

The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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MESMERIC EXPERIMENTS.

Last Saturday afternoon, at 33, Museum-street, London, Mr. S. R. Redman, the Mesmerist, performed a few experiments for us, in the attempt to produce some of the phenomena of Spiritualism by the power of mesmerism.

The sensitive, Mr. Sparke, was thrown into a mesmeric sleep, and brought to a great extent under the control of the operator. He was so much under control, that with his eyes shut and bound round with a handkerchief, he followed Mr. Redman everywhere at about a yard's distance; for instance, he followed him round two rooms, then into a passage, then down and up two flights of stairs, without touching the walls or anything to guide him in his path.

He was subsequently made to sit at a table with writing materials, and silently "willed" by Mr. Redman to write a short sentence which had been handed to the latter upon a piece of paper. In the manifest attempt to read the mesmerist's thoughts, the face of the sensitive assumed an expression of earnest attention; it became flushed, and the veins of his forehead began to stand out. But the sentence could not be passed though his organism in this way.

"Well," said Mr. Redman, "write what you please—write something." The hand of the somnambulist began to move, and wrote the word "*something*," which was a more literal compliance with the order than was desired. "I mean," said Mr. Redman, "write what is now uppermost in your mind." The sensitive then wrote "*Your work you've got to do.*" It was asked, "Who has work to do?" The reply came through the sensitive's hand, "*G. W. Sparke.*" The question was put "What work?" and the reply came "*What you started this morning and couldn't stop to finish.*" Thus either some outside intelligence was writing through his organism, or the sleeper was curiously enough addressing himself in the second person.

Seeing that no message could be passed through the organism of Mr. Sparke by will-

power, eight small objects were placed in a row upon the table, and while the back of the sensitive was turned, one of them was mesmerised by Mr. Redman, who then said—"Now Sparke, turn round quickly and pick up the object with a blue light upon it." He turned, and instantly picked up the right object out of the eight; there was not a moment's hesitation. This experiment was performed a second time, but not so quickly, by the sensitive, after which there were three or four failures. It seemed as if the concentration of the minds of the observers upon the desired result, interfered with its attainment, as is commonly enough the case in relation to the phenomena of spirit circles.

At Mrs. Mary Marshall's *séances* it was a common thing for the spirits to ask a sitter to write a dozen names upon a slip of paper, and among them the name of a dead relative. The sitter was then instructed to point to each name in succession, and the spirits gave three raps when he came to the right one. If they knew the name, why did they not spell it out at once? The experiments with Mr. Sparke may answer the question. It was found to be easier to make him indicate one object in eight by mesmeric processes, than to send a written word through his organism by the same power.

In the last number of *The Spiritualist*, a description was given of the making of "passes" over the head of a person in a public audience, who afterwards slipped out of his seat while Mr. Redman's back was turned, and allowed another observer to take the place. The sensitive then saw (as he was told to see) a blue light and a rose upon the head of one of the sitters, but upon the head of the wrong man in the right seat. An experiment was tried on Saturday, in the attempt to ascertain whether he saw the light upon the head of the wrong man because of mind-sympathy with Mr. Redman, who believed at the moment that the light ought to be seen there, or whether some halo unseen by normal vision were really hanging over the particular spot. Accordingly Mr. Redman was blindfolded, and led about the room by Mr. Harrison till he did not know his whereabouts; then he made passes over the head of a sitter (Mr. Wheelhouse,) whom he could not see, so that he did not know over whose head he had made the passes. He then ordered the sensitive, who had not been allowed to see the preceding operations, to bring him the blue light which was upon the head of one of the sitters. With much slowness and hesitation the sensitive

tried to lift an invisible nothing, if the phrase may be permitted, from the head of Captain James. Mr. Redman then stated that the idea had been in his own mind all the time that he had mesmerised the head of Captain James, although he was not sure of the point. Thus the actions of the sensitive seemed in this case to be governed by the unspoken thoughts of the mesmerist.

A DREAM REVELATION.

The following strange dream-story is published in *Lippincott's Magazine* :—

There is an inexplicable story—which I believe has never been published—among the traditions of the fat, fertile hill country of Western Pennsylvania, the most unlikely quarter in the world to serve as a breeding place of mystery. It was settled almost wholly by well-to-do farmers from the north of Ireland, economical, hard-working folks—God-fearing too, after the exact manner described by John Knox, and having little patience with any other manner. Not a likely people, assuredly, to give credence to any fanciful superstitions, and still less to originate them. The story, indeed, has a bold, matter-of-fact character in every detail, which quite sets it apart from relations of the supernatural. I have never heard it explained, and it is the best authenticated mystery in my knowledge.

Here it is in brief. Among the Scotch-Irish settlers in Washington county, in 1812, was a family named Plymire, who occupied a comfortable farm and house. Rachel, the daughter, was engaged to a young farmer of the neighbourhood. On a Saturday evening in July, having finished her week's work, she dressed herself tidily and started to visit her married sister, who lived on a farm about five miles distant, intending to return on Monday morning. She tied up her Sunday gown and hat in a checkered handkerchief, and carried her shoes and stockings in the other hand, meaning to walk in her bare feet, and to put them on when she came in sight of her destination, after the canny Scotch fashion. She left home about seven o'clock in order to have the cool evening for her walk. The road to the farm was lonely and unfrequented. The girl did not return home Monday, but no alarm was felt, as the family thought her sister would probably wish to detain her for a few days; and it was not until the latter part of the week that it was found that she had never been at her sister's. The country was scoured, but in

vain; the alarm spread and excited a degree of terror in the peaceable, domestic community which would seem inexplicable to city people, to whom the newspaper has brought a budget of crime every morning since their childhood. To children raised in those lonely hamlets and hill-farms murder was a far off, unreal horror.

