

THE

Harbinger of Light.

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DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM,
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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THE subject of Co-operation is one that should receive the attention of all progressive Spiritualists. In it lies the solution of all social, political, and religious difficulties, and through it must be brought about the elevation and harmonization of humanity. Crime, error, violence, and all other social evils, arise from ignorance and selfish antagonism, and the almost universal prevalence of the latter is clearly traceable to the wrong basis on which society is at present constituted. In trade, commerce, and profession, each one works for his own aggrandisement, seeking to obtain all the wealth he can, regardless of the fact that in many instances by his exertions, or often superior shrewdness, he is depriving others, equally industrious but less clever than himself of their fair share of the general wealth. This is more apparent among tradesmen. One having the advantage of capital seeks an opening, he discovers a locality where the shops in the particular business he contemplates are small and unpretending, and considers—"If I build a handsome and capacious establishment, the trade will be attracted to me." He does so, and after a brief struggle is left master of the situation. The humble, but perhaps more deserving shopkeeper, is ruined, and withdraws, often compelled by necessity to come into antagonistic competition with some others equally unfortunate. The successful shopkeeper feels no compunction at the ruin he has caused, and is "esteemed of men." This is merely an illustration of what is occurring in all ranks of society, the individual interest being adverse to the general good. The physician's interest is in the amount of disease that prevails, and the removal of the causes of disease, is manifestly antagonistic to his success in a worldly point of view; hence but few take an active part in sanatory or physiological reforms. The lawyer's interest

lies in the amount of discord and selfishness that prevails, and in the upholding of complicated laws. Proposals for law reform generally emanate from those who have made a competency out of its abuses. The clergy are interested in upholding the various systems to which they have attached themselves; their interest is to suppress free thought on religious subjects; their worldly position depends entirely on the cohesion of the theological structure, and conscious as they are of its unsubstantiality they endeavour to ward off the attacks of Free-thinkers, and to enlist the sympathy and support of their followers by assuring them that their edifice is built of unexceptionable materials on a rocky foundation. Men esteemed religious and honourable, buy up produce with the view of taxing the community to add to their already plethoric coffers, and the law imposes no restriction on them. Throughout all grades of society the same selfish principle prevails, and is tacitly accepted as the natural condition of things. From these facts it must be evident to the progressive reformer that society requires re-organizing upon a more natural basis, where the nations' labour will by conservation and direction into proper channels create a competence for all workers. The earth yields abundantly all the raw material for food, raiment, and shelter, and were the industry of man properly directed, every individual might with little labour acquire all the necessities, comforts, and refinements of life. The bringing about of this change in the condition of society must in the face of the numerous and powerful antagonistic selfish agencies who are (or conceive they are) interested in maintaining the present condition of things, be a work of time; but nothing will tend so much to that end as the successful carrying out of 'co-operative associations on a communistic basis.' The great desideratum in such an association is harmony among its members, and a general understanding that the labour of all shall be economically applied, under the direction of their self-appointed leader for the benefit of all. The greatest difficulty to be encountered at the outset would be the getting together of a sufficient number of individuals fitted to work in harmony as brothers and sisters for the general good, but failing this a small co-operative band of energetic men, with a joint capital of two or

three thousand pounds, might take the first step in the matter by purchasing a section of land and throwing their joint capital and labour together, appointing the one they had most confidence in as director, and employing what labour was necessary from without until their association grew sufficiently strong to do all its own work. In a small association of only fifteen or twenty persons there would be a diversity of talent which if judiciously applied in proper channels would ensure adequate returns to meet all the requirements of the community, and enable them to enlarge their operations, for while in favourable weather the artisan or mechanic could assist the agriculturist in the field, in unfavourable weather the intelligent agriculturist could in many things assist the artisan. This concentration of labour, especially in harvesting and sowing, would enable the community to take advantage of favourable weather for the rapid accomplishment of any given work and thereby obviate to a great extent the losses the individual cultivator is subject to. After a time it would be necessary to establish a store at the nearest town, in charge of one of the community, where the products of the association could be sold directly to the consumer at such prices as the members might consider fairly remunerative, for they would be able to sell at a lower price than other producers, and thereby benefit the consumer and ensure a ready sale of their products. Ordinary trade unions have very little progressive influence upon society, their object being the same selfish one which prompts individual competition. They believe that by combination they can acquire more wealth, and associate accordingly, regardless of the effect of their combination on others. About fourteen years since, a philanthropic Frenchman, "M. Godin," conceived the idea of establishing a community with the view of ameliorating the condition of the working classes, and having means at his command, purchased a large area of land at Guise. He erected workshops, and a large dwelling-house, with small suites of well-built apartments for the families of those engaged. As soon as it was well established, he called the men together and handed it all over to them, reserving a nominal interest of about three per cent. on the capital invested for himself. He offered them the benefit of his experience and advice whenever it was sought, but withdrew from any interference with their affairs. The community gradually extended till in 1871 it numbered 1300. An immense building called the Social Palace had been erected, which with the original and a smaller supplementary one contained ample accommodation for all, each family having separate suites of apartments. All the latest improvements in ventilation, sanitary matters, and the economization of labour were introduced, and the members allowed, as far as practicable, to select the class of labour most congenial to their tastes. The school and nursery are models in themselves. The children healthy, happy, and intelligent. The children are always put to bed awake, rocking and crying is unknown. There are pleasant gardens adjoining the school, where the children are periodically exercised and taught the rudiments of floriculture and gardening. Sicknes is very rare in this community, and crime is unheard of. Unfortunately, the law of France does not

recognise a community of this kind as holders of property; hence M. Godin has to remain nominally the proprietor, or he would hand over his interest to the community, who it appears are in a flourishing condition and able to purchase it. Apart from the benefit conferred upon those concerned, there is a lesson to be learnt from the experiment. Here is a demonstration of our assertion that crime and its concomitants arise from selfish antagonism and ignorance. There in an association to which we have formerly called attention* forming here. Their prospectus is very attractive, and the originator of the scheme is a man of sound judgment and philanthropic tendencies. We have hopes that it will be successfully established and worked out, as it will give a great impetus to the communistic co-operative movement.

We have also had our attention called to an association denominated "The Workpeople's Co-operative Club, and Industrial Company," whose head-quarters are at the Workman's Hall, Lonsdale-street. The object is to make lucrative employment by combination for those who find it difficult to battle singly with the world. Their scheme as embodied in the prospectus seems a good one, and deserving of the support of philanthropists and reformers. Meantime, our first scheme is worthy the attention of small capitalists with progressive ideas.

COMMUNICATIONS.

ALL God's ways are equal, all man's ways are unequal. The thoughts of God by man formed are as the ways and mind of man who think of and about God; God's dealings with men and the world are as his wisdom great, but understood by man as his wisdom and goodness, little. The Almighty always keeps his own laws; he never acts contrary to his own nature, and were man educated according to his nature, and consequently living according to his own nature, and not transgressing his own laws, God and man would be less different in their nature; God better known; evil less known, and less compelled to be endured.

Man is born into a world full of man's own evil, or as it is by man termed circumstances,—evil of man's own producing; and can be influenced by nature not his own; he is grown up according to natures not his own, but often essentially evil. Attempt to grow plants pure and perfect, in soil and climate essentially against their natural requirement for development, and what would you expect. Do men gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles?

Have confidence in your interior nature to carry you upwards to whatever standard you may have raised for attainment. It is in that interior truth of natural principles that the germ of all advancement of individual and mankind has its origin and growth.

Were man to fully realise what is in the essentials of his nature, he would be more self-reliant and more dependent in his conduct on his Maker and spiritual origin. It is man's custom to look upon himself as his own barrier to progress as the evil to overcome; to live at enmity with himself, and consequently to distrust his nature. What man requires to improve or eradicate from his nature is what false impressions have been artfully implanted, and to develop his true nature.

Man's germ of progress implanted by God is truth and a sense of right, and only requires to be honestly followed in its own development. Its force becomes irresistible, though only in its first felt impress a still small voice. It will become profitable in individual experience and powerful in mankind collectively in its

* The Aurelia.

advance. It would be found by you in a short time (and may have been felt) that your inward principle cultivated, is what the Lord himself adds to in all that is presented in nature to your reason, to be exercised upon and to unite in itself all the truth gathered from without. It is for man's advancement that all surrounding nature exists.

To his inward principles all speaks; his God's temple is within; his God enters that temple, and resides therein, when man is true to, himself in his reason, and his God, in conception.

Man's life is not for himself alone; man has not the provision of all surrounding nature to contribute solely to his selfish gratification, but his life is when properly applied, common property, and for the universal good. It is not how to apply to his advancement but in good, and to elevate all mankind,—indeed to elevate the platform on which he stands and all else along with him. Individuals lose themselves in the common good; only by rising in united progress can the world have good from the best man.

It will not suit our purpose to instruct in details. Principles are what we wish to have to do with, but all mankind have their own peculiar circumstances they are surrounded by, out of and amongst all these arise the quality of his life and his influence on surrounding man. Can you not see how you can improve the train of some one's thoughts; how you could show some one that his circumstances could be bettered in regard to his social or individual happiness or advancement by an almost non-intervention mode of suggesting. Think of Jesus's sayings. Good night.

Were it possible for man to exist as mineral, as vegetable, and as man, he would then experience those sensations of mind respecting spiritual forms that belong to each kingdom. God would be to him of the various principles, and have attributable forms corresponding, and then it would be an analogy to what is now experienced by minds higher or lower, and corresponding to the relative positions of mineral, vegetable, and animal, and those conditions of mind respecting spiritual forms or forces that belong to each kingdom. For those lower strata of the world's composition correct principles are always maintained, because no volition interferes with the external reception or flow of divine principles to those parts of his kingdom universal.

