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

Two years after the earliest manifestations in connection with modern Spiritualism began at Hydesville, U.S., strange disturbances occurred in the house of the Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D., of Stratford, Connecticut. As the manifestations were of considerable interest, and can be paralleled by many of more recent date, we quote nearly the whole of the authorised record of them which was published in E. W. Capron's *Modern Spiritualism, its Facts and Fanaticisms*, published in 1855, by Mr. Bela Marsh, of Boston, Mass., one of the most interesting volumes connected with the early history of the movement. Mr. Capron says:—

### THE OUTBREAK OF THE DISTURBANCES.

I have been allowed to examine all the records kept of the occurrences by Dr. Phelps, and shall be able, therefore, to present the history with more minuteness and accuracy than has ever before appeared. The first disturbances took place at the house of the Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D., on the 10th day of March, 1850. The house had been occupied by him from the 22nd of February, 1848. It is a large and genteel country mansion, separated from the street by a fence forty-five feet from the front of the house; the house is thirty-two feet in front, and, including the piazza, seventy feet deep, with a hall thirteen feet wide, running through the whole depth of the building. Adjoining, and opening from this hall, are two parlours and a dining-room. On the second floor are five sleeping-rooms, and on the third floor two. The kitchen is in the basement. The house was built about the year 1829 or 1830 by a Captain Dondall, who for several years commanded a vessel in the China trade, and who died in the bay of Canton within two or three years after his family had taken up their residence in the house. The property then passed into the hands of another sea captain, by the name of Purcell, who, with his family, occupied it for several years. Captain Purcell dying suddenly in New York, the family removed, and the house was occupied and used by an Episcopal clergyman for a school for a year or more, and afterwards by a Mr. —, also as a school for boys.

None of the families who had thus far occupied the house had ever been disturbed, or witnessed anything aside from ordinary events. At the death of Captain Purcell it became the property of the two daughters, of whom Dr. Phelps purchased it during the month of November, 1847. For two years previous to this it had been unoccupied. Dr. Phelps and family commenced their residence therein on the 22nd of February, 1848. Nothing occurred to excite the attention of the family out of the ordinary course of events until the 10th of March, 1850; and, as before stated, nothing can be learned of any strange or unusual events occurring there previous to that time. It will be observed by the dates given that Dr. Phelps had occupied the house more than two years, had found it an agreeable and quiet place of residence—having never been disturbed or alarmed by unusual occurrences. On the 10th of March, as above stated, it being the Sabbath, Dr. Phelps and family—consisting of Mrs. Phelps, two daughters and two sons, the eldest a daughter aged sixteen, a son of twelve years, and a second daughter of six years, children of Mrs. Phelps by a former marriage, and another son of Dr. Phelps by the present marriage, not then three years old—all attended church; and an Irish servant girl, who had been employed in the family some six months, and had shown herself to be honest and trustworthy, had gone on that day to Bridgeport, to attend the Catholic Church. On leaving the house in the morning it appears that the doctor had secured the chamber doors, and put the keys in his pocket; those which could be

were locked inside and the keys left in them. The only door by which the chambers could be entered was locked, and the key taken by Dr. Phelps. He also locked the front door inside, left the key in the lock, and, passing out at the back door, locked that and placed the key in his pocket. On returning from church at noon the front door was found standing open; the chamber doors, which were left fastened, were now open; and in the nursery the furniture was thrown about in disorder; chairs on the bed, and thrown down upon the floor; the shovel, tongs, and poker, with other things, were in unusual positions and places, everything showing unmistakable signs of the work of some rude hand making mischief in their absence. Upon discovering the disorder here Dr. Phelps passed into other rooms on the same floor, but could see no further evidence of intrusion. The first supposition was, very naturally, that some person or persons had entered and robbed the house. Search was immediately made in the closets where silver plate, spoons, forks, &c., were kept. All were found safe and undisturbed. A gold watch, left in an exposed place, remained there as left. The impression still remained that burglars had been in; and on examination of the windows one was found that could be raised from the outside, and though there was no evidence of entrance having been made there, no doubt existed that this was the place of access. Thinking they might return during the afternoon, Dr. Phelps remained at home, the other members of the family going again to church. Being left alone the doctor armed himself, and, selecting a secluded position, awaited the return of the burglars. There was no disturbance during the afternoon; no sound of footfall; all remained quiet. On the return of the family, after the service, usually closing at three o'clock, several other articles were found out of place, but not in a way to make it certain that they were not moved in the morning. Articles of kitchen furniture were out of their places. A tea-kettle, which had been used at dinner-time, was found hidden behind some boxes in the cellar. The bread, sugar-bowl, eggs, and numerous other things kept in the kitchen, were found where they did not belong, and where they had evidently been placed in some way which the family could not account for. Upon entering the middle chamber, occupied as a sleeping-room, a sheet was found spread over the bed outside the counterpane, and beneath which was a nightgown and chemise laid out with the arms folded across the breast, with stockings placed in a position to represent, as it seemed, a corpse disposed as is usual before placing it in the coffin. On the wall were written characters resembling those said by certain clairvoyants to belong to a spiritual language, but which none of the family were able to decipher. Whether they had any significance, or how they came there, was alike an unanswerable question by the family; they had not observed them before. Occurrences ceased for that day and night, yet, no one thinking of any mystery in the matter, they imputed it to roguish boys, or others, who had effected entrance with false keys, for mischief, rather than for robbery, and that the culprits would soon be detected.

### THE PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER.

The next morning, March 11th, when the family went upstairs, after breakfast, the middle chamber had again been visited, exhibiting much the same scene of disorder presented the previous day. A sheet was spread out upon the floor, the wash-stand laid upon its back upon the sheet, a candlestick set upon the stand, the wash-bowl placed upon one side, and the pitcher on the other. The nightgown and chemise, used on the previous occasion to represent a dead body, were found one in the bowl, the other in the pitcher. It appears that these articles of clothing were not then in use; they had been placed in a trunk which stood in a closet

adjoining that room. They were replaced in the trunk when removed from the bed the day before. As they were conversing in relation to the disposition of the things as above stated, Mrs. Phelps looked under the bed, and discovered articles there, partially concealed by the bed, resembling those in question. They were taken out and pronounced to be the same. Dr. Phelps had not before examined them, but then took them, noted the name and number on each, as they were marked, folded and placed them again in the trunk, remarking that he would put them where they would stay; did not lock the trunk, not having a key, but locked the closet and placed the key about his own person; then requesting the family to all leave the room first, which they did, the doctor, following, locked the door of the room, and kept the key. Having observed that Mrs. Phelps seemed a little troubled as to the mystery, he thought to convince her that there was no mystery in the matter, and, having secured the closet and room, he descended to the rooms below, following them all. After the lapse of fifteen minutes, some person spoke to the doctor, upon which he went up to the chambers. At the head of the stairs, out in the hall, he found the same articles which he had left as before stated. He examined them, and was *positive they were the same*. He went to the door; found it locked; entered by applying the key from his pocket; went to the closet; found it locked; took the key from his pocket; opened the door; looked in the trunk; and the articles were gone! Dr. Phelps states that he was confident there was no deception in the case, and that he then, for the first time, felt there was a mystery about the affair. He had never believed in the appearing of ghosts or departed spirits, warnings, or anything of that nature, and, at the age of three score, had never seen or heard anything connected with that class of phenomena. The evidence upon which superstitions, as he termed them, rest, he had never examined, and while he had no proof positive that they were impossible, and never did occur, he had no evidence to found a belief upon that they ever had. His idea of spiritual manifestations seems to have been that most, if not all, followed by a strict scrutiny, might be accounted for on natural or known principles, or some physical means, which would disrobe them of the mysterious altogether. But it was not to rest here.

#### THE MOVEMENT OF UNTOUCHED SOLID OBJECTS.

On the same day (March 11th) the moving and throwing of furniture commenced. An umbrella, standing at the end of the hall, leaped, without visible assistance, a distance of, at least, twenty-five feet. Dr. Phelps saw the movement, and knows there was no perceptible agency by which the motion was produced. A bucket, standing at the head of the stairs, was thrown into the entry below. Smaller articles, such as nails, forks, knives, spoons, bits of tin, iron, and keys, were thrown from different directions about the house. He says, "There were times when they came from such directions that they *might* have been thrown by some person in the house"—at least that may be admitted—but in very many cases the motion and point of starting were such as to preclude all possibility of deception on the part of persons in the rooms. During the afternoon Dr. and Mrs. Phelps had occasion to go to Bridgeport, a distance of some three miles. During their absence the shovel and tongs, standing in the dining-room, were thrown violently down the basement stairs; a piece of mourning crape fastened to the knocker of the back door, and the mirrors in the front chambers covered with sheets and tablecloths, as is the custom in some parts of the country while a person lies dead in the house. The crape on the door Dr. Phelps did not see, but the covering on the mirrors he removed with his own hands. The position of the mirrors in one room was such that the coverings could not, without great difficulty, have been placed there by any person about the house. Various articles were said to have been thrown about the room—the phenomena continuing in his absence about the same as when he was present in the fore part of the day. Soon after sundown all was again quiet, and so continued through the night.

The next morning (March 12th), soon after the family were up, the same phenomena began again: knives, forks, spoons, blocks of wood, nails, &c., &c., were thrown from

different directions, and with increased frequency, attended by still stranger circumstances, and those of a still more mysterious character. Mrs. Phelps expressed some alarm, and a wish that some of the neighbours might be called in. Dr. Phelps called on a retired clergyman of Stratford, a man of extensive information, much experience, and sound judgment, who was universally admitted to be capable of rendering correct judgment and good advice in such a case. He requested him to call and spend an hour at the house, to which he cheerfully consented. Dr. Phelps told him that his family had been a little excited by some occurrences in the house, but did not state any details of the matter, but desired that he would sit with them for a short time and witness for himself. He remained all day, but was, at first, firmly of the opinion that the occurrences were produced, in some way, through the agency of the girl, or some other person about the house, and his main attention was directed to the girl in the kitchen, or the children, in the expectation that he should detect them in doing it.

The door leading from the parlours to the kitchen was, by his request, locked, and all communication between it and the other parts of the house cut off; still, the throwing of articles went on as before. The children were sent out of the room, and the doors locked; but this made no difference. He stayed through most of the day on Thursday, and returned soon after breakfast next morning, and remained most of the time for nearly three weeks. He became satisfied, before the close of the second day, that neither the girl in the kitchen nor the children had any agency in producing the strange movements. During the day (March 12th) some of the neighbours were in the house, and small blocks of wood were seen to fall in different places in their presence; but only one person noticed them in a way to excite inquiry, and that person was requested not to mention what she had seen.

On Wednesday, March 13th, the manifestations commenced early in the morning, in the middle chamber, the room in which two children slept, and began while they were both asleep. A book, standing in the library, ten or twelve feet from the bed, leaped from the shelf into the middle of the room. The blower, which was in the grate, leaped out on the floor, a distance of at least six feet, the noise of which first awakened the children. At the breakfast-table several articles were thrown; among them a large potato, which had been sent from Pennsylvania, and laid up in a closet in the east chamber, fell on the table directly by the side of Dr. Phelps's plate, in a manner that no person could have done it without instant detection. The doctor's curiosity was much excited, and he watched, with all the scrutiny he was capable, every person in the room. He took up the potato and let it fall from different heights, in order to determine how far it must have fallen to have made the concussion that it did; and it was adjudged by all that the distance could not have been more than twelve or fifteen inches.

