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A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

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No. 314.—VOLUME THIRTEEN; NUMBER NINE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, AUGUST 30th, 1878.

THE INTERLINKED RINGS.

AFTER waiting for a long time for the close examination of Mr. Gillis's interlinked rings, which we have asked for every week, and had telegraphed to Mr. Aksakof, of St. Petersburg to furnish, at last decisive information has been obtained, pointing strongly, we regret to state, in the direction of intentional fraud. Mr. Gillis, who had been satisfied with the rings for two or three weeks, and had not adopted our suggestion of examining them with a microscope, has finally written to Mr. Christian Reimers:—"The keen eyesight of a friend detected indications of breaks in the wooden ring, and soon afterwards he placed imitations before me in which he himself was unable to point out the fine marks of junction. On putting these broken and glued rings into water along with mine, the inserted pieces separated, which fate was shared by my ring in company with the others." Here, then, seems to be evidence of a most heartless fraud practised by one or more of the four mediums upon Mr. Gillis, who had treated them all most kindly. Nevertheless, uncertainty is placed upon this view of the case by inquiries made by Mr. Christian Reimers, resulting in the information that if in turning wooden curtain rings one is broken when it is very nearly finished, it is a common thing in the trade to glue the two pieces together. As a general rule such joints are difficult to detect, and the rings are as good for practical purposes as those which have never been broken. The circumstance that such joined rings exist in numerically small proportion to those which are entire gives a balance of probability in favour of shameless imposture; yet, on the other hand, the assumed impostor must have committed the punishable act with the certainty that it would be detected directly Mr. Gillis submitted the rings to proper scientific examination, so that in such case the criminal act would at the same time amount almost to criminal lunacy. Then, again, at the same *séances* the unquestionably genuine manifestation of the passage of matter through matter took place, some true knots having been obtained in an endless cord, as at Leipzig by Professor Zöllner. With the power of obtaining these genuine manifestations the mediums had no temptation to resort to fraud; they were paid nothing extra for the interlinked rings; on the contrary, Mr. Gillis then held no further *séances* with them, but left England so precipitately with his supposed prize that there was no time to properly examine the rings, as we suggested, with a microscope, and the public mind was consequently kept in a state of vexatious uncertainty for weeks as to whether the evidence was complete or faulty.

If there is fraud in the matter, no punishment could be too severe for such a criminal and thoroughly heartless and ungrateful offence. And in such case there is the difficulty, perhaps but a temporary one, of tracing the guilt to the real person or persons. The four mediums vary more or less from each other in reputation, also in the number of years they have been tested and watched by Spiritualists of character. When the news of the result arrived last Saturday from Mr. Gillis, none of the mediums ran away in dread of legal punishment; Mr. Williams and Mr. Rita have since spent much time with Mr. Reimers, stating that so far as they know the manifestation was genuine, and suggesting that on their return from their present visit to Mr. A. J. Riko, at the Hague, they shall sit again with Mr. and Mrs. Herne in the endeavour to obtain the interlinking of other rings, whose structure is previously ascertained to be beyond dispute.

It will be remembered that at the past *séances*, when the same sitters and mediums first attempted to obtain knots in an endless cord, four tight knots came, but, after unpieking them with much difficulty, they proved to be but slip-knots. Had Messrs. Gillis and Reimers passionately broken up the sittings because of this impish trick, they would not have

reached the root of the matter; they good-temperedly accepted it as a joke of the strange powers sometimes at work in physical manifestations, and the result of this patience was that a little later they obtained three true knots in an endless cord—knots which no mortal could make without free ends of the string to manipulate. But the fraudulent joining of the rings would be worse than the impish trick at first played with the string, for it would have been an act of imposture deliberately planned and executed beforehand in cold blood. Altogether the present position of the whole matter is unsatisfactory, and places alike the innocent and guilty—if guilty there be—under a cloud. Therefore, the sooner new sittings take place for the production of the manifestation in an unquestionable form, if such achievement is possible, the better will it be for all concerned.

Wood will not do as the substance to constitute one of the rings. Sir Charles Isham has already pointed out in these pages that if a ring is placed half in a slit made in certain kinds of growing trees, the wood will heal in time round the inserted portion of the ring, after which a wooden ring could be cut out of the tree in one piece, yet linked into the ring of ivory. We presume the ivory ring would be stained, and otherwise suffer in this lengthy operation; also that in most cases an abnormal grain would be observable in the wooden ring. On this point Sir Charles Isham says in a letter we have just received from him:—

As to the ring, any one who has any knowledge of trees knows it is the simplest fact in the world that anything driven into a tree is soon covered with a new layer of wood, although this with regard to the ring test might not occur to them. You might saw the disc in two or more parts, and there would then be several rings linked round the embedded one; and were the latter left in the tree a few years, there would be no disruption or flaw in the grain of the wood. I intend making some, but for a large curtain ring three or four years might be required. A poplar or willow would produce the result quickest, as they are fast growers.

If the test is obtained at all it should be obtained with materials about which there can be no question, so wood of any kind should not be used. It should also be preferably obtained with materials which can be identified as real and sound without the aid of an expert. Bog-oak or jet would do to prove the phenomenon, but are so easily imitated in appearance that something which does not require examination by an expert, but proves its own genuineness to everybody at a glance, had better be chosen, and the substance selected should be very light in colour, so as to be easily examined for cracks. Cheap and scientifically unobjectionable materials would be a ring of true elephant ivory (showing the so-called engine-turned markings), linked into a large hole drilled through the centre of a mutton bone, say the middle of a leg or of a blade bone. If both the ivory ring and the bone were unbroken, the completeness of the test would be plain to observers of the meanest capacity. The tooth of a tiger or other large animal, with a hole drilled through it at right angles to the axis of the tooth, would form a suitable object for linking into a solid ring of that unobjectionable substance, true ivory.

At all events, the fierce fire of criticism brought to bear upon this ring interlinking problem, has had the result of promoting the selection of materials for the production of more conclusive results than had previously been sought.

Mr. Reimers called at the shops of three different upholsterers, all strangers to him, who each told him that broken and glued curtain rings were common. At Bowman Bros., 108, High-street, Camden-town, he was told that one common curtain ring out of every twelve might be so broken. But one out of every twelve would not be so perfectly joined as in the case of Mr. Gillis's ring, therefore probability is strongly in favour of the theory of imposture on the part of one of four persons, and this is hard upon three who may know nothing of the matter.

THE LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE following is the last report of the Lancashire Association of Spiritualists, an organisation which does much good proselytising work with very little expenditure of funds:—

REPORT.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—Your committee congratulate the Conference assembly here to-day on the third anniversary of its existence. It is three years ago to-day since its first Conference was held at Bury. Since that time your committee has, during its various tenures of office, endeavoured to promulgate the teachings and organisation of Spiritualism by every means at its disposal. The measure of success will be plainly palpable to every one who takes an interest in the progress of our movement. The committee's policy during the last two months has been one of recuperation; but that does not mean inactivity. The platforms of the various societies have been supplied with speakers for the Sunday services so far as the executive could command the talent. It is a matter for congratulation that at this apathetic period of the year all the societies in the district should be in active operation. Your committee has the greatest pleasure in presenting you the statement of number and cost of meetings during the quarter. Eighty-nine meetings have been held, at a nett cost to the committee of 5s. 3d. for each meeting. It further takes this opportunity of thanking the many gentlemen who have so generously assisted the committee by giving public addresses, and in many instances defraying their railway fares out of their own pockets. Your committee would impress upon you that societies receive the greatest share of benefit from this generous work, therefore it will be obvious to you that it is the policy of societies to support the committee so far as they are able. Your monthly paper, *The Spiritual Reporter*, has now been in existence four months, and has proved both a success and a great help to the district movement. The nett loss for the four months is £1 19s. 7½d. This your committee considers satisfactory. In reference to the Midland Counties' District Committee, mentioned in the last quarterly report, we are happy to say that the Midland Friends hope to hold a Conference on Sunday, October 13th, 1878. We advise that your next elected committee executive depute a representative of your committee to attend such Conference, to assist by giving advice and experience in forming this new committee. The friends in the West Riding of Yorkshire are also feeling their way to adopt a similar plan of action. We hope this work may long continue.

The following balance-sheet will give you the detail revenue and expenditure for the quarter:—

REVENUE, Aug. 4th, 1878:—To Guarantee Fund, £8 15s. 9d.; donations and collections at the Liverpool Conference, £10 16s. 11½d. *Donations during the quarter*:—Mr. Hargreaves, 5s.; Oldham Society, 14s.; Leigh Society, 5s.; Ulverston Society, 6s.; Barrow Society, £1 4s.; Mr. Harper, 3s.; collected at picnic, 19s. 5d.; Mr. John Lamont, £3 8s. 3d.; Miss Blundell, £3; Mr. Johnson, £1 1s.; sale of *Reporters*, £6 19s. 3d.; sale of hymn books, £6 9s. 9d.; sale of loose tracts, £2 4s. 2d.; sale of tracts in covers, 15s.; sale of books, 6s.; advertisements in *Reporter*, 10s.; affiliation fees, £1 1s. 3d.; guarantors towards loss on *Reporter*, £1 14s. 4½d.; railway fares paid by societies, £2 8s. 5d.; deficiency, £8 17s. 3d.: total, £62 3s. 10d. EXPENDITURE:—By balance from last quarter, £7 11s. 2½d.; expenses of mediums, speakers, lecturers, and railway fares, £24 11s. 4d.; sundry printing, 8s.; printing *Reporters*, £8 5s.; printing hymn books, £9 17s. 6d.; expenses of executive, 13s. 4d.; expenses of picnic, £1; Liverpool Conference—rent of concert hall and advertising, £5 7s. 6d.; Conference tea meeting, £3 3s. 9d.; postage on *Reporters*, 13s. 3½d.; postage on letters, &c., 12s. 11d.: total, £62 3s. 10d. Audited and found correct, JOHN CAMPION and J. S. KNOTT, auditors.

Showing a deficiency of £8 17s. 3d. Stock on hand of hymn books, tracts, and books, £26 0s. 4d. value. The membership returns from the affiliated societies in the district gave for the May quarter 500. The estimated returns for August quarter are expected to include 650 members. These returns, it is hoped, will be attended to faithfully by the secretary of each society every quarter, so that the number of members in the district may be known from quarter to quarter. Your committee now lay the quarterly report upon the table for your observations, and hope with the election of the next committee that this work will be further enhanced and persevered in.

JOHN LAMONT, *President*.

CHARLES PARSONS, *Secretary*.

AN article by a French writer on an election to the French Academy, in the *Christian World* of the 16th inst., speaks of the newly-elected academician, M. Henri Martin, as "our national historian, the special friend of M. Thiers, a republican senator, and a most distinguished Spiritualist." Is the word "Spiritualist" here used merely in the sense of the opposite to "Materialist?"