That cannot be said of man who does not continue in nature's ordinary conditions, but induces unnatural and false conditions that subvert the inflow of divine principles, and so leave him to continually deteriorate as he becomes closed against the admission of divine love in the higher forms. Man cannot live without the inflowing of divine love, but he receives it only in form of principle according to his condition.

Again, in the highest or celestial form of life, man can and does experience all and definitely, the diver's degrees applicable to his lowest and to every progressing degree of his mode of existence, and in all modes of existence higher, as super-celestial, and in those conditions of being he contemplates, comprehends and completely obeys his God.

It may be seen that the true nature of man's life should be to imbibe all of his God's nature that his capacity enables, and it will also be seen that man is so constituted that he may progress at an indefinite degree of progressive development. All favorable circumstances attending on universal progress doing their due proportion to his state of development and progress.

Now just look at one point. Our minds are elevated beyond your reach, as at present, we can only in some degree can make you comprehend our subject, and yet your minds often are turned upon God, his purposes and attributes. We cannot fully comprehend those subjects. Good night.

Poetry.

THE FATE OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

"In March, of 1854, says the Cleveland Herald, several months before the arrival of Dr. Rae, with his news of the probable death of the brave Sir John Franklin and his faithful comrades, we copied from the *Lily of the Valley* for 1854, a beautiful poem by Miss Lizzie Doten, in reference to these adventurers. The verses are touching and solemn as the sound of a passing bell, and appear almost prophetic of the news that afterwards came. 'The Song of the North' again becomes deeply interesting as connected with the thrilling account brought home by the Fox—the last vessel sent in search of the lost adventurers to the icy North, and the last that will now ever be sent on such an expedition."—*Buffalo Daily Republic*.

SONG OF THE NORTH.

"AWAY, away!" cried the stout Sir John,
"While the blossoms are on the trees,
For the summer is short, and the time speeds on
As we sail for the northern seas.
Ho! gallant Crozier, and brave Fitz James!
We will startle the world, I trow,
When we find a way through the Northern seas
That never was found till now!
A good stout ship is the 'Erebus,'
As ever unfurled a sail,
And the 'Terror' will match with as brave a one
As ever outrode a gale."

So they bade farewell to their pleasant homes,
To the hills and the valleys green,
With three hearty cheers for their native isle,
And three for the English Queen.
They sped them away, beyond cape and bay,
Where the day and the night are one—
Where the hissing lights in the heavens grew bright,
And flamed like a midnight sun.
There was nought below, save the fields of snow,
That stretched to the icy pole;
And the Esquimaux, in his strange canoe,
Was the only living soul!

Along the coast, like a giant host,
The glittering icebergs frowned,
Or they met on the main, like a battle plain,
And crashed with a fearful sound!
The seal and the bear, with a curious stare,
Looked down from the frozen heights,
And the stars in the skies, with their great, wild
eyes,
Peered out from the Northern Lights.
The gallant Crozier, and brave Fitz James,
And even the stout Sir John,
Felt a doubt, like a chill, through their warm hearts
thrill,
As they urged the good ships on.

They sped them away, beyond cape and bay,
Where even the tear-drops freeze,
But no way was found, by a strait or sound,
To sail through the Northern seas;
They sped them away, beyond cape and bay,
And they sought, but they sought in vain,
For no way was found, through the ice around,
To return to their homes again.
Then the wild waves rose, and the waters froze,
Till they closed like a prison wall;
And the icebergs stood in the sullen flood,
Like their jailers, grim and tall.
O God! O God!—it was hard to die
In that prison house of ice!
For what was fame, or a mighty name,
When life was the fearful price?

The gallant Crozier, and brave Fitz James,
And even the stout Sir John,
Had a secret dread, and their hopes all fled,
As the weeks and the months passed on.
Then the Ice King came, with his eyes of flame,
And looked on that fated crew;
His chilling breath was as cold as death,
And it pierced their warm hearts through!

A heavy sleep, that was dark and deep,
Came over their weary eyes,
And they dreamed strange dreams of the hills and
streams,
And the blue of their native skies.

The Christmas chimes, of the good old times,
Were heard in each dying ear,
And the dancing feet, and the voices sweet
Of their wives and their children dear!
But it faded away—away—away!
Like a sound on a distant shore,
And deeper and deeper grew the sleep,
Till they slept to wake no more.

O, the sailor's wife, and the sailor's child,
They will weep, and watch, and pray;
And the Lady Jane, she will hope in vain,
As the long years pass away!
The gallant Crozier, and brave Fitz James,
And the good Sir John have found
An open way, to a quiet bay,
And a port where we all are bound!
Let the waters roar on the ice-bound shore,
That circles the frozen pole;
But there is no sleep, and no grave so deep,
That can hold a human soul.

"Poems from the Inner Life."

"THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD."

DICKENS' GREAT NOVEL FINISHED BY THE MASTER'S OWN
HAND—A COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD.

AN exchange says that the mystery of Edwin Drood is finally to be divulged, and by no less an authority than Mr. Dickens, or rather by the spirit of the departed novelist. In an inland village of New England, we are told by a correspondent of *The Springfield Republican*, there resides a young, industrious, and somewhat illiterate mechanic, who recently became conscious of remarkable "mediumistic" powers, and from a sceptic has become consequently an ardent disciple of Spiritualism, and is now the channel of communication between those who believe with him and their departed friends. During the past few weeks he has received visitations from the spirit of the great novelist, and has taken up the story of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" precisely where Dickens left it when stricken by death, and is carrying it forward to completion. He writes only during these "visitations," and at the dictation of the ghostly "Boz." He describes Dickens as sitting by his side, and "the glorious beauty of his eyes is wonderful to behold." The continuation opens with a preface and dedication, both brief, particularly the latter. The dedication is to "the poor, the honest poor, who are bound with the iron bands of poverty," and the first chapter of the spiritual production begins with the caption, "What did the organ say?" The most remarkable circumstance of all, however, is the reproduction of the curious jargon of refrain of "Winks," alias "Deputy";

Widdy, widdy wen
I—ket—ches—Im—out—ar—ter—ten
Widdy, widdy wy
Then—E—don't—go—then—I—shy
Widdy, widdy wade cock warning.

"Of course," says the correspondent, "if this medium had ever read the work, his production of the above might be accounted for, but he had never seen the book, and probably never heard of it. He failed to recognize the features of Dickens at the first visitation, and on relating the circumstance to a friend, coupled with an account of what was communicated at the time, the latter was led to believe that the features were those of the lamented author, and upon producing a picture of Dickens to the medium, he exclaimed at once, 'That's the man!'" Be sceptical as we may, we cannot but wait with no inconsiderable interest the termination of this somewhat remarkable transaction, and "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" may yet be solved, but in such a way (as we said before) as to render the 'mystery' more mysterious than ever."

CLERGY AND LAITY.

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE MASONIC HALL, MELBOURNE, SUNDAY, MARCH 30TH, 1873, BY MR. J. WILLIAMS.

"Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting."—Isaiah 63-16.

There is nothing more important for men to study than the formation of character. It should be the aim of all education, and the object of the whole life. It is not completed at twelve years old, nor at twenty, nor at forty: it is a *life-long* work. It is the only wealth we can hope to hold on to; it is the only poverty we need greatly fear.

To possess a noble, enlightened, tender, well-poised character, is worth any sacrifice or suffering which the attainment of it may entail,—for it is the kingdom of Heaven within you. Such a character is no special grace—no gift of God to a favoured few,—but the result of the action of certain laws, difficult to understand, but immutable,—as all natural law must be. If you sow wheat, you will not gather tares.

Disposition is not character. I should hesitate to present so trite a remark to you, had I not so often seen the two confounded. The one is an *inheritance*: it is the work of our parents, of our ancestors, of circumstances. The other is our own work—done day by day, hour by hour. The laziest man on earth must do this work—he cannot get it done for him. The cleverest shifter of responsibilities—the most dexterous reaper of other men's harvests—in this matter can reap only what he sows. This is the book of each man's life, to be written by himself alone. This is the home that each one builds for himself—his own character. But how often we build in the dark, not knowing the form or quality of what we are constructing. Let us seek *light* then, by which to build.

We can scarcely doubt that every habitual pursuit or calling moulds and forms the *man* as much, if not more, than education does the youth. The eye of the physician learns to read through, and by muscle and nerve, into the very heart of a man,—learns to weigh his motives, his impulses, and all the forces that urge him into action, or that hamper him in it. This is the physician's peculiar power: it is beyond his healing art, though it is developed in him by the practice of that art, and without this power he would be no great healer.

We may have very little sympathy with the pursuits of a soldier, yet we must admit that to be successful in his calling he must learn to combine the most rapid and systematic action with the most patient self-control, or he will sink out of sight among his fellows.

The poet may be known from the mere rhymester by the prophetic perception of truths yet hidden, which makes him a torch,—a beacon,—lighting us onward into the yet dim future ages, whither the human race slowly follows him.

And the Clergy!—by what power developed in them by their daily avocations, and distinguishing them from other men, can we know that their mission, too,—like these others,—is beneficial? What manner of men are they as a class? In what respect are they wise above others? Should we entrust to them the government of the State, when it is torn by faction, or threatened with anarchy? Or do we hand over to them the prosecution of a difficult and delicate matter of business? Do we look to them for the settling of a vexed point in equity, or rely on them for the administration of a vast fortune?