#### INTELLIGENCE CONNECTED WITH THE PHENOMENA.

The Rev. Mr. — came in soon after breakfast, and remained during the day. Several Bibles were opened at different passages, which seemed to be selected with a great deal of care, and indicated either by placing pieces of paper on them or turning down a leaf. These things first occurred in the middle chamber where the library stood. While the family were at dinner similar things were done in the parlour adjoining the dining-room. Two Bibles and an Episcopal prayer-book were opened at different passages, chairs turned forward on the floor, two solar lamps placed on the floor, a hat and man's cap put one on each; nearly everything in the room had been moved, and in so *short a time*, that it seems wholly inadmissible that any person about the house could have done it; besides, the whole household were in the dining-room, all seated at the table, except the servant, and she was employed waiting on the table.

In the afternoon the demonstrations were confined to the middle parlour, Dr. and Mrs. Phelps, and Mr. —, and a part of the time the eldest daughter, being present; in the absence of the daughter the doors were locked, and the three first-named only were present.

The throwing of various things occupied the afternoon. The articles thrown were picked up and placed upon the mantle, and between the hours of one and four o'clock the number amounted to forty-six; among which were nails, bits of tin, iron, keys, and small blocks, all of which were gathered from different parts of the house; most of them from closets on the second floor, and the chambers. At one time while Mr. M—— was standing near the centre of the room, a padlock, which was known to have been in the closet of the middle chamber, fell at his feet. He took it in his hand, letting it fall from different heights, to discover the probable distance it must have fallen to produce the concussion. After various trials it was judged to have fallen not more than two or two and a half feet. As Dr. Phelps was sitting, perhaps ten feet from the pianoforte, he saw a small toy-mouse, which was on the piano, arise as if tossed, and, describing a parabola as it came, fall at his side, so near that he took it from the floor without leaving his chair. This he speaks of seeing as distinctly as ever he saw anything, the whole being perfectly in his view. He also saw, in the same way, among other things, a nail, cotton-spool, and key, arise from behind the sofa, which stood diagonally across the corner of the room. He arose, went to the sofa, looking behind and under it, but could discover nothing which might give impulse to the articles. While examining the carpet about the sofa to find if any other things were there, without success, as his eyes were directed to one spot, there arose from that very point a piece of cheese-rind, perhaps eight inches from the floor; when he saw it first, it arose four or five feet, passed over the sofa, and fell on the floor. He is positive it was not there when he was looking at the carpet, and knows there were no visible means of its moving.

RAPPINGS AND POUNDINGS FIRST HEARD.

Mr. M—— suggested, as he was about to leave on Wednesday night, that if the strange phenomena should return, he would like to have some other persons called in. Early the next morning, Thursday the 14th, the manifestations commenced about the same as on the previous day. Soon after breakfast a sheet was found spread upon the floor, several Bibles were opened at different places, the candlesticks, in a row, the highest in the middle, and covered with a sheet; other articles changed about the room, without any seeming design, more than to attract attention. Mr. M—— proposed that notes be despatched to Rev. Mr. W——, Congregational minister, and Mr. Plant, a lawyer of high standing and respectability, which was accordingly done. It was at this time that they first began to hear rappings and heavy poundings. A loud sound, like some person striking the floor with some heavy substance, was heard, generally in the middle chamber. This was usually done when no one was in the chamber, and on any one entering all was still. In one instance a chair was seen to rise from the floor and beat down again, five or six times, with a violence which caused the house to tremble, so as to be felt in all the adjoining apartments. A large plated candlestick, standing on the mantle, was moved by some unseen power to the floor, and then rose up and down, beating the floor, until the candlestick was broken. This was the first article that was damaged about the house. Several times during the day, loud noises, like some one pounding with an axe, or some heavy substance, on the floor, were heard in different parts of the house, and several times the loud poundings terminated with a frightful scream; it was not a cry of distress, or anything that could be easily imitated, seeming like something between the cry of a cat and the bleating of a calf, but louder than either. These sounds occurred, in all, probably twenty times while the manifestations were going on. Sometimes the screams seemed to be in the third story, sometimes in the front hall chamber, several times out in the yard, and occasionally in other places. There was, at no time, any audible expression of words. The sounds consisted of poundings, knockings, and screamings. On this day the first images were found, which will be spoken of more fully hereafter.

In the evening of this day, just after some young ladies had called, Dr. Phelps's daughter returned to the parlour, it being between nine and ten o'clock. After seeing the young ladies to the door, an iron stand, in which stood the fire-

shovel, tongs, and poker, leaped from the hearth, where it stood, into the middle of the floor, and rose up and beat the floor with a force that made a jar that could be felt, and the sound heard, in any part of the house. This was seen only by the daughter, but Dr. Phelps and his wife heard the noise. The daughter ran through the dining-room to get upstairs, and, as she passed, a large table was standing, with the other furniture, arranged for breakfast the next morning. The table was three feet nine inches wide, and five feet three inches long, made of solid mahogany; and when she entered the room it rose up and beat five or six times against the floor with a force which made the house jar. The noise was heard by many persons in the house. Mrs. Phelps was alarmed, and screamed out, "Oh, take me from this place!" This happened between nine and ten o'clock p.m. Previous to this time, all manifestations had ceased by sundown, or a little after.

THE PHENOMENA CONNECTED WITH AN INDIVIDUAL OR "MEDIUM"—IMAGES MADE BY THE SPIRITS.

Soon after daylight on Friday, March 15th, movements similar to those on previous days commenced. Henry, a lad then eleven and a half years of age, attended the academy, and nothing had, thus far, ever occurred to connect these strange phenomena with his presence. Dr. Phelps had never heard or thought of particular persons being "mediums." But on this day the remarkable occurrences seemed to be connected more or less with this boy. His cap was torn on his head, so as to be entirely destroyed. Another one which he put on was taken in the same way. First a small hole opened in the crown; this gradually extended, and in a short time it was torn into many pieces. On another cap characters were made, apparently with chalk. They resembled those sometimes made by persons in the higher mesmeric state, describing them as characters of a spiritual language.

Five or six of these characters were, at one time, made on the boy's cap. Others, supposed to constitute a sentence, were written on a red pocket-handkerchief; others on his pantaloons and coat, and on the *inside* of his sack-coat. Copies of these characters were taken with great care, and were preserved till September following, when they were mysteriously destroyed. From this time it became evident that some of the phenomena had some kind of connection with this boy.

An umbrella, which he was carrying, was, in a mysterious manner, torn in several pieces. His pantaloons were torn from the bottom upwards, as high as the knee, and sometimes higher, and were literally torn to ribbons an inch or more wide. This occurred several times under the immediate inspection of Rev. Mr. M——, which seems to fix the fact that, in those instances at least, no power visible did it. Thus it continued for several weeks, clothing to the amount of twenty dollars being destroyed. At one time, while he was riding in a carriage with Dr. Phelps, his cap on his head was torn in a mysterious manner, and his pants torn from the waistband to the bottom, in a way that no human power could have done. Dr. Phelps heard them torn, but could see nothing doing it, and knows the boy could not have done it himself. It was on this day, March 15th, that images, dressed in articles of clothing, were again seen; only two or three appeared on that day. The most extraordinary occurrences of this kind took place on Saturday, the 16th. Soon after breakfast two or three images appeared in the middle chamber; soon again another, followed by others still, numbering in all eleven or twelve. They were formed of articles of clothing, found about the house, stuffed to resemble the human figure. A lady's dress would be stuffed in some cases with a muff; again with a pillow, and sometimes with other dresses; a bonnet and shoes were aptly placed to complete the figure. These, on this occasion, all but one, represented females in the attitude of devotion, some having Bibles or prayer-books placed before them. One, formed of Mrs. Phelps's dress, so much resembled the real, that the little boy, scarce three years old, coming into the room with his sister, older, whispered, "Be still, ma is saying prayers."

A portable writing-desk, usually standing on the secretary in the room, was taken and placed upon the floor, a towel spread over it, and the image of a child kneeling beside it,

A Yankee clock was taken from the mantle in the nursery, and placed upon the floor in the middle room, a distance of twenty feet, and so carefully done that the clock was still going when discovered in its new place, though it stopped some time after. It does not appear that any of these images were seen in the process of construction, or that the clothing, which was gathered from different localities, was seen in the act of moving. When persons entered the room everything was still, the clothing about the floor, which, upon going again within a few minutes, was found wrought into forms. The marked rapidity of their construction, and the life-like appearance of them, seems to have been truly wonderful. During this day several others than members of the family were present. In several instances, when the rooms were closed and the doors guarded, so that no person could enter, the images were constructed. To one reading or listening to the relation of these facts, the mischief and cunning evinced will seem amusing as well as most wonderful; but to the family who bore the annoyance and witnessed the terrifying demonstrations, it was a serious and trying affair.

The reader will keep in mind that this was on Saturday of the first week of these strange proceedings, and many persons were still believing that they must be produced by some one in the house; every member of the family therefore was subjected to the most rigid scrutiny, which makes it morally certain that no member of the household could have had any agency in the matter without being at once detected. Besides the neatness and despatch with which they were formed, the natural appearance of most of them must have required taste and skill beyond the conception of ordinary persons in the flesh. Mr. M— remained there throughout the day, Mr. W—, Governor Plant, and Captain S—, a part of the day. During the day and evening various things were thrown in different parts of the house. A brickbat, which lay on the stairs leading to the third story, was thrown violently downstairs, passing very near the head of the eldest daughter as she was descending the stairs. A fire-shovel was also thrown near her, which she first saw high above her in a position to fall upon her head. She was several times constrained to cry out from fear, so much as to cause apprehension on her account.

[I omit, in this place, at the request of Dr. Phelps, a minute account of occurrences in which the medium seemed to be one who has now grown to be a young woman, and would feel a repugnance at having her name mentioned in connection with the subject. At one time a ribbon was tied around her neck, while she was sleeping, so tightly as to cause a serious affection of the brain. Dr. Phelps was sitting in the room when it was done. Several other remarkable occurrences are omitted, on account of her connection with them. In the main they do not differ materially in their nature from the occurrences herein related.]

The hiding of hats, caps, clothing, &c., seems at this time to have become of common occurrence. On several occasions a hat was seen to go upstairs—not thrown, but seemed to be carried rapidly by unseen hands. For several days Dr. Phelps was forced to keep his hat under lock and key to prevent its disappearance if left out as usual. Coats, hats, and canes of gentlemen who were strangers in the house were spirited away, the only object seeming to be the gratification of mischievous desires, with the exception of a few instances. They were found sometimes in the chimney, under the bed, and in the bottom of trunks. The design seemed to be to detain the owners to witness further demonstrations. Two gentlemen from an adjoining town called, one of whom had expressed an earnest desire to witness the phenomena; but, having passed several hours and seen nothing, they were about to leave, when the person who expressed a wish found himself minus a hat. A thorough search followed, but no hat could be found; consequently the gentleman decided to remain until the next day. During the evening and night phenomena transpired sufficient to gratify his most abundant desire. Similar cases, with like results, afterwards occurred.

On the nineteenth and twentieth little occurred to cause alarm. Some of the family heard loud and frightful screams in an adjacent outhouse, which must have been torturing

to the feelings, much more so than the silent images. Small articles were also thrown about the house. Reports had now got abroad, and some excitement was being produced, as is always the case in country towns, where each person knows their neighbours' private business quite as well, and sometimes better, than those most interested. And in a matter of this kind all efforts to prevent publicity would prove unavailing. Curiosity and staring wonder would overstep all bounds of propriety and respect for the private rights and feelings of the family, forgetting that it is no slight thing for the harmony and quiet of a household to be invaded, each member being subjected to suspicion, ill-natured scrutiny, or careless reproach. On this subject I can speak from experience, having myself passed the ordeal. To persons of refined sensibility it is a trial indeed. In this case Dr. Phelps adopted the rule of giving all who called an opportunity to investigate for themselves, and to this rule he adhered, notwithstanding the annoyance such a constant visitation must have occasioned. In one instance, while a rabble was gathered outside, a stranger, who came uninvited by letter or otherwise, asked to spend the night, and was refused for obvious reasons.