The girl had left home on Saturday at seven o'clock. That night long before ten o'clock (farmers go to bed with the chickens), a woman living in Green county, about forty miles from Plymire farm, awoke her husband in great terror, declaring that she had just seen a murder done, and went on to describe a place she had never seen before—a hilly country with a wagon road running through it, and a girl with a bundle tied in a checkered handkerchief, and shoes and white stockings in the other hand, walking briskly down the grassy side of the road. She was met by a young man—the woman judged from their manner the meeting was by appointment; they sat down on a log and talked for some time.

The man at last rose, stepped behind her, and drawing out a hatchet, struck her twice on the head. She fell backwards on the wet, rotten leaves dead. Presently the man was joined by another, also young, who asked, "Is it done?" He nodded, and together they lifted the body and carried it away out of her sight. After a while they came back, found the bundle of Sunday finery and the shoes and stockings, all of which were stained with blood. There was a ruined old mill near the road; they went into it, lifted a loose board in the flooring, put the bundle, shoes, etc., with the hatchet, underneath, and replaced the board. Then they separated and went through the woods in different directions. The farmer's wife told her dream to her husband that night; the next day (Sunday), going to a little country church, she remained during the intermission between the morning and afternoon services. The neighbours who had come from a circuit of twenty miles to church, gathered, according to their homely habit, in the churchyard, to eat their lunch and exchange the news. Our dreamer told her story again and again, for she was impressed by it as if it had been reality. After the afternoon service the congregation separated, going to their widely-scattered homes. There were thus many witnesses ready to certify to the fact that the woman had told the dream the morning after the murder was committed at a distance of forty miles, when it was absolutely impossible that the news should

have reached her. There were no telegraphs, we must remember, and no railways in those days—not even mail carriers in those secluded districts.

When the story of the girl's disappearance was told over the country at the end of the next week, the people to whom the dream had been repeated recalled it. Nowadays the matter would serve as a good material for the reporters, but the men of those days still believed that God took an oversight even of their dreams. Might not this be a hint from him? The Rev. Charles Wheeler, a Baptist clergyman, of Washington, well known in Western Pennsylvania and Virginia a generation ago, and Mr. Ephraim Blaine, a magistrate, father of the present Senator from Maine, and as popular a man in his narrower circle, drove over to see the woman who had told the dream. Without stating their purpose, they took her and her husband, on pretence of business, to the Plymire farm. It was the first time in her life that she had left her own county, and she was greatly amused and interested. They drove over the whole of the road down which Rachel Plymire had gone.

"Have you ever seen this neighbourhood?" one of them asked.

"Never," she replied.

That ended the matter, and they turned back, taking a little-used cross road to save time. Presently the woman started up in great agitation, crying, "This is the place I dreamed of!" They assured her that Rachel Plymire had not been on that road at all. "I know nothing about her," she said, "but that girl I saw in my dream came along here; there is the path through which the man came, and beyond that turning you will find the log on which he killed her." They did find the log, and on the ground the stains of blood. The woman, walking swiftly, led them to the old mill, and to the board under which lay the stained clothes and the hatchet. The girl's body was found afterwards, buried by a creek near at hand. Rachel's lover had already been arrested on suspicion. It was hinted that he had grown tired of the girl, and for many reasons found her hard to shake off. The woman recognised him in a crowd of other men, and startled her companions still more by pointing out another young fellow from the West as his companion in her dream. The young man was tried in the town of Washington for murder. The dreamer was brought into court, and an effort was actually made to put her on the witness stand; but even then

men could not be hung on the evidence of a dream. Without it there was not enough proof for conviction; and the jury, unwillingly enough, we may be sure, allowed the prisoner to escape. It was held as positive proof of his guilt that he immediately married the sister of the other accused man and removed to Ohio, then the wilderness of the West.

A PUBLIC ADDRESS ON SPIRITUALISM.

On Sunday, April 4th, at an evening meeting held at the Steinway Hall, London, in commemoration of the thirty-second anniversary of the advent of modern Spiritualism, Mrs. Fletcher, who addressed those assembled, in the course of her remarks said: A year ago there was less encouragement for Spiritualism; it was then a year weaker, and freethought in this country was a year younger. In its early days too it had more to fear from its friends than from its foes; it was born among the unlettered and the enthusiastic. Why, it might be asked, did not spiritual manifestations first come in some noble cathedral, led by a great high priest? But God knew how to do His work, His way was best, so Spiritualism was born, so to speak, in a manger, but month after month, and year after year, mediums sprang up like wildfire, until Spiritualism had established itself in every civilized nation on the globe. But Spiritualism itself was not new; the Bible was full of it from beginning to end. Had they ever thought how nearly the whole of the spiritual phenomena of modern times were described in the New Testament? What a grand exemplification was given in the account of the release of Peter from prison! An angel appeared to Peter and unlocked the heavy iron gates, so the materialising power must have been great; and the circumstance that the soldiers were thrown into a deep sleep, indicated the presence of strong mesmeric influence. The prison was flooded with a great light. When the freed Peter knocked that night upon the outer gate of his own home, little Rhoda thought that it was a spirit, so familiar did the family appear to be with spiritual phenomena. As to writing-mediumship, did they not remember the angel hand which wrote upon the wall "*Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin*," and why should not God at the present time be able to send another message, to tell the people once more that they have been weighed in the balance and found wanting? Objectors allege that false and lying spirits come to Spiritualists. Not always, and did they not remember how in the Old Testa-

