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MATERIALIZATION MANIFESTATIONS.

BY FREDERICA SHOWERS.

How is it that we see so little in your paper now regarding materialisations? No doubt our pseudo-scientific adversaries are well contented at having displaced us from the commanding position we once occupied, and at having struck, as they imagine, a vital blow at Spiritualism. Those of our own members also, who, have never had the advantage of developing the rarer gifts of mediumship among their own intimate relatives or friends, must feel somewhat uncertain of the truth of their belief, in this the most wonderful and important phase of Spiritualism, the culminating point not only of our modern revelation, but the sum and crown of scriptural teaching.

Too much space is taken up, I fear, by those who, having "rid themselves of human conceptions and religious side issues, are rejoicing in the possession of the tremendous, but unfortunately undefined powers of Chaldean Sages, Persian Magis, Greek Theurgists, Egyptian Hermetists, Buddhist Rahats, and Indian Yogis." We dwellers in the benighted West, however, though we may not possess the logical acuteness to refute their subtle sophistries, are forced to confess that all this mighty array of learning, has not only failed to satisfy one single yearning of the human heart, but has actually mocked it, by pelting with stones those who had humbly asked for bread. What then remains for us? Koot Hoomi and the mystic brothers have effectually entrenched themselves in their Himalayan fortresses. The "gospel according to Mr. Sinnett" seems to belie that signification—while the apostles, Blavatsky and Olcott, refuse to slake the thirst of most of their unsatisfied followers and adherents.

What is to become of the Spiritualists of the 19th century in England? Of those who, acknowledging the mighty spell and grandeur of antiquity, fail to see in it any especial merit except where it illuminates the present—fail to see how its conceptions of æsthetic culture, its noble maxims, laid down in the utterances of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Socrates, or

of Confucius, either embody the essence of the Christian life or produce the same form of testimony to a future age?—testimony which proclaims the truth as distinctly this day in England, as it did eighteen hundred years ago in Jerusalem, but which to the outer world remains still inscrutable, impossible, incredible as to the sceptics and Pharisees of old! But, though our plodding, humdrum efforts may not possess the glamour and brilliance with which the inventive imaginations of some have invested the dexterous and diabolical Spiritualism of the East, our testimony is still worth something in the eyes of a few; some of our names, though neither romantic nor classical, are still respectable; some of us have still the power to put forth a few weak utterances in defence of a cause both precious and sacred, and if we cannot startle the world by the manifestations in which India is alleged to be so rich, we can yet bear testimony to that which our own eyes have seen and our ears heard. True, our testimony is not generally believed, but what of that? Who among those of the clergy even, who preach Christ daily, would not laugh at Him if they saw Him entering Jerusalem this day in the manner recorded in the gospels? And what right have those who are confessedly looking forward to and praying for His second advent to say, that He *could* not come in 1881, the same Christ, despised and rejected now, as He was despised and rejected then? They imagine it more suited to our modern notions of religion, to give Him a seat on floating clouds with thunder and lightning as His heralds; but nothing is clearer than that *He* never sought to produce any startling effects, but rather refused to bear the Pagan insignia of Godhead, in order to wear a garb characteristic of meanness, poverty and suffering; and that He not only refused to coalesce with worldly ideals, but showed a positive antagonism to them. Now, leaving charmed serpents, and obedient alligators, and the Himalayan Brothers to those who especially care for such things, let us seriously ask ourselves to what point the manifestations which more especially concern us, the manifestations recorded in the Bible, lead? Why spoke those supernatural voices, why wrote those mysterious fingers, why prophesied the fire-touched lips of the prophets? What were those good news to man, that Gospel, of which so much is said, and so little comprehended? Was it simply a communication to assure him that he was saved from a hell of fire and brimstone, which his God-bestowed powers of reason

could neither comprehend nor conceive—that he was washed clean in a fountain of innocent blood, which if my sensations go for anything, was about as painful and unpleasant an allusion as he could either literally or figuratively receive? Was it not rather that, in the materialised form of the risen Christ, that crowning manifestation for which mankind had for ages been steadily and slowly educated, it was shown once and for all time, clearly and finally, not to the worldly and the arrogant, but to the sorrowing and the heavy laden, that the conquest of the grave was over, the terror of death gone? And those who have happily arrived at this knowledge, either by sudden enlightenment or by such painful and arduous and thorn-clad paths as some among us have trodden, can echo the words that the Church proclaims with jubilant voices and beating drums, and still confess their faith in Him the ideal of Spiritualist and of Christian.

Cujus regni non erit finis. And they can confess it the more triumphantly because they no longer only believe, but know that which is written of Him is true, and that the same sort of testimony is existing now in their midst. Every day additional evidences reach us from unlooked-for quarters, and among some of those received by myself I will here select one which may no doubt prove of interest to some of your readers.

THE APPARITION OF MR. LUXMOORE.

I passed last winter in the North of France, and the newspapers from England did not reach me regularly. It was not therefore, for some months that I heard of the death of our friend, Mr. J. C. Luxmoore. I was greatly shocked, for he appeared well and strong when I last saw him before my departure; so, being anxious to obtain the particulars of his decease, I called at the house he had lately occupied, and sad it was to see everything in the same condition as of old, the same old servant at the door, the sun shining cheerily in at the open windows, only the poor, kind, hospitable master lying in his distant grave. The butler gave me the address of a lady who had been much with him in his last illness, and the residence of this lady I found with some difficulty; however she was out of town, and I could only leave my card. The circumstance of Mr. Luxmoore's death had almost begun to pass from my mind among the many other cares and distractions of life, when I was agreeably surprised one day by a visit from the lady alluded to. She was never a Spiritualist, and had certainly no faith in materialisations, though I have often met

her at Mr. Luxmoore's *séances*, where she seldom however expressed an opinion either one way or the other. After an interesting conversation regarding the illness and death of our friend, we got on other topics, and discussed the different *séances* and meetings at which we had seen each other. Presently my visitor said, "Well you know I don't believe in Spiritualism, but I must tell you of a most extraordinary thing that has happened to me. Do you remember those curtains that separated the *séance* room from the drawing room, in Mr. Luxmoore's house at Gloucester Place?"