THE HYDESVILLE MANIFESTATIONS.—Mr. A. J. Riko writes from the Hague, Aug. 25th, "I thank your correspondents for the information I wanted about the manifestations in Dr. Phelps' family. I feel glad to be able, in my turn, to answer the question about the first account of the Hydesville phenomena. You are right. It was published by E. E. Lewis, at Canandaigua, New York, in 1848. It is a pamphlet of about forty pages, and appeared as soon as two or three weeks after the first rappings, bearing the title, *A Report of the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of Mr. John D. Fox, in Hydesville, Arcadia*. This is really the first book published in direct connection with our present movement, and as such is interesting to Spiritualists. Can any one tell me whether a copy is still obtainable in England or America?"

DUNFERMLINE WITCHES.

WE have received from the publisher, Mr. John Tweed, of Glasgow, the following extract from a book now in the press, and which will shortly be published, entitled *The Annals of Dunfermline and Vicinity, from the Earliest Authentic Period to the Present Time*, A.D. 1069—1878, interspersed with explanatory notes, memorabilia, and numerous illustrative engravings. The author is Mr. Ebenezer Henderson, LL.D. :—

A.D. 1643. SIX WITCHES BURNT AT THE WITCH-LOAN, and *Two others Die in Prison*.—This was a great witch-catching and witch-burning year in Dunfermline. A staff of officials, called "witch-watchers" and "witch-catchers," had been appointed early in 1643 to seize and put in ward (prison) all reputed witches, in order that they might be tried for their "horrid and abominable crime of witchcraft." Accordingly, "a great many old shrivelled-up women, with woe-begone countenances, were warded, and if any of them used the long staff in walking, so much the better for the catchers."

In Dunfermline *Register of Deaths*, notice is taken of the poor innocent unfortunates. During the month of May, July, and August, it seems no less than six poor women were burnt for being reputed witches! Their names were Grissel Morris, Margaret Brand, Katherine Elder, Agnes Kirk, Margaret Donaldson, and Isobel Millar.

These victims having been tried and condemned to be burnt, were accordingly carted east to the Loan (witch-loan), and being placed in the middle of a pile of wood, with feet and legs tied, the pile was set on fire, their bodies were soon consumed, and, it is to be hoped, that their better part received that mercy which had been denied to them on earth.

In "The Loan," many criminals in the olden time suffered. At the foot of "The Loan," near where the railway bridge crosses the road, there was the institution of "the witches' dub." Sometimes an old frail woman was thrown into it. If she sank, and was drowned, then it was supposed that "judgment had found her out;" if she swam on the surface, which by the bulk of her clothing she might sometimes do, then it was judged that there was something "no cannie about her," and on some pretence the victim got to the flames at last. Determined not to lose their victim, they appear to have acted on the principle of "Heads, I win; tails, you lose!" Ascending the loan (the witch-loan), and about 100 yards from "the witch-dub," and on the east side of the loan road, there was a small knove on which the witches suffered, and still further up the loan stood "the gallows" where execution was done.

The names of the victims who died "in ward" were Jonett Fentoun and Isobel Marr. In the same *Register of Deaths* their fate is thus recorded:—"The 20th day June, 1643, Jonett Fentoun the witch, died miserably in ward [in prison], and was bro't to the witch knove, being trailed and carted yro and castin into a hole y' without a kist" (a coffin). Being brought out of prison, the superstitious bigots were probably allowed to trail her along the streets to the hole at the witch knove. Finding that a cart at hand would be more convenient for their work, she was thrown into it, and carted to "the hole." Again:—"The 17th day Augt., 1643, Isobel Marr, being delatitit [accused] be the rest of her nyt bo' [neighbour] witches for a witche, and being detained yrfre in the laiche thieves' hole, shoe hangit hersel and was carryed to the witche knove and yerdit." Let those who sound the praises of "the good old times" take such doings as these into their earnest consideration. Witches, it seems, made their *débüt* in Dunfermline in 1627.

NEXT year's meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science will be held in Sheffield, under the presidency of Dr. Allman. In 1881 it will be held in Swansea.

THE valuable new apparatus for registering changes in the weight of mediums during materialisation manifestations, generously presented to the British National Association of Spiritualists by Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Didsbury, reached 38, Great Russell-street last Wednesday, and may now be seen there. We shall publish a description of it soon.

A TRUE MARRIAGE.—The Rev. Robert Collyer, of Chicago, in a sermon on marriage, in which he advocated the doctrine that all true marriages are made in heaven, said:—"I have a friend, a man of great intelligence, who told me that when he was in the middle of the Pacific on a voyage, he saw a face in a dream, and it was borne in upon him that this was the face of his wife. He went through many adventures after that, was away about seven years, came back, went home, went to a quarterly Quaker meeting in Bucks County, Penn., and there saw, in a Quaker bonnet, for the first time with his human eyes, that face he had seen in his dream. The maiden became his wife, and I never saw a happier pair on earth, or a sweeter home of children, and I have no doubt of the perfect truth of the story."—*The Religious Magazine* (Boston, U.S.).

TRANCE SERMONS.—The utterances in trance addresses are sometimes, but not always, limited by the knowledge of the mediums. One of the mediums recently said, in the trance state, when speaking of the past history of Catholicism in England, that there was small consolation in the reflection that tortures, the burning of human beings at the stake, and so on, had not been committed by Protestants. As a matter of fact, Queen Elizabeth and the Protestant Bishop of Norwich of her time, did much in the way of burning Roman Catholics, which ugly fact is not now published in this country by those Protestant authorities who issue books "for the use of schools," so the spirits did not give forth knowledge which was beyond that in the head of the medium. For reasons of this kind, ordinary trance addresses, although better than the sermons of average local preachers, are not usually of sufficiently high quality to compete with normal discourses like those of the Rev. H. R. Haweis, in whose church consequently many Spiritualists are to be found regularly every Sunday morning, despite the inspirational addresses given elsewhere.

REMARKABLE SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS IN THE HOUSE OF THE REV. E. PHELPS, D.D.

(Concluded from page 78.)

About the middle of May Dr. Phelps and Harry were riding to Huntington, a distance of seven miles. When they had proceeded about one mile on the way, a stone, about the size of a hen's egg, was thrown into the carriage, and lodged on Dr. Phelps's hat. Soon another and another were thrown in. The carriage was a covered one, and the back curtain was down, and there was no way a stone could have been thrown in by ordinary means. At one house where they stopped, the moment the front door was opened two stones were thrown, one of which entered the door as it stood partly open, and the other hit one of the lights of glass, and broke it. Harry was standing on the door-steps at the time, and there was no one in the street who could have thrown them. Two stones were also thrown against another house where they stopped of an errand. Sixteen stones were thrown into the carriage on the doctor's return, and including those thrown against the two houses, twenty, in driving three or four hours.

As it was now apparent that these strange things were in some way connected with Harry as a medium, it was thought best to separate him from the family. Accordingly board was obtained for him in a family two miles distant. One day, when he came home, he told his mother, in great secrecy, that on the night previous he had been awakened from his sleep by some persons dressed in white, whom he saw standing by his bedside. He was frightened, and was about to scream, when the person spoke and said, "Be not afraid, my son; I am your father;" and then placed in the boy's hand a silver watch, and told him to wear it for his sake. The boy affirms that he had the watch in his hand; that it was not a dream; and that he was entirely awake; and that his father told him to tell no one of it but his mother and Dr. Phelps. His mother told him it was nothing but a dream, and turned it off as a light affair.

It seems that a valuable silver watch had been left the boy by his father, which was not in use, but had been kept locked up in a drawer of a dressing-table, to which he (Harry) had no access. A member of the family, having occasion to look into the drawer, saw the watch and knows it was there, and that the drawer was locked, and the key given to Mrs. Phelps. A few minutes after the conversation with his mother about the apparition and the watch, the night previous, he came in from the yard with the watch in his hand! He said his father had again appeared to him, and put the watch into his hand again, and said, "Wear this for my sake." He brought the watch into the house, and showed it to his mother, and said that his father said, "Tell your mother to look at the second-hand." The hand was off, and lay on the face of the watch under the crystal. A credible person will make oath, if called upon, that she saw the watch in the drawer, where it was usually kept, not more than six or eight minutes before, and that she locked the drawer and gave the key to Mrs. Phelps. The key had been in possession of no other person, and Harry had not been in the room during the time. The watch was taken to Dr. Phelps, and he tried to replace the second hand, but could not succeed. He closed it, leaving the hand loose on the face, and passed it back to Harry, saying that he must take it to the watchmaker. When he took it in his hand, he exclaimed, "Why, it's on!" They looked, and it was on and going. In a few minutes it was off again, and was put on a second time, all within a minute or two. The doctor affirms that it was not out of his sight a moment; that he knows the watch was not opened, and that no visible power was employed in doing it.

On one occasion the pianoforte was played while it is known that no person was in the room; and, at another time, it was turned around, the front towards the wall, and so far removed from the side of the room as to allow the player room to sit next to the wall; the stool was also appropriately placed.

On several occasions, about this time, certain members of the family saw, or thought they did, visible appearances. Dr. Phelps did not give entire credit to these statements; not but what he had full confidence in the honesty of the family, but the excited state in which some of them had

been for a long time led him to think that they might imagine they saw what had no existence in fact. Towards the last of May, it was signified that one of the spirits who had communicated would appear visibly—first to the daughter, then to Mrs. Phelps, and then to the doctor himself. They asked in what manner he would appear, and the answer was, "In a sheet." Between ten and eleven o'clock the same night, soon after the family had retired, Anna, who occupied the east bedroom, the door between her room and that where the doctor and his wife slept being open, and a lamp burning on a stand so placed as to light both rooms, called to her mother, and said, "There it is, in a sheet." Dr. Phelps asked where; when she said it was in the door between the two rooms, coming from the room the doctor occupied; but the doctor saw nothing. The daughter was frightened, and in a few minutes looked up and saw nothing. He was represented as moving slowly from one room to the other.

In about two minutes Mrs. Phelps exclaimed, "There it is," and drew the clothes over her head. Both the daughter and mother saw it at this time, but still the doctor saw nothing, although in as favourable a position as either of the others.

After two or three minutes had elapsed, the doctor also saw it. It appeared to him to move slowly from the hall chamber into his, and turn and move slowly back. It had the appearance of a very tall person with a sheet thrown around; he saw only the sheet. In about one minute, something was thrown on to the bed, which proved to be a sheet which had been taken from the wardrobe in the hall. Dr. Phelps declares that he was not frightened in the least, and could not have been mistaken in the appearance. Some two or three weeks subsequent to this a similar appearance was seen, and Dr. Phelps sprang out of bed, determined to seize hold of it if possible. It came part way into his room, and then moved slowly back. The daughter affirmed that the doctor was within two or three feet of it when it disappeared, and a sheet dropped into a chair. These were the only instances in which the doctor saw anything himself. Others of the family saw persons in a mysterious way several times.

At one time, while Anna was in the dining-room, and a cousin of hers and some of the children in the front yard, her attention was arrested by some one entering the front parlour. She went in, and saw three gentlemen—two of them sitting on the sofa, and one on a chair by the table—all having their hats on, and drawn down over their eyes more than usual; the one by the table had his feet upon the table, and was reading a paper. She was surprised that neither of them rose up or looked at her as she entered the room; and when she was within five or six feet of the one nearest her, he leaned over on one side and fell, chair and all, on the floor, and instantly all disappeared! She was frightened, and ran to her cousin, who was near the front door. She came in; but no persons were there, neither could they have entered without her seeing them. The chair was thrown down, but no person near who could have done it.

