very much more there is to learn. Therefore, as thinking beings, it is a duty we owe to God, and to ourselves, to investigate and "prove all things," in order that we may "hold fast that which is good." But where we find ourselves in mazes of mysticism, let us not shout with sceptic-ire, as though all the mysteries of all the spheres were open only to us, and we alone, of all mankind, held the key which unlocks the door of the unknown—rather let us be humble and striving, wait for light. If we do not comprehend the source of great facts, is it any wonder, seeing that we do not comprehend the minutest particle of sand, or the commonest wayside flower?

We account, it is true, philosophically, for many of the workings of nature, and agree to ratify, as it were, certain recognised laws, which have been discovered by Galileo, Newton, and others. But the eternal principle, which perpetuates life and motion, which acts in all the operations of spirit and matter, where is that? We feel, but cannot prove its existence; neither can we comprehend its full developments. Human discovery can only track the boundaries of the known, and gain admission to the unknown-knowable. Beyond this is the unknowable. It is in vain that we attempt the impossible task of navigating our mental vessels upon that unfathomable sea. Seeing this, our duty is clear. We can only act wisely by exploring the unknown-knowable, and profiting by experiences gained in the realms of the known. Nor need we fear that we shall exhaust the whole range of the known, and the unknown-knowable; and having discovered all that is possible, find ourselves infinite beings in miniature. Each day brings us face to face with fresh novelty, which excites in us wonder. If we live to the age of Methuselah, such are the vast fields of unexplored knowledge, that we shall "know how little can be known" in the earth-life.

The Columbus of science is ever sailing in the discovery of new worlds, and ever presenting us with new light emitted from the darkness of distance. Shall we receive its radiance with joy, or grope along blindly with our prejudices, like seals set upon our eyes? Some men act in their opposition to truth as though they were not simply links in the chain of human life, but the chain itself. They fancy, when they express their ideas, that they hold a kind of inquisitorial prerogative, and the ideas of others are held by suffrance. Circumscribed by their limited circles, they are apt to suppose that they see all that is appreciable to mortal sight—that outside their circles nothing can possibly exist. Such men are veritable babies in experience; they have scarcely left the mental nursery chamber—their growth has been unnaturally impeded. The nurse and the schoolmaster have much to answer for, or their charges' stubborn indisposition to learn has defied their utmost care. Question them, and they open their lips to speak their own ignorance—yet they pretend to possess information of a very erudite character. What do they know? Ask them, and it is probable they will answer "everything." Cross examine them, and you will discover they know "nothing." It is these know-nothing individuals who are the most unreasonable and determined opponents to

new truths that exist. They have a peculiar crooked kind of logic, or rather illogic, quite their own. Tell them that human beings are capable, in various degrees, under certain conditions, of being psychologised or mesmerised, or spiritually entranced, they exclaim—"absurd," "impossible." Ask them to give a reason, they present you with an exclamation or asperson. Nothing further can you get if you talk to them till doomsday. They say—"these things cannot be!" "Why?" "Because they cannot," is the speedy reply; very old womanish, is it not? What is to be done by the men of advanced views. Halt in their progress to try the impossible task of transforming babies into men? No, certainly not. Go ahead, searching and finding new facts, and wisely storing them for the benefit of humanity? This seems the most philosophical way of spreading the truth. And this is the most satisfactory plan after all, for the more pains are taken to convince opponents of the character instanced, the more eagerly they shout "pooh! pooh!" "humbug!" &c.

It is a good sign when Reformers are open to discuss with those who strongly oppose them. It shows that they have confidence in the justice of their cause. But there is the danger of setting a too high value upon their conversion. Truth needs no extraneous aids to move it on. It will in time remove mountains of scepticism in spite of all extraneous opponents. Nothing can possibly stay for an instant the swelling tide of truth. All the mental babies in the world may stand, like Mrs. Partington, with beams ready to sweep the advancing waves of truth back, but vain will be the effort. If we perform our duty by offering evidences of truth to those who may listen to us, we need not reproach ourselves with unkindness or negligence when pursuing the even tenor of our way, and leaving the *know-nothing* beings to themselves. It is no use wasting energy and time trying to persuade persons who, either cannot or will not be persuaded; because, by so doing, we halt in our career to no useful end. Let us be always ready to help each other to find the ever fresh streams of immortal truth if they can or will be incited to the task; but to trouble ourselves unnecessarily with *know-nothing* beings who, having lived to manhood, are yet babies, is a work of supererogation.