#### THE MEDIUM FLOATED IN THE AIR.

On Friday and Saturday, March 23rd and 24th, the disturbances increased, and became still more annoying. Loud poundings and screams were heard in different places, and on Saturday evening, between sunset and dark, Harry was passing through the dining-room, and thought himself suddenly caught up by some unseen power from the floor, and supposed that he was about to be carried off through the ceiling. He was very much frightened, and screamed so as to alarm the family, and remained in a state of great nervous excitement for two or three hours, and the effects did not wholly wear off for more than a week. At times he was in such a state as to require two men to hold him. For several days after this he spent a portion of his time with one of the neighbours during the day, but the disturbances continued the same at the house, although he appeared to be more or less the medium as long as the phenomena continued. At one time he was thrown into a cistern of water; at another he was tied up and suspended from a tree; and several times was thrown into a state of apparent insensibility, in which he would remain from ten to fifty minutes, and for which no human cause could be assigned.

Somewhere about the 20th or 22nd of March Dr. Phelps's attention was called to a pamphlet (Capron and Barron's), giving a history of the "mysterious noises" at Rochester and Auburn. Several persons who had read the same proposed to question the agents of these disturbances in the manner there recorded, and see if they could get answers to questions. To this the doctor objected, for reasons known to himself, but which may readily be imagined by those knowing his position in life, and his general opinions of such phenomena.

#### CONTENTIONS AMONG THE SPIRITS.

On the 26th of March Anna left Stratford, and on the 3rd of April Harry also left. No manifestations took place while both were away. Harry was absent a week, and Anna three weeks; but the very day that Harry returned, the manifestations commenced with greater power than ever. Even before he arrived at the house, a paper with some mysterious characters was dropped near the front door. These characters were interpreted by a clairvoyant\* to read as follows:—

Fear not when he returns; all danger is o'er.  
We came, we disturbed thy house; but shall no more.  
Believe us not evil or good till we prove  
Our speech to humanity, our language of love.

This was supposed to indicate that no further disturbance would be made; but in the course of two or three hours another paper was found in the boy's hat in these words:—

The good ones say that all is done,  
But the wicked ones say it has just begun.

The "wicked ones," in this case, seemed to come nearer the truth than the "good ones," for, on the afternoon of the 8th of April, the breaking of glass commenced for the first time by the breaking of a pane in a mysterious manner. In

\* Andrew Jackson Davis.

the evening of the same day another was broken during family prayers, some of the pieces falling inside and some outside. There were no indications of anything being thrown against it. From this time forward for several weeks glass was broken almost daily, until the whole number of panes broken amounted to *seventy-one* in the house and out-buildings. Most of them were broken by something being thrown against them; among the articles were a brush, a shoe, a poker, a fire-shovel, a candlestick, a pair of snuffers, books, and numerous other things; occasionally a stone or piece of brick, thrown from the outside.

Dr. Phelps thinks it would have been possible, but not probable, that, in some of these cases, they might have been broken by human agency, but he was an eye-witness in some twenty or thirty cases, and knows that they could not have been so done. He saw a brush, which he knew to have been on a certain shelf but a moment before, and no person near the shelf, fly to the window, break out a glass, and fall down between the shutter and sash, where he knew, from the position, that no one could have thrown it. He saw a tumbler, which was standing on a bureau, rise from its place, fly to the window, and dash out the only pane remaining whole in the window, when no person was within twenty feet of it, and the only persons in the room were himself and Harry, the latter standing by the doctor's side in the doorway of the room—a position in which it was utterly impossible for him to have done it without detection.

A SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATION ESTABLISHED WITH THE SPIRITS—CURIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

About this time, Dr. Phelps's attention was called to the fact that the demonstrations were much more violent in the presence of some persons than of others. While some were present they would cease entirely, and commence as soon as they left with great vehemence.

On the 17th the communications were renewed, and from that time they had frequent communications, mainly respecting the property affair. At one time they asked how they should know that this was really from the spirit it purported to be, and requested his signature; when in less than four minutes a small piece of paper having on it an exact facsimile of his handwriting was seen sticking to the wall—the writing apparently done with a pencil. Dr. Phelps still preserves the original paper with the name inked over. It was stuck to the wall by being made damp.

It was now discovered that, in order to get the rapping, the presence of Henry was necessary. At one time a request was made by the rapping to send him to New York, and a threat that all the windows in the house would be broken, if they did not, was made; but in a few minutes after, a small piece of paper was seen to fall, apparently from the ceiling, and on it written, "Send him not to N.Y.—evil will befall him." It was evident that there were two or more contending agencies engaged in the manifestations. It was not easy to define or imagine what their objects were. At times, when one was making a communication the other would rap, seemingly to make confusion. At other times, when a communication was being made by alphabet, a paper would be dropped down, and on it written, "It is all a lie; don't believe what he says." Sometimes language the most profane, and occasionally, but rarely, obscene, would be written out in this way. Inquiry was made as to how these contradictory communications were to be accounted for, and the answer was that an opposing spirit was attempting to defeat the object of the first; that this spirit was now one of his tormentors; that both were in a state of misery, and his suffering would be mitigated if the object of the first could be accomplished, although he would never go to a state of happiness.

Among the spirits who communicated were two who professed to be in a state of happiness, and three in a state of misery. One of the good spirits claimed to be a sister of him who made the first communication; she communicated frequently, and constantly manifested herself in the morning and evening devotions of the family, and always gave two distinct knocks at the utterance of "Amen." Upon inquiry as to the meaning of these two knocks, the answer was given that it was a response, after the manner of the Episcopal service, signifying that she joined in the devotions.

Much that was communicated after the first few days was

of a trifling and childish character; some, more like what would be received from street rowdies than anything else. To the question why they destroyed property, they replied, "For fun." It was asked of the opposing spirit what could be done to afford him relief; he answered that "The best thing they could do would be to give him a piece of pie." Sometimes letters would come, purporting to be from ministers of Philadelphia, giving accounts of conversions in their congregations and additions to their churches. These were addressed to the doctor, and indicated a knowledge of things in Philadelphia to an astonishing degree. Some of the letters were addressed to Mrs. Phelps, signed, or rather purporting to be signed, by departed spirits of persons who had lived in Philadelphia, and all, or nearly all, who had lived in a single square, and were the acquaintances of Mrs. Phelps, during a residence in that city, in the time of her former marriage. Sentimental notes were also addressed to the daughter. These letters and billets were frequent, amounting in all to nearly one hundred, and were all written in one hand, though purporting to come from different persons. The fact was at one time referred to, and an explanation desired, to which the following was given: "We do not write with the hand—do not touch the pencil; we write with the will." At one time a paper was thrown down to Mrs. Phelps, while in the parlour with a number of ladies, having written on it, with a pencil, as follows:—

SIR,—Sir Sambo's compliments, and begs the laddyes to accept as a token of esteem.

A lady in the family of Dr. Phelps had, in a humorous way, requested the spirits to write her a letter that she might send to a friend in Philadelphia. The spirit complied with the request by sending down the following:—

DEAR MARY,—I have just time to write and tell you I am well. Give my love to Miss K— and her uncle. Also to Mrs. and Mr. D—. Also to Sarah. Good-bye. H. P. DEVIL.

The initials of the lady's name, who asked for the letter, were H. P.

Papers were also thrown down, signed "Beelzebub," and "Sam Slick." Sometimes names of persons, whom the family had known in Philadelphia, but who had been dead several years, were signed to these papers.

The following was in pencil, and seems to be written in the same hand as the other. It was superscribed "E. Phelps:—"

If you promise not to write that I told you, I will not throw anything all this week.

On the 28th of July, 1850, two singular letters were thrown down, addressed to Dr. Phelps. They were both in one handwriting, but were signed by two different orthodox clergymen of Philadelphia. Their interest in religious movements, and their acquaintance with the phraseology of "revival" correspondence, are seen at a glance. "St. Peter's," in the second letter, is a Puseyite church.

DEAR BROTHER,—The Lord is dealing bountifully with His chosen people. Brother Barnes admitted to the church forty-nine last Sunday, and Brother Parker thirty-four to-day. Brother Converse has had the cholera, and Brother Fairchild has grown so fleshy as scarcely to be recognised. Our friend Mr. Tarr has buried his wife. She died of consumption. E. Tarr is married. Brother Mahu, being suddenly inspired last Sunday, spoke so eloquently and so loud, and used such majestic action, as to be quite done up for a while. He broke a blood-vessel. Old Tiers has gone crazy, and is shut up in a madhouse, or, rather, a hospital. The H—'s have gone into the country to spend some time. That's all the news.—Your faithful brother in Christ, R. A.

DEAR BROTHER,—The millennium truly is coming. The day of the Lord is at hand. We are adding countless numbers to the altar of the Lord. Brother A— became inspired last Sunday, to such a degree, that his soul took its flight to the regions above, and has not yet returned. The Catholic churches, St. Joseph's and St. Mary's, were burned down; St. Peter's, also—I believe that is a Catholic church. Brother Mahu was preaching from the text, "Resist the devil," &c., when he was suddenly overturned by an invisible power, which frightened him so that his hair turned white in five minutes.

Brother Barnes, to render his church more attractive, is going to have opera singing and dancing, every Sunday p.m. Mrs. Alexander Tower, old Mr. Tiers, Brother Fairchild, and Mrs. Somerville are going to dance. I think they will find it a very lucrative employment. Jane and Martha still progress in Hebrew.—Your affectionate brother, M. R.

DIRECT SPIRIT-WRITING—INVESTIGATORS AT FAULT.

Spirit-writing, without visible human agency, has never been a common mode of communicating, although it was

among the early occurrences at Hydesville, Rochester, and Auburn.\*

Sometimes these missives were enclosed in a book, and thrown down stairs or into the room; sometimes wrapped about a key or nail, or anything that would give a momentum, and thrown into the room. Often they were seen to fall from above; this occurring frequently when the doors were closed, and it was not possible for any visible agent to have been the cause. Writing would appear on the wall at times, made, as it appeared, with a pencil. On one occasion Dr. Phelps was writing at his desk, and, turning his back for a few moments, without leaving his chair, turned again to his paper, where he found written in large letters, "Very nice paper and very nice ink for the devil." The ink was not yet dry, the desk was not two feet from him as he sat, and he was entirely alone in the room.

About the 1st of May, Dr. Phelps of Boston, brother of the Rev. Doctor and Professor Phelps, of Andover, a son of the Rev. Doctor, went to Stratford to "expose the humbug;" and with a full belief that it was a trick of evil-minded persons, and that they should be able to detect and expose it without trouble; and they were disappointed, as hundreds have been under like circumstances. On Tuesday evening a loud rap was heard on the back door, seeming to be made by the knocker, loud enough to be heard twenty rods distant. The servant went to the door, but no person was there. After the lapse of five or eight minutes the rap was repeated. It was then supposed that some one had done it mischievously, but on looking about no person was discovered. It was in the shades of evening, but not dark enough to prevent any person being seen who might have done it as easily as at midday. The knocking came the third time, when Dr. Phelps (the visitor) placed himself in the hall, perhaps four feet from the door, and the Professor, of Andover, took a position on the steps without, each having full view of the door. The same loud raps were repeated on the door between them. The knocker did not move, nor could the eye detect any cause for what met the ear. The noise was heard throughout the house, and both the gentlemen were positive that no visible agent was employed to produce it. About bed-time a loud pounding was heard on the chamber door. The gentlemen, each with a candle in hand, stood on either side of the door, as the pounding, as though done with a heavy boot, was continued. The noise appeared to each to be on the side of the door opposite to him. On the following morning, as Dr. Phelps, of Stratford, was standing at the foot of the stairs leading to the third storey, a noise as loud, and much resembling the report of a pistol, occurred apparently close to his ear. These boisterous sounds occurred at intervals during a great part of the time that the disturbance was continued. Sometimes for weeks they would be heard; and again for days they were heard every day.