I replied that I remembered them well, they were the curtains behind which Florence and my daughter had been seen at the same moment, as published in the *Spiritualist* by Mr. Henry M. Dunphy of the *Morning Post*, the curtains from which issued the form of "Katie King," when tested by Mr. Varley. "Oh yes, I remember them," I replied. "Well," she went on to say, "A year or so before his death, Mr. Luxmoore, who had given up any active participation in the Spiritual movement, having grown weary of the unsatisfactory sort of testimony adduced for materialisations, was re-arranging his house, and seeing the curtains said, 'Oh! I shall never want them any more, for there will be no more *séances* here now. Will you accept of them, if so pray have them taken away?' I took them away," she added, "and they lay unused in my room for months. Mr. Luxmoore died during the very cold weather of January. I saw him in his coffin the day before his funeral. I placed about him the flowers and wreaths sent by his friends, and then taking a last look round the room, left the house. The weather was bitter and cold, and my mind dwelt painfully on the scene I had just left. On entering my own house I experienced a shivering sensation, and called up my landlady to get me a glass of port wine negus. She prepared to comply with my request, but before doing so, suggested that some means should be taken to keep out the draught. We could not suggest anything at first; but at last she said 'There are those curtains, Ma'am, let me get a few nails and nail them up.' This was done, and the landlady left the room to prepare the negus. No sooner was she gone," added my visitor, "than the curtains were gently divided, and there stood before me, clearly, distinctly, *livingly*, the form of Mr. Luxmoore. The very ring he constantly wore was clearly discernible on one of the hands that held the curtain. He looked at me steadily and gravely for more than a minute,

then the curtains fell together, and he was gone." I have had a good deal of hesitation in publishing this testimony, but it appears to me that the cause of Spiritualism demands it, and to the minds of some at least, it will go some little way to show that materialisations possess more significance than we have been disposed to accord them.

For my own part I desire nothing better than that my testimony, however weak, may serve the course of Christian Spiritualism. I cannot always follow it out, but I know and feel that a supernatural belief demands a supernatural life. If we would have (not devils), but Christ and His angels in our midst, we must live so that He would approve our lives.

Meanwhile let us be brave and true to our cause, and endeavour to fight out as far as possible the battle that He fought, not only against the grosser sins, for to them He was merciful, but against worldliness and hypocrisy.

He has sounded forth a trumpet,
That shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men
Before His judgment seat.
Be swift my soul to follow Him,
Be jubilant my feet,
For God is marching on.

A PROBLEM IN CLAIRVOYANCE.

THE MURDER OF ABDUL AZIZ.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

Sir,—Having been away from home for some time, I have only just had an opportunity of reading Mr. Bowman's letter in your issue of the 29th July last. Mr. Bowman refers to the letters he wrote you five years ago in which he described "certain visions purporting to reveal some of the incidents connected with the fate of Abdul Aziz, the late ex-Sultan of Turkey, as witnessed and described by Miss Jessie Nicoll, of Newcastle." As both the letters referred to were headed, either by Mr. Bowman or you, sir, with a query as to whether the visions were trustworthy, I deemed it my duty to reply, and I pointed out in what respects they were inaccurate, and therefore *not* trustworthy. Those of your readers who are interested in what you now call "A Problem in Clairvoyance," I would refer to the former correspondence, viz., the two letters from Mr. Bowman in *The Spiritualist* of the 29th June and 14th July, 1876, and my reply in the number dated 21st July, 1876.

Mr. Bowman seems to have felt aggrieved at what he calls my "sharp criticism," and thinks that, "in the light of recent events," it is worth while to examine my objections. If

in reply to his last letter I again show conclusively, as I think I can do, that the visions are inaccurate *in every point of detail*, my object is not to dispute the honesty of the medium, but to protest against untruthful and unreliable "visions" being used (as Mr. Bowman himself uses them in the columns of one of your contemporaries) as "something in the nature of a revelation," available in argument with "those who are wont to challenge the utility of spirit communion." I do this because I set too high a value on the truth of Spiritualism to willingly see its opponents furnished with a weapon for use against it, in the shape of untrustworthy evidence too readily accepted as proof. Personally, I do not know Miss Nicoll, but am assured that her honesty and truthfulness cannot be doubted; whatever the origin of the "visions" may be, I do not doubt her *bona fides* in the matter.

Although Mr. Bowman states his object to be to examine my objections in the light of recent events, he only touches on two points of detail,—the alleged wound in the breast of the late ex-Sultan, and the age of the assassinated minister. He admits that the late trial was a farce, but yet would appeal to a sham trial to prove that the ex-Sultan was murdered, which he thinks is "universally believed now." I maintain that even if the trial had proved beyond doubt that Abdul Aziz was murdered, this would not prove the correctness of the visions; but public opinion, both in this and other countries, on the late trial, is so well known that I need not refer to it, and as to its being the universal belief that the ex-Sultan was murdered, I beg to differ from Mr. Bowman. I do not think it will ever be absolutely proved how Abdul Aziz met his death, but I have had opportunity of talking with many Turks and others well acquainted with Eastern affairs, and the opinion of those best fitted to judge is in favor of a suicide. The *Daily News* correspondent too, (an English barrister who has resided in Constantinople very many years) telegraphing on the 3rd July last, after the trial, says: "Upon balance of probabilities, I believe the evidence is in favor of suicide. This is the general opinion." This question, however, is one that always may be disputed and can never be settled.

The visions given by Miss Nicoll were correct only as to the two facts to which they referred. The ex-Sultan died in some way, and the minister Husséin Avni Pasha, was assassinated. The visions took place *after* these events were well known in this country,

and, as briefly as I can, I will show, without reference to the trial, but by indisputable facts, that they are wrong in every detail which can be checked. Afterwards I will show that they are equally at variance with the statements made at the trial.