We are all, more or less, subjected to external and internal, visible and invisible influences. Sleeping or waking, walking, sitting, thinking, or talking, we are impressed from within or without, and know not what impresses us. Influences "silent and resistless as light," without asking our consent, operate upon our brains and bodies, setting them to work. We may be said to be in a receptive state, a psychological condition, every moment of our existence. The positive and negative forces act and re-act perpetually from and upon the poles of Being. We receive magnetism from each other, and are influenced according to its qualities. Where does the human will get its so-called freedom? What do we absolutely know of ourselves? Psychologists and Anatomists have traced out the locality, and discovered the mission of the various, nerves, arteries, bones, &c., of the human frame; yet almost all their deductions relating to the human system are drawn from the human organism *after* the spirit has deserted it. What do they know of life? its secret and wonderful operations are beyond the reach of the dissecting knife. The instant death appears, a transformation of conditions in the brain and body takes place. Then what becomes of the theories concerning life founded upon experiments made upon the lifeless body and brain? What are they but guesses sanctioned by what, for the want of a better name, is termed science? Everybody knows after the "final struggle," how rapidly changes are perceived upon the corpse. Who can tell what facts and conditions are lost sight of by the investigator when he anatomises and theorises on the dead? A moment's reflection will convince any thoughtful mind that insuperable difficulties are in the way, like immovable stumbling-blocks, of "man's finding out." The point where life gives the reins to death cannot be seen—it is a grand secret preserved in darkness. All we can do is to watch results and act from uniform experiences; and even when we do so, we sometimes find ourselves "mysteriously mystified." Whilst man exists on this lower plane, he must hold the legacy of fallibility. Hence the mistakes he constantly commits are necessitated. He is progressive—hence he "sees through a glass darkly." Always gaining experience, and living in expectancy, not in certainty of realising hoped-for realities which belong solely to this life, we rise from the infant to the man-stature, but what do we discover in the interim between the two stages which leads us to pronounce ourselves perfect? Nothing. In childhood we see realities through the horoscope of ideality. In manhood we see them in all their apparent hardness, and pronounce them "the all in all out of the realms of fancy." Thus we learn to deify matter and ignore spirit. But why do we for ever act with authority on questions we know little or nothing how to answer? Because we forget our fallibility, and acquire with aptness the alphabet of assumption. If we *are* fallible, we are progressive. There is no rest ng-place between the Fallible and the Infallible. Fallibility leads to error which rectifies itself in wisdom. If this be so, then it follows, as a corollary, that no man, without he has first candidly and fairly investigated any phenomenon, or series of phenomena, is justified in authoritatively prejudging them. First let him ascertain, beyond the possibility of deception, that certain alleged facts are not facts before he anticipates objections. It is a very common practice for men who set their faces against new truths to ridicule, gratuitously, all that may be said in their favour, without taking the slightest trouble to find out if they are what they are represented to be. It is needless to say such a course is derogatory to human nature, and calculated to produce immense harm. Humility is one of the best graces of human life. It is a gem which always sets well in the casket of intellect. Men who are humble learn more than those who are haughty. We observe, as we walk with humility, how little the wisest of us know, and how vast is the field of unexplored wisdom. But, on the other hand, as we lose sight of humility we lose ourselves in the mazes of ignorance and selfishness. The *know-everything*, or rather, *know-nothing* beings are sure to cry "Impossible!" at the appearance of every unrecognised fact. They think and act in grooves, and rarely look higher than the tops of their own castles of self-opinion. It is a fruitless task to reason with them. Their belief is founded in early experiences, and since they have acquired the habit of denying what they do not understand, and are too great in

their own esteem to push themselves into the open doorways of other people's views, they live on good terms with themselves; and from their stubborn strongholds of self-opinion they cannot recognise the universal beauty and life around and above them. Those who grow in prejudice, as they grow in physical stature, are very good stumbling-blocks in the way of true progress. Nor are they without their uses. Standing as blockades, they become danger signals, which, to the wise, are appreciable. In the order of mental progress it is divinely ordained that stimuli or impelling influences shall work; and it is often seen that those who start out to war against the truth excite its devotees to noble sacrifice for its sake. The human mind, like the physical organism, strengthens by exercise, and opposing powers often have the effect of stimulating exertion. Hence, the mind gains strength, like the body, by conflict. So is it with the principles of Truth; the more they are opposed the more beautiful and the stronger they become. There is no need, therefore, to fear the antagonism of thought. Out of numerous discords comes forth harmony. From the friction of principles, like the action of two flints, is emitted the spark of progress.

Those who fear to meet opposition feel themselves weak and fear to be proved so. But those who meet opposition bravely, if they are children of God inspired by holy principles, will be sure to come forth from the heat of battle conquerors. Why? Because the truth belongs to God; it is eternal, unchangeable, perfect. The false, on the contrary, must eventually die out, it is a coarse weed in the garden of life which can only grow whilst it is allowed space. We can, if we like, pluck it up by the root and cast it away on the refuse-heap of human folly and sin. But whilst we nurture its poisonous roots let us not forget that however carefully we shield it, and however wide the space it spreads over it cannot possibly choke the flower of Truth, although it may press around it with all its rankness and power—because the flower contains within its petals the germ of immortality, which does not and cannot exist in the weed.

All truth belongs to the eternal, all error to the ephemeral. If we work for truth we work for God and the ever living; if we work for error we work for that which can only yield a present and passing pleasure to us, and which must in the natural order of things die out at some period, remote or at hand.

We have seen that the man of humble mind is just the man for inquiry and the reception of new truths. On the other hand the man of high self-opinion, whose conceit closes humility outside his nature, although he may be useful in stimulating the devotees of truth to renewed labour, is, nevertheless, the man of all others less likely to accept even the evidence of his own senses in relation to phenomena, at least, of a novel character. Well, then, let us not be discouraged by such men, even while they oppose us with all the intensity of bigoted ignorance. Our mission is progressive. We need not halt on our way, only to leap over such stumbling blocks.

Psychological and spiritual manifestations take place under certain conditions. Sceptics invariably ask for their production free from the necessary conditions, and argue that if they are not produced according to other conditions of *their* dictating, they either are not produced at all, or they are the effects of legardmain or humbug. The unreasonableness of this mode of dealing with cognate subjects is apparent on the surface of it. A photograph taken in the light would be destroyed in the light, if not first fixed in the darkness or semi-darkness by the aid of chemicals. Let any sceptic demand that the portrait of a person shall be reflexed on the plate without and shall be developed and fixed in the light, the absurd reversal of the conditions would be fatal to success. Let any sceptic demand, before he will be willing to accept the fact, that men sleep and dream strange, sometimes prophetic dreams; that dreams cannot possibly display their phantasmagorical pictures to the mind of the sleeper, without he is similarly delighted in his waking hours as he proceeds to the work of his ordinary daily life. Let any sceptic assert that no manifestations either of natural or so-termed supernatural origin can exist under one set of conditions without existing under all. The practical result of such extravagant demands would end as they begin in driving reason and common sense from the region of thought. As well might he ask that the moon shall be called upon to perform the work of the sun; or fire that of water; or carbon that of oxygen; or the brain that of the body; and *vice versa*. There is no phenomenon in nature, no experiment belonging to the domain of science, which can be demonstrated without conditions. A grain of mustard seed may split the mightiest rock, but not until it first becomes embedded in it and begins to grow. It then is subjected to the law of growth which is mightier than itself.

Those who demand a reversal of conditions in order to disprove the possibility of attested phenomena, might, consistent with their mode of investigation, refuse to believe that any other being apart from themselves could possibly *think*, and, to carry their consistency to its ultimatum, they might legitimately perform a surgical operation, laying a human brain bare to watch the process of thought. After this they might digress from psychological studies, and rip open the bag of a pair of bellows to discover how the wind acts within them. And if not quite satisfied that they had acted with *wise* foolishness, they might ascend in a balloon on a tour to the moon, with the view of gaining ocular evidence that the light which fills it is not a monster rush-light. Then falling on account of the distance to reach the moon, they might turn their attention to the balloon in which they had, moonstricken, started on an impossible journey, and cause it to collapse by reversing or changing the essential conditions.

