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The Spiritual Rostrum.

The Voice of the Shepherd.

An Inspirational Discourse written through the Mediumship of
MRS. H. J. HORN,
And delivered by H. J. Horn, President of the
First Society of Spiritualists, Saratoga
Springs, N. Y., November 24, 1884.

"And Jesus when he came out saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd."—Mark vii.

What a picture these words from the New Testament give of the eager, questioning nature of man, of the great heart of humanity which is ever seeking answer to the soul's interrogation of the hereafter.

These people had their synagogues and their feasts days and their fast days, the law of Moses, and the precepts given by Jehovah on Mount Sinai—just as you to-day have your churches, your priests and ministers, your sacred lore and traditions.

Their souls, we see, were not fed by those abstractions. They were hungry, and walked along the hot sea coast over the stones and sand into the desert place whither Jesus went for seclusion, hoping to hear his answer to the ever-recurring question, "Where are we going, and what shall become of us when our bodies die?" They felt a craving for immortality, they longed to hear something of that other world that their instincts told them existed for them in the dim future.

Where were the prophets and seers of their tribe? Where had gone their loved ones? "They had put them away to sleep with their fathers, and they were not."

Where were they? Christ seeing them, following with inquiring eyes, was filled with compassion for them, for they were as sheep without a shepherd. Where else would they find a shepherd who would lead them into a safe retreat, who would give food to their hungry souls?

Christ fed them with a few simple maxims as simple as the food with which he fed their hungry mouths—a few leaves and some small fishes—that was all they needed. And this great, compassionate teacher set a lesson to the proud rabbis and priests of Jerusalem, as well as to the preachers of to-day. He taught them that the kingdom of heaven, the incomprehensible future of which they questioned, was like a marriage ceremony to which all were bidden—not a feast reserved for a few elect, but an open, glorious marriage feast for all, such as travelers in foreign lands have seen, in happy contrast with our restricted ceremonies—a gay party in the spring season, gathered under the trees in front of the open doors. They had only to put on the gay attire ready for them, and then go in and enjoy the brilliant festival. They could understand that simple, close, poor, half-starved people who longed for a higher life.

Christ's days were destined to be but few among them; a year or two at most, and he departed—A Great Mystery into the realm of mystery.

After he had gone from earth, and his followers became teachers in his place, and century after century rolled on, the same clamorous question arose, the representatives of this meek and lowly teacher attempted to give food as he had done to the hungry masses—but oh! long-suffering Christ, what a different, nourishing food from thine!

They gave lifeless doctrines, such as transubstantiation and baptism, and the cold, formal sacrament, in place of his words of love and encouragement. No wonder the human heart has grown shriveled and starved, and that the cry of unrest still goes up from the wandering, shepherdless flock!

To-day the same cry comes up from the multitude, asking, "Where are our dead? Whither are we going? Tell us our future in the world to come."

They tremble along on the rough places of life, and with hungry hearts disappear within the great vortex of eternity. And not alone does this cry come up from the poor and homeless, but from the rich and the great, the crowned monarchs, the great and noble Hebrews, to the length of days, and benevolent life that the whole civilized world now celebrates with glad jubilation of thanksgiving. Not from the synagogues for a Messiah has he gathered the wisdom which

orated robes of her bishops and archbishops who have no answer for her desolate heart-wall, which constantly is: "Tell me of my husband and children—are they living in the soul-land beyond?" Spiritualism alone can and does answer this question for her.

The Church bids us veil our heads and wait till some vague Judgment Day, whose point of view is ever shifting like the changing quicksand it resembles. It gives us to-day but the dried husks of Scribes and Pharisees. No tender loving voice like Christ's points the simple way, but we are sternly told to be resigned to the will of God when death ruthlessly severs our heart-strings!

What would you do, friends, if a neighbor to you, living happily on his farm, with his growing, dutiful family about him, should be suddenly surprised by a band of robbers from the far mountains, coming down and seizing by force his son and daughters, whom he loved more than his own life, and carrying them off he knew not whither? Would you coldly visit him, and tell him he must not inquire about those loved ones, that it was the will of God, and he should be resigned? Would you expect him to listen to your counsels submissively, and not feel anxious and desirous of hearing from his lost family? And when lo! the good news comes that he can communicate with his children, that he can receive a message from them, and send one in return, what would you think of this man if he replied, "I fear to do that; it has been interdicted in Turkey, or some distant land, to communicate with those thus carried off?"