First as to Husséin Avni Pasha. He is described as wearing "a white tunic, scarlet knickerbockers, and sash of the same colour." This alone disproves the vision. The person who imagines that a Turkish minister of the present day wears a costume like this, must have very crude ideas of life in Constantinople. The neat Turkish frock coat and the red fez must be well known to nearly all your readers. But I will further show the incorrectness. The religious orders in Constantinople (the Softi and the Ulemas) wear a dress distinctively their own, with the turban. But immediately anyone becomes a civil servant of the Sultan, even though he were an Ulema (as was the case with Midhat Pasha) he must, by law, wear the fez. Then as to Husséin Avni's age. In the vision he was "apparently between 30 and 40." I stated his age to be 57, and Mr. Bowman does not think this a striking inaccuracy, because "a miscalculation of his apparent age might, according to common experience, only prove her inability to calculate from appearances." But, sir, I based the point of inaccuracy on the *appearance*. I said "he was 57 and *looked older*." His face bore signs of many active campaigns as a soldier and of much care and thought as a statesman, and he wore a thick moustache and beard, which were *perfectly white*." I saw Husséin Avni Pasha on several occasions, and spoke with him some time before his death, and can confidently say that a person guessing his age from appearance would say between 60 and 70 rather than between 30 and 40. Another detail was the position of Husséin Avni at the council when murdered. The medium described him as occupying "an elevated seat in one part of the room, *above all the rest*." I showed in my previous letter that he was not presiding at the council and would not be, and in fact was not seated "above all the rest," but occupied a low easy chair and sat by the side of another minister. Here then are errors which neither "recent events" nor "future revelations" can possibly gainsay. Mr. Bowman also thinks that "the tragic end of Husséin Avni was strongly suggestive of the work of an avenger," but there was absolutely no reason to connect his murder with the death of the ex-Sultan. He (Husséin Avni) was the

head of the army; his assassin was a discontented soldier prompted by private spite; his motives were confessed by him at the time.

I now turn to the part of the visions relating to the alleged murder of the ex-Sultan, Abdul Aziz. Miss Nicoll described him as sitting and murdered in a room "*richly furnished.*" He died in a room *poorly* furnished. Matting on the floor, curtains to the windows, and two sofas completed the furniture. There was not even a mirror, and the state of the unfortunate man's mind being known, everything with which he could injure himself had been removed. In the visions, the assassin has a pair of scissors given him by Husséin Avni, and, after killing his victim he places them in the dead man's hand and leaves the room. In reality, as was proved beyond doubt, the scissors which were found by the dead man's side, covered with blood, had, a short time previously, been given him by his mother, together with a hand mirror, to enable him to trim his beard, which he entirely cut off—evidence to a Mahomedan of insanity. As to the particulars of how death was caused, I will give the points of the visions and oppose to them an abstract of Dr. Dickson's written statement, using his own words. Your readers can judge between the two. The medium saw the assassin approach the ex-Sultan and force him to drink the contents of a cup, from the effects of which he swooned away. The assassin then lacerated *one* of his victim's arms *close to the shoulder* and then *stabbed him deeply in the breast.* So much the vision, and now Dr. Dickson. "As soon as most of the persons present (at the inquest, about four hours after death) had left the room, I made a *careful inspection* of the body. I noted the appearance of the face, eyes, mouth, neck, (all round), *of the chest*, abdomen, back of the shoulders, and of the upper and lower extremities. Abdul Aziz was dressed in a wide loose shirt, with wide loose sleeves, made of very fine gauze, and a pair of wide loose silk pantaloons. He wore, in fact, his night garments. The arms presented *two* gashes, *one at the end of each elbow* in front. The direction of these wounds was oblique, from above downwards and from within outwards, and the skin at their edges was jagged. The wound at the bend of the left arm was deep; I thrust my right forefinger into it down to the bones. The skin, the veins, the deep-seated tissues, were cut through, and the ulner artery laid open, but not cut across. The wound at the bend of the right arm was slight, cutting only through

the skin and superficial veins. *No other wound*, no scratch, ecchymosis, or mark of violence was to be seen by me on those parts of the body which I examined. *No smell of chloroform, æther, alcohol, or other volatile substance* was perceptible either on the body or in the room." Your readers will note the discrepancies between Dr. Dickson's statement and the visions. These, with the other inaccuracies I have pointed out, establish, I think, the falsity of the visions.

Now let me briefly refer to the "recent events," the trial of Midhat and the other Pashas for the murder of Abdul Aziz. No one who knows how these things are managed in Turkey would believe any evidence or the "confessions" of the alleged assassins, without much hesitation. I have not, however, to enquire into the veracity of the statements. The visions represented one Minister (Husséin Avni) bribing one man with gold and precious stones; one man committing the murder by administering the contents of a cup and stabbing with a dagger in the breast. The evidence at the trial was that three men committed the murder, who said they were bribed by the Council of three Ministers (of whom Husséin Avni was not one); the bribe was £100 each and a promise of a pension; that two of them held the ex-Sultan, while one, a well-known athlete, cut his arms with a knife, thus causing death. No evidence whatever was given of a wound in the breast. The *Daily News* correspondent says "there was absolutely no evidence produced in Court of any other wound" than those on the arms.

I regret that my reply has necessarily run to such a length. The visions being proved false, and the honesty of the medium admitted, the question of their origin still remains a problem in psychology.

R. PEARCE.

September 12th, 1881.

A PAMPHLET by Mr. W. H. Harrison, giving a history of "The Founding of the British Association" at York in 1831, has just been published.

DR. JAMES MACK, the celebrated healing medium, has returned to London, and is exercising his powers as usual. His address is 37, Upper Baker Street.

THE valuable records of "Remarkable Séances" by the Countess of Caithness will be resumed in these pages in a week or two. Lady Caithness has been travelling in Holland and Belgium for some weeks.

THE conjuror from Oxford who calls himself "Stuart Cumberland, Esq.," which is not the name of his youth, has been exhibiting feats of jugglery at Dover as "A Marvellous Exposé of Spiritualism." Some of the resident clergy and doctors patronised the exhibition. Among the patrons were the Mayor, also Messrs. W. E. Light, A. W. Baird, G. Bell, G. A. Rogers, T. Evans, W. Knocker, and A. Bottle.