A few other instances occurred in which appearances were supposed to have been seen; but the circumstances were not of a character to put the matter beyond a doubt, therefore no record was kept of them. About the middle of May, Dr. Phelps spent some time with the Fox family in New York. He soon decided that the manifestations were essentially the same as those at his house, with a few points of difference. With them property was not destroyed, and they were not painfully annoyed. The sounds were different, it being with them a double or rolling sound, and at his house a single knock. They could call upon and receive answers from different spirits, or what claimed to be different ones. This could be done at his house. During the months of June and July the same general occurrences continued at Stratford. Sometimes for two or three days there would seem to be an entire cessation of "hostilities." Then they would commence again with redoubled force. People from all parts of the country were visiting the house, to whom every facility was afforded to search into the cause. Newspaper discussions were going on, casting the most unjust and painful reflections, subjecting the family to suffering

little short of martyrdom, while numberless other persons had as good an opportunity of explaining the matter as the persecuted family. In this affliction I can sympathise somewhat with Dr. Phelps and family. In the first days of these phenomena in western New York, all persons who were involved with or interested in them were looked upon and treated at once as void of all common feeling or sensibility, both privately and publicly; their names passed about, coupled with opprobrious epithets; their houses were entered without ceremony, and even in the face of direct request to the contrary; their right to quiet and repose invaded, their houses often being crowded with visitors, prompted by idle curiosity and a malicious desire to torture, beyond the midnight hour; still insisting to remain, and adding insult to injury by declaring in your ears that it was an arrant cheat—a grand humbug—being carried on; and all for—what? And at the same time those whose ill-fortune it then seemed to be to have an identity with it were weeping and praying for the scourge to be removed from them; for scourge it seemed, indeed, under such circumstances.

Dr. and Mrs. Phelps concluded, in August, as the demonstrations were then less frequent, on taking a short journey of three weeks. The disturbances were still more annoying in their absence than before; and it was decided as best to close the house for the winter, and remain away. Accordingly, on the 11th of September, Harry left for Pennsylvania, and it was arranged that the other members of the family should follow within three weeks. It seems that, although the manifestations were connected more intimately with Harry, his presence was not all-important, as they did not cease altogether when he left; but communications were still made, though with less force and violence. The knockings were not as loud, and the communications less free or frequent. At one time a note was thrown into the room, while Dr. Phelps was writing at the desk, which contained the following: "How soon do the family expect to go to Pennsylvania? I wish to make some arrangements before they go. Please answer in writing." The doctor replied as desired, as follows: "About the first of October," and placed the paper in a position where he had before put writings of the kind, and heard nothing further.

Two or three days after this a communication was given by use of the alphabet, saying that Root, a gentleman who had been in the house, had destroyed the doctor's book. He inquired "What book?" and was answered "The big book." Yet he did not know what book was designated, and repeated the question, and received the answer, "The big book in the secretary." Still it was not understood. Again was spelled "Look and see!" Dr. Phelps had in the secretary two blank books; in the larger one he had written a full account of the mysterious manifestations, in the form of a diary, and, having noted them as they occurred from day to day, they were recorded with more minuteness than could afterwards be done. Upon looking, it was discovered that every page that had been written upon was torn from the book and gone! After a long search, the fragments of the leaves were found in the vault. Copies of the characters, which the doctor had carefully taken, and felt anxious to preserve, were every scrap gone. There were, in a dressing-table drawer in the chamber, a great number of the notes sent. These were set on fire with a match and burned in the drawer. The fire was discovered by the smoke, but not until the papers were so far charred as to injure them beyond preservation. A few of these writings only are retained, which were in other places. The last of the annoyances was on the 25th of September, and was that of throwing ink upon the daughter's dress. She was standing on the piazza, near the front door; the window of the front chamber was open, from which was thrown a small bottle of ink. The ink went over her dress in a way to entirely unfit it for further use. There was no person in the chamber who would have done such a thing for mischief; and, indeed, no person in the house who would have been guilty of it.

The young lady was just setting out for a visit at New Haven, from which she was anticipating much pleasure, and I cannot conceive of any feeling, short of sheer malevolence, that would prompt such an act.

On the second day of October the family, with the exception of Dr. Phelps and the cook, left Stratford to go to

Pennsylvania. During their absence all demonstrations ceased, with what may be termed one exception. A letter, addressed by Dr. Phelps to Mrs. Phelps, contained, when it reached her, some of the spirit writing in pencil, saying that "her husband was sick and wished her to return if she expected to see him alive." He was then in good health; but the next week was sick and confined to his bed two or three days. There may or may not have been some connection between the two occurrences. It was the design of Dr. Phelps to separate the family for a time, in order, if possible, to get rid of the annoyance; and for the five weeks he remained at Stratford, after the family had left, no disturbances took place. Harry stayed in Bucks county (Pa.) all winter, and the other members of the family lived in Philadelphia.

In the month of March the family returned to Stratford. The house had been closed and under the charge of a neighbour, and no sign of any disturbance was visible, as every article of furniture was found just as they left it. About the fourth or fifth day after their return slight rapping was heard as they sat at the tea-table. They affected not to notice it, and the next day it was repeated more distinctly, but no response was made. Soon after, certain characters were found about the house, which were known, from the circumstances, to be of recent origin. Two or three days after, distinct communications were made by a spirit purporting to be Dr. Phelps' daughter, who died at the age of twelve years. On being questioned, this spirit could not give any evidence of identity.

About the first of May several communications of a trifling character were given. On one occasion the doctor asked if they would be troubled any more as they had been, when they answered by rapping the following:—

"Be not afraid that they will trouble you more,
Though we have not quitted Connecticut shore."

At another time certain characters were given, which were interpreted by the rapping as follows: "Evil one has gone, and better one has come." No communications were made after the early part of May, but some things occurred indicating their presence and desire for mischief.

At one time, on cutting a loaf of bread, there were found in it nails, pen-holders, small sticks and tin, under circumstances which showed that they must have been placed there after it was put on the table, and before the family were ready for tea. At one time Harry's hat was hid away, and then his cap, and then another hat. He took his brother's cap to use, and that was also taken away. On the evening of the 18th of July they set fire to some papers in the doctor's secretary, and some twenty papers and letters were burned before they were discovered. Fire was set at the same time to the papers in both the closets, under the stairs in the hall. They were discovered by the smoke. Two or three days after this, when some friends who had visited them were about to leave, their bonnets and some other articles could not be found, although search was made in every part of the house, until the train by which they were to go to New York had passed. They were at last found, locked into an enclosed washstand, in a way that made it morally certain that they could not have been placed there by human hands.

On the 29th of July Harry left to spend some time at New Lebanon, N.Y.; and during his absence no manifestations were noticed, although they were constantly on the look-out for something of the kind. Anna and her mother left for Philadelphia on the 25th of September, and they had been so long exempt from annoyances that they hoped they had ceased altogether. But Harry had the manifestations at New Lebanon, and there was first operated on, by invisible agency, to produce a trance, into which he passed with a sudden shock. He had never been entranced before, although frequent attempts had been made to do so. In this state he evinced all the phenomena common to good clairvoyance. On his return to Stratford, on the 9th of October, the sounds accompanied him almost constantly; but they seemed less inclined to mischief than formerly, because, as they said, "Harry had passed to a higher state, where the low and ignorant spirits could not communicate with him."

On the evening of the 12th, Dr. Phelps, Harry, and two younger children, were seated at a table; responses were frequently given by raps under the table. Dr. Phelps inquired if it would accommodate them at all to have some substance to rap with; to which they replied affirmatively. He threw down a table-knife; the raps seemed immediately to be made by striking the knife against the table-leaf, and soon it was tossed up on to the table. A small tea-bell was then placed under the table; it was rung several times and tossed on to the table as the knife had been. It was again put down, and returned as before; the same being repeated several times in succession. The light was then extinguished, and the candle put under the table with a match-box containing matches, and the spirits requested to light it. They distinctly heard the match drawn upon the bottom of the box, which was prepared with sand-paper for that use. All saw the light; but the first match went out. Again the scratching of the match was heard; it ignited, the candle lighted, and was placed upon the table! The experiment was repeated several times, with the same result; every precaution being taken to prevent collusion in the matter.

On a subsequent occasion a chair was placed upon the table by invisible power, and the two children, Harry and Hannah, raised up and placed upon it; they could neither of them tell how it was done. The sensation was that of some person placing a hand under them and raising them up. Many of these things occurred when the room was darkened, as has been the case in numerous other places, and for which explanations have been recorded, as given by the spirits. On the evening of the 20th of October, the light being put out of the room, the bell was placed under the table, with a request that it should be rung, and placed in the doctor's hand. He was sitting by the table with both his hands lying on his lap open, with the palms upward. The bell rang several times with some violence, and then was placed in his left hand. This was repeated four or five times in succession. Dr. Phelps sat beyond the reach of any one, and the room was sufficiently light for him to have detected any movement on the part of persons present. He requested them to let him feel the hand that placed the bell in his. Very soon a hand came in contact with his, took hold of his fingers, shaking his hand, passed slowly over the back of his hand, then over the palm again, took hold of his fingers, and he felt what he is sure to have been a human hand. He describes it as being cold and moist, which accords with my own experience repeatedly, and that of my friends. They then took hold of his foot, shook it with much force, loosened the string, took off the shoe, and placed it upon the table before him. At his request the shoe was replaced, the heel adjusted, and the strings drawn up, but not tied.

On a subsequent occasion a large-sized tea-bell was rung under the table, then rose up, passed round the room, ringing violently all the way, and fell upon the table. The candle was in the closet, but the room was sufficiently light to make it certain that no person left the table to convey it. It was manifest that from the time Harry returned from New Lebanon the manifestations began gradually to subside. They were less frequent and less marked. It was arranged that he should accompany the family to Philadelphia, and go to a boarding-school at a town about twenty miles distant from the city. At different times he had been told that if he went there he would again be annoyed by bad spirits. The question was many times put, "Will you annoy him again if he goes to the school?" *Answer.*—"We will not, but others will."—"What others?" *Answer.*—"Those who were with him last summer."—"Will they disturb him if he stays here and goes to the academy in Stratford?"—"No. They will not disturb him while he is with you."—"What will they do if he goes to Pennsylvania?" *Answer.*—"They will tear his clothes, destroy his books, and break his windows."—"Can you not control those bad spirits, and prevent their doing him any injury?"—"No."—"Will you do all you can?"—"Yes." At another time Dr. Phelps inquired if they would not leave him, as his mother was so much opposed to the whole thing. "Will you not, to oblige her, leave him, that he may be a medium no longer?" said the

doctor. The reply was, "If we leave him, evil spirits will get possession of him again." These communications were made by what purported to be the boy's father. For two weeks previously to going to Philadelphia the manifestations had almost wholly subsided; perhaps only occurred when requested; and notwithstanding the repeated declarations that when he should leave for the school in Pennsylvania, the bad spirits would come in and make him trouble, it was determined to try the experiment, and on the 11th of November the family set out for Philadelphia, where they were to spend the winter, while Harry was to go to school. He remained with the family in Philadelphia about a week, where a few communications were given to Dr. Phelps in private. The spirits said they would begin to annoy the boy on the cars, on his way to the school, would pinch him and tear his clothes, so that, when he got there, they would be found torn, and that the troubles would follow him in the school as long as he stayed there. Dr. Phelps, under all the circumstances, thought it best not to send him; but on consultation it was decided to have him go, and on the 19th of November he started for the school. Dr. Phelps went a mile or two with him, put him under the care of the conductor, and told him to report on his return if anything worthy of notice occurred on the way. In two days the doctor was sent for to come and take him away. He said that soon after his father left him on the cars, he was pinched, pricked with pins, and annoyed in various other ways until he reached his destination; that, on his arrival there, he found that his pantaloons were torn in front, between the waistband and the knees, in two places, several inches in length. He changed them for another pair, which were new, and made of very substantial material, and these were torn down in front, at least half a yard in length, before the doctor arrived there. The knockings had attended him in school and other places; his books were torn and damaged to the amount of two dollars, which the doctor paid. The family where he was had become alarmed, and would not keep him, and he was taken away. The boy stated that on one of the evenings, while he was there, he was walking in the street, when his cap was mysteriously taken from his head and thrown upon the side walk. As he stooped to pick it up, he saw the flash of a gun at some distance, and a bullet passed over his back and struck a board fence near him. He was afterwards informed by the rapping that, had he not stooped down, he would have been killed, and that his friendly spirit took this means to preserve him.