ment it was recorded that the Lord once put a lying spirit into the mouths of his prophets? Another objection was that the modern manifestations were ridiculous. They should remember that Ezekiel was taken up by the hair of his head, and carried first to Jerusalem, and afterwards to another place, yet to-day people ridiculed the idea of anybody being carried even two miles by spirit power. If God sends evil spirits to the world now, He sends them as He sends evil men, He sends them as He sends His poor and His afflicted that we may do good to them, but not be harmed by them. It was a good sign that Spiritualists were working among all who were seeking for beneficial social reforms; it was to be found among those who were asking for a creed which is sexless, for God knows neither sex nor creed. Spiritualism visited the bedsides of the sick; Christ said that one sign he would give to his true followers, they should lay hands upon the sick and they would recover. Spiritualism said to the sick "Take more prayers and fewer pills;" to criminals it said "You are God's sin-sick ignorant children, and you must learn;" it was philanthropic and philosophical as well as phenomenal. To her it was the truest, divinest, sweetest revelation on the face of the earth. Yet it was subjected to persecution. To disbelievers its facts were spurious and its mediums vagabonds. Only last Friday, one of our mediums has been sentenced to three months' hard labour by Keighley justices, under an old law which should have been obsolete a hundred years ago. 'It matters not who the young man is, nor what is his name. It is enough to know that he stands in a gaol to-night; and that our mediums are called vagabonds by the law. Are we a free country? Is this law of England never going to claim its right to religious liberty? Why have we Spiritualists not liberty to worship God according to our conscience? If we are vagabonds, then so must Moses have been, and the prophets of old, and Peter and Paul for exercising their spiritual gifts: and kings and queens are our aiders and abettors, and they also should be called upon to share the responsibility. And as you return home to-night and gather those you love around you in your comfortable houses and by your fire-sides, just let a thought and a prayer of yours go forth to that prison, and that captive within it, who is there because he has exercised the gifts that God gave him. And let us feel that our religion of Spiritualism is worth even suffering for, for a time, and that God as He

gives the increase, as He gives the flower its colour or its sweetness, and the sun its light will give unto truth the victory.

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.]

THE DEATH OF MR. G. ANDREWS.

Sir,—All Spiritualists who have for years attended Mr. Williams' *séances*, at 61, Lamb's Conduit Street, will sincerely regret to hear of the death of Mr. G. Andrews, whose untiring devotion to our cause contributed most essentially to the success of those remarkable meetings.

Many troubles inevitably borne by him in the face of the slow progress of the movement and the persecution of blind prejudice, endear his memory to all friends, as a true and faithful advocate of Spiritualism, under circumstances of great inconvenience and personal loss.

His passing over relieves him from all his sorrows, which will now only cause a smile on his lips when looking back to earth from the shores of Spirit land.

C. REIMERS.

Richmond, April 12th, 1880.

THE MATTHEWS CASE.

Sir,—In reference to the remarks in your paper by a Mr. F. T. Morton respecting the defence of Mr. Matthews before the Keighley Bench and reflecting on Spiritualists for not attending and giving evidence, I have to reply that when Mr. Matthews was in Newcastle on the Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday previous to the case being heard, it is within my knowledge that offers were made to go and give evidence if required, but Mr. Matthews thought it would not be necessary, seeing that such evidence would not bear directly on the cases on which the charges were founded; but he did ask for general support, and in response to which I moved the following resolution at a public meeting in this Society's Hall, when an audience of from 230 to 250 persons were present; Mr. I. Mould, the President of the Society was in the chair.

"That this meeting of the Members and Friends of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society cordially sympathizing with our esteemed brother Mr. F. O. Matthews, hereby tenders to him their renewed confidence and assurance of his genuine mediumship for clairvoyance and other manifestations of spirit power proving the absolute truth of the possibility of communion with the spirit world; and we further testify with pleasure our unabated confidence in his integrity and truthfulness which we have had numerous opportunities of proving, as well as his high-souled devotion to the principles of truth and purity, and we at the same time offer to him our united heartfelt sympathies in this his hour of trial."

This motion was seconded by Mr. J. Urwin, and carried unanimously, not a single hand or voice being raised against it. An official copy signed by the chairman and myself, as secretary of the Society, was sent to Mr. Matthews, to be used in his defence, and we are unable to ascertain if this was ever laid before the Bench as evidence of his integrity; in fact from the entire silence about it, we fear that the solicitor in charge of the case has not made the use of it we think he might have done. It is most difficult to learn what

was the line of defence adopted, and we are utterly at a loss to know why an appeal was not made to a higher tribunal. It is, I think, the profession we should educate in the matter rather than the magistrates; it is plain that even in the Slade trial they did not know how to defend it. It appears to me that mediums are charged with *pretending* or *professing* by subtle craft, &c., to deceive and impose. Now, this appears to me to throw the burden of proof respecting pretending, or professing to deceive or impose, on the prosecution, and I fail to see that in either case they proved their case, as they did not attempt to show that they fraudulently imposed, but proceeded on the assumption that all so called spirit manifestations are fraud, and they simply content themselves with producing evidence as to the manifestations and not as to the impossibility of communion with the spirit world, and I for one do think that the solicitors in charge of such cases should be obliged to demand proof of such before conviction. With respect to genuine mediums there is no pretension to deceive; it is conjurors who pretend to deceive.

The Spiritualists in Newcastle and district, I am sure will gladly do all in their power to second a combined effort in this matter, only let it be decided what is the best mode of procedure, and they will work at it heart and soul, not only to obtain Matthews' release, but also to petition Parliament for a repeal of the obnoxious Acts, a course which finds favour here.

