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BENEFICENT HAUNTINGS.

This number of *The Spiritualist* contains much about the visions seen at a Catholic Church in the village of Knock, County Mayo, Ireland, and the subsequent healing of inveterate diseases, such as blindness from birth, at the sacred spot. There is no reason to doubt either the good faith of the witnesses, or the reality of the cures effected.

The human mind cannot rest satisfied with isolated facts which are outside the range of ordinary experience, and temporarily separated from any system of philosophy, consequently not a few thinkers will desire to know the meaning and the place in nature of such psychical and physiological phenomena, as have been evolved in the Mayo village.

In the first place did the Virgin Mary, with the stars and other glorious surroundings, appear in objective form at the Church? No; because some of the witnesses saw more or less than others who were observing at the same time, and most of the onlookers saw nothing till they were told what they ought to see. The few witnesses who saw the apparitions were doubtless mesmeric sensitives, and synchronous waking visions as well as synchronous dreams are common among such persons. Moreover, the visions were of the character of those which are seen under mesmeric influence, and not of the nature of the appearance presented by materialised apparitions. The differences between these two classes of apparitions are set forth, with numerous matter-of-fact examples in the book, *Spirits before our Eyes*.

The next question is, did the whole matter originate in the waking dream of a boy, or was there an external spirit influence? The probability is that it was a vision produced by the action of an unembodied spirit upon mesmeric sensitives, not alone because it was so entirely unexpected by the first witnesses, but because such synchronous visions can be proved to have in other cases been due to the action of an outside spirit influence, and because the cures subsequently effected at the Church tend to show that some powerful psychical influence appertains to the spot.

On the 16th April, 1846, Philip Weld, nephew of Cardinal Weld, and son of Mr. James Weld, of Archers Lodge, near Southampton, was drowned at Ware. Mr. Weld and his daughter Catherine were walking at the time along a turnpike in road, daylight, and both of them saw the apparition of Philip, standing by the side of his patron saint, St. Stanislaus Kostka. A labouring man walked through the apparent spirits, without seeing them. Thus did information of the death reach Mr. and Miss Weld before they received it in any other way. Subsequently, the boy's tutor, the Very Rev. Dr. Cox, called personally to give Mr. Weld the sad news. Here, then, we have a case in which two persons saw what a third did not see, yet, an outside spiritual power was really the cause of the apparition, and not brain disease. The spiritual eyes of the seers were temporarily opened. Such was also probably the case at the village of Knock.

Were the subsequent cures of diseases the result of the faith of the patients? Most likely not, though faith or spiritual sympathy aids in such matters. Dr. Newton, the healing medium, has through his powers cured thousands of people of inveterate diseases by the laying on of hands; scores of certificates to that effect are printed in his recent book, *The Modern Bethesda*, and a considerable number of the cures he effected in London are recorded in the earlier volumes of *The Spiritualist*. We followed him about London for some weeks to make sure of the actual facts, and by the mere laying on of hands he cured about one person out of every five who came to him afflicted with inveterate diseases of long standing. For every single startling cure effected at Knock, Dr. Newton can probably point to five hundred of his own. He sometimes cured people who did not believe in his power, and who had no faith in him, and there is evidence that he did this work under the control of unseen spirits.

Are the doctrines of the Catholic Church a necessary element in the production of such results? No. Dr. Newton believed in no doctrine but "Love to God, and Love to man." He condemned the usual dogmas of all Churches, and in an artless and guileless manner, for he was a man who was not of this earth in his ways, he would utter sentiments calculated to make the blood of orthodox people run cold in their veins.

When houses are haunted physical manifestations are produced in them, the intelligence connected with which is of a low and some-

times malicious order. The spirits also are so low that when they appear to persons in the house, they show themselves in materialised form.

But why should there be no beneficent hauntings? Such would account for the healing powers connected with sacred tombs, sacred wells, and sacred relics. The spirits, being of a higher order, would have no power to appear in materialised form, and could only make their presence known by exerting mesmeric influence over sensitives. In such case, what the spirit thought the medium would see, this being the philosophy of a proportion of symbolical visions.

As in a place haunted by the lower order of spirits, some great crime has usually been committed, we should expect some great act of virtue, or of self-sacrifice to have been committed where beneficent hauntings rule. This is clearly the case when men of prayer and real self-sacrifice have died, and healing powers have afterwards been manifested near their tombs. Has any self-sacrificing devotee died recently near Knock, so that it might be supposed he has returned to earth to expiate a life of blind faith by beginning a life of works?

AN IRISH LOURDES.

From the Daily Telegraph, February 28th, 1880.

Some time ago a rumour began to spread through Ireland that supernatural manifestations had taken place at or near the Catholic chapel of Knock, in county Mayo. It was stated that an apparition of the Virgin Mary, attended by celestial personages supposed to represent St. Joseph and St. John, had appeared to several persons on a certain night in August; subsequently to others on New Year's Eve, and a third time, to yet others, on the eve of the Epiphany. The report excited a good deal of attention, and presently found its way into the newspapers, a Tuam journal being the first to publish it to the world, followed by the *Nation*, which sent down a special correspondent charged to collect evidence from the witnesses. But this was not all. A further rumour stated that miracles of healing were frequently wrought upon sick persons who made pilgrimages and performed devotions at the favoured shrine, that miraculous virtues were possessed by the very plaster from the walls of the church, and that the faithful were crowding in ever-increasing numbers to the place thus suddenly dragged from obscurity into fame. So matters

