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Review.

THE OCCULT WORLD.*

(Concluded).

ARE THE PHENOMENA OF OCCULTISM AND OF PHYSICAL MEDIUMSHIP IDENTICAL?

Ever since the Theosophical Society was born into the world, we have watched with interest to see if its members had any phenomena in their midst differing in kind from those of mediumship; also, whether any evidence beyond that of the assertions of mediums more or less under control, has been produced that the said individuals can govern the phenomena. As yet we have seen no evidence but that of unverified individual assertions, of anything but ordinary mediumship being, in all cases, at the root of the matter, the mysterious powers in the one instance calling themselves "the Brothers," and in the other "John King," "Peter," and so on. Mr. Sinnett's book tends strongly to confirm us in the speculation that the Brothers are but members of the John King fraternity, under another name. Nothing is recorded in Mr. Sinnett's book which the intelligences about a strong medium could not do after a little practice, and some of the spirits about strong physical mediums are eminently jocular, or sometimes intentionally untruthful, as those who are intimately acquainted with mediums who have been living in their own families, can testify from long experience. It seems to be a general law that the lower the spirit, the greater is its direct control over common matter, and its power of producing marvellous physical manifestations.

If Madame Blavatsky controls the phenomena, how is it that Mr. Sinnett is obliged to tell us that "it was out of Madame Blavatsky's power to give an exact explanation how these raps were produced." He adds, "Every effort of occult power is connected with some secret or other," which is unfortunate.

Mr. Sinnett states that the Brothers had "an unconquerable objection to showing off," and that during Madame Blavatsky's first visit to his house, only the slightest of imaginable

* *The Occult World*, by A. P. Sinnett. London: Trubner & Co., 1881.

phenomena were permitted to be exhibited freely. She was allowed to show that raps, "like those which Spiritualists attribute to spirit agency, could be produced at will." He then describes how raps were produced on a table, window pane, glass clockshade, and in every imaginable way, until at last he comes to the point, thus:—

"But the fact that the raps were obedient to the will was readily put beyond dispute, in this way amongst others: working with the window-pane or the clockshade, I would ask to have a name spelled out, mentioning one at random. Then I would call over the alphabet, and at the right letters the raps would come. Or I would ask for a definite number of raps, and they would come. Or for series of raps in some defined rhythmical progression, and they would come. Nor was this all. Madame Blavatsky would sometimes put her hands, or one only, on someone else's head, and make the raps come, audibly to an attentive listener and preceptibly to the person touched, who would feel each little shock exactly as if he were taking sparks off the conductor of an electrical machine."

Probably all the phenomena here described could be obtained with ease through the mediumship of Mrs. Kate Fox-Jencken, under exactly the same conditions, and as she says that they are *not* produced by her will, how can the phenomena themselves negative the assertion, for if they prove the matter "beyond dispute" in the one case, they must do so in the other.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF SEEING THE BROTHERS.

Mr. Sinnett found it "mortifying" to be able to approach no nearer than he did, to the absolute certitude whether "there did not indeed exist men with the wonderful powers ascribed to the adepts." On page 64 is a description of an out-door expedition after a Brother, a slippery individual who could not be found; but on page 73 Mr. Sinnett tells us how he saw a little Thibetan temple, in which Madame Blavatsky told them that a Brother "had passed the previous night," and this is the nearest, though somewhat aggravating, approach which Mr. Sinnett ever had, to a sight of one of these mysterious beings. Not being able to catch sight of a Brother, Mr. Sinnett asked if Madame Blavatsky would deliver a letter from him to one of them. There was a slight hitch at first, no Brother at the outset being found who was willing to receive the communication, but after a time one of them, Koot Hoomi Lal Singh, to whom the book is dedicated, began

to receive and answer Mr. Sinnett's letters. Is Koot Hoomi Lal Singh one of the John King fraternity, communicating through a medium of more than the average education and intelligence? Like John King, he does not give his real name, but his "Thibetan mystic name," taken by him on initiation.

Mr. Sinnett has never seen Koot Hoomi, nor does he mention that any other Theosophical probationer in India has had that privilege, but one day he received a telegram from him, Mr. Sinnett says:—

"And if it is urged that the authoress of *Isis Unveiled* has certainly a command of language which renders it difficult to say what she could not write, the answer is simple. In the production of this book she was so largely helped by the Brothers, that great portions of it are not really her work at all. She never makes any disguise of this fact, though it is one of a kind which it is useless for her to proclaim to the world at large, as it would be perfectly unintelligible except to persons who knew something of the external facts, at all events, of occultism. Koot Hoomi's letters, as I say, are perfectly unlike her own style. But, in reference to some of them, receiving them as I did, while she was in the house with me, it was not mechanically possible that she might have been the writer. Now, the telegram I received at Allahabad, which was wired to me from Jhelum, was in reply specially to a letter I addressed to Koot Hoomi just before leaving Simla, and enclosed to Madame Blavatsky, who had started some days previously, and was then at Amritsur. She received the letter, with its enclosure, at Amritsur on the 27th of October, as I came to know, not merely from knowing when I sent it, but positively by means of the envelope which she returned to me at Allahabad by direction of Koot Hoomi, not in the least knowing why he wished it sent to me. I did not at first see what on earth was the use of the old envelope to me, but I put it away and afterwards obtained the clue to the idea in Koot Hoomi's mind, when Madame Blavatsky wrote me word that he wanted me to obtain the original of the Jhelum telegram.