You question further—"But who interdicts?" "Oh!" says the man, "centuries ago it was forbidden among the Jews! I am not a Jew, to be sure, and I wish I might inquire about them," he stammeringly answers, "but I fear it is wrong; my life will be endangered, perhaps!"

And so this timid, cowardly man lets his children disappear without making an effort to communicate with them.

Would you not say the man was insane, or an unnatural victim of fear? What tender-hearted father or mother would be deterred by such a weak excuse? And yet this is the condition of thousands in our land to-day. They are distraught with fear, like sheep without a shepherd, and in wild confusion fall into pitfalls made by ignorance, ruined for life, and injured for eternity!

What is the attitude of the church toward Spiritualism? Is it not one of antagonism? Not because of our atheism or infidelity, for that we have not. Not because our teachings are immoral or truthless; for it is a fact patent to all observers that the highest morality and spirituality are taught by our public mediums and teachers.

What then is the cause of this opposition we meet with? This lack of fraternal feeling between the church and Spiritualism? Is it not because we have attracted the wandering sheep to us, even as Christ drew them after him? Why did the church of his day oppose him? Not because he inculcated sentiments that were earthly and impure; but because the people followed him gladly. They were like sheep without a shepherd, and the great sympathetic heart of humanity responded to his encouraging voice.

So Spiritualism addresses the heart of the people. Their native born sense is appealed to. The other world is described as a natural sequence to this. Even so Christ made it seem to the lowly fishermen and wondering crowd. No far-away place was his heaven—but almost a continuation of this earth.

How natural were all the comparisons to which he likened the other world, the kingdom of God! He said: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasures hid in a field, the which when a man hath found he selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls; who, when he has found one pearl of great price, sold all that he had and bought it. Again, it is like a net that was cast into the sea, which when it was full they drew to the shore."

Don't you know that is the way Spiritualists feel about the Truth they have found. The spirit-world is accessible; you have only to cast in your net and draw out the treasures waiting for you.

You have found the magnetic key that unlocks the gate of heaven. You should not hide it, but turn the lock and permit the angels to come out and go in. How full of care and turmoil is the earth! How men strive for high places in the synagogues! In political life, how they slander and defame each other, that they may rise on such unseemly props; as in the olden days of warfare the slain soldiers were heaped up into a high mound, that the attacking party might scale the opposing wall by climbing over their lifeless bodies!

Not from books—not from great schools of learning, not from legal research, but from within, are to be found the rules of life which should govern us! The kingdom of heaven is within you, said Christ. He sought his inspiration from the great book of nature and from within! He broke the laws that were inhuman and narrow, and gave to them the interpretation of a kind, generous heart. So must we be taught to seek inspiration of the spirit-world! This twin world of ours (lifted up out of the clouds and fog that surround our earth, and backing in a serene air) is capable of drawing us up into a purer, clearer atmosphere. If it is this communion within that has brought Sir Moses Montaigne, that great and noble Hebrew, to the length of days, and benevolent life that the whole civilized world now celebrates with glad jubilation of thanksgiving. Not from the synagogues for a Messiah has he gathered the wisdom which

has garnished his pathway, but from the great spiritual font, and from communion with the kind Father of us all. He has followed the shining light, the pillar of fire, that each has to guide him if he would but open his eyes to behold it.

A hundred years of doing good! Oh! grand old Jew, thou art again to the front! And well may we, who doubt and quibble at the goodness of the spirit-world, take thy simple faith in the goodness of the Great Father of us all as our example.

And this is the point that we expect to teach through Spiritualism—that there is no spirit of enmity in the other world, seeking to drag you down, trying to mislead you in your efforts to attain truth, assuming a false garb to entrap you, as the police officer assumes a disguised character to catch his victim.

It is not surprising that Christians are a nervous and frightened race of fearers of hell. Unlike the Jews, who believe that God is their friend, or the Spiritualists, who believe that God is not only their friend but that he sends to them their earthly friends who have reached the other shore, to inspire them with hope and love, of rectitude and belief in a great, progressive life hereafter, these Christians are driven by fear instead of being drawn by love.