Such things we never entrust to them. Why not? It is said—because they are too unpractical; yet if anything on earth needs to be made practical, it is religion. And why are men so unpractical as not to be trusted with the weighty affairs of this life, chosen to lead us up to God? Are they, as a rule, sincerer than the rest of us? Have they but one word upon their tongues for all sorts of men—rich and poor, high and low? Are they always—or almost always—steadfast men of principle; that kind of principle that holds to the right, even when the right is the losing side?

Or are they, as a class, smooth-tongued men of expedients, plausible in words, and desiring nothing so much as quiet lives and comfortable homes? They are, perhaps, more charitable than we are? I do not mean, will they give away more money to the poor; but will they suffer longer and be more kind than others. Will they envy less, and vaunt themselves less? Will they be less easily provoked, and think less evil than other men? Will they *always* rejoice in the truth?

What, in short, is the influence on ordinary men of the life peculiar to this profession? What are the effects of those pious exercises—which we will believe they honestly practice? What are the fruits of their theological seminaries—of their sabbaths and saints' days—of their evening, and morning, and mid-day prayer meetings, and of their closet self-examinations? What is the actual result, in the formation of character, of long and frequent prayer, and of days spent in expounding the will of God? Does it tend to make weak minds strong? To make the worldly man unselfish? The cunning man guileless? To give judgment to the foolish?

Thus alone—by results, by things as they are,—can we safely judge how to form character, so as to bring forth into actual existence the *good, great, and godlike* qualities that are latent in every human being—the imperishable image of the Divine Father. To achieve this great work shall we pass our days in prayer, praise, and preaching? It has been fully, fairly, and often tried: Has it produced that result?

It is the fashion nowadays, and particularly with a certain literary clique, to hint that all those who cast their lives in this exclusively religious mould are hypocrites or fools. Do not let us listen to the suggestion for one moment: it is so easy, so terribly easy, to call bad names,—“hypocrite!” “infidel!” “blasphemer!”—what little easy words to say! what fearful meanings! No: let us give them full credit for sincerity, and for average intelligence; and still it is not difficult to see that a truly sound heart and healthy spirit must be sought in some more varied life, that will give play to a greater number of the faculties. “Clergy,” says Mr. Froude, “are generally blind of one eye.” My own experience has been that no specialist is a safe man, either to himself or to others. A one-sided development always produces a one-sided mind, often not capable of recognising truth even in the one department to which it has devoted itself. This is as true of religion as of any other pursuit. Religion has no right to be the whole of a man's occupation. Call it the *centre*, from which all flows, or the *circumference*, which binds all together,—it is still but a part of man's complex nature. The attempt to make it the whole, deforms the character. This is what we read in history: this is what we see in the world around us.

The noble SAVONAROLA, whom one of the infallible Popes burnt, and whose statue is only now to take its true place in Rome among the greatest men of Italy,—though pure in heart, and single in purpose,—was yet so warped by his priestly life, that he could not discern truth from falsehood, either in the Church, whose rottenness he knew so well, or in the visions to which his mediumistic capacity made him subject.

The fiery and earnest LUTHER—than whom no one had better reason to cast behind him the dialectics of his day—could never entirely free himself from the effects of his early life in the Church, and therefore was obliged to adopt the precious nonsense of Consubstantiation, in order to satisfy his own conscience. Yet he felt no stings in that diseased organ, when he justified a *useful* princely patron in having two wives at once—quite as an exceptional indulgence, however!

We do not find in the clergy any characteristic quality or faculty which places them above other men leading active lives. We do not find them endowed with any superior mental power; nor are they better, wiser, or more practical than other men.

Yet there is a characteristic which the unbiassed judgment can hardly fail to discern in all of them, from the highest to the lowest—from men like FENELON and ARNOLD, down to those who are notorious in evil. Amid such great variety of characters, this quality is to be

found so nearly without exception, that it may fairly be considered as the *result* or invariable tendency of clerical pursuits.

It is *not* strict honesty—It is *not* unbiassed fairness; It is, in their best men a disposition to view things as they ought to be, according to some preconceived system—rather than accept them *as they are*. It is a morbid disingenuousness, that, unknown to themselves, colours and perverts all they *do* or *say* or *think*. It makes them tyrannical masters, unfair judges, and verbal tricksters. Their whole practice trains them to deal with words—not as the true signs of true ideas, but as the juggler deals with the cup and ball; and the perceptive faculties suffer most in those who most entirely surrender themselves to the crippling process of theological study. I doubt much whether any man whose mind has once received the warp of a clerical training can ever in this life regain that fearless mental straightforwardness which is one of the high qualities we should all strive after. Certainly, he enters into the race for this prize *heavily weighted*, as compared with other men.

Is it, then, likely that more truth will be given to these men than others; or is it to them that we should go for a fair, well-balanced opinion on the merits of any case? Are they fitted, more than other men, to be our trusted guides in any direction? *One would hardly think so!*

For what good purpose, then, does such an order of men exist among us? What great *use* are they performing, that justifies the expenditure of so much time, and money, and energy? What are they doing for mankind, in these our times?

Many will be ready to exclaim at once: “Doing!—why they are christianizing the savage nations of the earth; they are teaching our youth the truths of God; they are building hospitals and founding charities all over the land; they are visiting the sick, they are keeping the poor, they are comforting the dying.”

If this is really so—if the facts will bear these statements out—then the clergy are indeed a part of the army of the Most High on earth. But the statements alone are nothing; facts only will show the truth. Go, then,—go see for yourselves, if they are really the poor man's friends; if they really strengthen his hands for his daily work, and stand between him and all sorts of oppression. Go, see if the charities they found, are really charities—recognising no claim but that of suffering. Go, see if in their schools they *dare* to teach the plain unvarnished truth, as all men know it. Go, watch in those domestic circles where the influence of the clergy rules, and see if it is all for good. Stand, too, beside the death-beds, and listen to the cant of the clergy; and judge whether any free and thinking mind could find comfort in the dread God they picture. Comforting the dying! Say, rather, *frightening them out of their wits!*

It is true that they are preaching to the savage nations, and have been doing so for these hundreds of years; but it is very doubtful whether they are converting the heathen. It is certain that one of the most enlightened heathens of our time, the Hindoo CHUNDER SEN, after lending an open ear to every Christian preacher that wished to teach him, has deliberately decided that it is best to remain *unconverted*.

True, among merely savage nations—as in the islands of the Pacific and in Southern Africa—the influence of the clergy has been great: the civilized man is always stronger than the savage. But the greatest Missionary of our time, Dr. LIVINGSTONE, and the most successful missionaries of any times, the *Jesuits* and *Franciscans*, have recorded their testimony in history, that it is as a *civilizer* that the missionary should go, in order to be useful—rather than as a priest. Our men of steadfast integrity, and our virtuous women following their husbands, and taking the influence of *home* into every clime: these may make the heathen christian and the savage civilized—but our priests alone will never do it.

Again, it is sometimes said that the clergy are teaching the truths of God to our youth,—that the *religious* instruction of the young should, of course, be in the hands of the clergy. Truth—and all truth is God's—comes

into the word in a gradually increasing stream. At first a little beck, that grows into a mighty river—a pathway for the nations. Now, say who are they who have fed this little beck with tributary streams; who have cleared up the muddled fountain of doubtful knowledge, and sweetened the bitter waters of imperfect experience? And who are they who have choked and dammed the streams, and would have dried up the water courses? On which side have the clergy stood? With those who cried—"Ho! everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters?" Or with those who would fain say to the spirit of man—"Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further?"

What are the "truths" they teach? That man shall not progress—at least, not the highest and holiest part of him; that God is not a God of love, but a God of wrath and vengeance; that man is not his child, but his offending slave; that a certain set of men—varying according to varying creeds—are the sheep, and the rest of mankind are the goats. These are some of the "truths" the clergy teach.

Let us hear something of their deeds. Who was it crucified Jesus? Was it not the Clergy—the Orthodox Clergy of the day? Who was it that distracted the early Christian Church by their avarice and lust of power, till it seems almost a miracle that it survived these first ages of its infancy? Was it not the Clergy? Who set on foot the massacres of the Waldenses and the Albigenses? Who drove out Luther from their midst, and burnt the Protestants? And when their turn came, who were the Protestants that persecuted the Catholics? Who hunted the Quakers and the Baptists into dungeons and wildernesses? Who persecuted Galileo for impiety, when he first announced some of the great truths of Astronomy? And who, even in our enlightened times, would have hooted *Geology* from the list of the sciences? Was it not the Clergy, the Clergy, and always the Clergy? And this not because they were naturally worse men than others, but simply because such is the influence of the profession, *whatever the creed*.

Time was when, according to received ideas, no Government was staple and secure, without a king. Now, the freest and most vigorous nations have either no sovereign, or one little more than in name, and recognize self-government as the highest form of national existence. Time was when marriage was no better than legalised concubinage, and concubinage itself was held to be lawful and right—not injurious to the State, and not degrading in its influence. Time was when, among all nations, the father possessed the right of life and death over his children—they were his, body and soul, and he might do as he pleased with his own.

Now these ideas of the ancient world have passed away, or linger only among the dead old nations of the earth. With them have passed away the institutions to which they gave birth, and which were their fit expression—*despotism, polygamy, and slavery*. Is it better or worse since then? Have men lost or gained by this passing away of what was once held to be the highest and divinest truth.

