

A
SKETCH OF THE LIVES
OF THE
DAVENPORT BROTHERS,
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
THEIR MANIFESTATIONS IN AMERICA
AND ENGLAND.

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THEIR MANIFESTATIONS IN ENGLAND, &c.

All unrecognised systems have their long battles to maintain. Before they can set victory on their shields and hold a right to security of position, they must experience extreme trials of discipline and struggle. Not only are there schemes, doctrines, and facts connected with them which need support, but the weapons necessary to carry them to successful issues must be manufactured and exercised. That which is old appears new in novel robes, and people who are fond of taking little trouble to search and find out the truth, but who like to have no trouble at all, and all the advantages accruing to those who take all the trouble in the bargain, are glad of an excuse to cry down old truths because they *appear* to their superficial gaze new. They like novelty, especially if it be of a sensational character, and are ready to sanction any impostor or set of impostors who can manage to surfeit them with novelties. Hence Humbugging has become an Art, which few people fail to exalt. Every fresh novelty is counted by a discriminating public so much the more astounding or gratifying as it exemplifies the cleverness of the human intellect. He that outdoes his predecessor and contemporary, in trickery, is rewarded with the world's applause, and need not go penuriously to the grave, although when he gets there the gold he gains will avail him little. So clever have certain persons become that the world pronounces them great, and bestows favours without judgment. Some are honest jugglers, who perform their tricks and tell you they deceive you; others are dishonest and profess to possess supernatural powers, which have the effect of exciting the wonder of the credulous dupes who, in ignorance of the conjuror's art imagine their eyes are not made "the fools of the other senses."

The practice of conjuring is quite harmless when it is

honestly exercised for beguiling the evening hours, which may be put to a worse use than in witnessing a wizard's palmistry, &c. But if conjuring be, in any way, performed under a mask, and the conjuror pretend to a special delegated power from the Almighty, no one can calculate the sin and shame which such dishonesty produces, and nothing can be more reprehensible.

Taking our stand upon this ground, let us examine and test the operations of the Brothers Davenport, disposed to detect all trickery, and on detection to make a thorough exposure.

The parents of these extraordinary young men reside in Buffalo, N. Y. The mother is a Kentish Englishwoman; the father claims his origin from New York. Their children, two sons (the Brothers Davenport) and one daughter, have all turned out marvellous mediums. The young men are now 24 and 25 years of age, whilst their sister is about 19 years old. She is at the present time giving séances in America. It was through her organism that the family had the first intimations from the spirits that communications would be given and phenomena produced. She was impressed repeatedly to inform her parents that if they and some friends would sit, some remarkable manifestation would be elicited. They did so, and from that time the boys discovered their medium powers, and have never since failed to be used by the invisibles for purposes mysterious and wonderful. The early physical manifestations were not at all complicated in character—the boys being simply carried about the room. But after a time spirit hands touching the persons in the circle, musical instruments playing without visible touch, and flying about the apartment—spirit-writing, spirit-voices, and other remarkable phases of the mighty doings of the departed were evoked. Doubtless the early evidences which came to this family in so sudden and so marvellous a manner, caused them to experience more or less fear. They had, it is true, heard of Spiritualism, known friends who had manifestations too self-evident to be placed to the score of "psychology," "trickery" and other alleged causes. We remember hearing one of the brothers relate a few child experiences:—

His mother heard noises in the room, and could not

imagine what could have produced them. She called up her children, and sent for a neighbour, who entered the house to hear nothing, but he went over the house and retired satisfied, perhaps, that Mrs. Davenport *fancied* all she said she heard. No sooner had the neighbour departed, than the mysterious and heavy sounds were again heard. The mother sent in for her neighbour-friend again—he came, but the invisibles ceased knocking and nothing was heard by him. Incidents such as these were plentiful enough before the children were thoroughly developed. By-and-bye, naturally enough, the parents and children grew familiar with the mysterious powers which wrought such wonders through them.

One of the brothers, Ira Davenport, married in 1861, a half cousin, daughter of his father's sister, who was a remarkable medium—a delicately finely organised being. She had premonitions which were verified in the course of events. She had lost her father some seven months. She dreamed exactly three months before her death that her father entered her bed-chamber, carrying with him a coffin, which he placed by the side of the bedstead saying, "There, daughter." The apparition then disappeared—but returned in a brief space of time, bringing a small coffin, which he placed on the top of the large one, and then finally disappeared. Mrs Davenport displayed afterwards no interest in worldly affairs for the future—she would tell her husband whenever he tried to rouse her to a sense of earthly things that she should never recover. She died in childhood three months after her dream, and the coffins foreshadowed were in request. She gave directions for her funeral—said her coffin could not be got out of the door of her room without great difficulty, which was the fact, when the sad office was undertaken of carrying her corpse out of the house in Chicago to the car to be borne to Adrian, Mich., where her husband buried her remains in fulfilment of a promise.

The loss sustained in the death of his wife and first-born is a sad chapter in the life-history of Ira Davenport. Let those who so readily hurl denunciations and pronounce hasty unjustifiable verdicts on mediums pause—they would do so, if they had, as we have done, listened to the affecting story of his loss from his own lips. He does not tamper with human affections and presume on

making capital out of sympathy, but he tells only a story many of us have heard before, with variations of incident—but he tells it with a husband's anguish and a father's grief—and this comes not in eagerness, but in sadness, questioned out of him.

She was ill for about two years previous to her decease—whilst she was in Chicago, Illinois, Ira her husband, was in Wisconsin. He had a dream or vision, in which he saw a large bird of a most beauteous appearance, its plumage looking very resplendent—presently, this object which presented the form of a bird, descended gradually to him, and seemed then in an instant transformed to his wife. She bowed and smiled to her husband, and then ascended and disappeared behind the clouds. Ira was much affected by what he saw. The next day he told Mr Fay and a friend the circumstance, and took it as an omen of his wife's decease. Mr Fay said he ought not to be superstitious. The next night the vision was repeated in exactly the same manner. Ira was still more than ever satisfied the vision had a more than ordinary meaning, he went to Kenosha, and there he found a messenger from Chicago, who bore the sad news to him of his wife's death.

Manifestations of such an extraordinary physical character which were witnessed by friends and the family, soon got noised abroad. Then, quite natural, philosophers and fools set their heads to work, and the fools outwitted the philosophers. Plain, heavy, looking men, with little *spiritual* beauty in their features, pronounced the puzzled wiseacre's shibboleth "Humbug," and gaping thousands took up the echo. Over the broad domains of America, the fame of these Davenport's spread. Men of high and low degrees—masters of medicine and mental alchemists, came from far and near, all fired with the purpose of "finding the trick out," and there were not wanting imitators who, professing to rival them made miserable failures of attempts to give practical form to their vauntings. The mediums submitted to varieties of test. They allowed their hands and feet to be tied by strong sceptics who knew the secret of making knots, and very often, indeed, did these sceptics torture the mediums with a callous, heartless indifference to humanity, but anything rather than supermundane realities. They tied them with ropes varying in length, and taking some-

times a full hour to secure to their satisfaction. Yet with an unerring eye the *secret agent* saw the complicated knots, and after manifesting phenomena, slipped them with the most thorough ease, and that too in a space of time almost incredible.

In company with their father, for some time, and other agents, these mediums traversed over an immense portion of the American territory, from Ohio to the state of Maine. Their manifestations have been given thousands of times. They have visited most of the principal towns and cities within the circuit of their travels, and in all cases marvels have been witnessed which have caused excitement of no ordinary character. Their mission has not been altogether one of safety or pleasant to contemplate, only in the heroic sense; they have been opposed, and submitting to tests have triumphed—but in America, as here, there are men who are not only strong in physical powers, but in prejudices, and those prejudices have grown into demons in certain instances, and the men who owned them have been their slaves. Organised conspiracies here and there have threatened the Brothers Davenport and their agents with destruction, and the chances of escape have seemed nowhere; but ever the invisible influences which manifested their presence and power so often to them guarded and warned them and they *did* escape.

The *furor* created against them at one time was so great that it was certain, had their enemies taken them that they would have suffered the fate of common malefactors, and have yielded up the ghost from the overhanging branches of some tree. But a mysterious Providence was with them. And, having passed through the fierce fiery ordeal of persecution without being injured, except by scandal and a period of thirty days' imprisonment, the brothers have left behind them the Atlantic Ocean, and are here in the midst of our Philosophically Materialistic life, doing their work and prepared to continue to do it. In America, they were submitted to test-committees, and were continually subjected to the most searching scrutiny. Yet the way in which the *hand* is produced—the *voice* is heard, the musical instruments played, has not been found out, on any one of the whole range of Materialistic Hypotheses. The modes of testing have sometimes been ingenious—boxes have been

made which were intended to settle the question in a jiffy. These boxes had very accommodating holes for the arms and feet and were fastened on the mediums. Yet all the visible appearance of *the hand* and the playing of the music resulted just the same, and then the mediums walked forth before the audience free as the air. One account which comes to us speaks of a sack test which was speedily "sacked." The boys were tied well and fast to their chairs, then a sack was put over them and nailed to the floor; this was done to win heavy bets, but they were lost. Of course the *bettors* on the sceptical side were confident of winning. How could it be possible for the mediums to do the feats with a sack nailed over them? The trick would be now exposed, they were all quite sure, and the mediums would for ever after lose caste, and the "Spiritual Humbug" would no longer thrive. Very confident, indeed, were these sceptics, and very confident were the invisible agents who watched unseen the whole scene. Thousands of people were present to witness this final stroke of sceptical diplomacy. But those thousands were soon made to cheer the mediums and laugh at the diplomatists—for the musical instruments *did* play and whirl about in the air as usual and other wonderful manifestations took place, which entirely set the philosophers and fools at sea, whilst wise men looked on and thought in silence and waited for a hypothesis more satisfactory than "jugglery" or "psychology."

A remarkable escape from death by railway accident occurred from impression. The Davenports were bound for Alton, Ill., from St. Louis, Mo. They were to take the train in the morning, and had got their luggage at the depot, and were themselves there ready to start. Everything external to them made their speedy journey appear a certainty—but something internal worked upon their wills and caused them to put off their journey a few hours. In the evening the Brothers took another train, and discovered the frightful fact that the train which they had intended and prepared themselves to go by in the morning, was shattered and mutilated, and a large number of the passengers killed and wounded.