A GOVERNMENT CENSUS OF SPIRITUALIST SOCIETIES IN AMERICA.

The following letter has been sent to a few prominent Spiritualists in the United States:—

PELHAM MANOR, N.Y. *Aug. 10th, 1881.*

GENTLEMEN — For my use in collecting statistics of Religious Organisations for the Tenth Census, I am in need of a complete list of Spiritualist Societies in the United States (together with the name and address of the principal officer of each).

For some time I have been in correspondence with persons connected with that body, but up to the present time have not been able to receive the information I desire.

May I ask that you will have the kindness to call attention in an early number of your paper to the importance of my being promptly furnished with such lists?

Trusting that you will endeavour to aid me in my efforts to secure for the Spiritualists accurate representations in the Tables of the Tenth Census,

I have the honor to be, respectfully yours,
HENRY RANDAL WAITE, *Special Agent.*

NOTES FROM THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

AN APPARITION IN LANCASHIRE.

LIVERPOOL, WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

In the course of the last ten days, accounts have appeared in various Lancashire and some London newspapers, about the activity of an alleged apparition at Garstang, Lancashire. The substance of the reports is, that for some days the inhabitants of Garstang have been considerably concerned on account of the reported nocturnal walkings of a "white ghost." The place where the ghost has appeared is a lonely point between the railway station and the village. "A few nights ago a servant girl was passing the point when the ghostly object presented itself to her. She was so terrified that she could not speak, and she hastened home and went to bed, where she has since been confined, suffering from nervous shock. The village postman, whose duty it was to meet the night trains with the mails, was so scared by the ghostly appearances that he gave up his office, and could not be induced to go down the lane after dark. So strong is the sensation respecting the ghost that each night bands of young men patrol the lanes armed with cudgels. They express their determination of making an example of the 'ghost' if it can be caught. It is believed by the police, who are also on the

look out, that some young fellow has been enfolded himself in a white sheet and parading the road."

A DESCRIPTION OF THE HAUNTED SPOT.

I resolved to inquire into the matter, so went last night to Garstang, a small agricultural town, two miles from the nearest railway station. The surrounding scenery is picturesque, undulating hills and a rich supply of trees contributing to its quiet beauty. There are two routes from the railway station to Garstang; that to the right is the one favoured by the visits of the ghost, who "walks" at a spot half-way between the station and the town.

Last night the station-master told me that the alleged spirit had appeared almost nightly for a week, up to about seven days ago, and that it had been seen by perhaps a dozen persons in all. He also said that it was a woman in black, and not as the newspapers had stated, a man in white; moreover, those newspaper accounts were rather hard upon the postman, who had, so he had heard, resigned his appointment before he saw the ghost. He added that the apparition was in the habit of presenting itself between half-past eight and nine o'clock in the evening—a convenient time.

On the way to Garstang, a small wood near a private residence borders the road to the left. At this place the apparition takes its accustomed walk of one or two hundred yards. By the directions of the station-master, and of a young woman living near the spot, the latter of whom informed me that the spirit had last been seen on Saturday, I found the place last night without difficulty, and walked up and down the road for an hour, not at all afraid of the spirit, but somewhat doubtful whether one of the more enthusiastic of the young men said to be on the watch for the "white ghost" might not take a pot shot at me because of my light dress. My umbrella was an unæsthetic safeguard against such intentions, there being no instance probably on record of a white ghost carrying a black umbrella. However, no village patrol or other human being was visible. The spot, with its reputation of being haunted, was not an attractive one for lonely watchers; thick clouds obscured the stars, not a breath of wind was stirring, and there beneath the black trees the white road led into the surrounding gloom. It was a favourable scene and opportunity for an apparition, but I saw none, so had no

chance of any conversation with an inhabitant of another world.

THE TESTIMONY OF ONE OF THE EYE-WITNESSES.

The servant at the Church Inn at Garstang, is one of those who is stated to have seen the ghost. She is an intelligent woman, not at all nervous-looking, and the following is the account she gave to me this morning :— "Three of us, my brother, a young woman, and myself, were recently walking slowly along the road, on the right hand side, after dark. Some distance before us we saw a woman dressed in black, walking on the left; we did not take much notice of her. We slowly gained upon her, and one of us said to my brother, 'Leave off talking till we have passed this woman.' A little later she passed in front of us, crossing the road, and she vanished into the hedge on our right, where there was no possibility of anyone hiding or getting through; that is quite certain. My brother says that he did not see her. We did, and were much excited by her disappearance. I did not see her face. She made no noise in walking. I do not believe in ghosts. I do not know *what* it was, but it must have been something. It was within sight of us for, I should think, fully five minutes." The Church Inn at which this witness resides, is kept by Mr. Curtas Barton.

At the Post Office at Garstang the clerk on duty informed me that the name of the postman who said he had seen the apparition, was John Billington; that he had left Garstang to keep a coffee tavern at Penwortham, a village about two miles from Preston. He had resigned his situation five days before he had seen the supposed apparition; he (the clerk) could not say whether the postman had seen the apparition on earlier occasions without telling anyone.

Of course the right action to have taken would have been to have watched the haunted spot every evening for a week; but as I have reluctantly ceased to sacrifice as much time and energy as of old in the elucidation of spiritual manifestations, I resolved not to undertake the performance of the investigation, but nevertheless made a journey to Penwortham, to take down the narrative of the eye-witness, John Billington.

PRAYERS FOR SPIRITS IN UNREST.

Outside Garstang is the Catholic Church of St. Mary and St. Michael, within less than a mile from the haunted spot, but the clergy have not investigated a matter so specially within their province. Notices on the door

say, "of your charity pray for the repose of the soul" of so and so, and so and so, with the addition sometimes of—"on whose soul sweet Jesus have mercy." On one card asking for prayers for the departed, was the quotation, "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from sins. II *Maccab.* xii, 46." It is within the experience also of all mediums, whatever their individual religious belief, that unhappy spirits on their return, often ask for the prayers of their friends.