stood when, in the discharge of a mission connected with Irish distress, I found myself at Claremorris, a little town about six miles from the much talked-of village. It became my duty there to seek an interview with the parish priest—the Very Rev. Ulick J. Bourke, Canon of Tuam, and late President of St. Jarlath's College—a gentleman well known to philologists as the author of a learned work on the Aryan origin of the Gaelic race. Canon Bourke, having acted on a commission appointed by the Archbishop of Tuam to take the evidence of those who asserted that they had seen the apparitions, was well able to put me in the way of ascertaining particulars for myself, and, within an hour of my introduction to him, I was face to face with one of the persons who deposed to the August vision. This was a boy of about fourteen years of age, named Hill—a bright, intelligent little fellow, who told his tale clearly and simply. I shall put Hill's statement in the first person, without pledging myself, however, to literal exactness, and premising that the narrative was not continuous, but frequently interrupted by questions needless to repeat here. "I sometimes go out to the bog for turf, and did so on the day of the August apparition, taking my little brother with me. When night came on I went into the house of a relative not far from Knock chapel. It was raining hard, and very dark. While there some one (naming him) ran in and said, 'O, come up to the chapel and see the Blessed Virgin against the wall!' We all ran up, and saw the end of the chapel covered with light. At first we stood against the wall of the yard, but presently we got over and went close up to the gable. Then we saw the Blessed Virgin standing like a statue so (lifting his hands and eyes); on her right was St. Joseph bending towards her, and on her left St. John, dressed like a bishop, his left hand holding a book, his right raised, with two fingers pointing upwards. Above, and to the left of St. John, was an altar with a lamb on it, round which moved what seemed to be the wings of angels, whose heads and bodies I could not see. We stood and looked at the figures a long time, and my little brother cried out that he wanted to take them home. They did not move, but lights kept playing about the wall. Presently there were ten or eleven of us looking, and we all knelt down and said 'Our Father' and 'Hail Mary!' Then, as the rain kept on and we were very wet, we went away. I did not look behind me when standing in front of the figures, and

cannot say whether any light was to be seen except on the wall." Having told this story in the manner already described, Hill departed, and presently a lad was brought in who witnessed the appearance in his company. The new-comer's statement did not agree in every detail with that of his predecessor, but substantially both were in accord. He, for example, saw no "angel's wings" fluttering round the lamb, but only lights twinkling like stars. It was also stated that, though the rain beat against the chapel, the wall on which the light shone remained dry. To the question "Did the figures look as though they were part of a picture?" this witness replied, "No; they stood out from the wall like statues, and we seemed to see round them." To the further question, "Was the light on the gable a circle?" he answered "No; it covered the wall."

On the morning after my interview with these early witnesses of the alleged marvel, I accepted Canon Bourke's invitation to drive over to Knock and see the place for myself. The six miles of road leading thither were not lonely. It was market day in Claremorris, and the small farmers, who abound in that part of Mayo, were hastening toward with a multitude of asses bearing oats, or potatoes, or hay for sale at the advanced rates now "ruling." But all the travellers we met or passed were not on marketing thoughts intent. Some had an "up-all-night" appearance, and, indeed, had been keeping vigil in the chapel to which we were hastening; while others, going the same way as ourselves, moved haltingly on foot, or swiftly on cars, in search of miraculous deliverance from the ills they suffered. The country thereabouts is very uninteresting. It stretches west and east, in long undulations, without variety or charm. On reaching the summit of one of the gentle rises, a tall square tower appeared above the next eminence, and signalled our approach to Knock. The modest cottage of the parish priest, Archdeacon Cavanagh, lies in the intervening hollow; but before reaching it the traveller passes a thatched and whitewashed dwelling-house, bearing the distinguishing mark of a police barrack. One of the stalwart members of the "Royal Irish" chanced to be standing in the road as we drove up, and him Canon Bourke introduced as a witness worth hearing. The policeman cheerfully came round to my side of the car and told his story, in effect as follows: "On a certain night (named), about twelve o'clock, I and a comrade set out on patrol, our

road taking us past the chapel. When opposite the building we saw people, and heard the sound of praying, so we went in to look round and ascertain that all was right. Down to that time, though others professed to have witnessed the apparitions, we had not. On going round to the east gable some one cried, 'There's the light!' and then both I and my comrade saw the end of the church covered with a rosy sort of brightness, through which what seemed to be stars appeared. I saw no figures, nor did my comrade, but some women who were praying there declared that they beheld the blessed Virgin, and one went nearly frantic in consequence. We stood and watched the light for some time before starting again on our rounds." "How do you explain the light?" "I can't explain it." "Did you look around to see where it came from?" "I did; but everything was dark. There was no light anywhere except on the gable." Thus the policeman, who offered to produce his comrade in corroboration. Leaving him, we drove to the cottage of the parish priest, and found him in his garden, whither he had gone, perhaps, for relaxation after getting through the multitude of letters that reach him by every post. Archdeacon Cavanagh is reputed along all the country side as a man of simple piety, gentle manners, and a modest and retiring disposition. This character is justified by his appearance. He at once makes a favourable impression, and is about the last man in the world whom a stranger would look upon and suspect of anything but straightforward, honest conduct. The very reverend gentleman gave his visitors a cordial welcome, and soon, in the little parlour of the cottage, I heard all that he could tell about the visions and miracles, in which he believes with unquestioning and reverend faith. As to the visions, the archdeacon said, in effect: "On the night of the first apparition my housekeeper asked leave to visit a friend, and remained out unusually late. While wondering what had become of her, she made her appearance in a very excited state, exclaiming 'Oh! your reverence, the wonderful and beautiful sight! The blessed Virgin has appeared up at the chapel with St. Joseph and St. John, and we have stood looking at them this long time. Oh! the wonderful sight!' Inferring that the vision had disappeared, and omitting to question my housekeeper on that point, I did not go up, and I have regretted ever since that I omitted to do so. On another occasion a messenger was sent down to fetch me. I was in bed, after a

