

# The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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

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## REPETITION OF ONE OF PROFESSOR ZÖLLNER'S EXPERIMENTS WITH PRIVATE MEDIUMS.

BY NICOLAUS WAGNER, PROFESSOR OF ZOOLOGY, AND HONORARY MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY AT ST. PETERSBURG.

The reaction against the spiritual movement runs its course with the same violence as every fanatical opposition. If "blind faith" is the motive power of religious fanaticism, so also is the direction of the contrary movement determined by a force which is quite as illogical—"blind scepticism." In the one and the other the cause is the same—feeling, passionately excited, and resisting every cool, matter-of-fact (objective) consideration. There is no better proof of this than the attacks of the *savans* upon those of their colleagues who had the inexcusable temerity to satisfy themselves of the reality of mediumistic phenomena, and to publish their experiences to the world. Until their fall into Spiritualism the work and opinions of these men were recognised as entirely logical, accurate, and satisfying the conditions of scientific inquiry. But scarcely have these same scientists carried their researches into the region of mediumistic phenomena, than they are forthwith encountered by the feeling of antipathy; and that even before the phenomena themselves have been adjudicated upon by sound reason.\* Impelled by this antipathy, even the strongest understanding is blind; it seeks support from and attaches itself to such strangely childish arguments and suppositions, as to any sound thinking and unprejudiced person are in the highest degree absurd.

In the relations of the *savans* to my colleague, Professor Zöllner, who lately experimented in the mediumistic

\* Note by translator.—This reminds one of Mr. Crookes: "It is edifying to compare some of the present criticisms with those that were written twelve months ago. When I first stated in this journal (*Quarterly Journal of Science*) that I was about to investigate the phenomena of so-called Spiritualism, the announcement called forth universal expressions of approval. One said that my 'statements deserved respectful consideration;' another expressed 'profound satisfaction that the subject was about to be investigated by a man so thoroughly qualified as,' &c.; a third was 'gratified to learn that the matter is now receiving the attention of cool and clear-headed men of recognised position in science;' a fourth asserted that 'no one could doubt Mr. Crookes's ability to conduct the investigation with rigid philosophical impartiality;' and a fifth was good enough to tell its readers that 'if men like Mr. Crookes grapple with the subject, taking nothing for granted until it is proved, we shall soon know how much to believe.'

"These remarks, however, were written too hastily. It was taken for granted by the writers that the results of my experiments would be in accordance with their preconceptions. What they really desired was not *the truth*, but an additional witness in favour of their own foregone conclusion. When they found that the facts which that investigation established could not be made to fit those opinions, why, 'So much the worse for the facts.' They try to creep out of their own confident recommendations by declaring that 'Mr. Home is a clever conjurer, who has duped us all.' 'Mr. Crookes might, with equal propriety, examine the performances of an Indian juggler.' 'Mr. Crookes must get better witnesses before he can be believed.' 'The thing is too absurd to be treated seriously.' 'It is impossible, and therefore can't be.' 'The observers have all been biologically (!), and fancy they saw things occur which never really took place,' &c., &c.—Crookes's *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism*, p. 22.

field, we have the most complete evidence of the justice of the above observation. Satisfied through the force and reality of facts of the entire genuine objectivity of the mediumistic phenomena, he detailed his investigations. But as in the case of the investigations of Crookes and Boutlerow, so were these also forthwith exposed to suspicion, and set down to clever conjuring; and the name of the cautious and accurate investigator swelled the sad list of scientists who had been deceived by (so-called) charlatans.

Now, since the whole weight of this charge rests on the merely supposed fraud of the mediums, it will not be superfluous if I give to the Press the results of some investigations, analogous to those of Zöllner, which I have made with non-professional mediums. I do not in the least expect that this narrative, any more than hundreds such, will make the slightest impression on the fanaticism of the sceptic: on the other hand, I have the strongest belief that it will serve to confirm the growing conviction of those who are not disinclined to be convinced by the truth of things.

Since the force of the evidence chiefly depends on the confidence in the mediums, and in the persons composing the circle among whom the *séances* took place, I consider it essential first of all to discuss this question, and to follow it up with some historical statements. Moved by my and my colleague Boutlerow's writings in certain Russian periodicals, the family of the engineer and chemist E——, as also some of their intimate friends and relatives, desired to convince themselves of the reality or otherwise of the mediumistic phenomena. It must further be remarked that in these families earlier cases of a mediumistic character had been already observed, but had been ascribed to different causes, such as accident or hallucination.

Three ladies took part constantly in the sittings—the wife of the chemist, Sophia E——; her sister, A. M——; and her friend, A. L——, who had for years been united with Mrs. E—— in the most genuine friendship and sympathy. Of these ladies the two first were gifted with very remarkable mediumistic aptitudes. All three were distinguished by deep religious feelings, and every deception, even for a good end, is abhorred by them as a heavy sin. The manifestations occurring almost from the very first were regarded by them as miraculous, and this feeling was confirmed as the phenomena became more and more developed.

The fourth lady, who was likewise constantly present, was Miss Catherine L——; one of the greatest friends of Sophia E——, the wife of the chemist E——. At the commencement of the *séances* she was an atheist; all her convictions leaned to materialism. She held the principles of the well-known Russian publicist, Herr Pisaref, as irrefragable dogmas. The power of the manifestations shook, and at length overthrew, this fanaticism of hers.

This small circle was formed with the firm expectation that it would succeed in demonstrating the mediumistic manifestations to be simply a further development of already known physical phenomena. With this object the table at which they sat was placed upon glass supports, and round the feet of the table was wound a wire, the ends of which were attached to a galvanometer. Instead, however, of the expected physical phenomena, the table at the very first *séance* urgently demanded the alphabet, and by means of blows with the foot of the table the following sentence was spelled out:—

"I suffer because thou believest not."

"To whom does that refer?" asked those present.

"To Catherine L——."

"Who, then, art thou?" asked L——.

"I am thy friend, Olga N——."

This dearly-loved friend, also an atheist, had died about a year before, and on this account Catherine L—— was deeply astonished and moved by the information communicated through the table. This information, given in the same *séance*, referred to different particulars of an event known only to Catherine L——, and thoroughly convinced her of the existence of the soul of her beloved friend, even though in another world.

Henceforth, the before-mentioned physical experimentation was laid aside, the conversations were more and more striking, and confirmed their faith in the reality of another world. This faith soon became a firm conviction with all. To show the relations of the circle, and especially of Catherine L——, to the phenomena, I here add some extracts from her diary, which was written for her own eye only, and communicated to me after her death, which happened somewhat later.

29th March, 1876, 1.30 a.m. Scarcely had S—— and I retired to rest, and left off talking that we might sleep, than suddenly there sounded a beating on the wall at the head of my bed. I supposed at first that some one was probably passing on the stairs adjoining my wall, but after some minutes the knocking was repeated, and with such force that S—— also became attentive, and asked me if I had not knocked. Now I guessed what it was.

"Probably my Olga is now come to me," said I. In assent sounded immediately three times, one after the other, a muffled blow, as if a soft wall had been struck with a hammer wrapped up in something soft.

"Is it thou, Olgehen?" I asked the spirit aloud. Three regular knocks answered.

"Can I sleep quietly this night?" Again the like three knocks.

30th March, 6.45 p.m.

"Why did you knock at my wall yesterday, Olinka?"

"Evil spirits prevent you going to the supper. Thou wouldst do it, and hast abandoned this intention. I came yesterday to say to thee that thou, dear one, shouldst not obey them. I will not come for a whole week. I have much to do. On Thursday, after the supper, I will visit thee."

"So, if I take the supper, thou will'st come to me?"

"Yes! and I will make thee a present."

"What sort of a present?"

"Thou can'st show it to every one."

"Thou will'st give it to me on the day of the Communion?"

"Yes, in the church."

1st April. I have confessed. After the supper I went and took my place in the church. Suddenly in my hand there came a nosegay of white rose and myrtle, tied with a lock of the dear to me well-known hair! That was the promised present.

Come home from church, we sat ourselves at the table. Our heavenly friend was already among us. Her first words were—

"I wish you all happiness. I am happy for you. My darling! art thou content with my present?"

"What significations have the rose and myrtle?"

"Pure love. Eternity."

I could scarcely restrain my tears.

30th April, 10 o'clock. S. E——, sitting on a chair, fell into a trance, of which the spirit informed us.