There is no end to the absurd attempts to expose falsehood or charlatanism where it does not exist. Sceptics will urge their endless list of "why don'ts," and maintain with dreadful tenacity their ground of opposition. They are so satisfied that they are infallible just on the one question at issue, that there is no getting them to *look* without frowning or to *talk* without excitability. The calmness of wisdom is certainly not theirs. Neither the facts nor the philosophies of the systems they denounce have any influence on their actions because they are so infallible that they have prejudged them and oppose, not desiring truth, but success.

The true spirit of inquiry, however, works out its own salvation from prejudice. Men who are real inquirers lose themselves, so to speak, in their eager explorations after truth. They do not fear to embrace this or that, or to testify to the reality of that fact, "for fear," as Sir Bulwer Lytton says, "of losing their reputation for good sense." They believe in progress and God, and are not afraid to confess themselves children in knowledge, and to defend the truth at all hazards. These are the men who take the reins of progress. Who never know defeat and are ever prepared for action, who can suffer even martyrdom for the truth's sake but can never turn out Esaus selling their birthright "for a mess of pottage."

The manifestations of spirit over matter are readily perceived. If we only reflect for a few seconds we shall puzzle ourselves to understand how a single phenomenon in Nature can exist under any conditions independently of spirit. We behold the work of matter, but we do not see the Worker. But He is, nevertheless. Human intellect vainly seeks to pierce the veil of mystery which hides the Almighty Worker from His work. But Faith standing tip-toe on the head of Reason can see Him and cause the soul to realise His spiritual presence.

If nothing can exist but what is recognisable to man's physical senses; then indeed we are without hope; immortality is a chimera, and God an infinite myth. But we know that many things exist above and around us which are not recognisable to the sense of sight but which appear to our internal selves through other than the five senses. We know little of the laws of Psychology, and magnetism, or spirits in their gross and most refined conditions, but we know enough to perceive that all which influences us does not originate from ourselves. We are dependent beings, never absolutely independent. Who can say that he lives, moves, and has his being apart from conditions of climate and education? That he is invulnerable to all assailing powers, either of a material or spiritual character? That he can insure himself against all noxious inhalations or infectious diseases, mental and physical? That he will not obey any silent mandate of a magnetic or spiritual character? That he never finds himself doing that which impulse or instinct and not reason dictates? If such a being exist he is a curiosity, for he can claim to be a mortal infallible, a perfect, independent being; for him there can be no new realms of intellectual inquiry, no necessary human progress; his life can have no culminating points which lead to error, because he is independent of all moral as well as mental and physical conditions. But it is useless hunting this idea further. I do not believe an ordinary sane individual exists who will contend that he is infallible, or that he is not at times, without his own conscious power of volition, compelled to enact certain parts in the life-drama of which he could have had no presence.

Our physical organisation without our design absorbs like a sponge certain atmospheric elements which take the names variously of electricity, magnetism, odyle, etc. There are influences of a purely atmospheric character which steal upon our organisms at times when we are in good health, and suddenly prostrate us upon a sick bed. We wonder what could have caused our sickness, and our sage intellects are set to work attributing it to this and that cause and so on. Sometimes we satisfy ourselves on the wrong scent and think ourselves very wise at the same time. Why is it if men have such independent powers as many pretend to possess, that they do not place themselves within the boundaries of sanitary conditions and keep themselves from bodily sickness? It is true that attention to all known methods of warding off sickness is the wise work of us all; but when this is done, certain extreme sensitives will take cold—will find themselves sick, and will be prematurely cut off. One man may withstand a hurricane, another will sicken at a breeze. It is true the latter might be made more hardy by exposure, to the very conditions which subdue him. But he may be tempered only to a certain degree, and that degree may be much lower than the tempered condition of the former. Constitutional differences in human character are as apparent as the differences of feature. The man who makes the best musician, painter, or preacher, would be likely to make the very worst scavenger, and no amount of education could alter the natural conditions. Nothing seems more divinely designed than the diverse differences of organic strength and mental fitness for the various occupations of life. One man fills a pulpit, another wields a pen, a third directs an army, a fourth drives a plough, and so on. It often happens, doubtless, that the man in the pulpit ought to be at the plough, and *vice versa*. But where the natural fitness for position is recognised, there you get at the fundamental fact that men possess constitutional powers, genius, if you will, for certain forms of labour, and no other occupations could suit them so well. It would be the evidence of folly for a father to insist on making his son a mathematician if he were manifestly deficient in what phrenologists term *causation, weight, and comparison*. One might as well think of sending a lame child to school to learn dancing and expect those who witnessed his fantastic limps to call them graceful. We cannot find pumpkins on apple trees or peaches on cabbage stalks. We may graft and train until certain fruits change their flavour, but grafted apple trees bring forth apples and not fruits of another kind. We may in like manner graft or educate the mind of a fool and the flavour of his follies will be changed, but he will be a fool still. We may so far unsex a woman as to make her masculine in thought and deed, destroying the softness of her nature by bringing her in contact with coarse realities, but she will be a woman, nevertheless, although circumstances hide her in distortion.

