

must be allowed that the noses of Franz Hals' friends are now and then too red, and the wine cup goes too often to their lips.

There are other quaint pictures in the Haarlem Museum. One is to be remembered, but not to be described in these modest lines. A Flemish artist has undertaken to exhibit on one canvas all or nearly all the Flemish proverbs of the Middle Ages. Some are easily identified with those we know well at home, others are harder to understand. But this is clear, that the Flemish painter had drunk deeply at the same fount of inspiration as Rabelais, or that Rabelais knew Flemish proverbs well. The excellent comedy of the whole condones its coarseness, which is not after all immoral, and the whole composition is unspeakably funny.

If this Flemish picture is indeed of the earth earthy, the rolling tones of the great organ, which told us that the musical recital was just beginning, reminded us of a quite other side of the human mind and art. Two recitals are given each week for an hour, and the organist handles his instrument fairly well. But who can describe what that instrument is? I confess that up to the present time I had been unworthy of the organ. It always seemed to me a poor and whiffling substitute for a full band, and doubly imperfect since the player—save where the bellows are moved by steam or water—is in a degree dependant on another hand and brain. But the organ at Haarlem—I care not how it is set in motion—spoke as with the tongue of all nature, and in a language which each hearer could interpret as he pleased. Now, in a fragment of the *Messiah*, or a movement from a mass of Mozart, which one knew already, the words to which the music is set were read as it were by the voice of an angel, speaking from the clouds of some great mountain-top. And then were songs without words, where the notes alone spoke; and from the vox humana stop, which in all other organs has seemed to me like a mere trick, tones came floating which almost moved to tears, though the message they brought was vague. Then with rustle and flutter of wings, the notes of linnets dropped through the air, to be stilled again in the roll of thunder, out of which pealed the tumult of minster bells. That the good Haarlemers walked about with their hats on, and removed them only to bow to their acquaintances, that the smoke of bad Dutch tobacco was wafted in when the doors opened, that a rampant Protestantism had whitewashed the walls and painted the organ a sickly pink where the wash was not, all these things were of no account, and were not even noticed when the organ spoke. Then the incense seemed to roll, and the heavens to open, till the player dropped us flat on earth again. He played us out by variations on that most terrible of airs, associated with so much vulgarity and so much discomfort—"God Save the Queen"!

We wondered if it is a fact, or if the kindly exhibitor practised on our credulity, that the rack was in use at Haarlem up to the year 1793, in which year a man suffered that torture; at all events, it and other instruments seemed of comparatively modern make, and they would scarcely be made for show.

I am not going to weary you or your readers with accounts of towns, and indeed if I gave them, some would be recollections of other towns than this. Nor will I speak of the pleasant travelling by canal-steamer, in among the village lanes, here all of water, through trim gardens, where the nasturtiums and dahlias are still uncut by frost. Nor can I say now aught of Leyden, and the kindly welcome from some of its most distinguished men, save that Professor Kuenen's class seemed fuller than I feared it would be, and that the authorities of the British Museum might take many hints for their catalogue and the arrangement of their books and shelves from the excellent little University Library.

And it is getting cold for the sandhills, the canals, and the Zuyder Zee; the storks are gone, all but one, as far as we could see, and the fish are rising in the dykes as though no storks were. We, too, must go, as the storks, not where they go, but back to the "fumum strepitumque" of London. But when the storks come again—will our readers, who know not Holland, trust us?—will they avoid Rotterdam, avoid Amsterdam, avoid, as a rule, what the guidebooks tell them they ought to see, and make acquaintance with this kindly industrious people and the breezy healthy land they live in, full of a picturesqueness all its own? P.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### SPIRITUALISM IN HIGH LIFE.