Afterwards a hand was shown to us, one after the other; at our wish it touched our hands, and came close to the sight of those of us who had not been able to distinguish it clearly enough. I asked the spirit whether I could kiss this hand? The spirit replied that its hand would be between the table and the cloth, and that I might kiss it through the cloth. Twice I kissed the

dear hand, and convinced myself thereby thoroughly of its reality: it was a living, flexible hand.

I have given these extracts to show the genuine and cordial relations of the deceased to these observers of the phenomena which took place before their eyes. Again, I repeat, that she wrote her diary for herself alone, and probably never thought of the possibility that extracts from it might appear in the Press. The circle itself, in the sittings of which she took part, was exclusively interested in the phenomena for their own sake, and was utterly and altogether unconcerned with the Spiritualistic propaganda. All the usual mediumistic phenomena, such as the self-moving of objects, lights, appearance of hands, &c., took place at these *séances*. Especially often were objects brought to the circle, most frequently pictures of saints, hair, and flowers. During a *séance* in the spring the whole table was literally covered with flowers. During another *séance* the daughter of Sophia E—, a young lady of fourteen years old, received a live green frog, to make up for the loss of one that had died a few days before. This frog remained with her for some days alive, and afterwards disappeared.

On one occasion the spirit of Olga N— declared that she would fully materialise, and designated Sophia E— as the strongest medium, through whose means the materialisation would be effected. On the evening appointed by the spirit the medium was laid upon a sofa and separated from the rest by a curtain formed by hanging up a plaid. She remained, however, so far visible that her position could always be observed. It was half dark in the room. After the medium had fallen into a trance she was several times raised in the air, placed upon the boards, and again carried back to the sofa. Afterwards a white figure, covered with a thick veil, was raised behind and above the curtain. Quietly, calmly, it came over the curtain to the table at which the party were sitting. Then it went to Catherine L—, embraced and kissed her, touched her face with its hand, and disappeared, whilst raised again in the air. At the next *séance*, which was in darkness, the phenomenon was repeated, and Catherine L— was covered with a veil, which was left behind upon her.\* After this phenomenon the sittings of the circle almost ceased. Amazed with what they had seen they were all convinced that it would be a sin, after these proofs of the reality of another world and of a higher power, to continue the *séances*, though at the same time they did not refuse individual communications and instructions from that world, and for this purpose availed themselves from time to time of the usual means of intercourse, such as table tipping and psychography. Of course, therefore, the phenomena did not cease, and they were not seldom concerned in different events which happened to the families of the mediums.

All this had gone on for about a year, up to the winter of 1877, when I accidentally made the acquaintance of the chemist E— and his family. Entertaining the wish to receive some proofs of the objectivity and reality of the phenomena, I begged some of those who had taken part in the earlier *séances* to afford me the opportunity. I obtained their entire consent, and found the greatest readiness to

\* The condition of the medium during the trance made a deep impression on all present, the most lasting one, naturally, upon her husband. After the *séance*, she was for some days ill; at the same time there appeared upon her left side a broad blood-swollen spot. (Compare the description of a materialisation from the left side of the medium, Dr. Monck, in *Psychische Studien*, 1877.—Note by the editor). These unfortunate results were supposed by the sitters to be owing to their having put forward the *séance* contrary to the appointed time.

comply with my wish, although the sentiments of the whole circle were openly opposed to my opinions. This opposition was especially marked in the case of Catherine L—, who, as compensation for her discarded materialism, was now fanatically addicted to ultra-orthodoxy. She continually maintained against me that no evidences of these things could ever convince any one, since they were matters of faith and not of knowledge. Such being the relations of the circle, it was not to be expected that we should obtain any decided results.

During the first sitting in which I took part, and which was held in a dim light, a hand was formed above the small table, which was covered with a cloth, and afterwards came out from under the cloth, remaining above the table some minutes, and, gently moving, touched those who inclined themselves towards it. This was the only materialisation, and the only remarkable phenomenon in the series of not very numerous *séances* which lasted up to the end of the winter.

Catherine L— had long suffered from a chronic catarrh, which at this time took the form of consumption. Her disposition was still hostile to my objects, so that we were compelled to give up the *séances*. She died in the arms of Mrs. Sophia E—, amidst the proofs of her love, friendship, and affection.

[A long note is here omitted. It relates to particulars about Miss L— and her funeral.—Translator.]

In the autumn of the year 1878 the relations of the circle to the mediumistic phenomena were completely changed. After the spirit of the deceased Catherine L— had given consent to the continuance of the sittings, and promised good success, remarking, however, at the same time, that the results would be received with distrust, the circle was widened by the addition of some young people; the engineer, the mechanist M—, was one of the constant sitters. Sometimes the physician L— took part in the sittings.

In the very first sitting we were directed by raps to repeat the experiment of Professor Zöllner; and since it is the object of this publication to confirm that experiment, I will not dwell upon other more or less remarkable phenomena which occurred at our *séances*.

We took an ordinary folding slate, with clasps; on each side within was fastened, by means of wax, paper blackened with soot. The slate was then tied together with a string, and the ends of the string, as well as the edges of the slate, were fastened with four seals with the signet of the chemist E—, and the signet was entrusted to me for safe custody at home. We were informed by means of raps that this slate must lie upon the table for four *séances*, and impressions would then be found upon it. At the *séances* the table was always covered with a cloth, and between this and the table the slate was laid. With the development of the phenomena the slate began to move of itself. It went from one to the other, in order that it might remain for some minutes under the hands of each of those present.

In the third sitting we were enjoined to seal the slate with seven seals, with another signet of the chemist E—. We asked, "Is there anything on the slate?" It was answered, "I do not know." Thereupon we asked if we might open it? The answer was, "Yes, you can." We opened the slate; both papers were untouched. We closed it again, bound, and sealed it with seven seals. The signet I again took away with me. At the following sitting violent movements of the slate again occurred, and finally I was directed to lay the slate on my knees. I did so, and then placed my hands again upon the table. For some minutes the slate remained quiet; then I had the sensation as if some one lightly touched it for a while. Soon after we were told, through sharp decided

raps, to take away the slate. To the question, "Is there anything on it?" a strong definite affirmative answer was returned. "Can we open it?" "Yes!"

We struck a light (the *seance* was in the dark), opened the slate, and perceived an impression on each side: upon the right, that of a hand; upon the left, that of a foot. All three female mediums and the chemist E—— at once recognised in the impression the hand of Catherine L——, which had characteristic peculiarities. It was unusually large and long for a female hand, the little finger being strongly bent out. The foot, also unusually large, could not find room enough on the slate, and this impression, moreover, was not very clear. The hand was much more sharply impressed, if not quite so distinct as was the case with Zöllner's impression. (I here add the copy of our impression.)\* For greater certainty this impression was shown to a sculptor, who well knew the hand of the deceased, and he at once asked, "Is this an impression of the hand of Catherine L——?" He supposed that the impression had been taken during her life. We were apparently ourselves partly to blame for the want of distinctness in the impression. Every one who is familiar with mediumistic phenomena knows their whimsicality, and that promises given at *seances* are often not fulfilled. Not much expecting success, we went only superficially to work in the preparation of the slate—did not fasten the paper with smooth regularity over the sides of the slate, and the soot was not thickly and regularly spread. Had we only found anything when we opened the slate after the third *seance*, which would have given us but a remote assurance of future results, we should then have rectified every defect in our preparations.

The above-recorded objective proof I regard as sufficient to obviate every suspicion of deceit. Had it been even possible to imitate the seal and open the slate, yet was it at any rate impossible, and indeed without aim or object, to imitate the impression of the hand of the deceased C. L——. All those who took part in the *seance* were "believers;" all were in like manner interested in the experiment: no one among them was so depraved and mischievous as to contrive so cruel a mystification, cruel in relation to the persons to whom the memory of the deceased was sacred. That young lady was more than a relative in the family of the chemist E——; one could not but see the joyful rapture of the mediums in the moment when they recognised in the impression the hand of Catherine L——. All crossed themselves and wept: all regarded this result as a miracle.

After this phenomenon some of those present proposed to terminate the sittings, since no better, more objective, more all-convincing, complete proof could be obtained; I, however, wished to continue them, though they must at all events soon cease. The next sitting had already lost the characteristics of our usual *seances*. The phenomena were languid and intermittent. The spirit of Catherine L—— declared that it could not appear for a whole month. Other disturbing circumstances concurred, so that we resolved to postpone our *seances* to a more opportune time. An unexpected misfortune intervening compels us to renounce them for a long time, perhaps for always.