"Through the agency of a friend connected with the administration of the telegraph department, I was enabled eventually to obtain a sight of the original of the telegram—a message of about twenty words; and then I saw the meaning of the envelope. The message was in Koot Hoomi's own handwriting, and it was an answer from Jhelum to a letter which the delivery post-mark on the envelope showed to

have been delivered at Amritsur on the same day the message was sent. Madame Blavatsky assuredly was herself at Amritsur on that date, seeing large numbers of people there in connection with the work of the Theosophical Society, and the handwriting of Koot Hoomi's letters, nevertheless, appears on a telegram undeniably handed in at the Jhelum office on that date.

"So, although some of Koot Hoomi's letters passed through her hands to me, she is proved not to be their writer, as she is certainly not the producer of their handwriting."

While the matter was yet fresh in the minds of all concerned, a description by the telegraph clerk at Jhelum of the person who sent the message, would have been interesting. The next best thing to actually seeing a brother, is to be acquainted with someone else who has had that privilege. Has Colonel Olcott ever seen one? Mr. Sinnett says but little about him in his book.

Our respected occasional contributor, J. K., has published that he is an Adept. Is he then one of the Occultist Brothers, and a colleague of Koot Hoomi, for if so we have had the privilege of seeing one of the Brothers here in London, far from his Himalayan retreat. He strongly objects to and writes against the taking of animal food, salt, drugs, spices, condiments, alcohol, and fermented liquids, so we presume that by these signs a true Theosophist may be known. He says that "every tobacco smoker has an aura peculiar to himself, created by his habit; like the drunkard, he is surrounded by depraved earth-bound spirits, and continually prompted in the habit which gives them gratification. Whatever he thinks he does for his own pleasure, he really does for these spirits and for their pleasure, and after his death he too will influence individuals to indulge in the depraved habit which gives him the sensual gratification to which he has become accustomed. The man attracts the spirit, and the spirit excites the man." If this be so, how about Madame Blavatsky and her cigarettes, and how about all those Theosophists who smoke? On the authority of an Adept they are all mediums under the influence of the lower spirits.

Koot Hoomi, not being able to meet Mr. Sinnett himself, tried to send to him a mystical ambassador, and wrote Mr. Sinnett the following exceedingly curious particulars about the circumstances:

"I desired Madame Blavatsky to select, among the two or three Aryian Punjabees who study Yog Vidya and are natural mystics, one

whom, without disclosing myself to him too much, I could designate as an agent between yourself and us, and whom I was anxious to despatch to you with a letter of introduction, and have him to speak to you of Yoga and its practical effects. This young gentleman, who is as pure as purity itself, whose aspirations and thoughts are of the most spiritual, ennobling kind, and who, merely through self-exertion, is able to penetrate into the regions of the formless world—this young man is not fit for a drawing-room. Having explained to him that the greatest good might result for his country if he helped you to organize a branch of English mystics, by proving to them practically to what wonderful results led the study of Yog, Madame Blavatsky asked him, in guarded and very delicate terms, to change his dress and turban before starting for Allahabad; for—though she did not give him this reason—they were very dirty and slovenly. You are to tell Mr. Sinnett, she said, that you bring him a letter from the Brother, with whom he corresponds; but if he asks you anything either of him or the other Brothers, answer him simply and truthfully that you are not allowed to expatiate upon the subject. Speak of Yog, and prove to him what powers you have attained. This young man, who had consented, wrote later on the following curious letter:—"Madame," he said, "you who preach the highest standard of morality, of truthfulness, &c., you would have me play the part of an impostor. You ask me to change my clothes at the risk of giving a false idea of my personality and mystifying the gentleman you send me to. . . . Here is an illustration of the difficulties under which we have to labour. Powerless to send you a neophyte before you have pledged yourself to us, we have to either keep back or despatch to you one who, at best, would shock, if not inspire, you at once with disgust."

Is it the duty of initiates to object to clean linen? Are dirtiness and slovenliness among the occult virtues?

THE OBJECTIONS OF THE BROTHERS TO GIVING ABSOLUTE TEST MANIFESTATIONS.

When the news reached us, long ago, of the carriage of small objects over long distances through the mediumship or powers of Madame Blavatsky, we asked if the powers could carry a daily newspaper several thousands of miles on the day of its publication, since that would be evidence. Mr. Sinnett, in his first letter to Koot Hoomi Lal Singh, made the same request, and he says about the reply:—

"The letter I received began, *in medias res*, about the phenomenon I had professed. 'Precisely,' Koot Hoomi wrote, 'because the test of the London newspaper would close the mouths of the sceptics,' it was inadmissible. 'See it in what light you will, the world is yet in its first stage of disenthralment . . . hence unprepared. Very true we work by natural, not supernatural, means and laws. But, as on the one hand, science would find itself unable, in its present state, to account for the wonders given in its name, and on the other the ignorant masses would still be left to view the phenomenon in the light of a miracle, everyone who would thus be made a witness to the occurrence would be thrown off his balance, and the result would be deplorable. Believe me it would be so, especially for yourself, who originated the idea, and for the devoted woman who so foolishly rushes into the wide, open door leading to notoriety. This door, though opened by so friendly a hand as yours, would prove very soon a trap—and a fatal one, indeed, for her. And such is not surely your object. . . . Were we to accede to your desires, know you really what consequences would follow in the trail of success? The inexorable shadow which follows all human innovations moves on, yet few are they who are ever conscious of its approach and dangers. What are, then, they to expect who would offer the world an innovation which, owing to human ignorance, if believed in, will surely be attributed to those dark agencies the two-thirds of humanity believe in and dread as yet? . . . The success of an attempt of such a kind as the one you propose must be calculated and based upon a thorough knowledge of the people around you.'"

