

(5) Many mystifying effects are produced by the following means: (a) Members of the audience, by request, write questions on prepared pads, keep the questions, return the pads, and read, later on, (startled when the clairvoyant, covered up in a sheet, reads out the questions, credits them to the right persons, and answers (or essays) to answer) them. They are not aware that, in writing, they unconsciously wrote a carbon duplicate of their question, that the clairvoyant reads this duplicate, by the aid of a tiny lamp, under cover of the sheet, and that the name of the writer, or at least his or her location in the audience, are sufficiently noted on the pad by the assistants, as it is being brought on the stage, or by the use of paper of different colors for different parts of the theatre, or different rows of seats in a hall. (b) In the highest and exceptional reaches of the party, wonderful results are also obtained by means of a system of signals based upon the trained capacity of the conjurer and the clairvoyant to count secretly at the same speed (say at the rate of "common time," such as is done at piano-playing practice for the purpose of setting the time). After a brief practice of an hour or so, two persons of average intelligence—even though not practical musicians—could thus transmit to each other any number up to 10 with unerring accuracy. Notification is given by word, hand, or otherwise (as above) when the count is to begin, and when a particular figure is to be stopped at. And this system can be extended to an indefinite number of acts and objects in groups of (say) ten, as already explained in our preceding article, when dealing with the spoken codes of stage clairvoyance. This ingenious deception was introduced in Paris some years ago by Professor Verbeck and Mademoiselle Mathilde, and was repeated with much success by Guibal and Marie Gréville before bewildered audiences in England and America. Those of our readers who may be desirous of getting at the details of this sensational bit of acting may consult Burlingame's little brochure, entitled *Tricks in Magic, Illusions, and Mental Phenomena*.

(6) Some sensation is, during almost all such performances, created by the use of local information about various sitters secured by the medium, in advance of the performance, or, during the performance, by confederates scattered about in different parts of the house. We conclude this summary description of a great current deceit by quoting some of the methods of the Baldwins—methods which are, to this hour, being utilised in part by a fortune-telling 'clairvoyant' that has made, and is making, a great impression upon numberless gullible women in every part of Australasia (we quote from pp. 308-311 of Carrington's *Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism*).—During the early part of the performance a number of slips of paper are distributed among the audience, with the request that they write on them questions such as "Who stole my watch?" They are then asked to fold them up and place them in their pockets; and keep their minds on the contents. They are also requested to sign their full name on the slips. During the latter part of the performance, Mrs. Baldwin is brought upon the stage, in a supposed "hypnotic" state. She starts by saying: "I have an impression; it comes from the centre of the house; it is from James Brown; he wishes to know who stole his pocket-book." Mr. Baldwin now asks for the slip, and Mrs. Baldwin, either describes, or gives the initials of the person who stole the pocket-book, probably telling when it was stolen, and the amount of money it contained. In this manner she answers three, or four questions, when she appears to be "chilled." A piece of cloth is thrown over her, and she answers the rest of the questions, and probably describes some recent murder. The secret of this feat is as follows: Amongst the audience are placed four or five confederates, who take slips of paper, but instead of writing questions, they take copies of the row and the number of the seat, and if they cannot make out the name, they give a description of the writer's dress. These slips are passed to the attendants when they collect the pencils and the small tablets from which the slips are torn. They are taken to Mrs. Baldwin, and a list is made of them with such answers as they see fit. When possible, information of lost friends is obtained. Additional information is obtained by taking into confidence the manager, or treasurer of the house. For instance, if some person, when buying a ticket, tells the treasurer that he has lost some article, and that he is going to ask Baldwin about it, the treasurer makes a note of this, and also the seat the person buys in, and Mrs. Baldwin uses this information of Marked change is frequently given to persons buying seats of a dollar bill, the number of which is known to the ticket agent, or a half-dollar, of which he knows the year, etc. A note is made of the number of the ticket to the purchaser of which this marked change is given, and later on in the performance, if a gentleman sitting in the C, S, or S, seats is asked that the

medium has informed him correctly when she stated that he had in his pocket a dollar bill, the number of which was C77684493, and another gentleman is equally surprised to be informed that he has in his pocket a half-dollar, of the date of 1862. These are given as "spontaneous tests," and so appear all the more remarkable. Before Mrs. Baldwin goes on to the stage, she conceals in her dress the list of questions; but she commits four or five of them to memory, which she gives first. When these are exhausted, she has the cloth thrown over her, which gives her an opportunity to consult the list. For each performance, one or two questions are worked up by the confederates, for the star test of the evening. These usually relate to some great local sensation, such as a murder, or a railroad accident. By this method it is obvious that a tremendous amount of sensation can be produced, limited only by the skill of the performers. Still further information can be obtained by having a lady or gentleman confederate make a systematic canvass of the towns where the performer intends playing (v. pp. 312-13). It will hardly be necessary for me to describe a performance of the Baldwins in any further detail, as the actual working out of the tricks can be easily imagined. The methods of obtaining information are so numerous, and the codes employed so ingenious, that it is practically impossible for the average person to detect the fraud that is invariably practised in exhibitions such as these.

## Notes

### The Congress Volume

The work of printing the Memorial Volume of the Third Australasian Catholic Congress goes on as expeditiously as a work of such magnitude permits. Some little time must, however, necessarily elapse before a volume of its size can be issued in such considerable numbers as are required. Inquiring friends will kindly note this. The finished work will reach them in due course, and it will be found well worth the little waiting.

### Au Revoir!

With this issue of the *New Zealand Tablet*, the editor says *au revoir* to his readers. The months of his absence, however, will be in great part devoted to their service—to the collection of varied and interesting information and illustrations, especially in the (to Australasians) little known lands of Spanish America, both South and Central. Through the kindness of many high-placed friends, we shall have exceptionally favorable opportunities—so far as our limits of time will permit—to note the religious, social, and industrial conditions of those interesting lands. It is intended that the results of these observations shall, in due course, be embodied in an extended series of articles in this paper. Editors of all men require to get away from their desk occasionally, to rest their fagged brains, to look around and take a perspective, and, in the interests of their readers, to get a fresh term in the world's wide university and creep a little further into the fringe of useful human knowledge and experience. If his course of travel should, even in a small way, enrich the editor in this way, he will, at the proper time, do what he may to share the benefit with those who have been so indulgent as to follow his plitudinous trail week by week in the leaded columns of this paper. So—*au revoir!*

### Ritualism

According to G. K. Chesterton, the anti-ritualist Kensit is (so to speak) violently ritualistic. He is (says Chesterton) under the impression that he is not a ritualist. But the daily life of Mr. J. A. Kensit, like that of any ordinary man, is, as a matter of fact, one continual and compressed catalogue of mystical mummeries and hummers. The trifling of his list to a lady is merely one instance in point. In short, adds Chesterton, Mr. Kensit, and those who agree with him, may think, and quite sincerely think, that men give too much incense and ceremonial to their adoration of the other world. But nobody thinks that he can give too much incense and ceremonial to the adoration of this world. That is, in substance, what is chiefly the matter with the ritualists, who call themselves anti-ritualists. In the meantime, the particular forms of ritualism against which they protest, keep spreading apace on both sides of the Atlantic. The *Philadelphia Catholic Standard*, of a recent date, quotes something of interest in this connection, from the *American Catholic*, which is a Protestant Episcopal organ of pretty high ritualistic tendencies. The matter here especially referred to was taken from the Episcopal newspaper *Stranger's Guide*, in which it names nine parishes