In their travels, incidents have not been wanting, where persecution has planned and perpetrated mischief—attempts

were made repeatedly by sceptical committees to bring the phenomena under the banner of "Trickery." It would not do to allow even the strictest eye of investigation to watch the manifestations and to detect every possible flaw without consequences accruing as disreputable to the enemies of spiritual fact as they were torturing to the mediums. The trick was beyond the sceptics if it was a trick. But prejudice was with them to the end. Prejudice, blind prejudice gave prejudgment and made honesty criminal. The mediums knew their power was natural to them, and that they could no more help possessing their organism than their lives. They knew the juggler's art was not theirs, and they likewise knew that to submit to pay imposts which were charged to conjuring exhibitors was practically to admit that illusion had something to do with the seances. So, with a praiseworthy manliness, they always held to their colours, and refused to pay the conjuror's fee, not being conjurors. But on a certain day in 1851 they were consigned to a common jail, to remain there for thirty days, reflecting on the humanity of the law and the magnanimity of certain men.

Mr L. P. Rand, who stood in a similar relation to them as Dr Ferguson does at the present time, and who has written a sketch of the Davenportes, was incarcerated with the two brothers in the common jail at Oswego. When they were locked in the cell, the sceptics said—"Now see where their spirit-power is. If they have the spirits attending them, let them deliver them from prison:" or words to this effect. The cell door was most strongly locked, and even new locks night after night supplied, in order that the suspicion of fear that they would escape might not exist. But the mysterious agents which had so often performed the marvels which had set the scientific and the materialistic philosophers theorising in perplexity were not to be defeated with a bolt and lock, let them be ever so secure. It was not considered necessary to give freedom to the whole party, but freedom was given to Mr. Rand. He escaped from the prison through the door which was unlocked by a mysterious hand, and he heard voices telling him to go and the way he was to escape. Mr. Rand went out at the open doorway, and the Brothers attempted to follow, but the same spirit voices which told Rand to go

bade the Davenports stay behind. They obeyed the mandate, wondering why they should not be free as well as their fellow-prisoner. The wonder was at end after Rand had fairly escaped—the invisibles gave as the reason why they had been told to remain something like the following:—"If you all escape before the term of imprisonment expires and you should be retaken, who is to prove that you did not break open the prison-door? But should Rand be retaken, you can both swear that he did not break open the door." No doubt the manifestation of deliverance had a purpose, not simply to give freedom to one person out of three—but to establish the mighty fact that the spirits *can* perform miracles even to the taking off of locks without visible tools. There was only one more night to pass before the law's claim upon the Brothers was duly honoured—that night passed and they walked forth free. The spirits had proved their might mightier than matter, the lock had been taken off, and on being felt by one of the boys was warm, and then when Rand was gone the lock was again put upon the door and the Brothers were again locked in. Rand's account of his release will be interesting:—

"Just after we were seated in our room, the jailer came to the door to lock us in as usual, and asked if we were all there. We answered promptly to his call that we were. He put on a new lock that we had never seen. Immediately, sooner than we expected, a voice spake in the room and said that I was to go out that night. I was told to put on my coat and hat, and be ready. It was oppressively warm in our small room with the window and door both closed, and I asked if I could be allowed to sit with my coat off, as I did not expect we should be released for more than an hour; but the answer was, "Put on thy coat and hat,—and be ready." I did so, not even then supposing that we should be released until the jailer and his family had retired, and all might be still without. But I was disappointed. Immediately, not probably twenty minutes from the time we were locked up, the door was thrown open and the voice again spoke and said: "Now go quickly.—Take with you the rope, [for a rope had been in our room which had been used for another purpose, in our former room, as we have previously said,] go to yonder garret window, and let thyself down, and flee from this place. We will take care of the

boys. There are many angels present, though but one speaks." I hastily passed on and strictly obeyed the angel. The boys came out with me into the Hall, took up the lock which lay upon the floor, and for the first time examined it,—spoke of its being warm. The angel told them, as they afterwards informed me, to go into the room again, and the door was closed and locked again by the angel, and they were to remain there for the night.

"When I went I expected the mediums would immediately follow me. It by no means occurred to me that the door was again to be locked. I was told by the angel even to leave the rope at the window. I expected that when I had successfully made my escape from the building the boys would be directed to follow me. I did not comprehend at the time that the angels intended to detain the boys for the night. I loitered by the way supposing it likely my companions might overtake me; and when I arrived at the house of a friend who kindly arose to receive and shelter me, I joyfully announced that I expected the boys along in a few moments. I sat down, hastily wrote that night to my wife and children in Massachusetts, as that letter will now show, announcing to them that our prison door had been thrown open, that I had thus made my escape, and that I expected the boys would soon arrive.

"It matters not to me what force these statements may have in the minds of others—I make them because they are true,—before God and man I make them, and shall make them while I exist; and thanks be to God on high, and I am not alone in this testimony; angels who do his bidding will ever attest its truthfulness.

"In the morning I went out and showed myself openly and confidently in the city. It never occurred to me that the door was re-locked. I marvelled, indeed, that the mediums did not come, for I knew they were determined to go out if they could, after the jailer had given assurance that we should not be harmed if we did go away when unlocked by the spirits. I supposed they might have been seen by the jailer, possibly, and that seeing them he might have felt it his duty to retain them, for we intended to go out unbeheld. When we were unlocked from our room and thus let out into the hall, there were no more locks against us. We could all have gone down the two flights of stairs and thus out

into the street: but must then pass in full view of the jailer and his household. I obeyed the order of the angel, and went out as I have said, through the upper portion of the jail which presented no obstacles at all. I could have gone without a rope, but as it lay at my hand it was a matter of some convenience."

There was a great commotion amongst the giants and pigmies of science and law. The account of Rand's release flew on the wings of Rumour. People wondered, but were hard to believe. Sceptics still harped upon the string of "Trickery" and some believed the jailer had received bribes to leave the door unlocked by "mistake." Nevertheless, the facts were publicly circulated, and the mediums on their release made the following:—

DECLARATION AND AFFIDAVIT.

PRISON OPENED BY THE ANGELS.

Be it known to all people, that in the seventh month A.D. 1859, we, the undersigned, were imprisoned, in the common jail, in the city of Oswego, N. Y., on account of propagating our religious principles, and that after twenty-nine days of our confinement, at evening, when we were all in our prison-room together, as we had just been locked in by the jailer, we having truly answered to his call, a voice spoke and said, "*Rand, you are to go out of this place this night. Put on your coat and hat, — be ready.*" Immediately the door was thrown open, and the voice again spake and said, "*Now walk quickly out and on the attic window yonder, and let thyself down by a rope, and flee from this place. We will take care of the boys. There are many angels present, though but one speaks.*" The angelic command was strictly obeyed.

That this, and all this, did absolutely occur, in our presence, we do most solemnly and positively affirm before God and angels and men.

Subscribed and sworn before me, this first day of August, 1859. [Signed]

JAMES BARNES, Justice of the Peace.

IRA ERASTUS DAVENPORT,
LUKE P. RAND,

Subscribed and sworn before me by William Davenport,
this 5th day of August, 1859.

WILLIAM DAVENPORT.

U. B. BENT, Justice of the Peace.

We know that many will refuse credence to the above, but why need they? If they can admit the fact that a coat is, in a marvellously quick space of time, pulled off the back of Mr. Fay or one or other of the Davenports, whilst the hands are securely tied behind—or that a waistcoat has been taken as quickly from the back of one of them without the coat being removed, and has been found buttoned up with the watch in the waistcoat pocket—or that a vase in a private drawing-room has been apparently to the sense of hearing broken into pieces, and afterwards picked up from the hearth quite whole and uninjured—all in a time quicker than we take to describe them,—there is nothing to obstruct the way to believing that spirits can open a prison door, to establish a truth and give freedom to a prisoner. We read in the 12th chapter of the Acts—"And behold the Angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up saying, arise up quickly. And the chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, gird thyself and bind on thy sandals, and so he did. And he saith unto him, cast thy garments about thee and follow me. And he went out and followed him." Here we have in the sacred records evidence that an angel has been sent on a mission of redemption, that the prison bars have yielded to its ingress and egress—and Peter, who before was in chains, stood free and left the prison in safety. It is easy enough to sneer at the scripture account and say, "What proof have we of this?" but still the testimony comes to us and there is no contemporaneous evidence to discredit it. Daily occur miracles of a character the world has no conception of, which in their results are as marvellous as Peter's release from prison. The fact comes to us and christians need not doubt it. It is founded on evidence clear as other facts recorded in "the Book of Books." Why need we for ever look for results recognisable and explainable to our own finite senses? We see the green satin grass and admire its fresh pleasing beauty, but can we comprehend fully the law of

growth which gives it strength and the law of light which gives it colour? We see the horse and the sheep eating the grass, but can we answer why the same grass breeds wool on the back of the sheep, and hair on the body of the horse? Everywhere in nature miracles are hourly performed, and perhaps the greatest miracle of all is the effect they variously produce on various minds. Peter was released from prison, and by an angel, do we understand how the chains fell off from his hands, how the prison gates were unbarred? We read the account in Faith and bid Reason puzzle itself for aye. The operations of men who move on this earth are familiar to us, but not so the operations of angels or spirits whom we rarely see but whom we have sacred assurance both in the scriptures and in numerous modern instances present evidences they are near us for celestial and divine purposes, are only known to us in special manifestations, which we cannot doubt, but which we cannot explain nevertheless. In the case of Peter we get the fact of his release and learn that his chains fell off his hands and that the prison doors were unbarred. But we ask ourselves in vain to satisfy our reason with the how all this was done? We do not hear that the angel was provided with a hammer and chisel or that any other material substance was used for the purpose of "deliverance." But the fact that Peter *was* delivered is recorded nevertheless. After perusing the scriptures and learning the particulars of Peter's deliverance, do we find any passage which informs us no such miracle shall be performed again? We do not, therefore are we free to take the testimony in relation to the release of Mr Rand from the jail of Oswego, and coupling the bare testimony with the solemn affidavit of the trio, we shall find it difficult to doubt the fact that almost at the eleventh hour when hope and suspense had subsided in despair of freedom, the angels came and performed the miracle of deliverance, establishing a fact for the modern historian which must, legitimately considered, make the case of Peter a case that stands forward in the New Testament challenging disputation.