Sir,—I was not a little surprised at learning about a week ago, from a chance visitor, that observations of an offensive nature, and reflecting on my daughter, had appeared somewhat recently in the *Examiner*. As my informant did not remember

the date of publication, I have had some difficulty in procuring your article of September 16, and now lose not a moment in writing to acquaint you of the serious mistake into which you have fallen, in placing prominently, and at the head of a list of people whose conduct you criticise in no measured or complimentary terms, the name of a young lady, who is the only child of Major-General C. S. Showers, lately Political Agent at the courts of Oodeypoor and Gwalior, and niece of General St. George D. Showers, C.B., whose career in India is a matter of history.

I have not the slightest doubt, however, that as soon as you become aware of the error into which you have evidently been led by the disingenuous conduct of Mr. Serjeant Cox, you will make the only amends in your power, by giving this letter a speedy and prominent insertion. Into the circumstances attending the development of Miss Showers's mediumship it is not my purpose to enter, further than to affirm that during the process of that development she was never in any way—no, not for a single instant—associated with any professional or non-professional medium in the world, that the whole of the manifestations that occurred in my house—280 miles away from London—pursued their wonderful, startling, and irrepresible course, without our having had the slightest previous acquaintance with the subject, or being able to form the remotest conjecture as to any successive phase that the phenomena were likely to assume. We never so much as contemplated the possibility of any publicity in the matter, and it was therefore a train of utterly unforeseen circumstances that led me into the position in which I am, however, exceedingly proud to stand, that of an advocate of Spiritualism, of one who recognises faith in the Invisible, not only as a Reality but as the only Reality.

In August, 1873, my husband, with whom I was in communication on the subject, was so much impressed by the spirit and beauty of some of the poetical manifestations that were given through our daughter, then only sixteen years old, that he addressed the following letter to the Queen, and Her Majesty was graciously pleased to direct Sir Thomas Biddulph to acknowledge the receipt of it. You will perceive, therefore, Sir, that in this case, at any rate, the medium did not chance to be one of those persons of "unknown antecedents" on whom it is, according to the *Daily News*, popularly supposed that "spirits have a trick of fastening themselves":—

"Mussoorie, Himalayas,  
August 11, 1873.

"Madam,—I hope your Majesty will pardon the liberty on which I have ventured in addressing you, to submit for your perusal the enclosed letter from my wife, Mrs. Charles Showers, who had the honour of being presented to your Majesty by her aunt, the late Honourable Mrs. Charles Ewan Law, communicating answers received through the medium of our daughter from the spirit world, in respond to the highest and most important questions that can affect the living in this world.

"I would premise that on receiving recently an account of some very extraordinary spiritualistic manifestations of which my daughter was represented to have been the medium, I wrote to my wife, disapproving of the experiments, and expressing a hope that my daughter might never be allowed to take part in anything of the kind for the future. The enclosed communication is in answer to that remonstrance. The power which my daughter possesses as a medium for good would appear by the enclosed answer, received in writing to the vital questions asked, the same being herein recorded, and my objections are silenced. It has occurred to me, then, that it might interest your Majesty to witness some manifestations of my daughter's power, and examine the original writings of the enclosed verses. If so, my wife, with whom I am communicating on the subject, will be prepared to receive your royal commands, and to wait upon your Majesty, accompanied by my daughter, at any time she may be honoured with the same.

"If, on the other hand, the subject should not interest your Majesty, all I would hope, Madam, is, that you will pardon the liberty on which I have ventured in obtruding the enclosed communication upon your august presence, under a sense of its mingled mystery and sacredness, and condescend to direct the letter to be forwarded to my address in London, The Travellers' Club, Pall Mall, to await my return to England.

"I have the honour to be, Madam,

"Your Majesty's most faithful

"And humble servant,

"C. L. SHOWERS."

The story of the "capture of Miss Showers, as the spirit Lenore," is so ridiculous, that I hardly care to touch upon it; but if it be true, as you say, "that everybody knows it," it is time "everybody" should learn that "everybody" is wrong. When Mr. Serjeant Cox, envious of imitating other investigators, in the hope of redeeming the character which he feared had been somewhat compromised in the eyes of a sceptical

public by his coquettings with an unpopular subject, rushed blindly forward and proclaimed that he too had "captured a medium," he did not foresee that one day the laugh would be turned against him, for he was showing up no thief but an innocent person.