The author says that Madame Blavatsky, left to herself, "is always the worst deviser of tests imaginable," and "utterly out of sympathy with the positive and incredulous temperament," in which remarks he describes to the life a marked characteristic of physical mediums, with a few exceedingly rare and good exceptions. He also says that "Madame Blavatsky was untractable and excitable as an experimentalist, and herself no more than the recipient of favours from the Brothers in relation to the greater phenomena." In the beginning of this sentence the characteristics of a physical medium are vividly pictured, and the close of it admits she has no control over some of the phenomena, but has to take what she can get, a fact which, we believe, has never previously been published, notwithstanding its importance.

WALKING BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT.

Few write more severely upon those who base their belief on faith in authority, rather than upon verifiable evidence, than does Madame Blavatsky, in her strictures upon orthodox believers, in her book *Isis Unveiled*. Is it her opinion that the public at large would act rightly, morally and religiously, to accept the belief and to take public action upon it, as Mr. Sinnett has done, that these Brothers have an actual existence in some locality not exactly specified? And that a society with world-wide ramifications should exist and promulgate such of their teachings as it can obtain, for the time at least, only upon the assertions of Madame Blavatsky? If so, why say a word against Catholicism and its head at Rome?

The book, as a whole, is the outcome, and a bold outcome—coming as it does from a good literary man—of honest conviction and of devout faith. We mean faith in the utterances accompanying the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, and do not apply the word "faith" to the descriptions of the phenomena themselves, for the latter are critically and carefully recorded, and the original facts are no doubt entirely genuine. The work is not likely to be popular among Spiritualists, since it seems to present our own phenomena in another guise, and from the imaginary superior standpoint taken up by the believers in "the Brothers." Nor is it likely to be popular with leading Theosophists, since it plainly states that the Theosophical Society was started in an erroneous way, and might, with advantage, begin afresh under new managers. Nor will it be popular with the general public, who will not accept the reality of the genuine phenomena at any price. But it will interest, more or less, all these classes of readers. The work contains more than has hitherto been published in book form, about the early career of Spiritualism in India, and in this respect is of exceptional historical value. The author is true to his convictions, and has taken a bold and honest stand upon them before the public.

A fine opportunity has been lost, for want of some good men working publicly in Spiritualism in London, to have provided an outlet whereby a great number of Spiritualists could have expressed to the general public their indignation at the Fletcher fraud, and their sympathy with the lady who has been swindled by some, and foully slandered by several others, in our ranks. For aught the general public know, most of the Spiritualists in the Kingdom may be sympathisers with the Fletchers, and nothing has been done to remove such a stigma. The treatment the Fletchers' victim has received, ought to weigh heavily on the conscience of the movement.

HOW ARE THE DEAD RAISED UP?

Some will say, how are the dead raised, and with what kind of body do they come? The epithet "fool" is applied by St. Paul to those who ask this question in a captious spirit, but not to the honest seeker after truth. If anything is clearly taught in the passage before us, it is that the body which dies and is burned or buried in earth or sea and is resolved into its primitive elements, is not identical with the spiritual body of the resurrection (v. 36). The sowing here alluded to does not refer to the burial of the remains as is often supposed. We are sowed upon earth in an animal body, the spiritual body is developed, and is quickened or blossoms forth whenever the former dies. After the grain of wheat is cast into the earth it dies and its death is but a signal for the appearance of the tender blade. In accordance with the same law, we, too, who are now sown in the embryonic state of being, may expect to burst forth in immortal bloom. Our earthly bodies are sown in corruption, are liable to disease, decay and dissolution. They may be analysed, dissected, divided, scattered and resolved into their primitive elements and ultimate atoms. But we are raised in incorruption, for we then attain the condition of unparticled matter. But what do we mean by a spiritual body? St. Paul tells us, there is a natural (or animal) body and there is a spiritual body. These two are clearly co-existent and co-terminous. The spiritual body is invisible to the mortal eye. There is a system within a system; man within man. There is a force that lies deeper than the nervous system, and which must not be mistaken for it. It is this which preserves my personal identity from head to foot, though the particles which compose my nervous, circulatory and muscular systems, have changed many times since my birth. It is the spiritual body, the intimate vehicle of the soul, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. This spiritual body is separated from the physical by the change we call death. Thus death and the resurrection are simultaneous, I had almost said identical, and the same event. The body dies and we are raised from the dead body. The scriptures indeed speak of a general resurrection at the end of the world. This doubtless refers to the fulness of time, in the advanced ages of the world, when the higher type of humanity shall daily behold in open vision the angelic beings, and the two worlds shall speak together face to face. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished. At death we

shall leave the earthly casket with a form ethereal and ready for flight to the higher world. Oh, that we may so live that our eyes shall dwell upon, and our hearts repose in a fairer clime than this. Let us so shape our earthly lives that hereafter we may find a home in a summer land, where no boisterous storms shall chill us; where the flowers of love shall ever bloom, and our mansions shall glisten in the sheen of holiness for ever.—The Rev. Mr. Miller, (*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.)

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents who sometimes express opinion 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.]

ADEPTS.

Sir,—Mr. Sinnett is talking rubbish! Everyone endowed with a particular nature, recognisable enough to the possessors of it, knows perfectly well, whether he chooses to confess it, or not, that he and those like him could become what the Theosophists call adepts here in England, and that those unlike never could become so, though they spent the rest of their natural lives in the Himalayas or anywhere else. He knows also the kind of discipline that would have to be gone through for the perfect development of such powers. But if he is a sensible man he asks himself whether it would be worth while.

One thing is undoubted—that if people endowed with this nature were to link themselves to the Divine within, i.e., obey their conscience, and taking a firm hold of their peculiar powers, band themselves together for healing and help, as much might be done in other places as ever was done in Thibet, without bastinado and without blarney. From those who chance to agree with me, I should be glad to hear if they will write to me at your office. J. A. CAMPBELL.

