

THE VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT—LETTER OF MR. WILLIAM SMITH O'BRIEN.

Chahimoye, Newbrien West, August 25, 1860.

Dear Sir—I have to thank you for the papers relating to the "Volunteer Movement," which you have placed in my hands.

I am happy to be able to tell you that I have viewed, with much satisfaction, the manifestations of a desire, on the part of a highly respectable portion of our countrymen, to enrol a National Force composed of men belonging to all parties and professing different creeds for the defence of this island.

I have at all times thought that military training ought to form a portion of the education of the youth of every country, and that young men arriving at manhood should be stimulated to accustom themselves to the use of arms and to military evolutions.

Not only does such training give a manly bearing to the person of a young man, but it tends to develop vigour of character, to engender habits of order founded upon discipline, and above all, to nurture a spirit of self-reliance.

The Swiss Confederation realises more nearly, perhaps, than any other country, the idea that I have formed of the results which may be expected from the organization of a national force by encouraging the military training of all the inhabitants of the country.

If I have been rightly informed, Switzerland, with a population of little more than two millions, can place under arms, at a fortnight's notice, an army of 250,000 men.

The consequence is that Switzerland, though comparatively powerless when measured in point of strength and national resources, with some of the great Powers of Europe, has yet been able to preserve an attitude which commands the respect of all mankind.

When I was in America last year, it gave me great satisfaction to find myself surrounded, not only in New York and in other cities of the United States, but even in Canada, by Irishmen who were formed into military companies, corresponding to the Volunteer Force which we desire to establish in this country.

How much more intense would be my satisfaction if I could see 10,000 men under arms in the city of Limerick, arrayed in regiments, representing the manhood of the counties of Limerick, of Clare, and of the other districts of which Limerick is the natural capital.

How proud would be our exultation, if we could witness a review of 50,000 Irish Volunteers in the Phoenix Park of Dublin!

To me it seems that it is not necessary or desirable that hostility to any other country in the world should be connected with the motives which induce us to desire the formation of a Volunteer Force in Ireland.

In England the movement appears to be founded upon an apprehension of France. Now, whilst I respect much the national ardour which has been exhibited, both in England and Scotland, in reference to the formation of a Volunteer Force, I do not think it necessary to imitate our neighbours in the disposition which they have evinced to cherish, in connection with this movement, a spirit of hostility towards France.

The Emperor of the French disavows the intention imputed to him of invading England. The French press disavows it. I have recently travelled through a considerable section of France, and have conversed with a very large number of Frenchmen.

All of those with whom I so conversed disavowed the desire of quarrelling with England, which is imputed to them. We have therefore no right to assume that the French or any other nation intend to invade England or Ireland.

But we have a right, and it is our duty, to take care that we shall be prepared for any eventuality that may arise, and that the safety of our domestic hearths shall not be left to the mercy, nor shall be dependent upon the protection, of any people under the sun except the Irish nation.

If an invasion of what is called "the United Kingdom" were really impending, it would be for the interest of the people of England that the invader should be attracted to our shores rather than to the shores of England. It would be for their advantage that the Irish nation should be divided into two hostile camps rather than that we should be united, and by such union should become arbiters of the destiny of the Empire.

It is not surprising to me, therefore, that our shores should be left defenceless, and that our people should be prevented from taking steps which would discourage, if they would not prevent an invasion, by formation of a Volunteer Force composed of the united strength of the Catholic and Protestant population of Ireland.

For myself, I can truly say that there is not in Ireland a single person who would more earnestly than I deprecate an invasion. It would produce results exactly opposite to those which I desire to attain. It would introduce massacre and plunder, and conflagration, and proscription and confiscation, and civil war into the heart of our country; whereas it is my desire that the Irish should enjoy peace, and order, and unity under a national government, and that, in regard of external polity, they should preserve friendly relations not only with England but with all the rest of mankind.

