

L. A. Thell

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.

MR. SOTHERN.

Our readers will have seen that Mr. Sothorn has taken proceedings against the proprietor of this paper for the libel contained in the article inscribed in this journal on the 27th January, and which was most incautiously and improperly taken into these columns from a copy of the *New York Sunday Times*. It must not be forgotten that Mr. Sothorn himself made an attack upon the Spiritualists, in which he gave them the choice only of being either Idiots or Swindlers, and in his letter to the *Glasgow Citizen* he accused them of blasphemous indecency, and used other names rather hard to bear, considering that we are only inquiring into the indications of certain curious and deep laws of psychology, and into the beginning of a science of the extremest interest and importance. In this inquiry many thousands of the highest educated classes are engaged, with earnest hearts and hopes that a broad and useful discovery may be made, and Mr. Sothorn's letter, making these broad and sweeping charges of fraud and swindling, was eagerly accepted by the London press, and copied in large type. It found its way by these means to America, and on the 31st December, Colonel Du Solle, who is, we believe, the Editor of the *New York Sunday Times*, who had been acquainted with Mr. Sothorn when he was in New York twelve years ago, and indeed professionally connected with him, published in leading type in his paper the inculpated article. This article was chiefly for the purpose of justifying Spiritualists from the charges made in Mr. Sothorn's letter, and the parts complained of, and so justly, by Mr. Sothorn, formed a portion of the article. We need hardly say that we had no previous knowledge of the article, nor any of the alleged facts; and, as we have said, it was most improperly and incautiously transferred to our columns entire, and without taking out the portions of which Mr. Sothorn has so much just cause of complaint. When an offence of this kind has been committed, though without the knowledge of the proprietor, it is the part of any person professing honesty and the feeling of a gentleman, to offer the fullest reparation of his offence, and this, whatever may be the result of the legal proceedings, he does by stating his sincere regret that any such words or charges should have found insertion in his paper, and he entirely retracts them.

SUICIDES.

THE ominous title of this article carries with it a meaning none can mistake. To think that in this favoured England

of ours, where wealth holds human beings in its glittering chains, that there should every now and then be heard the suicide's awful wail, and that the world should move on its way with a callous indifference, is truly terrible. Hood's "Bridge of Sighs" presents us with a poet's thoughts on "one more unfortunate" of earth's suicidal children. We read and ask ourselves with the poet—

"Had she a father—had she a mother—
Had she a sister—had she a brother—
Or had she a nearer one still and
A dearer one yet than all other?"

and passionately exclaim—

"Oh, 'tis pitiful,
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none."

But the restless tide of human life rolls on, and suicides occur daily, and there appears no remedy in the order of social economy. A poor woman who, it may be, has one continual struggle for life's common need, throws herself into the dark water, is dragged out a corpse; a jury is empannelled, and the verdict, "self destruction," is pronounced, and all is over. Who is there that does not sympathize with the poor suicide whose melancholy end has been the direct result of Poverty and Hope long deferred? We know not the heart-burnings, the agonizing thoughts, and the all-conquering temptations which urge the suicide to her fatal purpose. But this we know—the moment we allow our minds to become the prey of morbid thoughts, we lose our self-control and become, as it were, passive instruments in the hands of low or evil spirits in and out of the flesh. It is this condition of mind which fills our lunatic asylums and our prisons—keeps Calcraft at work, and makes up the increasing list of suicides. The only security against the commission of the heinous offences which blacken the social calendar is to be found in a healthy condition of self-hood. Weaken the idea of virtue and you at once strengthen the forces of vice. Spiritualism presents us not only with the clue to the cause, but to the preventive of crime. No philosophical explanations outside Spiritualism have as yet been given of the causes of suicide. The word "Insanity" has been the one standard solution to the majority of cases which have taken place; but what insanity is or is not has not been made clear. Spiritualism as we have before shown gives a more lucid and correct explanation of the causes and cure of insanity than has ever yet been given. It shows that insanity is neither more nor less than possession or obsession, and offers a clue to very many of the crimes which have disgraced the natural life. If our scientific philosophers will take this idea home, it is most certain that they would treat the insane and the criminal in a manner which reason and humanity dictate.

It is a sad blot on our national escutcheon that crime should continue its fearful reign, and that little or nothing of a practical character should be done to erase the blot. Spiritualism not only offers a true solution of the cause, and points out the cure of insanity and all the crimes that branch from it, but it does more by striking at the roots of

the evil—it cuts it down at a stroke. One of the first principles of Spiritualism is to establish the moral selfhood of man, teaching him that he is to do for himself, not wait for others to do for him, that which is essential to his spiritual growth. It further stimulates his power of self-control by proving to him that no evil temper can mislead him if he be only watchful and wary. Nothing is more needed than this knowledge; the world has been so long habituated to dependence on others that its life, instead of being supported by strong buttresses of self-dependence, has become weakened by the aggregated forces of a foreign source which have been continually sought after by it. The true strength of a nature grows from within—its individuality is its own, and marks its character. A nature without individuality could have no distinct history of its own. So with individuals; they must gain their strength from within—they must be themselves or they become the veriest of inanities. A nation peopled with such would speedily decline, and its decline would be a blessing.

It is the mission of Spiritualism to bring individuals face to face with their responsibilities, without which they can have no title to individuality. If they are taught this, instead of being slaves to others, they will be free in the truest sense, because duty and not individuals, will be their guide.

Without entering at length into details, we may conclude from facts of daily occurrence that the apparent causes of suicide are often of a trivial nature. We hear of a man hanging himself because he receives a letter from the lady of his choice, telling him that she cannot marry him because she does not love him. Thus the fairy silken thread of love is woven into a dismal thick death-cord. We hear of another suicide who plays at the game of "hazard" with Fortune and gets beaten. He is proud, and has no idea of life with poverty, so he shoots himself and quickly expires. We hear of another who declares the devil is tempting him to self-destruction, and who has to be taken care of after the second attempt to follow the devil's advice. One starves himself to death, another poisons himself, a third cuts his throat, all being urged to the commission of the insane act by mistaken pride or disappointed love, or the discovery of their crimes, or sad distressing poverty. These are more or less cases of daily recurrence; they teach a terrible lesson, and show more than anything else that sad condition of mind which loses its selfhood, and offers itself a week, willing sacrifice to evil influences.

Sooner than be taken by his enemy, the Roman soldier would fall on his sword, dying a martyr to his valour, because he looked upon his death as an immediate consequence of his capture, and chose the readiest means of freedom from so terrible a fate. We can admire the courage of the Roman suicide, and lament the necessity of the act, but not so courageous was self-destruction even on the part of Rome's warriors, as the mighty heroism of the martyrs who went, singing psalms, to the stake, for the cause of religious liberty. Better death than a long life of infamy and cowardice—better life, with all its material ills, if the spirit turns its feet homewards. There is often more cowardice than courage in suicide, but when it takes the form of martyrdom, it may be courage maintained by heroism of the holiest character—then we dare not condemn it. But how vast the distinction between heroic sacrifices for the cause of humanity, and those ever recurring individual suicides which are the subject of our remarks! Jesus offered Himself a martyr for mankind. Socrates chose to drink the hemlock rather than fabricate untruth. Galileo gave his accusers the triumph and saved his life thereby. Which does the world honour most of the two, Socrates or Galileo? The one represents sturdy, uncompromising honesty—the other, provaracative policy. If the "Truth does come uppermost," as Mackay sings, and we believe, Socrates must take the palm from Galileo. The real suicide was not Socrates, but Galileo, because the one saved his life by losing it—the other lost his life by saving it. Let us hope by this time he has found it again.