Mr. A. P. SINNETT, author of *The Occult World*, left London for Paris a few days ago, en route for India.

FASCINATION.—A short paper on fascination is contributed to *Nature* by Mr. Carl Orchenius. He says: In the interior of the province of Valdivia, South Chili, a species of woodsnipe is often caught by the natives in the following manner. When the bird flies into one of the low bushes, two men on horseback go around it in the same direction, swinging meanwhile their lasso over the bush. After ten or more rounds, one man slips down from his horse, while the other continues to ride around the undergrowth and leads his companion's horse. The dismounted rider carefully creeps on to the place where the snipe sits in a state of stupor and nearly motionless from the effects of the riders' circular movements, and kills it with a quick blow of a stick. When the writer was first told of this mode of capturing a bird he would not believe it, but he himself, in 1853 or 1854, took part in this very sort of method of taking the bird, in the hacienda San Juan, in Valdivia. He left the house without a gun. He saw a snipe fall into a dense bush, and expressed his regret to a servant that he had no gun so that he might secure a good specimen of a not very common species for the natural history collection. "Never mind," said the servant, "if you wish, we will get the bird," and the bird was caught, without injuring it, substantially in the way above described.

MR. EASTON AND AN APPARITION.

At the Fancy Fair held last week at the Royal Albert Hall, and at the stall of Lady Archibald Campbell, photographs were sold, taken from the original water-colour drawing by the miniature painter, Mr. Reginald Easton, of "The Portrait of a Ghost." The apparition is stated to have been seen by him in a haunted house, three times consecutively at 3 a.m., and to have been painted by him on the spot. The face of the spirit does not resemble that of any of the ladies who officiated at the bazaar, for it is the quintessence of ugliness.

SEANCES IN THE STREETS OF ROME.

By SIGNOR RONDÌ.

THE TRANSPORTATION OF SOLID OBJECTS.

The following incidents occurred during my recent visit to Rome :—

On my way to that city, I wrote from Florence to my friend Signor T., one of the best private mediums in Italy, to meet me at the railway station. Somehow I made a mistake of half-an-hour in the appointment, so arrived in Rome before time, and went to the Hotel di Milano, where he subsequently joined me. He was suffering from a bad cold, and had fits of coughing. I suggested to him to take some common gum, and to keep it in his mouth. After dinner another friend joined us in a walk, and I recommended him not to forget the gum before going home. He then went into a trance, and his spirit guide told us it was unnecessary to buy the gum as they (the spirits) would bring it to us.

In accordance with their instructions we stopped at the corner of a street, Via della Croce, and under the gaslight we, all three, put our hands one over the other. In a few seconds we experienced a shaking of the hands, and on separating them we found some pieces of gum between the hands of the friend who last joined us. We again put our hands together, and I felt something passing into mine, but not as if slipped into them between the edges. These were three pieces of gum, each about as big as a Spanish nut. The medium then had the same experience, and so on all three of us alternately, two or three pieces being given each time, till we were tired, when a shower of small lumps of gum fell upon our heads from above. Thus ended my first *séance* in Rome.

The second *séance* also took place in gaslight, in the street. The medium passed into a trance, and after speaking upon spiritualistic

events in England, of which the Italian newspapers were full, the spirit promised to bring me something, and directed us to leave the Via Nazionale, in which we were walking, for another street close by. There the medium, who was still in the trance state, seized both my hands in his own, and after the lapse of a minute or two, I heard something falling on the pavement as heavily as a stone. I looked down, and saw nothing near me, but farther on I saw a small object, which I picked up. By the light of the street lamp I saw it to be a little American flag, with stars and stripes, and on it written in ink was the name of a person I knew. It was a small object, not at all corresponding to the heavy noise heard.

On a subsequent evening while taking our walk, the medium, as usual, without any conversation in relation to Spiritualism, was put into the trance state. His principal guide, who has even in Italy the familiar English name of John King, said he would then and there bring me something from London. While I was walking arm-in-arm with the medium, and while the spirit was telling me about events in London, proving to me he had been present at them, I heard something fall close to me. I picked it up, and found it to be a small glass bottle, of about two ounces capacity, corked tightly, and I put it in my pocket, without the entranced medium paying any apparent attention to my act. I left him after he had been awakened from his trance, without telling him anything about the circumstance. On my return home I uncorked the bottle, and to my great surprise found in it a sheet of paper, the size of one leaf of a sheet of foolscap, printed in English, containing particulars of a private nature relating to three persons I knew in London, and which by no process conceivable to me could have reached Rome by natural means. The contents were of a legal nature, and gave me most important information about private affairs of which I had been previously ignorant.

On my return recently to London, I exhibited the paper to one of the persons interested, who was astounded at finding it in my possession, and said it must have been taken from his house.

As your more experienced readers know, I have had over twenty years' experience with various celebrated mediums, more especially those who present materialisation manifestations, and I take everything quite coolly and critically for just what it is worth, without special enthusiasm; and my opinion is that my

Italian friend is one of the best mediums I ever met, for the presentation of all classes of physical manifestations under good conditions. I am obliged, for the present, to designate him only as Signor T., without giving his full name, because he is not a professional medium, and like most private mediums takes little interest in his own powers, and does not usually care to make them known. But some of your readers have, to my knowledge, had *séances* with him, and consider his powers to be remarkable.

In a week or two I will record some more manifestations with him, of another class.

22, Montague-place, Russell-square, London, June 14th, 1881.

THE REIGN OF LAW, OR THE INVARIABILITY OF NATURE.