The testimony from the other side of the Atlantic, proving the reality of the manifestations, and consequently the perfect honesty of the Davenport Brothers

and those who are with them, forms a stupendous argument against deception.

Dr. Loomis, a member of the medical profession, and a professor of Chemistry and Toxicology in George Town Medical College, has drawn up a report of what he witnessed through the mediumship of the Davenports. Being himself a man of scientific attainments, and withal strongly prejudiced against the truth of the phenomena, he may perhaps be accepted as a reliable witness by sceptics on this side the Atlantic. It will be seen that Dr. Loomis does not admit the spiritual hypothesis, but talks of some *new force*, which he does not attempt to explain, nevertheless his testimony to the facts witnessed by him is valuable in shielding the mediums from the oft-reported scandal of "Humbugging :"—

DR. LOOMIS'S REPORT.

"At one end of Willard's Hall is a large platform about fifteen feet square, and three feet from the floor, carpeted. At the back side of this platform, resting on three horses, about eighteen inches high, with four legs each, (one inch in diameter), was a box or cabinet in which the phenomena occurred. It is necessary to describe the box critically, in order to be able to understand the occurrences which took place.

"After a very careful examination took place, I find the box seems to be made for two purposes only. 1st, to exclude the light; and 2nd, to be easily taken apart and packed in a small space for transportation. It is made of black walnut boards, from one-fourth to one-half of an inch in thickness. The boards are mostly united by hooks and hinges, so as to be taken apart and folded up. The box is about seven feet high, six feet wide, and two feet deep, and the back was one inch in front of the brick wall of the building. It has three doors, each two feet wide and as high as the box, so that when the doors are open the entire interior of the box is exposed to the audience. Across each end and along the back are boards about ten inches wide, arranged for seats firmly attached to the box. These are one-half inch walnut boards. At the middle and near the back edge of each of these seats are two half-inch holes, through which ropes may be passed for

the purpose of tying the boys firmly to their seats. The entire structure is so light and frail as to utterly preclude the idea that anything whatever could be concealed within or about its several parts by which any aid could be given in producing the phenomena witnessed. The top and bottom of the box are of the same thin material, and not tongued and grooved, so that the joints were all open. The floor was carpeted with a loose piece of carpet, which was taken out. The entire inside of the box was literally covered with bruises and dents, from mere scratches to those of an eighth of an inch deep. I examined the box thoroughly in all its parts, and am satisfied that there was nothing concealed in it, nor was there any way by which anything could be introduced into it to aid in producing the phenomena. The phenomena exhibited may be divided into several classes.

"a. Before the performance commenced the audience chose a committee of three, of which I was one. The other two were strangers to each other and to myself. I never saw them before that evening, have never seen them since, and do not know their names. One of the committee—a stout, muscular man, over six feet in height, professionally a sea-captain, and who remarked to me as he was performing the operation, that he had pinioned many prisoners—tied one of the boys in the following manner, viz.: A strong hemp rope was passed three times round the wrist and tied; it was then passed three times round the other wrist and tied again—the hands being behind the back. The rope was then passed twice around the body and tied in front as tightly as possible. Before this was completed the wrists had commenced swelling so that the flesh between the cords was even with their outer surface—the hands puffed with blood and quite cool. The circulation was almost completely stopped in the wrists. The boy complained of pain, and said, "Tie the rope as you wish, but I cannot stand it. I am in your power, but you must loosen the rope." I remarked to the Captain that it was cruel to let the rope remain so tight as it was—that security could be gained without being unnecessarily cruel. We examined his wrists again, and the Captain decided not to loosen the rope. The whole work of tying the boy was closely watched by me during

the entire progress, and thoroughly examined when done ; and I must say that very little feeling was exhibited for the boy. No human being could be bound so tightly without suffering excruciating pain. His hands were released in about fifteen minutes. I then examined his wrists carefully. Every fibre of the rope had made its imprint on the wrists. I examined them a second time, one hour and thirty minutes after, and the marks of the rope were plainly visible. He was pinioned as tightly around the body. After being thus tied by his hands, he was seated at one end of the box, and a second rope being passed around his wrists, was drawn both ends through the holes in the seat, and firmly tied underneath. His legs were tied in a similar manner, so that movement of his body was almost impossible. All the knots were a peculiar kind of sailer knots, and entirely beyond reach of the boy's hands or mouth.

"The other Davenport Boy was tied in a similar way by another member of the committee. After being tied, I carefully examined every knot, and particularly noticed the method in which he was bound. The knots were all beyond the reach of his hands or mouth. He was as securely bound as the other, the only difference being that the ropes were not as tight around the wrists. This one, as the other, was tied to his seat, the ropes being passed through the holes, and tied underneath to the ropes attached to his legs. Thus fastened, one at one end of the box and one at the other, they were beyond each other's reach.

"Thus far I was perfectly satisfied of three things:—1st. There was in the box no person except the boys, bound as above described; 2nd. It was physically impossible for the boys to liberate themselves; 3rd. There was introduced into the box nothing whatever besides the boys and the ropes with which they were bound.

"These being the conditions, the right-hand door was closed; then the left-hand door; and finally the middle door was closed. At the same time the gas-lights were lowered, so that it was twilight in the room. Within ten seconds two hands were seen by the committee and by the audience, at an opening near the top of the middle door; and one minute after the doors opened of their own

accord, and the boy bound so tightly walked out unbound—the ropes lying on the floor, every knot being untied. The other boy had not been released, and a careful examination showed every knot and every rope to be in the precise place in which the committee left it.

“The doors being closed as before, with nothing in the box besides one of the boys, bound as described, hand and foot, with all the knots beyond the reach of his hands or mouth, in less than one minute they opened without visible cause, and the Boy walked out unbound, every knot being untied.

“b. The box being again carefully examined, and found to contain nothing but the seats, the boys were placed in them unbound, one seated at one end and one at another. Between them on the floor was thrown a large bundle of ropes. The doors were then closed. In less than two minutes they opened as before, and the boys were bound hand and foot in their seats. The committee examined the knots and the arrangements of the ropes, and declared them more securely bound than when they had tied them themselves. I then made a careful examination of the manner in which they were tied, and found as follows, viz: a rope was tightly passed around each wrist and tied, the hands being behind the back; the ends were then drawn through the holes in the seat, and tied underneath, drawing the hands firmly down on the seat. A second rope was passed several times round both legs and firmly tied, binding the legs together. A third rope was tied to the legs and then fastened to the middle of the back side of the box. A fourth rope was also attached to the legs and drawn backward, and tied to the ropes underneath the seat, which bound the hands. This last rope was so tightened as to take the slack out of the others. Every rope was tight, and no movement of the body could make any rope slacken. They were tied precisely alike. I also examined the precise points where the ropes passed over the wrists, measuring from the processes of the radial, ulnar, and metacarpal bones. I also carefully arranged the ends of the ropes in a peculiar manner. This arrangement was out of reach and out of sight of the boys, and unknown to anyone but myself. The examination being ended, the

following facts were apparent:—1st. There was no one in the box with the boys; 2nd. There was no thing in the box with the boys, except the ropes; 3rd. It was physically impossible for the boys to have tied themselves, every one of the knots being beyond the reach of their hands or mouths, and the boys being four feet apart; 4th. The time elapsing from the closing of the doors to their opening—less than two minutes by the watch—was altogether too short for any known physical power to have tied the ropes as they were tied.

“c. The boys being tied in this manner, one of the committee was requested to shut the doors. He stepped forward, closed the right-hand door, also the left-hand door, and was about closing the middle door, when two hands came out of the box, one of which hit him a severe blow on the right shoulder. The committee-man was partly in the box and felt the blow, but did not know what struck him. He immediately threw open the doors, but nothing could be found but the boys, tied as before. I carefully re-examined the positions of the ropes, and found them as I had left them. The hands were seen by the audience distinctly. The lights had not been turned down, and the hands were seen in the plain gas-light, and remained in sight several seconds. Having satisfied myself of the reality of the hands, having seen the blow given by one of them, which was sufficient to turn the committee-man partly round, I examined them with reference to their position in relation to the boys anatomically considered. The middle door had not been closed, and the committee-man had not left the box; both boys were firmly tied to their seats, and the gas was fully lighted. The hand that appeared to the left of the committee-man might have been, so far as position and anatomical relation was concerned, the right hand of the boy at the left side of the box; but the hand that struck the man could not have belonged to either boy. It was more than four feet from either one, and at least two feet high; and, had either boy been sufficiently near, it must have been a right hand on a left arm.

“d. The box was then carefully examined again, and nothing could be found except the boys bound as described before. There were then placed on the floor between the

boys, a bell, a violin, a guitar, a tambourine, and a trumpet. This being done, the left door was closed, then the right door; and as the committee-man was closing the middle door, the brass trumpet, weighing about two pounds, jumped up from the floor, struck the top of the box with great force, and fell out on the floor. This took place while the committee-man stood facing the box. The door was wide open, and the committee-man stood partly in the box. The boys were again carefully examined, and found to be tied as at first. I examined the ropes that I had carefully and privately arranged, as before described, and found them as I had left them.

"*c.* The trumpet was placed back, and all the doors closed. Within ten seconds the violin was tuned and began to play; at the same time the guitar, tambourine, and bell began to play, all joining in the same tune. Part of the time the bell was thrust out of the window in the upper part of the middle door, by an arm, and played in sight of the audience. While the music was being made there were a multitude of raps, both light and heavy, on all parts of the box. The first tune was played and repeated, and a few seconds of comparative quiet followed, broken only by the instruments jumping about the box, and a few raps. Soon a second tune was begun, in which all the instruments joined as before. In the midst of this tune the doors suddenly opened themselves, and the instruments tumbled about, some one way some another, and part fell out on the floor. The time between the stopping of the music and the opening of the door was not a single second. I went at once to the box and found both boys bound, hand and foot, as I had left them. I examined the ropes particularly around the wrists, and found them in the precise position in which I had left them, measuring from the processes of the radial, ulnar, and metacarpal bones. I also found the ends of the ropes under the seats, which I had, as previously described, privately arranged in a peculiar manner, in precisely the same position as I had left them.