It would seem, from various occurrences, that the agents of these sounds, whoever they were, must have been human beings, or at least possessed of all the leading characteristics of humanity. They were evidently influenced by kindness or unkindness, by respect and confidence, as persons generally are in this life. Some instances illustrating this are given. One morning, during the breakfast hour, they would push the breakfast table suddenly, raise up one side and shake it in such a manner as to spill the coffee, and otherwise occasion serious inconvenience. A person at the table spoke to them in a tone of authority, commanding them to desist; but the act was at once repeated. Again they were commanded to cease, but increased violence followed this demand. This was five or six times repeated, and the shaking was each time renewed. At length another person at the table said, "I request you kindly to cease this annoyance, and allow us to take our breakfast quietly," and they ceased at once without a repetition. It was found from this time that kindness had about the same effect upon them that it produces upon mankind at large. A lady, the wife of a clergyman, spent a few weeks in the family during the summer, who received many communications from them, would often, when the scissors, thimble, or things of that kind were mislaid, say, "I will thank the spirits to return my thimble, scissors," or what-

\* Mr. Sunderland, in his *Book of Human Nature*, p. 280, says this was the first of the spirit-writing, but he is in error. The author of this work was acquainted with cases of this kind long before the disturbances at Stratford.

ever was missing, and the article missing would drop at her side, or in her lap, within a minute. Things of this kind occurred very many times in course of the time that these phenomena were continued. If a key or knife, or anything of the kind was mislaid, and any person was looking for it, frequently it would be thrown to them as though their wants were anticipated. Dr. Phelps was once with Harry in the stable, when the currycomb could not be found, and he asked Harry where it was, to which Harry replied that he did not know. At that moment the Doctor saw it rise, as if thrown, from a point ten feet distant from them, and, describing a parabola, fall within a short distance of the spot where they both were standing.

(To be concluded in our next.)

#### LETTER FROM HERR J. GILLIS TO MR. C. REIMERS.

MR. CHRISTIAN REIMERS sends us the following:—

SIR,—I have just received a letter from Herr J. Gillis, dated St. Petersburg, Aug. 10th, from which I extract a few lines:—

"I too felt rather nervous about the preservation of the two interlinked rings, but they are all right, and delight and astonish again and again. I will now lay also bare the grain of the wooden ring, and have a perfect photo taken. I received also a letter from Professor Zöllner."

Thus the long silence of Herr Gillis seems explained by the absence of his scientific friends (vacation season), together with his wise resolution not to part with the rings on any account.

CHRISTIAN REIMERS.

47, Mornington-road, London, August 14th, 1878.

#### BELIEF IN SPIRITS.

OSSIAN, as rendered by Macpherson, pleads that the dead still exist, because their ghosts are seen. I know full well the senseless incredulity which will greet this argument. It requires the audacity of conviction to pronounce it. I never knowingly beheld an apparition, whether ghost, wraith, or doppel, and I have no expectation of ever seeing one. But I am sure that if beings exist in an ethereal or spiritual form, there are persons who are capable of seeing them. I do not believe that all spectral appearances are produced by a deranged digestion or disturbed molecular adjustment of the brain. I am totally incapable of such credulity.

To illustrate this belief we will now cite two or three examples which it seems to me cannot be candidly questioned. M. Matter, a French gentleman, holding a position in the Department of Public Instruction at Paris, stated to a well-known American in 1859 that he paid a visit to Friedrich Oberlin, the celebrated pastor of Ban-de-la-Roche, in Alsace. Oberlin submitted to his inspection a manuscript prepared by himself, entitled, *Journal des Apparitions et Instructions par Reves*. He found it to contain, among other things, a narrative of a series of apparitions of his deceased wife, and of his interviews (*entretiens*) with her. "Oberlin was convinced," said M. Matter, "that the inhabitants of the invisible world can appear to us, and we to them, when God wills; and that we are apparitions to them as they are to us."

Miss Anna Maria Porter, the author, relates that during her residence at Esher, in Surrey, England, an old gentleman was in the habit of visiting her house of evenings, reading the newspapers and drinking a cup of tea. One evening she saw him enter as usual, and seat himself at the table, but without speaking. She addressed some remarks to him, but he made no reply. After a few seconds she saw him rise and leave the room without uttering a word. Astonished and alarmed at this conduct, she immediately sent a servant to his house to make inquiries. The reply was brought back that the old gentleman had died suddenly about an hour before.

It is also related that a gentleman in London who was familiar with the late George Smith, the celebrated Assyriologist, heard his name called in Mr. Smith's natural tone of voice on the afternoon of the day that he died at Hierapolis, in Syria, in August, 1878.

Indeed, so general is the belief of mankind, from all antiquity, upon this subject, that there is no people among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. "This opinion," remarks Dr. Samuel Johnson, "which prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those who never heard one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience could make credible." Addison also declares: "Could not I give myself up to this general testimony of mankind, I should to the relations of particular persons who are now living, and whom I cannot distrust in other matters of life."—A. WILDER, in *Evolution*.

MINISTERING ANGELS.—The Rev. Mr. Clark, of Xenia, Ohio, startled his congregation a few Sundays ago by declaring in one of his sermons that it was a precious doctrine with him to believe and know that all God's people had ministering angels, who had power to come back to this world and encourage and comfort all such as put their trust in Him; and that these ministering angels were unquestionably those who had once lived with them, and taken an earthly interest in them. He claimed that he had a right, though a Methodist minister, to this faith; claiming that John Wesley and Adam Clarke, two of the greatest exponents of the Church, had long ago taken this position.—*Independent Age*.



## THE INTERLINKED RINGS TEST.

THE RELATIVE VALUE OF RINGS OF IVORY, WOOD, CORAL, AND OTHER SUBSTANCES.

WE have received the following letter from Dr. Carter Blake about the interlinked rings manifestation recently obtained by Mr. Julius Gillis and Herr Christian Reimers:

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—Since my letter last week, I have had an opportunity through your kindness of carefully examining the photograph taken of the ivory and wooden rings on which so much discussion is likely to take place at Leipsic and elsewhere.

The fact appears clear to my senses that traces of the pattern, commonly called "engine-turned," and which is especially distinctive of the ivory, either of the Asiatic or African species of elephant, is visible over nearly one-half the periphery of the ivory ring, such periphery being the one which the photographer has exposed to the light. This examination, therefore, places the fact beyond all doubt that the ring is really composed of elephantine ivory, cut at a transverse section to the axis of the tusk.

A careful examination of the wood ring, which cannot be made from the photograph alone, is now necessary; and it is to be hoped that it will not be long delayed by the German microscopical botanists.

C. CARTER BLAKE.

The reason why the "engine-turned" markings of the ivory show so well in the photograph is, that a slight tinge of yellow effects the contrast in colour by which the markings on ivory are made visible. Strong yellow comes out black in a photograph, and feeble yellow produces a deeper tint in a photograph than in the original object. The natural interlaced lines on some specimens of ivory resemble the curved lines sometimes turned by machinery on the backs of watches, hence the expression "engine-turned."

In the following letter Mr. Wakefield speaks of the permanency of the test:—

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—As the correspondent who in your issue of the 19th April ventured to point out the great value of such a test experiment as the interlinking—passing through one another without fracture—of two rings, each of a different material, such as two woods like ebony and boxwood, a feat that has been now happily accomplished, allow me to make a few remarks on the practical value of such evidence.

It appears to me to be more valuable, viewed simply as a matter of evidence, than if one had been raised from the dead, for whereas the latter miracle must necessarily be wrought before a limited number of witnesses—the testimony to its truth would be greatly weakened by transmission—the miracle of the rings can be seen and handled by an unlimited number, and for any length of time. It is for all purposes of evidence as good ten years, a hundred, or a thousand years hence as it was the day and hour it was performed.

There is not an association, or public or private meeting in the world, to which it cannot be exhibited—not one doubting individual in whose hands it may not be placed to be seen and felt, thus appealing at once, and directly, to two of their most reliable senses.

It must always carry about with itself (as I observed in my letter) conclusive evidence of a miracle having been wrought. So that in this respect it stands quite alone.

The alleged miracle, repeated at intervals, of the melting of the blood of St. Janarius, is not to be compared with this as a question of evidence.

It is greatly to be regretted that the rings were so soon taken out of England, at least till they had been seen and testified to, after being subjected to careful microscopic and chemical examination. At all events, it is to be hoped they will be forthcoming at the meetings of the British Association in Dublin now approaching.

However, there can be little doubt that other equally zealous and truthful inquirers will attain equal if not greater results. It is within my experience (and I am glad to have a fitting opportunity of bearing witness to the fact) that the results of such inquiries bear striking proportion to the honesty and zeal of the minds who make them. As of this, I have been furnished from time to time with conclusive proof. To those who approach such inquiries in a different spirit, influenced by other considerations, such as a desire to find evidence in support of some preconceived theory, self-interest, curiosity, or with that large class so circumstanced as to fear they might be compromised by an open avowal of belief—a class much to be pitied—to all these the results will be always doubtful, often negative, and sometimes illusory. As to whether this ring "wonder," if proved genuine, is to be regarded as a true miracle, it is a verbal question really not worth discussing, turning on the meaning to be attached to the word miracle. Stripping that word of its many theological accretions, and understanding it to mean simply an act contrary to, or beyond, the known laws of nature, these rings do present a miracle within this definition.

In my former letter I believe I stated I had other suggestions to make, but I think it better to reserve them till this miracle of the rings has brought about some of the effect it is calculated to produce.

E. T. WAKEFIELD.

Hanover Lodge, Harrow-on-the-Hill, 12th August, 1878.

Is the test so very permanent? Specimens of ivory frequently crack with age, and a crack through the linked ivory ring would render it worthless thenceforth as evidence.

It occurred to us that a solid ring of natural coral, small

though it must be, would be exceedingly durable. On this point a leading London coral merchant informs us small rings in one piece of true coral are exceptional and expensive things, since coral is not found in size sufficient to permit of being turned into rings. Supposing that the manifestation can hereafter be obtained without the smashing of several rings in attempts, probably neither the smallness of the size nor the expense would be any great impediment to their use. Coral consists of microscopically small shells of a kind of zoophyte. Two pieces of wash-leather (with a round hole in the centre of each), interlinked without having been cut, would form good evidence to carry about in the pocket; we believe that Mr. Joad once tried to get this test. An unbroken ring of solid wood round the neck of a medium, which ring is much too small to be slipped over his head, would be a good test; the chief drawback would be that the scientific disbelievers called upon to testify to the phenomenon would tug at it viciously, and be delighted to drag a medium about by such a collar.

