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WAR ON SPIRITUALISM PROCLAIMED BY THE  
POPE.—PROCEEDINGS IN FRANCE.

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BY WILLIAM HOWITT.

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It is plain that we are yet but in the beginning of things. As Spiritualism advances it starts the lions, tigers and wolves from their lairs in the spiritual forest. At first they thought it poor and contemptible, and only growled a little and dropped asleep again. The tramp of the innumerable feet now going past them has effectually roused them up, and they are beginning to howl and are preparing to spring in earnest. From the first the Catholic priests have let it be understood that it was the devil in a new coat that was amongst us, but the late amazing spread of the spiritual faith in France, Belgium, Holland, Spain and Italy, and still more amongst the Catholics than the Protestants, has awakened the alarm of the Papal Hierarchy effectually. We had lately to record the issue of a fulmination against the heresy by the Bishop of Algiers; the Bishop of Strasburg has followed his example, and the expulsion of Mr. Home from Rome has shewn that these dignitaries are not acting on their own suggestions, but that the order has gone out from head-quarters to denounce and anathematize the power that is growing so rapidly and asking no leave from the old man with the church keys. We are glad to see that the Spiritualists of France are ready for the contest and are determined to speak out plainly on the subject. The *Revue Spiritualiste* of March is full of matter of this stirring kind, and we may as well take a summary view of its contents.

It opens with an article informing us that Mr. Home, after having been most cordially received on the way at Nice and Naples had arrived in Paris, and the Spiritualists had hastened to invite him to a banquet on the 10th of March, in honour of his expulsion from the city of priestly sin, and that he had accepted it. "It will be a fine occasion," says M. Pièrart, "for the

Spiritualists of France to affirm once more their faith, and to mark their indignation at the intolerance of a priest who has got a habit of fulminating wrath and curses against us, and to persecute as far as the power is left him. The moment is come for all those who partake of our faith to fraternize and to close their ranks. That which has taken place at Rome appears to be the result of a kind of general order given to the whole Catholic Church militant. Everywhere there are publications; everywhere books—great and small—are issuing forth against us, everywhere sermons are preached and episcopal mandates launched against us: it is a veritable Anti-Spiritualist crusade. Let those organs which are more immediately aimed at by these publications and these sermons be silent, according to the system which they have adopted of saying that with a creed which saps the very foundation of the Christian faith, they are still good Catholics: let them use all their arts to prevent their readers becoming aware of the exasperation that has arisen in the camp of the prelates against their doctrines. These are petty stratagems that we shall not imitate. The brave soldier who fights in the battle of ideas should not only parry the blows aimed at him, but pay them back to the enemy. He ought not to permit for a moment a misconception, a suspicion of his devotion to his flag to exist. He ought to give it to the winds, and defend it to the death. That is what we have always done; that is what we are certain our fellow believers will do with us. The following extract from a recent mandate of the Bishop of Strasburg, will show what little ceremony is used towards us:—

EXTRACT FROM THE MANDATE OF THE BISHOP OF STRASBURG.

“The demon hides himself under all possible forms to eternise his conspiracy against God and man, to continue his work of seduction. In Paradise he disguised himself as a serpent. When it is necessary to the realization of his project, he transforms himself into an angel of light, as history testifies by a thousand examples. At a very recent period he has even drawn from the armoury of hell the weapons of antiquity buried in rust, which he used in times long past, but especially in the second and third centuries, to combat Christianity. Table-turnings, rapping spirits, evocations are some of these artifices, and God permits them for the chastisement of men, impious, perilous and inquisitive. The evil genii, as the Sacred Scriptures assure us, fill the air:—see the Book of Job, and many other passages of Scripture. Now, if they are able to make wood, stone, a serpent, goats, a she-ass speak;” (docs the learned bishop here include Balaam’s ass?) “if, by the lake of Genessaret they on their own demand received permission to enter into the unclean animals, it is

just as easy for them to speak by means of a table, to write with the foot of a table or of a chair, to adopt the language and imitate the voice of the dead or the absent; to relate things unknown to us or which seem impossible, but which, by their quality of spirits, they may see and understand. Woe, then, to those who, insensate, lazy, short-sighted and criminally indiscreet, seek amusement in diabolic juggleries; who do not fear to have recourse to forbidden and superstitious means to arrive at a knowledge of the future, and of the mysteries which the devil does not know, and which we can know but imperfectly! He who loves danger will perish in the danger; he who plays with venomous serpents will not escape their deadly sting; he who precipitates himself into the flames will be reduced to a cinder; he who frequents the society of liars and thieves will necessarily become their victim. This practice is a commerce with the evil angels to which the prophets of the Old Testament gave a name which one would not willingly introduce into a Christian pulpit. When these evocations take place, the evil spirit will probably at first utter occasionally a truth, and talk according to the wishes of the curious, in order to gain their confidence, but when once the persons impatient to penetrate their mysteries are dazzled and seduced, then they put the poisoned cup to their lips; then they gorge them with all sorts of lies and impieties, and strip them of every Christian principle, of every pious sentiment. Happy are those who in time perceive that they are fallen into the hands of the devil, and who are able, by the help of God, to burst the bonds in which they have been enveloped."

M. Pièrart adds:—"We leave this act of the Bishop of Strasburg to our readers, without a word for the present: but to him and to all the demonophobic prelates who are at this moment anathematizing our ideas, we shall, including their bretheren at Rome, have a reply. It will come on the day of the approaching Spiritualist banquet—the 10th of March."

Amongst the numerous books published of late by Catholic priests against Spiritualists, the indefatigable Marouseau, curé of Mortroux, has put forth another, very much in the strain of his former one. The Marquis de Mirville has also come out again with another work on the subject. His former ones had, without exception, made all the Spiritualists over to the devil; but in the present work the Marquis has bethought himself that there is such a thing as Spiritualism in the Catholic fold, and he has made wonderful concessions; in fact, he has retreated into the Catholic fortifications, and now asserts, that all spirits coming to Catholics, when they are obedient to the bishops, are blessed spirits, all, whether coming to Catholic or Protestant, who teach independence of faith are of course from the "anarch old" of the nether

regions. The Marquis has made a fatal retreat, for admitting that Spiritualism has its good as well as its bad side, he admits the whole faith of Spiritualism, and the spirits must be judged by the rule laid down by one far above bishops, cardinals, or popes—by our Saviour Jesus Christ. “A tree must be known by its fruit.”

Whilst the Pope and the political alguazils are menacing Spiritualists, and would burn them if the age were of the burning sort, the faith is rapidly spreading, and new journals are daily springing up. Besides the three spiritual journals of Paris, Bordeaux has its *La Ruche Spirite*; Lyons its *La Verité*; Bordeaux *Le Sauveur des Peuples*; and now Antwerp has announced *La Revue Spirite d'Anvers*, a monthly journal edited by M. Prosper Eyben, and supported by able contributors. Thus in the very centre of little Belgium, swarming with its 40,000 Catholic priests, a very hotbed of Popery, the alarming heresy has established its organ. We may imagine the anathemas that are brewing!

Thus it is that the old lady of the Seven Hills never learns wisdom. There was a time when nations trembled at her nod, and kings put their heads under her feet, and became her myrmidons of vengeance to lay waste and destroy all cities and countries which dared to say they had souls of their own; when Silicia and Bohemia were actually harried and massacred from end to end by her Austrian emissaries; when in every country where the Pope collected his pence, he also made his bonfires to burn out body and soul, all heresies. But that time passed with Luther and Melancthon. Now this shews that the old lady had had her day, and that a better day was come—a day of freedom of opinion and recurrence to the open Bible, and not to priests and inquisitors as spiritual guides. In vain did this antiquated Scarlet Woman and all her scarlet cardinals denounce Luther in precisely the same terms as they now denounce Spiritualists, as the offspring and spawn of hell, the tool and companion of devils. Luther sate securely in the Wartburg and turned the Bible, which the old lady had so long locked and sealed up, into the every-day language of the people, and the secret was out, the mystery was at an end. Stout Martin sate aloft singing aloud “Ein fester Burg ist unser Gott;” and “Alle guter Geister loben den Herrn,” and from that day the condition of the old Roman lady has become more and more dilapidated. But there is no way of redemption for her, no side path by which she can come round to the truth and freedom which are in God. She has nailed INFALIBILITY to her flagstaff, and must, therefore, go on banning and persecuting as far as her feeble remaining power permits. Whatever refuses to crouch to her command *must* be heresy, and *must* be damnable. If she had not grown blind as well as feeble in her

old age, she must see the error and the folly of this system ; for the great march of opinion goes on without her, and even her worldly property and state are falling from her like her once spiritual power. And she sits on that ancient heap of the ruins, the sins and putrid carcasses of ages, a tattered demalio[n] spectacle scarcely upheld by her worm-eaten crutches. Yet, true to her antecedents, she will curse and grind her teeth to the last. And it is now come to this, that whatever she brands as heresy, becomes necessarily stamped as truth. Protestantism and Spiritualism now bear the same Papal warrantry. It is a great satisfaction that not only hundreds of thousands of Catholics are daring to break this old and feeble yoke of Roman despotism, but that here and there even priests are found to join in this remonstrance against the spiritual usurpation of Popery. Men even of the old faith are beginning to see—the acts and the spirit of Rome are forcing them to see—that Popery and Catholicism are two things. That Popery is a secular heresy grafted on Catholicism. That when the Popes, tempted of the devil, accepted the bribe which our Saviour indignantly rejected—worldly rank and estate—they became princes of that world which Christ emphatically declared was not *his* kingdom, and were no longer the priests of Christianity but of Secularism. From that apostacy all the corruptions of Romanism, all its crimes and murders, and denunciations, and spirit of cursing and avarice, and uncharitableness, have sprung. It is time that all true Catholics should recognize this grand truth, and save their religion from the scandal of such an alliance. This is, in fact, what Spiritualism is doing for the Catholic world. Where it spreads, spreads the spirit of freedom. The heralds of heaven proclaim once more the supremacy of the Gospel, its liberty and its love. They place the Christian truth above every dictation of priesthoods, above every princedom and autocracy of this world. They point to the law of Christ as the only true law, which every one may consult for himself, and in letters so large that “he that runneth may read” in a way so broad and plain that “the wayfarer though a fool cannot err therein.” This is the grand distinction of Spiritualism. It is the charter of Divine freedom ; the sovereign prerogative of the soul of universal man, making itself heard above the clamour of all conflicting creeds, above the pealing bells of ten thousand churches, above the clashing arms and bellowing artillery of conspiring kings ; and out of the bitter ocean of the tears and the blood of ages we now see unmistakably rising, slowly but surely, the new continent of a harmony so long foretold, based on the teaching of spirits, themselves enfranchised from the creeds and bondages of earth, and sent forth by the Universal Father, to his universal family, in which “he is no respecter of

persons," but renews by a legion of flaming tongues his decree, that there shall be but "One Shepherd and one Fold."

Popedom does not tremble without cause. In the process now going on so rapidly on the Continent, it sees the certain foreshadowing of its downfall. This will not be through strife and opposition as in Luther's time, but by the quiet passing of its adherents into a higher allegiance. Wherever, as we have said, Spiritualism is accepted, it breaks the chains of the old Papal thralldom, and teaches its votaries the liberty of the Gospel. They accept the heavenly teaching, and calmly leave the old earthly despotism to itself, but without any proclamation of secession. By this means, if it goes steadily on, and it will go on if it be of God, Catholicism, the true Catholicism, enfranchised from all priestcraft, and from all corruptions fastened upon it for gain and worldly pre-eminence, will rise in a new and glorious resurrection, and find itself once more in its original form of primitive Christianity, whilst the body of the Beast, which has so long bewitched and dominated it, will collapse of itself and fall in the stench of its own rottenness. That is clearly the fate of Popery, that is the day-spring of Spiritualism, if it does not suffer itself, as a great sect of it has already done, to be enslaved by another popedom—a spiritual popedom—more pernicious than the first. Already the enemy has spread his nets and taken a vast shoal of captives to the poisonous sophisms of Re-incarnation and the like. Probably nothing that men can do can preserve the spirit-faith from such corruption. The truth has never yet long escaped such assaults of an artful and age-long experienced adversary. But the truth is God's truth, and to Him we must commit its prosperity. Spiritualism is prepared to undermine every system of mere secular religion. Let all true men support it by their prayers and their whole heart's strength. In its purity and power lie the world's regeneration.

It is from the perception of this great fact that a Catholic author like Delrio writes in his "Disquisitions":—"It is a truth recognized not only by the Catholic faith, but by true philosophy, that the souls of the departed can return and are in the habit of returning in the Divine power and virtue. I am, therefore, astonished that a Catholic of much learning and judgment, should treat such spirits, not as those of the dead, but as demons" (a hard blow for Mirville). "To dare to treat as a lie, or as a chimæra, a faith accredited by the most orthodox and holy doctors of the churches of Asia, Africa and Europe—a faith based upon all the monuments of ecclesiastical history—upon the traditions of the fathers—upon the acts of councils—upon the pages of Holy Writ, preserved from age to age, and delivered through the hands of the whole succession of pastors, is, in

truth, an audacity hitherto unheard of."—Tom. II., Quaest. 26, Sect. I.