Dr. Phelps now concluded to return with Harry to Stratford, and was told that the bad spirits would have no control over him there. The family in which they resided in Philadelphia had become alarmed at the strange occurrences, and finally they again returned to Stratford. From that time the disturbances began to subside, and by the 15th December, 1851, they had ceased altogether. The family remained at Stratford till the spring of 1852, when they returned to their former residence in the city. The house at Stratford is occupied by another family, but no disturbances have ever occurred with the family which now occupy the house, and none with Dr. Phelps's family since the above date.

Thus ends one of the most remarkable histories in the whole course of modern spiritual manifestations. The authority on which it comes to the world is indisputable, and the characters of all concerned are beyond suspicion. It will be observed that generally the demonstrations, as in the case of Mr. Calvin R. Brown, in the Fox family, were less boisterous after the family consented to hold communication with them. It seemed to be the desire of a spirit to communicate and set right a matter which was making him unhappy. This accomplished, the demonstration ceased.

From the foregoing narrative it will be seen that these phenomena do not attach to places, as some have supposed. It makes the fact equally clear that they do attach to persons, and that without certain media they cannot, to any extent, take place. If there is such a thing as "haunted houses," they must belong to another class of phenomena, or a very different phase of the same, than



those always depending on the presence of particular persons, as at the house in Stratford.

Another fact seems also to be proved by the above narration, namely, that persons may be powerful mediums at one time and afterwards lose the power, for neither of the media of Dr. Phelps's family in Stratford have had any proof of mediumship for years.

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA.

A CORRESPONDENT writes from the Bengal Presidency, July 29th:—

“Natives in and around the Presidency towns are beginning to inquire into Spiritualism, especially the Bengalese about Calcutta. The men of Behar, North-West, and Central provinces will wait yet a while. Compared with the great size of the country, Europeans are here very much scattered, and, as a rule, unsettled. Their aim is to leave the country for good as soon as possible; there is, therefore, little care or time for anything but business. The Spiritual papers and periodicals which accumulate on my hands, usually during long railway journeys I tie in packets, and hand to the guards, drivers, and station-masters. Enclosed is a note from a medical friend, to whom I sent the last number of *The Spiritualist*, in which the weighing experiments performed by the British National Association of Spiritualists are contained. *The Spiritualist* seems to me to be well suited for intelligent people, there being little or nothing of the sectarian spirit in it. I call it spiritual sectarianism when men begin to publicly call each other ‘brothers’ over an idea which is peculiar to themselves. The sect sentiment appears to have taken a new and probably a decided hold on the minds of some Spiritualists, and the result is that the fundamental truth, however universal in itself, is reduced to the humble limits of private property.”

MORE ABOUT THE PHENOMENA AT DR. PHELPS'S.

BY EPES SARGENT.

IN *The Spiritualist* of the 2nd inst. you ask for information as to where you can find accounts of the phenomena at Dr. Phelps's house in America. You will find a brief account in my *Planchette* (pp. 49, 50), all the particulars of which, together with many others, were confirmed in a letter which Dr. Phelps wrote me in reply to one which I addressed to him, asking for information.

My friend Dr. J. R. Nichols, editor of the *Boston Journal of Chemistry*, writes:—“I once, for several hours, listened to the recital of what occurred in the dwelling of the Rev. Dr. Phelps, of Stratford, Connecticut, from the lips of the venerable man himself. I was reduced to the alternative of regarding him, his family, and a wide circle of intelligent friends, as the most egregiously duped circle of men and women, or the greatest liars and impostors—or of believing in the reality of phenomena which human reason and science were incompetent to explain. I felt compelled to adopt the latter alternative.”

The Rev. Dr. Eliakim Phelps was a well known and highly respected clergyman, whose reputation for strict veracity and good sense was above all question. The phenomena in his house began March 10th, 1850, and continued for seven months. They were of the most unaccountable character. In his letter to me Dr. Phelps wrote:—“I have seen things in motion above a thousand times; and in most cases where no visible power existed by which the motion could be produced. There have been broken from my windows more than seventy-one panes of glass, more than thirty of which I have seen broken before my own eyes.”

You will find quite a full account of the Phelps phenomena in *Modern Spiritualism*, by E. W. Capron, published in Boston in 1855. Probably some of your readers have called your attention to his account before this letter reaches you. My principal object is to assure you of the high character of Dr. Phelps, and to impart the fact that he wrote me a letter confirming the particulars in the newspapers of the day, and which are reproduced partly in *Planchette*, but much more fully in Mr. Capron's book. I published the letter in the *Boston Transcript* some time in 1851, I think.

The phenomena are so well authenticated, so various, and have been so fully corroborated by subsequent developments in Spiritualism, that the Stratford occurrences will always form a most interesting chapter in the history of the subject.

Boston, Massachusetts, August 12, 1878.

THE FORMATION OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY IN CAMBRIDGE.

MR. A. E. HUNTER, of Jesus College, Cambridge, sends us the gratifying news of the formation of an association for investigators into Spiritualism in the intellectual University town in which he resides. The name of the society is “The Cambridge Association of Investigators into Spiritualism.” The rules will be the same as those adopted, after long experience, by the well-managed Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, with a few additions.

The following are the names of the officers of the Society: *President*, Mr. E. O. Fountain, Pembroke College; *Vice-President*, Mr. Nicholls; *Treasurer*, Mr. D. Burgess; *Secretary*, Mr. Harpley; *Librarian*, Mr. A. E. Hunter, Jesus College; *Sub-Librarian*, Mr. H. Burgess.

The subscription will be 1s. a month, to include membership, and the use of the library. There will likewise be a fund for purchasing the current literature of the movement, to which fund members may or may not subscribe. Terms of subscription to the current literature fund 6s. a year, or 6d. a month. Any books on Spiritualism or kindred subjects will be gladly received for the library, if addressed to Mr. H. Burgess, Fitzroy-street, Cambridge.

Mr. Hunter forwards us a new set of rules for forming spirit circles, likewise a small tract on “*Spiritualism; What is it?*” He says that he and his friends are distributing them round the neighbourhood of Cambridge, and find them generally well received.

A REQUEST FROM AUSTRIA.

THE Baroness von Vay (Countess Würmbrand), who has done so much for years to forward the cause of Spiritualism on the Continent, desires to place the following case under the notice of English Spiritualists, who, it is to be hoped, will liberally act upon her suggestion:—

To the Editor of “*The Spiritualist*.”

SIR,—*Viribus unitis* is the best motto for Spiritualists, and bearing this in mind, I write to solicit your sympathy for Dr. Julius Neubert, of Berlin. I know him to be a worthy and good gentleman, who has for forty years worked assiduously as a mesmeric healer. He has been successful in curing a great number of patients, but as they were in most cases poor people, he has received no adequate remuneration for his services. Then, this last spring, he became so weak and exhausted that he was obliged entirely to cease from his labours, and retire to the Thüringer Wald in order to recruit his strength. He is still unable to undertake his work, and is consequently now, in his seventieth year, without means of support. During this cessation from his occupation he has read and thought much on Spiritualism, and has himself received manifestations which he considers of importance, but which he has no means of placing before the world. I have already begun to get up a subscription for him here; and thinking of our dear brother and sister Spiritualists of England, I write to beg you to try the same for him through your excellent organ, *The Spiritualist* newspaper. You have already done many works of charity in this way, and I should be exceedingly thankful if you would try it again for Mr. Neubert. He is indeed worthy of your aid. His present address is Dr. Julius Neubert, Georgthal Gotha, Germany. Knowing the generosity and kind hearts of our English brethren, I hope in this way to help him.

ADELMA VON VAY WÜRMBRAND.

Gonobitz, Styria, *viâ* Gratz, Austria.

MR. WILLIAMS, the medium, asks us to state that he left London for the Continent on Tuesday last; therefore his rooms are closed until further notice. Letters for him should be addressed to the care of Mr. A. J. Riko, at The Hague. Mr. Williams intends to be in Paris in the middle of September, and to return to London at the end of that month.

MR. COLVILLE'S MEDIUMSHIP.—Mr. W. J. Colville, the trance medium, has been doing much good of late to provincial societies of Spiritualists by his inspirational lectures, and the generous way in which he has sometimes given them freely, for the benefit of the poorer localities. He contemplates leaving England for the United States in a few weeks' time. Mr. Colville will deliver a trance address on “The Present and Future Life Advantages of a Knowledge of Spiritualism,” in the Hulme Town Hall, Stretford-road, Manchester, on Thursday, September 5th, at 8 p.m. The admission will be by payment. He will also lecture in the Temperance Hall, Grosvenor-street, Manchester, on the following Sunday, September 8th, at 2.30 and 6.30 p.m., the subjects to be chosen by the audience. Admission free; a collection at the close.

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION AT DUBLIN.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

CHESTER, AUGUST 25TH, 1878.

Now that the proceedings of the British Association are over, and I am on my way back to London, I think, in reviewing the events of the last two weeks, that there is every reason for satisfaction at the generally improved tone of intelligent men in relation to psychic subjects. A considerable portion of the address of the President was devoted to the problem about the possibility of four dimensions in space, brought forcibly of late before the scientific world by Professor Zöllner's experiments with Henry Slade at Leipzig, and Professor Huxley could not keep aloof from utterances about the same problem. Mr. Romanes delivered an evening lecture, entirely devoted to the psychology of the lower animals, and this, again, is a symptom of the turning of the tide. In conversation I heard no word of disparagement of Spiritualism from any member of the British Association at Dublin; but several spoke of it as an open question, and as a matter for investigation by those interested. At one of the chief clubs in Dublin I met several members who wished to investigate, and who, from information they had previously received in the form of testimony, were thoroughly alive to the importance of the subject.