Sir Charles Isham questions whether interlinked solid rings of wood and ivory form an absolute test:—

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—Now that the ring test appears to have been so splendidly accomplished, non-Spiritualists will be endeavouring to discover material solutions of the same; I therefore should be pleased if this communication of a Spiritualist may anticipate them. However startling the announcement may at first sight appear, it has just occurred to me that a solid ring of any material might be linked to a solid one of wood in the following simple manner:—

Cut a longitudinal slit in a tree, and insert tightly a ring of any size and material to such a depth as to bury a small section of it; the diameter of the tree will be a little less than the required diameter of the wooden ring. Should the operation be performed just before the bursting of the foliage, and the ring be quite small, the bark will heal over, and a very thin film of wood will develop in a few weeks; but for practical purposes, or should a thick ring be required, it would be necessary to leave it two or more years, according to the size desired. Then cut the tree off on a level with the ring, above and below, and you have a disc of wood; now cut out the inside, and there are two solid rings of different materials interlinked. Such being the case, it would be advisable to obtain the phenomenon with a material other than wood, such as ivory and bone, or Indian and African ivory.

C. E. ISHAM.

Lampport Hall, Northampton, August 11th, 1878.

In reply to the above, the wooden ring used in the successful experiment had no abnormal markings in the grain, but appeared to have been originally cut out of a normal disc. Is it experimentally proved that growing wood will enclose solid objects in the manner stated? The ivory ring used in Mr. Gillis's experiment had been brought by him from Germany a few days previously.

Herr Christian Reimers writes:—

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—The minute and exhaustive examination of the rings is considered, and justly so, the next step to be taken to arrive, if not at the solution, at all events at the full stupendity of the result. The wooden ring, as indicated by Dr. C. Blake, demands careful attention. I concur with Dr. Carter Blake in avoiding the term "matter through matter," for it premises knowledge of part of the mysterious *modus operandi*. Likewise, I never say that things are "brought through closed doors" (why not walls?); but, "in spite of closed," &c. We only know the effects, and partly the conditions to obtain them, but not the chain of causes. Therefore, we ought to be careful in applying terms. That results like the present one have not been obtained long ago with similar conditions and intense desire may be explained by the mental conditions playing the most important part in these psychic experiments, which mental conditions act, so to speak, like material substances. Thus, a cutting sceptic may paralyse a strong array of powerful elements; a burning enthusiast cause vibrations preventing the nice adjustment of subtle forces.

A few days ago my medium told me that my spirit-companion, Bertie, communicated to her that she (Bertie) played an essential part in the experiment. Having no reason to doubt the veracity of my medium, I took this, at first, as an innocent display of spirit enthusiasm, or pride, for they share with us little freaks of imagination; but after-reflection shows another side to it. In my latter period of witnessing marvellous manifestations, Bertie played hide-and-seek with certain natural laws, and ignoring all impediments, such as solid matter in the passage of objects, seemed quite child's play. Thus, scores of times I carried on a correspondence and exchange of letters and flowers under absolute test-conditions, viz., sealed doors and windows. The *rapport* grew so intense that once I left my letter on the usual spot at noon, and returned to my adjoining sitting-room. After half-an-hour (nobody coming near all the time), I resolved to affix the tests, but the letter was already gone—snatched away, as it were. One of the *bonâ fide* proofs of disregard of matter occurred when I discovered my three bunches of flowers (previously brought into my sealed room) gone from the glasses on the mantelpiece. Shortly before, I had locked my piano and taken the key with me. After vainly searching for my flowers I returned to the piano

to play a sonata, and, unlocking the lid, found all these same flowers spread over the key-board! A pretty sight indeed! Last December, when I had particularly carefully secured the entrance to my room by means of the most intricate tests (which, by the bye, I increased after each success), after leaving a letter and flowers there, I went to the opera, and returning too late for refreshments, I had a vivid impression on the road home how nice a glass of wine and a piece of cake would be; then I, after finding all the tests intact, opened the door, and found the letter gone, an answer in its place, also an exchange of flowers, and a little Christmas present—a delicious glass of spiced wine and a cake on the top of all. With these experiences I may be understood to feel some confidence in the communication of Bertie as to her salutary presence at these remarkable sittings, where she—and this gives more force to it—several times materialised herself sufficient for me to accept the appearance as identity.

London, 12th July.

The editor of *Truth* says in last week's issue of his journal:—

Now here we have persons asserting that they supped with ghosts and talked with ghosts; assertions that we may believe or not believe as we please. But the interlinked rings are, it is stated, to be submitted to independent investigation. If really the one is a solid piece of ivory and the other a solid piece of wood, by no recognised law of nature could they be interlinked. I shall be curious, therefore, to read the report of the Leipsic professors as to whether the ivory and the wood really are solid. But if the melancholy Peter can interlink one pair of rings he can interlink others. Why should not, therefore, a pair of interlinked rings be submitted to scientific investigation in England? I should like to see such rings myself, and I should like still more to sup with Peter. These mediums seem able to enjoy his society whenever they please. If they would only bring Peter with them I shall esteem it a pleasure to have the party to supper, and to provide them with as much fowl and champagne as they can eat and drink. But mediums always herd together, and never can be induced to allow independent investigators to witness their mysteries. I am afraid, therefore, that it is somewhat improbable that I shall ever be gratified by entertaining Peter.

#### THE SPIRIT-MOTHER.

The following verses, given through the trance mediumship of Miss Lizzie Doten, are extracted from her *Poems of Progress*:—

Through our lives' mysterious changes,  
Through the sorrow-haunted years,  
Runs a law of Compensation  
For our sufferings and our tears.  
And the soul that reasons rightly,  
All its sad complaining stills,  
Till it learns that meek submission,  
Where it wishes not nor wills.  
Thus, in Sorrow's fiery furnace  
Was a faithful mother tried,  
Till, through Love's divinest uses,  
All her soul was purified.  
O ye sorrow-stricken mothers!  
Ye whose weakness feeds your pain!  
Listen to her simple story—  
Listen! and be strong again.  
"It was sunset—and the day-dream  
Of my life was almost o'er;  
For my spirit-barge was drifting  
Slowly, slowly from the shore.  
Dimly could I see the sunlight  
Through my vine-wreathed window shine,  
Faintly could I feel the pressure  
Of a strong hand clasping mine.  
"But anew the life-tide started,  
At my infant's feeble cry;  
Back my spirit turned in anguish,  
And I felt I could not die.  
Deeper, darker fell the shadows,  
Like the midnight's sable pall,  
And that infant cry grew fainter—  
Fainter—fainter—that was all!  
"Suddenly I heard sweet voices  
Mingling in a tender strain—  
All my mortal weakness left me,  
All my anguish and my pain.  
On my forehead fell the glory  
Of the bright, celestial morn,  
I was of the earth no longer,  
For my spirit was re-born.  
"Pure, sweet faces bent above me,  
Tenderly they gazed and smiled,  
And my Angel-Mother whispered,  
'Welcome, welcome home, my child!  
Then, in one melodious chorus,  
Sang the radiant angel band,  
'Welcome! O thou weary pilgrim!  
Welcome to the Spirit Land!  
"But, o'er all those glad rejoicings,  
Rose again my infant's cry,  
For my heart had borne the echo  
Through the portals of the sky.

And I murmured, 'O ye bright ones!  
Still my earthly home is dear;  
Vain are all your songs of welcome,  
For I am not happy here.

"Strike your harps, ye white-robed Angels!  
But your music makes me wild,  
For my heart is with my treasure,  
Heaven is only with my child!  
Let me go, and whisper comfort  
To my little mourning dove—  
Life is cold; O let me shield him  
With a mother's tenderest love!

"Swift there came a pure, white angel,  
Through the glory, shining far;  
In her hand she bore a lily,  
On her forehead beamed a star.  
Very beautiful and tender  
Was the love-light in her eyes,  
Like the sunny smile of Summer  
Beaming in the azure skies.

"And she said, 'O mourning sister!  
Lo! thy prayer of love is heard,  
For the boundless Heart of Being  
By thine earnest cry is stirred.  
Heaven is life's divinest freedom,  
And no mandate bids thee stay;  
Go, and as a star of duty  
Guide thy loved one on his way.

"Life is full of holy uses,  
If but rightly understood,  
And its evils and abuses  
May be stepping-stones to good.  
Never seek to weakly shield him,  
Or his destiny control,  
For the wealth that grief shall yield him  
Is the birthright of his soul.'

"Musing deeply on her meaning,  
Turned I from the heavenly shore,  
And on love's swift wings descending,  
Sought my earthly home once more.  
There my widowed, childless sister  
Sat with meek and quiet grace,  
With her heart's great wasting sorrow  
Written on her pale sweet face.

"And she sang in dreamy murmurs,  
Bending o'er my Willie's head,  
'Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed.'  
Soft I whispered, 'Dearest sister—  
Darling Willie—I am here.'  
Sweetly smiled the sleeping infant,  
And the singer dropped a tear.

"Thenceforth was my soul united  
To that life more dear than mine;  
And I prayed for strength to guide me,  
From the source of Life Divine.  
Slowly did I see the meaning  
In life's purposes concealed—  
All the uses of temptation,  
Sin and sorrow, stood revealed.

"Through my loved one's youth and manhood  
In the hour of sinful strife,  
I could see the nobler issues,  
And the grand design of life.  
I could see that he was guided  
By a mightier hand than mine,  
And a mother's love was weakness  
By the side of Love Divine.

"Then I did not seek to shield him,  
Or his destiny control—  
Life, with all its varied changes,  
Was the teacher of his soul.  
Nay, I did not strive to alter  
What I could not make nor mend,  
For the love so full of wisdom  
Could be trusted to the end.

"I could give him strength and courage  
From the treasures of my love—  
I could lead his aspirations  
To the Holy Heart above;  
I could warn him in temptation,  
That he might not blindly fall;  
I could wait with faith and patience  
For his triumph—that was all.

"Mid the rush and roar of battle  
In the carnival of death,  
When the air grew hot and heavy,  
With the cannon's fiery breath,  
First and foremost with the bravest  
Who had heard their country's call,  
With the stars and stripes above him,  
Did my darling Willie fall.

“Onward—onward rushed his comrades  
 With a wild, defiant cry,  
 As they charged upon the foe-man,  
 Leaving him alone to die.  
 Faint he murmured, ‘O my mother!  
 Angel mother! art thou near?’  
 And he caught the whispered answer,  
 ‘Darling Willie, I am here!’

“‘O my loved one! my true-hearted!  
 Soon your anguish will be o’er,  
 Then, in heaven’s eternal sunshine,  
 We shall dwell for evermore.’  
 Swiftly o’er his pallid features  
 Gleams of heavenly brightness passed,  
 And my Willie’s noble spirit  
 Met me face to face at last.

“In a soldier’s grave they laid him  
 Underneath the sheltering pines,  
 Where the breezes made sweet music  
 Through the gently swaying vines.  
 Now in heaven our souls united  
 All their aspirations blend,  
 And my spirit’s holy mission  
 Thus hath found a joyful end.”

Through our lives’ mysterious changes,  
 Through the sorrow-haunted years,  
 Runs a law of Compensation  
 For our sufferings and our tears;  
 And the soul which reasons rightly  
 All its sad complaining stills,  
 Till it gains that calm condition  
 Where it wishes not, nor wills.

THE LINES OF DEMARCATION BETWEEN OCCULTISM  
 AND SPIRITUALISM.