fatiguing day, and, having a prospect of hard work on the morrow, did not rise." This manifestly appears has a triumph of the flesh over the spirit. "I shall ever feel sorry that a sight of the apparitions has been denied me, but God may will that the testimony to His blessed Mother's presence should come from the simple faithful, and not through the priests. Though I have not witnessed the Divine manifestation, I have seen the light, and once, when standing at some distance from the chapel, in company with others, a most brilliant star flashed along the gable, leaving a train of radiance." Questioned as to miracles, the Archdeacon said: "I will show you a long list of cures effected by the Divine interposition, and can tell you of one in which I was an agent. Some little while ago I received a 'sick call,' late at night, to a man who was said to be vomiting blood, and in extreme danger. Hastening to the house, attended by a boy with a lantern, I met the father of the patient coming to hurry me, in distress lest I should be too late. On reaching the cottage I found the young man covered, so to speak, with blood, and apparently very near death, but conscious. After ministering to him, I called for a glass of water, sprinkled on it a few particles of the mortar from the gable-wall of the chapel, and bade him drink. He did so, at once began to recover, and is now well. I can speak to other cases, but especially of a man who came from Cork afflicted with a polypus, which extended into his windpipe, and, so said the surgeons, required a dangerous operation. He was here performing his devotions for several days, and then, to his astonishment and joy, expelled the abnormal growth—I saw it—and returned cured." The Archdeacon next showed me his list of "miracles," from which I quote a few special cases: Bridget Nearney, of Strokestown, blind for seventeen years, can see. Maria Conolly, a cripple for thirteen years, is now able to walk. John O'Brien, who was born blind, has the use of his eyes. Belinda Mash, of Ballina, dumb for six years, has recovered the power of speech. Patrick Boyle, of Glasgow, came to Knock afflicted with heart disease, and returned cured. Michael Marin, of Lisakullen, subject to epileptic fits, visited the shrine, and is now free from their attacks. The daughter of R. Walsh, of Clifden, regained sight after bathing her eyes in water containing a piece of plaster from the chapel-wall. John Roache, of Roosky, Roscommon, stone blind for seventeen years, went away able to see. John

O'Connor, of Ardagh, came to Knock with a bent leg, supported by an iron crutch, and returned home, leaving the crutch as a memorial of cure. Owen Halpen, of Meg, Drogheda, troubled with deafness, placed a bit of the mortar in his ears, and had the sense fully restored to him. I might continue these extracts from the Archdeacon's records, but space would fail for a complete setting forth of the alleged cases of miraculous healing.

Before leaving the priest's cottage to view the chapel, I saw the very reverend gentleman's housekeeper, an elderly woman, whose appearance suggested neither romanticism nor imaginativeness, whatever may be said of her credulity. Spoken to of the August apparition, she stated: "I had gone to visit a friend, and, as it was very dark when I set out to return, someone came with me. Our way took us past the church, and, on reaching the end of the building, we saw a light on the wall, and the figure of the Blessed Virgin standing in the middle of it, a little above the ground." The housekeeper's description of the figures agreed in the main with that of other witnesses, and need not be repeated. She continued: "We went close up and fell on our knees, one woman wanting to embrace the Blessed Virgin's feet. We stayed a long time, although it was raining hard; but, at last I ran home, dripping wet, and told his reverence what I had seen. The figures did not look like those in a picture, but like statues. No light was visible anywhere else." Leaving the housekeeper to her duties, and meeting at the door a man whose sight, long lost, was said to be returning, the two priests and myself went up the road towards the chapel, having the famous gable before us the whole way. I saw that, for fully half its height, it had been boarded over—a measure necessary, the Archdeacon told me, to protect the wall, since the people after having removed the covering of plaster, began to pick the mortar from between the stones, as, indeed, they are now doing round the corners, where nothing prevents. My first business was, of course, to take, as Jack Bunsby would say, "the bearings" of the place. The chapel is a plain cruciform building, having a tall, square tower at its west end, and at the opposite extremity a sacristy. It is on the gable of the sacristy, at the far east of the building, that the figures are said to have appeared. The chapel stands in a rather extensive yard, which is bounded, opposite the gable, and distant from it some twenty-five paces, by a dilapidated wall about

four feet high. Beyond this is a large field and the open country. Within the yard, a little to the north of a line drawn from the north angle of the gable to the low wall, stands a school-house, its gable directly facing towards the east. Obviously, therefore, if the appearances alleged to have been seen on the chapel-wall were due to a magic-lantern, the operator, supposing he could have focussed his picture at such a distance, must have taken post behind the low wall; or, if stationed in the school, must have thrown the image on the "screen" at a very considerable angle. The wall theory may be dismissed, because over its tumbled stones the first witnesses passed to get a nearer view, and the glare of the lantern would at once have been detected by the observant policemen. There remains the notion of a manipulator stationed in the school-house. I gave my best attention to the windowless gable of that building and could find no sign of a hole or crack from chimney to foundation. Going inside among the children, to look at the wall from that point of view, the plaster appeared untouched, and the roof too much open to admit of a man working between its apex and what there was of ceiling. In the result, and despite a wish to explain the wonder naturally, I was obliged to conclude that the reported apparitions, however caused, could not have been, and, therefore, were not, due to a magic lantern. With any theory not determinable by a reference to considerations absolutely positive, such as those just touched upon, I have nothing now to do.

Mondays and Thursdays are the times when Knock is overwhelmed with pilgrims, many thousands being frequently present at once, but on no day of the week is the place deserted, and it assuredly afforded an extraordinary spectacle last Wednesday. About ten paces from the gable stands a small roughly constructed pen, wherein pilgrims who no longer require the aid of sticks and crutches deposit them before leaving. Scores of these discarded props to tottering feet were lying there; and a few others, besides two very battered umbrellas, were suspended from the boards that protect the sacred wall. It is needless to say that the wall itself, boarded though it be, excites the utmost reverence. I saw a score of people kneeling before it repeating prayers, some of them knowing the spot on which they believe the Virgin appeared; while others had brought sick children, upon whom they lavished attention

in the intervals of devotion. Others, again, wandered round and round the chapel, telling their beads as they went—an act of faith, so I was assured, altogether self-imposed. Yet others, mostly afflicted with diseases, stood about in the road or enclosure, waiting, like some at the Pool of Bethesda long ago, “for the moving of the waters.” Night and day they wait, filling the chapel during the dark hours, and praying there so as that the sound of their voices can be heard far down the road. At least 200 persons were in the sacred edifice when I entered. The interior is poor of aspect. Beyond the unpretending altar, and two or three small windows filled with stained glass, there are no attempts at decoration, and very ineffective ones at convenience, since all the benches in the place would not seat more than thirty people. The floor is roughly flagged and full of holes made by devotees who, in their eagerness to possess some blessed substance, have dug beneath the level of the stones. But, holes or no holes, the pilgrims covered almost the entire area, from the altar rails to the western door and from side to side of the transept, their muttered petitions making a continuous and solemn hum. Many sick had been brought there, and some professed to have gained much benefit. A poor paralytic, seated in a wheeled chair, rejoiced at a feeling of warmth in his lower limbs; a woman, who had crawled for years on her hands and knees, was found sitting upright, and delightedly showing how she could use her feet a very little. Such sights were visible more or less on every hand, and as the Arch-deacon went about among the people one and another would go to him and tell of benefit received by themselves or their friends, and get for answer, “Thank God and His Blessed Mother.”