In giving this simple history, with its child-like full conviction and faith in the personality of the spirit (Fetichism), I repeat that it can have no effect upon the stubborn scepticism of those who have become the slaves of their *à priori* convictions. This narrative can have only an irritating tendency with such, excite their

scepticism up to a fanatical point, and drive them, even should they admit the facts, to discover some explanation even more senseless than Carpenter's "unconscious cerebration." But those with whom Fetichism\* is no subjective product of our brain and feeling, who recognise the necessity and legitimacy of individuality as the lever of the development of humanity and of well-being, those will find in these facts the proof and confirmation of their views.

Again, these facts convince us of the necessity of widening the domain of recognised science and its methods and means for the exploration of the invisible and unknown world, of the existence of which we have in our hearts from childhood so clear, so simple, and so warm a presentiment.—*Translation of Detached Sheet from "Psychische Studien," July 1879.*

#### A NOVEL KIND OF PSYCHOGRAPHY.

BY LOUISA ANDREWS.

I HAVE just received from Mr. Epes Sargent a detailed account of certain phenomena occurring under his own observation and in his own house. With his permission I send you such extracts as I think will interest your readers.

Some statements in regard to the singular form of psychography described in the letter referred to have been published; but as the conditions under which the writing was obtained were, in this case, exceptionally satisfactory, I am sure the account given by my esteemed friend will be appreciated as a peculiarly trustworthy record of very remarkable facts. The letter from which I shall quote was written on the 23rd of June, and the writer says:—

"The day before yesterday, in the evening, Mr. Robert Cooper, Mrs. Thayer (the flower medium), Mr. Colville, and Mr. Powell and his wife (the former a medium for some remarkable phenomena), called upon me, the object being to introduce Mr. Powell, a man of about thirty-four, I should say, who only found out last November that he had strong medial powers. He is controlled by one *Tecumseh*, an Indian spirit, and on his forefinger something exudes, with which he can cover a slate with writing. He took my forefinger, without touching the inside tip of it, and immediately a little protuberance, or something, seemed to form upon it, and he could write with my finger as well as with his own. He wrote with my wife's forefinger in this way, also with that of a lady visitor. That there was nothing on the slate producing the mark was evident from his using my slate, and having me use it in the same way.

"But the really miraculous event of the evening was this—the slates being all under my own charge and carefully washed under my superintendence. The Indian control had left, and the performances were, as we supposed, at an end, Mr. Colville being entranced for an improvisation. Suddenly a spirit that rarely comes got possession of Powell, and he called for a big slate. Then, standing up, side by side with me (all Mrs. Powell's movements being watched by me), close under the blaze of three gaslights in the chandelier, he allowed me to select a clean slate—clean on both sides—and place it in his hands. One side of it was held by the medium, the other side by myself. Waving his forefinger in the air he flourished it rapidly, without touching the surface of the slate, as if drawing a picture; then paused a moment, and seemed to be writing. Then, loosing his hold, he told me to look; and on the under surface of the slate was a neatly-drawn flower, with the

\* There is here a footnote relating to the illustration, omitted in this translation, as the illustration itself is not given in the copy before the translator.—*Note by Translator.*

\* "Fetichismus" is the word used, but not, it is conceived, in the sense that word bears in English.—*Note by Translator.*

name of the control, *Wynonie*, written under it: this in the face of six spectators besides myself. Nothing could be more irresistibly convincing. All the conditions were perfect, and there was no conceivable loophole for fraud or sleight-of-hand on any one's part. There was no tampering with slates. I had the four he brought placed on my right on a large sofa occupied by myself alone, while most of the time—except when we stood up at the last—Mr. Powell sat on my left upon a chair where he could not reach a slate. There was no look nor movement to excite distrust. His sleeves were closely tied with twine; his fingers were wiped and examined.

"The concluding phenomena—drawing and writing in the air, and covering the under surface of a slate thereby with written words and a picture—distanced the other phenomena so far that they seemed to sink into insignificance, truly remarkable as they are. Mr. Powell was tested in Philadelphia by a committee of six scientific men (two of them physicians), and they reported in regard to the protuberance on the finger of the person writing:—

"The microscopic appearance was that of albuminous cells filled with a pigment. There were also fragments of cuticle and epiphytal structures. The chemical analysis showed that the substances were composed of albumen, starch, phosphate of lime and phosphate of ammonia, with an amorphous pigment matter, without any traces of lead, slate, or other substances ordinarily used for writing on slates."

"The fingers had been thoroughly washed in chemicals, the slates washed, and every precaution taken. The committee reported that they resorted to many expedients to account for the phenomena on other principles than those claimed by Mr. Powell (the spiritual), but their efforts were unsuccessful. They were perfectly satisfied there was no deception. The names of the members of the committee are Professor William Paine, M.D., B. F. Dubois, John P. Hayes, Alfred Lawrence, Reuben Garter, M.D., and Francis J. Keffer—the last-named being the only Spiritualist of the number.

"My experiments with Mr. Powell took place in my own library, and the conditions were such as to preclude utterly all theories of imposture, aid from a person in collusion, or hallucination produced on the minds of lookers-on."

I will add nothing to the above quotation, except the expression of a hope that statements made by so able, experienced, and conscientious an investigator may be fully appreciated by all interested in the subject.

1, Bernard-street, Russell-square, July 7th, 1879.

#### SPIRITUALISM IN EGYPT.

THE little Society of Spiritualists at Cairo has broken up from a somewhat remarkable cause. Count Nichichiewich, one of the most active workers in connection with Spiritualism in Egypt, says that at first everything was flourishing in connection with the Cairo Society, but it let in new members too easily, and soon found within its ranks a number of persons who had been attracted solely by the charms of a lady who was the chief medium. The Society has been brought to an end by mutual consent, after a troubled existence of one year's duration.

*Séances* are held in several of the principal towns in Egypt, and Count Nichichiewich wishes the movement there to take a more organised form.

#### WHO WROTE SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS?

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

No doubt Ben Jonson, being in the secret, wrote lines in praise of Shakespeare, because he could not praise the works in any other name; but he omits the name of William Skakespeare in his list of the great wits of his time, a thing quite impossible if he had believed Shakespeare to have been the author of the plays. The same of Sir Tobie Matthaw, who clearly knew the secret too, by the wording of that P.S. in his letter to Bacon—"The most prodigious wit that ever I knew, of my nation and of this side of the sea, is of your lordship's name, though he be known by another;" and hence Sir Tobie's praise of Bacon as follows, and the ignoring of Shakespeare:—"We have also rare compositions of minds amongst us, which looks so many fair ways at once that I doubt it will go near to pose any other nation of Europe to muster out in any age four men who, in so many respects, should excel four such as we are able to show—Cardinal Wolsey, Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, and Sir Francis Bacon; for they were all a kind of monsters in their several ways." "The fourth was a creature of incomparable abilities of mind, of a sharp and catching apprehension, large and faithful memory, plentiful and sprouting invention, deep and solid judgment for as much as might concern the understanding part—a man so rare in knowledge, of so many several kinds, indeed with the facility and felicity of expressing it all, in so elegant, significant, so abundant, and yet so choice and ravishing a way of words, of metaphors, and allusions, as perhaps the world has not seen since it was a world." This may seem a great hyperbole and strange kind of riotous excess of speech, but the best means of putting me to shame will be for you to place any man of yours by this of mine. And, in the meantime, even this little makes a shift to show that the genius of England is still not only eminent, but predominant, for the assembling great variety of those rare parts which used to be incompatible anywhere else." We have the same magnificent praise from Osborne and other contemporaries, who speak from personal observation. I shall have convinced no one by what I have written, but perhaps may induce a few to read Judge Holmes's splendid volume, or at least have a fuller apprehension of the vast and varied genius of Francis Bacon, and just such a man as we should suppose must have been the author of the plays.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.

Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself and you shall have the support of the world.—*Emerson.*

LUNACY LAW REFORM.—On the first instant, Mrs. Louisa Lowe, hon. sec. of the Lunacy Law Reform Association, lectured at the Quebec Hall, Great Quebec-street, "On the Duty of Spiritualists as regards the Lunacy Laws." She said that the question of the Lunacy Laws, important as it was to the whole nation, was of especial importance to Spiritualists, in the same way that the question of religious toleration had been of special importance to the early Christians. From the bigotry of the Lunacy Commissioners, who she stated to have declared Spiritualism to be insanity, all Spiritualists were exposed to especial danger. Dr. Carter Blake was in the chair, and stated that the evidence given before the late Select Committee on Lunacy Law raised questions about the actions of certain of the Lunacy Commissioners, and rendered a Royal Commission of Inquiry into their conduct highly necessary. Petitions to Parliament and memorials to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and the Lord Chancellor praying for a Royal Commission, were unanimously passed.

## A HAUNTED HOUSE AT SHANKLIN.

BY F. W. PERCIVAL, M.A.

SOME years ago I was staying with the late Sir Gilbert Scott, and in speaking of Shanklin he told me that he had once taken a house there which was haunted, but I did not at the time ascertain what had occurred while he was living in it. His autobiography, entitled *Personal and Professional Recollections*, has lately been edited by his oldest son, Mr. Gilbert Scott, and the house in question is alluded to as follows on page 252: "On one occasion we took another house there (at Shanklin), the grounds of which extended to the very edge of the 'chine,' and which proved to be haunted."

To this the editor has appended the following note, in which he gives his own recollections of what took place at the house, and I think that they will be of general interest. Possibly some of your readers, who are now at Shanklin, or intend to visit it this summer, will make inquiries on the spot, and publish the results of their investigations. Haunted houses are so rare, and zealous psychologists are now so numerous, that "the letting value of the villa" is not likely "to suffer" even if the footsteps are still to be heard.

In a letter which I have just received from Mr. Gilbert Scott he says: "There is little that I can add to the facts respecting the haunted house at Shanklin, stated in my note in the *Recollections*. The sounds were most *unmistakable*. I can now recall how clearly I used to hear the pacing tread when kneeling near the window at family prayers, the comparative silence allowing them to be the better heard."

The house may no longer exist, but if it can be identified, it would be interesting to know whether "the village story" remains unaltered, and whether it has any foundation in fact.

*Note by the Editor of "Personal and Professional Recollections."*

I well remember the circumstances. Every evening after dark footsteps, as of a man pacing slowly up and down the verandah, upon the garden front of the house, were distinctly to be heard. We at first took it to be the gardener. Finding that this was not the case, we boys used to lie in wait, and when the footsteps were heard, leap out into the verandah. I can well recollect doing this upon a bright moonlight night, and our amazement at finding no one. This failing, we stretched things across the track, so as to render it impossible for any one to walk there in the dark without stumbling, but these interfered in no way with the even regularity of the strange footfalls.

Another time we strewed the flagging with sand, and when the footsteps were again heard, we went out with a lantern and carefully examined the sanded pavement: not a trace of any kind was to be found. I do not remember that we ever thought of there being anything supernatural in the matter, only the noises were unaccountable, and so strongly piqued our curiosity. Our groom, who slept in the house, came one morning about this time to my mother, and asked for leave to go to his home. When pressed for his reason for this sudden wish, he stated that he had in the early dawn seen by his bedside a ghostly female figure, from which he inferred that his mother, his only female relative, was in danger. He was with some difficulty persuaded to wait the result of a letter to his mother, who, of course, was found to be well enough. We thought no more of this, judging it, in spite of the extraordinary impression which it had evidently made upon him, to be nothing but a dream of indigestion. More than a year after this we happened to meet some friends of ours who, as we then found, had

occupied the same house during part of the following season. They asked us whether we had not been disturbed by ghostly noises, and so forth, and told us that they had themselves been so annoyed that they had had to leave the house, and that after giving it up they had ascertained that every one in the village knew the house to be "haunted," but that the fact was carefully kept secret lest the letting value of the villa should suffer. The village story goes—I know nothing of the truth of this—that in that house, in about the year 1820, a wicked uncle murdered his niece and ward in a cellar which is accessible only by a trap-door in the floor of the room in which our groom slept. The old gentleman is said to have been accustomed to pace up and down that verandah after dark for many years, during which the crime remained undetected. I attach no particular value to these facts myself, but as my father has referred to them, and the evidence is first-hand, it may be worth while to give it. The footfalls, the attempts made to discover their cause, the fact that the groom made that statement to my mother, and that he was without a doubt sincerely alarmed, I can vouch for. I also heard myself the statement of the lady who rented the house the next season. Of the rest I can only say—

"I know not how the truth may be,  
I tell the tale as 'twas told me."—Ed.

## MATERIALIZED SPIRITS.

LAST Wednesday night, at a *seance* held at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, while Mr. Williams, the medium, was held by both hands in the dark, by Mr. Serjeant Cox on the one side of him and Mrs. Duncan on the other, a living spirit form was seen several times by everybody present. It was floating over the table, robed in white, and it illuminated itself momentarily with a flashing light held in its hands. The other witnesses present were Mrs. Gregory, Archdeacon Dunbar, Mrs. Wiseman, Mr. Annesley Mayne, of the Junior Carlton Club; Miss M. Houghton, Mr. Townsend, Mdlle. Huet, and Mr. Harrison. Somewhat similar manifestations took place on the previous Wednesday. At both *seances* playing musical instruments sometimes flew about like bats, gently touching the heads of some of the sitters in their rapid flight. Last Wednesday a vase of flowers was taken from a table about two yards from the medium, while he was held; the flowers were then divided out, and given to several of the sitters by materialised spirit hands.

If we cannot lay the foundation, it is something to clear away the rubbish; if we cannot set up truth, it is something to pull down error.—*Macaulay*.

At the close of the session of the Psychological Society, Mr. Serjeant Cox entertained the members of the Council and a few other friends at a dinner, or, more accurately speaking, a banquet, at his house in Russell-square.

LAST Tuesday, at a meeting of the Council of the National Association of Spiritualists, the members present were Mr. March, Mr. Stainton-Moses, Miss Houghton, Mrs. Maltby, Mr. Reimers, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. and Mrs. D. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Tietkins, Dr. Speer, Mr. R. Pearce, Miss Withall, Mr. Meugens, Mr. E. D. Rogers, and Mr. Theobald. Mr. A. Calder presided. A vote of condolence to the friends of the late Mr. Benjamin Coleman was passed. The resignations of Mr. Herbert, Mr. J. W. Fletcher, and Miss Younge were accepted. Mrs. Lowe's resignation, on the ground that the Council had invidiously treated Dr. Carter Blake differently to other persons who had acted in the same manner as himself, was accepted, and no explanation was given by the Council why Dr. Blake had been treated unlike others.

## THE RELIGION OF SPIRITUALISM.

No. I.

BY ISABEL DE STEIGER.

THE above title is the ordinary way of rendering this idea, but perhaps the more correct expression would be, "The religion taught by Spiritualism."

I think Spiritualists are very generally being more and more possessed with the idea that there is a religion taught to us by Spiritualism, and that to this goal we are certainly tending.

It would be useless for me to argue badly what so many have argued so well, that a religion is necessary for us, and that human nature infallibly has made and will make one, and declares that both for its happiness and welfare, on the whole, a religion of some sort is demanded.

Let us, therefore, suppose that this fact is established, that at all events the majority of persons require a religion. Next, have this majority got it? Most people who have not liberated their souls into the glorious realm of *real* free thought will reply, "Of course we have; we have Christianity in its various forms and phases: it is blasphemous of us to want more." Some others, *i.e.*, the thinkers, will say, "It is true we have a religion, for we own we want one; but it seems powerless to effect its ends, and we confess it does not satisfy our ideas of religion. It is strange that our ideas and desires fly beyond what is given to us as comfort to our souls in the shape of religion; but, nevertheless, they do, and we feel we want something more. We realise that Christianity has not done what its teachers say it can and does do; moreover, we question whether the very nature of some of the doctrines taught by these same teachers would not prevent these promised results." It is these non-satisfied minds that the spiritual movement will most affect, for they feel that we need fresh cause to kindle the enthusiasm of religion in our hearts.