BY HENRY G. ATKINSON, F.G.S., AUTHOR OF "LETTERS TO MISS MARTINEAU."

Every civilised community makes laws, according to which the "body politic" agrees to act. In nature we find laws to be constant and to be relied upon. Laws of action, to which wise men conform, and in the knowledge of which the power of man chiefly consists, have given rise to the expression that "knowledge is power." In the words of Francis Bacon, "*Scientia et potentia humana in idem coincidunt*," &c., and if we take into account the pre-existing conditions as well as the law of their development, we obtain the conception of "cause" in its fullest extent, and we thus see how the word "form" may be replaced by "law" or "cause."

Plato's idea of form, was of abstract formative principle, taking the form of the effect for its cause, or "final cause," ignored by Bacon.

The word law is used for the form or principle according to which an effect or change takes place, or it stands for the particular cause or nature or potential ability and uniformity of cause and consequence, like conditions always producing like results, or they would not be alike, because by like we mean equal to the same. But the law does not reign or rule, but is simply the rule according to which the event takes place, in the invariable cause and consequence, or we fall back on Plato's abstract ideas embodied as causes. I have read with pleasure Mr. Podmore's most interesting and suggestive article on Mr. Denton's book on the Darwinian theory of life, in which he says, "Everywhere, from the wind that is swept around us by the rush of the rolling world, up through the life of crystals, of plants and animals, to the deeds and words of man himself, we

see the reign of inexorable law. The explanation, which is sufficient for one set of phenomena, is sufficient for all," meaning a unity in diversity, and that all through, from gravitation, to instinct and mind, all must be derived from one general or summary law or principle differentiated, but analogous in principle, as exhibited in the similitude observed throughout. But we must not follow Mr. Darwin in mistaking similitude for sameness, when all that can be logically inferred is a general principle of development—a principle we find to be the rule, but which is not the cause and ruling power by which the rule itself is determined.

Again, Mr. Podmore says that "The reign of law is everywhere, or it is nowhere; the whole world is miraculous, or there is no miracle at all." The word law is also used for the eternal and uniform sequence of events in which we must take the consequence, sometimes spoken of as divine, as when Plato regards truth, eternal truth, to be the body of God, and light as his shadow, in Persia expressed that "God is hidden under all that shines." Mr. Podmore thinks that "it must be admitted that, in our present state of knowledge, we cannot wholly account for our perception of beauty." Socrates did not see the difficulty, but said that we must begin with the simplest elements, as, for instance, a glazed pot, and ending in the principles of harmony, contrast, and so on; and he said that even philosophy itself "is not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose, but musical as is Apollo's lute." I may pursue the argument another time.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.

In this week's *Truth*, is a brief notice of the career of Captain R. F. Burton. He was originally destined for the Church.

COSTLY LACES.—As the Countess of Caithness once expressed to us her surprise at the enormous value of the lace worn a few evenings before at her house by Mrs. Fletcher, we recently asked her for some more particulars about it, and have received the following reply:—"You ask me what is my opinion of the beautiful lace I have seen worn by the celebrated Mrs. Fletcher. All I can tell you is, that I thought it some of the most lovely lace I had ever seen, and I am a pretty good judge, for I possess very valuable lace of my own, am a great admirer of beautiful lace, and have taken great delight in minutely examining the rich and exquisite fabrics at the different International Exhibitions, particularly the last one in Paris, where I suppose the best of specimens were exhibited. But I must say that the rich lace worn by Mrs. Fletcher could vie and compete with them all for beauty and costliness, and while greatly complimenting her on its beauty, you may imagine I was much perplexed to understand how she could afford to adorn herself in such rich lace and such valuable jewellery, having so lately known her in a very different position."

THE "CALL" OF A CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

From the "Chicago Times."

Reading and hearing the many reports of the so-called spirit manifestations and materialisations which are said to be taking place at the present time, my memory reverts back to a time when I heard what was then considered a very strange and incredible statement. In the summer of the year 1841 I was one day in attendance at a covenant meeting of the regular Baptist church, at Cooper's Plains, N. Y., of which I was then a member—when Brother B. F. Balcom arose and said he had a matter bearing upon his mind of which he was obliged to speak. He said he had been called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the matter had been presented and urged upon him in such a manner that he was obliged to make it known to the church and ask its co-operation by granting him license to preach; and the manner of his calling he stated in this wise: On a certain time, which he stated, he was going to a barn of his which stood some distance from his house, to feed some stock which was there, when at a certain point on the way he heard a voice say: "You are not about your Master's business." He said he looked all about, it being in an open field and not yet dark, but could see no one, and he passed on. A few days later as he was passing the same place, at about the same time of day, he heard the same voice say to him: "You are not about your Master's business." He again looked all about but no one was visible and he passed on again as before; but soon after as he was again passing the same place the same voice again said to him: "You are not about your Master's business;" and as he paused to muse upon the singularity of the occurrence he was informed that the business referred to was to preach the gospel, and "woe" was pronounced upon him if he did it not. The same voice, he said, came to him at night in his own room, and he conversed with it upon the subject in question. He objected on the ground that he was only a farmer and not sufficiently educated to undertake so great a work; but no amount of objection availed anything. He had been chosen, and he must do the work assigned him. The voice claimed to be St. Paul, and told him if he would go to a certain unoccupied room in the upper part of his house, at a specified time in a night which he mentioned, he would show himself (St. Paul) to him and talk more about the matter; in compliance with which he repaired to the room at the time appointed, where in a short time

he saw two persons, who claimed to be St. Paul and Jesus Christ, and he talked with them and they with him concerning the matter in hand.