My story is told, and I have nothing more to say. The conclusion to be drawn from it one way or another is the business of the reader.

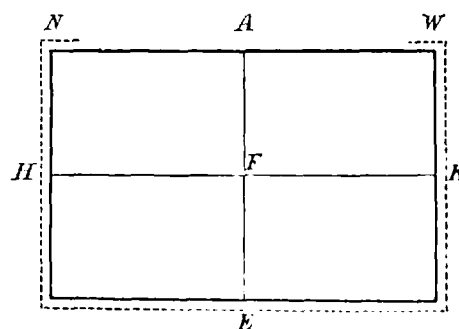
MR. J. N. T. MARTHEZE is in San Francisco.

“BLOOD AND FIRE.”—Mr. James Cain sends us the following notice, recently copied verbatim by him from a large poster outside a chapel door in Salmon's Lane, Limehouse. The whole of the notice was written in capital letters: “Blood and Fire. Some of the Devil's Use to Be's will D.V. fire the first vollee, in this place, at 11 a.m. Guns loaded at 7 a.m. Firing all day. By order of the King of Kings, and Captain Morrell, or Salvation Dealer, on front of the enemy. The wounded will be attended by the Great Physician. At night, the converted cannon seen at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.”

PSYCHOGRAPHY.

LAST Saturday night, at a *séance* held at 129, Gower Street, London, the residence of Captain John James, formerly of the Ninetieth Light Infantry, Mr. Rita was the medium. The sitters present were Captain James, Miss C. A. Burke, Major General Maclean, Mr. Wheelhouse, Mr. Ernest Wilding, Mr. F. Collingwood, and Mr. W. H. Harrison.

Before the medium arrived, General Maclean took a hinged book slate, with two leaves, quite clean, and before closing the leaves, put a crumb of pencil about a sixth of an inch long between them. He then tied the leaves of the slate tightly together, in the manner indicated in the following diagram:—



A piece of twine was first tied tightly round the slate at A, E, with the knot at E, where the edges of the two leaves of the slate touched each other. The knot was then sealed with sealing-wax, and stamped. This seal covered the knot, and it likewise sealed the edges of the leaves together. The two brass hinges of the slate were on the other side, between N and W.

A second piece of twine was next tied over the closed covers in the direction H, K, and the knot and edges of the cover were sealed over at K. The wax, as before, was stamped while hot.

On one side of the slate the strings passed each other at the central point F. On the other side the string H, K, was passed once round the string A, E, at the point F, before being drawn tight and knotted at K.

Strips of paper, the full width of the two wooden edges of the slates, were then gummed over the closed edges as far round the slates as denoted by the dotted line N, H, E, K, W. Thus the sealed knots at K and E, were covered by the strips of gummed paper.

The slates were thus held together by two brass hinges, two strings tightly drawn and knotted, two seals, and by strips of gummed paper. Everybody present saw that the slates had no writing on them before they were so

secured, and the medium did not arrive in the house until all the operations just described had been completed. The book slate did not belong to him but to Captain James. Its size was 11 inches by 8 inches.

Mr. F. Collingwood brought a somewhat smaller book slate of his own with him to the *séance*. He put a crumb of pencil between the leaves, and in the presence of the company tied and sealed the slates in much the way already described. Mr. Rita did not touch the slates before the *séance* began, and there is no evidence that he did so afterwards.

When the *séance* began, Captain James and his guests sat round a table in total darkness, and after the lapse of about twenty minutes, during a portion of which time some of the ordinary dark-circle manifestations took place, the voice of the controlling spirit asked General Maclean, Mr. Collingwood and Mr. Harrison to place one hand each on the two slates which were lying on the top of each other on the table. They did so for about five minutes, when feeble vibrations were felt, as if writing were being executed inside the slates, and feeble noises, as of writing on slates, were heard.

The gas was then lit, and the closed slates examined. The knots, strings, seals, and gummed papers were in the same condition as at first. They had manifestly not been tampered with. The strings were still tightly strained round the slates, without any slack.

After all present were satisfied that the fastenings were intact, the strings were cut, and the slates opened.

Inside the slate fastened by General Maclean, it was found that the words "Good night" had been scrawled in very large badly formed letters. In Mr. Collingwood's slate the words "God bless you" had been written. The writing was in dry and dusty slate pencil.

Later on, one of the spirits was asked if he could cut out with a pair of scissors, in pitch darkness, the outline of a head and profile of about six inches average diameter, which had been previously drawn with a pencil on a sheet of paper. The spirit, in reply, asked Mr. Collingwood to hold one side of the sheet of paper in his hand, and then with scissors cut out four-fifths of the outline as requested, thereby proving the power of the spirit to see perfectly in the dark.

The Glasgow Association of Spiritualists will hold a conference in its Rooms on Sunday morning, March 7th, at 11.30, and at 6.30 will be addressed by Mr. Harper, of Birmingham.

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this Journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA.

Sir,—In Commandant Aylward's recent book "The Transvaal of To-day" there is a very good ghost story which I think is worth transferring to your columns: it will be found on pp. 204-209, of the work mentioned. It is interesting to note how similar these occurrences are in various parts of the world, breaking out amongst people who are unlikely to have heard of the corresponding disturbances elsewhere.