We hear it perpetually said, and read it written over and over again, that nowadays there is no real enthusiasm: what there is, such is either assumed or it belongs to early youth, or, at all events, is very fleeting; and that the enthusiasm of old which made people build grand and glorious temples, or the enthusiasm which gave them strength to die for their opinions, is dead. It seems, judging from results, that this is true. However, let us consider because the expression of enthusiasm is dead, does it prove that the capacity for it is likewise dead? I think not, and believe that, far from its being dead, this vital feeling is only dormant, ready to kindle into fresher and more glorious life had it once more fuel to feed its slowly flickering embers. To most thinking minds—I mean those who have given honest and fair thought, the best of their reasoning powers in all justice to every phase of opinion—enthusiasm is but resting; they can, however, see nothing in the present forms of religion as taught in Christendom to rouse what they feel *could* be roused if there were fair cause for it. They cannot assume it for less cause than they require for its real production. Some minds have for a time had their darkness brightened by the revival of a high ritual; their enthusiasm began to burn up, but only to die down still lower; the novelty wore away, and sufficient fuel had not been given, and no more was forthcoming. To these people the conscious and unconscious hypocrisy of most Christians is a cause of great disgust. They *will* look things in the face, and these so-called Christians *won't*, and say it is not religious to do so. In a recent article in *The Nineteenth Century* I read this phrase—"Without passionate emotion of the nobler sort, man would lose even the clipped wings by which he some-

times flies a length higher than his fellows." Also—"Some of our rising artists in romance seek in pre-Christian models for the nobler expressions of human feeling." And again—"All founders of religions have recognised the large part that emotion should play in the conduct of life." These are all pregnant words, and embody much of the spirit of the times. This spirit, no doubt, is the recognition of a general yearning for some higher truths, some nobler developments, through which man may fairly say that his highest faculties, his most ardent enthusiasm, once again may have full action.

There is a prevalent mournfulness in Christendom. In England we may pretend that our climate weighs upon us; and that may, indeed, be a secondary cause, but not a primary one, for we each of us know that when at any period in our individual lives we are thoroughly happy, secondary causes are not even noticed. Putting aside the joyousness of youth, or the hilarity of selfish or animal pleasures, we must feel that there is an indescribable sadness running parallel with much intellectual activity. There is no stagnation; on the contrary, life is fuller and more earnest than ever, and there is decidedly a leaning towards actually trying to develop the emotional side of humanity. Sentiment, imagination, are no longer scoffed at. Great orators condescend to say from public platforms that the powers of imagination ought not to be kept down, and that poetry, the drama, and the fine arts should be cultivated as necessities, not as extras, to education. So much is this teaching already followed out that hundreds of pedestals are reared as altars on which long-forsaken art rapidly ascends. Alas! so astray is the public mind, and so unable to discriminate true and false art, or to understand its real functions and powers, that as yet this blind worship is productive of no especial good. The idol is worshipped, not the idea expressed through its figure. Still, people are on their knees, seeking, groping, on all sides for something, anything, to rouse enthusiasm, to call forth emotion in their chilled hearts, which can thrill still for noble deeds and noble thoughts. Anything to stifle the deadly poison of the question, "Is life worth living? Do I want to be out of it?"

The Church of Christendom has apparently never been so prosperous; but do we not now know that its foundations, said to be on rock, are discovered to be but on sand? With feverish zeal some people try to cure the malady of unbelief, and to stifle what they think is the sad wail of doubt and disbelief, which is now the mournful undertone sighing here, there, and everywhere. First one "point of faith" is conceded, and then another is questioned, and many people now read without any passionate emotion whatever, in their common magazines, onslaughts on the whole structure of Christianity itself. They like their particular form of it, and as long as that fortress is untouched they calmly allow ideas to take root, any one of which would have set Christendom aflame once upon a time. So here people are—one set calm and unenthusiastic for want of thought, and the other set sad and emotionless from too much thought. Most people are making untold strides in educating the intellect, but none particularly like to say what they are doing for their souls; indeed, its destination, now that its eternal punishment or salvation is not considered a fixed fact, is somewhat uncertain, and the orthodox party take refuge in begging the question by replying with a few texts, and the notification of *their* faith, at all events, in something vague; the unorthodox become thoughtful, and seek in the cultivation of the finer faculties of man a solace for the growing sadness of their hearts, and find it not. Art, poetry, are beautiful expressions of divine ideas, but no

one can be entirely satisfied with outside results; we all seek to find our *own* souls. Ought, however, this spirit of sadness to brood over us as it does? Are our minds made to live and die either in flat dulness or deadly disappointment? Ought we to seek *only* in the pages of history, miscalled Pagan history, "to find models for the nobler expression of human feeling?" No! Emphatically no. If this is a dead age, it is of our own making, and not God's making. He has given us the same materials as of yore, and we throw them from us, and say they do not suit us.

Religion has been always of our own making, and we have suited our needs, and in so doing have naturally obeyed God's law; but we are no longer obeying it. Spiritual gifts are showered upon us as of yore. Once the world opened its heart and hands for them, and they were filled and blessed. From the earliest known religions down to Christianity, whenever the world wanted a new development of the divine nature, a new development came; and until now the world never knew this deadly feeling of having no religion and no God.

Christianity has done its duty well; we are all the better for it. It has worked its purposes for our good, but those purposes are ended now, because Christianity has landed us on the shores of a new continent, and she bids us explore the new realms she opens to us. Christianity has taught us the value of free thought, and for centuries she has been employed in the work of *materialising* us for our benefit. It was required by the needs of humanity that the reasoning faculties should be powerfully awakened, and that those of faith should, on the contrary, be curtailed, and this Christianity has done for us. In no other faith are there such seekers after God—such doubt as to revelation. The Oriental religionists are still as faithful as ever to their ideas of revealed religion; their time has not yet come, or its time has been, may be. But in any case *our* time has now come, and therefore come this sadness, and gloom, and doubt; for it is a transition period, and no one knows where he is. Men are looking in the dust for the origin of life, and in vain; but they are not to blame; the exigencies of the time require it, and we are now at the ultimatum of our period, when materialism has reached its apogee, when our intellectual guides tell us they cannot find God; and if there is one we must find one for ourselves, for, frankly speaking, they own the fruits of their deepest research, and the efforts of their finest capacities and their profoundest labours are all in vain. They are too noble to deny, only because they cannot demonstrate; but they say to us, "Leave us alone, we don't want God, and if you do we cannot help you." And so they leave us to our religious guides, who tell us we must first have faith, and believe what they say; so here are we groping, floundering, looking here, there, and everywhere; and because we begin to see in our darkness, and to know we must have light now that these dark clouds of Christianity are rolling from us, and it is revealed to us that we are a people sunk in materialism; having our reasoning powers in full working order, and letting them slumber; trying to kindle our dormant enthusiasms by secondary means, and having our emotions chiefly roused by material causes only, the love of money principally. When a millionaire dies there is excitement enough respecting the destination of his wealth; but how few positively, really and truly and honestly, interest themselves about the destination of his soul? Christianity has enabled people to throw what they would call a decent veil over such matters, and it would be improper to attempt to raise it. This veil has been getting so big and thick that it is not to be wondered if many people begin to doubt whether

there is any other side at all! Money is now the god of this world, through whose power we are enabled to worship the other gods. Alas! there is no Moses to punish us collectively for kneeling before the golden calf; but we begin to feel that this worship of Mammon—dead against the teaching, but entirely *with* the practice of Christianity—is also one of the deadly chills which cools our emotions. Art is worshipped, as I said before, blindly, and principally because its commercial side is the one chiefly recognised. For the sake of money, or for the want of it, that most noble art music is lost to many, and is not as melodious as it should be, and the divine voice, "the lost language of the soul," is chiefly to be heard through golden ear-trumpets. Politicians and orators are losing their fiery ardour; they all agree things are bad and require mending, and that with all our boasted civilisation we are not the happy people we say we are; and we have left off, unremarked, much of the prate of former days, when we thanked God for having looked after our country better than others, for we are not quite so sure now that *He* has.