"*Inferences.*—1. There was no one in the box with the boys; 2. Nothing was in the box except the boys, bound, and the instruments; 3. The boys could not untie themselves; 4. The boys could not have been untied, as the

position of the ropes could not have been retained—having been privately arranged by myself, out of their sight and reach ; 5. The time between the playing of the instruments and the opening of the doors was totally insufficient for the boys, had they been untied, to have tied themselves—it being less than one second ; 6. The boys could not have tied themselves, all the knots being beyond their reach.

“*f.* The boys being tied as before, I got into the box and seated myself on the back seat between them. I then placed my right hand on the legs, just above the knees of the boy at my right, and my left hand in a similar way on the legs of the boy at my left side. My hands were then bound to them with ropes. They were placed in such a manner that I could detect distinctly any movement of the superficial muscles of the thighs of both boys. I did this for the purpose of ascertaining whether the body of either boy moved.

“After being thus tied, the committee carefully examined the box, and found nothing in it except the two boys and myself bound. The instruments before named were then placed in the box beside my feet, the violin being in my lap. In this position the doors were closed. Instantly loud raps were heard, and within two seconds after the closing of the door, and while we were all still and not a muscle of either limb, as I could perceive, moved. I felt fingers passing all over my head and face. It could not have been imagination, as the fingers took hold of my cravat, unfastened it, and took it off my neck as carefully as I could have done. One of the boys spoke to me, and said, “Will you request the instruments to play?” I asked, “Do you mean me?” He replied, “Yes.” I then said, “Will the violin play?” Instantly the violin rose up from my lap in front of my face, and began to play. It was out of the reach of the boys. The boy at the left then said, “Will you notice the order in which the instruments move?” I replied, “I will.” He then said, “Gently.” “Will the violin go to the top of the box?” Instantly the violin, still playing, went to the top of the box at least two feet beyond our reach, all the while playing. The guitar was at the same time playing at my side. While the violin was moving about, playing over our heads,

the boy at the left said, "Will the spirit strike the stranger with the instrument gently on the head?" The boy at the right said, "Strike gently. Don't strike hard." Instantly the tambourine came up in front of me, tapped one cheek, then the other, then the top of my head, and, as quick as thought, struck the righthand boy a tremendous blow on the top of the head. He cried out, as any one would, hurt by a sudden, unexpected blow, "Oh!" The trumpet then moved on the floor to the front of the box, and up the side, out of our reach, to the top of the box, then sailed around with the violin at least two feet above our reach. The tambourine came up my left and balanced itself on the top of my head; at the same time hands were passing over my face, head and sides. At this point the doors suddenly opened. The violin and trumpet dropped from the top of the box, and the tambourine fell from my head. During all this time I did not move; neither did the boys, as far as I could perceive.

"I know that it was impossible for them to have moved their hands from behind their backs without my noticing it. I know they did not rise from their seats. I know that there were not hands or fingers enough to have played the guitar, violin, and tamborine, and passed over my face and body as they did at the same time had both boys been untied. Had it been the hands of the boys on my face, they could not have had time to have replaced them and tied the ropes before the doors were opened. Such quick and violent motions of the boys must have caused perceptible motion of the legs. But I know they were perfectly still during the whole time I was bound to them. When I was untied I again examined the ends of the ropes which I had previously adjusted as before described, and found them as I had left them at first. The instruments were then taken out, and nothing was left in the box but the boys, bound as described. The doors were closed, and in less than one minute they opened, and the boys walked out, every knot being untied. This closed the evening's performance.

"REMARKS.

"In order that this paper may be correctly understood, it is proper to make the following statements:—

"1. I am a disbeliever in Spiritualism.

"2. I could see nothing in the phenomena above described that was indicative of spiritual or intellectual power or force beyond that of the boys.

"3. I never spoke to the Davenport Brothers before, nor have I spoken to them since.

"4. I have written this as an account of phenomena which I have witnessed as correctly as I am capable of doing; precisely as I would any other phenomena.

"5. I endeavoured to be critical in my observations, that they might be valuable; and, for the same reason, accurate in the expression of them in this paper.

"6. I felt during the exhibition that the phenomena were produced by the means of a power with which I was unacquainted.

"7. I was not at all impressed with the idea that this new force was under the control or direction of a spiritual presence, but fully under control of the minds of the boys.

"8. I did not make the examination for the purpose of sustaining any theory, or for curiosity, but for the express purpose of accurately noting the phenomena that occurred.

"9. I am acquainted with the general methods of sleight-of-hand performers, and am perfectly satisfied that these phenomena must be accounted for in some other way.

"10. I cannot believe that deception was used. As far as I could perceive, the phenomena were real, and must be accounted for through the agency of a new force.

"11. If the human mind is competent to give evidence of observed phenomena, then the above statements may be relied on as correct.

"(Signed,) S. L. LOOMIS."

The Davenport Brothers accompanied by Dr J. B. Ferguson and Mr Fay, arrived in Liverpool Sept. 9, 1864, and reached London Sept. 11, 1864, having set sail from New York in the ship *Britannia* on the 27th of August.

Mr W. M. Fay was born in Darmstadt, Germany, and emigrated to America in his eleventh year. While residing in Buffalo, New York, he was unexpectedly, to himself and his widowed mother, found to possess the organisation that reflects the most positive and powerful spiritual evidences. This led to his association with the

Davenport's in their earliest experiences of this character, and the association has been preserved ever since. True, occasionally he has been operating in one field while they were engaged in another, but they have always come together again, and seem necessary to each other as the proofs mutually reflected. He has been subjected to the same tests and has ever come out triumphant. He is now 25 years of age, and for eleven of that time he has been before the world in private as well as public manifestations, and through his agency thousands have been made to recognise their spiritual agency or its sublime alliances.

Dr Ferguson was born in Philadelphia on the 19th of January, 1819, of Scotch parentage on the father's side and English on the mother's. When an infant they removed to the Valley of Virginia, where he grew up under the best influences of southern society. Upon attaining his majority he left home for the great West, spending two years in Ohio, where he married into one of the oldest and most highly respectable families of Kentucky. Removing to that state he there spent twenty-five years as a minister of religion in extended missionary fields, and for sixteen years as the settled pastor of one of the largest congregations of Nashville, Tennessee, where men of all denominations attended upon his ministry with pleasure and profit. During six years of that time he was the editor of the *Christian Magazine*, a widely circulated religious journal of the most liberal principles. While pastor of the Free Church of Nashville, one of the largest and most beautiful edifices was erected for his use. He was called upon to fill the most responsible places in the state charitable institutions; to act as almoner for the charities of the city of Nashville; to deliver addresses before the legislative councils of the state, and for all its literary and scientific associations, receiving the highest testimonials alike from her legislature, her governors, her colleges, and her literary societies. He was also called before the first literary and political societies of the States of Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Kentucky, and enjoyed a reputation equal, if not superior, to any of their most popular authors or speakers.

When the revolution broke out, men of the first eminence waited upon him and urged him to deliver addresses

over the whole country, which he did before their state conventions, and the public, amid the adulations of the whole people. He was known by their oft-repeated compliments as the Patrick Henry of the South. He advocated a united South to prevent war; discussed the subject of slavery in all its bearings, recommending a gradual emancipation, and exposing the fanatical measures of one party, and the retaliation of the other, and was heard by all. When the war invaded his own home, he was day and night engaged in mitigating its horrors, and stood forth the advocate of an armistice, negotiation, and every hope that would look to a just settlement of difficulties, the passions of war were only intensifying. He was sent to Europe, to Richmond, and other points on this mission of peace. This failing, he took up anew the evidences of a new hope, for all mankind, reflected in the great spiritual movement of these times, and finding the Davenports mediums through whom they could be given to all classes of mankind, he accepted the opportunity of coming with them to Europe to represent their own and kindred evidences to the public. Upon every one of these distinctive features of his career, books of the most interesting description could be written, which, in their plainest and most truthful narration, would rival the romances of the age.

He is to-day the advocate of a church as broad as humanity; of hope to all of all classes of that humanity; of a council of nations to settle all questions that lead to war, so that no nation can go to war without arraying itself against all mankind; of the inherent immortality of man; and he has been before the courts and cabinets of some of the most powerful nations in that advocacy. He is in association, responsible and hopeful with men and women who are the recipients of the brightest evidences of Divinity ever granted to any people, all looking to the highest and most enduring good of humanity at large.

Dr Ferguson possesses all the manners of a gentleman, and the qualifications of a logician. In argument he is powerful and always earnest. His style, like his manners, is winning, and there is not only a poetic beauty in his diction but there is always a charm in the manner in which he presents it. It is no common task to elaborate

the fine sparkling threads of poetry into a web of metaphysics, and give withal to the character of his discourses the subtle touches of unanswerable logic; yet this we consider from sermons we have read, which he has delivered, Dr Ferguson is eminently qualified for. Those who have made the Doctor's acquaintance, as we have done, will not fail to mark the rich superiority over ordinary minds of his conversational powers. He seems to us adapted in every particular for the mission he has undertaken. Few men would have exchanged the pulpit for the rostrum under the conditions which Dr Ferguson has had to accept. He was beloved in his own country, he was doing a good work preaching the gospel of blessed peace to his people, his popularity was solid, he had no lack of support, and was even urgently solicited to accept an advanced income to remain behind and work in the vineyard of truth as hitherto he had done. But no, the Davenports were coming to England; they wanted some noble-souled preacher who could brave opposition and suffer scorn, and, if need be, carry the cross of submission the while, without murmuring, to accompany them. Dr Ferguson braving all objections, with a clear vision piercing the veil of spiritual doubt, consented to take up the cross and do the work necessary to be done, for no mere monetary consideration, but for the cause of universal humanity. It is a good thing such a man with the Brothers has entered the field here in London. It not only speaks for his own great-heartedness, but for their judicious judgment, and there is little doubt but the arrangement, which is a mutual one, will serve all parties and more especially the cause of truth.

Mr H.D. Palmer, who brought with him letters of introduction to several leading Spiritualists, when he preceded the mediums some ten days, is a man thoroughly business-like in his department, which embraces the management of all business details connected with séances, &c. He has proved himself astute and competent. He does not himself hold by any special theory, but wishes to have the manifestations, free from all speculations, fairly tested. He does not profess to philosophise, but he knows the medium powers of the brothers are genuine. He appears, likewise, thoroughly acquainted with the *modus operandi*

of Professor Anderson, having some years ago acted as his agent in America. This gives him confidence, and he is not afraid of submitting the mediums to the most scrutinising tests. How he can witness *all* the various phenomena which daily take place in his presence, without deciding on some plausible theory, is to us a marvel; but since subjects are not kings, and molehills mountains—since the mechanism of success, in public exhibitions of any character, must be under the management of business men, rather than dreamers and philosophers, we must yield the meed of praise to those who make the machine work well, however we may exalt the genius of metaphysicians like Dr Ferguson.