I feel assured that nothing would tend so much to produce these results as an indiscriminate arming of the Irish nation. The only event in our recent history to which all Irishmen look back with pride is the Volunteer movement of 1782.

The formation of a national force for the protection of the island against all its foes had, at that time, the effect of bringing into kindly co-operation elements which had been previously antagonistic to each other; and I believe it to be a mere pretext—a pretext insulting to us as a nation—to tell us that we must be treated as children to whom sharp-edged implements are denied lest they should injure each other; and that whilst the population of England and Scotland are encouraged to prepare themselves for the defence of their country, we are to be denied the first privilege of freemen—the right of bearing arms—because we shall employ these arms in butchering each other.

On the contrary, I feel convinced that if the Protestants and Catholics of Ulster were in the habit of associating together under a common standard, as members of a Volunteer Force, such unhappy incidents as that which occurred a few weeks ago in the county of Armagh would never have taken place.

In this part of Ireland the Catholics would form a large majority of the Volunteer Force, and I feel convinced that they would take their places side by side with their Protestant neighbours, without giving cause for jealousy or disunion, and that, whatever may be their feelings respectively towards England or France, they would both stand together for the defence of Ireland—their common home.

ing the use of arms. The law prohibits regimental training, but it does not impose a penalty upon the practice by individuals of the art of rifle-shooting, and I conceive that any number of persons may meet to try their skill as marksmen. Let the leading gentlemen of Ireland, without distinction of party, offer prizes for marksmanship in rifle shooting; and, in case of need, the organization of such marksmen into military companies would be effected without difficulty in a few weeks—perhaps in a few days.

If any effort should be made by the legislature to put a stop to such trainings, I venture to hope that Irishmen of all persuasions would resent such an attempt, and would show that, as it is impossible to imprison a whole nation, so it is dangerous to contravene the wishes of an United People.

I have the honour to be, very faithfully, your obedient servant,
Wm. Richardson, Esq.,
Hon. Secretary to the Volunteer Association.

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.—Never was a measure of justice yielded with a worse grace than Emancipation; never was a measure so ruinous to the best interests of Ireland.

We are weary listening to such nonsense as the 'blessings of Catholic Emancipation.' Blessings! they are indeed; blessings that bought up our professional classes, and bound them over the bond-slaves of England, and the menials of English interests; blessings that spread corruption broadcast over the land, and work their insidious ramifications into every class of society; blessings that have made more to do with the ruin of our trade and the expatriation of our people, than mere superficial observers can see.

They have opened the flesh-pots of England to Irish Catholics; and alas! too soon were they ready to sell their bright right for their poisoned mess. The blessings of Catholic Emancipation have produced the Sadliers and the Keoghs, the Deasys and the Fitzgeralds, of Ireland. They have produced a class of men worse than the Orangemen—a class ever ready or any foul office which England may call on them to perform—ever ready to sell country, creed and conscience to do the behests of their heartless task-masters.

They have done even worse than all this. They have poisoned the minds of many of our trading classes with false notions of prosperity—false and ruinous notions of the duties they owe to their children and to society. For twenty years after the passing of the Emancipation, Catholic parents thought they were doing the greatest possible good to their children by rearing them up to obtain government situations.

Every little shopkeeper who made £100, was ashamed to bring this child up to that by which he made his money. Some petty officer under government was the height of his ambition, and was associated in his narrow mind with more respectability than the pursuit of honorable industry or of virtuous handicraft.—And, so worthless, time-serving, place-hunting race has been produced in Ireland, unfit for trade, unfit for business of any kind—possessed of an upstart impertinence and a shabby gentility, so very peculiar, that they can be at once recognised in every locality. It is from this class the spies and informers are generally manufactured. They are the supernumerary agents of British rule, and quite ready for any employment required of them.—Waterford Citizen.

NOBLE CONDUCT.—An Irish servant-girl, named Jane M'Gord, residing in Boston, (Massachusetts), recently transmitted to Ireland the sum of £40, the result of six years' incessant toil, as payment of her deceased father's debts.