Time was, too, when man's only idea of worship was sacrifice—bloodshed or offerings made to appease an offended deity—to avert some fate or calamity. To such worship as this the office of the priesthood was a necessity. And, in so far as men still cling to this dark old notion of appeasing an offended deity, so far are the priesthood still a *necessary evil*—a broken reed for the weak to lean upon. This is why the teaching of the Clergy, of all sects and creeds, always forms in man, more or less distinctly, this notion of the Deity, and this sacrificial notion of worship. Their *existence* depends upon it. When *this* is gone into the tomb of the dead and buried past, the *work of the clergy is done*—THEY, TOO, MUST PASS AWAY!

Surely, We have advanced beyond this. Surely it is a higher and a wiser thought to look on the relation between ourselves and our God as better represented by the relation of father and child than by anything else in nature. And if He is in any sense our Father, what need of any one between us and Him? What need of a priesthood offering prayers for a trembling people, who dare not themselves address their Father? No! There

must be no more anyone to stand between us and Him! No threatening figure—no taskmaster holding the whip and chain,—saying: "Ye are idle, ye are idle! There shall no straw be given you; yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks!" There must be no more orders and hierarchies—no more saints and priests—no more sanctified and elect between God and us lest we come too near Him, and He destroy us.

If we have indeed, with many struggles and much suffering, reached *freedom* in religion, let us see to it that we keep it:—that we let not this Upas-tree of priestliness spring up among us again—no, not in any form, nor under any name! Let neither priest nor missionary, medium, spirit, nor angel, come between us and our Father; for into each man's own heart must come the highest revelation he can receive. Let us not vainly imagine that we are in *no danger*. So long as there is superstition and weakness in the world—so long as the majority of men do not habitually think for themselves—so long as there is self-seeking and the love of rule in the heart of man—we are in *danger*.

No people can be in greater danger than those among whom there is even the mere possibility of a priesthood arising, basing their claims to authority upon direct communication with higher beings than ourselves. That there is such a possibility is plainly shown by the career of the well-known medium "Thomas Lake Harris," once a free Progressive Spiritualist, now the high priest of a community, whose members claim to be endowed with faculties, *even with senses*, superior to those of other human beings! Nor need we look so far away from home, to see the possibility of men arising among ourselves, who assert that they are favoured with a light brighter than human reason. Only by this human reason—by its free and constant exercise—can we hope to save ourselves from this great danger.

The Shakers—an enthusiastic but most practical people in America, of whom you may have heard—are occasionally aroused from the even tenor of their busy lives, by an alarm that the devil is loose among them. Forth comes every man that loves peace, and would see good days—and not every man only, but every woman, too. The workshops are forsaken, their produce-packing houses are closed, the villages are emptied. Over field and fence—up hill and down dale—over rocks and rivers—the whole community rush headlong, guided by some strange instinct, inscrutable to a looker-on. The wild chase lasts sometimes for hours, till the poor hunted fiend usually takes refuge on the top of some mountain, where he can be followed only by a vigorous few. There, after proper struggles, he is duly disposed of, and a large stone is rolled over him, to keep him quiet.

So let us watch for and hunt out from among us, the evil thing of *Priestcraft*, under whatever smiling mask it hides its hideous face. Let us be free in very truth. Let there be no wrangling among us for the first place. Do we not stand all alike before the face of our Father? Let the sole bond of our union be *our common needs*; the sole source of our dignities be *personal character*; and never let the worth and value of our common humanity be lost sight of in individual hero worship. Let there be no treachery, no pious fraud among us; no striving, no censuring, no silencing this one, nor exalting that one. Let us not seek to lead others, nor be willing to be led ourselves by anything but the Divine light within us—which, shining ever brighter unto the perfect day, is itself the surest evidence that doubtless "God IS our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not."

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* states that the Liberal or Rationalist party in the Protestant National Church at Geneva has obtained a great victory over its opponents. Rationalism of the present order has been victorious in the ancient stronghold of Calvinism. One of the Liberal pastors is reported to have declared in the conference that the essence of Liberal Christianity consisted in suppressing the belief in a supernatural order. The same gentleman, M. Congnard, said he did not believe one syllable of the Bible, that he and his *confrères* had abolished hell in order to inaugurate a religion of pure love. The liberal party has now the majority in the consistory.

MY DREAM.

The following extract from the letter of a friend is offered as one more example of the cloud of evidence that is ever gathering in favour of Spiritualism. The writer is a lady of five or six-and-twenty, of healthy physique, of active habits, and of very cheerful disposition. Her education has been of a very decidedly liberal turn, not to say sceptical, and there is one mode of religious thought to which she early imbibed strong prejudice—Spiritualism. And I am perfectly certain that at the time the following experience occurred to her she had never read either Andrew Jackson Davis or any other spiritualistic literature. The incident is narrated in her own words:—

"I shall make no more apologies for telling you my dream. I wish I had 'the pen of a ready writer' that it might bring to your heart the strength and calmness it brought to mine. I call it advisedly my dream. Other people have dreams often; some nightly; some whenever they close their eyes even for an afternoon nap; some whenever they are sick or sad, or unusually excited in any way. Now, I never dream. By never, I mean that it has not happened to me more than once or twice in my whole life.

I slept, but did not know it, for never were the things of this earth plainer to my senses than they were then. Parents, friends, home, were around me: I saw, I heard, I touched with as much certainty as ever I did. The beautiful summer sunshine lit up the thousand familiar objects just as it had done through so many other happy summer days. I was as conscious of the sweet scent of the flowers as ever; the forms and faces of my friends were as distinct as ever. And their inner life, their thoughts, emotions, even their passing impulses not developed into acts, were as plain to me as, when stimulated by some strong excitement, mind answers to mind without the aid of spoken words.

I had a sense of rapturous repose as if the weariness of life were gone for ever; and I wanted to tell some dear friend of this new and blissful feeling. Every familiar face around me had a weary look, some were sad, and all were grave. If they could once feel as I felt they would be so rested that they would never be tired again. Could I even describe to them this delightful state those clouds might pass away from their care-marked brows, and those anxious, uneasy hearts might beat again with healthy impulses.

"I asked what troubled them so much, but no one answered me. I moved among them, I smiled upon them, I touched them, I called them by their dear old household names,—but no one noticed me. I moved from the fresh outer air down the large hall towards the drawing-room door, for something in there seemed to attract them all. The hall was crowded with faces that I knew; yet no one spoke to me or gave me an answering look of recognition. I passed among them without an effort. Swift as thought I stood at the threshold of the well-known room, and then—I paused, and let one by one go by me, for a wonder had seized me that I could scarcely tell to myself.

"This was a funeral! Whose?

"I asked a clergyman who passed near me. He walked on without glancing at me.

"Our old physician came along; I stretched my hands towards him, yet did not seem to reach him. I called him. The keen ear that used to detect the slightest change in my voice was now deaf to my loudest tones. The piercing eye that had so often made me feel that he saw into my very being, now saw me no more than I saw yesterday's sunshine.

"More and more I wondered. I looked at my hands; I touched my face; I drew down a curl of my hair and looked at it. It was all as usual. My voice was my own voice, my form my own form.

"Then some one said to me—not one of those, but some other one—'Go in and look at the body you have left.' 'Is this allowed?' I said. 'Not always, but to you it is; go in, fear not; you are not alone; we are with you.'

"Then I leaned on that other one, and we went in together.

"Within they were weeping, some bitterly, some more quietly; otherwise everything was hushed and silent. One end of the room was almost filled with flowering shrubs. Among them, slightly raised, stood a coffin—my coffin—the coffin where I lay!

"I lay? Oh, false! Oh, folly. I never lay there,—never for a single instant. I, freer, happier than I ever was before:—I, not less myself, but more myself than ever, passed up the room with my companion, and stood and looked upon the wax-like form in which I had lived. I saw it without feeling or emotion of any kind. I felt only a vague surprise that there should be mourning over that cast off and useless thing. Then came a deep earnest wish to speak to the mourners, to tell them I was there, well, happy, living, and to bid them not thus needlessly to suffer, like little children weeping over their broken toy, and shutting their ignorant eyes to the better thing that is given in its place. But they did not see me or hear me. I could not reach them, though they were so near me.

"Then I asked those other ones to whom I could speak and be understood, if they would not help me to comfort them. They smiled as if in sympathy. 'By-and-bye we will comfort them, but now we must wait. We are further from them than you. You shall comfort them first. Be patient. Wait.

"Then I saw one coming in at the door: it was the clergyman I have spoken of. His face expressed much kindness and sympathy, but it had a puzzled look. It was as plain to me as words could have made it, that he had a message to deliver, which he did but partly understand. It was on his lips, but he did not feel its truth in his heart: therefore his heart sought gropingly around for words to express the but dimly seen idea. He took his place, but paused before he began the customary service, and his thoughts were as plain to me as a printed book. He had a duty to perform; as such he felt it; as such he was resolved to perform it. But it required him to step out of the beaten path of ceremony to forsake the customary expression of ordinary feelings and strike upon a new key-note. This is always hard for men of his profession to do, hardest of all when it is the expression of a feeling not entirely their own. Therefore he hesitated; he did not hesitate to do it, but how to do it, that was the question. He looked upon the face of the corpse, but that did not seem to help him. He looked at the weeping friends, and he seemed still more troubled.

"With a violent effort, and only when the pause was becoming embarrassing, he began the service. The prayers were said; the beautiful hymn, 'Come ye disconsolate,' was sung, and no one joined in it more heartily and happily than I and those others that were with me. Then again the minister paused; he still had something he must say. At last he spoke, as if the words were wrenched from him.