Two clergymen not long ago sent me reports of mysterious occurrences in their houses, stone throwing, &c., of which they were eye witnesses and careful investigators; one of my informants was the rector of a country parish in Ireland, and the other the rector of a parish in Staffordshire, and there are of course numerous similar published reports equally well authenticated.

Could any of your readers who have sufficient leisure supply me with a classified list of trustworthy cases bearing on this subject,—cases either directly known to them or properly accredited reports published in your paper. You do not, I believe, issue a classified index to your paper: it would be very useful. May I also ask for any good cases of mind-reading, or of good subjects in the so-called "willing" game.

Letters may be addressed to me as above; no names will be published unless permission is given.

W. F. BARRETT.

Monkstown, Dublin.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

Sir,—Thank you for your kind insertion of the announcement of the Goswell Hall Meeting for Sunday.

This movement at Goswell Hall was commenced about four months ago by a few humble Spiritualists, in the hope of doing something towards spreading the cause, and that others, more able, would come to their assistance, supplying some of their deficiencies; which latter expectation has not yet been realised to any considerable extent. At the same time, the movement progresses. The Goswell Hall undertaking is not yet paying itself, but if a little more interest could be created, doubtless it could soon be made to do so.

Mr. W. Wallace, pioneer medium, will occupy the platform on Sunday next, March 7th, and the following Sunday evening Miss Keeves, trance speaker, will officiate.

H. J. STEVENS, *Hon. Sec.*,

224, Albany Road, Camberwell, S.E., March 2nd, 1880.

SPIRITUALISM IN GERMANY.

Sir,—Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau, has done eminent service to the advance of truth, by issuing a pamphlet in reply to an attack on Spiritualism by a Dr. Nagel, who misguided his audience by speaking of the folly of "reviving ghost-stories," as the chief feature of the new dispensation, and by ridiculing its advocates, Prof. Zöllner and similar victims of conjuring not excepted. Space would not permit me to enter into the details of this excellent paper, but Dr. Friese has hit the nail on the head, completely showing up the ignorance of the rabid unbeliever.

If more such attacks are equally ably responded to, the *Professoren dünnel* (learned conceit) in Germany will soon abate, and a fair hearing for Spiritualism result.

C. REIMERS.

APPARITIONS AND LUMINOUS PHENOMENA.

Sir,—You recently directed the attention of the readers of *The Spiritualist*, to the apparitions of the Virgin Mary, and to the alleged miraculous cures at the most significantly named village of Knock, in Ireland. I take the liberty of forwarding by this post a copy of to-day's *Manchester Guardian*, in which you will find a description of the state of things the correspondent found there on his recent visit, and his comments thereon, and I judge thereby that he has read the wish you expressed to have the phenomena investigated. However, from his statement it would seem that with the most ardent faith, there are some failures to effect cures of such diseases as blindness. I am not surprised at this, with such a motley crowd of people always on the spot, and each devotee exercising his or her physical, mental, and perhaps in some instances mesmeric powers, for the healing of the particular malady from which each was suffering.

Some few months after my beginning to investigate Spiritualism, myself and a few others had held a *séance* at a friend's house, which I was the last to leave. It was a fine summer evening, about a quarter past ten o'clock, and light enough for objects to be distinctly seen. I had only gone a few yards up the street, when my attention was attracted by a singular appearance which seemed to come through the broken window of an empty house on my left hand. When it reached the footpath, I found the figure to be shaped somewhat like a dog, white and cloud-like, which quickly rose higher and higher, and finally assumed the figure of a woman dressed in a beautifully flowing white robe.

The figure walked on the left-hand side, crossed over in a diagonal direction to the other side of the street, then vanished through another empty house, passing quite out of sight.

The apparition was the only one I have ever seen. The figure was that of my mother; to be mistaken was impossible. Her majestic carriage, finely formed figure, and unequalled walk were as distinctly visible as in real life.

Whilst I was carefully noting this, to me, strange and extraordinary phenomenon, my movements were being watched by a man and his wife, who were standing and talking together on the foot-path, opposite my friend's house; they were carefully noticing a most strange appearance on the door, and called me quickly, to look at it.

The door shone like the summer sun on plate glass, and we became alarmed, for we thought it was on fire, and we caused our friends to re-open it before the family went to bed, in order to satisfy ourselves that all was right in the house. The radiantly shining door gradually assumed its natural appearance on being opened.

The phenomenon was seen by myself and two other disinterested witnesses. The poor earnest Irish devotee will seek in vain for the re-appearance of the heavenly phenomena amongst the earthly stones and mortar of the primitive temple at Knock. Those who have gone on a pilgrimage, miracle seeking, ought to remember that only one Enoch is recorded as having walked with God; and only one Elijah, centuries afterwards, was permitted to enter the fiery chariot and ascend into the region of the infinite.

DELTA.

Hyde, near Manchester, February 23rd, 1880.

MR. E. W. WALLIS, the trance medium, has recently by his public addresses, been stirring up interest in Spiritualism in the south-west of England.

THE APPARITION OF THE VIRGIN MARY
IN COUNTY MAYO.(From the "*Manchester Guardian*," February 23rd, 1880).