Oh! wandering sheep! Come to this fold! It makes our hearts ache to see the uncalculated misery of earth's children! the metaphysical, transcendental misery they make for themselves, as though the accidents attending life, the efforts for sustenance and the schooling for soul-culture were not enough to contend with, but they must add to the severity of existence by depicting a dark power at warfare with them: Afraid of the Divine Being who gave them life! Like wandering sheep, startled by a rushing wind which they deem some devouring animal, they run wildly over the abyss and are torn to pieces. So humanity, heeding not the voice of love which is speaking to them from the skies, rushes headlong from the fears their terrors have conjured up, and the sum of their miserable life is finished in disaster.

Every human soul should set in, glory, as the sun, like the noble example across the ocean, whose century of earth-life finds him like our autumn trees with their golden leaves falling gently upon the earth, which will bear him away as it rolls on its course into the springtime of the fair spirit-life.

Can we ever go back to the sterile fields of Materialism, we who have been gathered into this fold of Spiritualism? Will we ever be satisfied with the semblance in place of the reality?

Our enemies accuse us of being too credulous of belief. Has there ever been such unwavering investigators as Spiritualists? No! re-echoing missionary of any church has exhibited the zeal of the Spiritualists. If human teaching can be taken in evidence and we can believe the apostles when they say they saw Jesus after the crucifixion, then we have evidence enough to convince the whole world.

But remember you have to deal with a new science—new inasmuch as its laws are not understood. Spirit magnetism may truly be called an occult force, for so ethereal is it that even an opposing thought disturbs it. Passiveness is the motto of our spirit teachers. Receptivity and self-abnegation are its watchwords.

You must sit in the sunshine of the spirit influence and drink in the golden air, and noble, inspiring thoughts will flow from the supernal world to you. Float without resistance upon the magnetic atmosphere, as the swimmer on the sea does when he wishes to be borne over tempestuous waves to the green land, and you will soon find yourselves touching the shores of that invisible country that stretches unseen around us.

What a strange riddle is the immortal soul of man! that sphinx-like head which has puzzled mankind for centuries! Are we any nearer to deciphering the mystery than before Spiritualism opened the way to the realm of the soul? I answer, Yes! We begin to comprehend that the contradictions of human nature grow out of the union of the material with the spiritual, and are necessary factors in our growth. We are like captive eagles caught in an earthly snare, and we will mount skyward if we have to take the rotten timbers with us.

The harsh judgment of the world ever takes perfection as its aim. Look at Carlyle, that rugged philosopher, whose words were quoted with authority during his lifetime, and who was looked up to as a way-mark to a higher life. Since he has passed from earth, see how he has been dragged from his pedestal by a once adoring public, as it has been discovered that he who forced men on over the hard road of noble deeds by his caustic words, haunted along over the easiest path himself, and seldom climbed the heights he goaded other men to ascend.

Why should inconsistent men fret over the revelation made by his biographers, and eschew all his grand words, since they have found out these shallow discrepancies in his life? Why? Unless it is that the God in man shrinks from contact with the earthly play with which he is mixed and molded.

What matter be it if the ladder by which we climb up to heaven be a beanstalk instead of an angel's stairway? Yet such paradoxes are we that we would rather remain below than mount by other than the fairest and purest structure.

The world judges of Spiritualism as it judges of these cases and of Carlyle. While it cannot but approve of the grand scheme of its doctrine, it upbraids us because our teachings are beyond our general practice. This is the sphinx-like head which mystifies us, like its Egyptian counterpart, half buried in earth and half

rising above into the blue ether. Such is man. He is like the typical God of Greek mythology, with human feet upon a god-like body. By the exigencies of his human nature drawn to earth, whilst by his god-like birth he yearns to soar over Mount Parnassus.

The earthly contends with the spiritual throughout our mortal existence.

Let us learn to discriminate between the truly great and the counterfeit appearance of greatness, and while we demand purity and uprightness, let us be sure that it is not externalism which we take in its place.

People say, "Show us your good works. Your inspired words are good and noble. Your belief is a most beautiful and cheering belief. Nothing would make us happier than to believe as you do, that we could communicate with our spirit-friends. But show us your good works. Bring to us a long list of names of donors to your cause, such as the Christian Church can produce. Show us your buildings for the aged poor; your homes for the world's famishing children; your hospitals. Let us see grand churches and cathedrals raising their spires in testimony of your belief. Then, perhaps, we will join you."