"'We cannot better conclude these services,' he said, 'than by informing you that it was our deceased friend's last and most earnest wish that her funeral sermon should be preached from the text, "Rejoice, and again I say unto you rejoice!" It was this-rejoicing she wished for at her funeral, not your tears. That you should rejoice—rejoice that one more free and happy spirit has attained to its deliverance. That one more weary human being has reached the goal of life. That one more of our tried and tempted race has entered into life everlasting. That for her, weariness, and struggle, and discord are over. That she has gone to her own place. She is now gathering the very fruits of life. The season of toil is over, the time of fruition is begun. Fruition which she went to meet as fearlessly as a child goes to sleep in its mother's arms. Even as you hope, so shall it be unto you. Let, then, all tears be dried and all mourning cease, for she is satisfied, aye, more than satisfied.'

"This and much more like it did he speak, growing eloquent with the truth he uttered, until he almost spoke my very thoughts, as if he knew I stood beside him, a freed and happy spirit.

"When all tears were dried, and every head was raised, and each face was beaming with a joy more or less bright, as the truths he spoke dawned more or less

fully upon them, then I felt quite content to leave them all, for I could not talk with them; or rather, I could talk, but they could not hear me. I wanted to go away: away with those other dear ones who looked so tenderly upon me. Were they not mine, and was I not theirs, and what earthly love was ever like the new love I felt for them, and which they gave me back a hundredfold? 'Come,' I said, putting my hands in theirs, 'come, we have done all we can do here, take me home with you.' 'A little longer yet, beloved,' they answered, 'a little longer yet,' and they led me away. We were among flowers, and warm sunshine, and shady trees, and hanging fruit. And they took me in their arms and looked into my face more tenderly than mothers look upon their first-born, and a sweet, deep sleep fell upon me.

"When I awoke, the world and my day's work were still before me, but from that hour I have had no fear of death.

JUDGE EDMOND'S VIEWS IN GENERAL.

THE *Religio Philosophical Journal* of February 23rd contains a letter from a gentleman in Edinburgh to Judge Edmonds, asking many questions in reference to Spiritualism, and the Judge's experiences thereon, also the Judge's reply. The correspondence, though interesting, is too voluminous for us to publish, but as an appendix to his letter, the Judge gives the following, which we reprint:—

Very early in my investigation into the phenomena of spiritual intercourse I imbibed the idea that its great end and aim was to reveal to us what was the life into which we were to pass from this earth-life, and in what was to be found its great blessing to mankind. About that time it was that I said to one of the archbishops of this country, that, if it was true, it was destined to overthrow all the ideas or conceptions of the future life which modern Christianity was teaching, and to substitute something natural and comprehensible in place of the strange, mysterious, supernatural existence which that religion was describing.

Aware how deep seated and wide-spread was this erroneous conception of the future throughout all Christendom, and knowing how slow a process it ever had been to change in the masses the notions which ages had sanctified by their adoption, I did not dream that I should live to see the day when this grand result should be attained.

I knew that the first step in the work would be to convince the world of the actuality of the intercourse, and that that, of itself, would be a tremendous task, because it would have to contend with our fear of ghosts, our abhorrence of witchcraft, our contempt for astrology, the superstitions of theology, and the wide spread infidelity which had ranged the majority of all Christendom in the ranks of those who doubted, if they did not actually disbelieve in the existence of any life beyond this. And it was very evident that to bring that about would require thousands of manifestations and much time—time not only for their reception, in the first instance, but for their diffusion abroad among men. I readily saw, therefore, that our first publications must be devoted to the manifestations, in the chief degree, if not exclusively; and I did not suppose that the time would arrive, in my days upon the earth, when our spiritual literature would extend beyond the first step, and occupy itself with the grander objects of this extraordinary movement. I knew that it would come in due time; but, judging from the history of the past ages, and the progress of former reforms in religion I supposed that decades, if not centuries, would be necessary for the attainment of that end.

I had frequent conferences upon the subject with the spirits who seemed to have the control and direction of the movement, and I found them much more sanguine than I was as to the rapidity of the effect upon the minds of men; and therefore it was, that after some ten or twelve years' operations with the physical manifestations—sometimes in most extraordinary forms—they informed me of their intention to withdraw them in a great measure, and thenceforth to direct their

attention rather to the mental manifestations; and they gave as their reason for so doing, that those manifestations were rather tending to pander to the love of the marvellous than to produce that conviction of the reality of an intercourse with the Spirit World, which lay at the very foundation of the intended revelation of what that future was.

Hence it has been—in this country, at least—that, for the last six or eight years, the intercourse has been and is now directed chiefly to the intellect and the emotions rather than, as formerly, to the senses; the object being to convince the reason of the possibility and even the probability of an intercourse with the unseen world, and to satisfy the inquirer that his senses were bearing true testimony to his understanding.

Still, I thought that so much time would be required even for this second stage of the movement, that I should not live to see much done toward the final object in view. I rejoice, however, beyond description, to find that I was mistaken, and to perceive that, even in my day, our literature is rapidly assuming the form originally designed for it; and my object now is to call the attention of Spiritualists to the fact.

I have observed all the way through, from the very first advent of the manifestations among us, and even when they assumed their most physical form, that every once in a while something would be said calculated to give us some idea—some faint notion of the nature of the future; and I at one time hoped that I might gather together the scattered fragments from the broad field over which they were flung, and present them as a whole to my fellow-men. But I was told that the time had not yet come for the work, and I fully realized my own incapacity for its proper performance.

There was another consideration impressed upon me throughout, which was this: The spirits who were engaged in this work told me at an early day that they were determined now to avoid the error which had been fallen into eighteen hundred years ago, and would not now, as in those days, concentrate all their powers in one person, so as, by their marvelous character, to induce an uninstructed age to worship man instead of God; and they should therefore diffuse those powers among many people, and broadcast all over the world; and in order to avoid the formation of sects, which had for ages been a curse to mankind, they would now take care that no one person should under any circumstances, have an undue pre-eminence over his fellows in the work, and thereby give to one mind a rule over many.

I have, therefore, waited patiently and watched narrowly for the progress of events—for the approach of the anticipated result; and it seems to me that its advent is now upon us. Four works have lately been published, which seems to me to be significant thereof. I do not mean that there are only four among the great number of spiritual books, but there are four whose most distinctive character is in that direction.

The first one is Sweet's "Future Life," published by Wm. White & Co., Boston, early in 1869, and now gone to its second edition. It is devoted entirely to accounts of what is the "Future Life," and to a detail of the experience of many who have entered it.

Among those whose experience is thus given are Mrs. Hemans, Margaret Fuller, Calhoun, Daniel Webster, Voltaire, Woolsey, Richelieu, the Mechanic, the Preacher, the Drunkard, the Orphan Boy, the Man of Ease and Fashion, the Self-satisfied, the Cynic, the Slave, the Queen, the Miser, the Erring One, the Idler, the Beggar, the Skeptic, the Convict, the Dying Girl, the Foolish Mother, the Disobedient Son.

All of these persons profess to give an account of their entrance into the "Future Life," and what they then and afterward found it to be; and when we consider that there is no other mode conceivable by us of our receiving the information, except from those who have gone there, I am sure I do not overvalue the importance of the Revelation.

The second work to which I refer is "Strange Visitors," by a Clairvoyant—published by Carlton in 1869; republished by Wm. White & Co., Boston, in 1871. It contains communications of a literary character from Henry J. Raymond, Margaret Fuller, Haw-

thorne, Irving, Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë, Mrs. Browning, N. P. Willis, Frederika Bremer; on science, from Prof. Olmstead, Humboldt, Sir David Brewster, Buckle, Prof. Mitchell and Dr. John W. Francis; on dramatic topics, from the Elder Booth and Burton; on art, from Charles L. Elliott, Gilbert Stewart; on theology, from Archbishop Hughes and Lyman Beecher, Prof. Bush and John Wesley; and on government, from Bonaparte and Edward Everett

These various topics are touched upon, not merely as they are on the earth, but also as they are found to exist in the life beyond the grave, and some of the articles are intensely interesting

Thus, as to the Drama, Booth says: "The gift of speaking, and of representing individualities separate from our own identity, is a spiritual gift decidedly; and with us theatres and amphitheatres are as numerous as churches are with you."

As to theology, Wesley, speaking of the progress of Spiritualism, says: "Then the primitive Church of Christ will be revived again upon earth, simple and unostentatious; its creed will be the creed of Jesus Christ—the brotherhood of man and the love of God for his children." This creed, you perceive, embraces the whole of the Spiritualistic faith, which is causing these great changes throughout the Church of Christ on earth."

"Lyman Beecher, after declaring that experience in spirit-life had caused him to change his opinions, adds: "I see now that Beecher, Spurgeon, and a vast host of others, are teaching human souls the great truths which will fit them for life hereafter. I have done now with endeavoring to solve improbable problems, and with simple faith in man's efforts for his own progression I give my testimony as to the uses of the Sabbath, and the advantages of religion in advancing their progress and in preparing the spirit for its future home."

Professor Bush declares that "The soul passes through many stages of existence in the process of refinement. The next state of existence to the material I term the spiritual and the one beyond that the celestial, and beyond that, the seraphic."

With us the transmigration is not veiled in darkness and mystery, as with you. We can see the spirit emerge from its old casement more ethereal than ourselves, but still visible, and we can hold communion with it."