After I had seen what I could of the immediate Westport district, I availed myself of the railway to make a short excursion to Knock, a name which must be familiar to your readers as the scene of the recent alleged apparition of the Virgin Mary. Wherever I went in Mayo and Connemara I had heard stories of the miracles performed at Knock, and had conceived a strong desire to see the place for myself—not at all to trouble myself with "investigation" into the appearance, which could only be done by one accurately acquainted with the place and the witnesses, if worth doing at all—but to see the demeanour of the people. I had to drive half a dozen miles from Claremorris to reach the place, which is situated in the midst of an almost level tract of bog land of the dimmallest description, and excites a natural surprise as to how the village could ever have come into existence at all on so forlorn and desolate a spot. The all-important chapel, on the west end of which the figures of the Virgin Mary, St. John, and St. Joseph are said to have been seen one evening about six weeks ago, is the first object one sees as the car tops the crest of the little hill immediately above the village. It is an ordinary building enough, of the usual cruciform shape, with a tolerable tower. The place was black with people. Even at some distance you could see them kneeling and standing about the churchyard and pressing in and out of the chapel. Coming near the centre of attraction, the car went at a foot's pace, for the narrow country road was lined with stalls for the sale of eatables, and any empty spaces were filled up with vehicles and pedestrians. I made my way at first into the chapel, which was packed. The people were kneeling in every direction, many of them on the clay floor, which was full of large holes, owing to the scraping away of the soil by specially enthusiastic devotees, and there was a hum of prayer. All who could get near enough were saying their devotions before a little shrine, where stood an image of the Virgin, with the two hands upraised to the level of the shoulders, much as she is said to have been seen on the wall of the chapel outside. After squeezing my way through the crowd with some difficulty, I went round to the western front, where the vision is supposed to have been seen. I found the whole of the wall boarded up to a height of eight feet with solid planking. If this precaution had not been taken the wall would have been down before this, as the people first scraped away the plaster, then the mortar, and were finally attacking the large stones of which the chapel is built. Round the corner on the south side a number of men were busily at work upon the plaster with penknives, and that side too will have to be boarded up before long. The plaster is mainly used for the eyes, whether to cure total or partial blindness, or merely for the ophthalmia which is common in the district, I will leave it for greater authorities than myself to determine. A "patriotic" Irish print which has given a full, true, and particular account of the Knock miracles, narrates a case of a beautiful little girl, previously blind of one eye, whom her mother had brought at great expense from Liverpool, and who, after nine days' stay at Knock, had the sight of her eye restored. It so happened, however, that I came across a substantial farmer's wife—such, at least, I took her to be—of Castlereagh, who told me that she had travelled in the train with this very lady on her return from Knock. The lady, who could think of nothing but her child,

told the girl to put her hand over her right eye, and asked her if she could open the other. "Oh, yes, I can open it mamma." "But what do you see out of it, my child?" "Nothing, mamma." The poor woman sighed, and said "Take your bottle then, and put on a little more of the holy plaster," which the poor child did, but without obvious restorative effect. However, I am deviating into "investigation." To return to the chapel. For a radius of some twenty yards from the west front, the ground has been churned up by countless feet into a sea of mud of the filthiest and clanniest description. All over this men and women were kneeling, regardless alike of the steady rain and the filth into which they were sinking. Some more fortunate than others had put a couple of stones together to kneel on. Other provident individuals had brought a wisp of hay with them for the same purpose. But the great majority were kneeling simply in the mud. The crowd was thickest just under the wall. A well-dressed woman who was kneeling there begged me not to come too near her, as her foot was disabled. There were lame men, blind men, poor unfortunates half paralysed or otherwise withered or deformed. A cross had been erected here, across the centre of which ran the inscription, "It is important that any miraculous cures wrought here would be made known to the parish priest." Below this was a box for alms, into which contributions were freely dropped, and on this box stood, when not in use, a little cross, in white china, and an article of pale blue china, which looked like the stump of a candlestick, but which, I suppose, had originally either a cross or some figure at the top of it. Round the lower part of the cross a sort of umbrella-stand had been contrived, which was simply full of crutches, sticks, and the like, all left by cripples who had gone away miraculously cured. The little china cross was hardly over out of use. The people would take it up, touch the forehead with it, make the sign of the cross over the body, then kiss it, then make the sign of the cross again, and so on a number of times. One poor man I noticed particularly—a fine, handsome, but dreadfully pale face, with eyes sadly dimmed by severe ophthalmia. He took the little cross with unusual fervour, touching his eyes with it as number of times, and breathing a fervent "Hail Mary" as he did so. I wish I could think that the poor fellow's intensity of faith would have its reward. I had not come to scoff, and I did not remain to pray; but I should not envy the man who would regard such fervour of devotion in a fellow-creature wholly unmoved. The transition was, however, easy from such tragedy as this to that element of farce which is never totally absent from the gravest scene in Ireland. The beggars, regular professionals, had gathered in crowds, and were having a fine time. A sturdy blind beggar was continually roaring in a stentorian and commanding voice for alms. "As you wish the Blessed Virgin to be gracious to you, give me a copper," was this gentleman's refrain, which followed one with dismal iteration wherever one went. There were plenty of others besides himself halt and lame and maimed, who were swelling the chorus, but none of them had lungs like his. I gave a trille to a poor woman who had no fingers to take the alms with, but closed two withered palms together to receive it—a gruesome spectacle. Immediately all the beggars in the place came after me. I had fairly to take refuge in the chapel, and even there a brat of a child came shrieking behind me, "For the love of God and the blessed Virgin." I am told that the church has not yet spoken about the Knock miracles, but if it gives them its sanction there is every prospect of the place becoming the Irish Lourdes.

MEDIUMS AND MATERIALISED FORMS.

BY A. J. CRANSTOUN.

In that curious book "The Dervishes, or Oriental Spiritualism," by J. P. Brown (page 403) there is a curious story.

"During the *Mijra i Shereef* (or the Ascension) of the Blessed Prophet, he beheld a lion in the seventh heaven of so terrible an appearance that it was perfectly indescribable. He enquired of the angel *Gabrâil* what lion it was, and was informed that it was not a wild animal, but was the 'spirituality' of the Imam Alee; adding 'O friend of Allah, remove your ring from off your finger, and cast it in its mouth,' which he having done, the lion with great humility and many caresses, took and held the ring in its mouth. On the day following the Ascension, the Prophet gave an account of the same to the *Ashâbs*; and whilst relating the frightful appearance of the lion, and the matter of the ring, Alee who was also present, withdrew the latter from his own mouth, and handed it to him, greatly to the surprise of all the spectators."

I should not have thought it worth while to copy this story, of what appears an incomprehensible occurrence, had not I myself, along with four other persons, seen a somewhat analogous phenomenon, which took place through the mediumship of Dr. Monck in London, in December, 1877.