BY EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

AT what exact point of time in this onward rushing age of ours the word “Occultism” first began to be bruited about by the tongue of rumour, I am unable to say. To what particular circumstance, place, or person, the word in question owes its widespread notoriety, I am equally at a loss to determine. All I do know is, that it is used as a weapon of offence by one class of Spiritualists against another, and certain ill-defined meanings have been attached to it by the attacking party, the sum of which implies that Occultism is the foe of Spiritualism, and that the chief end and aim of the Occultist’s faith is to level deadly blows against that of the Spiritualist. Having been classified—by a certain portion of the belligerent Spiritualists—amongst the enemy’s ranks, and deeming it rather hard to spend my lifetime and all I am and have in the defence of a cause which seems to rejoice in no line of conduct more than the suicidal act of slaying its best friends, I shall take advantage of the discussions which I am told are being carried on in the columns of the *English Spiritualist*, to offer a few remarks on the position of Occultism and Occultists, as I understand these terms. Being so far away from the great *desideratum* of a regular and frequent mail delivery, and the immense pressure upon my time being now, as heretofore, too great to permit of my studying mail matter *en masse*, I can only touch upon the salient points at issue from the reports rendered me by others. From these I learn that some of the English Spiritualists, like many of their compeers in America, greatly misunderstand the terms they denounce, and fail to realise that Occultism can only be legitimately rendered, as the science of that which is *hidden*—whilst the Occultist is neither more nor less than a student of *hidden* things. If there were no mysteries in the universe yet to be solved, and Spiritualism really covered the whole ground of the occult or *hidden* in nature, then would the term Occultism be meaningless, and the studies it points to be supererogatory. But after having sat at the feet of my spiritual pastors and masters for twenty years, and been as patient, faithful, and earnest a student of Spiritualism as its resources for instruction would allow, I find I have only just gained that standpoint of knowledge which assures me that the soul of man lives beyond the grave, and can and does communicate with mortals, through certain telegraphic signs and signals. As to the how spirits come, from whence the soul originated, its relations with matter, its powers, potencies, past, present, and future—all these are still points of occult knowledge, which I and others humbly crave permission to investigate, with a little more attention than Spiritualists are always willing to accord to such very occult subjects; and for this purpose I do not confess myself guilty of any want of loyalty to Spiritualism when I venture to question the opinions of the “grand old ancients,” explore the realms of magical art, peer into the crucible of the alchemist, take a seat now and then on the tripod of the Pythia, listen to the histories of trolls, dwarfs, fairies, undines, brownies, &c., and wonder whether they were any better or worse accredited than the stories of Katie King and all their family relations; in a word, I take the liberty—although I am a Spiritualist—to ask for a little more light on every subject to-day than I had yesterday, and determine that the *all* of spiritual knowledge and light that man has ever enjoyed is no more to be obtained through the communicants who have as yet manifested to us in this modern dispensation than it is to be found bound

up between the covers of the Bible. To me the most remarkable phenomenon in Spiritualism is that Spiritualist who would limit the sphere of investigation from the bands of Orion to the cabinet of the Davenport Brothers.

When the chains of ecclesiastical despotism fell from the neck of the human soul, as we opened the gates of immortality at the summons of the first rapping spirit of the nineteenth century, we immediately enlarged our edition of the Bible—from King James’s version to that written by the King of kings on the pages of the Universe. And shall any petty spiritual autocrat denounce me because I turn from the communications of the immortal “John” and “Katie,” to those of Plotinus and Pythagoras? Because I believe, nay *know*, that my soul shall survive the shock of death, may I not try to find out where that soul came from? Because the spirits of earth are all around me, and their homes are made manifest, and their spheres have become palpable, and the demonstrations of their presence peoples the very air I breathe with a living aura, and makes the atmosphere of my silent chamber alive with the heart-throbs of an innumerable cloud of living witnesses, must I thenceforward conclude that there are no other spirits in the universe than those of humanity? No other spheres than those of this “little dew-drop in space” earth? no existences but those who have once been incarnated in the ever-changing elements of our materiality? When my all-wise spiritualistic friends can find the ultimate point of divisibility in the atom, I will believe human spiritual existence is the ultimate point of density on the one hand, and attenuation on the other, in the realms of elemental being.

When they can prove that matter and spirit as we see it combined in the human structure is *all* that the realms of atmosphere hold in solution, I will cease to search below or above man for the origin and ultimate of his soul’s career. The real truth to my apprehension is this. Spiritualism is *one phase, and one only*, of Occultism. Occultism, as the science of the unseen universe, is only demonstrated in a very limited degree by Spiritualism. Even as far as we have proceeded in that glorious and most welcome revelation, the solution of one mystery only introduces us to the threshold of another, and upon, aye, and *over* these thresholds I shall presume to step, in never-ending search for those more profound solutions to life’s never-ending problems, that will require the whole realm of existence to solve, the experiences of every age to illustrate, and the entire areas of space to explore thoroughly.

As to any present standpoints of belief, which would justify critics in passing judgment upon us as Occultists, I protest against such presumption. I should as soon venture to set up my religious opinions as a standpoint for the faith of French Reincarnationists, Italian Catholics, English Trinitarians, American Nothingarians, Hindoo Buddhists, Chinese Lamaists, &c., &c., all of whom can, and do, believe in spirit communion, as to allow any journalist to represent the opinions of Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott, or Emma Hardinge Britten, as authoritative standards of faith in Occultism. Whatever we may all and each believe, we make no profession of *knowledge* beyond what we can absolutely demonstrate; and as I have ever held that position, with all due allowance from my spiritualistic associates, I shall take leave to carry it with me into those broader fields of investigation which enlarge the borders of Spiritualism into Occultism.

Occultism then is the *all* of spiritual things, as modern Spiritualism proper is a part. Occultists are fearless explorers into the entire realm of the Occult, instead of being contented to drink only from such fountains of knowledge as the spirits of our own sphere can open up to us. Occultism has as yet no standards of knowledge, but very broad areas of opinion; and I should no more subscribe to the *ipse dixit* of an Occultist, unless he could prove his positions upon unimpeachable grounds of proof, than I should acknowledge a right from any Spiritualist to say to my soul, “Thus far shalt thou investigate, and no farther, and hitherto shall the waves of thy thought be stayed.”

For my own part, I strongly recommend all Spiritualists to become Occultists; that is, to leave the idle and senseless platitudes in which so many while away a leisure hour, converting Spiritualism into a mere vehicle of an evening’s entertainment, and seriously set themselves to work to discover the links of causation from which effects spring; to trace each spirit up through, as well as *from* matter, and up through space into ultimates, as well as into the pleasantries of the spirit circle.

Where such vast fields of knowledge are to be traversed as spiritual existence opens up to our gaze, past, present, and future are the only boundary lines which should limit our field of observation. Where belief can stretch away to such illimitable heights and depths without finding any horizon save man’s ignorance, it is an unpardonable sin to sit cracking jokes with materialised spirits and “run a-muck” against every student who attempts to find out from what manufacturing the materialisers derive their materials. “Wide as the universe” should be the field of our research; free as the air our right to speculate and draw deductions; based on eternal principles our enunciation of doctrinal opinions; founded on the cornerstone of demonstrable facts our claims to knowledge.

Courteously exchanging opinions with one another, instead of belabouring those that differ from us with the old weapons of prejudice and ignorance, this should be our method of research and our means of growth; and if we add, standing shoulder to shoulder with each other in the new field of spiritual research against the legions of conservatism and materiality, I think I have laid down a better plan of operations for the advancement of our glorious cause than the idle and wasteful battle of terms which has so long been going on between the so-called ranks of Spiritualism and Occultism.—*Harbinger of Light* (Melbourne).

## "PSYCHOGRAPHY."

*Psychography.* By M. A. (OXON.) W. H. HARRISON. 1878.—Upon the title page this work is described as "a treatise on one of the objective forms of psychic, a spiritual phenomena," and, as the preface informs us, is designed to present "a record of facts" bearing on the form of manifestation, known usually as direct writing. It contains the personal experiences of the author, substantiated and extended by those of well-known writers, obtained in all cases under test conditions. Baron Guldenstube, Professor Crookes, Serjeant Cox, Hon. R. Dale Owen, Rev. J. Page Hopps, Mr. A. R. Wallace, Professor Barrett, Dr. Wyld, Dr. C. Carter Blake, Rev. T. Colley, Canon Mouis, and Madame Blavatsky, are among the authorities whose attestations are here placed before the public, in the briefest and most satisfactory manner. From the most unquestionable evidence we have here the proof of a force and an intelligence, exercised without physical intervention, and of such a character as to defy detection, as well as apparently to override all established law. We have the sworn testimony of the Court Conjuror and Prestidigitator to the Emperor of Germany, Samuel Bellachini, that after testing the mediumship of Mr. Slade in a series of sittings in full daylight, as well as in the evening, he considers obtaining of such phenomena by prestidigitation to be "absolutely impossible;" after which it is to be hoped that the unvarnished and shameless Maskelyne may be somewhat silenced. At one sitting in St. Petersburg, writing in six different languages was obtained on a single slate. Writing has been obtained in Greek, and even in Chinese, as well as in many modern languages, of which the mediums have been ignorant; but for further and complete information upon this subject we must refer our readers to the book itself. It is almost needless to say, that the selection of evidences has been guided by that scrupulous accuracy for which "M.A. (Oxon)" deservedly possesses the entire confidence of all readers. The criticism is as usual searching and suggestive, the method logical and scientific, the treatment scholarly—either to Spiritualists or inquirers the volume is one of the highest value, and if the exceptionally fitted author could continue to publish a series of them, each one dealing with a particular branch of the phenomena, the science of Spiritualism supported by such text books would inevitably advance to the position of importance due to its marvellous revelations, but hitherto denied by the ignorance and prejudice of the masses. No rational mind could escape the conviction which a perusal of this 150 pp. compels; and especially to those outlying tracts of civilisation, where physical phenomena are rarely within reach of the investigator, such treatises as these are invaluable. The printer's and binder's portion of the undertaking has been very handsomely performed, and we trust that the little handbook will have as it merits an immense circulation.—*Harbinger of Light (Melbourne).*

## AN EXTRAORDINARY STORY ABOUT A SPIRIT BRIDE.

(From the "Cincinnati Commercial.")

TERRE HAUTE, IND., Dec. 18th.—We, the undersigned, manager of Anna Stewart's *séances*, are in daily receipt of letters calling our attention to a report under the caption of "Marrying a Ghost," found in your issue of a recent date, asking our version of the unique wedding. In reply, we take from the said report the following extract, fully endorsing the statements made therein by your correspondent:—

"At seven o'clock Mrs. Stewart entered the cabinet, the lights were turned down, and quiet prevailed, broken only by the sweet and trembling vibration of the doctor's musical box, a condition necessary to assist the controlling spirit to more fully materialise. Some twenty minutes were in this manner whiled away, when the door of the cabinet opened, disclosing an angelic figure, arrayed in a complete bridal costume of snow-white texture, indescribably beautiful. The veil, which appeared like a fleecy vapour, encircled her brow, and being caught at the temples, fell in graceful folds and seemingly almost enveloping her entire form. Thus, like treading on the clouds, the form walked softly into the rostrum. The Judge, who had received spiritual intelligence as to what was about to occur, at once recognised the materialisation as that of his departed wife, and exhibiting considerable feeling, mingled with much dignity of manner, approached her with affectionate greeting, and placing within her gloved hand a bouquet of rare flowers, imprinted upon her lips a fervent kiss. 'Are you ready?' inquired the doctor. 'We are,' responded the Judge. Justice Denehie, of this city, then stepped upon the rostrum, and joining the hands of the couple, in a few well chosen words, in the name of the overruling power, united the mortal to the immortal; vows of eternal constancy and fidelity were exchanged, pledges of love were made anew. At the conclusion of this ceremony, the spirit bride received the congratulations of the company present, then slowly receded. As she crossed the threshold of the cabinet a dazzling light flooded its precincts, revealing to the audience a spirit face of marvellous beauty."