When spiritual teaching becomes more prevalent, there will be an end to the common notion that by using "a bare bodkin" man commits self-destruction. This is a most fatal mistake which the facts of Spiritualism proves beyond a doubt. We can let the blood from our veins, and find thereby a quick escape from the clogs of flesh,

but the "something after death" cannot be destroyed; and we have reason to believe that the consciousness of the spirit goes with the suicide to that "bourne from whence," Shakespeare supposed, "no traveller returns," but from which we have undoubted assurance that some travellers do return.

The subject of suicide is one demanding our sympathizing attention. We think it is a subject likewise which sooner or later, like insanity and capital offences, will be treated by the leading philosophers from a spiritual basis. Until this is the case we are quite convinced that the old *regime* will continue whilst madness, crime, and suicide, like spirits of darkness, will perpetually haunt our homes and hearts.

MISS EMMA HARDINGE.

On Monday evening last, at Harley-street Rooms, Miss Emma Hardinge, under inspiration, gave one of the most effectual, finished, and original discourses we have had the pleasure of hearing. Her action, gesture, and elocutionary force could have no other effect than to excite admiration of her auditors. She discoursed upon Mystery, showing how the priesthoods of the world had thriven upon it, and clearly showed that wherever a craft had an interest in Mystery, it was necessary that the "veil should be rent" in order that humanity might be free to ascend the beautiful ladder of knowledge. The latter half of the address was a magnificent peroration on "Modern Spiritualism," full of the simple Christianity of the New Testament. The lady said that Spiritualism came to widen the Church doors, so that humanity might enter.

We cannot attempt a full description of the address of Monday night, as we should only mar the effect by transcribing it in our own poor language. Those who had the privilege of listening to it will, we feel sure, remember it with pleasure, and we hope with profit.

FRASER'S MAGAZINE ON SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

FRASER'S MAGAZINE for January, 1866, contains a very able article on "The Queen of the West," giving, in particular, an extremely interesting account of various philanthropic and reformatory movements in America. We subjoin the sketch of Spiritualism there given, as though we might take exception to particular points in it, and to its slightly contemptuous tone, it yet, on the whole, treats the subject with greater fairness than most publications of its class. The writer seems, to have made Spiritualism to some extent at least, a matter of personal inquiry. We commend his example in this respect to those of our contemporaries who are in the habit of favouring us with their strictures on the matter without even this very simple and elementary qualification.

WHAT will the future historian say of Spiritualism? In 1847 one Michael Weekman, of Hydesville, Arcadia (New York), heard mysterious raps about his house. He left the house, and it was taken by a family of Foxes. (No doubt, as the 'historic doubter' reads these names, he will say—Michael Weekman, Hydesville, Arcadia, Foxes—tush! every name is allegorical, and Spiritualism itself a myth.) In this family of Foxes were two daughters—Catherine and Margaret—one of whom was certainly too young to be *compos doli*, but the age of the other was never given. That this elder one was considerably older, and also *compos doli*, may be judged from the fact that she is at present trying to make good in the courts of Pennsylvania a claim to certain properties of the Arctic explorer, the late Dr. Kane, on the ground of having contracted with him a secret marriage. These girls came to the conclusion that the raps which occurred in the house proceeded from spirits. They—the Foxes—afterwards removed to the city of Rochester, New York, where the raps attended them. They hit with marvellous wit upon a method of getting a system of communication between themselves and these raps, and one of the spirits—the first, according to spiritistic historians, who ever dropped a sociable word from the other world—gave his name as 'Charles R. Rosma.' Rosma rapped out the information that the younger sister was nine years old, and departed. When these tidings went through the country, it was recalled that there had been, during the year before, several prophecies in America that the spirit-world was about to manifest itself in an abnormal way. Several societies of Shakers declared that some of their members had, so early as 1843 been visited with trances, the like of which they had not known before, and prophesied the new dispensation; and Andrew Jackson Davis, an uncultivated but remarkably clever man, had already, in 1816, been exciting attention by the

publication of books quite worthy to be placed on the shelf with those of Swedenborg, written, he declared in a state of total unconsciousness, in which works similar prophecies were given. When the raps were heard in New York, some of us remembered that prophecies have a strong tendency to fulfil themselves; but the masses bent before the loud proclamations of a new era as before a strong wind. The newspapers published a receipt for table-turning, and it was a chance if one called at any residence of an evening and did not find its inmates, gravely or merrily, sitting around tealeaf tables. Of course the sensation wore off after a time, but there were too many elements of religious unrest and half-educated scepticism not to furnish enough fact to the newly-kindled superstition. It is less than eighteen years since those raps were heard in central New York, and now the "Spiritual Register"—with numbers a little too round and full to be accurate, but without certainly a very violent deviation from accuracy—estimates (1859) the number of avowed believers in America alone to be one million and a-half, and of unavowed, four millions; of public advocates, one thousand; of mediums public and private, forty thousand; of places of assembly one thousand; of books and pamphlets, five hundred; of periodicals thirty. This spread of Spiritualism was chronologically more rapid than that of any religious epidemic ever known before; but this is simply owing to the superior advantages for the use and expansion of such excitements derived from the cheap press, the ready machinery for meetings, and the unbounded 'liberty of prophesying,' which the scepticism of its founders bequeathed to the American Republic. Really the rise of the Spiritistic movement, of which the writer of this was a careful observer, presented the same features with those which history records in connection with other religions. The believers in the 'Rat-Hole Revelation,' as Emerson called it, were subjected to a nineteenth-century martyrdom; they were denounced by all the pulpits, ridiculed by all the newspapers, laughed at by the common-sense world, and had invariably to bear the stigma of 'vulgarity' (which in a republic has peculiar terrors) that Tacitus fixed upon the early Christians. They answered with the old arguments of persecuted minorities; they pelted the pulpits with reminders of the contempt which was heaped upon the Nazarene for whom their churches were built, and the philosophers with disquisitions on the reception of Galileo's, of Harvey's, of Kelper's discoveries. This filtration through a strong opposition gave a certain vigour to the apostles of the movement which was deficient in those who merely mumbled over inherited creeds and forms. Some of the trance speakers, too, were persons of rare ability. Andrew Jackson Davis was a natural artist, and gave to his spirit-world a kind of barbaric splendour which the champions of the poor dull puritanic hell and heaven could not emulate. He had also studied scientific books, and this gave him excellent rhetoric. I saw in Cincinnati a great audience, of which many were persons of education, listening in rapt attention whilst the weird-looking genius, with his jet-black hair and eyes, and marble-white face, described the magnetic or spirit-world which was on the outside of this—the cream, as it were, of the world. It is plain to me that he had been studying Plato, for his description of the spirit-world corresponded precisely with the 'Æther of Socrates,' so minutely given in his dying conversation. The new Spiritual movement was, according to him, but the natural result of celestial progress; as we were hovering on the verge of a suboceanic telegraph, so had they—the spirits—stretched a line from the overworld to this—an infrasonic cable. Peculiar brains were found to be so charged with electricity—like electric fish, &c.—as to be able to act as batteries. He greatly depreciated the raps, table-turnings, and other physical manifestations. He gave us a kind of chart of the world of spirits, and entertained us with an account of the experiences and sensations of the newly hanged murderer, Professor Webster, of Boston, on waking gradually up in his transmundane quarters, and his conversation with the spirits commissioned to take charge of his education, which was as interesting as anything in the "Arabian Nights."