Mr Palmer has already proved his tact in the tactics adopted in the way of bringing the mediums prominently before the public. Nothing could have worked better than his policy, and when the time is taken into consideration, it becomes a question with us, whether the spirits have not aided Mr Palmer to an extent he may have no conception of. However, be this as it may, Mr Palmer has undertaken the task of managing the whole machinery of the private and public séances, and the results of his management have been satisfactory hitherto.

The first séance was given at the house of Dion Boucicault; what took place there, was fully narrated in the *Morning Post*. The *Times* had also a very candid report of the same séance. The *Standard*, in a leading article, copying a portion of the *Times*' account, denounced the affair as the most thorough sham and humbug. It would be impossible to use terms more virulent and unreasonable than the *Standard* employed on this occasion. The ropes used for tying the brothers, in a figure of speech, should be in better use in another way. The editor of the *Standard*, having said his say, which is, we suppose, all he meant, the Davenports may go on exhibiting the wonders of their cabinet, without fear of the hangman—but this is not to be credited to the *Standard*, but to the higher and more liberal law of England.

Having commenced, the conflict between the believers and the unbelievers must go on, and it has been going on to some tune since the arrival of the Davenport Brothers. Professor Anderson, as most people who walk the streets

of London are aware, has been defacing the walls, and disgracing himself by tampering with sacred themes, for the sake of a "sensation." He has his daughter depicted blindfolded, whilst the figure of an angel, in very vile colours, is daubed behind her. To heighten the effect of this piece of cool impiety and effrontery, he calls his daughter the "second-sighted sybil" or clairvoyante; and yet at St James's Hall he has nightly insulted the liberty under which he speaks, by declaring Spiritualism a delusion, and Mr Home and the Davenport Brothers humbugs. If his daughter be a true clairvoyante, and angels are seen by her, Spiritualism has something to do with it; if not, then Professor Anderson knows he palms her off upon the British public under false colours, and by so doing proves that, if he does not himself believe in clairvoyance, he at least believes in assuming to believe in it. But is it not a sad moral condition for a father not only to crush truth in himself, but to make his own daughter a party to the base sacrifice?

On his platform Professor Anderson nightly gives the lie to his own placards. He is a Spiritualist on the walls, but he is the direst foe of Spiritualists on the boards. He uses Spiritualism outside to draw cash out of his patrons' pockets: inside he abuses it with a thorough earnestness very praiseworthy in a man who has crucified the truth in figures and paste, and makes his own daughter aid and abet him in the vile infamy.

The appearance in London of the Davenport Brothers gave a fresh impetus to the tongue of the Wizard of the North, who did not doubt that their trick, like his own, could soon be found out. So he swelled larger in his own bluster before his audiences, and at length wrote to the *Morning Post*, stating that his son was performing tricks similar to the Davenports in America. But Professor Anderson was not quite up to Yankeedom this time. He had gone a step or two too far. He implied by his letter that the manifestations of the Brothers resulted from "trickery." Another conjuror, in the Northern Wizard's confidence, who possesses certain qualifications for escaping from ropes, came forward after Anderson and challenged the Brothers Davenport, stating that he would do in the light all they did in the dark. The Wizards were in high

glee, the public looked suspiciously both on the conjurors and on the mediums. But at length a correspondence took place between both parties, which ended in the great furioso of Regent-street declining the honour of meeting the mediums. Every fair chance was given. The Brothers and Mr Fay were prepared to submit to any reasonable test, before any number of scientific men in any gentleman's private house, allowing Professor Anderson, with or without machinery, to imitate the manifestations which would result from the simple conditions of darkness and silence in their presence.

But the Wizard of the North had not gone round the world for nothing, he knew better than to make a failure and get himself laughed at; so like a very wise Wizard he held aloof, and cared not for any man's reproof.

There can be no dispute about the matter of the Wizard's cowardice. He has been invited in a proper, gentlemanly spirit, but he has not been gentleman enough to accept the invitation, or even to apologise for his uncalled-for attacks on Spiritualists.

With this we leave him to his "psychomanteum," and hope at least he may prove in future a wiser and better man, assured that he will not easily forget the lesson he has learned of the Davenports.

No sooner had the battle between the Wizards and the Brothers given victory for the latter, than another shot was sent whizzing through the press.

SPIRITUAL HUMBUG EXPOSED.—THE BROTHERS DAVENPORT.

A short time since two men, representing themselves by advertisement to be the "Davenport Brothers," paid a visit to this city, and performed what they claimed to be "spiritual manifestations." It will be remembered that the music hall was crowded on each evening of their appearance, and much speculation was indulged in as to the real *modus operandi* by which the tricks were performed. Some gentlemen determined, if possible, to fathom the mystery. A challenge was sent to the pseudo "Davenport Brothers," but, after delaying from time to time, they stated that they would not give those gentleman "a private séance, because they knew they would not act with them in

good faith." After this, the "Davenports" visited Hamilton and St. Catherine's. In the latter town, they were so closely cornered for a private exhibition that they, fearing an exposure, suddenly left the place. It appears that Mr Fay has been running the concern on his own account in Cleveland, but has met his match and been thoroughly exposed. Mr Fay had been gleaning a very good harvest there until the appearance of a Rev. A. S. Dobbs, who did not believe that the spirits had anything to do with the "manifestations." He challenged Fay, and said that what Fay would do he would follow. The challenge was accepted, a night appointed for the trial—but we will let the *Cleveland Herald*, of the 28th of August, tell the rest of the story:—A fair audience, composed about equally, we should judge, of believers in Spiritualism and those who did not, assembled in Brainard's Hall. At about eight o'clock Mr. Dobbs made his appearance. He remarked that plays and tricks were all very well in their place, and were often a great source of amusement, which was necessary to our happiness, but no person had a right to use tricks and mummeries and deceptions in the sacred name of religion. After a few more remarks, he proceeded to his exposition.

Fay and his wife came into the hall, apparently in high feather, to all appearance confident of the utter failure of the attempt to expose their manifestations. The same committee that acted for Mr Fay—John S. Ryder and W. R. Mound—were chosen to act for Mr Dobbs. They examined the box, and pronounced it similar to the one used by Fay. Mr Dobbs then entered the "cabinet," the lights were turned down, and the "spirits" proceeded to tie him fast, which they did in an incredibly short space of time. The lights were turned on, the doors of the "cage" thrown open, and there sat the reverend gentleman, tied tight, in hands, arms, legs, and body. The committee reported that he was fully as tightly tied as Mr Fay was, although the knot was slightly different. A manifest though not extravagant round of applause greeted the report. The doors were then closed, and he went rapidly forward, doing one after another all the marvels ever attempted by Fay. Loud noises were heard in the box, and the sound of bells, beating on drums, and various other demonstrations. When the

"spirit hand" was exhibited through the aperture the house came down with a perfect storm of applause. Several times during the evening Fay had attempted to interrupt the proceedings, but he was always answered good humouredly, and told that, when the performance came to a close, if he was not satisfied, he could ask as many questions as he chose. He then announced that he would do the "vest trick," which Fay would seldom do before a public audience, but reserved for the edification of believers, in private circles, as the "spirits" had told him that it was too mysterious and sublime for unbelieving eyes to behold. About this time the Fays began to show strong symptoms of wishing they were somewhere else; but still H. Melville put as good a face on matters as possible. It was evident the sympathies of the audience were fast running towards the Rev. Mr Dobbs. He was succeeding admirably. A vest was borrowed from a gentleman in the audience and placed in a box, not in reach of the operator—for it must be remembered that during all these demonstrations he was not only tied tightly down to his seat by strong cords, but his hands and feet were so securely fastened that it seemed almost impossible for him to move. The doors were closed, the room darkened and in less than a minute he called for "light," and there was a vest, with one arm of the operator passed through the armhole, and his hands still tied as tightly as before.

The applause was now deafening, and the heads of the Fays and some of their most ardent admirers, and firmest believers, came down another peg. The great "flour test" seemed to be Fay's "best holt," as he had alluded to it once or twice during the evening. Mr Dobbs now gave notice that he would attempt it. The committee placed in each of his tied hands a small portion of flour, and in less than two minutes the "spirit hand" and other demonstrations were made, but when the doors were opened he walked upon the stage with the full amount of flour still in his hands. The audience now rose in one wild shout. The wonderful and miraculous "flour test" was triumphantly accomplished. Down went the crest of the Fays and their friends another notch. Mr Dobbs then proceeded to explain to the audience the whole minutiae of these bare-faced humbugs. He was tied in a chair by the committee

on the stage, in the full glare of the gaslight, where all had a good view, and untied himself with the greatest ease, and in a very short space of time. He demonstrated fully how the knots were tied, and lucidly explained how the "tricks in the box" were accomplished. He did many more remarkable things during the evening than we have mentioned, but as they are all done in a similar way it is unnecessary to go into further detail. Suffice it to say, that it was a most searching, thorough, and successful exposition of one of the vilest, boldest swindles and humbugs ever practised on a confiding community, and the Rev. Mr Dobbs deserves the thanks of all who hold religion sacred, and we hope he will not give up the good work commenced, but will follow not only Fay, but those other swindlers, the Davenport Boys, and expose them in every town in which they may attempt to exhibit. It seems that Fay is an old practitioner of humbuggery, and has been often exposed, though never so thoroughly as by the Rev. Mr Dobbs, who showed him up in the winter of 1863, having been appointed on the committee to examine Fay, who was then giving exhibitions at Titusville, and having discovered the *modus operandi* of the affair at that time he followed the fellow up, through Western Pennsylvania, exposing him everywhere, and driving him out of the country into the east. He received a gold watch for his efforts in the matter. It is to be hoped that this revelation will open the eyes of the people to the manifold impostures and humbuggeries which the "Davenport Boys" and other mediums are constantly palming off upon them. Let them no longer be deceived.—*Toronto Globe, September 16.*

The above was picked up *instantly* by the local as well as the general press, and consternation was on the faces of not a few friends of the Brothers. No time was lost before a reply was written.