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A JOLLER CASE IN FRANCE.

The Poltergeister seem determined to do their part in the great spirit drama. The *Journal de la Vienne* says:—"For these five or six days there have been passing in Poitiers, circumstances so extraordinary that they have become the subject of general conversation and the comments of strangers. Every evening, just after six o'clock, singular noises have been heard in a house in the *Rue Neuve-Saint Paul*, inhabited by Mdlle. d'O——, sister of the Count d'O——. These noises, according to what we hear, resemble the detonations of artillery; violent blows are also struck on the doors and shutters. These were at first attributed to the tricks of the lads in the streets, or ill-disposed neighbours. A most complete and active surveillance was immediately organized. On the complaint of Mdlle. d'O——, the police took the most minute measures; officers were stationed both within and outside of the house. Notwithstanding, the explosions have continued, and we learn from an authentic source, that M. M——, brigadier, has been surprised by a commotion such as he can give no account of.

"Our city has been wholly occupied by this inexplicable mystery. The researches of the police have hitherto produced no result. Everyone is waiting the solution of this enigma. Some people initiated in the study of Spiritualism pretend that the rapping spirits are the authors of these manifestations, and that a certain celebrated medium, but who lives in another quarter of the city, is no stranger to them. Others call to mind that a cemetery existed formerly on the site of the *Rue Neuve-Saint Paul*, and we need not say what are their conjectures on the subject. We cannot tell which is the best of these explanations, but public opinion is greatly agitated by the event, and yesterday evening a considerable crowd was collected under the windows of Mdlle. d'O——, so that the authorities were obliged to send a picket of twelve chasseurs to clear the street. At the moment we write the police and gendarmerie are in possession of the house."

Truly we must call nothing common or unclean.

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SPIRIT DRAWINGS IN LYONS.

The spiritual journal of Lyons, *La Verité*, is now giving a series of lithographs of spirit drawings. They are chiefly delineations of plants and flowers totally unlike anything in the vegetable kingdoms of earth. They cannot be called exactly wreaths or garlands, yet they have more the resemblance to these than to

independent plants themselves, for they have in general no stems, but seem to be thrown out without any means of support on all sides in a graceful and fanciful style. One of them is more than a foot in length, and eight or ten inches in width. Every leaf is ornamented with designs, and on some are the representations of smaller flowering plants. Others display the butterfly, and others the calceolaria flower-form in their leaves, and some of the blossoms put forth most delicate streams of anthers. One of the designs represents the exterior of a house in the planet Venus. Whether the Venusians inhabit such houses, we do not pretend to know; but it resembles a sort of tent outlined in elegant scroll work, and ornamented all over with plants of singular but graceful form. Another is a group of flowers from the planet Saturn, which have stems, and considerably resemble our own vegetation, except that certain leaves and flowers seem ready to turn into caterpillars and glow-worms, a peculiarity which we have noticed in other spiritual plants. The most remarkable thing, however, about these designs is, that the mediums who have drawn and lithographed them have no acquired knowledge of these arts. Also they bear a singular resemblance to similar things done in England.

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### THE EUCHARIST.—ITS MEANING AND VALUE.

BY A. E. NEWTON.

THE Eucharist, or "Lord's Supper," appears to have been the only thing like a religious ceremonial originated by the Divine Man of Nazareth; and it was doubtless intended, like all the doctrines of that Great Teacher, to have been entirely *practical* in its tendency. But the so-called Christian world, in its ignorance of spiritual laws, and its lack of any rational *philosophy* of religious rites, has misconceived its nature and distorted its practice.

In the light of the truth established in the preceding article on "Baptism"—(see *Spiritual Magazine* for October, 1863),—namely, that every person is continually giving off subtle emanations which partake of his physical, mental, and spiritual characteristics, and which tend to impart the same to all persons and things about him,\* we are enabled to see the real meaning and apprehend the true practical value which attaches to this institution.

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\* A remarkable series of confirmations of this truth will be found in a recently published work, entitled, "*The Soul of Things; or Researches in Psychometry and Palaeontology*," by WM. and ELIZABETH F. DENTON.

It may be premised that all cultivated people *instinctively* recognize something of sacredness in the act of eating together. To invite one to partake with us at our own board implies something of mutual confidence, friendship, and sense of equality. We instinctively shrink from meeting, in the intimate association of the table, with those whom we deem our enemies, or our inferiors in the social scale, or whom we regard as tainted with moral pollution. And those modes of life which necessitate the bringing together of strangers promiscuously at their meals, as in public-houses, restaurants, and the like, except as a temporary necessity, are the detestation of most persons of refinement and sensitiveness.

This intuitive sacredness of the family board, and repugnance to its profanation, has its origin in the law of impartation and reception already stated. When we are partaking of food—that is, with any proper appetite therefor—our whole systems are in a specially *receptive* condition. Not only do our stomachs welcome their proper aliment, but every one of the millions of absorbents all over our bodies are with open mouths taking in such aromas or invisible elements as may be diffused about us. Every person sitting with us being constantly surrounded by and giving off emanations partaking of his own qualities and dominant activities, these are unavoidably absorbed with special rapidity at such times, and a process of *equalization*, or unseen interchange, goes forward, analogous to the equalization of caloric which takes place when several objects of different temperatures are placed in proximity. The emanations of the more refined and spiritual in such a group are imparted to those who are less so, tending, if rightly received, to spiritualize and elevate the latter; while, on the other hand, the emanations of the gross and polluted, if such are present, are to some extent absorbed by the others, giving rise in them, perhaps, to grovelling and unspiritual suggestions and desires, the origin of which is often a source of great perplexity, and is not unseldom ascribed to the immediate agency of the devil.

Thus, at every social board, there is, by the action of a law as universal and inevitable as that of gravitation, a silent process of *communion* going forward—an interchange of the most subtile and potential elements of our being. We in fact partake of *each other* as really as of the food before us. And this interchange is greater in proportion as the partakers of a meal are in mutual harmony and affection, and also as they are seated in a circular form, or an approximation thereto, as is found most favourable in “circles” for spirit manifestations—so as to afford a continuous chain of circulation to the vital current.

More than this:—By virtue of this same law of impartation,

acting, as has been explained, with special force through the hands as the natural poles of the system, it is plainly possible for any one of such a company, by taking any article of food or drink in the hands and concentrating the mental and spiritual powers upon it, to charge or "magnetize" it with that particular quality of emanations which are at the time most actively generated in himself, or of which he may be the channel from higher spheres of existence. In other words, he may infuse that quality of spiritual and essential life which dwells in himself, into such articles of food or drink in a marked degree. It should be remembered that all elements are *substance*, however subtile, and the more subtile the more potent this life-essence will of course be received by all who partake, and it will work in them to reproduce, silently but surely, in some degree, the same quality of life that is imparted. Food may be either "blessed" or "cursed" in this way, as it is charged with either a life-giving or a poisonous magnetism, and that our common food is thus affected, in a greater or less degree, by all persons through whose hands it passes, is beginning to be recognized as a matter of perception by those of keen susceptibilities, and cannot be doubted as a question of science.

Now it is related of the origin of the rite under discussion, that "as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is My blood," &c. How simple the whole transaction! The Divine wisdom and Divine love which were incarnated in Jesus, and were the very life-principles of his body and blood (as they may be of ours)—leading Him through his whole public career to sacrifice body and soul for others' good—were aromally so infused into the substance of the bread and wine in the act of blessing them, that they who partook, partook literally of Him. At the same time, grouped as they were in Oriental style around one table, they must have partaken in degree of each other, by the natural interflow of their personal emanations. Thus the "supper" was a "communion" or mutual interchange of the most vital substantive elements of their being. Paul tells us that Jesus enjoined his disciples to continue the observance of a like feast in remembrance of Him, and of his self-sacrifice for them and for the world (1 Cor. xi. 24, 25); and it would appear, from the account in the Acts of the Apostles (ii. 46, and vi. 1, 2), that for a time it was observed *daily* by the first converts, who "had all things common," and probably made every meal a "Lord's Supper." Subsequently, when the converts to the new faith became more numerous and the attempt at community of

property was abandoned, it appears that the Christians residing in any one locality were accustomed every "Lord's Day" to "come together in one place" as one family, without distinction of class or caste, and celebrate this feast to the memory of their Lord and Master.

When we consider that one great object of Jesus in his teachings was to abolish all distinctions of social inequality,—to bring his followers upon a common level, as brothers and sisters of one family, and children of one Father,—that the burden of his most sublime prayer was "THAT THEY MAY ALL BE ONE," no longer "Jews or Greeks, Barbarians, Scythians, bond or free, but all one,"—we see how admirably adapted to bring about such a result was the injunction that they should often meet around a common table, and partake together of food "blessed" by the most spiritual of their number, after the manner He had exemplified. Thus they would interchange the vital elements of their own constitutions, so as to be gradually moulded into one likeness. Instead, then, of originating an arbitrary and mystical rite, Jesus wisely adapted means to ends of a most practical character.

Thus, in the light of the simple law we have mentioned, all mystery and marvel disappear; the fogs of "transubstantiation" and "consubstantiation," which have caused the shedding of untold quantities of both ink and blood, together vanish; while the essential truth, vaguely seen and hotly contended for by the partizans of each, stands clearly revealed.

It is hardly necessary to point out the obvious and gross distortions which the Christian world has made of this simple institution. We go into assemblies of the Roman Church, and see a circle of awed communicants kneeling before the altar, opening their mouths to receive from the fingers of the priest a bit of consecrated wafer—trying to believe that the visible substance has been by an instant miracle transformed into the "very body and blood of God," and quivering with mortal fear lest Deity should be offended by the falling of the smallest amount to the ground. We go into Protestant churches, and behold a company sitting in gloomy silence, fenced off from each other in unsocial pews, each in isolation mumbling a bit of bread and tasting a sip of wine—the while making desperate but futile efforts to realize some mystical connection between this ceremony and the life and love of Christ. The *social* uses of the institution, so prominent in primitive days—its chief uses, indeed—are almost wholly ignored. It is observed only at distant intervals of time, instead of "daily," as at the first. The genial overflow of magnetisms felt around the family or social board—the blending of soul with soul in sweet and real communion—are

not provided for. Hence the barrenness of the "sacrament" as regards any perceptible advantage in the individual soul, so often complained of by conscientious Christians, and its failure to exercise any appreciable influence in unitizing and cementing the Church. Were local churches organized as *families*, having united interests in material as well as in spiritual things, residing in a unitary household—so that every meal could be a "Lord's Supper," partaken by the whole in unison—and were it partaken with pleasant and elevated social interchange, as every meal should be, the result might be greatly different.

Some of the obvious corollaries of the truth we have been considering may be worth our attention. One is, that if we are seeking for purity and spirituality of life, it behoves us not only to be select as to the persons with whom we partake at the festal board, but our selection should be based on true grounds. It is not always those who occupy high social and worldly positions whose minds are the most pure, or whose aromas are the most spiritual. Indeed, the reverse is more often true. It is "the poor of this world" who are more usually "rich in faith" and in spiritual attainments. Especially should we beware of placing ourselves in such receptive relation with those in whom the passions of anger, hatred, and revenge are active. These generate a malign aura, which is in some degree poisonous to all who imbibe it. No less poisonous are the emanations of lust and concupiscence. There is a ground in the nature of things for Jewish, Brahminical, and Mahometan exclusiveness as regards eating with Gentiles and Infidels—but the rule of discrimination adopted by those sects has been an arbitrary and false one. It is not persons who happen to have been born in a certain nation, caste, sect, or social rank—nor they who profess an orthodox faith in any creed—whose emanations are pure or healthful; but rather they in all sects and ranks who earnestly aspire to and practically attain a true and pure life. "In every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

It is worth our while, also, to have a care as to who prepares our food for the table. Only they who are sweet, pure-minded, healthful, and overflowing with genuine good-will to all around them, are fit to exercise so important a function. They who can "bless" that which passes through their hands, by imparting to it a vital spiritual aroma, may indeed supply "living bread" to all who enjoy their ministrations.

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## ASTONISHING TRANSACTIONS AT STOCKWELL IN 1772.\*

BEFORE we enter upon a description of the most extraordinary transactions that perhaps ever happened, we shall begin with an account of the parties who were principally concerned, and in justice to them, give their characters; by which means the impartial world may be enabled to form some judgment what credit is due to the following narrative.