As in the material universe there exist orders, varying in degree and adaptation, so in human life diversified phases and capabilities display themselves. It is manifestly unreasonable, with this patent fact present to us, to declare that certain phenomena of a spiritually magnetic origin can have no existence through certain mediums, if not through all. Experience proves that certain individuals are impressibles, that is, natural mediums for psychologic, or mesmeric, or spiritual manifestations. It is useless saying this is not so, when the fact is recognised by some of the acutest and most trustworthy intellects of the age, and is further capable of demonstration by any person of average intellect and perseverance. It is always better to examine than to ignore, and far more creditable in the bargain. Let those who assert that Mesmerism and

Spiritualism are out of the domain of truth, pause to investigate; that is their only wise plan. After fair investigation, they will be entitled to offer an opinion, not before, because, without investigation they can know little or nothing of the subjects at issue. I use the term Mesmerism as an independent science, for the mere sake of meeting the popular conception of it. But I am of opinion that all the phenomena of Psychology, under whatever names they appear, are absolutely only branches of the tree of Spiritualism. The relationship existing between the phenomena of Mesmerism and Spiritualism is very apparent. Take an example. A person is selected from an audience, and by a process of magnetic manipulation, is rendered passive, then follow phases of what is termed Will-power, that is, the subject is made to obey the commands of the operator. The theory of Will-power gives the idea that where a failure takes place in any one phenomenon it results from a deficiency of Will-force. But is it so? Experience proves to me the contrary. I have operated successfully at times under the most painful difficulties; at other times apparently under the most favourable conditions, I have signally failed. In the one case I was ill and incapable of exercising my usual Will-power with anything like sustained vigour—the subject was more than ordinarily positive—yet I succeeded. In the other I had no opposition, no want of susceptibility, my health was good; my will was exerted with all my ordinary earnestness, yet the patient seemed but slightly influenced. Upon the theory of Will-power I may puzzle myself for ever to explain the why and wherefore of this. But recognising the operations of invisible positives, I can understand how it should turn out, myself being in a state of weakness, that my subject should, in spite of his strong self-resisting will, be completely overcome. Or, on the other hand, although highly sensitive to magnetic operations, should resist all my most determined and powerful efforts to subdue him. As magnetists we can use our wills to their utmost tension, but we cannot prove that our Will-power is the sole cause of manifestations which take place.

If the theory of Will-power be admitted, that is, if it be asserted that no effect can be produced on a mesmerised subject but by the direct agency of the operator's will, then I think it just to assert that no picture, or series of pictures can float before the clairvoyant's eye which are not first photographed on the mind of the operator. But what Mesmerist is there can say that his experiences, (if they have been numerous) do not teach the contrary? Every true Mesmerist after fair practice will discover that patients in certain stages will manifest phases of consciousness of which he himself can have no conception. Admit the Will-power theory in full—the patient should be absolutely subject to no influences but those proceeding from the mind of the operator. If the patient diverge but the width of a hair from the direct path of the operator's will, the theory falls to the ground. Because it must be borne in mind that I am now supposing the subject to be what is termed *en rapport* with the Mesmerist, therefore, the condition of brain requisite for manifestations of the positive power of the manifestator over the negative brain of the subject, is already attained, at least, so far as it is dependent on so termed Will-power. Well, then, what is required is to establish proof that the operator is the sole sustaining and inducing influence to every conception and action of the subject. If this cannot be done, and the facts of experience show that it cannot, but on the contrary that manifestations are produced on mesmerised persons which the Mesmerist never intended, and finds himself puzzled to understand, it follows, as a logical sequence, that the subject is only partially controlled by the operator. If so, two hypotheses present themselves. The one leads us to suppose that the subject retains a portion of his own individuality, he thinks and acts, to a certain extent independently, despite the indomitable efforts of the operator's Will-power. If this be so the Will-power falls to the ground, without it can be shown that it can be exercised to produce any given result. The other hypothesis which presents itself I feel certain is the correct one. Spirits aid or oppose the will of the operator, and thus render the subject a puzzle to understand or a clear proof that Will-power is not all-potent in the matter.

It would be perfectly correct to use the term Will-power if it was understood in its wide sense, viz., that the will of the embodied positive and the will of some disembodied positive, or positives, work out the success or non-success of the manifestations which are elicited. Take the spiritual idea and the mysterious panorama of pictures which are sometimes visible to the Clairvoyante whose condition is induced by a mortal Mesmerist, form no theme for perplexing our senses. They appear as natural as Nature herself. If I will a subject to dance and he dances and if I will him to sit on a chair but, in spite of my most determined will he still dances, I must either have a reason for this manifest opposition to my will, or I must allow a palpable incongruity to make no difference in my estimate of the theory of Will-power.

I have frequently found when experimenting on certain sensitives that I could affect them to a degree in itself very marvellous, but something else outside of myself affected them to a degree more marvellous. At the house of a clergyman I succeeded in producing a condition of clairvoyance in the brain of his daughter. Many very interesting phenomena were elicited, but I noticed one special experiment I could not win my most persistent *imperatives* bring to a successful issue. I had stood behind her, silently willing her arm to rise, it did so, thus far my will appeared potent, but I changed my position and *willed* her to walk backwards towards myself. But no; she went forwards. Try how I might, the patient *would* go forwards, when I wanted her to walk backwards. To account for this on the theory of Will-power, as popularly understood, I could not. But a few hours afterwards, evidence was given in my absence which seems to me positive proof that the invisible mesmerists had power over my patient as well as myself. I had demesmerised her, and on leaving the parsonage to go a distance of four miles, I saw, as far as my judgment could decide, that she was perfectly normal. When I returned, her parents told me that I had not been gone many minutes, when their daughter was entranced, she lay upon the sofa a long time apparently dead. The clergyman, who is a Spiritualist, not understanding the cause, and feeling some alarm, sat with his wife at a little table and on asking the spirits to say what was the matter with his daughter, received through means of the alphabet something like the

following: Powell has magnetised her. Is there any danger? No, leave her to us. Has Mr. Powell magnetised her for a good purpose? Yes.

After these answers were given by means of the alphabet and table, questions were put and answers given by means of the patient's hand, which was knocked upon the table, three times for "yes," once for "no," &c. I may mention that the young lady, when in her normal condition &c. I may mention that the young lady, when in her normal condition most emphatically declared her scepticism regarding spirit-communications. When she awoke from her long sleep, her parents questioned her, but she had not the slightest consciousness of having been the medium of communication between the spirits and them. Possibly I may have left her in a semi-mesmeric condition, but, whether I did so or not, I know I was not conscious of having exercised my will to put her to sleep during my absence. Her parents could not have done so, they being puzzled to account for her state of mind. Who or what did it then? Who or what used her hand to answer the impatient questions of her father? Some intelligence outside us all must have produced the results. If we accept in this case the fact I do not see how we can escape the conclusion it leads to. If spirits, as in the case I have cited, are proved in any single instance to control mesmerised patients, it is, at least, reasonable to believe they affect more or less all. Take this case only as an exception, it brings the Will-power theory to the ground.