At a *séance* held in my house, the materialised form called the Mahedi, remained with the circle, and with the medium, Dr. Monck, in the same room, with sufficient gas-light to see clearly everything that took place. Among other curious phenomena which occurred was this; the Mahedi drank some water out of a glass, and the moment after he had done so, the water came into Dr. Monck's mouth; the same thing occurred when the Mahedi ate part of a biscuit, and also the Mahedi went to the fire, and took a piece of coal out of it, and in the same moment the coal was found in Dr. Monck's hand.

By what mysterious law takes place this instantaneous transmission of matter from the form to the medium?

Whatever explanation may eventually be given of this strange phenomenon, it would at all events appear to bear some analogy to, and throw some light on, the present distressing case of Mrs. Corner, as proving how identified the medium and the form really are.

In Dr. Monck's case, however, the phenomenon was peculiarly interesting, as all the facts occurred in the same room, medium

form and circle having been present together the whole time, and so that every fact from beginning to end was carefully observed by all.

It becomes more and more evident from this case of Mrs. Corner's that if these strange psychological and spiritual phenomena are to be investigated as they ought to be, some plan should be organised by which *séances* should be held by closed circles, formed of serious and sympathetic members, and that the medium should be one who does not barter his services for money. That the circle and the medium should alike possess a serious and earnest desire to discover the truth, and all be actuated by high aspirations, so as to attract high spirits, or ensure a high class of manifestations.

Lucerne, Switzerland.

MATERIALISM AND MODERN IRREVERENCE

BY J. T. MARKLEY.

ONE of the strongest, outward and visible signs of the vulgarising spirit of materialism is the emboldened irreverence of the masses; chivalry and religious devotion are historic virtues, an experience only of the great long ago. In one of the Peterborough newspapers, I have just read that religious quietude has to be enforced by the police. Into the beautiful Cathedral of the above, my native city, crowds of young men rush with less reverence before, during and after divine service, than jockeys would enter the precincts of a stable of superior race-horses at Newmarket. Sometimes, when the pulpit oratory of Bishop Magee attracts a congregation of many thousands to Peterborough Cathedral, the hustling and bustling of the less thoughtful among the throng reminds one of the stampede for bottled stout at Spiers and Pond's refreshment bars, during the halt of an excursion train, *en route* for the sea-side. Also, anything but religious talk is spoken by the lust-blotched youths who form the outer fringe of vast congregations in buildings which should be consecrated by the sentiment of reverence, and faith in the presence of God. What the police have been called upon to do in Peterborough Cathedral, should only be needed in a travelling circus, or at a village fair. Religious devotion should be its own protection against the vulgar horse-play of what may be called the repulsive independence of moral disrespect. But this is not the case now. The Bohemians rule in ordinary circles of society. Manners have deteriorated. In countless instances, civilisation has become the antithesis of refinement. Railways, barrack,

and factory life, and the overcrowding of cities, have all indirectly combined to revive a mild type of barbarism in the thick, irregular cohesion of the crowd. Tennyson can only sing in rhyme, Patti can only appeal in the raptures of soul, and Irving only play to the choice spirits in our midst. The people overfeed, wax impudent, and despise the higher spirituality of Christian ethics. Men are certainly wise as serpents, but not so harmless as doves. Fortunately, in morals, in intellect, and in social developement there may be a Darwinian theory of evolution, and spiritually a survival of the fittest. Even in its artistic forms, and apart from the needless gloom of Puritan rigour, the moral sweetness of religious aspiration should be safe from the vulgar treatment of materialistic irreverence. But this is not so. The age is anti-spiritual. The partial death of poetry as an ideal enhancement of the better tastes and feelings of men, has made Morality more of a commercial virtue than an experience of inward rapture. Two great passions sway society, namely, combative politics, and the luxurious pursuits of sport. To patronise these cardinal pastimes, the great daily organs of the press sacrifice moral reflections, and the deeper issues of life and destiny. Pigeon-slaughtering has more interest for newspaper readers than the ascension of family prayer. Were it an age of faith in things immortal, it would be an age of reverence for things sacred. Graveyards are jesting-grounds; they may be "civilised" into arenas of secular recreation. Few—of the excursion crowds at least—care to respect death, as did the ancients. Nor would many, outside specially cultured circles, apostrophise their departed neighbours' tombs in language used by Longfellow in his reverie of eloquent comment on the Jewish cemetery at Newport:

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
That pave with level flags their burial place,
Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down
And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.

The very names recorded here are strange,
Of foreign accent and of different climes:
Alvares and Rivera interchange
With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

What cares your modern materialist for the holy Israelites? and as for Rivera and Alvares who, and what were they? It is a time of grasping and feasting. Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die. This explains our want of respect for the aged, for the dead, and for the beautiful and innocent lives of the animals.

But, say some, this gross defect of moral reverence is only a sin among the great unwashed, whose thoughtlessness is but an inspiration of ignorance. Indeed! The writer of this fragment can testify differently. I know a highly educated coroner, of superior family and lineage, who says with a materialistic laugh, "More dead meat," when speaking of his solemn, responsible duties. This is only a fair example of many, and much worse cases of viewing life as a huge joke, and death as an unimportant sleep after lunch, during the perplexing heat of the dog-days. But why this lament over the lower forms of materialistic thought and experience? The better class of materialists were not, and are not irreverent. Grand beings like Shelley, were as reverent without creeds, as were Wesley, Keble and Swedenborg, with a multiplicity of visions, prayers, catechisms, and melodies from the organ-loft. But after all, the moral beauty, and the intense religious fervour of Christ, and of the churches, are the best safeguards against that deterioration of manners and manliness, which unlettered materialism gives to those minds predisposed to sneer at things which history has held to be sacred. If Spiritualism really substantiates this holy faith and feeling, the argument for religious reverence is complete.

MR. ANDERSON, a young medium, occupied the platform of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists on Sunday evening, the 29th February, and lectured on "True Greatness." Short addresses were given the same evening by Messrs. Coates, Walker, Robertson and Mr. Wood, of Oldham.