The events indeed are of so strange and singular a nature that we cannot be at all surprised the public should be doubtful of the truth of them, more especially as there has been too many impositions of this sort; but let us consider, here are no sinister ends to be answered, no contributions to be wished for, nor would be accepted, as the parties are in reputable situations and good circumstances, particularly Mrs. Golding, who is a lady of an independent fortune: Richard Fowler and his wife might be looked upon as an exception to this assertion, but as their loss, was trivial, they must be left out of the question, except so far as they appear corroborating evidences. Mr. Pain's maid lost nothing.

How or by what means these transactions were brought about, time only will discover, if that ever happen: we have only now to rest our confidence on the veracity of the parties, whose descriptions have been most strictly attended to, without the least deviation; nothing here offered is either exaggerated or diminished, the whole stated in the clearest manner, just as they occurred, and as such only we lay them before the candid and impartial public.

Mrs. Golding, an elderly lady, at Stockwell, in Surrey, at whose

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\* "An Authentic, Candid, and Circumstantial Narrative of the Astonishing Transactions at Stockwell, in the County of Surry, on Monday and Tuesday, the 6th and 7th days of January, 1772, containing a Series of the most Surprising and Unaccountable Events that ever happened, which continued from first to last upwards of Twenty Hours, and at different places. Published with the consent and approbation of the family and other parties concerned, to authenticate which the original copy is signed by them. London: Printed for J. MARKS, Bookseller, in St. Martin's-lane, 1772."

Mrs. Crowe, in giving, in her *Night Side of Nature*, the narrative we have here reprinted *verbatim* from the original pamphlet, remarks:—"I have heard some people assert that the mystery of this affair was subsequently explained away, and the whole found to be a trick. But that is a mistake. Some years ago I was acquainted with persons whose parents were living on the spot at the time, who knew all the details, and to them it remained just as great a mystery as ever. Not the smallest light had ever been thrown upon it. People are so glad to get rid of troublesome mysteries of this description, that they are always ready to say, 'The trick has been found out!' and those who pride themselves on not believing idle stories, are to the last degree credulous when 'the idle story' flatters their scepticism."

house the transactions began, was born in the same parish (of Lambeth), has lived in it ever since, and has always been well known, and respected as a gentlewoman of unblemished honour and character.

Mrs. Pain, a niece of Mrs. Golding, has been married several years to Mr. Pain, a farmer, at Brixton Causeway, a little above Mr. Angel's, has several children, are well known and respected in the parish.

Mary Martin, Mr. Pain's servant, an elderly woman, has lived two years with them, and four years with Mrs. Golding, where she came from.

Richard Fowler, lives almost opposite to Mr. Pain, at the Brick-Pound, an honest, industrious and sober man.

Sarah Fowler, wife to the above, an industrious and sober woman.

The above are the subscribing evidences that we must rest the truth of the facts upon; yet there are numbers of other persons who were eye-witnesses of many of the transactions, during the time they happened, all of whom must acknowledge the truth of them.

Another person who bore a principal part in these scenes was Ann Robinson, Mrs. Golding's maid, a young woman about twenty years old, who had lived with her but one week and three days.

I shall not take up any more of the reader's attention from the narrative, but begin as follows:—On Monday, January the 6th, 1772, about ten o'clock in the forenoon, as Mrs. Golding was in her parlour, she heard the china and glasses in the back kitchen tumble down and break; her maid came to her and told her the stone plates were falling from the shelf; Mrs. Golding went into the kitchen and saw them broke. Presently after, a row of plates from the next shelf fell down likewise, while she was there, and nobody near them; this astonished her much, and while she was thinking about it, other things in different places began to tumble about, some of them breaking, attended with violent noises all over the house; a clock tumbled down and the case broke; a lanthorn that hung on the staircase was thrown down and the glass broke to pieces; an earthen pan of salted beef broke to pieces and the beef fell about. All this increased her surprise, and brought several persons about her, among whom was Mr. Rowledge, a carpenter, who gave it as his opinion that the foundation was giving way, and that the house was tumbling down, occasioned by the too great weight of an additional room erected above: so ready are we to discover natural causes for everything! But no such thing happened, as the reader will find, for whatever was the cause, that cause ceased almost as soon as Mrs. Golding and her maid left any place, and followed them wherever they

went. Mrs. Golding run into Mr. Gresham's house, a gentleman living next door to her, where she fainted.

In the interim, Mr. Rowlidge and other persons were removing Mrs. Golding's effects from her house, for fear of the consequences he had prognosticated. At this time all was quiet; Mrs. Golding's maid remaining in her house, was gone up stairs, and when called upon several times to come down, for fear of the dangerous situation she was thought to be in, she answered very coolly, and after some time came down very deliberately, without any seeming fearful apprehensions.

Mrs. Pain was sent for from Brixton Causeway and desired to come directly, as her aunt was supposed to be dead—this was the message to her. When Mrs. Pain came, Mrs. Golding was come to herself, but was very faint. Among the persons who were present, was Mr. Gardner, a surgeon, of Clapham, whom Mrs. Pain desired to bleed her aunt, which he did; Mrs. Pain asked him if the blood should be thrown away; he desired it might not, as he would examine it when cold. These minute particulars would not be taken notice of, but as a chain to what follows, for the next circumstance is of a more astonishing nature than anything that had preceded it. The blood that was just congealed, sprung out of the basin upon the floor, and presently after the basin broke to pieces: this china basin was the only thing broke belonging to Mr. Gresham; a bottle of rum that stood by it broke at the same time. Among the things that were removed to Mr. Gresham's, was a tray full of china, &c., a japan bread basket, some mahogany waiters, with some bottles of liquors, jars of pickles, &c., and a pier glass, which was taken down by Mr. Saville (a neighbour of Mrs. Golding's); he gave it to one Robert Hames, who laid it on the grass-plot at Mr. Gresham's, but before he could put it out of his hands, some parts of the frame on each side flew off; it raining at that time, Mrs. Golding desired it might be brought into the parlour, where it was put under a sideboard, and a dressing glass along with it; it had not been there long before the glasses and china which stood on the sideboard began to tumble about and fall down, and broke both the glasses to pieces. Mr. Saville and others being asked to drink a glass of wine or rum, both the bottles broke in pieces before they were uncorked.

Mrs. Golding's surprise and fear increasing, she did not know what to do or where to go; wherever she and her maid were, these strange destructive circumstances followed her, and how to help or free herself from them was not in her power or any other person's present; her mind was one confused chaos, lost to herself and everything about her, drove from her own home, and afraid there would be none other to receive her. At last she left

Mr. Gresham's and went to Mr. Mayling's, a gentleman at the next door, here she staid about three-quarters of an hour, during which time nothing happened. Her maid staid at Mr. Gresham's, to help put up what few things remained unbroke of her mistress's in a back apartment, when a jar of pickles that stood upon a table, turned upside down, then a jar of raspberry jam broke to pieces, next two mahogany waiters and a quadrille-box likewise broke in pieces. Mrs. Pain, not choosing her aunt should stay too long at Mr. Mayling's, for fear of being troublesome, persuaded her to go to her house at Rush Common, near Brixton Causeway, where she would endeavour to make her as happy as she could, hoping by this time all was over, as nothing had happened at that gentleman's house while she was there. This was about two o'clock in the afternoon.

Mr. and Miss Gresham were at Mr. Pain's house, when Mrs. Pain, Mrs. Golding, and her maid went there. It being about dinner time they all dined together; in the interim Mrs. Golding's servant was sent to her house to see how things remained. When she returned, she told them nothing had happened since they left it. Some time after Mr. Gresham and Miss went home, everything remaining quiet at Mr. Pain's; but about eight o'clock in the evening a fresh scene began, the first thing that happened was, a whole row of pewter dishes, except one, fell from off a shelf to the middle of the floor, rolled about a little while, then settled, and what is almost beyond belief, as soon as they were quiet, turned upside down; they were then put on the dresser, and went through the same a second time; next fell a whole row of pewter plates from off the second shelf over the dresser to the ground, and being taken up and put on the dresser one in another, they were thrown down again. The next thing was, two eggs that were upon one of the pewter shelves, one of them flew off, crossed the kitchen, struck a cat on the head, and then broke to pieces. Next Mary Martin, Mrs. Pain's servant, went to stir the kitchen fire, she got to the right-hand side of it, being a large chimney as is usual in farm houses, a pestle and mortar that stood nearer the left hand end of the chimney shelf, jumped about six feet on the floor. Then went candlesticks and other brasses, scarce anything remaining in its place. After this the glasses and china was put down on the floor for fear of undergoing the same fate, they presently began to dance and tumble about, and then broke to pieces. A teapot that were among them, flew to Mrs. Golding's maid's foot and struck it. A glass tumbler that was put on the floor jumped about two feet and then broke. Another that stood by it jumped about at the same time, but did not break till some hours after, when it jumped again and then broke. A china bowl that stood in the parlour jumped from the floor to behind a table

that stood there. This was most astonishing, as the distance from where it stood was between seven and eight feet, but was not broke. It was put back by Richard Fowler to its place, where it remained some time, and then flew to pieces.

The next thing that followed was a mustard pot, that jumped out of a closet and was broke. A single cup that stood upon the table (almost the only thing remaining) jumped up, flew across the kitchen, ringing like a bell, and then was dashed to pieces. A candlestick that stood on the chimney shelf flew across the kitchen to the parlour door, at about fifteen feet distance. A tea kettle under the dresser was thrown out about two feet, another kettle that stood at one end of the range, was thrown against the iron that is fixed to prevent children falling into the fire. A tumbler with rum and water in it, that stood upon a waiter upon a table in the parlour, jumped about ten feet and was broke. The table then fell down, and along with it a silver tankard belonging to Mrs. Golding, the waiter in which had stood the tumbler, and a candlestick. A case bottle then flew to pieces. The next circumstance was, a ham that hung in one side of the kitchen chimney, it raised itself from the hook and fell down to the ground. Some time after, another ham that hung on the other side of the chimney likewise underwent the same fate. Then a fitch of bacon which hung up in the same chimney fell down.

All the family were eye-witnesses to these circumstances, as well as other persons, some of whom were so alarmed and shocked that they could not bear to stay, and was happy in getting away, though the unhappy family were left in the midst of their distresses. Most of the genteel families around were continually sending to enquire after them, and whether all was over or not. Is it not surprising that some among them had not the inclination and resolution to try to unravel this most intricate affair, at a time when it would have been in their power to have done so; there certainly was sufficient time for so doing, as the whole from first to last continued upwards of twenty hours.

At all the times of action, Mrs. Golding's servant was walking backwards and forwards, either in the kitchen or parlour, or wherever some of the family happened to be; nor could they get her to sit down five minutes together, except at one time for about half an hour towards the morning, when the family were at prayers in the parlour; then all was quiet; but in the midst of the greatest confusion, she was as much composed as at any other time, and with uncommon coolness of temper advised her mistress not to be alarmed or uneasy, as she said these things could not be helped. Thus she argued as if they were common occurrences which must happen in every family. This advice

surprised and startled her mistress almost as much as the circumstances that occasioned it ; for how can we suppose that a girl of about twenty years old (an age when female timidity is too often assisted by superstition) could remain in the midst of such calamitous circumstances (except they proceeded from causes best known to herself) and not be struck with the same terror as every other person was who was present. These reflections led Mr. Pain, and at the end of the transactions, likewise Mrs. Golding, to think that she was not altogether so unconcerned as she appeared to be ; but hitherto, the whole remains mysterious and unravelled. About ten o'clock at night, they sent over the way to Richard Fowler, to desire he would come and stay with them. He came and continued till one in the morning, and was so terrified that he could remain no longer.

As Mrs. Golding could not be persuaded to go to bed, Mrs. Pain at that time (one o'clock) made an excuse to go up stairs to her youngest child, under pretence of getting it to sleep, but she really acknowledges it was through fear, as she declares she could not sit up to see such strange things going on, as everything one after another was broke, till there was not above two or three cups and saucers remaining out of a considerable quantity of china, &c., which was destroyed to the amount of some pounds. About five o'clock on Tuesday morning, Mrs. Golding went up to her niece, and desired her to get up, as the noises and destruction were so great she could continue in the house no longer. At this time all the tables, chairs, drawers, &c. were tumbling about. When Mrs. Pain came down it was amazing beyond all description ! their only security then was to quit the house for fear of the same catastrophe as had been expected the morning before, at Mrs. Golding's ; in consequence of this resolution, Mrs. Golding and her maid went over the way to Richard Fowler's. When Mrs. Golding's maid had seen her safe to Richard Fowler's, she came back to Mrs. Pain, to help her to dress the children in the barn, where she had carried them for fear of the house falling. At this time all was quiet. They then went to Fowler's, and then began the same scene as had happened at the other places. It must be remarked, all was quiet here as well as elsewhere, till the maid returned.