There happens to be just a substratum of truth, just an insecure foundation on which to erect an edifice of falsehood, which will crumble to pieces the moment it is touched, and the foundation is this.

Miss Showers does possess those abnormal powers which are called mediumistic. After her recovery from a quinsy, Mr. Serjeant Cox did beg me, and (probably in the hope of witnessing some exhibitions of those powers) to take her to his house at Moat Mount, for change of air.

It is true that, feeling grateful for his kindness, I deferred my proposed departure from town for a few days, in order to accept his invitation.

It is true that before we had been three hours under his inhospitable roof we were all at mortal feud—no unusual experience, however, in the history of Spiritualists. It is true that my daughter, a young and delicate girl of seventeen, had to be held down forcibly for two hours on the floor, while writhing in convulsions occasioned by the stupid and ignorant conduct of one particular person in the room; but it is not true that anything like "imposture" was either "detected" or imputed, or that the slightest confirmation whatever was afforded, either of the theory of "unconscious cerebration," or of Mr. Cox's own pet theory of psychic force.

Six weeks subsequently this gentleman thought proper to open on me a most disingenuous attack in the *Medium* newspaper, and misled the public by totally suppressing the following facts, which I subsequently compelled him to admit:—

That the occurrence to which he referred had not taken place, as people were led to imagine, in some spiritual circle, but in his own house, with his wife, daughter, and son as the only witnesses. That the uninitiated lady who has gained such questionable renown was no other than his own daughter Mrs. Edwards. That previously to the acceptance of Mr. Cox's invitation, I had written and told him that the spirit form seemed to me to be my own child in a trance. A more extended acquaintance with this perplexing and still mysterious subject has, however, led me to change this impression, and the subsequent testimony of competent and honourable investigators confirms that of Miss Florence Marryat (Mrs. Ross-Church), who, in presence of the guests of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, among others, of Prince Albert of Solms Braunfels—a cousin of Her Majesty—solemnly and tremblingly testified that, on entering the cabinet where my daughter was lying unconscious, she saw and felt not only one but two spirits by her side. This cabinet was no structure of wood and drapery, but the drawing-room of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green Street, Grosvenor Square, a room which we had all left only two or three minutes previously. So you see, Sir, that, however we may account for the spiritual theory, the "imposture" hypothesis is certainly not tenable, since no young lady medium could have easily carried about a man and a woman in her pockets. The account of this *séance* has been published in the *Spiritualist* newspaper. It is perfectly true that we did not all see it, but no more did the men who were with the Prophet Daniel see the awful vision that he records in his book, though it is said that "a great fear fell upon them, and they fell to the earth."

When Mr. Cox expressed, with so much apparent *naïveté*, his opinion (according to your statement) that Miss Showers was no "vulgar impostor," but the victim of an unconscious cerebration, which was manifesting itself in the perhaps excusable but certainly uncomplimentary form of "making faces at him *through a hole*," he was not altogether unmindful of his interests: he had laid the train, and adroitly skipped aside, in the confident expectation of seeing others fire it. This gentleman never goes so far as his reason requires, but halts where his personal interests dictate. Men who are thus unable to divest themselves of a slavish fear of, and cringing to, public opinion, men who cannot quit themselves like men, had better stand aside out of our path. Their proper place lies among those who, in the excitement of terror, would fain have contributed even yet more jagged oyster-shells to the funeral rites of Hypatia—who would have painted yet more hideous devils on the lurid winding-sheet of Huss!