The above, as reported, was witnessed on Sunday evening, the 19th of November last, by twenty persons, composed equally of each sex. The preliminary arrangements were consummated in a private *séance* on the morning of the same day. During the fifteen minutes taken up by the interview the apparition was seated by his side, asking and replying to questions indicative of a superior intellect. The conversation on her part was conducted in a loud and distinct whisper. She manifested the greatest pleasure in accepting the privilege granted to reassure him of her continued regard and affection. In reply to the question referring to the proposed marriage, "What will the ignorant and prejudiced say? Will they not regard me crazy?" "It matters not as to what they may say; let us please ourselves," was the decisive and emphatic reply. His wishes as regards the wedding-dress were consulted with manifest interest and scrupulous care. She appeared on the momentous occasion

attired in the habiliments agreed upon, with the pleasing exception that in splendour they surpassed anticipations.

Mr. Linas B. Denehie, the official whose services by pre-engagement were secured, promptly mounted the rostrum at the proper time, and passed on to meet them, as they arm-in-arm advanced to the front. Unexpectedly a warning to halt was received. Alas! the apparition was faltering. In swaying the head and shoulders fell backward; the face, partially dematerialising, assuming a pallid and ghastly appearance. Awe-stricken, his honour, the 'squire, awaited results with anxious solicitude. In the meantime, sympathetic minds imploringly and silently offered prayers in her behalf. A few moments of breathless silence, and the crisis passed. Behold! she rallied, coming up with a power that inspired all with a grateful confidence in her ability to pass successfully the trying ordeal. At the conclusion of the ceremony the judge conducted her to the cabinet, following which the illumination referred to was introduced. After the brilliant light faded away, the apparition reappeared, shaking hands with the judge, then the 'squire, and afterwards with all in the room, returning to the cabinet, closed the door, and was seen no more. Thus terminated the most startling and interesting event ever recorded in the annals of spirit phenomena.

In conclusion, we desire to say that the location of the judge in Vermont was incorrectly reported, and the initial "A." is fictitious. Doubtless the omission was for prudential reasons. The inaccuracy in the location and the initial letter does not change the important fact, and a correction is unimportant. It may be proper, however, to assure the public that his honour occupied the executive chair in a judicial capacity of judge in his circuit court district for fourteen consecutive years. The execution of his official acts was noted for accuracy and promptness; he filled his position with honour and acknowledged ability.

ALLEN PENCE,  
JAMES HOOK,  
SAMUEL CONNAR, } Committee.

To the interested be it known that I, Linus B. Denehie, certify that the statements in the above referring to my connection therewith are strictly correct.  
L. B. DENEHIE.

## Correspondence.

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

## CANON FARRAR'S TEACHINGS.

SIR,—Mr. Gerald Massey has plainly shown us in his *Shakespeare's Sonnets and his Private Friends*, as well as in his valuable little book *Concerning Spiritualism*, that Marlowe was the poet to whom Shakespeare alluded as—

By spirits taught to write above a mortal pitch;  
and to whom came

Compeers by night, giving him aid.

This appears to me very valuable testimony, because the Spiritualism taught by Marlowe is so very like the Spiritualism taught in the present day, that it shows the unchangeable nature of true Spiritualism, so unlike the variety of teaching in the Churches. And yet, indeed, such men as Canon Farrar are beginning to teach Spiritualism, though they are unwilling or unable to acknowledge its source. However this may be, Canon Farrar is at any rate teaching Spiritualism; and while, moreover, knowing perhaps nothing about the identity of Marlowe with that of the poet alluded to by Shakespeare, he yet quotes Marlowe in confirmation of his own views of *Eternal Hope*, and, I may add, of true Spiritualism, when he points out that writer as telling us in his *Devil and Dr. Faustus* that—

Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed  
In one self place; but where we are is hell,  
And where hell is there must we ever be,  
And, to be short, when all this world dissolves,  
And every creature shall be purified,  
All places shall be hell which are not heaven.

AUDAX.

## THE DERBY PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

SIR,—The annual picnic in connection with this society will be held on Saturday noon, August 24th, 1878, at Haddon Hall, Rowsley. A special excursion train will leave Derby for Rowsley at two o'clock. Upon arriving at Rowsley the party will proceed direct to Haddon Hall, an old mansion belonging to the Duke of Rutland, which is famous for its historical associations and excellent preservation, although some six hundred years have elapsed since it was founded. Those friends desirous of viewing the various rooms and grounds will take the first opportunity of doing so, after which the party will partake of refreshments in one of the rooms of the mansion. A short meeting will then be held in one of the rooms procured for the purpose. It is hoped that friends in the Lancashire district, Nottingham, Belper, Holloway, Leicester, and neighbouring towns will kindly accept this intimation; each and all will be welcome.

J. J. MORSE, *President.*  
T. W. WARD, *Hon. Sec.*

Derby, August 10th, 1878.

NEWSPAPER abuse of Spiritualism seems to be nearly at an end in this country. We sent out to different journals many copies of the last number of *The Spiritualist*, and, contrary to all precedents, but those of recent date, not a single specimen of newspaper blackguardism has come back in return. *Truth*, in its yesterday's number, publishes the details of the "interlinked rings" test.

## THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION AT DUBLIN.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

DUBLIN, WEDNESDAY EVENING.

THE proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science for 1878 will begin here to-night, under the presidency of Mr. Wm. Spottiswoode, LL.D., treasurer to the Royal Society. The meeting will be a large and lively one, the inhabitants of Dublin and various noblemen residing in the vicinity having made preparations to entertain their visitors on a scale of hospitality perhaps never exceeded in any city in which the annual meeting has yet been held. Nothing much in the way of scientific novelty is expected to be brought forward; there will probably be more play than work, to the general satisfaction of everybody, since a British Association meeting may somewhat justly be defined as "the learned and scientific societies out for a holiday." I have not as yet heard that Spiritualism and its phenomena are likely to occupy attention, but if something sensational is required to talk about, a mine of excitement can be sprung, as at Glasgow, by broaching psychic subjects. The circumstance that most of the scientific people here are utterly ignorant and untrustworthy on these subjects, will enable them to speak upon them with all the more fluency, and an opportunity will thus be given to the better-informed, who are in fair proportion here, to correct the assertions of the garrulous.

Captain R. F. Burton, one of the honorary and corresponding members of the British National Association of Spiritualists, arrived here last night with Mrs. Burton; they are the guests of Lord Talbot de Malahide. Two other great travellers, Captain Burnaby and Mr. Stanley, are also here. Mr. William Crookes is not coming. Mr. Barrett, who broached psychic phenomena under the notice of the Glasgow meeting, is here; in fact, he holds a permanent professorship at the Royal College of Science, Dublin. Professor Huxley presides over the Anthropological Department, in which the subject of Spiritualism is most likely to come up, if it is broached here at all.

Some scientific men paint Spiritualists as dying with anxiety to have psychic phenomena considered by scientific organisations. There never was a greater mistake. Except for the consequent advertising, Spiritualists do not care a snap of the fingers for the sayings or doings of scientific bodies on the subject, being quite content to investigate psychic phenomena for themselves, and to see the phenomena so spreading among the equals and superiors of technical authorities, as to make the ignorance of the latter a general laughing-stock, and a proof to the public that bigotry exists among reputed men of science as well as among theologians.

An example of the effects of this scientific ignorance took place this morning. At a meeting of the General Committee of the Association at Trinity College, at which an unusually strong array of men of world-wide intellectual fame was present, the following paragraphs in the report of the Council were passed unanimously, and are believed to have reference chiefly to the debate on Spiritualism two years since, at Glasgow, at which debate practical facts of nature were advanced, divorced to a large extent from hypotheses:—

"The General Committee adopted last year certain modifications of the Rules of the Association, which had for their object the exclusion of unscientific or other unsuitable papers and discussions, from the sectional proceedings of the Association; and the Council have, during the past year, further considered this question."

The Council are of opinion that the existing rules of the Association, with the additions hereto subjoined, will afford, if carried out in their integrity, a sufficient guarantee for the exclusion of unscientific and unsuitable papers:—

"1. That the appointment of sectional presidents, vice-presidents, and secretaries, be made either a year in advance, or at such early period as the Council may find practicable.

"2. That no paper received after the commencement of the meeting shall be read, unless recommended by the committee of the section, after it has been referred and reported upon."

Will Captain Burton try experimentally whether this has the practical effect of making the British Association "commit itself" historically, by refusing to let him advance a plain statement of facts of nature he has witnessed, apart from a trace of speculation? It gives the public valuable knowledge to let them see that if they trust to authorities, instead of inquiring for themselves, they must suffer.

Mr. Walter Weldon, one of the gentlemen who testified at Glasgow to the reality of psychic facts, is here. He has just been awarded a medal from the Paris Exhibition for one of his scientific inventions.

Although the hotels of Dublin are numerous, and many of them large, they are all full, and the latest visitors drive about the town for hours, seeking for a place to lay their heads. When it rains, the accommodation of Dublin is not large enough to stand the present strain upon it, so some of the visitors are obliged to use the open cars.

On my way here I had a *séance* with Mr. Summerville, the new medium, at Birmingham, at which Mrs. Tyndall, Mr. Turner, Mr. Aaron Franklin, Mrs. Groom (medium), Mr. Perks, and others, were present. Two inquirers known to some of those present searched Mr. Summerville thoroughly, then brought him into the *séance* room between them, not permitting him to go near anybody else; then they dropped an inverted sack over him, near the centre of the room, and nailed the edges of the sack to the floor. The sack had previously been searched. Then, in declining daylight, by which I easily saw the time by my watch, the observers sat round the sack, with the nearest spectator at a distance from it of three or four feet. After the lapse of nine minutes the medium said that flowers had

fallen at his feet. One of the searchers pulled up the sack, and dragged up the nails near his feet, when about a dozen flowers were seen near his boots; they were different kinds of flowers, and six or seven of them averaged about three inches in diameter. They were wet.

Afterwards there was a dark *séance*, in which solid objects were floated about with a moderate degree of power, and touched the heads of the sitters gently in their rapid flight. The rudiments of the development of direct spirit voice manifestations were perceptible. Mr. Summerville appears to be a strong medium, but with his powers but half-developed at present.

The manifestations herein-described are unsatisfactory to a medium, because *séances* of a test character necessarily submit him to disagreeable operations, and, after all, evidence that spirits can bring solid objects into closed rooms is given commonly enough at *séances* for other manifestations. It would be better for Mr. Summerville if some other section of his powers were cultivated in place of the present chief one.

MR. REGAN, the healing medium, and Mrs. Regan, are in Boulogne.

MANY of the works on Spiritualism published at *The Spiritualist* branch office may be obtained of Mr. J. J. Morsø, Uttoxeter-road, Derby.

LETTERS intended for Mr. W. H. Harrison should be addressed to him at The Reception Room, British Association, Dublin, if posted before next Tuesday night. Afterwards they should be addressed to 38, Great Russell-street, London, as usual.

WE have received a letter from the Rev. George St. Clair, of Birmingham, denying generally the accuracy of some of the statements of his opponents in the recent controversy, but giving no particulars. We have also received one on the other side from Mr. Aaron Franklin. The whole subject is so unimportant as to be unworthy of further public notice, and had better be good-temperedly forgotten by all those chiefly concerned.