When they got to Mr. Fowler's, he began to light a fire in his back room ; when done, he put the candle and candlestick upon a table in the fore room. This apartment Mrs. Golding and her maid had passed through. Another candlestick with a tin lamp in it that stood by it, were both dashed together, and fell to the ground. A lanthorn with which Mrs. Golding was lighted with across the road, sprung from a hook to the ground, and a quantity of oil spilled on the floor. The last thing was the basket

of coals tumbled over, the coals rolling about the room. The maid then desired Richard Fowler not to let her mistress remain there, as she said, wherever she was the same things would follow. In consequence of this advice, and fearing greater losses to himself, he desired she would quit his house; but first begged her to consider within herself, for her own and the public sake, whether or not she had not been guilty of some atrocious crime, for which Providence was determined to pursue her on this side the grave, for he could not help thinking, she was the object that was to be made an example to posterity, by the all-seeing eye of Providence, for crimes which but too often none but that Providence can penetrate, and by such means as these bring to light.

Thus was this poor gentlewoman's measure of affliction complete, not only to have undergone all which has been related, but to have added to it the character of a bad and wicked woman, when till this time, she was esteemed as a most deserving person. In candour to Fowler, he could not be blamed; what could he do? what would any man have done that was so circumstanced? Mrs. Golding soon satisfied him; she told him she would not stay in his house, or any other person's, as her conscience was quite clear, and she could as well wait the will of Providence in her own house as in any other place whatever; upon which she and her maid went home, Mr. Pain went with them. After they had got to Mrs. Golding's the last time, the same transactions once more began upon the remains that were left.

A nine-gallon cask of beer, that was in the cellar, the door being open, and no person near it, turned upside down. A pail of water that stood on the floor, boiled like a pot. A box of candles fell from a shelf in the kitchen to the floor, they rolled out, but none were broke. A round mahogany table overset in the parlour. Mr. Pain then desired Mrs. Golding to send her maid for his wife to come to them, when she was gone all was quiet; upon her return she was immediately discharged, and no disturbances have happened since; this was between six and seven o'clock on Tuesday morning. At Mrs. Golding's were broke the quantity of three pails full of glass, china, &c. At Mrs. Pain's they filled two pails.

Thus ends the narrative; a true, circumstantial, and faithful account of which I have laid before the public; for so doing, I hope to escape its censure; I have neither exaggerated or diminished one circumstance to my knowledge, and have endeavoured as much as possible, throughout the whole, to state only the facts, without presuming to obtrude my opinion on them. If I have in part hinted anything that may appear unfavourable to the girl, it proceeded not from a determination to charge her with the cause, right or wrong, but only from a strict adherence

to truth, most sincerely wishing this extraordinary affair may be unravelled.

The above narrative is absolutely and strictly true, in witness whereof we have set our hands, this 11th day of January, 1772.

MARY GOLDING.	RICHARD FOWLER.
JOHN PAIN.	SARAH FOWLER.
MARY PAIN.	MARY MARTIN.

The original copy of this narrative, signed as above, with the parties' own hands, is in the hands of J. MARKS, Bookseller, in St. Martin's Lane, to satisfy any person who chooses to apply to him for the inspection of the same.

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## PASSING EVENTS.—THE SPREAD OF SPIRITUALISM.

By BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

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THERE is in London a debating society, called "The Athenæum," which holds its meetings at the Guildhall Hotel, every Friday evening. Its members are numerous, highly respectable, and, doubtless, on most subjects, they exhibit more than an average amount of intelligence. This society, at their meeting, held on the 26th of February last, proposed for discussion the following question:—"Are the so-called Spiritual Manifestations of the present day real or delusive?"

I was invited and attended this meeting, which was crowded—ladies forming a fair proportion of the audience. The debate was opened in the affirmative by Mr. J. E. Saunders, a member of the Common Council of London, and this gentleman, though a very recent convert, has made himself master of the subject, and on this occasion he evinced his belief in the reality, at least, of the phenomena, in an eloquent and very logical address of more than a half-hour's duration. He was followed by Mr. Green, of the London Coal Exchange, who had undertaken to lead the negative side, *i. e.*, that the so-called spiritual manifestations were delusive—or, in other words, that the phenomena, of which so much has been said, are nothing more than the effects of an over-credulous disposition, or a weak and disordered imagination—that when a man says he has seen a table rise from the ground, or received a written communication from, or heard a musical instrument played upon by, invisible agency, he is deluded; no such occurrences, in the opinion of this class of reasoners, having taken place. Mr. Green illustrated his position by his own experience. He had gone like many others to

investigate, and after sitting over a table for an hour or so without obtaining any results, he found himself so stupid, so dazed, that he was prepared to believe that the moon was really made of green cheese, or any other absurdity.

At this point of the discussion, the Chairman said that he understood there was a visitor present who had had much experience in Spiritualism, and if the members would give way he would ask Mr. Coleman to address them. I at once responded to the unanimous wishes of the meeting, and observed, that the Society had so narrowed the subject by the form of the question to be disposed of, that it left me but little to add to Mr. Saunders's excellent remarks, except to give them a few facts of my own experience whilst investigating the subject during the last ten years; and if, as I perceived by the manifestations of several gentlemen around me whilst Mr. Saunders was speaking, they thought that he was a fit subject for a lunatic asylum, they would doubtless think, when they heard all I had to say, that I must be a very old inmate.

I then related some of my facts, which were listened to with apparent interest, and which, as they are familiar to most readers of the Magazine, I need not here repeat. The speaker who followed me elicited great applause from the opponents, by saying that I was mistaken if I supposed they knew nothing of the subject. He, for one, had seen some of the phenomena, and had read many of the books which had been published by believers, including Mr. Howitt's History of the Supernatural, to which I had referred: *and he did not deny the reality of the phenomena, but he did deny that they were produced by the agency of spirits*; and reading several passages from Mr. Howitt's book, denounced them as heretical, and even blasphemous. I had no opportunity of defending my friend Mr. Howitt from the palpable misinterpretation of his arguments; and it would be superfluous for me to attempt to do so in this place, where he so often speaks for himself with inimitable force and eloquent reasoning: I will only say—

When William Howitt peals his thunder,  
Let the sceptics "stand from under."

It will be seen that the very first speaker, whose sentiments drew forth the applause of the majority, gave up the only point in the negative, which the form of the question under discussion had raised. He admitted the *reality* of "the so-called spiritual manifestations," but denied their spiritual origin, which is quite another question, and, in my opinion, a more rationally debatable point.

The discussion was adjourned, and has, I am told, been extended to four evenings, exciting the greatest amount of interest,

and drawing together a larger number of members and their friends, than any other question that has ever been discussed by the Athenæum Society. This fact augurs well for the spread of Spiritualism. But, alas, the result of this discussion is a great blow and sore discouragement. The majority supported Mr. Green. His condition of mind is, in the opinion of the society, the true interpretation of these so-called spiritual manifestations. The phenomena, attested by so many hundreds of thousands of persons in all countries and in all ages, have, indeed, no reality. They are simply the delusions of a disordered imagination, &c., &c. One might be led to some serious reflections on the singular conclusions to which a large body of intelligent men have come, but I refrain, for it has been better done already a hundred times by others. I believe the whole tone of the debate was unexceptionable, but in one solitary instance, and that was in a fossilized representative of the good old times of the Inquisition, and the burnings of Smithfield. This charitable and Christian gentleman, would have all, who asserted that they had really seen certain curious facts called spiritual, handed over to the police, to be dealt with as rogues and vagabonds.

I wish to claim this young gentleman's attention, and all who sympathize with him, to the sequel of the following story, which I have just received from the lips of the persons engaged in the transactions, with liberty to use their names in this paper, which, however, I will not do for their own sakes. I do not think it prudent that they should expose themselves as professional men to the tender mercies of a Smithfield mob, though it will be seen that one of them himself belonged to that fraternity up to within a few days past, and has been suddenly brought, despite of his valorous and defiant tone, into the ranks of the delusionists :—

Mr. Henry S——, is a gentleman practising as a professional man in London. He was brought up by strict parents in a very religious manner, but after he came to manhood he thought for himself, read the most approved books of infidel writers, and satisfied himself that there was no God—no immortality. In this condition of mind he had remained for fifteen years, reading, however, as he informed me, the best books which were published on Spiritualism, and with an anxious desire to realize its truths, but wholly unable to do so. The last which he had read was that very excellent book from *Matter to Spirit*, by Mrs. De Morgan; and in proof of his earnestness he wrote in the first page, "I pray that the reading of this book may convince me that I shall live after this body dies." But Mrs. De Morgan's facts and beautiful reasoning failed to produce the required conviction. He combated every proposition, and made his objections in a mass of marginal notes, which he showed me, but which he

said he must rub out, for their folly was now too apparent to him.

At length Mr. S—— said, “If these things are really true, why should they not occur at my own home? I will try, and if possible, prove them for myself.” Accordingly, he arranged at once to have a sitting with his wife, and discovered, to his great surprise and satisfaction, that both he and his wife were mediums. Messages from departed relatives were given of the most consolatory and convincing character. Adding his two brothers, Alfred and Ernest, and a married sister, to their circle at subsequent sittings, it was found that *all* were mediums of more or less power. “I am,” Mr. S—— said to me, “now thoroughly satisfied, my doubts are removed; I am an entirely changed and happier man.” But now follow the incidents to which I have referred, and which, it may be hoped, will teach a salutary lesson to all who partake of the sentiments of that fossilized member of the Athenæum Society to whom I have referred. Ernest, the youngest brother, hearing of the follies to which his brother Henry had committed himself, joined a circle at the house of the latter; they were a family party of five. Ernest was “the coming man,” prepared to show up those spirits, and in a tone of levity and defiant manner he took his seat at the table, and began by asking frivolous questions. The table moved, as Henry told me, in a very unusual and excited manner, he said,—“A stream of cold air passed over our hands, and was felt more particularly by Ernest: a spirit then touched us all round, Ernest was sensibly affected, and exclaimed, ‘I cannot bear it.’ I assured him it would not hurt him, and pressed him to keep his hands on the table; but he again exclaimed, ‘I cannot bear it indeed: the touch is frightful.’ I endeavoured to reassure him, as all our previous experiences had been of a calm and solacing nature; but I found that he could not keep his hands on the table, and at length, jumping up in an agony of pain, and throwing himself on the sofa, he cried, ‘Henry! oh, Henry, take hold of my hand, help me to get rid of this frightful grip!’ Then rolling off the sofa, he cried out ‘It is coming again, it has taken fast hold of my arm.’ This state of possession continued at intervals for a considerable time, the spirit grasping his arms and legs, and at length throwing him into convulsions. Finding I could not relieve him, I went for assistance, and brought Mr. Fradello, of the Mesmeric Hospital. He tried to restore my brother by various means without success. At length he called on God to aid him, and exorcising the spirit, he commanded the spirit in the name of God to depart and leave the man. The whole body, which had been rigid, instantly relaxed, and Ernest slowly recovered feeling, though prostrated and unable to take his food.” I met

him at his brother Henry's house a few days after this eventful evening, and he described to me his condition after he left for his own home.

He said that he took the train on the following morning, and on arriving at his destination he was carried insensible into the waiting-room, when it was thought he was intoxicated; but, recovering after a short time, he managed to walk with difficulty to his residence, feeling stiffened throughout his whole frame, as though he were encased in an unyielding covering. On his way through the town he was several times tapped smartly on the shoulder "*by the spirit,*" which caused him to turn sharply round; and he feared, from his excited manner, that the passers-by would think he was a lunatic. His landlady, to whom he did not explain the cause of his prostration, assisted him to bed, and during the night came twice into the room to know the cause of the knocking, which continued until morning—the raps, he said, being at times as loud as if made with a wooden mallet. On the following morning he managed to get down stairs, and laid on the sofa, still stiff and unable to eat anything. About the middle of the day he felt, as it were, that the case in which he had been enveloped was suddenly drawn away from off his body, and he was at once restored to his natural elasticity and buoyancy of spirits. After the events of the first evening the following message was given to Henry:—"Ernest is a medium, and a strong one: tell him God can help him if he prays and loves Him. Get him good books. Have a Bible, and always read some verses before you begin your circle! May a good and righteous God defend you all from evil spirits!" I asked Ernest if he was now satisfied of a great reality? "Oh! yes," he said, "I am sure it was a spirit who took possession of me. I am not disposed to trifle with the subject any more."

This is not the only case of the kind. Similar occurrences are recorded in the earlier experiences of American Spiritualism; and it is due to our Transatlantic friends to acknowledge that they are not only the pioneers in almost every development of the modern manifestations, but that they have defended their belief with an earnestness and ability which can hardly be surpassed, if it ever be equalled by any who may follow them in this country.

I have recently had many proofs of the spread of Spiritualism. Many mediums have been developed in private families known to me. There is, however, a great similarity in the manifestations, and it is only now and then that an incident occurs of sufficient interest to record in the pages of the *Spiritual Magazine*.