There is no doubt that Spiritism gained much strength in the West by the fusion into it, already alluded to, of many of the socialistic elements which had been floating about without habitations for some time before it appeared. The spirits freely declared that they were about to reorganize human society. There is about all American Spiritism a mingling of Otherworldliness with Newworldliness, which seems to evaporate when it attempts to come over the ocean. Not that the Spiritists are radical reformers,—they trust in heaven too much for that,—but they are ever prophesying the dawn of a new era in humanity and society. They are sometimes speaking, sometimes rhyming, and, again, singing mediums. One of the last named I remember to have listened to far away in a cottage on the prairies. He was a soft-featured young man of twenty-five, with an almost girlish beauty about his eyes and long chestnut locks. He sat at a small organ, and sang with a clear tenor voice accompanying himself quite correctly. The musical theme had been revealed to him by the spirits; the poetry set to it had been similarly given to one of his friends. The pathos of the melody convinced me that the youth had a gift for musical composition of no ordinary kind. The words he sang were gorgeous and wild, returning to a refrain of 'Evermore,' that reminded me of the verses of Poe, who is the favourite poet of the Spiritists. It related a vision of a great olden portal, through which 'streamed the radiance of a never-setting day,' where stood countless angels tall and beautiful, 'greeting all who came, whilst they rolled forth a glad chorus whose burden was 'Evermore.' Hither there came a 'slave all worn and weary,' his fetters blood-crusted, his eyes gleaming wildly: swift sped a bright angel who raised the sinking wretch and 'off the fetters tore,' crying—

Pass, brother, through our portal, thou'lt a freeman evermore!

And next, as the seer gazed, came a mother 'wildly weeping' for her children and their father, whom the 'cold grave hath in keeping': to her came a gentle angel, who points her beyond the portal where those whom she has lost await her, and shall be with her 'evermore.' Then came a 'cold blue-footed' girl with cheeks of ashen whiteness, and heavy-laden heart, whose 'home had been the roofless street, her day had been the night: then the angel with a smile shining through his tears,

caught the poor creature as she was rushing from the golden portal, and cried—

Enter, sister; thou art pure, thou art sinless evermore;

Up to the golden gate came also the toiler who found rest, the weary hearted exile who found his native land, the beggar and the king who were equal—all to be greeted and ushered into the auroral land. The elements of which this vision was made are cheap enough (for that matter, the finest sunset is only some sunlight and fog!); but nevertheless, uttered by this youth with a sincerity which flushed his cheek and moistened his eyes, the song of 'Evermore' touched me then, and still floats about me when I see the poor wretches for whom the gate and its angels are waiting.

May not Spiritism be a popular reaction from the intensification of practical and materialistic progress, the absorption of man into steam-engines and spinning-jennies, which have characterized the civilization of Western Europe, and which went as far as it could in the material growth of the New World? With that peristaltic movement which some orientalists saw figured in the measuring-worm, humanity has, in successive epochs, now raised all of its attention to the heavens, now stretched itself close to the earth. Star-gazing Chaldæa is followed by Judea, whose very religion announced no future, but only temporary rewards and pains. Judaism is followed by Christianity, which commands its followers to lay up no treasures except in heaven, to give no thought for to-morrow. From this—carried out into the over-weening otherworldliness of Romanism—a reaction sets out with Protestantism, which has produced the material grandeur combined with scepticism and formalism which we see in Western Europe and in America. May not the Transcendental movement of the cultivated Americans, and the Spiritism of the uneducated, be forerunners of another heavenward tide? At any rate, it seems to me that neither Transcendentalism nor Spiritism in America are on the decline. There is, indeed, a growing dislike among the Spiritists, of the physical manifestations; the 'Brothers Davenport' have never caused popular commotions there; but on the other hand the Spiritists are organizing themselves into a large and important body, having all the appliances of expansion, and it seems even probable that some strong leader may yet start forward to divest it in its more manifest absurdities, and make out of its social and imaginative elements a great moral and religious revolution to culminate in a Declaration of Independence from, and a Monroe doctrine for, all the creeds and systems of the Old World.

TO MY FRIENDS.

I TAKE this means of thanking the many kind friends from whom I have received letters expressing their deep concern and warmest sympathy for me in the present unpleasant position in which, by the indiscreet act of another, I am placed.

The circumstance which has led to this is, of course, to be greatly regretted, and must, if needs be, be atoned for; but the kind feeling it has elicited has done much to compensate for the anxiety it has occasioned me and the indignities to which I have been subjected. ROBERT COOPER.

SPIRIT-COMMUNICATIONS—No. 8.

February 8, 1864.

Q.—Referring to a remark made in last message, I asked "If the murderer is the 'tool' of evil spirits, is he fully accountable for his crime?"

S.—The earthly man, intent on suicide, drinks the poisoned cup to the dregs, and writhes in the agony of a painful death. The spirit of man, by yielding himself up to the enticement of the evil spirits, also, imbibes the poisonous exhalations which surround him; and, in like manner, writhes in the pain of spiritual death.

Even as it was of his own free will that his hand bore the cup of death to his lips, thereby drinking in death to the earth-body, so does his spirit, of its own free will, reject the good aid of the God-spirits, and take to his bosom the exhalations of spiritual death.

But as there are antidotes to all your earthly poisons which will, in a measure, if not entirely, remove the effect of the earthly poison, but of which the man must, at his own will, partake to save his life and bring relief, even so is prayer, however weak, frail, and unformed, as it were, the great, the all-sufficient, the only antidote to the influence of the spirit poison, the evil in the heart of man. But, should the spirit of man deliberately reject the antidote of prayer, and thus reject the only efficient aid, so must he as inevitably pass on to spiritual death and destruction, as the earth body springs of life must be snapped asunder, without the speedy aid of the earthly antidote to the poisoned cup.

(Same day.)

The spirits, as seen by our "seers," are intangible. If we grasp a spirit-hand, it melts, as it were, in the hand. If we attempt to grasp the apparently substantial form of the spirit, we grasp at nothing.