Everett says, as to government: "An unlimited monarchy is not known in the Spirit World." "The one-man power is incompatible with spiritual laws." "In the government of the Spirit World every man can rise, and become for a space of time, the patriarchal dictator of a republic." "The prevailing form of our republic differs from that of the American republic in many particulars. Our term of office is shorter than with you; our directors are our fathers." The inhabitants of the Spirit World are divided and sub-divided into associations or bodies, which, in your world, would be termed nations and states." "The emperor or dictator is chosen by the people," etc., etc.

The third work to which I desire to direct attention, is the "Arcana of Spiritualism," by Hudson Tuttle, published in 1870

This work is professedly that of communing spirits. The writer says he is but an amanuensis, writing that which is revealed to him, and claims to have "faithfully, carefully and conscientiously presented his impressions as they have been given to him by his masters, the invisible spirits."

The work commences with a general statement of principles, intensely interesting, and giving a fair and full exposition of what Spiritualism claims to be. For instance, it says: "Man is a duality—a physical structure and a spirit. The spirit is an organized form, evolved by and out of the physical body, having corresponding organs and developments."

"This spiritual being is immortal."

"Death is the separation of this duality, and effects no change in the spirit, morally or intellectually."

"The spirit holds the same relations to the Spirit World that man holds to physical nature."

"The spirit there, as here, works out its own salvation, receiving the reward of well-doing, and suffering for wrongful action."

"Salvation is attainable only through growth."

"There is no arbitrary law, final judgment, or atonement for wrong, except through the suffering of the guilty."

"The knowledge, attainment and experience of the earth-life, form the basis of the spirit-life"

"Progressive evolution of intellectual and moral power, is the endless destiny of individual spirits."

The spirits are often near those they love, and strive to warn, protect and influence them."

"Their influence may be for evil, as well as for good."

"Communications from spirits must, then, be fallible, partaking of the nature of their source."

"Spiritualism encourages the loftiest spiritual aspirations, energizes the soul by presenting only exalted motives, prompts to highest endeavors, and inculcates noble self-reliance. It frees man from the bondage of 'authority' of book or creed. Its only authority is truth—its interpreter, reason."

"It seeks for a whole and complete cultivation of man—physically, morally and intellectually."

It is to the elucidation of these principles that this work—a volume of 452 pages—is directed. It is—all of it—well worth the perusal, and particularly its seventeenth chapter, treating of "The Spirits' Home."

There is still another work to notice in this connection, viz., "Real Life in the Spiritland," given through Mrs. Maria M. King, and published by Wm. White & Co., in 1870. Vol. I.

In this work is given, among other things, the experience in the spirit-life of one who died from starvation in prison, in the seventeenth century; and of a mother, who was herself a slave, married to a slave who was sold away from her, and who had given birth to three children, who also were slaves; an account of the condition and education of children in the Spirit World; "a chapter in the life of a poet," looking marvelously like an autobiography of Shelley; the pauper's resurrection; the condition of a depraved spirit, of the inebriate, the gambler and the murderer; of a miser, smarting under the reflection of the good he had left undone, from his sordid love of gold; of a mother who, by her own unworthiness, was separated from her child; and an account of the mode of instruction designed to fit the spirit for an upward progression, "no means being left untried to aid the progress of the lower grade of spirits, who are so emphatically the dependents of the higher." All calculated to show how infinite is the variety of spirit-life, and yet how consonant it all is at once with our instincts and our reason.

In calling attention to these works, I repeat that I do not mean to be understood as implying that they are the only ones devoted to this topic, or that they are the best yet given to the public. I am aware of others whose teachings on the same subject are as valuable. In my own two volumes, published seventeen years ago, there is much kindred matter, and probably there is no spiritual work that does not contain more or less of it. But what I mean to say is, that I rejoice to see thus begun the work of concentrating within accessible limits the revelations that are being made to us of the immortal life beyond the grave, and my object is to point out to the inquiring minds that are stirring all around us, where they can most readily approach such concentration.

I am fully aware how vast is the quantity of such revelations already made to man from the Spirit World—some it is only resulting in the memory of the recipients; but much, very much of it already reduced to writing, and prepared for preservation and distribution to the world. Whether it will, like the Jewish Bible or the Christian's Testament, ever be concentrated into a single work, can not now well be divined. But we may well entertain the hope—nay, the firm conviction—that if that ever does come to pass, the book will never be received as "authority," binding man to a belief that he can not comprehend, but as an appeal to his head and his heart, to be received or rejected as the intellect or conscience may direct.

MELBOURNE PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

THE election of officers for the ensuing year took place at the ordinary session of the Lyceum at the Masonic Hall on Tuesday, May 4th. Most of the officers were elected without opposition, the only competition being for the Conductorship and three Group leaderships. The following are the officers elected:—

Conductor, Mr. W. H. Terry.

Guardian of Groups, Mrs. M. Loudon.

Secretary, Mr. G. A. Stow.

Librarian, Mr. Bonney, Junr.

Guards, Messrs. Williams and Debney: Misses Armstrong and Jaffray.

Leaders:—Messrs. Manns, Clay, Hutchens, Arthur, Yeates, Wilson, J. Sanders, Mrs. Black, Mrs. Syme, Miss Hazelden, Miss S. Hazelden.

Some of the recent sessions have been interrupted by discussions on the propriety of adopting a constitution, but by general consent all business matters will in future be conducted at special meetings.

At the special meeting held May 25th the Constitution in the "Lyceum Guide" was adopted, with a slight amendment in Article VIII, in accordance with the above.

SPIRITUALISTIC PHENOMENA.

AND THE DEDUCTIONS DRAWN THEREFROM. A LECTURE DELIVERED ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 19TH, 1873, AT APOLLO HALL, NEW YORK, BY THOMAS GALES FORSTER.

(Abridged.)

Spiritualistic truth may be compared to the water flowing from beautiful rivulets and assuming the shape of the vessels into which it flows. It is adapted to the mind receiving it. According to an ancient allegory, a certain kind of wine was made which gave life to the worthy and death to the unworthy. This illustrates the divine beauties of Spiritualism, conveying supreme happiness to some, admiration of outside phenomena to others, while still others can see nothing but nonsense. Much distress is manifested by some on account of the want of appreciation of these latter. The more advanced thinkers know that spasmodic changes in public opinion are unnatural and unhealthy. Time and gradual reform are beautiful. In the old Brahminical religion they had a trinity, Brahma being the creative power, Vishnu the preserving power, and Siva the destroying power. The same general idea of incarnation was carried out by the Jews, Moses the Prophet, and Jesus being considered divine. To the Jews, Moses standing alone and leading them from the land of bondage, must have seemed inspired. Sublimely beautiful must Jesus have appeared when he promulgated his noble precepts, and then dared to die for them. The grand philosophy of Spiritualism derivable from its phenomena, carries this principle of incarnation still further. All men are divine. Wherever a beautiful form of thought is brought out, wherever man is raised up to a nobler manhood, there is the saviour of the people.

Holiness of purpose constitutes the divinity. The great facts of Spiritualism exist in various forms. Some minds are so attuned that they early learn to come in rapport with the Spirit of the Universe, getting lofty conceptions of Deity and of all the wonderful beauties around them. This great truth grew apace and ere it was twelve years old, confounded the doctors, and old Theology began to lose hold on the people. The raps told of the glories of the blessed abode where the loved ones had gone. In lieu of the terrible nightmare engendered by the doctrines of total depravity, endless hell and other monstrous dogmas, Heaven was held up as our home, not our prison, and God our Father, not our king. The great facts of spiritual communion have been established in the minds of millions and their

hearts are beating with a holy joy that nothing on earth can take away. They have found peace and a beautiful philosophy, which, in common with the Nazarene, teach that man is greater than institutions or oppressive hierarchies, and bids him to work out these truths in every-day life. They have found a religion that will redeem mankind and shine out far more brilliantly than all the other faiths in the world. Its mediums are listening to utterances nobler than any of the skeletons of the past. It is demonstrating from nature that amid all the glories of things, the infinite eye has not neglected the immortal and intelligent spirit of man which fortells its own greatness. Thus the Spiritualist has found in this system of science, philosophy and religion, something so ennobling, that all nature has grown more beautiful.

The moon to which old ocean waves, the stars on their inaccessible heights, the illimitable heavens, speaking of something beyond earthly glories, all have an especial revelation to the Spiritualist. But suppose these phenomena to be impossible as coming from spirits as many of the pulpit and press assert, still there is something wonderful in them and the delusion is the most gigantic of any ever known. Ridicule has too frequently blunted truth, but even this has failed to keep this cause back.

Nothing in the history of the world has been so laughed at as these phenomena, and yet they can not be put down. They are so fascinating that vast multitudes, including some of the best minds of the age, have become converts. The report of the Catholics at Baltimore, after having canvassed the religious opinion of the country, places the Spiritualists of the United States at eleven millions, and the mediums at sixty thousand. This alone is sufficiently good if they have been led to receive these happyfying beliefs. The Spiritualist can afford to be laughed at, to be charged with chicanery and fraud, but they should never let their anger rise. Their enemies, perhaps from constitutional defects, may be unable to see the truth.

Why should there be such distress among some when there are charges of fraud sometimes made against mediums. The very fact that there are some cheats and counterfeits, show, there is a genuine fact to imitate. Greenbacks are counterfeited only because they have genuine value.

Spiritualism can afford to have its army of charlatans hanging on to its skirts. They can not destroy it. Sunken deep, damnably down in the abyss of degradation must a human soul be who can cheat in so holy a cause. Instead of trying to apologize for what has taken place at any time, look to the glorious future and let the dead past take care of itself. Spiritualism can bear with the slanders and the imperfections of some of its professors. Its pathway has been upward. Never since the star of Bethlehem that led the wise men of the East, has a cause been so misrepresented. And yet it lives, is mightier than ever and shall live for ever. (Applause.)—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

DUNEDIN.