EXTRAORDINARY ATTEMPTS AT SUICIDE BY A YOUNG LADY.—The town of Banagher, in the King's County was on this day (Wednesday), thrown into a state of alarm and excitement, in consequence of a young lady resident there having made two unsuccessful attempts to destroy herself—the first by endeavoring to drown herself, and secondly by cutting her throat. Happily on both occasions her efforts proved unavailing. The facts are as follows:—A respectable young female named Broadhead, who is a teacher of music, in a fit of delirium threw herself over the battlements of the bridge into the River Shannon, at Banagher. Fortunately she was observed by Mr. James Houghton, who plunged into the river and after much and courageous exertion, succeeded in rescuing Miss Broadhead, who was then conveyed to the residence of a lady residing close to the bridge. Restoratives were applied, and she recovered from the effects of the immersion in the water, but having been left alone in a room for a few minutes, she again attempted to deprive herself of life, she having inflicted with a knife a desperate wound across her throat. She was very soon discovered bleeding. Medical assistance was immediately sent for, and the proper remedies applied. Although the wound is a very serious one, hopes are entertained it will not prove fatal.—Sunderland.

LANDED ESTATES COURT.—The Kerry property of the late Mr. St. John Mason was sold the other day in the town of Killarney by order of the Landed Estates Court. It was divided into three lots, which realized about £7,000, being nearly £2,000 over the general estimate. The rates obtained were extremely high, the lots producing respectively 35, 32, 36 year's purchase, with no prospective increase in the rental, as the lettings had been made during the present year, and, in addition, all the royalties are reserved to the chief landlord.

A MODERATE APPETITE.—At Nenagh Assizes, in the case of Daniel Lestrage, cattle dealer, against the Manchester and Sheffield Railway Company, which was an action for damages sustained by the plaintiff, through their negligence, in delaying the delivery of his cattle in Sheffield, so as to meet the market. The jury awarded £30 damages and 6d cost. Some wonderful examples of the consumptive powers of the genuine John Bull were brought out incidentally during the trial. One of the witnesses, a lairsmen of the London Corporation, admitted, upon cross-examination, that, if his mouth were blistered he would not eat so well as if it were sound. He spoke from experience, having suffered that morning from a sore throat, which so painfully affected him at breakfast-time, that he was obliged to content himself with eating only six eggs and drinking two cups of coffee. He swore, however, that another witness examined before him, an English porter, of immense proportions, who did not labour under so serious a disadvantage, but could enjoy his meal as usual, had for his breakfast that morning a pound of meat, 20 eggs, and half-a-gallon of coffee.

DISCOVERY OF A THIEF UNDER OBSCURE CIRCUMSTANCES.—Last Sunday, a farmer's wife, who had some short bread, called at a shop in the village of Rower in this county, and obtained sixpence-worth, laying a shilling on the counter to pay therefor. After conversing for some time with the proprietor, who was a neighbour, she asked for her change. The woman who owned the establishment denied that she had received any money, and demanded her sixpence; and an altercation ensued, each charging the other with an attempt to defraud. The result was that both adjourned to the police barrack, in order that Constable Madden should decide between them. The constable was busily engaged investigating the knotty point at issue, when a pet jackdaw belonging to his wife returned home from a ramble in the village, and looking significantly at the strangers, dropped on the knee of his mistress, and popped a shilling into her lap. The real delinquent was thus at once discovered, as rogues Jack was identified as having been on the counter when the transaction took place in the bread shop, where he had been a frequent visitor. The money was returned, and the litigants went away quite reconciled to each other.—Kilkenny Moderator.

One of Sir Boyle Roche's invitations to an Irish nobleman was equally equivocal—I hope my lord, if ever you come within a mile of my house, you'll stay there all night.