A Mr. P——, connected with the London Stock Exchange, informs me that he and his son are strong mediums. At a sitting

recently, a spirit purporting to be his father insisted in the strongest terms that he should become reconciled to a relative from whom he has been long estranged, and as this injunction has been earnestly repeated, Mr. P——, has consented to do so. Another spirit enjoined him to make Spiritualism known to a Catholic priest. He said he did not know one. The name of Father R——n was given, and his address in T—— Road, when Mr. P.'s son went and found the name and address had been correctly stated. The son told the priest the object and cause of his visit, and unexpectedly met with a kindly reception. The priest said he quite believed in the reality of these spiritual communications, and though he thought they were of devilish origin, he was curious to see something of their character, and accepted an invitation to a *séance*, the result of which I have not yet heard.

A friend of mine, Mr. S——, residing in the North of England, informed me that his wife had become a very good medium, and among other messages received at a sitting some time since at the house of Mr. and Mrs. B——, the following is remarkable. A spirit gave the name B——. The Christian name was asked for, and answered, Niels Frederick Gottlieb, and the following words, which were not understood by Mr. and Mrs. S——: "Han druknede i skib White Eagle, sig min moder." They were at once interpreted by Mr. B——, who is a Dane, "He was drowned in the ship White Eagle. Tell my mother." The name was that of a brother of Mr. B——, who sailed ten years ago from Bremen, in an American ship—name not known—and has not since been heard of.

The case of Captain Mathias and the Barque *Usk* will, no doubt, be fresh in the recollection of the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*. I recorded the story taken from the public papers in a former article (*see* Vol. III, p. 544), December, 1862.

Captain Mathias, commanding the *Usk*, sailed from Newport for Caldera, a port in Chili, and when rounding Cape Horn, was overtaken by a terrible storm, during which he said a spirit had commanded him, for the safety of his ship, to return to Newport; and though he strove for eight days against the influence, he at length found it irresistible. Demanding to have some sign that he might know that he was not under a delusion, the voice said, "I will take my hand off you, and the glass shall rise immediately, if you are obedient to the command given to you;" and it was further told him the exact day he would arrive, and did arrive in safety at Newport. His owners brought him before the Marine Board of Bristol, and Captain Mathias was declared to have been under a mental delusion, and incompetent to take charge of a ship, and his certificate was cancelled. I happen to be acquainted with a relative of the owner of the vessel, and he informed me

shortly after the event, that he had heard that a lady, a stranger, seeing the account, and sympathising with Captain Mathias's distress in losing his only means of obtaining a livelihood, had presented him with a handsome sum of money, or settled upon him a competence, which, as I fully believe in the reality of the spiritual manifestation described by Captain Mathias, I hope is true.

In my remarks on this case, I said, "It will be interesting to note the future fate of the barque *Usk*;" and we are recently informed of it in a letter addressed by the British Consul, Mr. G. A. Tait, at Coquimbo, dated December 3, 1863, to the Secretary of the Marine Department, Board of Trade. *The vessel was totally destroyed by fire on the 16th of November, by spontaneous combustion, on her voyage to Huasco, the captain and part of the crew having reached CALDERA in the long boat on the 26th November.* The account appeared in most of the English papers in January last, under the heading, THE VISION OFF CAPE HORN.—EXTRAORDINARY COINCIDENCE. Another ghost story, connected with a murder happening on board the barque *Pontiac*, is reported in the *Times* of this day, March 22nd, the particulars of which will, no doubt, be interesting, and will come out on the trial of the sailor now in custody in Edinburgh.

I had hoped to have been able to give the readers of the Magazine some further accounts of the extraordinary manifestations obtained by my friend, Mr. L., of New York. In a letter received from him some weeks past, he informs me that they continue with undiminished vigour, and that he will certainly send me full details as soon as he is relieved from the pressure of his business engagements.

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### STRANGE DOINGS IN "YE ANCIENT TOWN OF IPSWICH."

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THE following spirited description is copied from an old journal of a schoolmaster who resided in "ye ancient town of Ipswich" near the end of the seventeenth century:—

"Last nighte, as my wyfe and myselve were going to bedde a dreadful noyse was heard about ye house; an' ye soundes increased violentlie, and seemed too he in the bedde-roome lykewise. Ye wyndowes shook lyke a dyce box, and a horrible stynke arosc, smelling very much like unto brymstone, allmoste taking from us our breths. Suddenly ye chairs and taybles did move hyther and thyther by some unscene hand; anon all was sylent. Soon ye beddies did rocke and shake terriblye, and ye bedde clothes didde move hytherre and thytherre violentlie. Then ye plastering didde cracke and snappe lyke unto ye report of a pistoll. Soon ye jordan began to move aboute, and it did jump upon a chair, whyrlynge around right meryie. I clutched it by ye handdell, and ye potte did hoppe and skyppe around ye room, all toe our greate amusement."

THE POPE AND MR. HOME.

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THE remarks which we recently made on the violent expulsion by the Pope of Mr. Home from Rome, have been seriously reprobated by several of our Roman Catholic friends, who complain of them as being highly unjust towards the Holy Father, and as shewing an unreasoning hostility towards Catholicism. We have every desire to be just to Catholicism, as to all classes of religious thought, and we are sorry to give offence to any by too severe criticisms, but we should be more sorry if we were to sacrifice freedom of discussion, to the natural tenderness which offenders have for their own feelings. When we find that our Catholic friends are so sensitive themselves, it does not seem to be out of place to remind them that others too have feelings, which may be outraged by offences which may be said to shock humanity, and the very genius of the time. We should have thought much better of our friends if, in such a case, they had submitted in silence and in sorrow, to the shame which their spiritual head had brought upon all that is good in their religion; and if instead of complaining of *our* remarks, they had remonstrated against *his* conduct. We have heard nothing of this, but only the laments of children who do not like the punishment which they deserve. Even in Rome, and amongst Romanists, the barbarous acts of the infallible head of the only true Church, was protested against, by means of the principal residents and visitors, both royal and loyal, but to hear Englishmen in England refrain from condemning and contemning such doings is to us the saddest spectacle of all, for it shews us how necessary it is to prevent such a class from ever obtaining temporal power. One flimsy excuse for the Pope is, that what he did was not in the exercise of his spiritual power, in which alone he is infallible, but of his temporal power, which even his adherents cannot stand up for on all occasions. We believe, that what he calls the patrimony of St. Peter, has been his greatest curse, but there is no part of his alleged possessions to which he clings more pertinaciously; and if he will be a temporal ruler we shall take the liberty of blaming him when he makes such an abuse of his temporal power. Another friend complains of us for hinting a disbelief of the House of our Lady of Loretto having been removed bodily from Bethlehem to Loretto, making a temporary sojourn in Dalmatia by the way, and he informs us, on the testimony of a person who has carefully analyzed the evidence, and who went purposely to Bethlehem, to Dalmatia, and to Loretto to examine the remains at the two former places, and the building itself, that there

is every reason to believe that the chapel was really so removed. But surely if Mr. Home's manifestations are sorcery for merely moving a table, or for being himself lifted in the air, this moving of a house bodily from the Holy Land to Italy must have been sorcery on a much larger scale. Of course all the world believes that this Popish miracle is a gross imposture, and that, because it is so monstrously opposed to natural laws; but if the Pope could have Mr. Home raised in the air at a solemn gathering in the Great Square of St. Peter's, like St. Theresa, it might give an air of possibility at all events to the floating of the House of our Lady. Taking levitation or the elevation of Mr. Home in the air as a special and crowning instance of his sorcery, what do we find? The same sorcery is practised by the great shining lights, the very saints of the Romish Church; and there are much fewer instances of it, unfortunately, to be found in modern Spiritualism than in the authorized records of Romanism. To say nothing of the instances of it given in the Bible, it is proved beyond a doubt in the cases of St. Theresa, St. Catherine, St. Philip Neri, Richard Abbot of St. Vanne de Verdun, Ignatius Loyola, Savonarola, St. Dominick, St. Dunstan, St. Francis of Assissium, St. Cajetan, St. Bernard Ptolœmæi, St. Catherine of Ricci, St. Cupertin, and others whom we could name if this list is not long enough; but to crown the question of the act of stupidity performed on the 2nd of January last, it is only necessary to state that, according to the requirements of the Church of Rome, the working of miracles, as they call them, is a condition absolutely necessary in the canonization of saints—it being regarded as the only assured proof of their final perseverance in those holy dispositions, which entitle them to that high honor. Hence the taking cognizance of miracles for this end has always been the province of the chief pastors of the Romish Church as requiring the greatest circumspection. It was said of the Bourbons, that after all their troubles they had learnt nothing and had forgotten nothing. Neither time, nor country, nor civilization, nor progress, nor humanity, nor liberty, nor even gentlemanliness, seem to have any power in moderating the bigotry, and the savage fanaticism of the successor of St. Peter, and the vicegerent of God. Let our Catholic friends join us in expressing their disapproval of such disgraceful modes of thumb-screwing thought, and of heretic-hunting, and we shall then be able to separate them from the general condemnation, which otherwise will be properly applied to the body as well as to the head of their section of religious opinions.

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## WARNINGS.

WE find the following curious and well-attested instances of spiritual warnings in an old volume of the *Intellectual Repository*, which is the organ of the Swedenborgians, and where we might fairly expect to find many such experiences, if their peculiar opinions respecting Swedenborg did not cause most of them to cut off all spiritual knowledge that does not emanate from their own prophet. The editor of their organ, at the time of the publication of these instances, was the Rev. Samuel Noble, a man of a large and philosophical mind, and himself a medium in the later years of his life, and subject to frequent intrusions of the rappings. One day a lady of his congregation calling upon him, rapped at the door of his room for entrance. She received no reply, and so she rapped again, but still without any response from the inside. A third time she rapped, and then he called:—"Come in."—"Why, Mr. Noble," she said, "did you not hear me knocking before?"—"Oh, yes," he answered, "but I am so troubled with knockings in my room that I did not pay any attention, never thinking that it was you."

Mr. Noble got into trouble by admitting these warnings into the *Repository*, for no sooner did they appear, than one of the body attacked him violently for giving credence to such disorderly statements, and on his afterwards inserting a second series, Mr. Noble administered the following very proper and gentle rebuke to his correspondent:—

"We have admitted the above, partly on account of the truly respectable character of the writer, and the ability with which it is written; and partly because occurrences of a supernatural character have of late become so frequent, and have engaged so much of the public attention, that we think it high time that the members of the New Church should no longer, in deference to the Sadducism of the age, shrink from the open investigation of such subjects. Delusive influences of a very extraordinary nature are also, it is our conviction, effecting much evil within the New Church itself; and none can guard against them, who are either ignorant of, or deny, their existence and nature. We do not promise to take up the subject ourselves, but will gladly receive communications, exhibiting sufficient knowledge and judgment, and written with sufficient correctness, to justify their insertion."—ED. of *Intellectual Repository*.

The instances which we now give are to be found in the vol. for 1838, p. 263:—

CLASS I.—SOUNDS.

A few years ago, "Warnings" formed the subject of frequent and affectionate discussion around my evening family circle. Many were the "Warnings" narrated as having been given to persons of undoubted veracity, of the approach of the period when a friend, or friends, were to depart to an eternal world. Believing that these "Warnings" in common with all that we in Scotland call "Frets"—which term I cannot translate into English,—although the subject of a deep-rooted and general faith, were nothing else than the results of superstition, I always supported the negative side, in these affectionate fire-side debates. On this point, however, Mrs. H——, my wife, always stoutly opposed me; and often by the aid of her young allies, fairly overwhelmed me with a mass of "Frets" and "Warnings," furnished by the testimony of persons, whose character for truth was above suspicion. No explanation, however, was at any time attempted. The facts of the occurrences only were stated; and I must say, that I could not account for many of them, except by the supposition that the witnesses of them laboured under some strange mental hallucination, at the time when they imagined that the "Warnings" were given. Although fairly vanquished, however, I, good-humouredly, continued to "argue still," maintaining my position, by attributing all these things to a distempered imagination, and deranged sensual media.

One evening, Mrs. H—— and I, having retired for the night, had for some time been in our bed-room. The evening, I remember it well, was calm, lovely, and bright. We sat and talked on a variety of subjects. There was a large-sized French wardrobe bed in the apartment, having, as usual, folding doors of solid mahogany, made so as, when shut, to cause the whole to have the appearance of a handsome bookcase. The doors were shut and locked. There was neither bed nor bed-clothes within it; as, at the time, it was not required for family use. Suddenly, the stillness that pervaded the apartment, and the house, was interrupted by a sound unlike anything I had ever heard. It was not a loud and violent crash; nor was it a loud and sharp blow; but something resembling a combination of both. It proceeded from the wardrobe-bed; and I can describe it only by saying, that it seemed to be produced by a strong muscular arm applying a riding whip with great energy across the folding doors of the empty wardrobe bed. The sound was so loud as to cause the whole apartment to re-echo. I may here remark, that this is the most common kind of "warnings," believed, throughout Scotland, to announce the

speedy death of a near and beloved friend. I immediately started to my feet, and exclaimed, "What is that?" Mrs. H——, having noted the time, calmly replied, "You have always spoken of 'Warnings' as being the offspring of superstition. Will you believe *now*? Explain if you can, that unearthly sound."