THE COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS is at Nice and Mr. G. C. Joad at Mentone; many other Spiritualists are temporarily residing in various towns on the northern shore of the Mediterranean until the close of the winter season.

At the February Meeting of the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists, one new member was elected, namely, Major General Maclean. The resignations were Mr. T. E. Partridge, Mrs. Burton Burton, Mr. R. Catling, The Rev. G. White, Mrs. H. Green, Mr. T. Weeks, Mrs. Weeks, Mrs. Wingfield, Mrs. Parrock, and a gentleman who does not wish his name to be published.

MR. JAMES COATES, Professor of Phrenology and Mesmerism, has just delivered a course of three Lectures in the Queen's Park Rooms, Crosshill, Glasgow. Subject:—1. How to read Character, or the Faces we Meet; 2. Chastity, Physiologically and Hygienically considered; 3. Health Hints for All. These Lectures were illustrated by anatomical figures, busts and diagrams, and by the delineations of the characters of persons selected by the audiences each night. The lectures were well attended and well received.

CLAIRVOYANCE APPLIED TO ASTRONOMY.

Astronomers have strong reasons for supposing that the planet Jupiter is red hot, and uninhabitable by organic beings. How far the information in the following letter is trustworthy it is impossible to say, but if the same clairvoyant had the power of accurately describing by the same means distant places upon this earth, it would add weight to any revelations she might make about the planets:—

To the Editor of "The Standard."

SIR,—In reference to your article of Tuesday last on the redness recently observed by astronomers in the planet Jupiter, the following may interest your readers. In July, 1877, I took down from the mouth of a clairvoyante, of the accuracy of whose spiritual vision I have had proofs innumerable, this account of Jupiter, she being at the time deeply entranced, and engaged on an excursion through space. The soul was already far on its return towards the earth when she exclaimed:—

"All the planets are inhabited. How innumerable is the variety of forms! Here is Jupiter; it has nine moons! yes, nine—some are exceedingly small. And, oh, how red it is! It has so much iron. And what enormous men and women! There is Evil there, too. Evil is wherever are Matter and Limitation. But the people on Jupiter are far better than we on Earth. They know much more. They are much wiser. There is less of Evil in their planet. Ah! they have another sense, too. I cannot describe it, or tell what it is. It differs from all the others. We have nothing like it."

The ascription to Jupiter of redness was quite unknown to either of us, so that the perception was independent of previous mental impression.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Paris, February 18th. EDWARD MAITLAND.

SPIRITUALISM IN GLASGOW.—The Glasgow Association of Spiritualists has returned to its old quarters, 164, Trongate. The course of winter lectures at the Trades Hall has been beneficial in more ways than one. It has shown the Association the value and necessity of organisation; it has knit the members together in greater harmony; it has gained some twenty new and intelligent members; placed fifty new volumes in the library, and given a course of fifteen lectures to the Glasgow public, in one of the most central and respectable halls in the city. Organisation has also greatly increased the enthusiasm, earnestness and liberality of the individual members of the Association. The following speakers occupied the platform during the course:—Mr. J. J. Morse, two lectures; Mr. Harper, of Birmingham, one; Mr. Wallis, of Nottingham, two; Mr. A. Duguid, of Kirkcaldy, one; Mr. Walker, late of Melbourne, three. The Secretary to the Association gave six, filling up the intervals between the professional speakers. The Committee of the Association, in order to carry out the above series, thought it advisable to raise a guarantee fund to cover at least the rent of the Hall, trusting to the collections to defray the lecturers' fees and advertising; for this purpose £22 10s. were required, towards which £18 have been contributed. With the experience and encouragement thus gained, the Association will make a bolder effort to put Spiritualism before the Glasgow public next winter. An inner circle, with Mr. David Duguid, as medium, has been formed for the careful investigation of the phenomena. It is held every Friday at 8 p.m. in the Association's *séance* room. At a future time, a limited number of Spiritualists will be admitted at each sitting.

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INFORMATION FOR NON-SPIRITUALISTS.

In thirty years Spiritualism has spread through all the most civilised countries on the globe, until it now has tens of thousands of adherents, and about thirty periodicals. It has also outlived the same popular abuse which at the outset opposed rail-ways, gas, and Galileo's discovery of the rotation of the earth.

The Dialectical Society, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, appointed a large committee, which for two years investigated the phenomena occurring in the presence of non-professional mediums, and finally reported that the facts were true, that the raps and other noises governed by intelligence were real, and that solid objects sometimes moved in the presence of mediums without being touched.

Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, deviser of the radiometer, and discoverer of the new metal thallium, investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism in his own house, and reported them to be true. Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Cromwell Varley, Prof. Zöllner, and a great number of intelligent professional men have done the same.

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES AT HOME.

Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or stranger to the family present.

The assertions of a few newspapers, conjurors, and men of science that the alleged phenomena are jugglery are proved to be untrue by the fact that manifestations are readily obtained by private families, with no stranger present, and without deception by any member of the family. At the present time there are only about half a dozen professional mediums for the physical phenomena in all Great Britain, consequently, if these were all tricksters (which they are not), they are so few in number as to be unable to bear out the imposture theory as the foundation of the great movement of modern Spiritualism. Readers should protect themselves against any impostors who may tell them that the phenomena are not real, by trying simple home experiments which cost nothing, thus showing how egregiously those are duped who trust in worthless authorities.

One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household, and about one new circle in three, formed according to the following instructions, obtains the phenomena:—

1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is of little importance. Any table will do.

3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is weakening.

4. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature.

5. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first indications will probably be table-tilting or raps.

6. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three raps be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class of messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of credulity, but should believe no more about them or the contents of the messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.

8. Should no results be obtained at the first two *séances* because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.

Mediumship may either be used or abused. Mediums should not lower their strength by sitting more than about twice a week; angular, excitable people, had better avoid the nervous stimulus of mediumship altogether.

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