While Spiritualism has spread through large masses of people in Lancashire and Yorkshire, it has fewer adherents in the whole of Ireland than in several small English towns. Perhaps race characteristics have something to do with this, and a skilled anthropologist who, aided by coloured maps, would deal with this question before one of the fortnightly meetings of the British National Association of Spiritualists, would be advancing a new and interesting subject. But race characteristics will not explain everything, if anything, in relation to the slow growth of Spiritualism in Ireland. Dublin, for example, swarms with priests; one is met in nearly every street and in nearly every tramway car; so plentiful are they that they appear to be in an unduly large proportion to the total population. All these being the servants of a well-organised Church, they have the power, if they use their tongues freely, to raise a prejudice in two days, from one end of Dublin to the other, against any man known to advocate the truths of Spiritualism, and this would go a long way in the direction of ruining any individual in a commercially dependent position. In private life there is more Spiritualism in Dublin than I had supposed two weeks ago, and I imagine that the large number of priests, with their eyes and tongues everywhere, has a blighting influence upon freedom of religious thought and utterance, and is the cause of the prevailing secrecy about facts witnessed in private spirit circles. Yet I am not aware that the Catholic priesthood have done anything in Dublin adverse to Spiritualism; probably when they first awakened to its growth in their midst, they will oppose it as they do all religious movements outside their Church, but, perhaps, after taking more time to consider, they may, like Canon Gilbert, pause in their attacks. With scientific materialism advancing in all directions, spreading from the intellectual classes into those beneath them, neither Catholics nor Protestants act wisely in opposing practical scientific proof of a life hereafter, of a life, moreover, in which men feel their responsibility for deeds done in the body. This is stronger authority to appeal to than to oral or written traditions riddled by the fires of modern criticism, and, rightly or wrongly, repudiated or ignored by a large and influential section in the nation. These remarks are not made from any special prejudice against the Roman Catholic Church; if the priests of all the Protestant denominations were united under one head, and were so increased in number that we met one of them in nearly every street and railway carriage, I should say that the country was priestridden to an extent injurious to freedom of thought and action in matters religious. And I do not say that such spiritual pastors and masters of the weak minds beneath them intend to do harm; they may be but the creatures of circumstances, the inheritors of a vicious system handed down to them by their forefathers. The priests I conversed with in Ireland were intelligent and warmhearted men, who evinced a great disposition to oblige strangers. At the *conversazione* given by the Catholic

University to some of the members of the British Association, refinement and art culture were more manifest than in some of the more expensive and pretentious *soirées*.

What with landowners looking after the material interests of Irishmen by retaining them in their own possession until that coming time when free trade in land shall be established, and what with priests looking after the spiritual interests of Irishmen, and allowing them no freedom of thought or action in matters religious, most of the working classes seem to be helpless creatures, utilised body and soul for the benefit of their superiors as completely as London cab-horses are utilised from first to last. I said to a large employer of labour: "The casual observations of a stranger are not worth much; but am I not right in the opinion that most of the working people here have lost confidence in themselves?" "Not quite," said he, "for they never had any confidence in themselves."

The British Association for the Advancement of Science has been placed in a dubious position by the action of its managers in relation to Spiritualism. By the rejection of Mr. Crookes's paper at Edinburgh about psychic phenomena, the Association was historically committed as the Royal Society once committed itself by rejecting Benjamin Franklin's paper on lightning conductors. And more recently by the stringent rules about the reading of papers made since the discussion at Glasgow about psychic phenomena, the managers of the British Association have intercepted no spiritualistic paper, for no Spiritualist ever offered them one, but have possibly thinned the number of papers on other subjects. At the Dublin meeting, the Biological Section and all its departments, read no papers at all on the Thursday, and little or nothing was done in most of the sections on the closing day. The Rev. S. Haughton called the attention of his hearers on one occasion to the very short supply of papers in one of the sections. How far this short supply resulted from the restrictive rules laid down about the reading of papers, in the attempt to prevent consideration of the psychic phenomena of nature, it is impossible to say.

BIRMINGHAM, MONDAY.

After my arrival here I called upon that good worker in Spiritualism, Mr. Aaron Franklin, at his house in Birmingham, near Navigation-street, and he furnished me with the following information, which I quote in his own words:—

"Last Monday, at Mr. Perks' rooms in Bridge-street West, an interesting *séance* was held, or rather *séances*, as there were two—the one directly following the other. Mr. John Summerfield was the medium. The following friends were present: Mr. Sneath and friend, Mr. and Mrs. John Colley, Mrs. S. and friend, Messrs. Pembroke, Perks, Powell, and Eades, Mrs. Summerfield, Mrs. Franklin, and myself. The sittings were not held under strict test conditions, although there were one or two sceptical friends present. The phenomena were continuous, and of a convincing character. A large quantity of flowers was placed upon the table; flowers were put in the dark into the hands of each sitter, some being conveyed to those outside the circle. A violin was taken, and the strings struck over the circle of the sitters, and it gently touched their heads. The room was suffused with sweet perfume, and the process of fanning was kept up for some time by our spirit friends. The spirits at one time asked Mrs. Franklin if she would like anything in particular. She replied, 'Anything you please;' but I said I should very much wish them to bring a canary for Mrs. Franklin if they possibly could. The spirits' reply was, 'We will try to do so.' In the early part of the sitting we noticed a glass tumbler on the mantelpiece; we heard it removed to the table; in a few moments we heard the glass move, and were requested to light up, and we were all delighted to see under the tumbler a canary lying asleep, apparently mesmerised. The spirit said it is for Mrs. Franklin. Then through the medium was said, 'Mamma, it comes with all the love that it is possible to convey from a child to its mother; and always when you look at it think of me.' At the close of the *séance* the bird was safely removed to Harborne, where it is doing well, and is highly prized by the recipient as a birthday gift from a dearly loved daughter in the Summer Land."

A LIFE SAVED BY SPIRIT POWER.

IN *Scribner's Monthly* for November, 1871, is an article entitled "Thirty-seven Days of Peril," vividly illustrating the loving care with which friendly spirits watch over and guide our footsteps.

Mr. Truman C. Evarts was one of a party of several who started in August of that year to explore the region of the Upper Yellowstone, in the Rocky Mountains. After some days' travelling he became separated from his companions. In his narrative he says: "On the day that I found myself separated from the company, and for several days previous, our course had been impeded by the dense growth of the pine forest, and occasionally large tracts of fallen timber, frequently rendering our progress almost impossible. Whenever we came to one of these immense windfalls each man engaged in the pursuit of a passage through it, and it was while thus employed, and with the idea that I had found one, that I strayed out of sight and hearing of my comrades."

The next morning, rising at dawn, he mounted his horse and took his course in the supposed direction of the camp, but he was obliged frequently to dismount and examine the ground for the faintest indications. "Coming to an opening, from which I could see several vistas, I dismounted for the purpose of selecting one leading in the direction I had chosen, and leaving my horse unhitched, as had always been my custom, walked a few rods into the forest. While surveying the ground my horse took fright, and I turned around in time to see him disappearing at full speed among the trees. That was the last I ever saw of him. It was yet quite dark. My blankets, gun, pistols, fishing tackle, matches—everything except the clothing on my person, a couple of knives, and a small opera-glass, were attached to the saddle."

Not despairing, he travelled that day, and at night reposed among fallen trees, and upon a couch of pine foliage which he gathered for the purpose. "A feeling of weakness took the place of hunger. Conscious of the need of food, I felt no cravings. Occasionally, while serambling over logs and through thickets, a sense of faintness and exhaustion would come over me, but I would suppress it with the audible expression, 'This won't do; I must find my company.'" On the next day he emerged from the forest into the open country, and discovered some thistles, the roots of which were nearly the only food he thenceforth subsisted upon, or rather starved upon. He was exposed to storms of mingled snow and rain, his clothing was torn, and through the rents the chilling moisture found ready access. On the third day he discovered a group of hot springs, and selecting a spot between two of them, he built a bower of pine branches, and there remained seven days. On the morning of the eighth day after his arrival at the springs he recommenced his wearisome and almost hopeless journey. "Weakened by a long fast, and the unsatisfying nature of the only food I could procure, I know that from this time onward to the day of my rescue, my mind, though unimpaired in those perceptions needful to self-preservation, was in a condition to receive impressions akin to insanity. I was constantly travelling in dreamland, and indulging in strange reveries such as I had never before known. I seemed to possess a sort of duality of being, which, while constantly reminding me of the necessities of my condition, fed my imagination with vagaries of the most extravagant character. Nevertheless, I was perfectly conscious of the tendency of these morbid influences, and often tried to shake them off, but they would ever return with increased force, and I finally reasoned myself into the belief that their indulgence, as it afforded me pleasure, could work no harm while it did not interfere with my plans for deliverance. Thus I lived in a world of ideal happiness, and in a world of positive suffering at the same time."

After many days spent in searching for some trail, he says: "I selected for a landmark the lowest notch in the Madison range of mountains. Carefully surveying the jagged and broken surface over which I must travel to reach it, I left the lake and pushed into the midst of its intricacies. All the day until nearly sunset I struggled over rugged hills, through windfalls, thickets, and matted forests, with the rock-ribbed beacon constantly in view. As I advanced it

receded, as if in mockery of my toil. Night overtook me with my journey half accomplished." The next day he arrived at the base of the range and scanned hopelessly its insurmountable difficulties. "What a feeling of helpless despair came over me with the conviction that the journey of the last two days had been in vain."

"While I was thus considering whether to remain and search for a passage, or return to the Yellowstone, I experienced one of those strange hallucinations which many of my friends have misnamed insanity, but which to me was Providence. An old clerical friend, for whose character and counsel I had always cherished peculiar regard, in some unaccountable manner seemed to be standing before me, charged with advice which would relieve my perplexity. I seemed to hear him say, as if in a voice and with the manner of authority: 'Go back immediately, as rapidly as your strength will permit. There is no food here, and the idea of scaling these rocks is madness.'

"'Doctor,' I rejoined, 'the distance is too great. I cannot live to travel it.'

"'Say not so. Your life depends upon the effort. Return at once. Start now, lest your resolution falter. Travel as fast and as far as possible—it is your only chance.'

"'Doctor, I am rejoiced to meet you in this hour of distress, but doubt the wisdom of your counsel. I am within seventy miles of Virginia. Just over these rocks, a few miles away, I shall find friends. My shoes are nearly worn out, my clothes are in tatters, and my strength is almost overcome. As a last trial, it seems to me I can but attempt to scale this mountain or perish in the effort, if God so wills.'

"'Don't think of it. Your power of endurance will carry you through. I will accompany you. Put your trust in Heaven. Help yourself, and God will help you.'