But it will not surprise many to learn that only about two papers out of the immense number which gave currency to the damaging report cared to give currency to this short and satisfactory confutation of the whole statement—

To the Editor of the "Morning Post."

SIR,—With respect to the article in your journal of to-day,

quoting the *Cleveland Herald* of the 25th of August, in which a circumstantial account is given of a seance, at which Mr Fay was present and was successfully exposed to the derision of the public by the Rev Mr Dobbs, I beg to state that on Saturday, the 27th of August, I left New York in the steam ship *Britannia*, for Glasgow, and consequently was at sea on the date mentioned. I observe, also, that the 28th of August is Sunday, on which day there is no *Cleveland Herald* published : so the concocter of this circumstantial account was probably at sea also. I have not been in Cleveland for some years past, and my wife never appeared in public, in any capacity whatever. I am accustomed to this manner of attack, but the article in question is written with more skill than care.

I am, your obedient servant,

W. M. FAY.

Oct. 5.

The *Morning Advertiser* of the 6th of October, referring to the above letter says:—"Mr Fay, it will be seen, does not deny that he was at any other time or place than those specified, confronted and exposed by the Rev Mr Dobbs. If he will send us such a denial, in explicit language, we shall readily publish his letter."

Mr Fay replied in the *Advertiser* of the 10th of October, as follows :—

Sir,—In your journal of to-day, appended to my card of the 6th instant, you make the following remarks:—

"Mr Fay, it will be seen, does not deny that he was at any other time or place than those specified, confronted and exposed by the Rev Mr Dobbs. If he will send us such a denial, in explicit language, we shall readily publish his letter."

In response, I have to say, that I never, at any time or place, met with the Rev Mr Dobbs: never, to my knowledge, saw the gentleman, and never was "confronted" by him, or any other clergyman or person, in an exposure, attempted or successful, before the public of Cleveland, Toronto, or any other place. I trust, sir, you, and all who feel that my former disavowal of the events accredited to the *Toronto Globe*, will regard the above as an "explicit

denial" of any exposure to which it, or any other print may allude, so far as my séances are concerned.

I am, sir, yours &c,

W. M. FAY.

The Wizard of the North, who by the way, brags that he gave Mr Palmer his first lessons in "Humbug" thirteen years ago, although determined not to meet the Brothers Davenport on fair grounds, for a fair test, is by no manner of means disposed to let the excitement created by the mediums pass away without turning the tide as far as possible in his own favour. He has had a structure made very similar to the one used by the Davenport Brothers, and has given several anti-spiritualistic séances. The Professor has had good encouragement and vociferous cheers—what for? Simply allowing his little daughter to be tied up and placed in the cabinet, where she sometimes dexterously frees herself from her bonds. She then, to make the mystery more perplexing, is boxed up, and in about four minutes is seen apparently bound fast. But a hand is also seen at the aperture, and a tambourine comes tumbling out. But after witnessing the manifestations of the Brothers Davenport, Professor Anderson's *Séances* sink into insignificance. Yet his patrons flock and applaud, and do the Wizard the honour to suppose he exposes Spiritualism. Now let it be known that the Wizard will by no means allow us to suppose that his exhibition is got up in opposition to the Brothers Davenport. He scorns any such practice. But where did he get the idea of the cabinet, if not from the Davenports? Before they came to London, Professor Anderson's assumed *expose* of Spiritualism was confined to his rapping table and striking bell. But now the excitement, produced by a few séances of the Brothers, is created, all of a sudden, the Wizard of the North has a cabinet made in imitation of the one used by the mediums. Yet he by no manner of means, means it to be inferred that he is performing in opposition to the Brothers. Of course not, and we suppose he would not like to acknowledge the debt he owes them, by using a similar construction to theirs. If the public expect a Wizard to be depended on, when he assumes to offer an

exposé of Spiritualism, they make a mistake. He who says he gave Mr Palmer his first lessons in "Humbug," by the statement, practically admits himself a "Humbug," because to teach another how to humbug, one must be something of a humbug oneself. Well, we suppose the Wizard of the North will not dispute the question—he will honestly admit he is a humbug. But stop!—a man to expose humbug in others, ought, at least, to aim at honesty himself. If the facts of Spiritualism are false, it is no use setting a false man to expose them. If they are true, the very last man in the world to bring them into discredit, is he who publicly avows himself a humbug. We know the people like to be hoaxed, and although it costs them a little cash, they cannot help admiring the man who is clever enough to *do* them. Professor Anderson grows grandiloquent, when he asks the Brothers Davenport to expunge the word "spiritual" from their programme. But why does he not himself expunge the word "*anti-spiritual*?" He uses it, assuming to expose Spiritualism. But does he expose it? Not at all; he exposes his own ignorance. His rapping table and striking bell, when set to work, betray their *material* character at once. No person who has heard genuine spirit raps would accept Anderson's counterfeits. If he can produce raps, similar in sound to those heard at Mrs Marshall's, or in presence of Mr Home, why does he not produce them? Surely it would be worth his while to puzzle the Spiritualists. If he wishes to prove Spiritualism a "delusion," why does he not give us genuine raps, exactly alike in sound, to those we obtain at spiritual séances? But he knows he is not clever enough to mimic the spirits, so he has resort to his mechanical and electrical contrivances. Supposing, for the sake of argument, we accept the Wizard's rappings as fair imitations of those said to come from the spirits; we ask, in sober truth, do those rappings disprove spiritual ones? If they do, then, by a line of logic, we may say that only burlesque imitations are genuine. The photographer, and not the person photographed exists. The universe, and not the universal Maker. There are plenty of miniature creators. Professor Anderson is one of them, who turn their wonderful powers to account in producing marvels; but it is in vain they attempt to rival

the Almighty. They may make boats, houses, produce tricks in legerdemain, &c., but they cannot make a universe, or even a single hair; but if this Wizard's logic about "the rappings" he produces proves that no spiritual rappings take place be accepted, then we are driven to the conclusion, that nothing supernatural could ever have taken place—that all the manifestations of mind and matter are bona-fide operations of natural agency. Nor do we see how such logic as Anderson's can admit God in the universe. Surely, He cannot operate through his angels, because Professor Anderson can astound the human mind with his exhibitions of magic. It is, to say the least, very incongruous logic, to say that burlesque rappings on a table prove that genuine spirit raps do not take place.

In witnessing his miserable attempt to mimic the Davenport manifestations, we observe in the first place, that few of the conditions accepted by the Brothers are accepted by Professor Anderson; and in the next place, that the manifestations are almost absolutely devoid of marvellousness. At the Wizard's séances, when a hand is seen, it is that of his daughter, who manages to release herself from the rope. There is no mistaking its human character. At the Davenport séances, hands, and even long flesh-looking arms are seen, differing in size and colour. At the Wizard's séances, several minutes elapse after the cabinet is closed, before the hand is seen. At the Davenport séances, hands appear at the aperture immediately the door is closed. The Wizard presents you with bungling tricks, the Davenports with marvellous phenomena. Will the Wizard submit to tests like the mediums? No, he dare not; he knows well enough he would come off defeated; therefore, he will not make the attempt. If Professor Anderson would allow some honest person to sit in the cabinet and hold his daughter, then, if the tambourine came tumbling out of the aperture, and the hand was seen, some approximation to the cabinet manifestations of the Brothers would be arrived at; then, when his daughter is well tied up in the cabinet, if he would allow some disinterested person to fill her hands with flour, and she should manage to release herself from her bonds without spilling a dust of the flour, some approximation

to the manifestations of the Davenports might be attained. If any person were to offer £1,000 to the Wizard of the North to take his daughter to some private gentleman's house, and place her in competition with the Brothers Davenport, he would not accept the offer. Why? Because he knows that all his daughter does, is by trickery, and he does not know that all the Davenports do is by trickery. But Professor Anderson trumpets aloud his own impudence, on his own platform. There, he is a little king, and if any of his audience happen to be Spiritualists, he Biologises them into silence, whilst he insults their holiest feelings.

Those who wish to prove Spiritualism, must not expect to do so at Professor Anderson's séances. He does but play with the subject; what he presents to the public ear and eye, he admits to be anti-spiritual (all a trick.) Those who have the least experience in Spiritualism have sought for phenomena in a spirit very different to the one animating the Wizard of the North. Had they commenced by accepting Professor Anderson's burlesques as actual proofs that spirits never commune with mortals, they would never have seriously gone into the subject. If Professor Anderson had sufficient humility to investigate, he might, himself, long ago have discovered that spirits *do* commune with mortals in a thousand ways; but the fact is, the Professor is a mountain of conceit. He is the great Sir Oracle, of Regent-street—the man whose brain is large enough to receive all knowledge, both material and spiritual. He must know everything, especially about the spirits, or he could never talk so authoritatively, and declaim so virulently, as he does, against those who admit the possibility of spiritual existence.

Spiritualism is open to investigation, it may be fairly tried and tested, and after the most thorough trial and test, it will be found true. But we protest against submitting a subject so holy as Spiritualism to the rude test of any acknowledged "Humbug." Let men of strictly honest minds, with purity of purpose, undertake the investigation; until such men do undertake it, reliable proofs cannot be obtained which will satisfy the public.