A meeting of the Society for the Investigation of Spiritualism was held yesterday evening, in the lower hall of the Athenæum, the President (Mr. T. Redmayne) in the chair. There were only between twenty and thirty persons present. The Chairman stated that the time for which the Society had been called into existence being about to expire, it would be necessary to decide whether it should be revived under a new name. He read a report, from which it appeared that the Society had received a total amount of £223 7s. 7d. Auditors were appointed, and after a lengthy discussion, in the course of which the transactions of the last year were reviewed, it was resolved that the meeting be adjourned to Friday, the 9th of May. The Chairman stated that Mr. Peebles informed him that he would advise certain lecturers and test mediums to visit Australia and New Zealand, and therefore it would be necessary to keep up an organisation. It was the general impression that a Society of Progressive Spiritualists should be formed.—*Otago Daily Times*, April 26th, 1873.

SEANCES AT MR. HENRY COOK'S.

We have occasionally alluded to the wonderful manifestations that occur in London through the mediumship of Miss Florence Cook. By the spiritualistic journals received last mail we find that she too has (in the presence of an active and determined sceptic) had an unsuccessful seance, or what the press here would call an exposure! That is, that the manifestations which did occur might have been produced by human agency. Several test seances were held subsequently, the results of which were particularly satisfactory, and fully establish the genuineness of Miss Cook's mediumship. We subjoin one, which is a fair sample of the whole:—

"This evening, February 12th, 1873, we, the undersigned, were present at a seance at the house of Mr. Henry Cook, of Hackney, Miss Florence Cook being the medium. Mr. Dunphy, Mr. Blackburn, and Mr. Mankiewicz searched the cabinet, and removed everything from it but a loose piece of carpet and a child's chair, the height of the seat of which was 10½ inches, and of the back rail 14½ inches from the floor. When Miss Cook entered the cabinet, Mrs. Mankiewicz, at her request, felt her dress all over, and turned out her pockets, to be sure she had nothing bulky about her. A piece of string was then tied quite tightly around her waist, with three knots, which were sealed with three different signet rings brought by the visitors. Her hands were tied together tightly with a handkerchief by Mr. Mankiewicz, and the knots sealed with a signet ring. The end of the waist string was tied to a chair outside the cabinet, and the knot on the chair sealed. Mr. Blackburn attended to the amount of slack string allowed, and it was less than three inches.

The instant the door was closed two dark hands appeared at the opening, and pulled the curtains about, not one second having elapsed since the witnesses lost sight of the medium. Instantly also showers of raps came upon all parts of the door.

In about ten minutes the first face came. It was a man's face, dark and young, with no whiskers.

Five minutes later another man came, elderly in appearance, with a bushy black beard. By raps he called himself "Alphonse," and said he often manifested at Miss Kislinsky's seances. While this face was at the opening Miss Cook held a quiet conversation with the visitors outside, and her voice could be heard coming from the lower part of the cabinet, while this and other faces came.

Hands came to the opening, raps asked for paper and pencil, and the hands wrote the following message from Katie before the eyes of the whole company, "I will not show my face again, because of the trouble it has been to the medium."

Katie then asked for string, and shortly afterwards requested that the doors should be opened. Miss Cook was found tied tightly round the neck with the string, the knots being at the back of her neck; the string was afterwards passed round the rail of the chair at the back and tied there.

It was then ascertained that two gold finger rings, which Mr. Dunphy had put through the aperture to Katie, had been passed through the gold wires which Miss Cook wore in her ears, thus making pendants of them.

When Miss Cook came out of the cabinet, Mr. Mankiewicz took both her hands and led her upstairs to the door of a room, which she entered with Mrs. Piercy and Mrs. Corner, who took off her clothes and searched them, and found nothing whatever concealed in the medium's clothes. Mr. Dunphy, Mr. Blackburn, and others examined the cabinet directly she left it, and found nothing in it but the chair and the piece of carpet.

All the seals were unbroken and intact when the cabinet was opened. There were no joints or knots of any kind in the string but those which the visitors had made and sealed.

CHARLES BLACKBURN, Parkfield, Didsbury, near Manchester.

FREDK. PIERCY, 12, Stock Orchard-villas, Holloway.

JAMES MANKIEWICZ, 37, Upper Bedford-place, Russell-square.

AMELIA CORNER, 3, St. Thomas-square, Hackney.

A. PIERCY, 12, Stock Orchard-villas, Holloway.

HENRY M. DUNPHY, 3, Essex-court, Temple.

ADA MANKIEWICZ, 37, Upper Bedford-place, Russell-square.

WILLIAM H. HARRISON, Chaucer-road, Herne-hill."

"A DEBATE is in progress between Father Ignatius and Mr. Bradlaugh about Christianity. Your correspondent went to the last meeting, and was much struck with the total impotency of the Reverend Father's philosophy against Mr. Bradlaugh. Imagine a man in such a place gravely declaring his belief that the burning bush was the Virgin Mary, and asserting that this was a christian article of faith. It was a great pity that the secularists should have such a caricature set before them as the religion of the New Testament, because it merely confirmed their prejudices."

The above is extracted from the *English Nonconformist*, and the inferences of the Secularists will be analogous to those who deduce their ideas of Spiritualism from the utterances of Woodhull, of the Nunawading Messiah, or of the magnetic school of deadened brains.

SPIRITUALISM: WHAT IS IT?

Is the title of an excellent lecture, delivered at Castlemaine on Sunday, April 27th, by Miss Mary Fimlason, and since published by the local committee in pamphlet form. We print the following excerpts as containing the gist of the author's definition of Spiritualism:—

"Nature teaches Spiritualism in every department of life. It is the poem, the painting, the music of life; it throbs in the deep heart of humanity. Is it not the fire that kindles the glowing thoughts within the poet's soul? Is it not the inspiration that guides the hand of the painter to make the barren canvas instinct with life and beauty? Is it not the voice that makes harmony throughout the musician's being, and constrains him to charm the world with melody divine? Yea, what would the earth be without these things? A drear and soulless thing; a weary wilderness of Time. Do not all these aspirations after a beauty rarely caught at, prove a soul within, and a soul yearning after a thing yet higher, grander, fuller, more sublime than what, with its utmost strainings it can reach, ere death closes its career? Is it not that spirituality within the soul that bids it strive on, even unto the last, to reach greater and greater perfection in its art, to stamp the impress of its soul upon its work? But struggle as it will, it yet fails to satisfy its desires in that.

"Spiritualism is the soul of nature's religion, the gospel of 'good tidings' sung in her deep heart of love, and echoed by the voices of angels proclaiming peace on earth, and good-will to men. In loving accents she speaks to her children, 'Come unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, my yoke is easy and my burden is light.' In her language, the loving heart of Jesus of Nazareth addressed mankind. He was the exponent of Nature's truth, drawing all his similes, all his teachings from her wondrous storehouse; drinking in her truths by every avenue of his being, and, realising them in all their spiritual meaning, he uttered the words—'Come unto me,'—'Believe in me.' So did he identify himself with all; so did he love the living works around him; so did he partake abundantly of all the flowing streams of light which nature so bountifully provides, that, from the fulness of his soul, he could say—'I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'—'Come, take of the waters of life freely, without money and without price.' No bondage there; the yoke is easy, and the burden light; 'tis the liberty of the true children of God, bound only by the chain of nature's laws, a bondage sweeter far than liberty, for it is the bondage of love, weaving around us a strength which tells that we are not alone, that the bosom of a loving mother is our refuge, that the arms of an Almighty Father are our support."

The concluding part of the lecture has reference to the unfair criticisms of the press anent the seance at Mr. J. P.'s.

We extract the following from a letter received from an earnest Spiritualist and Progressionist (Mr. A. D. Strachan, of "Ournie," N.S.W.), as apropos in connection with the lecture on "Priests and Laity" which appears in this issue. Speaking of the early Unitarian reformers, he says:—"What noble men there seems to be among them—they appear to me to be 'the salt of the earth.' Being brought up as a Presbyterian, I had terrible ideas of them, but what a delusion I have been in. I find several of them have been put to death for their views,—Servetus by Calvin, Gentili at Berne, and after the Reformation the writ *de heretico comburendo*, or for burning the heretics, remained in full force, and under this bloody law many Unitarians were put to death by their Protestant brethren. In the reign of Edward VI. Joanna Bocher was condemned for heresy in denying the doctrine of the Trinity, by a Court in which Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley sat as judges. Cranmer extorted from the youthful sovereign the signature to the warrant for executing this virtuous and noble-minded lady, and she was burnt to death. And so was

George Van Paris two years afterwards. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Wielmacker, Van Toort, Hamond, Lewis, Cole, (a clergyman) and Francis Ket were put to death for like heresies. In the reign of King James I. Mr. Legate and Mr. Wightman suffered in the same manner for the same offence. During the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell the learned and virtuous Mr. Biddle was apprehended, and would have been put to death by the Parliament but the Protector rescued him from their fangs and allowed him to spend the remainder of his life in exile upon the rock of Scilly. In the reigns of Charles I. and II. and James II. many hundred persons accused of Unitarianism were allowed to languish out their miserable lives in perpetual imprisonment. The last public execution in Great Britain for this offence was that of Mr. Thomas Aikenhead, a student of divinity, who was hanged at Edinburgh on the 16th January, 1697. This was in the reign of King William III."