At another time when I had mesmerised this same patient she told us, on being restored to her normal condition, that she remembered seeing a most beautiful lady, and on giving a description of her to her father, he expressed no ordinary interest in the fact. I am quite certain no image of a lady was present in my mind, neither had I any wish that she should see any special thing. How, then, will those who contend that the patient is absolutely under the control of the operator, account for the appearance to the patient of a beautiful lady? If no action of the limbs can take place, but by the exercise of the operator's volition, no ideas or images can possess the mind, but by his will, or the patient is partly independent of his Will-power; in other words, is not only *en rapport* with himself, but to a certain extent with spirits.

Electro-Psychology, under all its various phases, has had to pass through the fire of scepticism. A noteworthy fact is, since Spiritualism has forced itself into notice, some of its most vehement opponents, who before used the very same kind of illogic against all animal magnetic operations, which they now employ against spiritual manifestations, turn round very adroitly to make an accommodating stool of Psychology for the sake of ridding themselves of the deeper and weightier truths of the more unwelcome spiritual hypothesis. This is kind, no doubt. But it is fortunate that Spiritualism is true, nevertheless, and quite as fortunate that Psychology has its roots in Spiritualism; so that our clever conservative friends, who think they repulse Spiritualism by sanctioning Psychology, are only shutting their doors upon the mother and opening them to her child.

We may be said to be more or less under psychologic influence all through life. It is true the influences which affect us at one period may fail to affect us at another. Psychology is often with the mother before her child sees the light. It needs no elaborate argument to prove this. There is scarcely a grown up male or female who has not seen the effects of certain impressions made on the brains of the pregnant. I have, in my experience, known cases where certain fruit, fish, or flesh, has caused in the pregnant woman a sudden desire. What has resulted? Why, the child, when born, has been found to have a mark on some portion of its body; perhaps it was in the shape of an orange, a mackerel, or a leg of mutton. I knew one man whose face was partly disfigured with the mark of a frog. He certainly was an object to look at. The probability is, his mother, at a certain stage of her pregnancy with him, was suddenly frightened by the appearance of a frog. I knew a lady who was exceedingly self-proud; she was in the habit of speaking very disparagingly of decrepit or ugly people. When she was pregnant with her first son, she came in the presence of a child who had his feet turned the wrong way. She did not express pity, but contempt. When her own child was born he had his feet turned heels foremost, as though brought about as a judgment for her wicked expressions. Thousands of cases similar to these might be cited, showing that under certain conditions, effects psychologically induced, may be transmitted to posterity. And here I may observe that nothing can justify the Government but a most fearful ignorance of the laws of mind in permitting cripples, whose arms and legs are apparently shrivelled, and whose general bearing excites mingled feelings of disgust and pity, to beg through our streets. The consequences come home to us sooner or later. No woman in a condition of pregnancy is safe, if such objects are seen by her. It is true, by long familiarity with sights of the kind, she may fail to entail injury upon her child through seeing them, but we know not how to secure her from the sudden sight of such beings. It is in this where the danger lies. I do not wish it to be inferred that cripples should be treated as though they were not human beings. Proper provision should be made for them, and they should not be allowed to expose their deformities to the injury of society.

Not only does Psychology affect the mother during the period of gestation, but under strong impulse at other times. It is true we do not readily perceive the motive influences which act upon our characters, but the closer we observe life, the more I am persuaded we shall discover how fearfully and wonderfully we are impelled by surrounding agencies of a spiritual and material kind. Associate the mind with low, debasing vices, and with an almost inevitable certainty, vice will seem to wear features of passable beauty. On the contrary, let virtue hold the reins of power, give the mind pictures of purity to contemplate, and continue to inspire it with noble ideas, the result will be, unless vice has entered the mind's temple, and shattered its purest images, that virtue will wear, not seem to wear, perfect and pure features. Every human being impresses his fellows, and is himself impressed by them—in other words, psychologised. Not only so, but all natural objects more or less impress the mind, and to a certain extent psychologise it. I well remember standing in the Crystal Palace, transfixed before a painting, I think it was by a French painter. It

was a fine beautifully-suggestive subject, "Tintoretto painting his dead daughter." The effect on my mind was a psychological one. I could not move, but stood gazing at the picture, as though fascinated—the charm lost its power after a little time, and I was free to walk away; but at first I was utterly lost to myself and all other surrounding objects—nothing to me existed but Tintoretto and his daughter. I went about my ordinary duties, but for two years that picture came back upon my memory with such natural reality that I was haunted by it, until I wrote some verses on the same theme. It was a strange fact that all the other pictures in that gallery failed to transfix me. I can scarcely remember the themes of any of the other pictures, but "Tintoretto" haunts me yet. I always prefer illustrating an idea by referring to my own personal experiences, because I am not then troubled with what may be termed the doubtful authority of some known or unknown author.

Extraordinary achievements have often been known to result from some quick impulse excited in the minds of the heroes of the occasions psychologically. Oftentimes persons of very humble origin, with no uncommon abilities, like Joan of Arc, perform miracles. Such persons are a wonder to the world, and form episodes in history. They begin life quietly enough, and end it amid the noise of fiction, it may be, or the wailing sounds of national grief. It is true that every woman could not turn out a Grace Darling, or every man a Christ, but that does not affect the question I am considering. Grace Darling was not a masculine being, but was gifted to a large extent with the soft graces of her sex; yet under the strong power of Divine sympathy she put on the courage of the bravest men. She was irresistibly forced to her work of mercy, psychologised by beneficent spirits, and stimulated to heroic action by the perilous situation of rock-bound human beings, apparently beyond the reach of human succour. Great deeds of mercy, like hers, wait not upon a quiet reasoning out of probabilities and dependence upon selfishness, but upon the stimulating urgencies of the occasion. Had Grace Darling waited to reason on probabilities, with one eye to the sufferers, and the other towards her own safety, it is very probable she would never have saved a single shipwrecked sufferer. She waited not to reason, but rowed forth to save, in an enthusiasm of benevolence, which lent speed to her boat, and strength to her arm. Under the influence of those benefactors, who doubtless guided her, she was rendered courageous, and stimulated by faith, quelled all fear; the result was, she performed a noble deed which renders her name sacred to English history. I grant she was a girl full of the virtues of her sex—one in every way suitable for deeds of heroism, that her disposition was philanthropic in the highest degree, but as in the case I have mentioned of myself and the picture, there was an irresistible influence—a psychologic impulse which sent her with her father on a rough sea, where stout men feared to sail to succour the wrecked. She was in other words—a medium, through whom the invisible "benefactors" could work; and they supplied the extra strength over and above her own, which enabled her to row the boat with a super-human vigour.