FAIR PLAY.—There is a law in this country, the wisdom of which it is not our desire to question, by which money lotteries, raffles, &c. are prohibited. A special and specific exemption has been made in favour of raffles, lotteries and prize drawings for works of Art, and a measure of toleration, amounting practically to a permission, for years past has included drawing for purely charitable and religious purposes. No more proper exemption, none more worthy, none acceptable to the public, could be named; for desirable as it may be, and is, to encourage Art, incontestible Charity and Religion—the sinner of the poor and the worship of God—have far stonger claims on individual and legislative encouragement and aid. Within the last year or two, it became a resort, for the purpose of raising funds for charitable or religious purposes, to constitute drawings for money prizes. We deem it of importance that it should be noted when, where, and by whom this project was first proposed and carried out; and what was the general verdict of the Irish and British public upon it. A high civil functionary—one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace—a Member of Parliament—a Knight, a Protestant, a Scotchman—Sir John Arnott, of Cork, last Christmas twelvemonths offered the handsome sum of £500 to be raffled for; the proceeds to be distributed amongst the poor of Cork. It was handed in, rather dramatically to the sitting magistrates in open court, under the name of 'Timothy Tightboots.' The magistrates of Cork and other legal functionaries were duly formed into a committee to superintend a Grand Raffle for the £500. The whole proceedings—so novel and so striking—so far from invoking checks or censure from any quarter, elicited praise from all. The Loudon Press vied with the Irish journals in bestowing laudations on the affluent Timothy Tightboots. English, Irish, Scotch—Catholic, Protestant, Dissenter—Liberal, Tory, and Independent—all countries, creeds, and parties, applauded the proceedings. If we err not a second Christmas witnessed a like donation, for like purpose, applied in a like way—not a breath of objection presenting itself to the imagination of any one.—The success in Cork naturally led to imitation, and in Limerick and elsewhere drawings for money prizes for the benefit of religious undertakings (building of churches &c.) were announced—and carried out. Still no one dreamed of fault, if indeed, all did not join in felicitation. At this stage two projects of drawings appeared.—One for the Church of St. Saviour's, Dominick street, Dublin; the other for a New Church in Carrickmacross. Some of the more illiberal and bigoted amongst the Protestant papers—indeed those very papers that most praised the introduction of these drawings by Sir John Arnott—began to snarl at the success attending those resorts to obtain funds for building Catholic Churches; and even the law was invoked against them! The law, whose administrators originated them at Cork—whose officials assisted at them, and whose officials participated in them at Cork, Limerick, and elsewhere! To distant readers it will seem incredible; yet here we know it only too well to be the fact, that the law, which tacitly sanctioned, and through its representatives, praised those raffles for the course of an entire year, waited till the respected clergy of the two Catholic Churches had largely involved themselves, and had proceeded far with arrangements for similar prize drawings, and then pounced upon them with prohibition and menace of prosecution! Menace of prosecution for imitating the much-lauded 'Timothy Tightboots,' rewarded by his fellow-citizens with the Mayoralty, and by the Queen's Representative by a Knighthood!—Dublin Morning News.

Captain D. O'Connell has again called the attention of the House of Commons to the case of the depositors in the defunct Tralee Savings Bank.—The Lord Chancellor promises redress next session.

MIRAGE.—This singular phenomenon was witnessed on Sunday evening week in this neighborhood. A gentleman was returning from Cardonagh, with his family, and the party had just dismounted off the car to walk the hill near Quigley's Point, when their attention was attracted by a wonderful appearance in the heavens. Away to the north they saw several ships in the air, sailing across the face of the sky from east to west. The line of vessels seemed to be fully five miles in length, and they appeared to be sailing down a river whose high banks could be made out behind the ships. Some of the vessels seemed to be moored close to a fortress, built on a rock. To all the party was the phenomenon distinctly visible. So clear was the air, and so near did the ships appear to their eyes, that the sailors pulling at the ropes were made out with ease, even by the children who saw the strange spectacle. The phenomenon was nearly a half an hour before it disappeared. Although the appearance of such things in the heavens may be very startling, the phenomena are not unknown about this part of the Irish coast. The "mirage," as it is termed, often displays itself in fantastic shapes on the shores of the northern counties. It most frequently is to be seen on the coast of Antrim, especially in the vicinity of the Causeway. About twelve years ago a very curious instance of mirage was seen in Lough Foyle. Some fishermen had been out at night with their nets. The face of the heavens was overcast and black, when the clouds suddenly parted, leaving a bright gap of clear sky in the zenith. Across this space the astonished fishermen saw some thousands of soldiers pass, rank after rank, regiment after regiment, and so near did the phenomenon appear that the dress of the officers could be easily distinguished from that of the men. It was two hours before the marching ceased or rather before the clouds closed in, and shut out the scene from view. An account of this extraordinary occurrence was published at the time.—Derry Standard.