"Overcome by these and other persuasions, and delighted with the idea of having a travelling companion, I plodded my way over the route I had come, intending at a certain point to change it so as to strike the river at the foot of the lake. Stopping after a few miles of travel I had no difficulty in procuring fire, and passed a comfortable night. When I resumed my journey the next day the sun was just rising. Whenever I was disposed, as was often the case, to question the wisdom of the change of routes, my old friend appeared to be near with words of encouragement, but his reticence on other subjects both surprised and annoyed me. . . . Once, while struggling through a field of tangled trunks which seemed interminable, at one of the pauses I found myself seriously considering whether it was not preferable to die there than renew the effort to proceed. I felt that all attempts to escape was but a bitter prolongation of the agony of dissolution. A seeming whisper in the air, 'While there is life there is hope; take courage,' broke the delusion, and I clambered on. . . . I lost all sense of time. Days and nights came and went, and were numbered only by the growing consciousness that I was gradually starving. I felt no hunger; did not eat to appease appetite, but to renew strength. I experienced but little pain. The gaping sores on my feet, the severe burn on my hip, the festering crevices at the joints of my fingers, all terrible in appearance, had ceased to give me the least concern. The roots which supplied my food had suspended the digestive power of the stomach, and their fibres were packed in it in a matted, compact mass.

"Not so with my hours of slumber. They were visited by the most luxurious dreams. I would apparently visit the most gorgeously decorated restaurants of New York and Washington; sit down to immense tables spread with the most appetising viands; partake of the richest oyster stews and plumpest pies; engage myself in the labour and preparation of curious dishes, and with them fill range upon range of elegantly furnished tables, until they fairly groaned beneath the accumulated dainties prepared by my own hands. Frequently the entire night would seem to have been spent in getting up a sumptuous dinner. I would realise the fatigue of roasting, boiling, baking, and fabricating the choicest dishes known to the modern *cuisine*, and in my disturbed slumbers would enjoy with epicurean relish the food thus furnished, even to repletion. Alas! there was more luxury than life in these somnolent vagaries.

"It was a cold, gloomy day when I arrived in the vicinity of the falls. . . . The only alternative was to seek shelter in a thicket. . . . Constant friction with my hands, and unceasing beating with my legs and feet saved me from freezing. It was the most terrible night of my journey, and when, with the early dawn I pulled myself into a standing posture, it was to realise that my right arm was partially paralysed, and my limbs so stiffened with cold as to be almost immovable. . . .

"My old friend and adviser, whose presence I had felt more than seen the last few days, now forsook me altogether. But I was not alone. By some process which I was too weak to solve, my arms, legs, and stomach were transformed into so many travelling companions. Often for hours I would plod along conversing with these imaginary friends. Each had his peculiar wants which he expected me to supply. The stomach was importunate in his demands for a change of diet—complained incessantly of the roots I fed him, their present effect and more remote consequences. I would try to silence him with promises, beg of him to wait a few days, and when this failed of the quiet I desired, I would seek to intimidate him by declaring, as a sure result of negligence, our inability to reach home alive. All to no purpose—he tormented me with his frolic humours through the entire journey. The others would generally concur with him in these fancied altercations. The legs implored me for rest, and the arms complained that I gave them too much to do. Troublesome as they were, it was a pleasure to realise their presence. I worked for them, too, with right good will, doing many things for their seeming comfort, which, had I felt myself alone, would have remained undone. They appeared to be perfectly helpless of themselves; would do nothing for me or for each other. I often wondered, while they ate and slept so much, that they did not aid in gathering wood and kindling fires. As a counterpoise to their own inertia, whenever they discovered languor in me on necessary occasions, they were not wanting in words of encouragement and cheer. I recall, as I write, an instance where, by prompt and timely interposition, the representative of the stomach saved me from a death of dreadful agony. One day I came to a small stream issuing from a spring of mild temperature, on the hillside, swarming with minnows. I caught some with my hands and ate them raw. To my taste they were delicious. But the stomach refused them, accused me of attempting to poison him, and would not be reconciled until I had emptied my pouch of the few fish I had put there for future use. Those that I ate made me very sick. Poisoned by the mineral in the water, had I glutted my appetite with them as I intended, I should doubtless have died in the wilderness, in excruciating torment.

"A gradual mental introversion grew upon me as physical weakness increased. . . . All doubt of immortality fled in the light of present realities. So vivid were my conceptions of the future that I longed for death, not less as the beginning of happiness than as a release from misery. Led on by these reflections, I would recall the varied incidents of my journey—my escape from the lion, from fire, my return from the Madison Range—and in all of them I saw how much I had been indebted to that mysterious protection which comes only from the throne of the Eternal. . . . Bitter as was my experience, it was not unrelieved by some of the most precious moments I have ever known. . . .

"I resumed my journey the next morning, with the belief that I should make no more fires with my lens. I must save a brand or perish. The day was raw and gusty; an east wind, charged with storm, penetrated my nerves with irritating keenness. After walking a few miles the storm came on, and a coldness unlike any other I had ever felt seized me. It entered all my bones. I attempted to build a fire, but could not make it burn. Seizing a brand, I stumbled blindly on, stopping within the shadow of every rock and clump to renew energy for a final conflict for life. . . . Once only the thought flashed across my mind that I should be saved, and I seemed to hear a whispered command to 'struggle on.' Groping along the side of a hill, I became suddenly sensible of a sharp reflection, as of burnished steel. Looking up, through half-closed eyes, two rough but kindly faces met my gaze.

"'Are you Mr. Evarts?' 'Yes, all that is left of him.' 'We have come for you.' 'Who sent you?' 'Judge Lawrence and other friends.' 'God bless him, and them, and you! I am saved!' and with these words, powerless of further effort, I fell forward into the arms of my preservers in a state of unconsciousness. I was saved."

Dr. Eugene Crowell, of New York, commenting on this narrative in his *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*, says:—"He was saved, and by angelic ministry. Thousands of persons who have read the story of Mr. Evarts' experience know—provided he relates that experience correctly, of which I have no doubt—that there was no illusion, no hallucination about it. Both what he saw and what he heard were real. The most blessed and willing task which our spirit friends undertake in our favour is to comfort and support us in our trials and sufferings, and many times through their instrumentality we are made happier in adversity than we were in prosperity. He says:—'Weakened by a long fast, and the unsatisfying nature of the only food I could procure, I know that from this time onward to the day of my rescue, my mind, though unimpaired in those perceptions needful to self-preservation, was in a condition to receive impressions akin to insanity.' It is a well-known fact that the condition of the system that is induced by fasting is favourable to the reception and recognition of spiritual influences, and Mr. Evarts' condition was precisely the most favourable for receiving these impressions; and after testifying that his mind was unimpaired, we are not surprised that, in accordance with the education which rejects all spiritual impressions, he should liken this condition of mind to that which accompanies insanity, but this professed opinion of his does not affect the truth as to this condition. He was constantly travelling in dreamland, and indulging in strange reveries such as he had never before known. He seemed to possess a sort of duality of being, which, while constantly reminding him of the necessities of his position fed his imagination with 'vagaries' of the most extravagant character. Allowing that spirit friends foresaw the hardships and the exhaustive labour to which he would be subject, what could have been better designed for his welfare than to thus fill his mind with vagaries so well calculated to divert his thoughts from the appalling difficulties and dangers that environed him, to protect him from the crushing effects of the paralysing fear and hopelessness that otherwise would in a few days have rendered him unequal to the task before him. It must be admitted that these 'vagaries' which filled his mind were helpful and successful, and if so, they were the best means that sympathising and wise intelligences could employ in that stage of his difficulties. By their means he 'lived in a world of ideal happiness, and in a world of positive suffering at the same time.' And it was necessary that he should suffer; otherwise the incentive to exertion would have been wanting; and provided his spirit guides possessed the power to prevent all suffering, it would have been unwise to exercise it.

"So much for the 'strange reveries' or 'vagaries' that so well served the purpose of partially diverting his thoughts from his condition; but if these were not spirit impressions, what can be said of his 'old clerical friend,' whom he clearly recognised standing before him, and for so many days ever present to counsel and encourage him. When losing time and strength in his perplexity whether to proceed or retreat, this spirit of his old friend said to him, 'in a voice and with the manner of authority, "Go back immediately, as rapidly as your strength will permit. There is no food here, and the idea of scaling these rocks is madness."' Then when he objected, this friend rejoins: 'say not so. Your life depends upon the effort. Return at once. Start now, lest your resolution falter. Travel as fast and as far as possible; it is your only chance.' Again he states his objections, and again his friend replies: 'Don't think of it. Your power of endurance will carry you through. I will accompany you. Put your trust in Heaven. Help yourself, and God will help you.'

"Is it possible to admit that Mr. Evarts is here stating the truth, and yet doubt the overwhelming intrinsic evidence of the reality of this appearance, of its being an objective perception, and not a subjective impression. Can it for a moment be supposed that the earnest pleadings, the emphatic warnings, the promised realisation of hopes, together with

the sound judgment and sagacity displayed in the counsel here given, were the product of a delirious brain, and especially when Mr. Evarts himself declares that his mind was unimpaired; and the apposite reasons apparent in his objections sustains the truth of his assertion; and besides which, the result of adopting this advice was his salvation. The promise given by his friend was faithfully kept. He says: 'Whenever I was disposed, as was often the case, to question the wisdom of the change of routes, my old friend appeared to be near with words of encouragement.' Here is a continued process of action which indicates a high degree of intelligence, of sound judgment, and is entirely incompatible with the operation of an unsound mind, and cannot possibly be ascribed to a dual action of the mind of Mr. Evarts, unless, on the one hand, we assume that he was insane, when there is not the least proof of it; or, on the other, that he was perfectly rational, and yet in a mental condition in which he possessed two individualities, one striving against the other, and yet both seeking his best good.

"At first, no doubt, all his spirit friends could do was to impress his mind with pleasing thoughts and images; but as he became more attenuated, less earthly and more spiritual, his spiritual vision was opened, and he was able to discern the spirit of his old friend. About this time also his uneasy slumbers were made pleasant, and even delightful, and consequently refreshing, through the labours of the same intelligences in impressing his mind with dreams, or rather visions, of luxurious repasts which he found occupation in preparing, and in which he indulged; and from the satisfaction thus obtained, though apparently visionary, derived some compensation for the real deprivations connected with his situation.

"With Mr. Evarts, as in all other cases where great exertions are necessary while the physical powers are in an exhausted state, varied means were required to incite to exertion, and that interest might be excited and sustained, and in time his spirit guides found it necessary to resort to other means to support his sinking powers. He had become familiar with the appearance and conversation of his clerical friend, and as fresh stimulus to exertion, his guides devised the plan of personifying the different members of his body, by which his arms, legs, and stomach were, to all appearance, transformed into so many travelling companions, with whom he conversed upon the wants of each, and which they assumed he was bound to supply, thus imposing upon him a responsibility which turned the currents of his gloomy thoughts from himself, and stimulated him to renewed exertions. 'Troublesome as they were, it was a pleasure to realise their presence. I worked for them, too, with right good will, doing many things for their seeming comfort, which, had I felt myself alone, would have remained undone. . . . As a counterpoise to their own inertia, whenever they discovered languor in me on necessary occasions, they were not wanting in words of encouragement and cheer.' And at one time the representative of the stomach prevented him from eating poisonous minnows, and thus saved him from a painful death.