It is, of course, difficult to draw the line of demarcation between material and spiritual operating causes; yet, on any other than the spiritual hypothesis, it does not appear to me we can find a resting-place. Always there is the impelling influence to thought and action; to be free from all impelling influences we must be free from the conditions of existence. Therefore, I take it as a potent fact that Psychology in various ways operates more or less upon us all.

The school-boy and his tutor—the congregation and the pastor—the lawyer and his client—all are at times in various ways influenced—psychologised by visible or invisible operators. The tutor finds he can bring forward his pupil best by exciting in him a spirit of emulation, setting before him models of learning. The boy's arithmetic and grammar lose half their dryness when his mind conceives the idea of gaining knowledge similar to that of the heroes or models he hears or reads about. Give him hard lessons and no incitement to learn them, the result would be that he would leave school almost as much a dunce as he entered it. But, in reality, various surroundings are at work in the education of the school-boy. He is constantly being impressed. Constantly being impelled to renewed efforts in one direction or another. The tutor who has no authority over his pupil is, of course, unfit for his position. It is necessary that the tutor possess authority; but it is not necessary that he display unkindness in his manner of exercising it. Here, as in all leading positions in life, it is necessary to say Will-power must be exerted or the tutor would find his influence weak in the extreme. But that Will-power is not all the impelling influence which operates upon human beings; it is a part, and a necessary one, and wherever triumphant, it has a psychologic effect.

There is a power in the human voice—in the expression of the human eye—in every movement of the human body—which acts on others, and which, in various degrees, psychologises them. Take an orator, and watch the effect of his eloquence upon an indiscriminate audience. Now he excites the most loyal feelings of respect for established institutions (however defective they may be)—now he wins tremendous and long-continued cheers as he gives vocal shape to some popular idea. Now he touches the tenderness of sympathy—inspires the enthusiasm of patriotism—or he makes his audience thrill with the majesty of his rhetoric, and applaud with the eagerness of partisans. When he has finished, what is the result? The very men who would, whilst he was psychologising them with the magnetism of his eloquence, have performed any foolish act for his sake—get into other spheres where magnetisms of an equally positive character, psychologise them with opposite effects. This is the case all through life. Watch the effect of a thrilling drama when its characters are well sustained. How life-like many of its scenes appear! Yet for a long time you lose not the idea of the stage and its appurtenances. Gradually, however, the subtle villany of some Iago—the philosophic reality of some Hamlet—the patient, appealing beauty of some Desdemona—steal upon you until you lose the acting and the stage, and see the characters as though they were not impersonated. Here Psychology performs its work, and you wonder afterwards how you could have been so foolish as to shed a tear for Desdemona, feel sympathy for Hamlet, and suffer the most intense disgust and hatred for Iago. Ah,

you say it was the extreme naturalness of the acting. Exactly so. But the real was not there; only the fictitious. Yet you felt its effects the same as if it had been real. Why so? on account of the extreme naturalness of the acting. Yes; because that extreme naturalness played upon your feelings with such psychologic force, that you were simply unable to resist its fascination. Let a man sit at the theatre and converse freely with his neighbour, or let his mind wander, it is probable the best acting will affect him little. But if he sit quietly, looking on with interest, he places himself in the proper condition for the reception of the psychological impressions the occasion creates.

(To be concluded in our next.)

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

SIR,—All honour to Mr. Reece for the account rendered of the Davenport manifestations at his residence, where necessary tests appear to have been applied for his own satisfaction, and that of his friends present, and who also, in the interest of truth and impartiality, have liberally permitted their names to be included in the account.

The statement also of Miss Emma Hardinge in behalf of the brothers, (who from being a Spiritualist became a Christian Philanthropist) is in like manner worthy of public reception.

If, as you have extracted from a Cincinnati paper, and also as evidenced by the little boy Turketine, ropes are tied and untied by spirits, it is not honourable positive to conclude that the same power is not manifested by the brothers, merely because Mr. Addison, conjurors and others, can do similar things on their own account.

No committee hitherto appointed to test them have testified to having discovered the manifestations to be the personal facts of the brothers, and none others have been placed in so favourable a position for judging.

Mr. Addison having afforded no statement of the way he is enabled to exhibit, has no higher claim for belief in the account he has given than he has extended to the Davenport Brothers, whose statement he has placed to disbelief.

I know not what stronger proof could be evinced of the truthfulness of the statement put forth by the brothers, than is presented by the circumstances that, while some, if not all the mediums have been told by others, the instruments have been sounded together and made to float about the room touching both the ceiling and the floor, and hands have been felt by members of the company, at the same time it being known to all present there are no confederates, and no wires or other mechanism.

If, because it is supposed that mankind are alone constituted to be able to move material bodies, we are to take it for granted spiritual beings do not and cannot do the same, we must likewise, of course, take it for granted the scriptures are untrue when giving us to understand that spiritual powers unlocked the doors of a prison for Peter to escape, or removed a stone from a sepulchre.

Are spirits enabled under suitable conditions, and do they desire to give evidence to our external senses of their presence by acting on material substances? What matters it what bodies are acted upon to produce this result, whether tables, musical instruments or anything else? And what motive can they have for it so likely as that of desiring to make known to us this important fact and to impress us with a sense of our own immortality? and it is a lower order of thought which induces persons to believe they would do this merely to enable mediums to realize money.

If mediums, having no means, give up their time and put themselves to considerable expense with a view to promulgate these facts to the world, they must needs be remunerated by the people who witness them.