Q.—Can you tell me whether all spirits, and things in the spirit-land, are of the same nature there as they are here?

S.—It is born a corruptible body, but raised a spiritual body. It is born in dishonour, but raised in honour. There is a spiritual body. All this, my child, was told by St. Paul, and is literal truth. Not that one particle of your earth-bodies could by any possibility exist in the home of the spirits.

For, even as the grain or seed, cast into the mother earth, will, in due

time, rise to the life of the outer world, in the form of a lovely flower, with no apparent remains in its beautiful form of the obscure and insignificant seed, from which it received its life, so is there a spiritual body, a form, substantial, real. The spirit-feet do walk the gardens of the Lord. The spirit-senses receive nourishment and delight in a much more exquisite and real degree than is possible to you to understand in your earth-body. But the spiritual body is as incapable of existing in the atmosphere of earth as your earth-body is incapable of transplantation to the spirit-land.

Nevertheless, in spirit-dream life your spirits are free to visit other places, and to return to your body by the magnetic cord which is never dis severed until the death of the earth body.

So it is with the spirit who, drawn by the magnetic aura, or by any other cause, to the duties of guardianship, appears to you real and true, but being the spirit ethereal, and divested of the spirit-body, the essential form belonging to, and only capable of being assumed in the happy joyous atmosphere of the spirit-land, it is not possible for the spirits appearing to your earth-seer to be more tangible than they are.

This spirit essence can, for the purpose of recognition, assume any earthly dress, or even as the messengers of God appeared to the prophets of old, can they appear as men. Likewise, can they present to your spirit-sight the *fac simile* of their spirit-dress, and appear in their bright lovely hue. This is ever according to the power of spirit-vision possessed by the seer; as also according to the spirit atmosphere that is around him.

F. J. T.

St. Leonards-on-sea.

AN APPARITION AND PREDICTION FULFILLED.

THE Marquis de Bantouillet, and the Marquis de Precey were intimate friends and companions in arms. Talking one day of the next world, they promised that the one who died first would return to tell the other of the event. Three months subsequently the Marquis Bantouillet started for the seat of war in Flanders, his friend being detained by fever, remained in Paris. Six weeks later, de Precey was awoke at six o'clock in the morning by the curtains of his bed being suddenly drawn aside, and turning to see who it was, he perceived his friend dressed in a buff coat and boots. Springing out of bed he tried to embrace him, to testify his joy at his return, but Bantouillet retreated a few steps and said caresses were misplaced, he came to fulfil a promise—that he had been slain in battle the preceding day, and that all that was said of a future life was true—that de Precey ought to alter his present mode of life without delay, for he would be killed in his first engagement. Unable to credit his senses the Marquis again tried to embrace his friend, believing it all to be a joke, but he only grasped the air, and Bantouillet perceiving his doubts showed him the wound he had received in his loins from which the blood appeared to flow. After this the phantom disappeared, and de Precey awoke the whole house by his cries. Several persons to whom he related what he had seen and heard, attributed the vision to a fevered brain, and entreating him to lie down, assured him he must have been dreaming. The Marquis in despair at being taken for a visionary, related all the above mentioned circumstances, protesting he had both seen and heard his friend while awake, but it was of no effect, until the arrival of the mail from Flanders brought the announcement of the death of the Marquis.

This first circumstance proving correct, and in the very manner related by de Precey, his friends began to think there might be some foundation for the adventure related; Bantouillet having been killed on the eve of the day he announced the fact, and there not having elapsed sufficient time for the information to be received by natural means. The event was much canvassed in Paris, but attributed to a heated brain, in spite of the testimony of some who had examined the case seriously. The prediction was however shortly verified, for on the Marquis's recovery, at the commencement of the civil wars—he proceeded at once to the scene of action, in spite of the urgent entreaties of his father and mother, who dreaded the fulfilment of the prophecy, and was killed at the battle of Saint Antoine.

MR. SOTHERN AND THE SPIRITUALISTS.— THE CHARGE OF LIBEL.

Robert Cooper, described as of 14, Newman-street, Oxford-street, was brought up at the Marylebone Police-court yesterday, on a warrant. The prisoner was apprehended in Dublin, and the charge laid against him was—"That he did, unlawfully, wickedly, and wilfully utter and publish a certain false and defamatory libel towards one Edward Askew Sothern, and knowing the same to be untrue."

Serjeant Ballantine, in stating his case, said the prisoner was there upon a warrant for a libel. It was one of the most base calumnies that was ever penned or uttered. The prisoner was the proprietor of a paper called the *Spiritual Times*. He (the learned serjeant), understood that it would be stated that the libel had been copied into the *Spiritual Times* from a paper called the *New York Sunday Times*. Mr. Sothern had used his utmost endeavours to get a copy of such a paper as the *New*

York Sunday Times. but still he had no reason to doubt that this libel did appear in it. He need not say that the fact of this libel having been published as original in a *New York* paper could not stay proceedings there; but he would say that to copy such a scurrilous, scandalous thing as this into one of our own papers was libellous. He thought he would be able to show at a future tribunal that, although the libel appeared in a *New York* paper, the wording itself was concocted in the prisoner's office. He believed it emanated from the prisoner's office, and was sent to the *New York* paper. The paper with the libel inserted was sent back to the *Spiritual Times* and it was thought by this means to get rid of the danger of publishing the foul and scurrilous abuse. The learned serjeant read the libel, which was as follows:—"He created quite a sensation by admitting the truth of an accusation brought against him by a certain young actress, that he had grievously wronged her after placing her under a state of mesmeric influence." Now whether that meant that Mr. Sothern had committed a felony, or had really committed a criminal assault, could not be gathered from what had been stated. It was a grave and cruel charge to make against an innocent man, by such people as those of whom the prisoner seemed to be the leader. Mr. Sothern was a man who is living, in spite of all these base calumnies, with his wife and his children in the most perfect harmony and concord. Another portion of the article he wished to bring before his worship's notice. In it Mr. Sothern was introduced to the public in these terms, which were also italicised in the print:—"He was a good looking, gay, vivacious, 'fast,' young man, whose pretty wife continually won the sympathy of those who were witnesses to her husband's licentiousness." Mr. Sothern would be called before his worship, and he would assert positively, and conscientiously, that what had been written about him was pure malignancy and a base invention. He (Mr. Ballantine), had had an intimation that inasmuch as the paper was not registered, and he really believed it was not, the plea would be urged that the prisoner could not be held liable. But the paper bore his name, and he had acknowledged his proprietorship. Although it was not the prisoner who inserted this libel in his paper, it was idle of him to deny knowledge of it. True, he was travelling with the Davenport Brothers, but it could not be true that he knew nothing of this libel. He (the learned serjeant), would show by a letter which appeared in the *Spiritual Times* of the 27th of January, that the prisoner must be cognisant of all that was going on, or being inserted in his paper.

Mr. Knox: What is the date of the publication?