This is what I heard him tell at the covenant meeting . . . Now this was several years before the advent of modern Spiritualism or the Rochester rappings, and the church did "go back" on the story very much. Some said they thought Brother Balcom was "crazy," and others thought he had had a very bright experience, and after due deliberation they granted him license to preach. I afterwards saw him ordained as an Evangelist, and heard him preach many times. He was considered a useful man in his profession, and I never could see that he was "crazy." He was peculiar: in other words, he was Brother Balcom and had a way and will of his own. He preached nearly forty years, and in the fall of 1880 "passed over." Perhaps he's preaching yet.

THE INSPIRATION OF AUTHORS AND POETS.

Signor Trémeschini, of the Pantheon, at Paris, in his enlightened criticism of Signor Fanciullacci's Dantesque poem, alludes to the fact of the latter having let the world know in the title page of his book that his poetry was dictated to him, as "a rare example of honesty." And surely it was so. Such ingenuousness is a rare occurrence. I know of no other example of it, as far as concerns works of poetry and fiction (in both of which spirits certainly excel, more than in questions of matter of fact) except in the case of Mr. T. Lake Harris. Shakspeare did not do it, although he, like Signor Fanciullacci, "never erased a line," as Ben Jonson tells us in his *Discoveries*. Milton, I think, did not do it, until his seventh book of *Paradise Lost*, when he disclosed it, because, I suppose, he could not keep it in any longer. Perhaps his guide "Urania" insisted on it; for like some other clairaudient mediums (I say "some other" advisedly, for some mediums would discourage such exclusive attendance), Milton had a guide, nay, a "control," one "Urania," whom he called his "celestial patroness," and "whose voice divine he followed." *In fact she dictated to him his best poetry, as I shall show, and gave him "style."* Now, like many other controls, this "celestial patroness," "Urania," with better pretensions probably than many spirits to a high title, skilled in *diablerie* though she was, yet by no means necessarily worthy of the very lofty name she

adopted, informed her medium, Milton, (and, as I said, Milton informed the public) that his poetry was dictated to him by one who was actually sister to "Wisdom," as we shall demonstrate.

We are accustomed to high-sounding names given to themselves, often very inappropriately, by spirits, but few surpass this!

Milton, however, while fully accepting this spirit's definition of her own great dignity, seems to have had some hesitation in accepting unreservedly the name itself, heavenly as it was, which this spirit assumed, for he thus addresses her:—

Descend from Heaven, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian Hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.
The meaning, not the name I call: for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st, but heav'nly born,
Before the hills appear'd or fountain flow'd,
Thou with Eternal Wisdom did'st converse,
Wisdom thy sister.

We may believe then, that although the spirit who visited and dictated to him adopted the name of Urania, yet the reason why Milton himself was not quite satisfied with it, was not certainly because he doubted the dignity and heavenly origin of his guide, but because he might have considered that the name had been contaminated, as Urania, in fact, happened to be that of one of the Muses; and actually one of the names of Venus. So it is natural to suppose that, on this account notwithstanding the very high meaning of the name itself, Milton might have supposed that his celestial patroness should have chosen some other discriminative appellation, even had it been less grandiose. The lines quoted, themselves point to this explanation, as well as to the beautiful idea of introducing feminine influence into Empyrean Council.

Again he sings in acknowledgement of Urania's dictations and visitations:—

In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east: still govern thou my song,
Urania!

In the ninth book, Milton actually tells us the two methods Urania took to use his mediumship. That firstly, she "*dictated* to him slumbering;" that is, apparently, dosing but sufficiently awake to catch the sound, or we should never have had the sense. The other means adopted by Urania was, "*inspiring* easy his unpremeditated verse." So we see that, under any circumstances, what he wrote

in his heroics (for as we have seen even from short extracts, he wrote very charming lines himself also) was not premeditated by himself; nay, he looked to her for his words and ideas, and was only able to express himself in admirable poetry on the moot questions of heaven and hell, as he says:—

If answerable style I can obtain
Of my Celestial Patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me slumb'ring, or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse.

That unmistakable medium, Sir Walter Scott—for such an article in your journal of Dec. 10, proves him, if he saw Byron's ghost so plainly—did not transfer to the world that which he probably wrote from dictation or impressional writing coming from that source. But the truth came out, nevertheless, by a side wind. Lockhart, Scott's biographer, quoting James Ballantyne, Scott's printer, says: "*The Bride of Lammermoor* was not only written, but published, before Mr. Scott was able to rise from his bed; and he assured me that when it was first put into his hands, in a complete shape, he did not recollect one single incident, character, or conversation it contained."

I may, I hope, be excused, for alluding here to an incident which regards myself, especially as it is connected with a ghost story. I was, as a lad, reading with a tutor at Twickenham. I remember well his asking me "which of Walter Scott's novels do you like best?" I answered, unhesitatingly, "*The Bride of Lammermoor*." Since I have read the origin of the book, I have sometimes thought that the cause of my preference arose, perhaps, from its not improbable Spiritualistic origin, being of somewhat a Spiritualistic turn of mind myself. The house in which I was then an inhabitant was the house where that intellectual and fair authoress and wit, the friend, and after enemy, of Pope, used to reside, the Lady Mary Montague. And in this house the wraith of that lady was then reported occasionally to show herself. My dear old tutor, his wife, and their only child have long since been dead and gone, so I betray no confidence in asserting what was told me by the lady of the house, many years ago; which was, that not only strange noises used to be heard on the stairs during the holidays, but that, on one occasion, a lady friend came to stay with them. The next morning after her arrival, this lady came to breakfast with a very long face, begging that a post-chaise (post-chaises were then the vehicles) might be ordered at once, that she might go