Instead of attaching importance to the facts intended to be conveyed by the manifestations, persons dwell on the supposed insignificance of the things done, and sneer at the whole matter; yet are there things done by the brothers which the conjurors cannot do, and which, being doubtless well aware of, they know themselves to be guilty of hoodwinking and deceiving the public and dishonourably so at the expense of the character of the Davenport Brothers.

Those who are acquainted with Spiritualism know there are other forms of spiritual action on mediums, considered of a higher nature, such as drawing, impression, and healing, which many opponents are pleased to ignore, or stupidly to say is all of the devil.

As to the insignificant nature of slings as an objection to matters concerning truth, no doubt but the conceited Jews of old were very unwilling to believe that He who was to be their Messiah King should be found deposited in a manger at his birth.

I remain, sir, yours, &c.

R. D.

A FAULT FAULTILY CORRECTED.

In order to satisfy Mr. Conway's audience that there was no conspiracy at work to secure the election of Drs. Wilson and Metcalf on the occasion of the Lyceum Benefit, we have visited Dr. Metcalf at his Hydropathic Establishment, and have since received the following letter from him, a copy of which was placed in Mr. Conway's hands, on Sunday last, but he did not deem it advisable to read it, although he had previously promised to read any brief statement we might draw up.

He stated, however, that we had expressed our object in requesting him to vote for Drs. Wilson and Metcalf, to be solely on account of our having heard that they understood the "Tom fool's-knot."

We must do Mr. Conway the justice to say that he delivered an excellent lecture in favour of the evidences of Spiritualism.

SIR—I most willingly respond to your request of yesterday, if not for the honour of the Davenport Brothers, for my own. For one of the audience to assert that I was packed on the committee at the *séance* at which I officiated, amounts to his calling me a humbug—a position creditable to no man. Some people make it a point to denounce everything they do not understand; in this instance, instead of accusing the brothers, the committee have been accused. It was through a friend I was called to serve on the committee, who was on intimate terms with the Davenport Brothers. This friend had a great many times endeavoured to get me to a *séance*, knowing that I was a sceptic to the whole thing. After a great deal of persuasion I at last consented to go; and on the morning of the 4th, when the *séance* in question took place, he presented me with tickets, and asked me if I had any objection to serve upon the committee. I assented, not knowing at the time the nature of a committee-man's duties. I assure you I should never have taken upon myself that position. When I arrived at the Hanover-square Rooms I was asked if I could tie the "Tom-fool's-knot," as the Davenport Brothers wished to be tied in that way. I replied in the affirmative. These were the whole of the preliminaries to my being called on the platform, where I appeared, as a sceptic to the whole of the proceedings of the Davenport Brothers. In reference to the *brutality* of a person named Addison, who is not worthy the name of a gentleman. I beg to refer my accusers to Drs. Wilson and Yarsley, as to the fact of such brutality having been inflicted. I stake my position on this statement—I had Mr. W. Davenport not been released within two minutes, his arm must have sustained considerable injury.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD METCALF.

Hydropathic Establishment, Priessnitz-House, 11, Paddington green-road, March 25th 1865.

INCOMPLETENESS.

Nothing, resting in its own completeness,
Can have worth or beauty; but alone,
Because it leads and tends to father sweetness,
Fuller, higher, deeper than its own.

Spring's real glory dwells not in the meaning,
Gracious though it be, of her blue hours;
But is hidden in her tender leaning
Towards the summer's richer wealth of flowers.

Dawn is fair, because her mists fade slowly
Into day, which floods the world with light
Twilight's mystery is so sweet and holy,
Just because it ends in starry night.

Life is only bright when it proceedeth
Towards a truer, deeper life above;
Human love is sweetest, when it leadeth
To a more divine and perfect love.

Childhood's smiles unconscious graces borrow
From strife that in a far off future lies;
And angel glances, veiled now by life's sorrow,
Draw our hearts to some beloved eyes.

Learn the mystery of progression duly;
Do not call each glorious change decay
But know we only hold our treasures truly,
When it seems as if they pass away.

Nor dare to blame God's gifts for incompleteness:
In that want their beauty lies; they roll
Towards some infinite depth of love and sweetness,
Bearing onward man's reluctant soul.

Adelaide Proctor.

SOME SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS EXPERIENCED BY

R. H. F. RIPPON, Author of *Victor*. *

"December 18th.—I returned yesterday from a five weeks' absence from home; during my journey I have had various spiritual experiences, a few of which I will relate to you.

In R.—I lodged at a house where the baby was ill—I was not told by the people of the house the cause of the infant's illness. During the night I had a dream, in which I looked into the child's lungs, and perceived that they were dreadfully ulcerated, and that the child would die. The child was suffering from consumption. I became greatly attached to the child. A week later, at Doncaster, I received a visit from its spirit at the time of its departure.

Whilst walking one day in R.—, I passed a woman who suddenly assumed my mother's form and style of dress so perfectly that, as she turned and looked at me with my mother's features, I could scarcely believe but that I beheld my mother, who in some unexpectedly strange way was present.

Whilst in Doncaster I had a dream in which an angel showed me a new artistic telegraph which was to be discovered. Paper was rendered sensitive and placed upon a wall. A coil of wire was then brought forward and pointed at the sensitive paper. Upon this a quantity of odylie fluid was ejected from a syringe upon the paper, when the most beautiful architectural designs were formed. I could see these designs in all their loveliness coming from the mind of the angel and passing into the wire.

December 1st.—Awoke at Doncaster in the night and beheld the spirit of my wife, who is still living upon the earth, standing and watching over me. I could feel her breath upon my cheek. Her spiritual presence seemed to surround me with an intensely heavenly happiness.

December 5th.—Doncaster. Rappings in my room during the night, and movements of spirits. Awoke in the night and found the spirit of my little son, also still in the flesh, in my arms. He did not leave me for a long time.

December 6th.—Dreamed that my wife again stood by the bed-side, and awoke to find my hand held really in the grasp of a friendly spirit; my hand was held up out of the bed. The hand was a warm female hand.

December 8th.—Awoke, and saw a vase of the most beautiful flowers supported in the air before me. The vase was of a pure white material. The flowers were unlike any I have seen before. They were as living in appearance as any to be found in our gardens.

Awoke and saw a huge snake rearing up on my right side. The head was that of a lizard. I was much startled.