Mr. Ballantine: The 27th of January of this year.

Mr. Knox: I think you are quite right in not losing any more time. You have lost none at present.

Mr. Ballantine: If any time has been lost I wish to explain how that might have arisen. When this libel first appeared—or rather the paper containing it was issued—my client gave instructions to sue in the superior court, but afterwards, and immediately afterwards, seeing an advertisement in the *Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, he consulted me, and I told him to take immediate steps in the matter. I then told Mr. Sothern that an action at law would not come on, perhaps, say for six months. All this time they could be calumniating him, and no doubt they would get rid of an immense number of the publication. At the stated time for the action coming on, the paper would be defunct, and as to the prisoner, the difficulty would be to find him.

George Henry Church was then called. On the 14th of this month he purchased a copy of the *Spiritual Times* of the 27th of January last in which was the article complained of.

Mr. Edward Askew Sothern was called, and in reply to Mr. Ballantine said—I am now performing as an actor at the Hay-market. I have read an article in a paper called the *Spiritual Times*. In relation to those parts imputing improper conduct on my part towards some actress, I say there is not one single word of truth in them. There is not the slightest foundation for any part of them, and emphatically I say there is not a word of truth in it. I am married and have four young children. I have always lived on terms of fondness and happiness with my wife—most fond terms.

Mr. Ballantine: And but for my advising she would have been here to-day. It was not necessary that she should be brought to such an ordeal.

Henry Kirby, 233 D, said: I took the prisoner into custody in Dublin, at the theatre, and read the warrant to him. In reply, he said, "Me? I was not in town when it was printed. I did not know it till I saw the paper. I thought it was wrong." I then said, "You ought to have stopped it directly." He said, "I was not then in town." I brought him to London.

Mr. Ballantine said that this was his case for the prosecution.

Mr. Lewis said that before this case came on he was instructed to appear for Mr. Cooper, and to express his great regret that such an article should have appeared in his paper without his knowledge and consent. He did not know that it

was in till his attention was called to it by the officer who apprehended him. His client had instructed him to make a most full and ample apology to Mr. Sothorn, saying that what had been printed he retracted. If the learned serjeant (Mr. Ballantine), would not accept the apology, the law as bearing upon libel under Lord Campbell's Act, could be fully discussed then. If the magistrate looked at the matter, and also looked at the paper, he would therein find that his client (Cooper), could have had no knowledge that this was to be inserted. The signature was, "Robert Cooper, representative of the Dartport Brothers—Queen's Arms Hotel, Dublin, January 18." Mr. Lewis continued: And this was several days before the paper was published, in which they say this alleged libel was inserted. He knew it was not pecuniary recompense that Mr. Sothorn wanted. It was a *bona fide* apology, and that had been offered to him, and he would not accept it. It would be more to his honour to have accepted it.

Mr. Knox: Have you published any apology?

Mr. Lewis: No, sir.

Mr. Knox: Then you are at a stand-still. It ought to have been done. Every word published should be regretted and retracted. Has anything of that sort been done?

Mr. Lewis: It could not be done, as Mr. Cooper did not know of the libel appearing in his paper till he was taken into custody and shown it.

Mr. Knox: And I am to believe he has not seen his own paper?

Mr. Lewis: I am instructed so. He gave no instructions for the article being inserted.

Mr. Knox: Then I am to understand that he comes into court to-day, saying that there has been a matter inserted in his paper, for which he is very sorry?

Mr. Lewis: My client is willing to apologise if they will accept it.

Mr. Knox: You spoke of *bona fides* just now, Mr. Lewis. I think your client would have been acting *bona fide* if, when he felt that he had done Mr. Sothorn a wrong—the most atrocious wrong it is possible for one man to commit towards another—he had at once taken the most prompt steps and found out the person who inserted, or caused to be inserted, anything so scurrilous, scandalous, and vile, and turn him or them adrift at once.

Mr. Lewis: There was no opportunity.

Mr. Ballantine: Why, the officer said he had been speaking to him about it.

Mr. Knox: How often does this paper come out?

Mr. Lewis: I believe once a week.

Mr. Knox: It turns out then that this is a weekly publication. If you ask me, as a matter of fact, to believe that where communication is so easy, and also ask me to believe that the prisoner, who is proprietor of a paper published here, takes so little interest in his publication. I candidly tell you I can't believe it. It is ridiculous to tell me that a man feeling an interest in a paper, and that paper, in fact, his, does not see a copy of it. In this case he waits till the officer puts his hands upon him and brings him to a criminal bar before he attempts to apologise. I have no hesitation in saying it is a most scandalous libel, and if the press of this country had such power as this paper usurps, then I should say, "God help us!" Imagine for one moment, even now, the scandal floating about for three weeks, of such a public man as Mr. Sothorn. I will not stop the case, it must go for trial.

The prisoner was fully committed to the Old Bailey for trial, but bail was taken, himself in 500*l.*, and two sureties in 250*l.* each.—*Morning Star.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our Correspondents.

THE DOCTRINE OF RE-INCARNATION.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times.*

Dear Sir,—You have so frequently and liberally opened your columns to my letters and other communications, that I make no doubt you will allow me to say a few words upon that very peculiar phase of doctrinal Spiritualism, the Doctrine of Re-incarnation, and at the same time give you such responses from my diaries as are there recorded in reply to my specific inquirers at various times. Before doing this, however, perhaps you will permit me to make a few general observations on the subject, as derived from other than spiritual sources.

It has been for ages a doctrine among certain spiritual philosophers, whose command over nature and its occult properties was derived from a deep study of the natural nominalistic inter-relations of ideas—that is the abstract qualities, for instance, of the four elements as distinguished from their positive concrete chemical constitution—that a vegetative soul or occult life existed in everything independent of, yet adhering to, each specific object and eternally characteristic of it. This, after all, stripped of its jargon, is nothing but a proclamation of the eternity of matter,

each quality of matter being preserved in its nature as a whole, but passing from one form to another, in accordance with the laws, chemical and mechanical, by which transmutation is effected throughout the physical universe. These qualities of souls, therefore, in a certain sense, may be said, from time to time, to be regenerated in new bodies, just as the supporters of the re-incarnation theory affirm that souls become re-incarnated in new bodies. Mr. Howitt in one of his luminous and thoroughly dignified articles, has exclaimed against the monstrosity of the re-incarnation theory—against the repulsive idea that the new-born child, which the happy mother holds upon her maternal knee, has for its soul principle, and hence immortal characteristic, the individuality of a blood-stained murderer, or obscure profligate. In this protest all cannot but agree.