The end of it all is, that though we are more curiously anxious about the positive fact of our souls than we ever were before, we talk less; but we don't like the reply of our leading minds that they know nothing about it, because we feel that the faculty of blind faith is gone from us. We are in reality far more anxious than ever we were to know about our souls. Do they or do they not exist? Is Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man* true philosophy? we ask; and if Mr. Greg's statement that "Death is the greatest tragedy in life" is true, it is a question whether we ought to be the means of exposing any fresh beings to the tragedy we cannot avoid for ourselves. If our modern scientists are more trustworthy than Socrates and Plato, and know nothing of the soul, what a misfortune for us it is to be born to live and to die; and a silent rebellion rises in us, and *this* is the cause of our sadness. We are in want of harmony with nature—with our inmost selves. We don't believe, but we hope; and yet we are ashamed of hoping, because we think it false philosophy to buoy ourselves up with mere hope. We now want something fresh to give a mainspring to our actions, new impulse for our enthusiasm, fresh field for our emotions, new realms for our intellects and reason, and new goals for our aspirations. To find this we must not go back before Christianity, even to the beauties or glories of Pagan days, though it is true that Christianity, while shedding fresh light on morality, has dimmed the spiritual side of humanity and taken out its poetry. Still it has been for the strengthening of our characters; and if, therefore, we want to turn our eyes to the light, let us watch the curtain that is now being drawn aside before our eyes, and as we bid farewell to the one-sided, narrow-minded religion of to-day, *called* Christianity, we shall be ready to welcome the beautiful and noble one now waiting to inspire and deliver mankind—the religion of Spiritualism. Through her aid we are enabled to gather together into one strong cord all the various and twisted strands with which she has permeated history through all the early and grand worships, but where power was lost, because the wise refused to give their wisdom for the good of humanity, through the wondrous sciences called occult, whose glories shall once again invigorate the world. All these strands we gather in our hands, and we feel that in modern Spiritualism we have at last a clue—and a sure one—through the great labyrinth of the future. To Spiritualists this will be an easy truth, and one that needs no explanation, but others may inquire more. Let us see what this long-maligned philosophy offers to us.

## SPIRITUALISM IN HOLLAND.

BY A. J. RIKO.

ON Monday, June 9th last, my dear mother passed to the higher life at the age of 79 years. A dear mother can be lost but once, as I deeply feel; but I remember that I am a Spiritualist, and I experience the strength and consolation our knowledge affords, above all religious systems and creeds. I have every reason to thank our good Father in Heaven that my mother was spared to me so long; but there is more; I was favoured with an oft-described but always remarkable experience, before my dear mother's passing away, which I shall never forget.

For three or four years her mental faculties had been declining, and her memory had been fast fading away to such a degree that for about a year she was totally unable to join in a regular conversation; she made frequent mistakes about persons, dates, and places, and even mixed up family remembrances. In short, advanced age made her act and speak like a child. This was a cause of grief to me, and when thinking about the probable closely approaching time of her departure, I deeply regretted that her state rendered it impossible for me to talk once more to her as a child with a beloved mother. Her powers were declining with rapidity. With the exception of the night of Friday (6th-7th of June) she did not suffer, but that night she complained of interior burning and pain. I noticed that while suffering she prayed aloud. Before the morning she happily grew calmer, and from that moment till her death she was in clear possession of all her faculties and of her memory. It was simply wonderful to me; I could talk with her about everything and everybody, on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th, till Monday morning about eleven, when moments of unconsciousness came on, during which she appeared as sleeping. At about two o'clock she passed calmly to the better home, where I hope to see her again.

Have I not every reason to be thankful for this experience? How grand, how consoling it is to witness the fact that the decay of the organisation leaves the spirit untouched, and that the individual, in getting free from the material body, possesses all its faculties and its spiritual forces. How good was she, my dear mother, and how did she love me! She passed away as a good Roman Catholic, without the least fear, but full of hope in a happy immortality. So I say with all my soul: *Resurrexit! sursum corda.* I spoke out my spiritual convictions in the advertisement of her departure in one of the Hague papers, and I drew up the inscriptions for her memorial card (as the Catholics use), in which I also unfolded our banner by expressing my faith in immortality and continued relationship with my dear mother.

At Amsterdam they now obtain with a lamp upon the table and a candle on the floor materialised hands and even feet, which are projected from under the table at the free side, while the few sitters (five or six) occupy the three other sides. I have this information from two Amsterdam friends who have witnessed the phenomena; they are Spiritualists who unite calm observation with strict logic. The circle obtains direct writing under the same conditions, by simply throwing paper and a pencil under the table, and in a very short time the result is obtained. The medium is the daughter, a young married woman of about twenty-four years of age.

Oude Molstraat, 8a, The Hague, Holland.

NATURE commands every man to take care of himself. The society or association which bids one man take care of another, or says that every man should be provided for by the state or nation, is teaching a false principle.—*L. K. Washburn.*

## MISS EMILY FAITHFULL ON MATTERS SPIRITUAL.

THE last number of *The Victoria Magazine*, conducted by Miss Emily Faithfull, contains the following review. The mind of the writer seems to be somewhat hampered by theological doctrines which have had their day:—

*Spirits before our Eyes.* (1st vol.) By W. H. Harrison. (W. H. Harrison.) Modern Spiritualism has advanced so far beyond table-rapping and alphabetical manifestations, that one may easily read several pages of a Spiritualist book, and imagine that one has come across another edition of Mrs. Crowe.

From Spiritualist theories of the future state; from the nonsense concerning mediums, spirit-writing, and the usual paraphernalia of the distinctive Spiritualist programme, we differ *toto calo*. That there is a vast deal of fraud has more than once been proved; that self-deception does a great deal is almost equally clear. Beyond this, we do not propose to inquire just now. But the great bulk of Mr. Harrison's book is taken up with matters concerning the appearances of the dead to the living that have really no necessary connection whatever with the peculiar scheme of Spiritualism, or, as we prefer to call it—the term being, we think, more distinctive—Spiritism. Without undertaking to say that we believe half of the alleged facts related in Mr. Harrison's book, we see no reason to dispute the possibility of many of them. We repudiate the utter ignoring of the spiritual world: we can readily imagine that the spirits of the dead are from time to time permitted (for some wise purpose) to visit the living. More, we have known incidents in our own experience which carry out a theory consistent with the strictest orthodoxy. The circumstance related on pp. 29, 30, is known to us, the narrator being a relative and friend of our own. In proof of the statement that a belief in the visitations of the departed does not imply any belief in "Spiritism," Mr. Harrison has drawn largely upon a work entitled *Dead and Gone*, by the Rev. James Pollock, of Birmingham, an advanced High Churchman, and therefore bound by his religious views to be an uncompromising opponent of the special doctrines advocated by Mr. Harrison and his school.

It is to be regretted that the author should have weakened much that might be valuable (to all interested in curious semi-psychological studies) by the relation of events that only the most profound credulity could regard with respect—legends of saints, and stories of appearances two and three hundred years ago, resting, of necessity, on positively contemptible evidence. We must include in this category the highly-diverting story of "Old Booty," which was, however, actually the subject of an action at law (see pp. 118-121).

Nevertheless, a great deal of this book is worth reading, and if we are compelled to condemn some portions, we entertain no doubt whatever of the honesty and earnestness of Mr. Harrison individually. That the thoughtful reader must needs smile over many things related and many doctrines advanced, is more the author's misfortune than his fault. At any rate we do not think much harm could be got from the book, and it is hardly needed for the conviction of those who have already a rational belief in the supernatural.

EXCELLENT accounts reach us of the test mediumship of Mr. Matthews. When is he coming to London? Through this class of mediumship, long-forgotten facts and thoughts are often revealed to sitters; but, so far as our experience extends, the revelation of demonstrable facts, known to the spirit and not previously known to any of the sitters, is rare.

## CLAIRVOYANCE.

(From Dr. Gregory's "Animal Magnetism.")

MR. ATKINSON had magnetised a young lady, the daughter of a medical man who resided many miles from London, where the young lady was. She became clairvoyant, but her father, who came to see her, would not believe in her clairvoyance. Mr. Atkinson then requested him when he got home to do anything he chose, not telling any one, at a certain hour, and in a certain room. At the time appointed Mr. Atkinson mesmerised the young lady, and requested her to visit her father's dining-room. (It was at dinner time.) She did so, and saw her father and the rest. But all at once she began laughing, and said—"What does my father mean? He has put a chair on the dinner-table, and the dog on the top of the chair." Mr. Atkinson sent by the first post an account of what his patient had seen, which was received next morning, and in answer he was informed that she had seen correctly, for that her father, to the amazement of his family, had put the chair on the table, and the dog on the chair, at the time agreed on.