On the motion of the President, a subscription was raised to help supply what might be required for Matthews' defence, and in two evenings the sum of £18 16s. was raised and handed to Mr. Matthews, and we hope Spiritualists elsewhere will also aid him by contributing to this necessary fund. H. A. KERSEY. Newcastle-on-Tyne, April 13th, 1880.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

Sir,—Spiritualism in the provinces has at least three strong centres, namely, Newcastle, Glasgow and Cardiff. At the latter town much quiet work is being done; the local society of Spiritualists though not large in numbers, is united and earnest. Several mediums are under development, and Messrs. Sadler and Spriggs, as physical and materialising mediums obtain phenomena under good test conditions. A young lady who has the misfortune to be blind has recently developed the faculty of psychometry with such success as to promise remarkable results when she is more fully developed. Under influence too, she is rapidly becoming a first rate speaker and occupies the platform at the Sunday services. Messrs. Morse, Walker and myself have visited the town with good results, and respectful attention is manifested by outsiders, where a short time since only ridicule and intolerance were manifested.

An excellent entertainment promoted by the Manchester Association of Spiritualists, on Good Friday, would have given a stranger a tolerably correct impression as to the influence of Spiritualism in that town. About 200 friends partook of tea, and many more came to the entertainment. I heard it remarked, "You Spiritualists certainly know how to enjoy yourselves," and the chairman in opening the proceedings struck the key-note by declaring that it was hoped and intended the evening should be one of enjoyment and happiness. Excellent singing by the choir, together with solos and recitations, occupied the first two hours, followed by a comedy, which was very well rendered by members of the society under the direction of Miss Fox, and gave great satisfaction. Subsequently dancing and other amusements were carried on till a late hour.

The West of England is far behind the times in matters spiritual. A recent attempt to advocate the new truth in Cornwall brought forth rancorous opposition. The Wesleys, George Fox and others, met with the severest persecution in that district, and true to old traditions the people shut their eyes and stop their ears and cry "devil" "humbug" "away with him;" but the day will yet come when the facts of Spiritualism will be fully accepted even in such benighted regions.

Nottingham has at length a free platform and a strong society of Spiritualists. Regular Sunday services are held with good success. Spiritualism is ably advocated and very fair reports of proceedings are given in local papers, gentlemen connected with the press being in full sympathy with the efforts made. Many adherents have been gained, and there is every prospect of continued success.

E. W. WALLIS.

SPIRITUALISM IN MANCHESTER.

Sir,—I hand you a report of the half-yearly meeting of the Manchester Association of Spiritualists, held last Sunday, April 4th, after the usual meeting, at which there were present a fair representation of members. After the usual preliminaries, the following balance sheet was presented:—

Receipts—Balance last year, £7 2s. 3½d.; Subscriptions, £8 1s.; Collections, £13 14s. 5d.; Sale of Books, 6s. 2d.; Profit on Tea Meeting, 6s. 2d.; Séance room box, 15s. 7½d.; Harmonium fund, per Miss B., £2; Lancashire Committee for Rent, 5s.; Balance deficit, 3s. 7½d.; Total, £32 14s. 3½d.

Expenditure—Rent of rooms, £8 10s. 6d.; Speakers, and Mediums, £12 10s. 6d.; Advertisements, £4 8s. 9d.; Pioneers for distribution, 12s.; New Books, £2 6s. 5d.; Organist, £2; Placards, 17s. 6d.; Sundries, 12s. 1d.; Deficit, 3s. 7½d.; Balance in hand, 12s. 11d.; Total, £32 14s. 3½d.

The following are the names of the Officers and Committee appointed for the next six months:—

President, Mr. Richard Fitton, *Vice-President* Miss Blundell, *Treasurer*, Mr. Allan Hall, *Secretary*, Mr. Cross, *Librarian*, Master T. Emery. *Committee*: Ladies—Mrs. Chirwell, Mrs. Emery, Mrs. Braham, Miss H. Blundell, Miss Johnson and Miss Goodall. Gentlemen—Messrs. Chirwell, Ainsworth, Elliott, Goodall, W. Shaw, Braham and Booth.

I have much pleasure in stating that our Association is in a healthy state, our meetings well attended, our platform well supplied, the books in the library well thumbed, and we can find room for more volumes, which will be forthcoming when our fund will admit of more being purchased. Your kind insertion in the next issue of the *Spiritualist* will oblige, yours truly,

R. FITTON.

44, Walnut Street, Manchester, April 10th, 1880.

NEXT Sunday evening Dr. George Wyld will deliver a lecture at the Quebec Hall, Great Quebec Street, Marylebone, on "The Life of Sister Dora at Walsall Hospital."

MR. W. EGLINTON, who writes to us from Vienna, gives detailed information setting forth that his mediumship has been the means of making various influential converts to Spiritualism on the continent.

MR. J. N. T. MARTHEZE has completed his voyage round the world, for the purpose of observing spiritual phenomena among various races, and he arrived safely at Havre last week. He is now in Paris.

A NEATLY printed little half-penny periodical called *The Spiritual Pioneer*, is published monthly at 63, Manchester Road, Bradford, Yorkshire.

SPIRIT HANDS.

Mr. C. R. Williams, of 6, Field View, London Fields, writes that at a recent *séance* at the foregoing address, "two lady mediums were fastened securely with thread in the cabinet a few evenings ago by two doctors. Two bells were placed outside, fully six feet away from the mediums, and visible to the sitters. In about a minute they were taken up, thrust through the apertures by hands perfectly visible, and were carried to and fro inside the cabinet which extends the width of the room. Again, a sceptic, with assistance, tied and sealed them, and hinting that he had given them their *quietus*, the bells were placed outside the cabinet. No sooner were they put down than one was thrust out of each of the apertures of the cabinet, which are about six feet apart. The hands and arms carrying the bells were plainly visible to the elbow.

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MR. EDISON.