THE INFLUENCE OF IMAGINATION ON TESTIMONY.

On the outskirts of Garstang, I this morning passed the "Occasional Court House," in charge of the local constabulary. A man outside it, who might have been a policeman in shirt-sleeves, was digging vigorously. I asked him by way of starting the subject, with which everyone in Garstang is *au fait*, which was the way to the ghost scene. He replied: "Well, there aint no ghost. It was only a lad in a white sheet, who whisked it off, and jumped down, and hid himself in a ditch." "Oh, that's it, is it," I responded, "please give me his name and address." "Well, I don't know him," said my informant, "I only tell you what I have heard from others, you know."

The Preston Chronicle, of September 3rd, goes beyond this man, who may be its accredited Garstang correspondent, for it says:—"During the last few nights the people of Garstang have been to some extent alarmed by the appearance of what was quickly designated a ghost—of a woman. So quickly did the news of there being a ghost in the neighbourhood spread, that for several nights crowds of inquisitive people visited the place. On one of the nights, a party of unbelieving Garstangians made up their minds to see the supposed ghost, which was said to be seen near the station after dark. No sooner had they got upon the spot, when out of the hedge, quietly and slowly, proceeded a white spectre apparently that of a woman. The party at once withdrew; but one of the more excited and tender beings, a woman, fainted and fell; not into the hands of the ghost nor of a lover, but upon the ground. By that time the mysterious spectre had disappeared, gone where no one knew. Nevertheless, this nonsensical farce could no longer be borne by the brave-hearted youths of the neighbourhood, and accordingly next night they re-visited the spot and concealed themselves. The white figure again appeared, when out rushed the

youths and grasped the supposed ghost, which, after all, as could only have been dreamt of, turned out to be another youth who had been 'trying a ghost trick on.'"

VERBATIM REPORT OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE POSTMAN WHO SAW THE APPARITION.

At Penwortham this afternoon I saw Mr. John Billington, the ex-postman, an intelligent straightforward-speaking man, and took down the following narrative as it fell from his lips :—"Three weeks ago last Monday, about half past eight o'clock, I went to look for the ghost by appointment with some friends of mine who had seen it. They missed their appointment. As I neared the spot, I saw the apparition some forty yards in advance, and thought it might be one of my friends. As I drew nearer I saw that it was a woman, dressed in black, and with a black veil; I could not distinguish any features. She was standing still by the side of the road until I came within about fifteen yards of her, then she crossed over towards me, and vanished close to me, while my eyes were full on her. At that moment she was not more than two feet from me. I could see in front of the hedge and through the hedge; it was too light for any trick to be possible, otherwise I might have thought there was something in the tales about trickery. She had a black bonnet on, trimmed with brown velvet. All who have seen her agree in their descriptions of her. She appeared to be in a great hurry, and did not seem as if she wanted to talk to me. Elizabeth Chippendale, of the Church Inn, was so frightened when she saw the apparition that she nearly fainted, and had to be assisted to a neighbouring house to recover herself."

In reply to questions from me, he further said: "I do not know of any old report of the place being haunted, except that there is a rumour which may be true or false, that something of the kind was seen there, three years ago, in the month of August." I asked, "Is there any story of a crime having been committed on the spot, for all history shows that these appearances are usually connected with the scene of some horrible tragedy?" "No," he replied, "but last spring a child was found dead by the roadside, about three hundred yards nearer the railway station than where the woman shows herself. There are the remains of an old castle not far from the spot. I have heard old inhabitants of the district say that before the moat was filled up and the ground

cultivated, people used to skate on the ice in it at winter time, and sometimes towards dusk heard the rustling of silk passing them, without being able to see anything. Whenever the woman has appeared, I think it has always been between eight and nine o'clock in the evening. I have heard that a picture of me frightened by the ghost, with my arms in the air and the letters flying about in all directions, has appeared in the *Police News*. Of course it is drawn from imagination; the letters are always sealed up in the mail bags, so cannot fly about." He further said, "I daresay it is true that at least a dozen people have seen the apparition; I myself know five or six who have seen it."

THE "DAILY TELEGRAPH'S" DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECTRE.

Such are the facts of the case. *The Daily Telegraph*, however, of Sept 7th last, gives the following version of the circumstances :—

"Not a bad title for a farce would be 'The Garstang Ghost and the Palpitating Postman;' yet it may be doubted whether the unfortunate functionary who has just been so frightened by a ghost at Garstang that he has given up his situation rather than face the nocturnal visitant again, will discover anything farcical in his alarming experiences. The facts of his case seem sufficiently well authenticated. He declares that a few evenings ago, as he was quietly pursuing his way along a lonely road near the village of Garstang, absorbed in his occupation of letter-carrier, a ghost stopped his way, and warned him with many mysterious signs not to continue in his present courses. The terrified postman immediately acted upon the ghostly injunction to the extent that he at once turned tail and fled. He has since resigned his official position, not so much, it is believed, from any desire on his part to obey the advice tendered from another world, as from an irresistible repugnance to continue his ghost-ship's acquaintance. The act certainly goes far to prove the reality of the postman's terrors, if it does not completely establish the objective existence of the ghost. Other proofs in the latter direction are, however, not wanting. Brief as was the period during which the postman permitted himself to gaze upon the dreadful apparition, he carried away with him a very clear notion of its principal characteristics. These would seem to be abnormal stature, a horrid pallor of hue, and a variety of terror-striking gestures. His description of the Garstang Ghost is borne out by the testimony of another unimpeachable witness. A young woman of the district has also had one dreadful

look at the spectre. She happened also to be out in the haunted lane when evening 'had in her sober livery all things clad.' As she walked along, perhaps in maiden meditation, not altogether fancy free, her affrighted eyes beheld the ghost. There it was, of fearsome height, clothed in white, and performing portentous movements with its arms—so she afterwards declared. This witness's testimony is invalidated to a trifling extent by her confession that directly she saw the awful sight she threw her apron over her head, and ran home. Having got there safely, she instantly went to bed, where she has since remained, in proof of the truth of her story. The reality of the Garstang Ghost is thus very fairly substantiated; and if it should manage to appear in the midst of the young men who are now looking for it, and, at the same time, elude capture, it will certainly deserve to rank with the respectable fraternity of shades who in times past have revisited the glimpses of the moon, and usually with so much dramatic effect.