Mons. Sabine, chief of the station of the Havre Railroad, went a few days ago to consult Alexis, who when in somnambulism said, "You come about something lost in the service to which you belong?" "It is true," replied he. "You are employed on the Havre Railroad." "It is likewise true" (Mons. Sabine not having previously mentioned his business to any one); "it is a basket that is missing containing some little animals." "They are—they are—leeches. You sent to inquire about the basket at Rouen and at Havre, and you have received no news of it. This is what has taken place. A traveller going to Havre by your carriages on the—the—the 11th of November was greatly annoyed on arriving at his destination to find only one basket instead of two, which he had on setting off." "This is wonderful," said M. Sabine; "there were two baskets of leeches." "The train," continued Alexis, "on arriving at Rouen, left several travellers with their luggage, and one of the baskets was placed by mistake on one of the omnibuses going into town, and the conductor was surprised to find that no one claimed it. For fear of being scolded, he did not deposit the luggage in the warehouse, but hid it for some time in his stable; and while it was there you wrote to Rouen and Havre about it, the reply being that it could not be found. A few days ago the conductor put it in the goods depôt near the entrance, and beneath the first window on the right. You will find it if you set off to Rouen; only on account of the length of time that has elapsed you will find about two hundred of the leeches dead." On the next day M. Sabine returned from Rouen, having found the basket at the place indicated by Alexis, with two hundred of the leeches dead.

In the autumn of 1845 Alexis gave a series of mesmeric sances to the medical men of Havre, each of whom was permitted to bring one friend to witness the experiments. One of them took with him Mr. Featherstonhaugh, the consul at Havre, who had come over the day before from California, and was a decided sceptic as to mesmerism. In order to test Alexis, Mr. Featherstonhaugh put in his pocket, enclosed in a box, a portion of a Japanese idol which he had picked up out of the wreck of a vessel from Japan, which had been lost on the coast of California during his stay there. On being asked by Mr. Featherstonhaugh, "What have I in my pocket?" Alexis answered, "It looks like a beetle, but it is not one, but a part of a Japanese idol with an inscription on it. You picked it up during a walk on the seashore in

California, and thought at first it was some curious stone, but you afterwards perceived it was an idol which had been washed up from the wreck of a Japanese vessel that was lost on that coast a few days before."

These are brief illustrations of a power of which there are innumerable examples, many more marvellous than these, and of infinite variety. Dullards to-day close their eyes to such occurrences, but the exercise of the higher psychic powers is becoming every day more widely diffused, and their extension is synonymous with the progress of humanity. The intuitive faculties are feebly developed at present, for in some they seem to be only rudimental, but in the natural evolution of mankind they are destined a few centuries hence to enjoy intuition as a common heritage of all. In that happy period when the Divine plan of humanity shall be fully realised truth will find no opaque obstruction in human bigotry, no fierce resistance to its progress, but its revelations will be known and accepted all over the civilised world on the day of their discovery.

## SPIRITUALISM IN AUSTRALIA.

## SYNCHRONOUS VISIONS.

A CORRESPONDENT of *The Harbinger of Light*, Melbourne, May 1st, narrates the following facts, which might possibly have had their origin not with a spirit, but in the synchronous psychical impressions of a few individuals:—

Do spirits walk the earth after the violent death of the body? The following, in answer to the question, has been told to me within the last few days:—A young woman of my acquaintance, who is an automatic writing medium, had written, through her mediumship, on a slate, that the spirit of a man nightly frequented a certain spot on the bush road between Beechworth and Twist Creek, and that if the medium would go to the spot he would try to show himself.

Now, before I proceed further with this account, I must tell you that, some two or three years ago, a brother-in-law of mine who was walking along this same road one very dark night, saw a white luminous sort of shadow walk or glide across the road in front of him—he, strange to say, was not at the time of the occurrence any way alarmed, but thought it very strange. He saw it again after that, in the same spot. A man named Allen saw the same thing, and another whose name is Scanlon; in fact, as far as I can learn, no less than four or five persons had seen the same object at different times. One (Scanlon) made a hit at it with a stick, and, on his doing so, it vanished instantly. None of the *seers* confess to being afraid or timid at the time, but rather the opposite.

But, to proceed: A party, consisting of three men and three women—that is, father, mother, and daughter (medium), the daughter's husband, and a neighbour with his wife—sallied out to view the supernatural visitor, and a long and lonely walk it was. The night was starlight. The particular spot being reached, our friends held a circle in the lonely bush. The medium having brought a slate and pencil, at the instigation of one of the circle she held the pencil in position, and scarcely was it held so, when "Do you not see me?" was quickly written and read by the aid of a match. All looked, but could not see anything. Slate again—This time, "Now look!" and, sure enough, quite near was the form of a man gliding along towards the party. "Look there!" said one. "Look!" Strange to say, all the circle could not see it; only the three women and one man. The other two men strained their eyes in vain, nothing could they see. After

the lapse of a few seconds, it vanished. Slate again—Now was written, "I will try again; I will show a light if I can." All saw the light flash dimly (like the momentary flash of the firefly on a summer's night). Three times it was seen, and then no more. Slate again—This time there was writing on it to this effect: "My name is Robert ——. I was murdered near here nineteen years ago. Help me." No further writing took place, and, after trying to see if anything further would occur, our brave little party trudged away home again, and so the matter rests at present. Can any of your readers give a similar instance to the above?

#### THE ROYAL COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND.

The annual prize festival of the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind was held last Wednesday at Upper Norwood. After some singing and music of a superior character by the pupils, the visitors assembled in a marquee in the grounds, where Canon Barry explained that the institution was not a charity, for it trained the blind to be self-supporting. H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, who was accompanied by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales and three of her children, then distributed the prizes, after which the Archbishop of York, in the course of some remarks, said that a hundred years ago the blind would have been almost left to take care of themselves, but the care now taken of the afflicted surprised him more than all the wonders of science. The Duke of Westminster, president of the College, thanked the Prince and Princess of Wales for their presence, and by a happy thought "brought down the house" by including the three little princesses, who with sparkling eyes had been keeping a close watch on all the proceedings. The Prince of Wales responded with a few general remarks, in which he complimented Mr. Campbell for his efficient management of the whole establishment, after which the company separated. By means of excellent arrangements the proceedings were short, and there was no overcrowding. The best meetings always are short ones.

As we have before stated in these pages, there is plenty of evidence on record that clairvoyance is sometimes developed in persons physically blind. Dr. Childs, of Philadelphia, has published how a man physically blind was, by clairvoyant powers, able to drive a horse and cart about that city, and the Baroness von Vay has recorded in these columns her knowledge of the clairvoyant powers of a blind woman. Clairvoyance is often developed by mesmerism, so it may be that by means of mesmerism a kind of sight could be given to perhaps a third of the patients in the College. At all events, good results are so probable, that the day may come when the whole world will be wondering why no experiments in the matter have been made at the present day. The mesmerists who read these lines would do well to search out any persons in their localities who have been totally blind for years, and to attempt to develop clairvoyance in them, letting us know the results. Some years ago Mr. Serjeant Cox was exceedingly successful in developing clairvoyance in persons with good normal eyesight; but the same method would probably develop it in the blind, so he is a good authority to consult as to the mode of operating. Some time since he publicly expressed his desire to know the nature of the dreams of the blind. Do they dream that they see?

MRS. ELGIE CORNER (Florence Cook) is in France.

MR. CAIN, Spiritualist, who once did good work for the movement at the East-end of London, is in want of employment. His address is 47, Harford-street, Mile-end-road, London, E.