The Revd. A. L. Hatch, Congregational minister, of 59, Liberty Street, New York, made the following statement for publication to the commissioner of the *New York World*; it was published in that journal on the 17th of March last, of which number Mr. Martheze has sent us a copy:—

"You know he [Mr. Edison] is a medium, and his great invention of the quadruplex telegraph instrument was revealed to him in a trance state. He sat one day, and passing into that condition seized some paper lying before him and wrote until he had filled several sheets with closely-written notes. Then waking up and rubbing his eyes, he said he thought he had been asleep, until his attention was called to the paper, which he had not read through before he broke out with his usual expletives and said he had got the idea he had been struggling for so long."

PSYCHOGRAPHY.

The following is the official report describing some recent experiments in psychography, at the house of Mr. Epes Sargent, the American author:—

At the house of Epes Sargent, on the evening of Saturday March 13th, the undersigned saw two clean slates placed face to face with a bit of slate pencil between them. We all held our hands clasped around the edges of the two slates. Mr. Watkins's hands also clasped the slates. In this position we all distinctly heard the pencil moving, and on

opening the slates found an intelligent message in a strong masculine hand, in answer to a question asked by one of the company.

Afterwards, two slates were clamped together with strong brass fixtures and held at arm's length by Mr. Cook, whilst the rest of the company and the psychic had their hands in full view on the table. After a moment of waiting, the slates were opened, and a message in a feminine hand was found on one of the inner surfaces. There were five lighted gas burners in the room at the time.

We cannot apply to these facts any theory of fraud, and we do not see how the writing can be explained unless matter, in the slate pencil, was moved without contact.

F. E. BUNDY, M.D.
EPES SARGENT.
JOHN C. KINNEY.
HENRY G. WHITE.
JOSEPH COOK.

Boston, March 13th, 1880.

The original of the above report is in Mr. Cook's possession, and Mr. Joseph Cook states:—

The writing found on the slates when they were opened was in response to my question, and was as follows: "I think in 1812, but am not sure. Warner Cook." This date was correct. The doubt expressed in the reply did not exist in my own thoughts, for I knew what the date was. During the writing I was not thinking of the date, however, but very cautiously watching the psychic to detect fraud.

In the second experiment the psychic closed the slates in our sight after they had been washed with a wet sponge and heavily rubbed by a handkerchief in presence of us all, as they lay on the table. After they had been shut upon the pencil, the psychic, at my request, placed on them two strong brass clamps, one at each end. Thus arranged, the slates were placed by him in my right hand, which I extended at arm's length over the back of my chair into the open space of the room, while I left my other hand on the table. The psychic, twice or three times, turned the clamped slates over in my hand, and then returned his hands to the table, where, with the rest of the hands of the company, they were kept constantly in sight. In this position, I held the slates a few seconds, and watched both them and the psychic. He appeared to be making no particular effort of will. When

the slates were opened, these words were found written on one of their surfaces in a feminine hand: "God bless you all. I am here. Your loving friend, Fanny Conant." I have never heard of this person; but the name was recognised by several in the company as that of a psychic now deceased, and lately well known in Boston.

One of the observers who assisted in the experiments at my request was my family physician, Dr. F. E. Bundy, of Boston, a graduate of the Harvard Medical School—a man of great coolness and penetration of judgment, and by no means inclined to adopt any spiritualistic theory. Another of the observers was Mr. Epes Sargent, who is known to the whole English-speaking world for the volumes which contain the results of the many years he has devoted to the study of psychical phenomena. Another observer was an editor who has assisted in several important exposures of fraud on the part of psychics. One of the three ladies present had herself performed psychical experiments for Mrs. Stowe, and had also exposed psychical frauds. Of the nine observers, a majority were not only not Spiritualists, but thoroughly prejudiced against the claims made in behalf of the psychic who led the experiments. Written notes of the facts, as they occurred, were taken by Dr. Bundy and myself.

Among the names correctly read in a closed pellet was that of an officer in the regular army, shot dead in one of the preliminary skirmishes of the battle of the Wilderness. The instant the psychic pronounced the officer's name the former fell backward with a quick, sudden motion, like that of one shot through the heart. After a few seconds, the psychic wrote the word "shot" in large letters on the slate.

The hands of the company were so placed on the slates in the first experiment that the theory of fraud by the use of a magnetic pencil is inapplicable to the facts. One of the observers held an open hand tightly against the bottom and another on the top of the slate, and any magnet concealed in the sleeves of the psychic could not have been so used as to move the pencil.

At the close of the experiments the company unanimously indorsed a paper drawn up on the spot—and were agreed that the theory of fraud would not explain the facts. While they differed in opinion as to whether the slate pencil was moved by the will of the psychic or by that of a spirit or spirits acting

through him, the observers could not explain the writing except by the movement of matter without contact.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND THE "SUPERNATURAL."

BY J. A. CAMPBELL, B.A. (CANTAB.)

The real attitude of Sir Walter Scott's mind towards what are ordinarily called supernatural events, such as the re-appearance of the departed and the possession by mankind of abnormal powers of vision, has been a subject much discussed; that stories of this character had for him a strong fascination is perfectly evident to all readers of his works. In his novels they abound: the *bodach glas* in *Waverley* and the White Lady of Avenal in *The Monastery*, are instances which will at once occur to mind. The great poem of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and many of the shorter poems are founded on traditions of such things, while the notes to *The Border Minstrelsy* and the *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* are perfect treasuries of glamour. But, all these afford no evidence whatever of his belief in the possibility of the actual occurrence of any of the mysterious things which he knows so well how to describe: rather would the inference lie in the opposite direction.