"We may doubt, however, if the Garstang Ghost will achieve any such distinction. The present is not a time favourable for the appearance of sprites of the good old-fashioned sort. Perhaps the discipline to which spirits have of late years been subjected by professional Spiritualists has robbed them of the gaiety of disposition which once prompted them to disport in rural lanes and frighten country bumpkins. It is easy to understand that a poor ghost condemned to rap tables at the bidding and for the profit of a very poor sort of social adventurer, must lose all heart for either the lighter or more serious business of its existence. The modern spirit is, in truth, in bonds; its original occupation is gone, to be replaced by such undignified exercises as beating tambourines or tweaking noses at a dark *séance*. Special exception, however, must be made in favour of the apparitions whose business it is to intimate their own divorce from bodily existence in some distant land. The amount of direct, circumstantial, and, to all appearance, perfectly trustworthy evidence to be obtained on this subject is really astonishing. Any number of people may be found whose character for veracity has never been impeached, and who will most solemnly aver that on a specified occasion they, being of perfectly sane mind, saw distinctly the counterfeit presentment of a dear friend or relative; and that subsequent testimony proved that at the same moment such friend or relative expired at the anti-

podes. Sometimes, though rarely, the ghostly appearance is seen by two people at the same time, and there is one well-authenticated instance of a dog enjoying the same privilege, and being nearly driven beside itself by what it saw. But these are the only occurrences which can be said to make even a pretence of leavening with the truth the modern mass of ghostly fraud and imposture. In ancient times, when ghosts appeared, they invariably did so with a purpose; there was a solemnity in their manner and a dreadful import in their words which put to shame the frivolous manifestations of their degenerate descendants. Every one knows the splendid use to which Shakespeare put the supernatural element both in tragedy and comedy. Mr. Thomas Alfred Spalding, in his interesting work on *Elizabethan Demonology*, has instituted a comparison between the several sorts of spirits which the great dramatist made to do his bidding, the conclusion being that Shakespeare passed through three intellectual periods: in the first accepting unthinkingly current demonology; in the second, being governed by a profound and agitating scepticism; in the third, arriving at a settled belief, founded upon reason and experience. The innocent and sportive world of Oberon and Titania gives way to malignant ghosts of the type of those which drove Macbeth to destruction; and these are again succeeded by the good spirits who, at the command of human wisdom, personified in Prospero, vanquish the coarse brute force of Caliban. There is something very attractive and charming in this idea; but even if we descend from the superb creations of Shakespeare to a much lower level we find ghosts for the most part of highly respectable character, and with serious and responsible missions to perform. The spectral occupant of the haunted chamber in this castle, or that old manor house, was generally all that was left of a dispossessed and murdered owner; and such a ghost would almost certainly be charged with the task of bringing the criminal to justice, or having the undiscovered remains of the defunct proprietor decently interred, with the proper funeral rites. Everyone will remember how the 'unquiet sprite' of Nell Cook roamed about, to the great terror of little Tom Ingoldsby, after her skeleton had been released from its granite prison. This was reversing the ordinary procedure, but then Nell Cook's ghost was an exceptional one. Hundreds of other well known examples might easily be cited to prove that all well-conditioned ghosts are ghosts with objects

in life, whose time is not to be frittered away in unproductive masquerading, but is to be employed to some specific and generally commendable end.

"Indeed, the commonplace ghosts of to-day are degenerate creatures, unworthy the traditions of their species. They apparently have no better mission than that of frightening simple-minded folks out of their wits. There is no consistency, no moral resolve apparent in their behaviour. They bring no criminal to justice, they guide the way to no guiltily-hidden treasure. Some years ago a Spring-heeled Jack—the most vulgar and unromantic ghost imaginable—took to playing pranks in one quarter of London, to the great alarm of its feminine inhabitants. But its success brought into the field a crowd of rivals who were speedily found out, and the originator of the deception retired from business in disgust. At another time, the residents in a fashionable suburb, were thrown into a state of great consternation by the exploits of an invisible knocker of double knocks. A watch was set, but though the knocks continued, the knocking agency could not be discovered. People lay in wait in their passages, or just round the corner, and the moment the ominous double knock came rushed impetuously out and caught—nothing. So far as we remember, the perpetrator of these practical jokes was never discovered, for the reason that he left off performing when detection became probable. Ghosts of the type of the one now troubling Garstang have always been common enough. A striking similarity is to be observed in their general appearance and bearing. They are white in colour, indefinite in shape, and perform odd motions. In most cases a closer approach would prove them to be white horses or cows straying on unaccustomed pastures. On some occasions they are, of course, silly people masquerading in white sheets. If the Garstang Ghost be of this stamp, it is impossible not to wish the young men who, armed with sticks, are looking for it, all success in their search. It is indeed difficult to understand what pleasure even the most malicious can find in frightening superstitious or timid people into serious illness, or out of their employment. Fortunately the liking for this sort of practical joke has diminished of late years. If it were to die out entirely society would doubtless survive the loss. The bolder and more stalwart of the inhabitants of Garstang have now the opportunity of hastening this desirable end by unmasking the supernatural disturber of maiden reveries and

of the more prosaic fancies of the belated postman."

AN APPARITION AT CHURCH STRETTON.