HINTS TO INVESTIGATORS.—Mr. Z. T. Griffen gives, in *The Banner of Light*, the following sarcastic hints to vivisectioners and other investigators, who think it their duty to torture mediums:—"When you go to a circle for physical manifestations, take a syringe filled with oil of vitriol, to use in case a materialised face should appear at the cabinet opening. You should also have some Paris-green, moistened, to put on the musical instruments to be used in the dark. Provide yourself plentifully with torpedo-matches to scatter on the floor of the cabinet, or, better still, a few sharpened tacks, so that when the materialisation 'steps around' in the cabinet it will get pricked or explode a torpedo. An air-pistol would be a fine thing to shoot with into the cabinet when a form appears. Always be sure to provide yourself with a dark lantern, and matches or phosphorus to strike a light suddenly; and also be provided with spring-guns, fish-hooks, small steel-traps, or any other infernal machines you can invent or construct to catch a hand in the dark—either the spirit's or medium's hand. When a medium objects to having his (or her) mouth plastered up, hands tied, handcuffed, or hands and feet spiked to the floor, chair, or cabinet-wall, insist upon having him confined in an iron cage or barrelled up, with the bung-hole open, of course. When you get into a dark circle grab with all your strength and agility at every hand that touches you. If you hear a voice, especially in the direction of the floor, squirt tobacco-juice right straight in that direction, for you may hit the voice, or the materialised head of a spirit, or perchance the feet of the medium."

TWO SPIRITUALISTS.—Dr. J. M. Peebles, in the course of an article in *The Banner of Light*, says:—"I never met Victor Hugo but once, and that was at a spiritual *séance* in Paris. Recently he opened the Literary Congress in Paris with a masterly oration, which the English press pronounces to be a 'masterpiece of scholarship and eloquence,' but innocently forgets to tell the reading public that Victor Hugo is a Spiritualist. Hugo, in his recent great work on 'Shakespeare,' says:—"Table-turning, or speaking in trance, has been greatly ridiculed; the ridicule is groundless. To substitute jeering for examination is convenient, but it is not very philosophical. As for me, I regard it as the duty of science to fathom all phenomena. Science is ignorant, and has not the right to laugh; a *savant* who laughs at the possible is not far from an idiot. . . . Science has no other concern with facts than to endorse them; it is for her to verify and distinguish. All human knowledge is that of analysis; that the false complicates itself with the true is no reason for rejecting the whole in a mass. Since when has chaff been a pretext for refusing the wheat? Root out the worthless weeds of error, but harvest the facts and leave them for others. To elude a phenomenon; to refuse to pay it the attention due to it; to bow it out; to close the door on it; to turn our backs on it, laughing, is to make bankruptcy of the truth—it is to omit to put to it the signature of science. The phenomenon of the ancient tripod and of the modern table has a right, like every other, to observation. Physical science undoubtedly would gain by it; and let me add that to abandon these phenomena to credulity is to commit treason against human reason." On our steamer from Liverpool to St. John's, Newfoundland, was that distinguished thinker, explorer, and naval officer, Admiral Sir E. A. Inglefield, F.R.S., the recently appointed Commander-in-Chief of the English naval stations of the West Indies and North America. He was a warm personal friend of Faraday, and is thoroughly up in the freshest expressions of science. To the disgust of bigoted sectarians, he is what might be called a Christian Spiritualist. In 1852 Sir E. A. Inglefield took command of the steamship that went in search of the unfortunate Sir John Franklin. During this exploration he outlined new coasts, made important discoveries, and penetrated one hundred and forty-eight miles further north than Ross, Parry, or any previous navigator. The year following he was appointed commander of a Government Arctic Expedition of three of Her Majesty's ships. His descriptions of these perilous Polar Sea Expeditions are thrillingly interesting. The Admiral is the author of several mechanical inventions connected with navigation; and also the discoverer of a new theory of electricity.

### THE MENTAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INFLUENCE OF ACTING.

(From "The Spectator.")

THE death of Charles Mathews—a most regrettable event, for within a limited range he was an admirable artist—reminds us of a curious lacuna in the history of the Stage. There does not exist, so far as we know, certainly there does not exist in English, anything like a good autobiography of an actor, a life describing the intellectual and moral effect of the profession upon the actor's self. This effect should be great. The world believes much, and we think justly, in the effect of books, and swallows greedily stories of groups of boys made bandits by Schiller's "Robbers," and every now and then proposes to prohibit "penny dreadfuls;" and the effect of reading must be slight compared with that of acting. It is simply impossible that a man gifted with the sympathies essential to an actor should be able to realise many characters so completely to himself that he can represent them to others, and make them laugh or weep with his temporary second self, without those characters exercising some effect upon his mind; and we want to know both its kind and its degree. Was Charles Mathews or was he not more of an agreeable rattle because he incessantly studied how agreeable rattles should be depicted? His biographers say that his cool, laughing *insouciance* lasted all his long life, and sustained him under all difficulties, and it is at least possible that it may have been deepened by his professional assumption of the quality. The effect must be increased by the process of natural selection, which induces an actor to choose those parts which he can represent best, and with which, therefore, he must have a certain nearness of sympathy that one would think must greatly deepen the impact of their impression upon himself. One catches qualities from friends who are similar. Elliston, for instance, perhaps the best known of all actors of the second rank, had about him a certain liking at once for graciousness and for pomp which made him inclined to represent kings; and he studied so many parts of that kind, and acted them so well, that his friends all believed in their influence on his character. He became, as life went on, more and more the kind of benignant but over-stately and ceremonious grandee that he loved to represent, regarded all about him from a certain height, as his subjects, and met the endless difficulties of his career with a feeling which kept him always cheerful, and which could not be distinguished from benign condescension towards the creditors, supers, patrons, and other stupid people with a right to exist who kept trying to ruffle his serenity. It has now and then happened to an actor to play a part so well that the public never ceases to demand it, and he himself has begun to confess to an influence arising from the repetition which perplexed and worried his mind. We do not know if the saying attributed to Mrs. Dion Boucicault is true or not, but it exactly represents our point. Her representation of the dark "Colleen" in the *Colleen Bawn* so charmed all London that the piece, perhaps the best melodrama ever written, to have no genius in it, went on for hundreds of nights, till at last the actress declared that she must stop, that her brain was growing confused, and that "she began to be uncertain whether she was acting the Colleen Bawn, or the Colleen Bawn was acting Mrs. Boucicault." We have heard Americans say that they believed that most perfect of actors, Mr. Jefferson, was distinctly modified in character, and for the better, by his endless repetitions of Rip Van Winkle; and certainly it is difficult to conceive how a man could create that character, and then pass his life in representing it, without imbibing in some degree its essential qualities—the spirit of humorous tolerance and sense of the puzzle of daily life. But one wants direct evidence of that. Does Mr. Irving, for example, find that when he has been acting Hamlet for fifty nights the tone of his own inner mind has become more or less Hamletian? We say less because, of course, the chance of an influence of repulsion must always exist, and we can imagine an actor hating ambition more because he was every night a Richard III., or growing graver because for part of every day he was Mercutio. Liston's incessant playing of fools helped, in all human probability, to make of him the depressed Evangelical he was; and we could hardly imagine Mr. Irving less alive to the uselessness of religious formalism because he had played for seventy nights as Louis XI. Could a man act Prospero every day for a year, and not acquire something, however little, of dignified serenity of mind, of the sense of the power possessed by the immaterial to rule material circumstances? Or could he be Jaques for a year, and not tend to melancholy reflectiveness? It has often been remarked that men to whom life seems unreal, who have a sense of the histrionic element in it, are the least dependable of mankind; and of all foibles, absence of dependableness is the one most frequent with an actor. May not that be increased by his half-dubiousness whether he is himself or that other man whom every night he seems, to a watching audience, to be? Can Mr. Charles Mathews have separated himself entirely from the Sir Charles Coldstream, of whom the little girl said that she did not admire that Mr. Mathews, he was so lazy, and all through the play was only himself. Is Mr. Jefferson ever quite sure, as he walks about, that Schneider is not at his heels? That the long repetition of a dramatic character will make certain physical mannerisms cling to an actor for months, and even years after he has discontinued the performance, is quite certain—just watch Mr. Sothorn as Garrick—and why not mental mannerisms too? Was there no trace of Lady Macbeth's nature, no iron of resolve in Mrs. Siddons, even though she had acted tragedy, and especially that tragedy, so long that she could not get rid of her grandeur in private life, and appalled an unhappy waiter with—

You've brought me water, boy! I asked for beer.

The speculation, though it may seem of little importance, is of rare interest to students of the human mind, and solid evidence about it might greatly affect education, more particularly by determining tutors as to the Jesuits' contention, the utility of an enforced attitude

of mind in moulding the inner character; but solid evidence can only be obtained when some considerable actor, himself a man able enough and conscious enough to trace the workings of his own mind, shall delight the world and keep his memory fresh by giving us his autobiography, with accounts in it of other things than his triumphs over audiences, his difficulties with managers, or his disputes with rivals or assistants. Such a book would be a treasure.

### THE MOST VULGAR FORM OF MATERIALISM.

(From "Truth.")

THERE are men of whose success no one is jealous, others of whose prosperity no one is envious; men whom all rejoice to see on the pinnacle where their long and honourable toil has earned them the right to stand, and others whose exceptional wellbeing excites now a laugh, and now a sneer, with the feeling, from the stricter sort, that they would not have twice that amount of money if they had to get it by half those dirty practices. For there is no question about it—according to the way in which things go at this present time, dirty practices pay in pelf if not in repute. The successful man is always self-betrayed; not always in the same manner but to the same invariable result. He may be of many kinds. Let us take first the type dear to novelists—a man of low birth, with a loud voice and a dictatorial manner, capacious as to his chest and defective in his English, respectful to no man, deferential to no woman, worshipping chiefly the wealth which a man has made by his own exertions, yet not disinclined to hobnob with a title if he can catch one willing to be treated in a corner—when he brings down his golden feet heavily on the frayed old patent of nobility, and makes my Lord feel the force of wealth if not the power of breeding. He is the living monument of his own greatness, and he takes care that no one shall overlook him—the clever alchemist who has found the Universal Solvent, and learnt the secret of transmutation. Perhaps his alkalest was discovered in the cauldron where he boiled his soap; or he may have picked his gold out of rags and bones; but, say the experts, by no possibility can he ever be a gentleman, or even pass muster in the ranks with the rest. Rich and uncultivated, he hangs, like Mahomet's coffin, between the heaven of the aristocrat and the earth of the *prolétaire*. The one will not have him, and he will not have the other. Even the middle-class gentry who hold their own, and all of whom he could buy and not feel the loss, even the rector and the lawyer, the doctor and the half-pay captain, do not want him. His wealth overpowers them, and his vulgarity offends. Everything is inharmonious throughout—the man and his money, the coarse core and the splendid envelope, the lavish expenditure on all that will make a show, with the certain meanness in all that speaks of early personal habits. If he does not find friends among the middle classes, still less does he among the higher; and it is only when he has bought husbands and wives for his children in the ranks of the impecunious well-born that he is able to lift up his head as a man among men, and is not the flying-fish of the neighbourhood, pecked at by the birds and pursued by the sharks.

### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ERRATA.—In Baron Dirckinck-Holmfeld's recent article there were several printer's errors, chiefly in proper names, due to indistinct writing. The words "to Romo," in a quoted paragraph, should have been between brackets, as an interpolation by the author.

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"Although the author has taken some trouble to prove that table-turning and spiritual appearances are worthy of more attention than the public are disposed to give, yet we are so far from being impressed by the evidence he has brought forward, that we acquit the spirits of mortals of performing any of the nonsensical acts with which they are accredited."—Morning Advertiser.

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