A most agreeable incident in connection with the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland, took place in the west of this county on Tuesday last. It was consequent on the celebration of a marriage between Mr. Thomas Enright of Ardagh, son of one of the most independent occupiers of the Devon estate, and Margaret, the eldest daughter of Mr. Timothy Dore, of Ballinlinnea, a tenant farmer of the highest respectability and deservedly held by all parties in the utmost esteem. The benevolent and liberal lord of the soil, the Earl of Devon, and his amiable Countess and daughter, lady Agnes Courtenay, having been invited, honored the nuptials with their presence, and felt happy in participating in the festive enjoyments of the occasion. The invitation of the worthy and hospitable father of the bride was also accepted by the most eminent Irishman of our day, W. S. O'Brien, Esq., kindly conferred the gratifying favour of his presence who, accompanied by the young representative of his historic house, Mr. O'Brien, who was for himself a place in the respect and affections of the wealthy and warm-hearted population of the whole district.—There were present besides numbers of the Clergy and Gentry of the neighborhood, and the guest included Councillor Ferguson, M. Leahy, Esq., Rev. Mr. O'Shea, P.P., Money, Dr. Ambrose, Rev. Mr. Scott and numerous other lay and clerical gentlemen. After ample justice was done to all, the health and happiness of the newly married couple was proposed by the Earl of Devon, in terms that expressed the warm interest felt by the good nobleman in the welfare of his tenantry, and the desire cherished by him and his respected Countess to contribute to their domestic happiness, a proof of which was felt by all to be offered in the marked and well appreciated compliment offered to the young couple on that occasion. It was like the revival of one of the old feudal customs, by which clansmen and chiefs were bound together in harmony and interest. After the principal guests had left, the pipers and fiddlers found incessant employment, while the friends assembled enjoyed themselves up to a late hour in the morning. What an immense amount of reciprocal respect and confidence re-unions of this kind must inspire is obvious—uniting landlord and tenant in an indissoluble link of mutual regard.

GREAT BRITAIN.