He is almost eager, after telling a story of the sort, to disclaim any kind of sympathy with the credulity which could gravely accept it in its simplicity; he seeks about for an explanation that will show the supposed ghost to have been the result of clever trickery on the part of others, as in *Woodstock*; or mere mental impression on the part of the seer himself, as in the remarkable instance of Mr. Rutherford's dream, related in one of the notes appended to early editions * of *The Antiquary*. The story is briefly this:—Mr. Rutherford, of Bowlands, in the Vale of Gala, was at one time in extreme difficulty on account of the loss of some law papers which he believed to have been in his father's possession. In his sleep, his father, who had been long dead, appeared to him, told him that the missing papers were in the hands of a certain lawyer, who had then retired from business, and was living in the country; giving his name and address, and adding that should the circumstance of their deposit with him have been forgotten by the old gentleman, it would

probably be recalled on the mention of a piece of Portuguese money, about the changing of which there had been some small trouble. Upon enquiry being made, it turned out that in every particular this information was correct. Sir Walter's explanation is very characteristic: "That the dream was only the recapitulation of information which Mr. Rutherford had really received from his father while in life, but which at first, he merely recalled as a general impression that the claim was settled."

It may be added that Mr. Rutherford himself firmly believed in the actuality of his vision, and as Dale Owen remarks when telling the story in his *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, * "unless we assume it as a point settled, that there is no such thing as ultra-mundane communication, the simple and natural conclusion in such a case surely is, that the father really appeared in a dream to the son." How otherwise can the prophecy or suggestion of the old lawyer's probable forgetfulness be explained; and *a priori*, from my acquaintance with Scottish character in general, I think it exceedingly unlikely that a pecuniary transaction, † especially one in which he was personally so nearly concerned, would ever be forgotten by a Scotchman. It seemed however, after careful study of his writings, only just to conclude that Sir Walter's name could not be added to the list of those teachers who have found impressed—how they could not tell, upon their deepest consciousness the infinite possibilities of the unseen, and, not without pain, to acknowledge frankly to oneself, that this gentlest and most just of men in our own or any age, from whom of all others we should have looked for a simple faith in the promised ministries of heaven and forewarned assaults of hell, was sceptical in the extreme as to the possibility of "the laws of nature being suspended" by any external manifestations of their power.

What was my pleasure then, when looking over the old numbers of *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* for the years 1843 to 1844, to discover

* London edition. Trübner, February, 1861.

† Not that I for a moment give in my adherence to the vulgar prejudice about Scotchmen which imagines them more grasping than other folk; more careful and more prudent they certainly are, but then prudence was of old time reckoned a cardinal virtue, and remains so still, in spite of the boastful wasting of ill-gotten money in selfish luxury and cruel sensuality, which damns into yet blacker hell the robbers of the poor in France, England and Italy. A thief is a thief all the world over, but the Scottish thief differs from others, in that he is inclined to store up the reward of iniquity, letting a little leak out occasionally to a Soup Kitchen or a Missionary Society, whereas the others periodically disgorge theirs, creating miasma and foul pestilence everywhere.

* The old well bound Edinburgh editions of Ballantyne, who wore Montrose's buttons, and rode Old Mortality. For all I know the new cheap ones that make the eyes water and tear to pieces in the hand, may contain it also.

evidence of an unmistakable kind, which, to my mind entirely contradicts this view. The evidence I speak of is contained in a series of papers written by one John Morrison, a personal friend of Scott.*

Let the reader judge of its value after he has read what I have to say.

In Lockhart's life there is a well-known story about the knockings that disturbed the rest of Sir Walter and his wife during the building of the new house at Abbotsford. For purposes which will presently appear, I now extract this account, and place it side by side with Mr. Morrison's record of the same circumstance related to him by Scott.

We will begin with the life. Scott, under date of April 30th, 1818, writes thus to Daniel Terry :

"The exposed state of my house† has led to mysterious disturbance. The night before last we were awakened by a violent noise, like drawing heavy boards along the new part of the house. I fancied something had fallen, and thought no more about it. This was about two in the morning. Last night, at the same witching hour, the very same noise occurred. Mrs. S., as you know, is rather timbersome ; so I got up with Beadie's broad sword under my arm.

" Bolt upright,
And ready to fight."

"But nothing was out of order, neither can I discover what occasioned the disturbance."

"On the morning that Mr. Terry received the foregoing letter, in London, Mr. William Erskine was breakfasting with him, and the chief subject of their conversation was the sudden death of George Bullock,‡ which had occurred on the same night, and as nearly as they could ascertain, at the very hour when Sir Walter was aroused from his sleep by the mysterious disturbance here described. This coincidence, when Scott received Erskine's minute detail of what had happened in Tenterdon Street, made a much stronger impression on his mind than might be gathered from the tone of an ensuing communication." (Also to Mr. Terry).

* "Reminiscences of Sir Walter Scott" by John Morrison. *Tait's Magazine* for 1843; pp. 609, 626, 780.

† While the new house was being built, Scott and his wife slept in the old part adjoining it.

‡ George Bullock made the cast of heads from Melrose for the ceiling of the new dining room, where they look ill-shaped and ugly at a distance of sixteen feet from the eye, instead of sixty, which is more nearly their distance, on the string courses of the grand old abbey. He had at this time gone to London on business, and was expected shortly to return to Abbotsford.

"Were you not struck with the fantastical coincidence of our nocturnal disturbances at Abbotsford, with the melancholy event that followed? I protest to you the noise resembled half a dozen men hard at work, putting up boards and furniture, and nothing can be more certain than that there was nobody on the premises at the time. With a few additional touches the story would figure in Glanvil's or Aubrey's collection. In the meantime, you may set it down with poor Dubisson's warnings, as a remarkable coincidence coming under your own observation."

This is what Scott told Morrison at his own breakfast table :—

"My wife," said he, "awakened me at midnight, and declared that Mr. Bullock must be returned from London, 'for I hear him knocking in the dining room.' I prevailed on her to fall asleep, for it must be all nonsense; but she again awakened and assured me that she not only heard his hammer knocking in the usual way, but heard him speak also. In order to satisfy her I arose and examined the premises, but nothing was either to be seen or heard. On the second day after, a letter sealed with black arrived, stating that poor Bullock was dead—mentioning the hour, which exactly agreed with the time he was heard in the dining room by my wife. I have heard (he adds) other editions of this tale; but what I have stated, I heard Sir Walter relate."