And why should we Spiritualists, looking abroad upon the spires and stately churches of our neighbors, attempt to simulate them? Christ, the great exponent of Spiritualism, frequented not the gorgeous temple at Jerusalem, but gave his spiritual inspiration by the wayside and on the sea-coast and plains of Judea. The hospitals he erected were like the Spiritualists' hospitals. They were improvised for the occasion, when, like our healing mediums, he healed the sick and restored the blind to sight.

Oh! friends, take good heart! We are making mighty progress; we are raising spires that reach unto heaven! From thousands of hearthstones in the land glad thanksgivings arise to the throne of the Immortals, for the dead returned. Our hearts send up columns of magnetic light to the good Lord, which are as visible to his eyes as the loftiest steeple.

If we have not sent the wolf from the door of the poor as our richer church neighbors have done, we have driven that more ferocious wolf, Satan, from his stronghold and scared him away from our churches and long-suffering families.

What good have we done? Why, we have discovered an open sea to the regions beyond death! we have by patient research developed the science of spiritual electricity by which telegraphic messages from worlds revolving around a great spiritual sun, billions of miles removed from our planetary system, can be received quicker than thought in the humblest household of the land. Is this to accomplish nothing?

To the desolate, heart-broken, friend-bereft multitude we have opened a heart of compassion; for they were like sheep having no shepherd. Is this to accomplish nothing?

We are teaching men to read the Bible aright. Oh! when will man learn the spiritual significance of those myths he has taken for literal truths?

The churches have their Bible-classes for inquirers into the meaning of incomprehensible texts; but what Bible-class can give the clear and harmonious interpretation to an incongruous statement that your inspired medium, in her stated visits to your society, gives in her answer to scriptural questions?

The stars may cease to shine, the mountains to tower above the clouds, rivers to flow and flowers to bud and blossom, ere the human soul can forget the truths taught by the angel world!

The Invocation of Angels.

We never could understand the objection to the "Invocation of angels." If they exist, if they love us, and if they are near, why not speak to them in aspiration and prayer? A Boston (U. S.) trance-medium, whose addresses are regularly printed in the BANNER OF LIGHT, has it appears, set an example in this matter that may perhaps, in time be followed. Her usual "Invocation" to God or the Father was, a few weeks ago, addressed to the "dear friends of the spiritual world," and ran thus: "Dear friends of the spiritual world, we invoke your presence and your influence at this hour. From that land of light where time is unknown, where no space can separate kindred souls who love each other, we would ask you to return, bearing messages of peace and comfort that will cheer the hearts of sorrowing mortals through all the days of the new year which has opened upon them. Oh! may you be given power to go forth from this place and all other places where spiritual intelligences are welcomed and received, bearing upon your wings of affection such light, knowledge and understanding as will sink into the souls of men, and give them courage, strength and endurance for the coming time. May you be welcomed in the hearts of all who dwell in mortal homes, and be given strength to soar aloft, bearing the aspirations of weary ones who dwell below, until their entire spiritual natures are so unfused as to gain a clearer perception of the light and purity of the immortal spheres. Oh! friends of the higher life, we beseech you bring to each sorrowing one who is in doubt or despair just that message which he most requires. May the blessing of all true and noble spirits fall like the summer dew upon each heart enshrined in the mortal life, and be refreshed and strengthened, may all delight to do the will of our Father who is in Heaven."—The Truthseeker, (Rev. John Page Hopps, editor) London, Eng.

At many a family table there will be a vacant chair. Death has removed some loved one within the year. The loss will be felt like a shadow at the feast. It must be so. Nor will the sunshine of life cease to be, to come, to veiled and tempered light, henceforth, through all the coming years. Yet to how many a bereaved and sorrowing heart comes off the sudden sense of the unseen but living and real presence of the loved and lost, with its influence of immortal love and attraction, saying out, as a soft, undying light, that lifts the shadow, and lights the darkened lowly way for us who remain.—Harvard (Ct.) Times, Editorial on Thanksgiving Day, 1884.

Spiritual Phenomena.