"It will be said by some, these were trivial means for angels to use; if they were the agents employed they would have resorted to means more worthy of their elevated condition; but supposing that they in their wisdom found these the best means, would they not wisely have employed them? Is a physician of the highest attainments above using the proper means, however humble, in relieving his patient and effecting his cure? Could the doubter, or perhaps caviller, have devised different and more effectual means to accomplish the deliverance of this unfortunate man? I doubt it, and believe he will also, if he candidly consider the peril and difficulties that environed him; his sole nourishment the thistle root; what we would consider a mockery to propose for this purpose; with insufficient clothing; exposed to the vicissitudes of weather, with no protection at night; compelled to travel footsore, maimed, and exhausted for weeks together before he could hope to reach a human habitation, his salvation was a miracle, even when effected by the aid of watchful and devoted spirit friends. Without their assistance, and left to his own unaided resources, his deliverance must have been impossible.

"Mr. Evarts is not alone in 'experiencing one of those

strange hallucinations which many of my friends have misnamed insanity, but which to me was Providence.' These experiences are not uncommon to the human family, and notwithstanding the determined manner in which most men combat what they call 'these hallucinations,' there are moments when a conviction that they are of a higher character, and deserve a better name, will flash upon the mind and fairly challenge confession; and I much mistake if Mr. Evarts himself does not since this experience fully believe in angel ministrations, and I have little doubt that he would have fully acknowledged to this belief in his narrative could he have found a respectable and popular magazine with the independence and courage to admit it with such a confession."

Correspondence.

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

SPIRITUALISM IN PARIS.

SIR,—Since my arrival here, over a month ago, I found that some healthy and promising changes have taken place among the followers of the harmonial philosophy. I scarcely believed in the near proximity of those changes when I left Paris in December last. The "Spirites" and "Spiritualists," so antagonistic toward one another, have to some extent clasped hands, and, what seems more extraordinary to me, is that the leading disciples of Kardec should have made the forward step in the matter of conciliation, and adopted such practical ways and means as to leave no loopholes for dissentients to hide in. At great expense the *Société Spirite* and *Revue Spirite* have established their new quarters in a more convenient place, at the north-east end of the Palais Royal, No 5, Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, where comfort and elegance are combined for the benefit of members and visitors. The hall, or meeting-room, is of good size, well-lighted, and contains the Spiritualistic publications of all countries. Alongside is a neat library-room, where the shelves are loaded with books and pamphlets. As an earnest endeavour to be up and doing, the reorganised society lately requested me to write to Boston, to the publishing house of Rich and Colby, for a large number of works to increase this library, and make it attractive to English readers, residents or visitors. The not defunct but transformed *Société Spirite*, which had a rather too defined personal character—"for the diffusion of the doctrines of Allen Kardec"—is now styled "The Scientific Society for the Study of Psychology."

I am aware that *The Spiritualist* has already published the substance of the above information, and furthermore made known the constitution and regulations under which the referred-to society acts; but I dare say the repetition, with additional points, will not be considered superfluous.

Mr. Leymarie presides as chairman at the meetings of the Psychological Society on Tuesday and Friday evenings, and acquits himself well of that function, which, under the new circumstances, becomes at times difficult to fill, as the combative faculties of sections, not fully married in tight bonds as yet, are apt to kindle and blaze to some extent. Some of the opposers of the doctrines of Kardec frequent these meetings and take part in the discussions; they also at times deliver lectures. As a rule, the hall is made lively and agreeable by the presence of many attentive listeners, ladies and gentlemen; and at every meeting foreigners from different countries are to be seen, even from Australia. Mr. Edward Maitland, author of *The Soul, and How it Found Me*, accompanied by a lady relative, attended lately one of the mesmeric *séances* held in the hall. Tuesday evenings are devoted to mesmeric experiments and discourses, Mr. Hippolyte and a *confrère* acting as principal operators. There are in Paris several mesmeric societies; one, established 1860, at No. 20, Rue des Neuve Petits Champs, where I found a large company of ladies and gentlemen, members principally. The subjects that we saw did not show any signs of clairvoyance, and I understood that they had but few sensitives of that description. Mr. Dangerville, residing on the premises, is the president of the society, whose members, as a rule, are opposed to our doctrines. I saw there a Mr. Donato, of Liège, France, who has a celebrated sensitive and clairvoyant, whose powers have been tested, I am told, before large assemblies here and elsewhere. I find that the cause is somewhat impeded here by divers circumstances. The Government regulations render it difficult to step forward and to assert its claims, and the people, as a rule, are averse to paying mediums for services rendered. At the Psychological Society I met an *ex-abbé*, *le père* Marshal, author of *L'Esprit Consolateur*, and *Mémoires d'un Missionnaire*, two works which have attracted much notice and praise. Mr. Marshal is a fluent and elegant speaker. He, with Father Hyacinthe, founded the New Church at Geneva.

Among the *littérati* here are found many warm friends of the cause, also in the ranks of *artistes*. *La Religion Laïque*, edited by Mr. Fauvety, a celebrated writer, devotes (monthly) several pages to Spiritualism. Mr. De Bonnemère contributes able articles on the subject in that paper. I find, however, that most book writers take the high flights of the doctrine; go too much into the scholastic style—abstruse sense; and do not generally attach themselves to experimental phases and demonstrations.

HENRY LACROIX.

Paris, August 20th, 1878.

ANIMAL PSYCHOLOGY

SIR,—In Mr. Romanes' very able lecture his conclusion is that "the only difference which analysis can show to obtain between the mind of man and the mind of the lower animals consists in this, that

the mind of man has been able to develop the germ of rational thought, which is undeveloped in the mind of animals, and that the development of this germ has been due to the power of abstraction, which is rendered possible by the faculty of speech." As leading to this conclusion—which I am not going to dispute—he says that "from the mental condition of uneducated deaf-mutes we learn that, in the absence of language, the mind of a man is almost on a level with the mind of a brute in respect of its power of forming abstract ideas." Immediately preceding this he states that a deaf-mute, *previous to education*, "supposed the Bible to have been printed by a printing-press in the sky, which was worked by printers of enormous strength;" and that, in another similar case, a deaf-mute "supposed the object of going to church to be that of doing obeisance to the clergy."

Now if deaf-mutes, who have "never been taught finger-language, or any other system of signs," can yet possess ideas—"abstract" or not—like these, is there not, somehow, a *very great* difference between the lower animals and human beings *before* language comes into play at all? Which of the lower animals can form conceptions like these?

Should Mr. Romanes observe these lines, and give a few words in reply, he will confer a favour on many who, like myself, have no scientific knowledge on this most important subject. A. T.

Peebles, Aug. 26th, 1878.

ANONYMOUS ASSERTIONS ABOUT MAGIC.

SIR,—For the further information of the readers of the article, "Opinions about Occultism and Spiritualism," in your last issue, and all other truthseekers equally interested but possibly disappointed and intimidated from their cherished studies by the extracts presented therein, and for the confirmation of the grand truth embodied in it of the necessity for a natural bias, physically and mentally, towards the occult, in all who would attain to any proficiency in its practical working, I send a verbatim extract from a letter from an intimate friend of the author of *Art Magic*, never before published. The writer says:—

"My friend, the author of *Art Magic*, can do all he writes of, make himself invisible, travel the air, or any of the feats described. He can command the elementaries, or do anything else of which he writes; he has Hindoo servants who can also do so; but he is a man of rank and station, and of course will not make an exhibition of himself, or parade his powers before a gaping world. He insists upon it that the practical powers of *Art Magic* are only to be obtained, as he obtained them, and as the Fakeers of India obtain them by the arts he has laid down. . . . My friend has fully convinced me there is no royal road to power, and that invocations and talk are of no effect, without a body prepared physically, and a mind concentrated by contemplation, fasting, abstinence, and severe mental and physical exercises. In these methods the true virtue of initiation consists."

As to this "M.A. (Oxon.)," seems conclusive when he says "nothing short of the severest exercise of will, so severe as to paralyse the mental powers for a long subsequent time, can avail to produce any objective effect"—unless, of course, the individual possesses the natural hereditary bias I before referred to, or is so favourably circumstanced and situated as to be able and willing to subject himself to a preparatory course of training, obviously undesirable and probably unsatisfactory, except to the few who already possess from birth, if they do not cultivate or exercise, those psychical germs.

ONE OF THE FIVE HUNDRED.

OCCULTISM.

SIR,—I have read with exceeding interest the most able and admirable article in your number this week from the pen of Mrs. Hardinge. I, as a Spiritualist, not as yet an occultist, cannot but endorse all that her eloquent language narrates.

It appears to me that Spiritualists, as students of the divine nature, the non-material part of man, ought to be the foremost to enrol themselves in the list of those anxious and eager to solve that most momentous problem. Spiritualism gives us the key; but we have unlearned and clumsy hands, and nothing really comes of our ignorant efforts.

It appears to me that occultism presents a field for occult inquiry. We ought most anxiously to explore it; and is it not, at least, possible that occultism may represent the ancient form of the coming modern science? As astrology preceded astronomy, may not some new science succeed occultism? In its day occultism served its own purpose sufficiently and satisfactorily. Science has made strides since, and through a modern and more positively scientific method, may not ancient occultism develop in a new and glorious, possibly an *exact* science—the *real* science of the soul? Even with the possibility of such a result, is it wise of Spiritualists to assail or ignore occultism? All Spiritualists who have investigated their phenomena in a truly earnest and truthful spirit agree in stating that they are overburdened with phenomena, all more or less similar; but they are quite unprovided with any positive theories in consequence.

Indeed, it appears to me that truthful phenomena increase, but not with them corresponding knowledge. Facts crowd upon us, and we are all longing to *begin* even some scientific method, some real solving of the problems; but time goes by, and we Spiritualists are much as we were, glorying in our knowledge which raises us so much out of the dust of the material world; and still the earnest ones amongst us feel beaten to the dust again under the greatness of our knowledge and the smallness of our comprehension of this vast subject. The key is given to us; we try to turn the lock; but the door will not open. Let us try what occultism will do, and the first gleams of the sunshine through the parting doors will soon inspire us all. My belief is, the doors will open. Such knowledge is *not* too great for man; if it were we should never even have had the reviving mental glimpses we most of us have had. Had the sages of old been told of the wonderful results of modern

science, would they not have been scared? The possibility of knowing something that is at present unknowable may scare us now, but in the future it may seem simply a matter of fact. To have an exact science of the soul may seem very astonishing now; but, still, that is no logical reason why it should astonish us in the future.

Let us chase the demon of materialism from the world through the advent of a material Spiritualism, if I can express it in such contradictory terms. I mean to say, let us prove our Spiritualism as other sciences are proved, not always in a material, but at all events in an intellectual sense. If Spiritualism is never to be grasped through the reason, it will always remain much as it is—mysterious, unproved doctrine, to be believed in by some only, those who have by nature a capacity for judging and reasoning of events by other faculties than the common ones. To these people Spiritualism is and must be a truth of the most glorious and noble a kind. To others, deprived of these divine faculties (I do not mean commonplace, unintellectual credulity), who must judge of a thing through the five senses commonly ascribed to man, Spiritualism will remain an unprovable, and possibly a fraudulent assertion.