away, as a lady in ancient costume had been sitting on her bed, and had frightened her almost out of her senses. The visitor was as good as her word, and took her departure at once. This room was, in my time, kept sacred to the tutor's only son, who was then at Oxford. I do not know whether we young men kept the ghost away, though the above was not, if I remember right, the only occasion on which the ghost appeared. What I do know is, that I have often laid awake at night, in the room which I occupied, alone, invoking the ghost to pay me a visit, which visit was, however, never vouchsafed. My time had not then come to see anything so very tangible in the ghost line, as Lady Mary's ghost even then is said to have appeared. Again, Dickens did not tell the world that he was helped by spirits, although in less guarded moments he disclosed to intimate friends that which looks very like it; and although, like Fanciullacci, he wrote much from what he heard clairaudiently. Your correspondent from Florence tells us that "Fanciullacci simply writes down what he distinctly hears declared to him;" while in Dr. Crowell's *Identity of Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism* we find the following:—"Mr. G. H. Lewes, in an article written by him and published in the *Fortnightly Review*, says Dickens once declared to me that every word he said by his characters was distinctly heard by him."

Again, Dr. Crowell says, "Mr. James T. Fields also bore testimony to the mediumship of Mr. Dickens, in his lectures on *Fiction and its Ancient Authors*. He there said, 'Dickens was at one time so taken possession of by the characters of whom he was writing, that they followed him everywhere, and would never let him alone for a moment. He told me that when he was writing the *Old Curiosity Shop*, the creatures of his imagination so haunted him, that they would neither allow him to sleep nor eat in peace; that Little Nell was constantly at his elbow, no matter where he might happen to be, claiming his attention, and demanding his sympathy, as if jealous when he spoke to anyone else. When he was writing *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Mrs. Gamp kept him in such paroxysms of laughter, by *whispering to him* in the most inopportune places—sometimes even in church—that he was compelled to fight her off by main force when he did not want her company, and he threatened to have nothing more to do with her unless she could behave better and *come only when she was called*.'"

If the *post mortem* part of *Edwin Drood* is

not so amusing as Dickens might have made his work had he lived to finish it, it may have been that, in fluidic life, he had not the same spirits to help him as he had in earth life, but had then to rely simply on his own genius. That this last part of *Edwin Drood* was a *post mortem* work of Charles Dickens I personally see no reason to dispute. This is certain, that the *Old Curiosity Shop*, and *Martin Chuzzlewit* are among his best works. Dr. Crowell also tells us that Mrs. Beecher Stowe says, in relation to her celebrated work, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: "She did not write it, it was given to her; it passed before her. She had to tell it as it came to her, and suffered in so doing." After the above it would be difficult to say that we are not indebted to spirits for instruction and amusement. I am considerably indebted to back numbers of your own journal for the above details. SCRUTATOR.

AN "ADEPT" ON RATIONAL ASCETICISM.

Fruits, cereals, unfermented vegetable produce, and animal products are alone fully assimilated as food, and build up a body of sound material. As this food is health-giving and life-giving, and is the best and only natural food for human beings, those who live entirely upon it remain in a state of health, and require no alcoholic stimulants. All other food is wrong, injurious and worthless, be it ever so costly. Only that is food upon which man can live exclusively; availing himself of the aid of water, air, fire and earth, which, by themselves alone, are insufficient to maintain him; man can live upon cereals or fruit entirely, whereas, should a man persist in living upon animal food exclusively, he would in a few months die of disease and starvation.

The flesh eater causes his physical nature to extract nutriment from that which is not food, but dead matter; the vegetarian partakes only of real food, so his physical nature, not being tortured by antagonistic dead matter, is more at rest and peace, and thus comes nearer to the divine design.*

Animal products, such as milk and eggs, which Nature provides in her bounty, and which can be taken without destroying any living being, are permissible, as they are very nutritious and conducive to health. Milk is the most vitalising food known. Consumption, if not too far advanced, can be cured by living exclusively upon the pure milk of cows or

* The stomach always demands that to which it has been accustomed. Rule the stomach, and let not the stomach rule you. The stomach once set right, lust and animal passion exist no more.

goats, while a fruit diet, if continued for sufficient time, will throw off almost every organic disease.

Many Vegetarians believe that every vegetable product is food for man, but therein they are in error, for the vegetable realm contains many injurious, poisonous products, from which we must abstain. Likewise we must avoid partaking of those vegetables which may be regarded as the proper food for other animals. All larged-leaved vegetables, and roots which are the right food for an animal with a multiple stomach are wrong as food for man, as the digestion of such food causes fermentation in the human stomach, consequently yeast is engendered and ultimate disease must result.

Whatever causes fermentation causes disease, and as all fermentation is identical, every kind of food liable to fermentation, generates the injurious alcohol. Therefore also the only right bread, one which does not engender disease and which gives the requisite nitrogen to the organism, is whole-wheaten meal unfermented bread, unsalted, and unpoisoned by muriatic acid. The wheat ground under immediate inspection is preferable to the bran and flour which are sold as whole meal; nothing should be added to the meal but water; but for improvement or luxury milk or eggs may be mixed with the dough, which kneaded and rolled to half-an-inch thickness and baked right off upon a griddle, gives real wholesome bread, not trash. Accustom yourself to eat this bread, and you will know the real staff of life. Where such bread is not obtainable, unsalted sea biscuits may serve as substitute; taken in pure milk they are very good diet.

Tea and pure coffee have valuable medicinal qualities, especially the latter. Cocoa and unsipped chocolate are, for the more delicate, also valuable products. But all spices, salt, liquors and wines must be always strictly avoided.