#### DIVINERS.

A GOOD deal of attention was paid by the newspapers to certain alleged achievements of two diviners, or dowzers, about twenty years ago. They were West of England men, named Adams and Mapstone. A farmer, near Wedmore, in Somerset, wishing for a supply of water on his farm, applied to Mapstone. Mapstone used a hazel rod in the usual way, and when he came over a particular spot, declared that water could be found fifteen or twenty feet beneath the surface. Digging was, therefore, commenced at that spot, and water appeared at a depth of nineteen feet. The other expert, Adams, who claimed to have been instrumental in the discovery of nearly a hundred springs in the West of England, went, one day, by invitation, to the house of Mr. Phippen, a surgeon, at Wedmore, to dowse for water. He walked about in the garden behind Mr. Phippen's house, until the stick became so agitated that he could not keep it steady; it bent down at a spot which, he asserted, must have water underneath it. Mr. Phippen caused a digging to be made, and water was really found at the spot indicated. As a means of testing Adams's powers in relation to metals, three hats were placed in a row in the kitchen, and three silver spoons under one of the hats. Adams walked among the hats, and his rod told him which of them covered the treasure. Then three kinds of valuables—gold, silver, and jewels—were placed under three hats, one kind under each, and he found out which was which. On another occasion he dowzed for water in the grounds of the Rev. Mr. Foster, of Sedbury, in Gloucestershire. Using the same method as before, he announced the presence of water at a particular spot, twenty feet beneath the surface. A pamphlet, published by Mr. Phippen, concerning these curious facts, attracted the attention of Mr. Marshall, partner in the great flax factory at Leeds. Water was wanted at the mill, and the owners were willing to see whether dowzing could effect anything in the matter. Mr. Marshall invited Adams to come down and search for springs. On one occasion, when blindfolded, Adams failed, but hit the mark pretty nearly in the second attempt, excusing himself for the first failure, on the ground that "he was not used to be blindfolded." Of the main experiments, Mr. Marshall afterwards said, in a letter to the newspapers, "I tested Adams by taking him over some deep borings at our manufactory, where he could have no possible guide from anything he could see; and he certainly pointed out nearly the position of the springs, as shown by the produce of the bore holes, some being much more productive than others. The same was the result at another factory, where Adams could have had no guide from what he saw, and could not have got information otherwise."—"Stick (not Table) Turning," in *All the Year Round*.

#### THE DIVINING ROD IN AUSTRALIA.

IN the area of Kiora, lying to the southward of Ararat, the settlers, who are very anxious to discover springs of water upon their selections, have engaged the services of an old man, apparently between sixty and seventy years of age, who professes to discover springs by the aid of a divining rod. He has already pointed out spots where he confidently states water will be found at a moderate depth, and the farmers are now engaged in practically proving his skill. We are told the diviner holds a slender strip of steel between the finger and thumb of both hands, and walks about the land with it in this position. When water is approached, the rod trembles violently, and the motion ceases as the place is left. One of the settlers, Mr. Tomkins, with the view of testing his accuracy, had the diviner blindfolded (after pointing out the spot where the water would be found) and taken to another portion of his land, but he states that the motion of the rod led him, with but little hesitation, back to the same place. The old man refuses to take money for his services till water be obtained, and when proved to exist asks £3 from each individual. He states that the rod was owned by his father, and that it will not indicate water in the hands of any of his brothers. While engaged at Kiora he showed some of the farmers letters which he had received from a number of squatters engaging his services on their stations in a similar capacity; and he left to fulfil these engagements, with a view of returning for payment when the sinking is concluded. He professes to name within three feet of the depth at which water will be obtained, but cannot say if it will prove fresh or salt.—*Melbourne Argus*, February 25th, 1867.

## Correspondence.

VISITORS AT THIRTY-EIGHT GREAT RUSSELL STREET.

SIR,—There is a point at which reticence ceases to be a duty, and a desire for peace may be misconstrued. I am very reluctant to burden your columns with any words of mine, but it seems that recent letters respecting the action of the Council in the matter of Dr. Carter Blake demand some notice.

*Quare fremuerunt gentes?* What is it all about? "You have excluded Dr. C. Blake from your rooms, obviously on the ground of his being a Roman Catholic," says Mrs. Lowe in her haste. It is pointed out to her that her "obvious" inference is a mere hallucination. "Well, then," she replies in substance, "you ought to have made a clean sweep of us all," ignoring our plain right to please ourselves in the matter.

Dr. Carter Blake has his say, and surpasses himself in quotation and recondite illustration.

Then comes Achilles from his tent, and judicially rebukes us, though we have not submitted ourselves to his judgment, and, patting Dr. Carter Blake on the back in the most brotherly manner, assails our President for some recent words of his. Unfortunately, however, his usually accurate mind is beclouded by prejudice, and he (I am sure, unconsciously) misrepresents Mr. Calder seriously. It was not the "persons" who, in their discretion, have followed Mr. Massey's example, that Mr. Calder called "weak and feeble," but the "reasons" assigned for their procedure. It would be uncivil to apply such terms to our departed friends; but surely we may be allowed to express our opinion as to the reasons they give for what they have done.

It would seem indeed to be impossible for us to do good in the eyes of our self-appointed critics. They are fond of sneering at our *National* pretensions, and tell us that we are a mere London club. Yet when we exercise the most ordinary privilege of a club, they accuse us of acting from motives of bigotry and intolerance. When we demonstrate that such motives are foreign to our mind, our opponents shift ground with much speed, and buzz, as before, only to another tune.

This is in its way amusing, but in another sense we have a right to complain of it as both unfair and unjust; as a poisoning of the wells, to borrow a metaphor from a celebrated passage of Newman's *Apologia*.

When these friends left us we mourned. Now that they return to busy themselves about us we wish that they would either come back and set us right, or leave us alone, or at least confine themselves to fact in their criticisms. Perhaps the second course indicated would best advance the cause that we, no doubt, all have at heart. W. STAINTON MOSES.

July 5, 1879.

MADAME BLAVATSKY.

SIR,—Be so kind as to make room in your next issue for this indignant protest of mine. Speaking of me in your leading article of May 23rd, and entitled "Theosophic Thaumaturgy," I am mentioned as the "Countess" Blavatsky. Allow me to state, once for ever, that such is not my title, nor can I concede the right to include in the long list of vices I may be possibly endowed with that of a *parvenu's* vanity. My family, on both sides, is quite ancient enough and noble enough to have transmitted to me too much pride to leave room for any petty feeling of vanity. I had to protest against this title while I was in America; have protested against it at another time in the *Revue Spirite* of Paris; and have just published in the *Bombay Gazette* of May 13th a third protest, stating that, for reasons sufficiently specified, and not wholly disconnected with American citizenship, my name is simply H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, June 12th.

[The expression "Countess Blavatsky" was taken from the Indian newspapers.—Ed.]

### A PRIVATE SEANCE.

BY CAPTAIN JOHN JAMES.

At the apartments of a friend of mine living near Hyde Park, a seance was held on Thursday, 3rd of July, Mr. Rita being the medium. Only three investigators were present, and the medium was held by the host and myself.

After sitting some time in the dark we heard the direct voice of Charlie, Mr. Rita's control, who for more

than a quarter of an hour kept up a conversation, answering questions, and making shrewd and humorous remarks.

Towards the end of the seance, while the medium was in safe custody, some object was brought from another part of the room, and placed on the table at which we were seated.

On striking a light, this object was found to be a book called Barnum's *Humbugs of the World*. The volume itself was closed, but on the outside was lying the first part of the chapter headed "The Spiritualists," fifteen pages of which chapter had been torn out, as if in protest against "Spiritualism" being classed amongst the "humbugs."

Of course, it might have been by chance—by a curious coincidence—that this particular chapter should have been torn out; but as the seance was held in total darkness, the coincidence was, to say the least, a very remarkable one.

The medium had come straight from the dining-room into an apartment he had never before entered, had taken his place immediately in the circle, and had no opportunity of handling any of the numerous volumes lying upon the side table from which the book had been conveyed.

129, Gower-street, London, July 9th.

### SPIRITUALISM IN PRUSSIA.

MR. H. LIEBING, of Berlin, Prussia, writes as follows to Mr. Simmons, Dr. Slade's partner, now residing in Chicago:—

"Professor Zöllner has kept his promise well. Three volumes of his works are published now, and the last one is expected to appear in a few weeks. No one has given Slade so much justice as he. The scientists of Europe have been startled by the revelations he made. The professor's books are working silently below the surface now, and many are investigating the spiritual phenomena, and in a short time things will change in favour of Spiritualism.

"I am not of Zöllner's opinion in regard to his hypothesis of a fourth dimension, but think it will prove to be an error on his part. But it makes no difference; it serves as the means to investigate the matter as minutely as possible. We have a very good medium here now, a lady, for physical manifestations. The spirits play on the guitar when laid under the table. We get impressions of spirit hands and feet in flour and on blackened paper. Spirits touch us, ring bells below the chairs, and do almost anything we request them to. Indians run about the room in their mocassins and dance; we hear but do not see them. About six months ago, when we were wishing for physical manifestations, pencil and paper lying on the table at the time, the former rose up in a full light, before all present, and wrote a message in a very plain handwriting. Mediums are developing all round us."—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

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