An apparition has just been seen at Church Stretton, in Shropshire, but as it has only appeared once in five years the chances of seeing it are small, so I did not go after it. *The Birmingham Daily Post* gives the following particulars about it:—"Midway between Church Stretton and the village of Hope Bowdler is a deep cavernous hole, excavated years ago by some enthusiastic persons seeking for copper. It takes its name from this and is called the Copper Hole. A few nights ago a small farmer, living at Hope Bowdler, who had been to Stretton to pay his rent, was passing this hole, when he saw, sitting on the fencing surrounding the hole the figure of a woman who had disappeared from the neighbourhood some five years since. He called to the woman, but she slowly glided back from him, and disappeared down the Copper Hole. The poor man was so horrified that he ran all the way to Hope Bowdler, where he arrived in a piteous condition, and told his tale. From this time the road has been almost deserted, and the villagers only come and go between their home and the market town of Church Stretton in clusters. No one would venture past the place at night on any consideration. The disappearance of the young woman was very mysterious. She was a single woman, and having saved a little money intended to emigrate to Australia. Her boxes were brought to Church Stretton station overnight, and she had come to the station and made inquiries about the trains. She left the station, presumably to go to her home at Soudley, and was never afterwards heard of. She disappeared, and all trace was lost of her. It is rumoured that the authorities are about to have the Copper Hole examined, and the debris cleared from the bottom. Popular opinion has it that the young woman was murdered and thrown down the hole."

SPIRITUALISM IN PRESTON, YORK, AND LIVERPOOL.

Penwortham, the place of abode of Mr. Billington, is a village near Preston, the station at which the London and North Western Railway Company gives an opportunity for its passengers by fast trains to Scotland to dine. The Great Northern Company does the same at York, in a room under the management of Mr. Kaye; the dining station of the Midland Company is at Normanton, under the well-known good management of Messrs. Spiers and Pond. The room

at Preston, under the management of Mr. Kyte, has good accommodation at moderate rates, and has special attractions for winter passengers. Hot water pipes are beneath the whole length of the tables for the benefit of their feet, there is a blazing fire at one end of the dining hall, joints are kept hot by steam at the other, and an adjoining lavatory has never-failing supplies of boiling as well as cold water. It is well managed. York is also a creditable place; there however seem to be too few waiters at busy times; they therefore fly about in a way discomposing to the nerves, and habitually cry out "coming" when they are visibly "going." One of them, in allusion to the clerical look of some of his companions, assured me in answer to a leading question, that they were mostly York clergymen with limited incomes, who made a welcome addition thereto by coming on duty there for a few hours during the busiest part of the day.

Mr. Foster, of Preston, who truly describes himself as "a Spiritualist and an enthusiastic one," tells me that there is a considerable number of Spiritualists in the town, and that Preston has some good private physical and trance mediums. Mr. Bishop, the conjuror, was showing his tricks there last Friday in opposition to genuine psychological phenomena, and Mr. Foster states that he was bound so securely by a committee that he could not free himself by conjuring, consequently his confederates had to cut him loose.

In York there is no outward and visible sign of the presence of Spiritualism. I was informed that perhaps a dozen families are studying it in strict privacy, and that they have a medium or two whose powers are not of a particularly striking or convincing nature. Some time ago, a man there who was violently opposed to Spiritualism became a medium himself, and at first was intensely interested thereat, but so many untruthful messages were communicated through his own writing mediumship that he gave it up.

I have been studying the Salvation Army in York, but must defer a report thereupon.

At Liverpool, where Spiritualism is very strong in point of number of adherents, the movement, as I learnt from Mr. Chapman last Monday, is in a disorganised state; from his description, matters here seem to be much the same as in London. To-night I have had the pleasure of spending some time with Dr. Walter Heurtley, whose daughter was so heartlessly swindled by the two Fletchers

from America, who practised upon her affection for her departed mother to obtain all her worldly possessions. Dr. Heurtley has long been exceedingly well-informed on the subject of Spiritualism, and is not prejudiced against it because of the acts of a few black-legs and enthusiasts among its camp followers. His judgment as to the good and evil in it is well-balanced. Mr. Miller, the solicitor with whose firm the Fletchers once attempted to transact some of their business relating to Mrs. Hart-Davies, is here in Liverpool.

A "DAILY TELEGRAPH" STATEMENT CONSIDERED.

The Daily Telegraph, in its article reproduced in this number of *The Spiritualist*, says, "The common-place ghosts of to-day" "bring no criminal to justice." This circumstance may be the fault of the newspapers as much as the fault of the ghosts. For instance, in the case of the apparition at Church Stretton, mentioned on another page, if the police do not adopt the common-sense line of action of clearing out the pit in search of evidence, it will be from fear of the ridicule of the populace and of the newspapers, at their so far recognising the reality of the apparition. It is considered clever to deny the reality of spirits, although ancient and modern history teems with good evidence of their having been seen. The wonder is, that a woman with money about her having disappeared in the vicinity, the pit near Church Stretton was not cleared out long ago.

Persistent apparitions rarely, if ever appear, except on the scene of some great crime, therefore if the newspapers had properly educated the public and the police in these matters, a thorough search of such localities as that at Garstang would be made by the constabulary, without fear of ridicule. The wood at Garstang should be explored in search of human remains, ponds dragged, ditches examined beneath the overgrowth of nettles and bushes, and so on. There is no ditch worth the name or capable of concealing any trickster on either side of the road frequented by the Garstang apparition, except just at one spot, near a gate, and the evidence of the postman and others is conclusive against trickery. But for other reasons the ground for some distance on both sides the road should be thoroughly searched by the police, without their being subjected to the ridicule of the ignorant.

THE Spiritualist organisation at 38, Gt. Russell-st., has appointed Mr. T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., to represent it at the forthcoming Church Congress at Newcastle-on-Tyne, when the subject of Spiritualism will be considered.

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.

CHAPTER II :—Henry Slade's first visit to Leipsic—Professor Fechner's observations of the movements of a Magnetic Needle in proximity to Madame Ruf, a Mesmeric Sensitive—Professor Erdmann's observations of the Phenomenon—The Experiment repeated with Henry Slade—The Observations of Professors Braune, Fechner, Weber and Scheibner—A Spirit Apology—Destruction of a large Screen by Spirits—Experiments with a Compass—Apparition of a Living Hand—Experiments with a Bell and lighted Candles—Slade and the Grand Duke Constantine—Testimony of the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof—A Test Experiment in Slate-writing—Impartation of Permanent Magnetism to an Iron Needle by Medial Power.