I was resolved on being satisfied. I went immediately to the wardrobe-bed, and examined it most minutely. It stood firmly on the floor. It was above five years old. Not a rent or crack appeared in any part of the wood. Nothing had given way, I examined the doors;—they were firmly locked; and each was in its proper place. I unlocked them, and examined the interior from top to bottom. Nothing appeared that would enable me to account, on natural principles, for the loud, sharp, crashing, unearthly sound, which I had just heard. When nothing remained to be examined, I re-locked the doors, and some time afterwards retired to rest, having first marked the time when the supposed "Warning" was heard. *We were awakened next morning by the arrival of a messenger on horseback, sent to announce to me the intelligence, that my father was suddenly struck with a deadly disease; and that he desired to see me before he died. I enquired at what time he was taken ill. I found that the time of the "WARNING"—shall I call it so?—corresponded to an instant with that of the commencement of my father's last sickness. He died a few days afterwards.*

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CLASS II.—DREAMS.

The second class of "Warnings" consists in dreams. It is not much above a short month, since the mother of Mrs. H—— was lying on her death-bed. Mrs. H—— dreamed one night, that she was on her way to visit her dying mother. Hearing a sound as if of furious driving behind her, she turned round, and immediately two mourning coaches drove past her on their way to her father's house. They followed each other so closely, that the heads of the horses in the latter almost touched the hinder part of the former carriage. They were so near Mrs. H——, that she thought she was to be ridden over. She therefore sprang to one side of the road. The carriages thundered past her so very closely, that the wheels touched her clothes. She uttered a loud scream, awoke, and told me her dream.

Aware of the principles of interpretation applied by the population around me to this class of "Warnings," I immediately perceived what that interpretation was which would have been given by those who believe in the supernatural origin of the communications to which I now refer, if their opinion had been asked. The number of mourning coaches, and their direction,

are supposed to indicate the death of *two* of the members of Mrs. H——'s father's family. The close contact of the carriages to each other, signifies the shortness of the period that would intervene between the deaths of the two individuals. The nearness of the vehicles to Mrs. H——, when they drove past her, denotes the intimate relationship subsisting between Mrs. H—— and the persons, of whose speedy departure to the eternal world she had thus received "Warning."

How did succeeding events tally with this "Warning?" The mother of Mrs. H—— died within two days afterwards. I could admit the solution, in certain circumstances, that the natural anxiety felt by Mrs. H—— for her dying mother, might occasion the dream. But why *two* mourning coaches? Why their *close contact to each other*, indicative of the speedy death of *another* of the family? Why the nearness of *both vehicles* to Mrs. H——? The persons indicated by the "Warning," must have been *equally related* to Mrs. H——. At that time, all the family were in perfect health, with the exception of Mrs. H——'s dying mother. Take these particulars in connexion with the fact I now state. *Within fourteen days after Mrs. H——'s mother's death, Mrs. H——'s father, in perfect health at the time of his wife's death, and, up to the moment of the fatal accident, in the enjoyment of perfect health, was killed within twenty yards of his own door, by a restive horse.*

In connexion with this second class of "Warnings," I may mention the following circumstance. Several years ago, one of my female cousins, a Mrs. R——, was suddenly seized with sickness. My sister, at that time in a distant part of the country, and in utter ignorance of her cousin's illness, dreamed that she saw a grave personage leading a large-sized horse, of a black colour, towards her, while she was endeavouring to get past a similar sized animal, whose colour was brown; and which stood in a narrow path-way. When she saw her road completely blocked up by this new obstruction, she became alarmed. The man with the horse told her not to be afraid. Her cousin, Mrs. R——, he said, had just been taken sick, and he was going to bring her with him. She was nearly ready, he continued, to go; but she would be quite ready to depart by the time he could get to her. By the next post, my sister received a communication announcing Mrs. R——'s sickness. By another post or two she learnt of Mrs. R——'s death.

Is there anything in all this; or are we mocked, when asleep, by the unanointed offspring of our own distempered fancy?

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## CLASS III.—SIGHTS.

Mr. E——, my father-in-law, to whose sudden death I have already referred, was a respectable farmer in the western district of Perthshire. He rented a farm on K——'s estate, about a mile and a half from my own residence. About an hour before he was killed, and while nothing could be farther from the minds of his family than the idea of his being about to die, his daughter and housekeeper, Miss E——, went up stairs to arrange somewhat in one of the upper apartments of the house. While there, a globe of purest light, larger and more brilliant than a star of the first magnitude, appeared about a foot from the roof of the apartment. It was no freak of fancy; no delusion produced by the deranged state of the optic nerve. This refulgence shone steadily, but most brightly; it was the very quintessence of light. It hung between the ceiling and floor of the room for a very considerable time. Its downward motion was so slow as to be scarcely perceptible. The young lady stood and followed this star-like splendour with her eyes, till it reached a distance of about a foot from the floor, when it became fainter and fainter, till it wholly disappeared from her view. I may here state, that this is a "Warning" generally vouchsafed to nearest relatives only. Amazed, Miss E——'s first impression was, that the house would be set on fire by what she had just seen. She soon, however, collected herself, and went down stairs. While looking, meditatively, out through the parlour window into the court yard, a horse and cart came from the field to the granary, for the purpose of taking a cart load of potato-seed to the planter's. While the cart was being filled, Mr. E—— desired the boy to go to the hay-loft, and bring a handful of hay to the horse. To enable the animal to eat with greater freedom, he proceeded to take the bit out of its mouth, and the blinders from its eyes. No sooner was this done, than the animal started and sprung forward. Mr. E—— was thrown on the ground with great violence before his daughter's eyes. The shock either produced concussion of the brain, or occasioned severe spinal injury. He survived it only about two hours.—Yours, &c. H.

19th June, 1838.

## LETTER FROM JUDGE EDMONDS.

THE real marvel of the phenomena is, that inanimate matter moves without mortal contact *and displays intelligence, and that an intelligence which can read, write, and cypher, can speak in many tongues, and can read our secret thoughts.* Whence comes that intelligence? is *the* question. The presence of an intelligence is easily ascertained. But the neophyte says—and it is almost his first question—How know I that it is not my own mind that either generates the thought I perceive or is read by this intelligence and communicated through the medium? The answer is, because thoughts come which were never in your mind, nor in the medium's either, nor in that of any mortal present. Over and over again—hundreds and thousands of times has this occurred. I could fill sheets with instances which have occurred to myself. I will mention some, merely as an illustration of what I mean. To convince my daughter that it was not her own mind, they told her of the loss of a steamer which had left this port for California, only a few days before, laden with soldiers. They said that vessel had foundered at sea, that over one hundred of the passengers had been swept overboard, and that the residue had been taken off by three vessels, bound for different ports. In the course of a few days after that, news came of the wreck, confirming in every respect the statement which had been made. I have heard Mr. Collins say that the first news he had of the loss of the Arctic steamer, with some of his family, was by a spirit-communication, and I have often been told of things then unknown to me, but afterwards ascertained to be true. These, and many other such like incidents demonstrated that the intelligence was not that of the medium or any present at the *séance*.

But still the question arose—May it not be of some other mortal, reacting in some as yet unknown way? This question, too, has been met by very many incidents, some of which show every probability in favour of the Spiritual theory, and some which show that it must be from the spirits of the departed. Dr. Hare's identification of his sister, and my identification of my wife are instances of the former kind. Things were said to him that he knew were unknown to any but himself and his sister long since dead. So with me, matters were referred to that never had been known to any one on earth but to my wife and to me. Then, again, the characteristics of the individuals purporting to speak from the spirit-world, came so strongly marked that there was no mistaking them, and that often in so subtle a form and with such a delicate touch, that no accomplished actor could imitate, much less one so rude and unlettered as the mediums

often were. The language, the tone of thought, the feeling, the temper, all agreeing in the minutest particular with those which marked the individual when in life, and often displayed in a tongue utterly unknown to the medium, but perfectly in keeping with the person professing to speak. Thus I have been spoken to in Indian, by a savage whom I knew once in our far-western wilds, and at another time by a Spanish woman, whom I had known in Central America, and in both instances referring to matters known only to me among the still living.

Now, if I was struck with blindness, think you that I could not identify distinctly from all the rest of the world one whom I had known most intimately for over thirty years, when the opportunity should be afforded me, of repeated conversation for a period of eight or ten years? Behold, then, how strong is the argument of probabilities, and how much more credulity it would require to believe any other solution of the mystery than the spiritual one.

But we need not stop here upon this probability however strong it may be. Add to it, the power of spirit-sight and hearing, and you have every element by which one could ever under any circumstances identify any individual. This seeing and conversing with spirits is quite common with us—more so, indeed, just now, than the rappings or table-turnings. This was of almost daily occurrence at my house for six or seven years, while our doors were open to all enquirers, and was during that time witnessed by thousands. Now, that we have withdrawn from that field of labour, it is less frequent with us, but has not entirely ceased. Only a few evenings ago, I was sitting alone in my library, profoundly thinking upon a great moral question, on which I had some perplexing doubts. I looked up, and my only brother, who died about a year ago, stood by my side, within three feet of me. He told me he came as the messenger of a higher intelligence to solve that doubt, and he did so, with an expression of countenance, a manner, and in language, entirely characteristic. We had a brief conversation on the subject, and as soon as he perceived that I understood him, he vanished. I saw him as plain as I ever saw him in life, and if I could ever identify him, I could then. Now, if this was not the spirit of the departed, what was it? and whence came the clear wisdom of his teaching, far as it was beyond my capacity to originate? Fifty years ago this would have been a ghost story, and the silly education of my childhood would have caused me to be frightened, but now it has been of such frequent occurrence, with so many people, and under so many various circumstances, and it has come to be so well understood, that it excites no alarm,—no agitation even. Why, even our children laugh and play with the spirits! Sup-

posing all this is true—and there is as much evidence of it as there is of the rapping and the table moving—what explanation can be given of it, half as probable as the spiritual theory? Men believe in the Bible! Then they believe that in the olden time, mortal men saw the spirits of the departed. Who was it that Peter, and James, and John saw with Jesus on the mountain? And who was it that John saw in the Revelations, but one of his brethren, the Prophets? And wherein, pray, has the nature of man so changed, that what was possible to him eighteen hundred years ago, is not possible to him now?

But this is not all that is to be said in favour of the spiritual source of these manifestations. There is one consideration more important than all others, for in it is involved the great end and object of the whole of this spiritual movement. It is this—this intelligence can and does disclose to us what is the condition of life into which we pass through death. No mere mortal intelligence can do this—no mere earthly intelligence having its birth, its home, its empire, and its grave here, can accomplish that task, for, whence could it get the knowledge? But the spirits of the departed would necessarily have the knowledge, and most naturally would impart it if once the way for the communion was opened, *and the mind of the mortal was ready to receive it.*

And this is what they are doing, giving us this knowledge of the future life in its broadest expanse and in its most minute details, aptly finishing—“now that man is ready to receive it”—the revelations of one God and one immortality given to us long long ago.

It will not do to say that these professed revelations of the future life are the product of mortal imaginations. The coincidence and agreement of the manifestations on this topic in all parts of the earth, in all languages, is a marvellous feature of the whole movement. While upon all other topics—domestic affairs, history, science, or natural philosophy—there are contradictions and incongruities, while in regard to the manifestations themselves and the *modus operandi* of them, there are all sorts of conflict; in regard to the condition of the future life, there is a universal accordance. This no mortal imagination could accomplish. This, no former revelation has given to man. This, all religions have hitherto failed to enlighten us upon. This, external nature and unaided reason are incapable of disclosing to us. But it can be done by the spirits of the departed, if they are permitted to return to earth and hold communion with us. And this is what they are now doing, and I repeat it, *this is the great end and object of the whole movement.*

Those among the spirits, whose material condition or strong affection brings them back to earth, or causes them to linger

here are the instruments first used to establish the fact of spirit communion. And as soon as that becomes established, the physical manifestations which have been used for that purpose fade away, and then the attention of both spirit and mortal is mainly directed to the other higher purpose, and the teachings come from the wise ones made more perfect by a longer sojourn in the spirit-world. But in the meantime, and in the earlier stages of the manifestations, there are dropped here and there thoughts upon this more momentous topic—the frequency and character of them depending mainly on the mood of mind and object of the inquirer. But whatever the character of the medium, whatever the purpose of the inquirer, whatever the nature of the manifestations, whether physical or mental, whatever the circumstances under which they are made,—there is in these revelations of the future life, be they brief or voluminous, a marvellous accordance and an exemption from all those contradictions which so often rise to plague us in all other parts of spiritual communion.