Sceptics perceive it less difficult to discover objections, to find evidences in favour of ultra-mundane realities. All

manner of trivial remarks escape their lips. Tell them certain phenomena take place, they say they don't believe you, or that they are tricks. Show them the phenomena, and ask them to assure themselves that they are tricks of practical discovery, and they fall at once into agony about the "Darkness;" only give them light to investigate, and they will be satisfied. But it is over and over again urged, that darkness is a necessary condition to success, but that does not prohibit strict tests being applied. It is no use—the sceptics will have it that darkness is a cloak for trickery, but where is the logic of such vehement assertions? Darkness surely has other uses than to afford a cover for villany. To argue that it has not, is to argue that the Almighty has created darkness for the express purpose of giving a covering to crime. In the darkness, the innocent babe slumbers and dreams, and angelic beauties charm its entranced sleep. In the darkness, the majority of wearied humanity repose, and find renewed strength. In the darkness, we enter upon our life-lease here, and generally "pass away" to the realms there in the summer land. Darkness is with the seedling in the ground as it begins to germ. The fish in the deep waters spawn where there is little light. The birds cover their young, and keep them warm, in the darkness. Throughout the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdom, darkness is a condition necessary to growth and development in some form or other. The glow-worm sheds its silver radiance with most effect in the darkness. In the darkness, too, the pale-faced moon, and the countless orbs which stud the firmament, shine with marvellous lustre. The night time, with all its associations of darkness, is a solemn time. It is then, that the contemplative soul is drawn by invisible influences to its Maker. Bad deeds are done in darkness, it is true—true, also, that vile deeds are done in the light, but that does not necessarily make light and darkness, of themselves, bad. The chemist knows that the atmosphere is freighted more or less with electrical currents. Baron Reichenbach has successfully shewn, that an agent he calls *odyle*, exists in the darkness. This *odyle* is only another name for electricity, or magnetism. Now, supposing the atmosphere, under the condition of darkness, to contain larger quantities of *odyle* than in the light, and supposing

this odyle to be used by the agents which produce the manifestation of the Brothers Davenport, it follows that they may give their dark séances without trickery; aye, that without the darkness, no manifestations could take place. Those who will demur from the darkness in the case of Spiritual phenomena, would add proof of their consistency, if they refused to admit the genuineness of magic lantern exhibitions, without they were produced in broad daylight—or would by no means consider a photograph genuine, which was not developed in the light. An exhibition of fireworks would look very so-so if darkness were prohibited; yet there would be no more unreasonableness in refusing to admit darkness for a firework display, than there is in refusing to allow darkness to be used by the spirits. The various phenomena, which manifest themselves in the darkness, especially the appearance of phosphorescent hands or arms, appear to demand the conditions under which they are witnessed. Whether some of the manifestations will ever be exhibited in broad daylight or not, is a question we cannot answer. But it is evidently safer for the instruments to whirl through the air in the darkness, than in the light, because it is very reasonable to suppose that persons, could they see them whirl along, would make an attempt to intercept their passage, by so doing, great damage might accrue. But we have the fact presented to us—the manifestations take place in the darkness—there is no choice for us but to accept them as they come to us, or to have nothing whatever to do with them. We think the man who would refuse to have anything whatever to do with spiritual phenomena, because they come not after his own way, to use a mild term, is very conceited. Who is he, that he should dictate terms to the immortal intelligences which surround us and influence us, whether we know it or not? Such a man may be on good terms with himself, but it is likely he will be on very bad terms indeed with his fellow creatures, because they will be doing things not at all after his style. Surely, if spirits offend him by not doing what he would like under his own conditions, mortals will offend him by a similar course. Sceptics to spiritual phenomena are generally the most absurdly unreasonable beings living; they continually ask for novel and startling

facts, but they have an admirable mode of overlooking them, when they are brought under their notice. Show them a table elevated from the ground, they can't believe what they see, without the table will go out of sight; then, they cannot believe because they lose sight of it. Show them the Brothers Davenport tied fast, with a disinterested person inside the cabinet with them, whose hands placed one on each medium, enables him to detect the slightest muscular movement on their part, then let spirit hands appear, musical instruments play, and other wonderful things take place, and what will they do? Why, go on to talk, not about what was done, but what was *not* done; as if that which was not done, could prove that which *was* done was *not* done. Always urging objections, never allowing facts to speak for themselves, sceptics become ossified; and one might as well try to melt an iceberg, as to try and melt them. Yet somehow, convictions of spiritual realities do reach the hearts of sceptics, and they wonder how they could have held aloof, and offered stubborn and foolish opposition.

If the darkness were used, without offering legitimate tests, there would be some reason in the objections urged against it. But there are the most careful and stringent tests applied, which go to prove that the mediums do not move hand or foot whilst the manifestations are going on. The unerring safety with which the guitar, and the tambourine are carried through the air, without striking the persons present, is as great a manifestation of intelligence as any of the more prominent phases of the séances.

The willingness with which the mediums have submitted to tests, the urgency with which they have invited men of science and erudition to the task of investigation, speak loudly in favour of their honesty.

It has been over and over again urged as an objection to the genuineness of the mediums, that the spirits only play one nigger melody, and that we see the same manifestations at every séance, in the exact order of a conjuring programme. To this, we give an unhesitating contradiction. On the 27th of November we were present when the cabinet manifestations commenced with musical discourses, discordant or otherwise; and at least four, if not five, tolerably well-executed tunes were

produced, with the whole of the instruments—consisting of bells, tambourine, guitar, and violin. Then again, we distinctly saw six or seven hands of different sizes, at the aperture in the centre door. At a previous séance, a lady informs us that she, and her friends who were present, distinctly saw a baby's hand; and, as a diversity to the ordinary order of the manifestations, the editor of the *Law Times*, having ventured to place his hand at the aperture, two of his fingers were clutched by one hand, and the other two by another, so tightly that he shrieked from the severity of the pressure. Our friend, Mr R. Cooper, at one séance undertook the onerous duties of a committee-man. After the usual tumbling about of instruments, and displayal of hands, and a large arm, apparently a female's, which was at least, half as large again as either of the arms of the Brothers, Mr Cooper went into the cabinet; when the doors were closed, he experienced a number of gentle raps upon his head, made with the tambourine—hands came about his face, and suddenly his spectacles were taken off. William Davenport cried out—"Something is poking me in the eye." The doors flew open—Mr Cooper sat divested of his spectacles; and on looking, we saw them on the eyes of Wm. Davenport.

At a séance which took place November 31st, an interesting experiment was tried by a gentleman named Goodrich; he was performing the duties of committee-man by observing with the closest carefulness all that passed. Dr Ferguson requested him to assist him in bolting the two outside doors; whilst performing this easy task, something like a hand, gave him a not very gentle slap on the side of his head; Mr Goodrich walked about the stage, holding his hand to the irritated spot. Presently he sat in the cabinet, the doors were closed; when they were again opened, he sat with the tambourine on his head. We all expected he would leave the cabinet at once, and relate his brief experiences with the spirits. Not so—a sudden thought took possession of him. He wished the door to be closed once more—they were closed. Silence threw its spell upon the audience. A moment after, the cabinet tenants were visible to us. Mr Goodrich came out and said, "that he had wished his pin to be taken out of his cravat, and placed at the back of his neck; he did not

know whether it was done." He turned round, and all could see the pin sticking in the collar of his coat, at the back of his neck. Whether Mr Goodrich is satisfied with the intelligent character of the invisibles, we have no means of knowing; but this we know, he bore testimony to the important fact that the mediums did not move whilst he sat between them. His own hands were tied one to each of the Brothers, consequently, he could not himself remove his pin.

Every sceptic is prepared with some test, if the mediums will only allow it to be put into operation, which will settle the matter; but during the eleven years they have been demonstrating the marvels of spirit-power in America, they have been subjected to every test ingenuity could devise, and always with results favourable to their honesty.

Some gentleman called out on one occasion, "Will you allow the young men's hands to be blackened?" "We will not;" replied Dr Ferguson. "Ah," says a friend near us, "then there is some trickery." "Stop a minute," we replied, and after a time the flour test was applied; turning to our suspicious neighbour, we said, "Is that not as good a test as blackening the mediums' hands?" He replied, "It is very puzzling." Of course it is, try one test, somebody wants another applied; and there is no end to the dissatisfaction in the end. But lest our readers should think the Brothers fear to be tested with black lead upon their hands, we may observe that such a test has been applied in America, when white hands appeared as usual; but should black hands appear after such a test, it would not prove that the Davenports' hands were at the aperture, because the spirits often duplicate their hands. The emanations from a blackened hand, would, it is reasonable to suppose, form the appearance of a black hand. But the spirits could, as they have so often done, in presenting hands of such different sizes and shades of colour, transform the black into white. Private séances are the best for test purposes. Men of the most profound scientific attainments have over and over again held conclave *apropos* to the Davenport "tricks," but who has discovered the "artful dodge?" Not one throughout the vast extent of America—not one in England—not

one anywhere. We present Captain Burton's testimony, which is a valuable addition to the mountainous array already at hand.

"London, Nov. 10.

"Dr. J. B. Ferguson,—Dear Sir,—You spoke yesterday about my writing in a few words my opinion of what I have seen done on various occasions by your friends, the Messrs. Davenport; you kindly overlooked my confusion of side views, and you permitted me to call the thing 'od force,' or 'od force.' The usual terms, 'spirit,' 'manifestation,' and so forth, will now, with your permission, be used—begging you, however, to understand that whilst I believe every thing and any thing equally, and nothing more than another thing, my faith and unfaith in 'od force' and 'spirit,' remain exactly as before. In case of my becoming a 'spirit,' I hope not to be summoned for the small sum of 1*l.* 1*s.* into anybody's drawing-room, there to play the guitar and rap people's heads. This latter state is worse than the first.

"As you are aware, I have now witnessed, under advantageous circumstances, four of the so-called 'dark séances.' These were all in private houses—one of them in my own lodgings. We sedulously rejected all believers, and chose the most sceptical and hard-headed of our friends and acquaintances, some of whom had prepared the severest tests. We provided carefully against all possibility of 'confederates,' bolting the doors, &c., and brought our own cords, sealing wax, tape diachylon, musical instruments (harmonicon, bird-whistle, tambourine, bells), and so forth.

"The results of the séances were almost invariably the same. After Mr Ira Davenport and Mr William Fay, the two strongest 'mediums' had been tied up, hands and feet, by us, you suddenly extinguished the light; we then, the darkness being complete, sat in a semicircle, fronting the mediums, each holding his neighbour's arm or hand, and each warned not to break the chain. On one occasion I placed my feet on Mr Fay's, while Mr B——, the master of the house, did the same to Mr Davenport, and we measured their distance from the semicircle—10 feet.

Within two seconds—I speak advisedly—after the candle was put out, the musical instruments placed on the table

between the two mediums began to shudder and tremble. Presently the guitar strings commenced twanging, as if badly played with a single finger, and the instrument went round the semicircle with the velocity of a bird, fanning our cheeks as it passed. The prettiest effect was to hear it buzzing in the distance as a humming bee would sound when flying away. If the guitar happened to be in a good humour the instrument patted our heads softly, or lay on our laps, or thrust itself into our hands. If the 'spirits' were displeased, the manifestations were decidedly rough. I received once a rather severe contusion with the tip of the guitar, when the heavy bells and the tambourine struck the ground and the table with a noise and force that suggested the kick of a horse on a splashboard. Presently the sounds cease, the candle is relit, we run up to the mediums, we find them in our own cords, taped with our own tape, sealed with our own seals, and perhaps plastered with diachylon strip. Everyone inquires how it was done, and no one answers, and not a few are clearly and palpably frightened. The honest declare themselves puzzled.