CHAPTER III :—Permanent Impressions obtained of Temporarily Materialised Hands and Feet—A proposed Chemical Experiment—Slade's Abnormal Vision—Physical Impressions in a Closed Space—Enclosed Space of Three Dimensions, open to Four-dimensional Beings—The Muscular Power of a Spirit Hand—A Test with Flour—Experiments with a Polariscopes—Flight of Objects through the Air—A Clue to Research

CHAPTER IV :—Conditions of Investigation—The Knowledge of our Ignorance—Unscientific Men of Science—Herr Virchow's Precept and Practice—"The Martyrology of Mediums," a book of the Future—Slade's reply to Professor Barrett—A Medium's enunciation of the First Rules of Experimentation in Natural Science.

CHAPTER V :—Production of Knots in an Endless String—Further Experiments—Experiments of the same Nature in London—A Dining Table Floating in the Air in Daylight—Manifestations in the House of a Physician—A Medium in Seclusion—The Imposition of *a priori* Conditions—The Apparition of a Pale Hand for Three Minutes—The Knotting together of Leather Bands beneath the Hands of the Author—Professor Weber's Experiences with a Spirit Hand—Disappearance and Reappearance of Ponderable Objects—A Book Vanishes and Reappears—A Table Vanishes; it Reappears in Mid-air.

CHAPTER VI :—Theoretical Considerations—The Axiom of "The Conservation of Energy" valid in Four-dimensional Space—Projected Experiments to prove the Fourth Dimension—The Unexpected in Nature and Life—Scientific Passivity—Schopenhauer's "Transcendent Fate"—Goethe on the Veil of Nature.

CHAPTER VII :—Various Instances of the so-called Passage of Matter through Matter—An Unexpected Phenomenon—The Heat sometimes produced by the Operation—The Burning Power of Psychic Force—That Evidence the best which can be appreciated without the Testimony of Experts—Failures at stances

an Argument against Trickery—A naïve Misconception—The Moral Responsibility of Mediums—The nature of the Phenomena inconsistent with Trickery—The Limits of Physical Human Strength—A Force of Tension of 198 cwt. exercised by Psychic Power—A Force equal to that of two Horses exercised in Slade's presence—Catalytic Forces—Galileo on the Perverseness of the Philosophers at Padua.

CHAPTER VIII :—The Phenomena suitable for Scientific Research—Their Reproduction at different Times and Places—Dr. Friese's and Professor Wagner's Experiments in Confirmation of the Author's—Experiments with Private Mediums—Manifestations observed by Professor Nicolaus Wagner at St. Petersburg—Blind Faith and Blind Scepticism—Professor Wagner on the Fanaticism of Blind Sceptics—Investigation of Spiritual Manifestations in a Private Family—Spiritualism a Foe to Atheism—Form Materialisations through a Private Medium—Appearance of the Spirit of Olga—Effect of strong Manifestations upon a Medium—Repetition of one of Professor Zollner's Experiments by Professor Wagner—Psychography—Spirit Identity—Impression made by the Materialised Hand of a Deceased Person—The Value of the Facts.

CHAPTER IX :—Theoretical—The Fourth Dimension of Space—A Miracle to Two-Dimensional Beings—The Experiments of Professor Hare—A Ball of Platinum introduced into a Hermetically Sealed Glass Tube by Spirits—An Experiment with Coins—Several Examples of the Passage of Solid Matter through Solid Matter—Clairvoyance—The Fourth Dimensional Theory explains Clairvoyance—The part taken by Slade's Soul in a Manifestation—The Spatial Widening of the Three Dimensional Circle of Sight to Clairvoyants—Why Bodies gradually become Transparent to Clairvoyants—Illustration in the case of Andrew Jackson Davis—The Criterion of Objectivity—The Influence of one Will upon another—Hansen's Experiments—The Philosophy of Berkeley applied to Spiritual Phenomena.

CHAPTER X :—An Experiment for Sceptics—A Wager—Slade's Scruples—A Rebuke by the Spirits—An Unexpected Result—Captious Objections—The Experiment of Professor Wach—Example of the Apparent Penetrability of Matter.

CHAPTER XI :—The Facility with which Material Bodies apparently pass through each other in Slade's presence—Writing through a Table—A Test in Slate-writing conclusively disproving Slade's agency—A Description of the Trance State.

CHAPTER XII :—A "Fault" in the Cable—Jets of Water—Remarkable Heating Effects through Slade's Mediumship—Smoke—Sulphurous Vapours—"Fire Everywhere"—A Bluish-white Light—Abnormal Shadows—A Philosophical Explanation—A Materialised Spirit Hand—A Luminous Form.

CHAPTER XIII :—Phenomena Witnessed by other Observers than the Author—Manifestations in Bohemia—The Narrative of Herr Heinrich Gossmann—Spirit Identity—Heavy Stones brought into the *Séances* Room—Extraordinary Manifestations—Spirit-Writing in Five Languages.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A :—The Value of Testimony in Matters Extraordinary—The Proportional Strength of Evidence—The Contradiction of Experience by Alleged Facts—Mr. Starkie's *Treatise on the Law of Evidence*—Hume's *Essay on Miracles*—The Influence of Preconception—Hume's Principle Mathematically Refuted by Mr. Babbage—The "Uniformity" of Nature—The Lord Lindsay's Experiences—Dr. Lockhart Robertson's Experiences—The Cumulative Force of Testimony—The Universal

Belief of Mankind—Obstruction of Truth by Scientific Men—The Testing of Evidence.

APPENDIX B :—Evidence of Samuel Bellaobini, Court Conjuror at Berlin.

APPENDIX C :—Admissions by John Nevil Maskelyne and other Professional Conjurers—Houdin—Jacobs.

APPENDIX D :—Plate X—Experiment with Sealed Cords and Endless Bands.

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