The Rational Ascetic's bill of fare consists of cereals, farinaceous preparations, potatoes, and pulse. The best ripe fruits* always form part of the meal, while olive oil, butter, cheese and honey or sugar impart wholesome seasoning.

Living upon this food one can know real, permanent happiness, and become pure and fit to receive the knowledge of the absolute.

J. K.

*The Rational Ascetic rigidly abstains from every product which is not of the best quality, and partakes only of that which is pure, delicious and nutritious.

MR. F. O. MATTHEWS is still carrying on the Sunday services, at the Ladbroke Hall, Notting Hill.

A GHOST story in verse, "The Bleeding Stone," written by Sir Walter Scott for the father of Mr. Henry G. Atkinson, and never previously published, will appear shortly in a well-known periodical.

CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON's *Glance at the Passion Play* will be issued at our office in a few days. It contains several pages of his utterances about Spiritualism, and as regards get-up is about the most handsome specimen of book-printing ever published in connection with the movement.

NEXT Sunday evening, at seven o'clock, Mr. J. C. Hunt will deliver an address to the Marylebone Society of Spiritualists, Quebec Hall, 25, Great Quebec-street, London, on "The Power of Spiritualism," as exemplified in the experience of a sceptic. Next Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m., Miss Gay will lecture on "Man and Woman, Spiritual Beings," and on Wednesday at 8 p.m. Mr. F. O. Matthews will occupy the platform.

A PEASANT at Havay, Belgium, lost a child and a cow, so believed himself to be bewitched. He was instructed by an alleged clairvoyant to burn the first woman he met and who chanced to be a neighbour. He induced her to enter his house, then proceeded "to roast her as he would a chicken on a spit." A priest rescued the unfortunate woman, and her hallucinated assailant was arrested.

MESMERISING CENTIPEDES.—Eastern residents suffering from over-exuberant animal life will hear with pleasure that centipedes are susceptible to mesmerism. A Chinese servant at Foochow, says the *Foochow Herald*, seeing a centipede eight inches long crawling up the wall, imitated the cackling of a fowl. The reptile moved slower and slower, and at length fell to the ground, where it was speedily despatched. The experiment met with similar success on repetition, and the Celestial declares that fowls are very partial to centipedes, which they kill by one peck on a particular part of the head, and devour with great gusto. Are we to conclude from this therefore that fowls can fascinate centipedes like snakes do birds?—*The Graphic*.

THE FLETCHERS.—A correspondent sends us the query whether the Fletchers did not freely restore to Mrs. Hart-Davies what she had freely given. Certainly not. When first applied to at Lake Pleasant they gave up nothing, and subsequently, when a policeman was at the door, gave up a part. Of the property un-restored to this day, Mrs. Hart-Davies deposed towards the close of the trial at the Old Bailey, as reported in the *Daily Telegraph* of April 8th, "Among the things not recovered is an Indian teak box of lace, which I value at between £3,000 and £4,000. There are also certain articles of jewellery missing, including a watch, and certain rings which were precious to me on account of personal recollections." The Fletchers showed small repentance, for afterwards one or both of them in America took steps to prosecute Mrs. Hart Davies (likewise Dr. Mack,) as the former deposed at Bow Street, for recovering her own property. The small amount of property the Fletchers were latterly charged with stealing in America, referred only to that recovered by Detective Wood; the property in England and that restored by Fletcher, was not included, we presume because the court would have no jurisdiction. The great value of the bulk of the property was a theme of comment in the American newspapers at the time. It is a sad thing that a refined and generous woman like Mrs. Hart-Davies should have fallen into the hands of such wretches. She returned to England from France at the time her father, Dr. Heurtley, arrived from America.

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF PROFESSOR ZOLLNER'S EXPERIMENTS.

LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

FRONTISPIECE:—The room at Leipsic in which most of the Experiments were conducted.

PLATE I:—Experiments with an Endless String.

PLATE II:—Leather Bands Interlinked and Knotted under Professor Zollner's Hands.

PLATE III:—Experiments with an Endless Bladder-band and Wooden Rings.

PLATE IV:—Result of the Experiment.

PLATE V:—Result of the Experiment on an Enlarged Scale.

PLATE VI:—Experiments with Coins in a Secured Box.

PLATE VII:—The Representation of Test Circumstances, under which Slate-writing was obtained.

PLATE VIII:—Slate-writing Extraordinary.

PLATE IX:—Slate-writing in Five Different Languages.

PLATE X:—Details of the Experiment with an Endless band and Wooden Rings.

PREFACES.

Mr. C. C. MASSEY'S PREFACE:—Professor Zollner and his Works—The Value of Testimony considered—Sources of Fallacy—How can Medial Phenomena be Explained?—The Value of Scientific Authority—Mr. A. R. Wallace's answer to Hume's *Essay on Miracles*—Spiritualism an Aggregation of Proven Facts—The Attack upon Henry Slade—Spirit Messages—Slade's

Career after leaving England—Professor Zollner's Polemic—Items relating to the English Translation.

PROFESSOR ZOLLNER'S PREFACE (Dedication of the Work to Mr. William Crookes):—Workers in a New Field of Research—Thoroughness of the Labours of Mr. Crookes—The Moral Necessity of the Strife about Spiritualism—The Immortality of the Best Works of Human Genius.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I:—Gauss's and Kant's Theory of Space—The practical application of the Theory in Experiments with Henry Slade—True Knots produced upon a Cord while its ends were in view and sealed together—The principles involved in the tying of knots in Space of One, Two, Three and Four Dimensions—Berkeley's Theory of Vision—The Conception of Space derived from Experience—Kant on Spiritual Existence.

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