Are we not, however, bound, distasteful as the theory may be, to remember that the Almighty does not see with the limited vision of man; and in accordance with the truest principle of Christianity, so often brought to our remembrance in the solemn charges of the judges when pronouncing the extreme penalty of the law, should we not hope that the criminal arraigned before the highest tribunal may there find mercy not attainable to him here on earth? If the theory be correct, that the Almighty has the prerogative of mercy, are we to suppose that the prerogative is a dead letter. If the latter, then such prerogative does not exist, and still less should it exist on earth; because it is impossible to conceive of a power without its efficacious employment. As mercy and forgiveness are practised on earth in *limine*, so in their fullest sense must they be practised in another sphere, or the Divine All is rendered a very Baal and Moloch unworthy of reverence or thanks for existence at all. Sentenced justly to the extreme penalty of human law, is it not ungenerous and unjust to pursue the unhappy victim to the bar of God, who sees with other eyes, and whose nature is love itself? This is, I am sure it will be seen, no apology for crime—no encouragement towards it—but a simple extension of a principle of mercy into the unseen world.

If then, as has been argued by some, the re-incarnation of any spirits so passing from this world is ordained, should not that spirit be deemed acquitted, of his previous fault, and received back into the world without the taint of even possible anterior sin upon it? In God's retributive justice, may this spirit not have to redeem itself in a second existence by a life of purity and goodness from the errors of the first; and if parents receive their children as a precious responsibility from the Almighty, should the mere *possibility* not be an incentive to more careful education and moral training?

In these observations I am not to be supposed to pledge myself in favour of the re-incarnation theory as an invariable and usual event. I am but pointing out a practical view of the question, as it may arise amongst us.

I will now proceed to lay my questions and the responses of my spirit friend before you, without comment, as is my usual practice, leaving to others the consideration of them, and only claiming accuracy and fidelity for my transcript.

Monday, September 14, 1866.

Question.—I was going to ask you whether you could tell anything respecting the occasional re-incarnation of persons upon this earth.

Reply.—This is a subject that we are not permitted to say much upon, but I will tell you what I can.

Many are re-incarnated, and for different reasons. Some have lived on the earth in a state little differing from animals without their instinctive merits. Such, you may feel, are unfitted to enter the spirit-world, and are sent to vivify others, where they rise in the grade of reason. Some were also of great virtue. In usefulness to the human race, they return to fill again another state of usefulness. To such persons life is a state of real happiness. The labour and knowledge of their power and influence fills the mind with satisfaction, and this return to earth is no burthen or punishment to them.

Q.—By the means of the crystal and mirror, we have learned that the celebrated Count Cagliostro or Joseph Balsamo, had been thrice incarnated—first, in the thirteenth century, as Prior of Tilbury Convent, second, as the dissolute Earl of Rochester of Charles the Second, and third, as the magician. Can you say anything upon this?

R.—No doubt it is correct, if you have been told so.

Q.—But you have nothing else to observe?

R.—No.

Q.—Nothing as to the reasons?

R.—There are, no doubt, good reasons for it. As a monk in a convent he may have been obliged to disguise his real character, which was shown in the second life, and the third (being a combination of the two with certain remembrances), may have produced the third.

Q.—Yet it would seem, considering the troubles of life, to be hard that persons should be fated to pass twice through them. I mean through the dangers and illnesses of childhood, the temptations of manhood, and the wretchedness and decrepitude of age. There seems a want of Divine justice in it.

R.—Not so; quite the contrary. If you did not fight the battle of life boldly, another trial is opened to you, and what is the span of a mortal life compared to eternity? Which is best; to return to earth again, and gain immortality by a state of usefulness to others, or to wander in the spirit-life, bearing the spiritual burthen of regret for former time and talent wasted?

Q.—Is a spirit free to choose whether it shall return to earth or not?

R.—Not always. Some are so dull when they enter the spirit-world, that they could hardly comprehend. A wiser judge awards what is best for them.

Sunday, September 20, 1866.

Q.—The Doctrine of Re-incarnation, upon which you made some remarks the other night, is also taught by the spirits to Allan Kardec. May I ask if you understand French?

R.—Yes.

Q.—Then if I read in French it will be enough?
I then read in French what is here translated—
A. Kardec Book of Spirits, p. 74. How can the soul which has not attained perfection during the bodily life, succeed in purifying itself?
R.—By submitting to the trial of a new existence.
Q.—How does the soul accomplish this new existence? Is it by its transformation in a spirit state?
R.—The soul, in purifying itself, no doubt undergoes a transformation, but for this purpose it must submit to the trial of bodily life.
Q.—The soul, then, has several bodily existences?
R.—Yes, all of us have several bodily existences. Those who say otherwise desire to maintain you in ignorance, or they are in that state themselves. It is their desire.
Q.—It would then appear to result that the soul, after having quitted one body, takes another; in other words, that it is reincarnated in a *new* body. Are we to understand it thus?
R.—Certainly. All spirits do not return; as I said, some come into other bodies for the reasons I named; but some go through a purification in the spirit-world, and are useful there; but it must not be imagined that they who appear to man the greatest sinners are really so. Man cannot see the soul, and the positions of different persons must be taken into consideration—the advantages some have had, and the disadvantages of others. Are they to be judged alike in the world, and not by the Seer into all hearts, and the just and most merciful judge of all mankind? If the same souls were constantly reincarnated, heaven would lose in its fullness. Every re-incarnation has its purpose. God never takes away the power of repentance, and the selfish man carries his own punishment with him either in this world or in the spirit-world.
Q.—What is your opinion of a death-bed repentance?
R.—I scarcely believe in such a repentance. It is rather a sorrow for consequences. All men cannot think and act alike; but the good or evil in man, it is impossible for any to judge but the Almighty—the shades are so blended, and so alike.

(To be concluded in our next.)

DREAMS.

To the Editor of the *Spiritual Times*.

Sir.—There was an excellent article on dreams in your valuable publication some time ago, but neither in that article nor in any other I have ever seen upon the subject, has any notice been taken of the usefulness of dreams, and their importance to the human race.

I think I can prove this, but before I do so I will just explain how I consider dreams are brought about.

It is ordained that the spirit in man shall periodically be dormant in order that the humours in the body may be recruited and the joints of the limbs be lubricated; without which the bones would heat by the motion of the body, just as the wheels of a machine would heat without the application of oil. Well then, the spirit of man being in a dozing state, surrounding spirits are at liberty to take possession of the brain and work it for their amusement, or for our preservation when necessary. They touch the brain and make us fancy all sorts of things, just as the biologists do on their platforms. But it is with dreams, as it is with vegetation, there is a great deal that is indisputable to mankind, and a great deal apparently useless. The useful part of the provision consists in the power it gives to our guardian angels, to preserve us from premature death, which they do by rousing us by some fearful dream, when our limbs are benumbed, through lying in an improper position, or when the stomach presses too heavily upon the blood vessels of the back, either of which is calculated to jeopardise our existence. Who has not at some time or other been awakened with a limb icy cold, and the blood thoroughly stagnated? What would have been the consequence but for the kindly office of the guardian spirit? May I not with reason presume that the stagnation would have extended and that death must have ensued? Children are constantly startled from their sleep crying lustily because no doubt of some frightful dream, and on such occasions they are invariably lying in some uncomfortable position, they not having the sense to adjust their limbs to keep the blood from stagnating. I consider that I have often been so aroused and on such occasions I have seen the presiding spirit rise from the bed in a luminous form. It is to me therefore no idle theory, but a confirmed notion what I have here endeavoured to explain.