I am now engaged in the task of collecting the revelations on this subject—scattered far and wide as they are—and hope to be able to complete the work before I pass away, and thus finish my contribution to the great movement now going on among men. I shall not confine my work, nor do I limit the preceding remarks to the manifestations of the last twelve or fifteen years. I embrace in both, the period of 250 years at least, during which, from time to time, in various countries, has broken the dawn which has been followed by the broader light of to-day, and is yet to be succeeded, when the first agitation of the change shall have passed, by a full meridian sun of light and knowledge, such as the world has never yet seen.

I have observed the past year, that several of your statelier order of Reviews have given some attention to this subject in their review of Home's *Incidents*. I perceive that they confine their attention mainly to the physical phase of the phenomena, and deny or question, simply because they do not know. I do not wonder at their unbelief without knowledge, for the manifestations are mainly so merely personal in their character, that it is not possible for any testimony from another to convey the vivid idea of reality. Thus, I know whether I am touched or not—I know whether I see or not; but it is quite impracticable for me to carry to another the vivid idea of reality which I have. And they who cannot give due weight to human testimony are to be pitied—that is all! But there is one subject on which these reviewers could safely have touched, if they would, and that is the moral nature of the doctrines which Spiritualism promulgates.

I have had frequent occasion to assert, that the tendency of these doctrines was to the most exalted private worth and public virtue. I have challenged contradiction—I repeat the challenge; and I know that every candid mind must answer in the sentiments, if not in the language, of the late Chancellor of South Carolina:—"The teachings in your publications, as emanating from the spirits, inculcate a morality the most pure and elevated, and a state of the affections towards God, in the highest degree holy and spiritual. In these respects there are, in my opinion, no writings extant more unexceptionable."—(See Tract, No. 5).

So, too, they might have said something about this great end and object of spirit-communion to which I have referred. When persons of education sit down "to cram" for the occasion of such a review, and to write an essay upon a subject which now occupies so much of the attention of the civilized world, is it possible that they could have waded through so many volumes and never alighted upon the idea? It stands out as the great end in view, and yet these reviewers ignore its very existence.

Why was this? Surely, nothing can be more important to man than a revelation of a future life, so full and ample that he may understand how to prepare for it. It could not have been intentional, and it can be accounted for only on the supposition that they, like the writer of "Mary Jane," were too intent on the means to be mindful of the end.

Let us be warned by their example! Let us never be unmindful of this great end of the work before us! Let us remember that the advantages enjoyed by us, who have been blessed with evidence enough to believe, and the privileges bestowed upon us, are that we may perform the duty of imparting to our fellow-men the most valuable of all knowledge—that, namely, of the future beyond the grave.—Yours most truly,

*New York, Feb. 21.*

J. W. EDMONDS.

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## THE DIVINE INCARNATION.

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LETTER FROM A MINISTER OF "THE NEW CHRISTIAN CHURCH"  
TO A. J. DAVIS.

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DEAR SIR,—It is the glory of Truth to be so perfect that it is everywhere consistent with itself, in everything confirmatory of itself, and in all modes thoroughly self-sustaining. It receives not testimony from man, for he can neither alter nor injure its organic unity and universality. But man receives illumination from Truth, and needs it much. Having received it, he can follow

its light unwearied and undisturbed through all realms, finding it ever the same, continuous, harmonious, and in perfection past finding out.

In a former letter I called attention to the universal truth of Life's Incarnation, taking that fact as a universal hint of the incarnation of God himself, which had its fulfilment in the glorified humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. But this is the subject which has to be still further elucidated and confirmed.

I take it for granted that the incarnation of life, as a universal law, is a matter too plain to present any difficulties whatever, that the *fact* is unquestionable, that the *general* truth will be seen and felt satisfactorily, and that the *particulars* of its modes will offer no obstacles that are not referable to our want of knowledge rather than to any apparent opposition they may offer. We say *apparent* opposition; for if the law spoken of be indeed a truth, there can be no *real* opposition to it, arising from any source whatever.

I now wish to present another proposition, which also receives universal confirmation, *viz.*: *That the Incarnation of God must take place in the human form.*

The human form is the masterpiece of creation. Its image, partial or complete, reigns alone and supreme throughout the whole realm of forms. Whithersoever we turn our eyes—within to the spirit-world, or without, towards the earth's—above us to the angels, or beneath us to the brutes—this beautiful form in all its perfection, is the first, and struggles to express itself in the very last—the outer confines of Creation.

We find ourselves standing in the midst of a boundless universe of natural and spiritual substances, all of which are restless, fluent, and infinitely active; all of which act and re-act, flow and reflow perpetually, their inmost essences and their outmost shapes heaving and yearning with an eternal desire for the human form! All Nature, and all Spirit, and all Life, aspire to that form for ever. The higher we ascend the more absolutely does it reign. It is the favourite and the only Temple of Life and Wisdom. They are joined as body and soul everywhere; where life is most intense that form is most perfect; where life diminishes to its least force and quantity, and reaches its ultimate of endeavour, there likewise the form becomes dim and finally disappears. As one universe contains all worlds; as one light inaccessible contains all truth; as one fountain of life fills all vessels; as one organ, the eye, contains *all* light; one organ, the ear, *all* hearing; one sense, touch, contains *all* sensation—so does this one form, wonderful in power and majesty, contain all forms; hold all substances within its infinite embrace; and with its omnipresence beautify all creation. So dearly does Life love the form of man! So

mighty is the love of God for humanity! Thus it is that man is in such perfect harmony with all the universe: if true to his own nature, all Nature has nothing and is nothing but agreement for him. If true to his spiritual life, all spirit is his counsellor and friend. Deeply can he be instructed—yea, *most* profoundly can he penetrate into the secret of secrets—the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Most High himself; for there is nowhere a law opposed to his own imperishable form, but all is one grand spiritual pathway, made like him, and for him, and in him, leading his spiritual footsteps so naturally, so lovingly, ever upwards to the living God. His progress in everything is unlimited, just because and only because of the universality of his form, spiritual and natural, and of its perfect harmony with all created things.

If, when we come to reflect upon God himself, we, in our conceptions of him, annihilate that form; our progress to a knowledge of Him, and to a union with him of love and worship, is hopelessly barred. It is conducting us by laws of ineffable harmony, that never erred, never wavered, never disappointed us; laws that strengthened us, and perfected us, and confirmed themselves to our inmost souls, and to our every glance unceasingly; laws that proclaim to us nothing but their own infinite continuity, and so promise us a royal reception at last by Him for whom our soul has long panted, “as pants the hart for water-brooks;” laws that have filled to overflowing every channel of hope and trust as truth alone can fill them; but which, with eternal and *intolerable* cruelty, desert us in the last moment of our toil and trial; when our lip trembles on the brim of the cup of which we are to drink and thirst no more—laws which dash it from our grasp, and leave us in eternal and agonizing solitude, in the *almost* presence of God!

I have known the affections of men and women suddenly torn from an object loved and cherished until life knew no other peace or joy, and the bereavement broke their hearts. Henceforth this was to them a solitude and sorrow; they longed only for eternal annihilation, or for the recovery of their soul's delight in the world to come. Sadly do our short-sighted spirits mourn the lot of those thus afflicted; deeply do we sympathize, hopelessly do we pity—for we know there is but one relief. But such a fearful ordeal is kindness itself, compared with the cruel destiny that in one moment separates our soul and shuts it out for ever from the Lord. Yet such is the necessary result of that spawn of philosophical idiocy—a *formless God!* Eternal shame upon that skeleton of phantasy—the figment of an imagination as hollow as the skull of Death!—a *formless God!* Consider it, ye wise of the earth! and oh, ye fools, rejoice that your utmost folly is out-done. Rave as ye will, ye insane and gibbering ghostlets of the

unclean world, ye cannot surpass this monstrous abortion of mental nothingness—a *formless God!* Heap your paradoxes mountain high, ye lovers of abstraction and of vacancy, your confidence built though it be on less than shadows, is modesty to this—the Only Substance shapeless—the Only Essence non-existent—the Only Order infinite vacuity—the Being of beings impalpable and worse—a *formless GOD!!!* But how easy is the consistency of Truth. Does she not everywhere proclaim but one thing, and make all the universe echo and re-echo it, that life everywhere loves nothing but the human form, and this because that form is its own, and God himself is the only Man!

One argument here, if we take the right one, is as good as a volume: God is a divine substance; not a spiritual substance merely, much less a material, but a *divine* substance, one degree higher than all others, consequently one degree more *real*, more perfect—in a word, Substance itself. Obviously, He must be a substance or He is nothing. And if a substance, He must have a form—for nothing can be without a form. And if a form, He must be the *most universal* form, the *only* form, and that we have already shown is the human! If there were any other form in the universe, this might admit of certain doubts; but as the human, complete or fragmentary, is the only form there is, we consider the matter beyond question.

But there is another and very satisfactory mode of approaching this subject, and I cannot forbear adopting it, inasmuch as it not only leads directly to the same conclusion, but also exposes the origin of the idea that God is an abstract principle, or a collection of abstract principles, which idea, moreover, must logically reduce God to an inconceivable nothingness, and compel the mind ultimately to deny him *in toto*, and seek refuge in mere materialism.

That which is above the sphere of one's thought, no matter what that sphere may be, of necessity appears as nothing compared with that which is within or beneath that sphere. Thus, the sphere of the natural thought, which is common to all men in this life, is one degree beneath the sphere of spiritual thought, which is common to the inhabitants of the spiritual world, and is also shared by a few lofty spiritual minds while in this world. Hence, the natural mind invariably conceives of the natural body and its world as being real and substantial things; but the spiritual body and its world are conceived of by that mind as shadowy, abstract, and so, unreal and unsubstantial. Here arises the denial of the future life. The natural mind thus conceives of the spirit as a mere abstraction, and easily denies it altogether; which, as we have said, is the logical necessity of the abstraction theory with regard to God himself.

But when the spirit is divested of the clay tabernacle, and

enters itself the realms of spirits, it then sees, and feels, and loves, and thinks, in a higher sphere; and its *quondam* abstract world it finds *more* perfect, *more* substantial, *more* real, than the world it has left. And as for its own being in that sphere, *that* likewise, so far from being a shadowy abstract of some vital principle, is a *perfect man*, with a body too solid to be laughed at or trifled with! The seer, from his two-fold experience, of this world and of the spiritual alternately, again and again bears unshaken testimony to this truth.

In like manner the spiritual angel is capable of thinking above his sphere, and deems the celestial angel an abstraction, unless he has received full instruction to the contrary. But let his life and faculties unfold interiorly, until he can himself ascend to the celestial realm, and lo! that again is *more* vital, *more* real, *more* substantial than the sphere he has left! His own being and that of all his associates, once so dim and formless in his inferior imagination, are now known to be *perfect men*—yea, the most perfect ever known! But why continue this appeal? It is already plain where it is about to lead us.

The spiritual is more perfect in form and substance, more beautifully human than the natural, though *to the natural* it appeared as an abstraction. The celestial is more perfect yet, in form and substance, more vitally human than the spiritual, though *to the spiritual* it appeared as an abstraction. And finally, the DIVINE, by the same inexorable logic, is the *most perfect* in form and substance, the *most real*, and the *most divinely human* of them all, even though half the world should deem Him an abstraction! This is an easy method of seeing how in the ascent of life, it becomes more and more perfectly *human in form and substance, and thus must end in a Perfect and Divine Humanity itself.*

But I must adhere to my promise to trespass upon you no further than to express the general truths of my subject. I will, however, indulge in one more remark. The term "Abstract Principle," or anything equivalent ought to be for ever abandoned by every sane mind when speaking of things spiritual and divine, because it is a destructive fallacy; and the idea of superior organization and substance substituted instead, because it is an unfailling truth. After what has now been said, I venture to push the closing remark of my last letter one step further, and to affirm *that it is the universal law of life to become Incarnate IN THE HUMAN FORM.*—Yours, truly,

R. NORMAN FOSTER.



## EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

SIR,—The Primate of All England wishes us to know, that “the eternity of punishment rests, *according to his mind*, exactly on the same ground as the eternity of blessedness; they must both stand or fall together; and the Church of England, *as he maintains*, holds both doctrines clearly and decidedly.”

I infer with pleasure, from the words which I have italicized, that the Archbishop recognizes the existence and respectability of an opposite opinion in the Church; and I submit that such difference will last *for ever, until* (Isai. xxxii. 14, 15) the words “eternal,” “everlasting,” are less loosely employed, better understood, and more clearly defined. I am puzzled to know how, when, and why these terms came to mean—as I suppose his Grace intends them to mean—absolutely endless.