PERSECUTION OF CATHOLICS IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.—We have been favoured with the sight of an important State paper recently presented to Her Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the persecuting laws against Catholics, and other dissidents from the State Church in the Northern counties of Europe. The attention of liberal Protestants was some time ago directed to this subject by the reclamations of the Catholic Press, and a show of sympathy was made which even went so far as to produce representations to the Governments in question. Whether this were done or not, certain it is that no real or effectual relief to the Catholics has resulted. In Iceland, under the premiership of the Danish Statesman-ecclesiastic, the Lutheran "Bishop," Monrad, the Government has revived the intolerant laws which owed their existence three centuries ago to an exertion of Royal power, and which were never ratified by the representative bodies of the people. Owing perhaps to their unconstitutional origin, rather than to any want of bigotry in the Icelandic administration, these laws have never been put in force. We now learn from the Government journal the *Islandingskr*, published at Reykjavik, and conducted by the Judge of the supreme tribunal of the island, that the repressive laws against Catholics are committed for execution to the officials of the Government. By these laws it is provided that every seceder from the State Church of Iceland shall be punished by exile; and lest that punishment should not prove sufficiently severe, it is to be preceded by imprisonment and the infliction of the *bastinado*. Secession also involves the forfeiture of all hereditary claims to the succession of property. So much for Iceland. In Schleswig and Holstein intolerance also prevails. Catholics are forbidden to marry unless they engage to allow their children to be brought up Protestants; such is the bribe held out by the Ecclesiastical Premier of Denmark to the Lutheran curates of the Duchies to secure their adhesion to the Danish interests. In Norway Catholics are forbidden to keep a printing-press; they are excluded from every situation in connection with the Government, and they endure, consequently, all the social inconveniences and losses which such a state of things must necessarily involve. Sweden has long been known as the most intolerant country of Europe, and our columns have reported sufficiently painful instances of the sufferings inflicted there on the professors of the old faith. The paper alluded to above goes on to inform Lord John Russell, in reference to Sweden, that during the past year, a Protestant named Sundquist has been condemned to the penalties of the law for having held a conventicle in his house, which means that he prayed with two other persons, not having previously provided himself with a licence to do so signed by two Lutheran ministers. The law of toleration, as it is called, has done no good, but rather harm, for it has changed the penalty of exile in several cases into that of imprisonment, and it has created several new offences against the Established religion.—Weekly Register.

An epidemic is at this moment spreading itself over Europe, and England is at least as subject to it as any of her neighbours. If salutative and tranquillizing remedies would have awaited to calm the disorder of the nerves, we should long since have been restored to perfect health. We have had administered to us every species of soothing prescription, but all in vain; the disorder does not yield to the treatment, and every fresh practitioner retires baffled by its obstinacy and inveteracy. The name of this disorder is Distrust. Confidence, we are told on high oratorical authority, is a plant of slow growth; but Distrust, though it springs up much more speedily, is much more difficult to eradicate. It is no fault of ours; we desire nothing better than to return to our old state of absolute security, to the glorious days preceding the Crimean War, when we had not 20 guns fit for service in the realm, when we had no Channel Fleet, when our army at home was scarcely worth speaking of, and when, confident in our earnest desire to be at peace with all the world, we considered ourselves perfectly safe behind the rampart of our own good intentions. Those days are gone, and we have instead £30,000,000 of naval and military expenditure, a loan of £9,000,000 for fortifying our dockyards, besides we know not what imposts levied on our gallant youth in the form of the services of a hundred and fifty thousand Volunteers. If any amount of fair speaking or fair writing could convince us that these things were unnecessary, we should long ago have laid aside this attitude of most unwelcome preparation, and betaken ourselves once more to our more congenial instruments—the ploughshare and the shuttle.—Times.

POISONING IN ENGLAND.—The trial of Winslow, on a charge of murdering Mrs. James, at Liverpool, by the administration of Antimony, has ended in a verdict by the jury of "Not Guilty." Year by year the ghastly array of victims, in England, to poison or to the knife stretches out longer and longer; while the resources of science for the detection of the former, or, at least, the confidence of the public in the value of those resources, as at present applied, are diminishing. Murder effected under any other circumstances seems of minor criminality compared with those cases in which the murderer takes off his victim by poison. The details of their accomplishment, and the scenes which they disclose, seem to belong rather to the world of fiends than of human beings. That very confidence which we repose in those alone with whom the ties of friendship and of mutual good offices teach us to feel we are safe, is the means of access which the poison-murderer lays hold of to approach his unsuspecting victim. It is in this view especially that the crime wears so appalling an aspect. In proportion as the intimacy between the victim and the accused was free and unrestrained, so much the more will suspicion attach on account of the increased facilities thus afforded for the commission of the crime. This feature in it, together with the dreadful consciousness that the blow is dealt by an unseen hand, tends to blight, with its fell influences, the most endearing relations of life. It invades and throws a doubt on the security even of the domestic circle, thus shaking the very corner stone of society; while the almost imperceptible traces which the agent itself leaves behind it of its fatal action, and the difficulty of distinguishing its operation, when skillfully administered, from the workings of natural disease, almost paralyse the efforts of justice. Meantime, victim after victim is struck down as by an unseen hand, and the press of England, sharing the doubts to which we have already referred, of the value of the resources of science, as at present made available for detection of the guilty, confesses "that the powers of darkness have, for the present, a temporary advantage."—Evening Mail.