I have heard men say that they were aroused because they thought they saw the devil, but that is no argument against guardian spirits; life must be preserved to a certain period, by the will of God, and if men are evil disposed and good spirits cannot therefore come near them, they must send lower spirits who can, and such will certainly make use of any means to arouse the subject under their care or guardianship in accordance with their own nature and character.

As has been often noticed in your publication, dreams have sometimes, too, been the means of bringing criminals to justice. An extraordinary instance of which will be in the recollection of some of your readers:—

A man of the name of Corder got the consent of the parents, to take a young woman to London, (as he represented) to marry her, but murdered her on the way. He then went to London, and married a lady at Ealing, and kept the parents quiet with all sorts of representation. But three nights successively, the mother dreaming that her daughter had been murdered, and buried in a place called the Red Barn; she insisted upon the father making search, when the body was found in that place, and Corder was executed.

H. WHITTAKER

MR. D. D. HOME'S LECTURE.

MR. DANIEL D. HOME, a gentleman who has acquired much notoriety, both in this country and America, from his connection with "Spiritualism," gave a lecture in Willis's Rooms last evening in explanation of the rise and progress, the uses and abuses, of that eccentric system of metaphysics. Mr. Home's appearance accords well with his profession, for he has a spectral aspect. He is a man with the frailest possible organization—"the shell and shadow of a man"—with eyes of a strange, not to say unearthly, lustre, sunken hollow cheeks, and a voice which makes up in power what it wants in melody. His head is chiefly remarkable for its hair, which is curly and abundant. His expression is benign and good-natured; there is not the slightest taint of acrimony in it, nor, to do him justice, does he convey the idea of one who plays a false part in which he has himself no faith. That he is an honest believer in his own creed is the impression which his manner and proceedings produce upon an unprejudiced spectator. He acts and speaks like what he probably is, a man of talent, whose head, to use an expressive familiar phrase, is screwed on the wrong way—a wild, but well-intentioned, enthusiast, who has brought himself to believe most potently in the theories he propounds. The favour with which he was received clearly proved that he had the advantage of addressing a sympathetic audience, who partook of his delusions, and were prepared to resist any attempt to call them in question. There was, no doubt, a leaven of scepticism in the assembly, but the majority were unquestionably believers, and the unbelievers were only an inconsiderable minority. Mr. Home read his lecture, which, though long and very discursive, was lucidly arranged and furnished occasional evidence of extensive reading and considerable literal ability. After disclaiming all mercenary motive for his singular career, and declaring that he had never received, and never would receive, money for being a medium, he proceeded to discuss the question of the immortality of the soul, observing that the yearning after a deathless existence was a feeling as characteristic of man, as unerring instinct was distinctive of the lower animals. But the mighty problem of man's immortality could not be carried by abstract argument beyond presumptive evidence. A more sure and solid testimony than any thus to be obtained was required in this unbelieving age, and it was his happiness to know that he had been the means of supplying sceptics with that description of positive evidence which was suited to their mental state. Spiritualism was no fungus growth of yesterday, as was too commonly supposed. Tables were used for eliciting responses from spirits fifteen centuries ago, and rapping spirits were known in Germany for seven centuries at least. Spiritual communications by means of trances, dreams, and visions, were common in remote ages among the Jews; and some of the best and greatest of men in all lands had believed in Spiritualism. Of this number were, John Wesley, Luther, Emanuel Swedenborg, and multitudes of others, and, in more modern times, Professor Hare, of Philadelphia, and Judge Edmonds, of New York, both of whom were unwilling converts to the system. The latter had investigated it most minutely for nine years, and had arrived at the conviction that it was quite possible for us here on earth to commune with the spirits of the departed through the medium of persons still alive. This creed was no phantom; it was a glorious reality calculated to conduce to exalted private and public worth. After endeavouring to trace his favourite doctrine so far back as to Tertullian, in the Christian era, and after attempting to identify the visions, dreams, apparitions, and angelic embassies recorded in the Old and New Testaments with the "Spiritualism" of modern times, the lecturer gave some statistics of the growth of the system. There were in America 500 public mediums, who received visitors; and more than 50,000 private ones, and the believers were counted by millions. In France, Spain, Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland it had made prodigious progress; and here in England it had taken hold of the literary and educated classes, and many persons of the highest distinction were its open advocates. He then passed on to the narration of some of his own experiences. He did not profess to have the power of bringing forward or sending away spirits, but all his life he had had spirit visions, revelations, dreams, forewarnings, presentiments, and providential interpositions, to which he owed that he was now alive. The gift he possessed had been for four generations in his mother's family, and the possessor of it was usually in delicate health, and generally died while comparatively young. His cradle was said to have been rocked by unseen hands, and when he was three and a-half years of age, and lying in his little bed at Portobello, near Edinburgh, he had seen the passing away into the other world of a little cousin who at that moment was at Linlithgow. At the age of thirteen he had his first great vision. He and another boy, two or three years older than himself, had made a mutual promise that whichever of the two should die first would appear to the other after death. As he was sitting in bed one night, and preparing to draw the sheet over him, a sudden darkness pervaded the room, the moon having been previously shining.

Suddenly there came through the darkness a glow of light, and at the foot of the bed, enveloped in a golden cloud of brightness stood his friend Edwini—his features unchanged, and his hair falling in wavy ringlets over his shoulder. With his right hand he slowly described two circles in the air, and vanished while in the act of describing the third. His mother died in the year 1850. A few nights after her death he heard three loud blows as of a hammer upon his arm. The blows were again and again repeated, and when he went down to breakfast the next morning there was a regular shower of raps upon the table, to the no small consternation of his aunt, who threw a chair at him, and accused him of introducing Satan into the bosom of a respectable family. On another occasion, while gazing in a looking-glass, he distinctly saw a chair in the bedroom moving towards him, and walking between him and the door—a spectacle which caused him no small alarm. He mentioned other cases also where the tables and chairs got into spontaneous motion when he appeared, and he told how his aunt, who seems to have been a sensible woman, tried to bring a refractory table to a sense of duty, first by placing a big Bible upon it, and then by leaning upon it with all her weight, but all to no purpose. The irrepressible table only moved the more briskly, and at last the sceptical old lady was lifted in the air herself.