It appears to me, therefore, that occultism being the material means of proving the hypothesis of Spiritualism to be neither fraudulent nor unprovable, it behoves us Spiritualists to set to work to see if, instead of scouting the venerable but obsolete science, we may not take it to our hearts, and develop it into another region of intellectual life for our own and every one's sake. Only let us know how to set to work. I. DE S.

SPIRITUALISM IN EAST LONDON.

SIR,—Last Sunday I opened a discussion on Spiritualism, on the Mile End "waste," and was agreeably surprised that among the audience there were a few Spiritualists who had previously been strangers to me, which indicated that the cause is gaining ground. I was also much pleased at the attentive manner with which my evidences of spirit communion were received. I found no opposition; a few friendly inquiries were made, which to me was encouraging; in fact, we had a very pleasant discussion indeed. JAMES CAIN.

S, Bloomfield-road, Burdett-road, E., Aug. 26th, 1878.

SPIRIT-HANDS.

(To the Editor of "The Banner of Light.")

SIR,—In the summer of 1875 I attended eighteen *séances* given by the Bangs Sisters, at their home in Chicago; and on reviewing my memoranda of those meetings, I think a brief summary of certain facts there witnessed may interest some, if not all, of your many readers.

Elizabeth and Mary Bangs were young ladies aged about fifteen and eleven years respectively, and at that time in the fifth year of their development as physical mediums.

We sat for the materialisation of hands around a common black walnut dining table on castors, and rendered dark underneath by being encircled with waterproof cloth, fastened around the table-edge with small hooks and screw-eyes, and having an aperture about 12 x 18 inches cut in the top, and loosely curtained with two strips of black cotton velvet. The circle room, an ordinary parlour, was moderately lighted with gas during the experiments.

At the first four sittings no hands appeared; but various musical instruments were played upon, and slate-writing occurred—all under the table.

During the next six sittings beautifully-formed white hands were thrust upward through the aperture, which, by snapping the thumbs and fingers, drumming on the table top, grasping objects, touching the hands of the circle, &c., demonstrated the fact that they obeyed an intelligent power.

During the next eight sittings different-sized hands and arms of both whites and Indians were projected (often simultaneously) from the aperture. The fingers were sometimes graced with rings, the wrists with bracelets, the arms draped with laces and other ornamental apparel. The Indians brought beads, feathers, and other adornments usually worn by the aboriginal tribes. Not more by ornament, colour, shape, and pantomimic movements of the hands than by the peculiarities of the messages they wrote were the race characteristics and individualities of the spirits manifesting plainly apparent.

An interesting feature was the gradual formation of a spirit-hand. During the fifth sitting, a slender white cylinder, about three inches in length and one-eighth inch diameter, resembling a common wax lighting taper, was thrust upward through the aperture. At the sixth sitting *two* cylinders were displayed, each the same size as the first. At the seventh sitting *three* cylinders were shown, about the diameter of an ordinary lead pencil, at first perfectly rigid, and seeming to adhere one to another; however, they soon became flexible, and on close inspection were found to be *spirit-fingers*, with perfect joints and tiny nails.

On the next evening a complete and finely-formed spirit-hand was presented, which had developed to maturity before our eyes from the little spindle of refined matter that our senses had first perceived.

What a beautiful and wonderful process is materialisation. It demonstrates that knowledge and power have been given to the spirit in its supermundane existence to exercise such control over the molecular forces of the universe as to arrange matter in harmonious forms, and endow the same with intellectual life. AUSTIN A. BURNHAM.

Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

THE human frame is something acted upon by a power outside of us, as familiar with that organisation as we are ignorant of it.—*Agassiz*.

A RELIGION in which faith and reason harmonise is essential to the best human development. But a philosophy without faith is destructive; and a theology which declares war between faith and reason with a view to silence and subjugate the latter, tends to warp conscience, and to breed confusion, hypocrisy, tyranny, and persecution.—*Clark*.

MORE FROM MR. HOWITT ON SPIRITUALISM.

THE following letter from Mr. Howitt to a gentleman on the staff of *The Nottingham Journal* was published in that paper on August 10th:—

Dietonheim, Bruneck, Tyrol, May 27, 1878.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 30th of April, my daughter, Mrs. Alfred Watts, of London, has forwarded to me, and I should have more immediately replied to it, but it reached me just as we were leaving our winter residence, Rome, for this, our summer one. You, of course, are aware that Rome is too warm after May for the cooler constitutions of more northern people; and, therefore, May, or early June, sees a rapid exodus of its visitors. We leave Rome May 1st, and this place to return thither on November 1st.

With respect to your immediate inquiry as to the reality of Spiritualism as a fact, I should have thought you could have amply ascertained that at this time of day. My experience of it has been of about twenty-five years, and of its reality I have been only more deeply convinced. I do not know what is exactly the expression of mine to which you allude, but undoubtedly we consider Spiritualism as one of our greatest blessings, from the simple fact that it has given us positive proofs of the continuity of existence, taught not only in the Bible, but by all the great authorities of all times and nations. It is one thing to believe this, another to know it from actual and unquestionable evidence. This is a fact which demons as well as angels can demonstrate, and in Spiritualism you come on plenty of evidence from both sources.

Mr. Serjeant Cox is peculiar in his theories, professing to attribute all the phenomena to what he calls psychic force. To my knowledge the learned serjeant has seen all sorts of manifestations, public and private, for, I suppose, at least fifteen years, and many of them have given most striking proofs of mind and reason. A force, therefore, which thinks and reasons may be called what people please, but to me it is a spiritual, conscious, self-acting agent—*i.e.*, a spirit. The theory of Serjeant Cox and the Psychologists is pretty much on a par with that of people who think themselves Atheists, but who account for this universe with all its marvellous phenomena by the agency of *Law*, which evidently possesses mind, intellect, invention, power, and all the sentiments which render the greatest men illustrious, and that in an infinite and eternal degree—in a fullness which can and does supply all those qualities and powers to whole races and generations of men, without the slightest diminution in itself. Atheists, or those who imagine themselves such, may call this *Law*, but that is but a poor misnomer for a *Law-Giver*. It is, in fact, the real definition of a Deity, beyond all human conception, wise, glorious, and good.

Spiritualism has, unfortunately, been supposed to be the true source of religious doctrine; and from this mistake has arisen all the follies and extravagances which now disgrace it. From this grand error it has become the fountain of more follies, extravagances, and superstitions than even Popery. People think that the dictation of an opinion by a spirit is a guarantee for its truth; but no fact in Spiritualism is more patent than that shoals of spirits, of all grades and conditions, are about us, and dictate those opinions which they held on earth.

It is perfectly plain that you must know who the dictating spirit is before you can know the real value of his inspiration; yet every person of any experience knows that nothing is so difficult as the identification of communicating spirits. But people believing spirits, merely because they are spirits, have come to believe in Reincarnation, Free-loveism, Buddhism, Parseeism, and a dozen other follies. If you want to see the chaos and clash of such retrogradisms, you have only to read a few numbers of *The Spiritualist*, a London organ of the Bloomsbury set, calling itself "The British National Association of Spiritualists."

You will say then—Where is the value of Spiritualism, and what is the advantage of it? I answer—Simply from its giving abundant and unquestionable proofs of man's immortality. I may transcribe what I wrote to another gentleman but yesterday. "Spiritualism is a great truth, independent of all creeds. It is a *fact* demonstrated by spiritual means, and which in return demonstrates the *other great fact* of the continuity of spirit life. As a great and eternal truth it is self-existent, and utterly independent. As a primal and master truth it is naturally auspicious to religious truth, but it is not necessarily the teacher of any other truth than that of the immortality of man. The teaching of creeds and dogmas is not its specific business—that is the province of theology. As a truth, it is favourable to all truth; and as we believe, on both historic and moral grounds, that Christianity is also based on substantial truth, we naturally expect that it will nourish and strengthen the Christian faith: but it imposes doctrine on no man."

It would be long to tell you all the manifestations of spirit presence, intelligence, and power which I have witnessed in private circles, where certainly there were no jugglers; suffice it to say that they have been such as no mortal agencies could have produced. I have never witnessed those materialised spirits which appear now so frequently in London *séances* in private families—they have occurred since I left London; but I have seen spirit hands, felt them and received articles from them. I have seen them throw down Indian idols from a cheffonier, and roll them about the floor, and unscrew them (the Indian screws turning the reverse way to ours). I have attended spirit concerts at the house of a gentleman who, at that time, had no acquaintances in the spiritual circles, and heard most excellent and distinct singing of well-known English songs, the voices being near the ceiling. I have heard these spirits play on the piano, and that repeatedly. We have had the news of the drowning of one of our sons in New Zealand brought by spirit agency, with all the

details, when such a fact was most unexpected and improbable; besides a vast number of things equally surprising.

What our experiences have been are the experiences of tens of thousands of people, of the most sound intellects and sober senses. Yet you will see by what I have said that the inquiry must be entered upon with the same caution that any one would deal with those beneficent but active agents, fire, water, darkness, or lightning. No one should believe a spirit merely because it is a spirit, or take for granted what cannot be otherwise proved to be true. From neglect of this rule come all the vices and errors of Spiritualists.

As a work which may give you information on the facts and literature of Spiritualism, there is a small but comprehensive one, called *Planchette, or the Despair of Science*, by Epes Sargent. In this you will see fairly related the concise history of the movement, and a fair statement of the arguments of both friends and opponents. I think it costs only six shillings, and may be got at Burns's, 15, Southampton-row, Holborn; where, also, you might get my *History of the Supernatural in all Ages and Nations*, two volumes, in which you will see that Spiritualism is as old and as diffused as our race, and infinitely surpasses all other beliefs in the number of its adherents; for all Eastern nations are, and ever have been, Spiritualists. It was believed in and known by all the great minds of all civilised nations, from the most ancient era down to our own.

I don't know what is the status of Spiritualism now in Nottingham, but I believe some time ago there were some rather wild professors of it.

Many Spiritualists will have it that Spiritualism is a new religion. It is what I tell you, simply a great natural fact. We do not want any new religion. We have already one which bears all the marks of a Divine origin, and contains everything that is best adapted to our needs—most fitted for our guidance, and most fraught with consolation in our sorrows and with strength in our trials. God gives bounteously, but He does not attempt to "gild the refined gold, or add fresh fragrance to the violet."

WILLIAM HOWITT.

THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.—A Wesleyan minister, the Rev. William Impey, has just resigned his office as general superintendent of the Wesleyan missions in South Africa. Some time ago the rev. gentleman wrote to the mission secretaries in London, stating that he could no longer enforce on his brethren, or on the Kaffir converts, the "plain grammatical sense" of the words in the Methodist standards which require it to be taught that "hell is a dark, bottomless pit, full of fire and brimstone, in which the wicked will be punished for ever and ever, by having their bodies tormented with fire and their souls by a sense of the wrath of God." At the request of the secretaries he came to London, and, as a result of his conference with them, he resigned the position of Wesleyan minister which he has held for forty years.—*The Globe*, Aug. 26th.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have received some resolutions from "The First Society of Spiritualists of Chicago," passed by them about some local matters in dispute, but see no good end to be attainable by ventilating such unpleasant matters of contention here. The more Spiritualists avoid contention, and settle down to observation, experiment, and a non-aggressive line of life, the better.

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