PAR NODILE FRATREM.—The other night, in the House of Commons, Sir G. Bowyer denounced the proceedings and threatened proceedings of General Garibaldi as utterly subversive of the public law of Europe. "There was a man lately in India very much like Garibaldi. He was a brave man, called Tantia Topce. 'Oh, oh!' and a laugh.) He kept the British army at bay and gave them a vast amount of trouble. He was, however, taken prisoner and brought to a court-martial on a charge of rebellion against British authority. The Government of India hanged that man. He thought that an atrocious act." If the King of Naples took General Garibaldi he would have as good a right to hang him as the Government of India had to hang Tantia Topce.

A SPURGEONIC PLAGIARISM.—Down with the thousand pounds, and I'll tell my adventures, says Mr. Spurgeon. Two pence more, says the street acrobat, and up goes the donkey.

The number of English volunteers for Garibaldi is so great that funds could not be raised fast enough to send them to Naples.

SMITH RAPPIED IN ENGLAND.—This Protestant infatuation, of which little or nothing has been said or written during the past year or so, except in a very narrow circle, has been re-introduced to the notice of the public by an elaborate article in the current number of the *Cornhill Magazine*. So universally is this new periodical read, that any striking paper in its pages is sure to be the popular talk in good society; and the article "Stranger than Fiction" was so very startling, that people who had read it could not refrain from speaking about it to all their friends. The more so, as Mr. Thackeray, in a note "in volutes for the good faith and honourable character" of the writer, "a friend of twenty-five years' standing." The gentleman is understood to be Mr. Robert Bell, whose name you may remember as the editor of a library edition of the English poets, and the house at which the recorded wonders were witnessed is said to be Mr. Milner Gibson's, the President of the Board of Trade. The article gave intense satisfaction to the few genuine disciples of the Spirit Rapping;—shall I say?—delusion; but on the other hand Mr. Thackeray has been greatly blamed for leading his powerful pages to the support of what most people think to be an undoubted cheat; and their opinions share not in the present case been weakened by the fact that the accomplished medium, Mr. Home, the American "Professor," is the "spiritual confidant of the Emperor of the French." Still, the deductions of the writer and the nature of the manifestations—however produced—are such that a good many sceptics have been induced to reconsider the matter, and to join sances at friend's houses or at the residences of regular business mediums; and some of them, if they only be conjurers, are very clever at their work of imposture, for it does not appear that they can be positively found out. Amongst others, the celebrated Wm. Hewitt, the author, and his not less famous wife, Mary, are devoted Spiritualists, as also Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall; and since the *Cornhill* was published, they have been more attentive than ever to the spirits. The other night Mr. Hewitt had a seance, for his friends, and the Rev. Thomas Blaney was induced to be one of the company. He relates that he saw some remarkable things, and acknowledges that he could not account for them, but is satisfied that human agency was at the bottom of all, and his conviction is strikingly fortified by a writer in the last number of *Once a Week*, who discovers how some of the tricks are done. Mr. Blaney mentions a circumstance which forcibly suggested to his mind that imposture was being practised. The name of some person present was to be rapped out, and the letters produced on the card of the medium were *dnrothins*; and when the whole of the company were despaired of making it out, the medium, Mr. Home, again said it was plainly "Dr. Worthing." The question was asked, how he knew or supposed that the "R" should be a small one, and that the D and R were intended to be a contraction for Doctor, but no explanation could be given. And, besides, it appeared that no Dr. Worthing was present, but a Dr. Worthing whom it is supposed the medium had mistaken. Some friends of my own have had Mr. Home at their houses, and Mr. Marshall and her daughter also, and the same difficulty has occurred in the rapping out of names. Several had been given very successfully, when it occurred to one gentleman that the person repeating the alphabet instinctively paused upon the letters which made up the name he mentally desired to have rapped out, and that the acute medium rapped immediately there was the least pause. So he was allowed to name the alphabet next, and purposely paused upon other letters than those he wanted to be indicated, and the uniform consequence was that the right name was given. I know many instances in which this scheme has been resorted to, and in no case was the desired name produced in which the repeater of the alphabet did not slightly pause upon the letters composing it. If this be not the right clue to the trick it is at all events a sufficient one. The raising of tables and the playing of musical instruments without hands are more remarkable phenomena and profoundly mysterious to the uninitiated. Mr. Bell relates that an accordion in his presence played without hands, and what is, if possible, still more wonderful, it was played in a narrow space which would not admit of its being drawn out with the requisite freedom to its full extent. He says:—"The air was wild and full of strange transitions, with a wail of the most pathetic sweetness running through it. When the notes swelled in some of the bolder passages, the sound rolled through the room with an astounding reverberation; then gently subsiding, sank into a strain of divine tenderness." Ourselves who heard it had never been visited by a sound so fine." Presently, Mr. Bell got hold of the instrument, and held it up in one hand in the open room, with the full light upon it, when "similar strains were emitted, the regular action of the accordion going on without any visible agency." And, he adds, that during the loud and vehement passages, it became so difficult to hold, in consequence of the extraordinary power with which it was played from below, that I was obliged to grasp the top with both hands." "A Thirty Soul," writing to *Punch*, does not see anything wonderful in Mr. Home having been lifted up by the Spirit; for he says he has frequently been "elevated" by spirits himself, and John Leach is week by week trying to raise the laugh against the Spiritualists by domestic sketches in drawing-rooms and kitchens, where the table and chairs, and bottles and footstools are shaking hands, and accordions, guitars, and pianos are being played by elfin hands belonging to invisible bodies. Ministers, moreover, have begun again to warn their hearers against what they consider to be an idolatrous abomination. Thus the public mind is quite stirred upon the subject, and while sceptics laugh, and teachers warn and exhort, the innocent Spiritualists are in no way shaken in their faith, and professional mediums are making themselves rich.