It appears to me that in the passage, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal” (Matt. xxv. 46), our translators purposely used both words instead of one, in recognition of the principle that the single original term (*æonian*) varies with its connection, and is perhaps dependent upon the nature of its subject. They seem to have understood it to imply an indefinite duration, the length of which would be determined by the intrinsic nature of the subject which it predicated. But whether this be so or not, I observe that Jeremy Taylor defined the word to mean, “to the end of its proper period”—as still used of certain plants; and Dr. Watts affirmed that Christ’s kingdom was called “everlasting” (*æonian*), “because it was to continue to the end of the world” (*æon*)—which, indeed, suggests the query—If the noun-substantive (*æon*) imply limited duration, how can its adjective form denote the reverse?

It is needless to point out all the Scripture passages where the word is used of a finite period. The reader may be reminded of Jewish servitude; the covenant of circumcision; Solomon’s temple; the desolation of Jerusalem; duration of the earth—of all of which everlasting duration is affirmed. But Tillotson, Albert Barnes, and others—including, I suppose, our present Primate—would argue that “the word used here (Matt. xxvi. 46) is the same in the original as that used to express the eternal life of the righteous; so that if one can be proved to be limited in duration, the other can by the same arguments;” or again,—“if the term endless is not implied in one case, it cannot be insisted in the other.”

Now, I answer—I. Our assurance of endless life is quite in-

dependent of that which an indefinite adjunct can afford. Revelation is very explicit on the point—"Because I live, ye shall live also;" "They cannot die any more, for they are equal to the angels;" "Partakers of Christ;" "Who is made after the power of an endless life;" "So shall we *ever* be with the Lord" (the word rendered "ever" being radically the same as that rendered "always" in Matt. xviii. 10—"Their angels do *always* behold the face of My Father"); "And of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end" (surely there shall be an end of everything else): whence the arguments of Isaac Taylor, Rev. G. Rawlinson, and others, for the inheritance of endless life, are judiciously founded on other considerations than the mere promise of a duration, which cannot, either in its literal meaning or its Scriptural use, be shewn to preclude the possibility of termination, and which is used both literally and Scripturally in a limited sense. 2. But granting, for argument's sake, that "eternal life" means "endless life," still it does not follow, even from the antithesis of the words in Matt. xxv. 46, that everlasting punishment means endless punishment—as the following parallel cases will show:—In Rom. xvi. 25, the word is applied to transient earthly times, and yet is used just afterwards in the same context as the immediate predicate of God. Since this does not appear in the English version, it may be necessary to point out that the phrase "since the world began," rendered word for word, would read, "for everlasting times"—which times the Apostle speaks of as having "now" ended, and then applies the word as an attribute of God Himself.

A similar remark applies to Tit. i. 2, where we find the words "eternal life," and "everlasting" (though transitory) times.

Also, in Habbak. iii. 6: "The everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting." Now, the reasoning above cited of Albert Barnes is, I suppose, either valid or not. If it is valid,—“if the term endless is not implied in one case, it cannot be insisted on in the other,” and it follows that the term "everlasting" does not mean endless. If it is not valid, let us hear no more of Matt. xxvi. 46, in support of endless punishment.

W. W. F.

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## Notices of Books.

### SPIRIT-DRAWINGS.\*

AMONG the books which have in some measure prepared the public mind in this country for a better understanding of the spiritual philosophy, and have attracted to its consideration many educated and inquiring minds, one of the most conspicuous is the volume entitled *Spirit-Drawings*, and which we are happy to see has now reached a second edition. If the sale of books was in any ratio to their merits it would have been called for long since. Those who may have first learned of Spiritualism by this book, have been fortunate in being introduced to the subject by a writer so competent to trace its bearings and indicate the conclusions to which it legitimately leads. It is not a book to be lightly forgotten by those who have read it, and we doubt not that its careful perusal will have opened a new era in the mental history of many of its readers. It is a "personal narrative," and a most interesting one, of what has occurred in the writer's own family, under his own observation; and a calm, reflective following out of the new lines of thought which the facts so witnessed have opened out over the broad grounds of ethical, psychical, spiritual, and religious philosophy. While characterized by a tone of elevated religious thought and feeling, it is perfectly free from the narrowness and limitations of creed, and the dogmatism of sect.

It is not our intention to attempt here any abstract of this very instructive narrative, or to discuss that phase of Spiritualism with which it is chiefly, though not exclusively, concerned. The book will best tell its own story, and point its own moral, and as the volume is not large, and this is a cheap edition of it, the reader will get both its facts and philosophy first-hand at a very slight outlay in either money or time. We would, however, point out that it is not a mere reprint, but that the narrative is brought down to the present time, and that the most recent phases of it are related, and their bearing considered. The drawings to which it more especially relates, have been so attractive that more than two thousand persons have been to see them, embracing "clergy of different persuasions, artists, authors, medical men, lawyers, the 'learned,' and the ladies—in fact, the essential educated middle classes, now carrying on the world's work." The author's description of the way in which these drawings and their sequences have been received by the different

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\* *Spirit-Drawings*. A Personal Narrative, by W. M. WILKINSON. F. PITMAN, 20, Paternoster-row. Price 5s.

classes of his visitors, and his treatment of their several opinions of them is most felicitous. Perhaps, however, the chapter which at the present time will be read with most interest is the one headed "Conclusions and Teachings," in which the writer discusses what is becoming more and more the great theological question of the age—that of Inspiration. His reflections on the subject are so valuable that we hope he may be induced to treat the question more fully in a separate work. There can be no theme more worthy of his pen, and there are few so qualified as he to do it justice.

Incidentally, Mr. Wilkinson mentions a fact concerning the late Mr. Buckle, which is not generally known, but which many will now be gratified to learn:—

Just before Mr. Buckle and a clerical friend went on his last journey, which ended at Damascus, by his there entering the spirit state, he was astounded by witnessing those spiritual phenomena of which he had till then consistently denied the possibility, and against which possibility the whole of his two great volumes are a running protest. So completely was he taken aback by this great discovery, the full force of which he recognised at once, as destroying the scope and bearing of the philosophy of his life, that he lay awake for the two following nights pondering the consequences. He and three friends determined on his return to England to investigate the subject fully, and this wise resolve was only prevented by his lamented departure into that world himself, where he will have had full reason and opportunity for making his investigation.

Commending this work to the best attention of the reader, we conclude the present notice of it with the following extract from Mr. Wilkinson's "Introduction," as indicating the temper of mind in which inquiries of this—or, indeed, of any, kind—should be conducted, and without which we cannot expect any good to result, or any truth to be elicited from them:—

Incredulity of a fact, I take it, is that widespread weakness of the human mind, which is observed in men who have perfected their opinions, and have no room for learning anything more. A new fact to them is just one above the number that is convenient or necessary for them, and had they the power of creating, or of preventing creation, the inconvenient fact should not have existed. Indeed, if admitted into their completed system, "the little stranger" would destroy it altogether, by acting as a chemical solvent of the fabric!

But this is not the mode of the searcher after truth; and in determining the important question which it is intended to submit for consideration, I would rather forget much that I have been taught, or find it all unsound, than I would reject one single circumstance which I know and recognise as a truth. In all the questions that can by possibility be mooted, whether philosophical or otherwise, that theory is alone admissible which will explain all the attendant phenomena and observed facts, and which is, moreover, consistent with the nature of man, and the world of matter and of mind with which he is connected.

How true it is that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophies," and yet how seldom is this great truth remembered at the right time! Although natural facts, being based, as they are, upon, and the products of Divine laws, never change, how long it is before they are recognised, and adapted into our little self-formed systems; and with what throes and agonies has their acknowledgments invariably been attended! How much easier to say, "Impossible!" and to reject the fact, than to have to reconstruct a new theory which shall embrace it, and in which it can find its home! Disbelieve, therefore, after enquiry, if you see cause, but do not begin with disbelief.

There are many other passages we are tempted to quote, but in truth this is one of that class of books which cannot adequately, or even fairly, be represented by detached extract: it requires to be read as a whole in order that the simple truth and beauty of its several parts may be seen in their appropriate connexion. There is in it no laboured obscurity, no mistaking of darkness for depth; the thought finds fitting expression, and both are worthy of the subject.

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### THE TWO WORLDS.\*

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WE have received a copy of this work just as we are going to press, and too late to do more than give it our strongest recommendation to all our readers. It is our interest that they should each be able in conversation and writing to give a reason for the faith which they hold, and that each should be able not only to reply to objections, but to give broad and satisfactory information to all sincere inquirers. Here is a book in which they will find all the materials for doing this, and it has this additional and manifest advantage for the purpose, that in design and execution it is really a discovery of the broadest and best forms of Spiritualism, as existing in ancient and modern times, and amongst the churches and great men and women of the world. It therefore brings forward testimony and instances which are already fully acknowledged, and shows the world that it cannot deny the conclusions of the book, without denying the best part of its own beliefs, and dethroning those who are its greatest ornaments. It is indeed a Handbook of Spiritualism, bringing out a new idea, and with great labour collecting its instances, and by the author's remarks the reader has the advantage of finding the result ready made for his use, whether for controversy or for his own improvement. We hope to give a full review of it in the next number.

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### THE SPIRIT WORLD.†

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THE increasing interest in Spiritualism is again shewn by the issue of another periodical, of which the editor is Mr. Sheldon Chadwick, well known as a lecturer on mesmerism and biology. We are glad to see that we are not likely to be alone in the advocacy of the claims of Spiritualism, and that the public wants

\* *The Two Worlds, the Natural and the Spiritual: Their intimate Connexion and Relation illustrated by Examples and Testimonies, Ancient and Modern*, by THOMAS BREVIOR. (T.S.) London: F. PITMAN, 20, Paternoster-row. Price 9s.

† *The Spirit World: A Record of Spiritualism, Mesmerism, and Phrenology*. Published monthly, price 2d., 32, Alpha-place, Three Colts-lane, Cambridge-road, London, E.

will be supplied in directions which we are not able to cover. There is ample space and verge enough for many such, in the various phases of the subject, and we hope that Mr. Chadwick will meet the success which his earnestness deserves.

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## Correspondence.

### A CASE OF HAUNTING.

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR,—The following case of haunting occurred to my sister-in-law, who has allowed me to communicate it to you. Should you think it worthy of insertion we shall be glad, as there is a question connected with it which perhaps some of your correspondents will kindly answer. In the year 1860, my sister (who is a widow) removed with her two young children, and two female servants, to a large town in the West of England, where she engaged a modern furnished house for a twelvemonth (conditionally). The first circumstance that attracted attention, was the opening of doors, that had been previously locked and bolted. Finding them open, the servants concluded their mistress must have gone down into the kitchen, after they had left; she, also, on one or two occasions seeing them open, felt rather annoyed, as she had given stringent orders, being rather fearful of burglars, that the doors leading from the stairs and hall, should never be neglected. At last the housemaid, a most trustworthy person, and the cook, her sister, complained of the constant opening of doors after they had carefully closed them for the night; and the housemaid also named a remarkable circumstance which had happened to her. She was awakened from a sound sleep by a rather violent pressure on the eyelid, and on looking up perceived a hideous old woman standing beside her, and at the partially open door of the room, stood a beautiful little boy who seemed to be looking and smiling at her. Dreadfully frightened, she endeavoured to awaken her sister, but could not succeed, and both woman and child vanished. The mark on her eyelid was quite visible the next morning. The next manifestation occurred to my sister herself, and in the room underneath that occupied by the servants. She had gone to rest very sorrowful, and troubled in mind, and in the midst of sad thoughts she fell asleep, but was thoroughly awakened and startled by a sharp decided push in the side; immediately concluding it was burglars, she was exceedingly alarmed. In a moment there was a great rustling, and then her hand was gently taken and pressed. Strange to say, she recognized the hand instantly as that of a dearly loved sister long since gone to the spirit-land. A feeling of entire repose and peace succeeded the alarm, and thinking "if my dearest A. is permitted to visit me, I am safe," she soon after fell asleep. Now, the question is, was this visitation from her sister alone, sent to console her, or was it first an evil influence inhabiting the house, counteracted by the benign and heavenly influence of the sister. Nothing happened afterwards, except perhaps the occasional opening of the doors. They left at the end of nine months, not liking to remain the other three, and the house never seems to have had a permanent tenant afterwards. At last the owner let it unfurnished, and for a very short period. The last time my sister noticed the house before quitting the town finally, the windows were boarded up, and a large placard, "To Let," on the walls. I must add, my sister knew nothing of Spiritualism until I was talking to her about it, after telling me this strange story. I enclose my card, but I do not wish our names mentioned, as many of our friends would object to the circumstances being made public. I will therefore merely subscribe myself—C. S.

P.S.—I have been myself from early childhood subject to what I now consider spiritual impressions, and I am sometimes awakened by a voice speaking apparently quite distinctly close by me. It almost sounds like a foreign tongue, and I hardly catch any word excepting sometimes the last. Are either of your correspondents subject to a similar visitation?  
C. S.