We have here then two versions, each from Scott himself, of the same story, varying remarkably in detail. To his old literary friend he says that he and his wife were both awakened by a violent noise, he comments on the fantastical coincidence, and speaks of the few additional touches the story would require to fit it for insertion in two celebrated collections of ghost lore. Bearing in mind the much stronger impression that Lockhart tells us was really made upon his mind, we turn to the conversation with Mr. Morrison to find the few additional touches supplied by his own hand. But first of all it will be necessary to understand what manner of man was Morrison. At the time of this conversation he had only lately become acquainted with Scott, their congenial tastes soon made them fast friends, and a mutual love of legends, antiquities, border ballads, and folk lore, led to those lone and delightful conversations which the *Reminiscences* describe—Artist, land surveyor, kindly and honorable gentleman, too, as we learn from the playful epitaph made upon him while he was still

living, by the Ettrick Shepherd, and not less from the modest and simple style of his writing, he was a person after Scott's own heart. From time to time he drew for him sketches of the Border Castles, Thraeve, the home of the Douglasses, and Smailholm Tower, and made a plan of Abbotsford, taking all the favourite places, Sir Walter writing in the names himself. On the occasion of their first meeting the subject of second sight seems to have been introduced.

"Mr. Scott told some remarkable instances, one of which I afterwards recognized in the Grey Spectre of Waverley. Have you any ghosts in Galloway? We have many, 'Mary's Dream,' for instance, which is a true tale, and was told in my hearing, by Mary's sister.

"Sandy had just sailed on a voyage, Mary had laid down to sleep; the rising moon was shining in at the window, when Sandy came and sat down with a *sozz* on a chair at her bed-side. 'Dear Sandy,' said Mary, 'your clothes are all wet!' The spirit addressed her nearly in the words of the song. The lady used to say the song was improperly called a dream,—it was a reality."

We will now go back and note the particulars in Mr. Morrison's account.

Here there is no mention whatever of the violent noise, and Scott does not say that he heard anything himself, but on the other hand he does say that both the sounds of Bullock's peculiar knocking, and also his voice were heard by his wife. He attempts no explanation, gives no hint of any doubt as to the actuality of the occurrence after the black-sealed letter had arrived, though he allows it to be inferred that at the time he was inclined to believe the sounds to exist only in the imagination of his wife.

Can two such different accounts be reconciled? I believe they can, and that the clue lies in the character of the friends to whom they were given.

Terry, the London *litterateur*, living in the midst of a society where belief in supernatural interposition would have been considered a mark of ignorance, if not a proof of imbecility, could hardly be expected to cherish in the matter very different convictions from those around him. Scott, with the impression made by the disturbance fresh in his mind, writes of it to Terry. The latter breakfasting with Erskine, receives news of Bullock's sudden death on the same night. Erskine writes to Scott, and mentions this circumstance. Can

anything be more natural than that he should reply, passing the whole thing off as a fantastical coincidence? Morrison, the Galloway artist, bred up in the country with a strong vein of mysticism running through his thought, interested in every kind of legend that connected him with the past, a believer in the possibility of communication with the unseen world, perfectly understood and sympathised with by Scott, but still a comparative stranger to him, he tells him only a portion of the truth—a far more important portion of it than he had told Terry—but does not commit himself in the matter, and leaves Morrison to form his own conclusions. Taking this view of the question, it seems probable that a closer intimacy between them would have led to a yet more clear statement of Scott's real opinions.

Such, I hope shortly to lay before my readers.

A PROBLEM.

Stone throwing by spirits is so common that Mr. William Howitt once wrote a bookful of authenticated instances, since which several new cases have occurred. At Cookstown, near Belfast, for instance, as recorded in the *Daily Telegraph* (London) and in *The Belfast News Letter* at the time, stones fell wholesale under the eyes of the police, and no trickery could be detected. A boy seemed to be the centre of the forces, and sometimes his clothes were cut into shreds in an instant under the eyes of the observers. At Peckham another case, a few years ago, baffled the police hour after hour in broad daylight, to the utter disgust of Scotland Yard; so some weeks later, when a man from there found a boy playing with a little stone-throwing toy some miles from Peckham, it was assumed to explain the whole matter. In the following unpleasant case, from Saturday's *Evening Standard*, it is a proper matter for inquiry among competent and well-informed people, whether the house in which previous annoyances had occurred is haunted, or whether the servant is one of those unfortunate people in whose vicinity very low manifestations take place. Among those competent to sift the case, these points are quite as open for examination as that of trickery:—

ON Saturday, at the Lambeth Police-court, Sarah Ann Frances, 18 years of age, a servant, was charged with wilfully doing damage to a door at the residence of her mistress, Mrs. Augusta Howard, residing in Cerise-road, Hanover Park, Peckham. The Prisoner had been in the service of the prosecutrix, a lady over 80 years of age, some eight months. Within a few days after she had entered the service a deal of annoy-