On another notable occasion he saw clearly in a vision all the attendant circumstances of the death of one of his brothers, who was crushed between blocks of ice in the Polar Seas. He told what he had seen to his friends and in five months after came the tidings of the fatal calamity which had occurred precisely in the manner he had indicated. But the strangest vision of all was that which he saw two years ago at Dieppe, where, on gazing into a little crystal ball, he plainly discerned an excited crowd, and a man who was being assassinated. On the instant he exclaimed, "That is Abraham Lincoln!" and the event proved his words but too true. These, and many other miraculous experiences, reminding the uninitiated of the good old days of Baron Munchausen of marvellous memory, did the Spiritualist detail with a solemn earnestness of manner which—so respectable is sincerity, even in the most visionary of causes—forbade a smile or the slightest manifestations of incredulity among his audience. He admitted that in the hands of bad, foolish, or mischievous men, Spiritualism, like everything else, was liable to abuse, and might be perverted to purposes of evil, and in that event no one would denounce it more strongly than he, but he maintained that, exercised with pure and virtuous intentions it was productive of incalculable good, comforting the afflicted and sorrow-stricken, enlightening the ignorant, serving the best interests of religion, and promoting peace and good will amongst men. He arrogated, however, no moral superiority for the medium, who, as such, was simply a bridge by means of which communication was established between the seen and unseen worlds. As for the statement that Spiritualism was conducive to lunacy it was ludicrously false. He had travelled in numerous countries, and had never known a case where it had had any such effect. The lecturer then read a poem dictated by the spirit of Robert Southey! and, after a few supplementary remarks, concluded amid the cheers of his hearers.

No sooner had he retired from the platform than Professor Anderson made his appearance there, but the audience would not give him a hearing, and he was soon obliged to take his departure. On his way to the door, however, he shot off some Parthian shafts, such as "lumbag," "hosh," "trash," "rub-bish," "blasphemy," "nonsense," and other exclamations equally complimentary, to which some of Mr. Home's friends replied by telling the angry professor that he was an "unlucky conjuror," that a "boy could perform tricks as good as his," and that Colonel Stodare at the Egyptian Hall could "lick him to fits." The learned professor bore these assaults with Christian magnanimity, and shouted "Humbag!" all the more lustily.

THE DAVENPORTS IN BELFAST.

THESE young men, with Mr. Fay, are continuing their progress through the chief towns of Ireland. They are now at Belfast, and the principle paper of that town, the *Northern Whig*, in its issue of Tuesday, February 29, gives an account of their first public appearance in that place, and which it speaks of as "quite a success." It says:—

"To attempt to explain what we saw done last night would be absurd; it was wholly unaccountable, and by many would have been pronounced marvellous. The whole of the well-known 'business' was gone through. Two gentlemen—one an officer, the other a reporter—tied the Davenportes as hard and fast as they could, inside the 'cabinet,' which defied all their minutest examination to pronounce it other than a large, empty wardrobe-shaped case, with two seats, and a small shelf for the 'properties' to be placed on. The very moment the doors were closed noises began—a guitar was twanged, a trumpet was thrown out into the room through a small aperture in the door and in another instant the doors were flung wide open, and the

Davenportes were seen seated, and, on examination, found tied exactly as they were left."

They and Mr. Fay, the writer continues, "were keenly watched by the two gentlemen on the platform close beside them, and every expedient of detection that suggested itself was tried, but no discovery of the way in which it was done was made. One of the gentlemen—the reporter—was put inside the cabinet, and shut up with the Davenportes, both securely tied; he also was tied with a hand on the shoulder of each, and yet the *fanfaronade* began as usual, the moment the doors were shut, the guitar was played and the tambourine beaten, and, when the doors were thrown wide open, all three were seated as before, only that the representative of the fourth estate was decorated with a tambourine on his head and a guitar on his shoulders by way of ornament—how placed there he vowed he could not tell, neither of the brothers having stirred a limb, so far as he could feel. We had the spirit hands, and the spirit arm, and a concert of most execrable music of singular vulgarity, and all the often-described features of the exhibition, which wound up with the 'flour test,' when the Davenportes, firmly tied in their seats, had their hands filled with flour before the doors were shut. The usual performances went on, and the flour was found unspilt in the hands of the Brothers when they were released."

"Then came the 'Dark séance,' which also was very remarkable, and very amusing—made so, perhaps, by the *obligato* assistance of some members of the audience who contributed greatly to the general entertainment of the company. Guitars and tambourines rushed about the room, and were pitched in different directions. When rubbed with phosphorus the gyrations of these eccentric instruments were traceable by the light, one or two of the audience get pretty sharp knocks to prove to them that, if the agency were spiritual, the instrument was unquestionably material. Mr. Fay, and one of the brothers, were finally held fast by two gentlemen. The audience kept hands, or were supposed to do so: the other Davenport was firmly held between two other gentlemen at a distance, and the lecturer was similarly taken care of at another extremity of the 'circle;' yet, when the light went out, a guitar lying on a table was thrummed, and was passed backwards and forwards over the head of one of the volunteer custodians, who afterwards assured us that it was impossible (he believed) for anyone to have touched it, and that he could not form the slightest idea of how it had been done."

Of course the reporter who, if we rightly judge here, since his own experience in the cabinet, and his observations as a witness, does not express a belief in the spiritual character of the facts he records, and which fairly bewildered him, as they have done many others. We can scarcely expect reporters or editors to do so, until their patrons, the public, whom they profess to instruct, are better instructed by a more familiar knowledge and understanding of these things. But then we may fairly retort the question so often put to us—*cui boni?* Newspapers being established on commercial principles, cannot be expected to supply commodities which do not meet the requirements of their customers. We are, therefore, satisfied and ever thankful when, as in the case of the *Northern Whig*, they, on the whole, fairly report the facts.

If the public, like Mr. Gradgrind, are of opinion that "facts are what we want," they ought to be obliged to the Davenportes for supplying them with a goal store, which we hope they will not only read, but in due time learn, mark, and inwardly digest, if they do so they will nourish not a love of the marvellousness, which is not their true end, but a love of inquiry into the true nature, capacities and powers of man, both in this visible state and in that which is invisible, and into those relations which facts of this order, evidence subsists between them.

CLAIRVOYANCE AND A DOUBLE.

(From the *Spiritual Telegraph*.)

A New Haven gentleman relates the following:—"Some years ago a gentleman of the name of Daboll, residing in New London, Conn., and who was reputed to possess a faculty of seeing things in distant parts of the country, was applied to for information respecting a sea captain and vessel which had sailed from that port, and concerning whose fate there was some uneasiness. The old gentleman retired, and shortly afterwards returned, and said he had seen the captain at a certain porter-house at New Orleans, in the act of drinking a bowl of punch, and that he was then on the eve of sailing for home. The circumstance was noted down, together with the day and hour of the observation. In due time the captain returned home, with his vessel, and was questioned respecting his whereabouts on the day above referred to. He said, among other things, that he was at a certain porter-house in New Orleans, and that as he was regaling himself with a bowl of punch, he plainly saw old Mr. Daboll come in at one door and go out at another. Many of our readers will recollect an almost precisely similar case related by Jung Stilling about an old seer who resided in solitude on the banks of the Delaware, near Philadelphia.

A RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE on "INSPIRATION" will be delivered at the Spiritual Lyceum on Sunday Evening, Feb. 25th, 1866, at 7 o'clock. By Mr. H. N. LIVERMORE. Admission Free.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CORRESPONDENTS will please to write legibly on one side of the paper only, and as concisely as possible. If this rule is not observed we may be compelled to reject even valuable compositions.

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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