No Spiritualist (may I here mention that if by Spiritualist is meant one who believes in a communion with his dead, then are we not Spiritualists, for our dead have certainly never returned to us), no Spiritualist, I say, ever became a Spiritualist by study of the physical phenomena alone. A man's belief is the one thing of importance to him, and belief being a mysterious and subtle working of the mind, it is not to be acquired through any sudden miracle—not even by the resurrection of one from the dead. When people then point with a supercilious air to such men as Mr. Alfred Wallace and Mr. William

Howith, and say, "Just look at the credulity of these men," I would answer, "Look at the humility of these great men." How they must have laboured, how their brains must have toiled, before they stood in the position in which they stand! Why, it must have been far easier for Mr. Wallace to accomplish the elaborate studies which have enabled him to make such valuable contributions to the literature of the world, than to accept the apparently absurd theory which every child thinks he is able to refute, that invisible intelligences come in rapping at tables; and when we see him, and others as courageous, standing imperturbably forward at this crisis, and amid sneers and ridicule, and the still more bitter humiliation of self-confessed impostures bearing witness to this truth of this day, as the early Christians bore witness before the Pagan tribunals to the truth of their day (which also was a truth for all time), we feel that the morn has dawned, when Spiritualism, soul of the world's history, can safely be trusted to hold her own, not only against those of the Protestant Church who, having lost the pearl, are still convulsively grasping the shell, but against all other mouldering ecclesiastical organisations that have fettered, while professing to defend her:—

Von nun an soll kein *irdische* Haus,  
Kein Tempel mich verschliessen.  
Altar und Tempel stürzen ein.  
Ich will mich besser wählen.  
In keinen Mauern such mich mehr,  
Such mich in schönen Seelen.

—I am, Sir, &c.,

FREDERICA SHOWERS.

[We have no reason to believe that the above letter is otherwise than genuine.—Ed.]

#### THE EASTERN QUESTION.

Sir,—It is not my purpose to enter into the question whether our Government has invariably chosen the best method of dealing with this puzzling Eastern imbroglia. Such bickering over the corpse of a quarrel would not help much towards a solution of the problem which Europe is now regarding with dim misgiving. What England clearly wishes to bring about is that the European provinces of Turkey shall for evermore be ensured at least moderately good government, without, if possible, destroying the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The remedy generally prescribed is styled by some "administrative autonomy"; by others "local self-government." These high-sounding names leave little to be desired—as names. Some experience with Asiatic peoples, warns me, however, that something more will be needed to place the Christians of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria, on a really equal footing with their Mohammedan fellow-subjects. Whenever alien races are cemented together into a so-called nation or state, the one which holds the sword is sure to lord it over the other. So far as my reading of history and personal experience have extended, this seems an invariable rule. Hence, the Christians of the three provinces will remain down-trodden, the Mohammedans cocks of the walk, in spite of any conceivable amount of "administrative autonomy," so long as European Turkey is garrisoned solely by Moslem soldiery. My suggestion is, therefore, that one-half of the forces—horse, foot, and artillery, officers and privates—shall be recruited from the Christian population, the other moiety from the Mohammedan. If this were done, I feel assured that the now pusillanimous Bulgarians and their kinsmen would soon learn the trick of martial courage.

It will be said, perhaps, that such an arrangement would be sure to end in a battle royal. Possibly. But when that contingency is accepted, what does it amount to but a probability that the Christians, when armed and disciplined, would no longer bend their necks to the galling yoke which their defenceless condition has forced them to bear so far? If the only evil result to be dreaded from teaching the Christians the arts of war is, that they will be rendered more capable of holding their own in the world, I, for one, say, proceed with this education as fast as may be.

It may chance that some critics of "my plan" will point to Ireland and India, and ask whether the indigenous inhabitants of those countries are yet entrusted with arms? The sarcasm bites but skin deep. England does not allow anything like a popular arming in those countries, because the immediate result of such madness would be internecine slaughter and wholesale massacre. And I hold that she has every right to adopt this precaution, so long as the life and property of every person in both lands enjoy legal protection, and so long as Irishmen and East Indians are secure against even the shadow of injustice. But should the day ever come when England treats those peoples as the Turks treat their Christian fellow-subjects, then, I hold, the civilised world would be perfectly justified in arming and disciplining the oppressed populations.

—I am, Sir, &c.

ANGLO-INDIAN.

November 29, 1876.