ance was caused by filth of all descriptions being thrown at the doors and windows in front of the house. To such an extent did the nuisance proceed that the police were communicated with, but until Friday morning the secret of the matter was not discovered.—Inspector Rutter, of the P Division, remained in ambush near the house of the Prosecutrix from three to about six o'clock on Saturday morning. The Inspector saw the Prisoner, shortly before six o'clock open the front door, and after looking round do something to the door. He then went over and found the door smothered with filth. Upon seeing the prisoner she declared she had not put the filth there, but the Inspector was satisfied no one else had been near the door from the time he had first commenced his watch. It was further stated that in consequence of the Prisoner having the unpleasant duty so frequently of clearing away the filth from the doors and windows her mistress had raised her wages. The Prisoner kept a kind of diary as to the number of times the nuisance took place, and this she showed to her mistress frequently. The mistress also stated that she had great faith in the Prisoner, and on Sunday night the Prisoner expressed much sympathy for her, and expressed her opinion that some evil spirits must be in the house or neighbourhood. The Inspector stated that a former servant at the house was a short time back convicted at this Court for destroying windows at a house where she was employed. For a long time in that instance the offender managed to elude conviction.—Mr. Chance said he remembered that case, and this was even worse. No doubt the Prisoner's object was to work upon the feelings of her mistress so as to get a still further rise of wages or reward.—The Prisoner now denied the charge, but Mr. Chance said he should remand her in order to ascertain something more of her character.

In defending attacks upon mediums, only solicitors and counsel who are publicly avowed Spiritualists should be engaged, in order that the movement may be well represented.

"PASSED to the higher life," on Monday, April 5th, Florence Louisa, beloved child of Frederick Arthur Nosworthy, and E. Louisa Thompson Nosworthy, and granddaughter of the late Mr. George Thompson, M.P.

MR. C. R. WILLIAMS, mesmerist, of 6, Field View, London-fields, informs us that several good mesmeric sensitives are among the frequenters of the spiritualistic meetings at the foregoing address.

At the Council Meeting of the National Association of Spiritualists last Tuesday, it was resolved to, next month, recommend the reduction of the number of members of the Council to thirty-six, and to have a general election of the whole of the managers. The case of Mr. F. O. Matthews, also of other mediums endangered by the state of the law, was referred to the consideration of the General Purposes Committee. Mrs. Maltby gave notice that she would quit her occupancy of some of the rooms of the Association on the 12th of July next.

DEATH UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF AN ANÆSTHETIC.—Yesterday, at Southampton, an inquest was held on the body of Herbert Greenwood, a resident of Lymington, aged 36. The deceased came to Southampton on Monday, with his own medical attendant, to undergo a dental operation. Having been examined and pronounced a fit subject for the administration of chloroform, he was put under the influence of the anæsthetic, and two teeth had been drawn when it was found that he had ceased to breathe. All efforts to restore respiration by artificial means were fruitless. A verdict absolving the medical man and dentist from all blame was returned. "*The Echo*," April 14th, 1880.

MR. DALE writes to us that to-night at 6.30, at a meeting of the Marylebone Society of Spiritualists, Quebec Hall, Great Quebec Street, some healing mediums will probably be in attendance.

COLONEL W. GORDON and Mrs. Gordon in speaking out publicly in *The Pioneer* newspaper, of Allahabad, have given a great impetus to Spiritualism in India. Previously the movement had taken deep root in the best society there, but Mrs. Gordon's letter published in non-anonymous form, has encouraged numbers of quiet friends of the movement to be less reticent.

IN reference to the fact of dilatoriness in sending information to us about Mr. Matthews having been arrested in Keighley, until it was too late for any of our readers to act upon the news, Mr. Morrell of Keighley writes—"There was little time to prepare any defence, as he returned here the evening before the day of trial." Meanwhile he was more than a week in Newcastle.

THE DEFENCE OF MR. MATTHEWS.—Mr. Morrell, of Keighley, has forwarded us *The Keighley News* of April 3rd, containing the following paragraph at the end of a report relating to the defence of Mr. Matthews before the three justices, Mr. J. Craven, Mr. W. Haggas, and Mr. J. Clough. The local superintendent of police, it will be seen, was a very active mover in the matter. Mr. James Sharphouse, tailor, having given his testimony, he was "cross-examined by Mr. Neill, who appeared for the defence: He did not believe in Spiritualism, and had gone to the *séance* only to expose the trickery and nonsense of such proceedings. He had told Mr. Sargeson that his wife had had, and was going to have, an interview with a medium, but Mr. Sargeson made no demur. He believed that Mrs. Sargeson was *compos mentis*.—Mr. Neill here suggested that if his client agreed not to trouble this neighbourhood again with his Spiritualism, the magistrate should inflict a fine upon the defendant, and the case should not be gone into farther. The suggestion, however, was not accepted, and the case was proceeded with.—Mrs. Sharphouse, wife of the former witness, gave corroborative evidence, and said that Matthews told her that she had fifteen years ago adopted a pretty blue eyed girl of whom she was very fond. This however, was not the case.—Cross-examined by Mr. Neill: She did not believe in Spiritualism.—Mr. Neill urged in defence that his client had not committed an offence under the 4th Section of the Vagrancy Act of George IV., which required that someone should have been deceived before a conviction could be granted. His client had neither deceived nor injured anyone, and Mr. Sharphouse had had a good joke for his 5s. He thought that instead of allowing Mrs. Sargeson to go and hear a lot of "twaddle" Mr. Sharphouse ought to have informed her of the folly of doing so, and have tried to prevent her. He believed that the witness had paid the money merely to press the case against the defendant.—After a short consultation, the magistrates said they thought they would not be fulfilling their duty did they not send the defendant to prison, and with regard to Mr. Sharphouse, they were of opinion that he had done quite right in acting as he did. The Bench then announced their decision to commit Matthews to prison for three months, that period being the longest they could give for one offence.—Mr. Neill then stated that his client had instructed him that he would appeal against the decision.—On this, Supt. Ireland said that he would strengthen his position by going on with the second charge.—After some discussion defendant agreed to take no farther steps in the matter, and the second charge was adjourned for a fortnight, when it will be withdrawn if no appeal is made against the decision of the Bench."

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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 railways, 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, conjurers, 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 sittings 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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