December 13th.—At Wakefield, rapping in my room during the night.

December 14th.—Before putting out the candle on going to rest, heard a sound in the room, like an explosion. This occurred three times during the night. About four o'clock in the morning there came a noise which shook the bed, then followed by the loud voices of several men talking. I was greatly startled.

December 17th.—At Boston, I was taken in the spirit again to Warsaw, and saw General Berg, and received an intimation that Poland would make another attempt for her freedom. The country swarmed with Russian spies. There were many noble men still ready to dare everything for their country's sake. Much more I also saw which I cannot now speak of.

December 21st.—I awoke one night last week after a previous experience at Wakefield, and beheld an object exactly resembling the human brain, with all its convolutions quite perfect, only at least three times larger than the brain of a man. It was a strangely beautiful object as it floated away from me towards the window. I am acquainted with the appearance of the human brain, but even had not this been the case, I experienced a spiritual impression which told me what this object was.

On Sunday night last I awoke and beheld a young man dressed in a college gown, and wearing a diamond shaped hat or cap. He was standing by the bed side in a contemplative manner. His features were pale, but exceedingly handsome.

On Wednesday night I awoke and beheld a most gorgeous object floating in the air above my wife. It resembled a very large cluster of fiery rubies, cherry-sized.

These are only a few of the experiences which I have lately had. I will send others in future letters.

* *Victor*.—An interesting tale, advocating temperance and all advanced moral movements, and replete with much remarkable spiritual experience. To be had of the author, 42, High street, Boston, Lincolnshire. Vide *Spiritual Magazine*, September, 1864.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

SIR—Is there any truth in that which is called the superstition of the death-watch?

I am aware that there is an insect which is called the death-watch, and which produces a sound, like the ticking of a watch. This insect is thus alluded to in Kirby and Spence's entomology—"Everyone has heard of the death-watch, and knows of the superstitious notions of the vulgar, that in whatever house its drum is heard, one of the family will die before the end of the year. These terrors, in particular instances, where they lay hold of weak minds, especially if sick, or hypochondriatic persons, may cause the event that is supposed to be prognosticated. A small degree of entomological knowledge would relieve them from all their fears, and teach them that their heart-sickening tick is caused by a small beetle which lives in timber, and is merely a call to its companion." Farther on in the same book, the following description is given of the manner in which the sound is produced—"Raising itself upon its hind legs, with the body somewhat inclined, the insect beats its head with great force and agility upon the plane of position; and its strokes are so powerful as to make a considerable impression, if they fall upon any substance softer than wood. The general number of distinct strokes in succession, is from seven to nine, or eleven. They follow each other quickly, and are repeated at uncertain intervals." I have myself frequently heard this insect, and can vouch for the accuracy of the description given in the latter quotation. But I have also on two occasions heard a sound closely resembling that made by the insect, only louder, under circumstances which entirely preclude the idea of its having been caused by the insect; and which I can only refer to a preternatural or spiritual cause. My wife frequently heard this sound. She has heard it during the last eight years, but only occasionally at times when she has been in a weak state of health, until during the last eighteen months. Up to this time she imagined it to be produced by the insect, but during the last eighteen months she has heard it much more frequently, and in whatever house she may happen to have been. During all this time she had been very much out of health. The weaker she is in health, the more frequently she hears it, when comparatively well, as she has been for some months past, she hears it but seldom.

It is a subjective sound. If she hears it when I am with her, I do not, neither did she hear it when I did, though I called her attention to it. It was 18 months ago that I heard it. If I had not heard it myself, I might fancy my wife was under a delusion. But I am as certain as I can be of anything, that I heard it and that its cause must be a spiritual one.

It does not seem to portend any evil. My wife's health has been gradually improving during the 18 months. I was at the commencement of that period in great anxiety about it, but now I do not seem to have cause for anxiety.

I would also like to say, that my wife avers she saw on one occasion—about a year ago—a globe of fire in the room, which gradually disappeared. Swedenborg speaks of the appearance of real globes of fire.

Yours truthfully,

WILLIAM GARDNER.

Hastings, March 16th, 1865.

SPIRITUAL LYCEUM BENEFIT.

A test *Séance* will be given by Mrs. Marshall, for the benefit of the Spiritual Lyceum, at the Lyceum Hall, 14, Newman-street, Oxford-street, on Wednesday evening, April 12th. Tickets—5s. Subscribers to the Lyceum, half price. *Séance* to commence at half past 7 p.m.

OBEEDIENCE.—The knowing of God, that we may serve him; and the serving Him, that we may enjoy Him; take up the whole duty of man's obedience.

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LYCEUM LECTURES.

On Sunday, April 2nd, The Author of "The Two Worlds" will review the Rev. M. D. Conway's Lectures on Spiritualism. Sunday, April 9th, Mr. R. Cooper (proprietor of the *Spiritual Times*)—"Inanimate and Animate Nature." Sunday, April 16th, Mr. J. Perceval—"The Teachings of Certain Preternatural Phenomena." Sunday, April 23rd, Mr. J. H. Powell—"Tennyson's 'Enoch Arden.'" Commence at 7, p.m. Admission Free.

PHRENOLOGY.—MISS NOA gives delineations of character, phrenological advice on the training of children, lessons and lectures on phrenology.—31, Blomfield-road, Maida-hill, W.

Miss Noa will Lecture on Phrenology on the 5th of April, at 3, p.m., at 29, Delamere-terrace, Upper Westbourne terrace, W. Tickets, 3s. each, to be had at Booth's, 307, Regent st., and at Whibley's, 2, Westbourne-place, Bishop's-rd.

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A DISCUSSION on Spiritualism will take place on Monday, April 10th, at the Cambridge Hall, Newman-st., Oxford-st., between Mr. J. B. Leno, late editor of the *Westminster News*, and Mr. J. H. Powell.

Chair to be taken at 8 o'clock precisely.
Body of the Hall, 6d., Reserved seats, 1s.

SPIRITUAL LYCEUM 14, NEWMAN-STREET, Oxford-street. On Sunday, April 2nd, The Author of "The Two Worlds" will review the Rev. M. D. Conway's Lectures on Spiritualism, delivered at South-place Chapel, Finsbury, at 7 p.m. Free.

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