"The most remarkable manifestations that occurred in my presence were the following:—A tumbler of water placed on the table, with a bird-whistle in it, was thrown on the carpet at my feet, without noise or breakage; a dry, hot, and rough hand on one occasion felt my hands, fell on my face, and then pulled my moustaches, and, finally, thrust between my lips a cigar taken from the mantel-piece; my legs have also been twitched, and my head patted. My neighbour in the same séance felt a cold, clammy, and feminine hand, screwed up at times like a bird's claw, running over her face, and evidently with a large portion of the arm resting on her head. Sparks of red and pale fire have fallen from the ceiling, sometimes perpendicularly, at other times crossing the room, and coming from a point apparently higher than the ceiling. Mr William Fay's coat was removed whilst he was securely fastened hand and foot, and a lucifer match was struck at the same instant, showing us the two gentlemen, fast bound, and the coat in the air on its way to the other side of the room. Under precisely similar circumstances the coat of another gentleman present was placed upon him. A gruff voice repeatedly addressed me and others. There are many other, for

which you have not space, of my own 'experiences.' A lady, whose veracity I have no reason to doubt, and who is supposed to have strong mesmeric powers, assured me that she perceived the musical instruments floating high in the air or wriggling along the floor. Being able to see them in a dark room, she imagined that we had applied to them phosphorised oil, which we had not. On the same occasion she distinguished the outline of a figure which stooped slightly, and not, as she thought, that of any one in the room.

"I have spent a great part of my life in Oriental lands, and have seen there many magicians. Lately I have been permitted to see and be present at the performances of Messrs Anderson and Tolmaque. The latter showed, as they profess, clever conjuring, but they do not even attempt what the Messrs. Davenport and Fay succeed in doing; for instance, the beautiful management of the musical instruments. Finally, I have read and listened to every explanation of the Davenport 'tricks' hitherto placed before the English public, and, believe me, if anything would make me take the tremendous jump 'from matter to spirit,' it is the utter and complete unreason of the reasons with which the 'manifestations' are explained.—Believe me, ever yours truly, &c.,

"RICHARD F. BURTON."

At the séance generously given for the benefit of "The Flaneur" and his friends, Mr Sutton, whom our readers will remember was tied up on an occasion at Professor Anderson's Anti-Spiritualistic matinée in such a secure manner that he was described to have looked like "an Egyptian Mummy," and had he not been untied by the aid of a kind embodied spirit, he would to this day have been a netted bird, was admitted by the pressing desire of Mr Yates, and allowed to tie, with cord and twine brought for the purpose, one of the Davenports, which performance took three quarters of an hour, and was not concluded until blood was cut from the wrists of the medium. In this way, with a brutality worse than a heathen savage would betray, did the "abettor of the *Star*" satisfy himself that the Davenport manifestations were the results of "clever conjuring." After the tying and blood-letting, came the release,

which was performed by "John King," or some other kind spirit friend. Mr Fay asked Mr Sutton to allow him to do "the rope-tying trick" upon him, offering £100 if he got loose. But poor tool Sutton could not stay. He would come on the next Monday again, but he has not been to this day. As we write these facts, we sicken at the idea of a member of the press aiding and abetting a common conjuror to lacerate the wrists of the mediums who had kindly consented, for the sake of truth, to undergo the process of tying, even at the hands of a professed agent of their worst enemy. Mr Yates has proved himself "flat, stale, and unprofitable." For years he has unworthily fought against mediums; but he ought not to have done so, being a medium himself—a medium for detailing, under the signature of "A Lounger about the Clubs," information which could only have been obtained at the Garrick Club, of which he was a member; it is well known in literary circles that this paragon of perfection caricatured the late Mr Thackeray, and did so by violating the rules of the club. Mr Charles Dickens, who, by the way, might have applauded his onslaught against spiritual mediums, was necessitated to sanction the exclusion from the club of the "lounger medium." But his conduct respecting the Davenports is infinitely more outrageous than his conduct towards Mr Thackeray and the other members of the club in question. He accepted an invitation from Dr. Nichols to prove the Davenports "sorry mountebanks, contortionists, and conjurors;" but has he done so? Let any one read his school-boy emanations in the *Star*, and if he does not conclude that "The Flaneur" has lost the equipoise of common sense, and proved himself "a sorry mountebank in literature," he must conclude that he has found the logic of Dr. Nichols, whose letter appeared in our last, too much for his grasp. We subjoin Mr Yates's proof of his inability to grapple with the subject he so absurdly attempted to laugh out of existence:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "STAR."

SIR,—As Dr Nichols has now publicly testified his belief that an affidavit sworn to by the Messrs Davenport, and asserting that they were delivered from prison by an angel, "was made in good faith," I think your readers will agree with me that it is useless to discuss the matter any further with him!

I would, however, point out one inaccuracy. Dr Nichols says that my overcoat, immediately before being put on Mr Fay, was lying on my knees. This is incorrect. At Mr Fay's desire I placed the coat on the table close by him, and between him and Mr Davenport.

Dr. Nichols makes a point of the fact that it was not intimated at the time that Mr Fay could have removed his hands from the fastenings. Since my first letter on the subject many means by which the removal could have been effected have suggested themselves to me and other members of my party. *In the dark seances the performers used their own ropes.*

Dr Nichols claims for himself a verdict of not guilty on the charge of aiding imposture. It is as a victim of credulity and not as an abettor of imposture that he stands arraigned.

A friend who was present writes to me that in justice to Dr Nichols he must admit that there was one "Manifestation" on Saturday evening which startled him greatly at the time, and for which, after much patient thought, he is still unable to find a satisfactory solution. He was, he says, and still is, utterly unable to comprehend how a person of Dr Nichols's apparent sanity can for a moment deem it more probable that preternatural powers are permitted to play tricks so utterly useless and absurd as those exhibited, rather than that experts like the Davenport Brothers should be able to juggle with ropes, or after long practice perform legerdermain in the dark, in a manner not readily discovered by persons seeing them for the first time.

With one further remark I take my leave of this controversy. If any strong man, careless of personal consequences, will at the next dark seance spring into the middle of the circle and tightly hold what he finds, he will discover that he has clutched, if not a fairy, at least a Fay—and we shall hear no more of the Davenport Brothers.—Faithfully yours,

THE FLANEUR.

The opening sentence in the above finishes cleverly—"It is useless to discuss the matter any further with *him*." Why? Because Dr. Nichols thinks the release of Mr Rand from prison by the angels was a fact. Well, suppose Dr. Nichols had turned round and said, it was useless to discuss any further with "The Flaneur," because he does not believe it to be a fact. The logical acumen would have been about

equal in both. But what cowardly twaddle for "The Flaneur" to adopt! If there were harmony of opinion, there could be no discussion between them. But in very truth it is a species of sorry mountebankism in "The Flaneur" to rid himself of a too-powerful antagonist. Who told him that the acceptance of a fact like the one related of Mr Rand's release from prison placed Dr. Nichols outside the pale of discussion? If Mr Yates's illogië be accepted, and should be applied to himself he would find that he must only accept facts of which he can have actual present proof, or it would "be useless to discuss with *him*." He must not believe in Scripture miracles, nor in any of the astounding phenomena of history which have a spiritual relation, or he must be content to be classed with those to whom his sage remark offers itself. Anything more supremely like "sorry mountebankism" in logic we never heard. Mr Yates had better hide himself in the mazes of his own inability under some other *nom de plume* than "The Flaneur," or we very much fear the sensible part of the community will laugh at the recollection of the part he has just enacted in the Davenport drama whenever his *nom de plume* is attached to a paragraph.

"The Flaneur" says, in reply to Dr. Nichols's remark, that, at the time Mr Fay's coat was taken off, it was not intimated that he could have removed his hands from the ligatures, "Since my first letter on the subject many means by which the removal could have been effected have suggested themselves to me and other members of my party." But mark the docile stubbornness of this prodigy of the press. He does not tell us *one* of the *many means*—of course not. Then why does he say anything about them? Because he assumes a virtue he does not possess. His arrant braggadocia puts us in mind of Professor Anderson. Either Mr Yates has taken a lesson from the Wizard, or the Wizard has found in his "Abettor of the *Star*" a facsimile of himself, perfect in his knowledge of the vocabulary of Impudence. In italics we have this astounding fact mentioned—*In the dark seance the performers used their own ropes*. But Mr Yates knows well enough that the séance which took place at Dion Boucicault's, in the presence of Lord Bury and some three-and-twenty gentlemen of good position, that the ropes and musical instruments were supplied by the party, and yet the manifestations took place. Why then, does he

introduce these prominent italics in his epistle? Simply to set suspicion at work, because he is not sufficiently cultured in good breeding to give the Davenports even the benefit of a doubt. The *performers* used their own ropes—why say “*performers*?” Have not the Davenports over and over again, for years, both in America and elsewhere, protested against being classed with conjurors? But this is nothing to Mr Yates, he went in for a settler; and a *settler* he got, which we hope he may profit by. The finishing item of unwarrantable assumption in the above epistle calls for a word or two, in order to show how utterly incompetent to deal with the subject “The Flaneur” is. He says, looking out for alliteratives—“If any strong man will spring into the (dark) circle, and tightly hold what he finds, he will discover that he has clutched, not a fairy, but a Fay.” What a piece of literary mountebankism is here! Why, the very thing has been repeated several times since the mediums have been in London. At Mr Sampson’s, City Editor of *The Times*, a rev. gentleman, who entertained something of “The Flaneur’s” conceit, rushed into the circle, and did *not* clutch either a fairy or a Fay. At Newcastle, lately, another person, touched with the insolence of conceit, broke faith by striking a light, but his mind was still as dark as ever; for, he only threw a little light on to a great truth, but he himself did not observe it, because, like Mr Yates, he would not, or could not, see beyond his own prejudices. At the Hanover Square Rooms, on two occasions—one since Mr Yates has written himself defeated—individuals have broken the circle, and still they have neither clutched a “fairy nor a Fay.” Had “The Flaneur” paid attention to the subject, he might have known these facts which are patent to the world.

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