MRS. BESTE'S TEMPORARY EXIT.
BY JOHN WETHERBEE.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Mrs. M. E. Beste gave a parting materialization séance (as she is about leaving for Washington to spend a month or two, partly for rest, which she seems to need), on Thursday evening, the 18th ult. This séance was a very interesting one. She feared, being obliged to give it in the parlors of 30 Worcester Square, instead of the room familiarized with her manifestations, that it might not be as successful as if given in her own room that her near departure necessitated her leaving. There proved to be no cause for her fears, for she, as usual, was eminently successful, and all present were highly gratified. Among those present I noticed the distinguished speaker, W. J. Colville, also E. W. Smith, of organ fame, his brother also, the benevolent light of Greenwold, and many other well-known faces, making, in the aggregate, some two dozen persons. It was a good circle, and I always feel glad when I find myself one among the right sort of a gathering, for the thermometer of the quality of manifestations depends so much upon the psychical quality of the persons thus gathered. The medium used the back parlor for her cabinet, a curtain at the folding-doors separating her from the circle, that occupied seats in the front parlor.

It is hardly necessary to say that the arrangement was perfectly free from any confederate aid, and that nobody but the medium occupied the room; that is, she was unaided except by the spirits. The honesty of the mediums of whom I have spoken from time to time, and including Mrs. Beste, has been so thoroughly proved by me, or to my satisfaction, that it seems a waste of time and space to be obliged to refer to it, and I often think I never will again, for if there are any who suppose I am blind to such possibilities then they are strangers to my perspicuity, and I am not writing for their benefit. I have so perfectly demonstrated, in the many opportunities I have had with Mrs. Ross, Mrs. Bliss, Mrs. Fay, the Berry Sisters and Mrs. Beste, of whom I am now especially speaking, that confederacy has been impossible and the medium not playing a part or masquerading as a spirit, that it seems superfluous for me to speak of it. In writing a report of any of these materialization séances I am not inclined to give a detailed account of what appears at them. That is so often done by others, and there is so much sameness in the descriptions, that they seem rather monotonous reading. I always try to paint a correct picture, as it appears to my mind, feeling that I am much more of an artist than a reporter. In the present instance I write more in detail than is my custom, because the manifestations were somewhat out of the usual order. I do not propose to give a consecutive account, only to be specific enough to be intelligent.

Mrs. Beste gives her manifestations in perfect darkness. Upon the whole I like that of the two the better. I want a séance-room to be either light or dark. Of course I prefer light—everybody does; but more or less darkness seems to be an essential in the production of some of the phenomena. Well, that being so, give us total of the two. As long as it is necessary to have a room so dark that recognitions are, to say the least, more or less doubtful, and one has to depend upon inferential rather than objective proof, then total darkness suits me better. In this pitch-dark séance of Mrs. Beste's—so dark that a white handkerchief or white collar was as invisible as a black dress—the white-robed forms of the spirits were dimly visible from a sort of intrinsic light of their own. Sometimes a phosphoric addition ornamented their head, or some other parts of the form, but indistinctness was the general order. These moving but indistinct apparitions seem to conform to one's spiritual ideas; they seem in a sentimental sense more like spirits. Of course, as the poet says, heaven or the spirit-world is a "land of light and beauty," and when spirits are showing up as apparitions they do not materialize their surroundings, or give us tableaux of that better land, so there is a fitness in these of Mrs. Beste's as shadows, or as "a sense of something moving to and fro."

These forms faintly fitting in the dark, on the occasion of which I am speaking, seem to be as well recognized, and with as much appearance of truth, as in the usual materialization séances. I suppose they carry with them their own evidence, for optical recognition was out of the question, but on this occasion there were many recognitions that were touching, and seemingly very real. I have so often said that my best recognitions at the materializations with the persons that I have already named have been intellectual or circumstantial rather than objective ones, (I am not forgetting that excellent one I saw at the Berry's), and that recognitions were not the essential feature in the phenomena, so much as the fact of their being spiritual manifestations, that I may be expected to find total darkness unobjectionable.

By mentioning some that came to me on this Beste occasion, I may make this notice as intelligent as in any other way. A spirit came to me—I could just perceive it by eye and its substantiality by touch—who said, "John, I am your mother." I think it was a spirit-form and not the medium, and I am inclined to take the spirit's word that it was the form of my venerable mother. Still I didn't feel that I was in the presence of a ghost, and yet I saw a sentimental person. After his retirement, another spirit came, who said, "Father, I am Hattie, I am with you and mamma most all the

PORTLAND.—H. O. FAY, chairman of the Webster, a "knagnotic," 883½ Commercial street, has removed to Lawrence, Mass. No. 33 Franklin street, and removed to Portland, Me., the residence of all who are not members of one of the professions, in the city of Portland.

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New Books

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TO THE HONORABLE
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
IN SENATE
JANUARY 18, 1907