TRANSATLANTIC AIR SHIPS.—The preparations are nearly completed in New York for the departure for Europe of Professor Lowe and his associates in their aerial ship. Professor Lowe is receiving the co-operation of several well-known commercial and scientific gentlemen, who, if not sanguine of the complete success of the expedition, are anxious to see the experiment of aerial navigation fairly tried. Whether successful or otherwise, it will probably add something to the general stock of scientific knowledge; and every precaution is being taken to secure the safety of the passengers. A trial trip has already been made with a successful result. This trial proves the possibility of directing the course of this ship through the air; and as the general direction of the current of air is eastward at a certain distance above the earth, the probability of Professor Lowe's reaching Europe is very strong. Should this European voyage be successfully accomplished in the short space of forty-eight hours, as the Professor anticipates, it will make a complete revolution in the manner of conveying intelligence between the two continents, as advantage can be taken of this eastward current in the return voyage, by passing round the world. Though this subject is at present exciting little public attention, should this ship prove a success, the originator will rank among the world's greatest inventors. The name of this novel ship is the Great Western. Its extreme length or height is 300 feet; its largest diameter 195 feet; the basket in which the mail and passengers are to be conveyed is 30 feet diameter, and constructed to carry 12 persons. Under this basket is an iron life-boat, 40 feet long, which contains a caloric engine, which is designed to give the direction to the ship by moving a fan, rather than to propel the ship itself. Professor Lowe states that he will take letters for all parts of Europe, and promises to deliver them safely within two days. The proposed crew of the Great Western is Professor Lowe, two scientific associates, and an experienced sea captain; to command the boat, in case it might be necessary to change the aerial for the water navigation.—London American.