It seems to be the impression among Protestants that all the burning, &c., was done by the Roman Catholics, and I think it would be well to place these facts before them.

OLIVER CROMWELL A MEDIUM.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—A week or two ago you had a short notice of Henry Thomas Buckle, author of "Civilization in England," in the second vol. of which page 334, we have the following:—"A writer of that time informs us that, even in 1648, when Cromwell was in Edinburgh, "he went not to their churches; but it is constantly reported that everie day he had sermons in his oune ludginge, himself being the preacher, whensoever the spirit came upon him; which took him lyk the fits of an ague, somtymes twice, somtymes thrise in a day."—*Gordan's Britane's Distemper*, p. 212."

Cromwell's conduct greatly puzzled the clergymen of the Scotch kirk of that day, and I am curious to know whether Buckle, two centuries later, had any better insight into the peculiar character of that determined man? You said that Buckle, lacking a certain kind of knowledge, was unfit to write the "History of Civilization." While he was penning the passage quoted above, I am thinking he would be sadly troubled what meaning to attach to it.—Yours respectfully,

F SILKSTONE

5 Elbow Street, High Street, Manchester, Feb. 27, 1873.

RING TEST.—A SPIRITUALISTIC EXPERIENCE.

The most remarkable experience I have ever had at a dark seance was that furnished to me on Monday, at my special desire, by the celebrated American medium, Mrs. Nelson Holmes, of 16, Old Quebec Street, Oxford Street. There was a large circle that night—twenty-five at least. Mrs. Holmes had her hands tied by a gentleman present in the most secure manner possible; they were tied to the back of a chair, so that she could not move without dragging this chair about with her. Then all in the circle joined hands, so that not a hand in the room was free. Immediately the candles were extinguished, musical instruments began to fly round the room with marvellous rapidity, never striking anybody with violence, but gently touching those who wished them to do so, I was touched on the head and hands each time I requested it—all this in pitch darkness. When the light was again obtained, Mrs. Holmes was found tied as when the seance began. Shortly afterwards, all in the dark, and while the instruments were busy playing, we heard the bonds of Mrs. Holmes being untied with a loud noise, and the rope was thrown into the lap of the gentleman who had bound her. Then came the "ring-test." The medium, in a state of trance, asked me to seat myself on a chair in front of her. Taking one of my hands, she made me note that three rings were on the table by our side: one of iron, one a tambourine hoop, and the third a tambourine hoop bound with iron. These rings I had carefully examined previously. Passing my hands over her arms, she showed me that no ring was secreted about her. I then took firm hold of both her hands, and shook them so roughly that had either of the rings been upon them it must have slipped down, or at least

have made some noise; but whilst holding her hands thus, she guided mine to the table where the rings lay motionless still. Directly after this the musical instruments began to play and float about my head, whilst I was simultaneously touched on the legs and arms and head by what seemed to be gentle hands. And in some manner or other, amidst a clash of the instruments, the iron-banded tambourine hoop came upon my arm without knocking against me or snapping as a spring hoop would have done, and there it dangled and jangled when light was again obtained. Such an occurrence as this is beyond my fathoming, but perhaps others may be able to clear it up in some way. I should say that I was induced to visit Mrs. Holmes by the marvellous accounts of her powers given in Mr. Harrison's excellent journal the *Spiritualist*, where all inquirers into these mysteries may find much that is curious and interesting.

G. F.

The above is from Mr. George Fraser, one of the editors of the *Brighton Daily News*. Mr. and Mrs. Holmes have, in addition to their public seances, lately held private sittings for H. C. Pennell, 4 Sumner Terrace, Onslow Square; Mr. Charles Walther, 8, Park Lane; Miss Douglas, 81, South Audley Street; Mrs. Miles, 46, Bolton Street; Mrs. Wiseman, 1, Orme Square; Mrs. Campbell, 41, Wimpole Street; Dr. Williams and Dr. Astler, Sudbury; and Mr. Armfield, New Wandsworth. Amongst the many who have had the celebrated "ring-test," we will mention the names of Mr. and Mrs. Pennell, Dr. Bird, Lord Arthur Russell, Lord Stanard, Duke of Rutland, Sir Christopher Rawlinson, Dr. Johnson, Baron De Rothschild, Dr. Astler, and many others whose names we cannot now recall. At all of these seances but one the spirit-faces were seen and many recognised. Mr. and Mrs. Holmes are giving the light and dark seances every Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, at 8 p.m. Private seances can be had any of those days at 4 p.m. by previous agreement.

THE CASTLEMAINE MANIFESTATIONS.

WE have had numerous enquiries in respect to the Castlemaine manifestations, an impression prevailing that they have ceased. We are in a position to inform our readers that such is not the case. Mr. P. is now experimenting in a systematic manner, admitting only one or two visitors at a sitting. The results so far have been very satisfactory, the old phenomena continuing, and new ones being developed. In the early part of the month (three visitors being present), two of the visitors and Mr. P. were singing, when a fourth voice, described as a beautiful tenor, was heard distinctly joining in the song. This was repeated several times during the evening. Some bulky articles were brought in, including a wash-hand basin, the lady visitor having searched Mrs. P. before the sitting. To simplify matters and remove objections Mr. P. has adopted another room with solid plastered walls and no fireplace, for the seances. It contains only a table with fixed legs, and the chairs. At a subsequent sitting an American clock was brought in, going, and the time correct. Then a gentleman's hat was brought from another room and dropped on his head, causing some trepidation. Next a leg of mutton was dropped on to the hand of a well-known mining agent who was present. Mr. P. is now trying to develop direct spirit writing manifestations, and has succeeded in getting some short messages. After the cruel treatment received by Mr. P. and his wife from the Melbourne press, he is not anxious to obtrude the further investigation of the extraordinary phenomena upon the public, but we believe he is perfectly willing to accept the suggestion of one of his visitors, viz., That a committee be formed, to include some gentlemen from Melbourne, to visit Mr. P.'s house (not more than 2 or 3 at a time), and to have a series of 10 or 12 seances. This would give an opportunity of testing the phenomena under various conditions, and be much more satisfactory in its results than any special sitting could be. It is also suggested that the gentlemen shall be unconnected with Spiritualism. We trust that some of our Melbourne savants will take the matter in hand.

RECLAIMED.

(Continued.)

So you will perceive I am as real a woman as you yourself, with this difference—that I am in the spiritual state, and you the earthly—and you see me with your spiritual eyes. This answers your first question. Then you ask, am I dreaming? In one sense you are, because your body is asleep; but, you see, your consciousness and perception is wide awake, therefore, in a spiritual sense, you are not dreaming, but by a natural process enabled to behold spiritual things as they are. And your anxiety about your husband's salvation is entirely unnecessary; calm your fears about him, he is nearer the kingdom of heaven than you are willing to believe.

And now, Mary, said the beautiful spirit, while a look of sadness and sorrow seemed to overspread her angelic face, I have something to tell you about myself, the thought of which makes me seem to live over again the painful experience I am about to relate.

This power to realize over again the events of earth-life appears to be designed by God to attract our spirits to the scenes and individuals of earth closely connected with our own past acts. This vivid realisation of the past seems like a re-incarnation of the spirit in another material existence; and it is renewed from time to time as we sojourn near the earth, until we see those acts of our past lives in a purer light.

You know, Mary, it is out of the power of mortals or spirits to alter the past, however much we may regret it; and, when the cold earth has closed over our mortal remains, the world is generally charitable enough to speak gently of the errors of the departed; and only the good belonging to them is remembered.

But to those who have passed on to spirit-life, and, like me, have the strongest natural attraction to earth (a mother's love for her offspring), these things are viewed differently; having passed into another state of existence, where it is no more in our power to alter the past than when on earth, and where it is out of our power to make material restitution to those of earth who may be suffering the effects of our wrong-doing.

There remains, therefore, only one means of redemption for sinners beyond the grave, Mary, and that is not forgiveness, nor atonement, nor the imputed righteousness of another.

Our salvation is knowledge, love, and wisdom. As I acquire more knowledge of the laws of my own being and nature generally, it becomes clearer to my perception that all that occurs is right, and will eventually work together for good. But it is while passing through the educational process in which knowledge is acquired that the mental anguish has to be endured—when memory brings back to us the most trivial events of our earth experience.

Nothing is lost, Mary; the memory is a faithful recording angel which never sleeps at its post—and, when the proper time arrives, presents the total account complete.

Everything is brought up for review, and weighed in the balances of truth and justice; and oh! what a terrible account some poor creatures have to meet here. Individuals who were very much envied for their successes on earth are objects of pity, compassion, and sympathy here.

I have explained to you, Mary, this fact of spirit-life that you may the better apprehend what I have to relate concerning myself and offspring.

When my boy was born, about nine years ago as you count time on earth, I occupied a respectable position in society, but I was not married—do not shrink from me, Mary, the angels did not forsake me when I died, but loved me and spoke words of tender compassion to me. My sin was great in the estimation of those who dwell on earth and was not regarded lightly by myself, but a sense of my great wickedness and degradation so deeply oppressed my heart that death was welcome to me, hoping it might prove a relief from sorrow and shame.

But death did not come to me suddenly, neither was it, as you might suppose, brought to me by my own act. Death, that monster of earth so much dreaded by some, so welcome to others, came to me, in what is

called a natural manner. True, I was young, and could not be said to be ripe for the gathering, but, Mary, human life is not measured by years, rather by thought, suffering, and knowledge. Experience had matured me, and life seemed complete, for no object seemed left me for which to live.

Although to some mine seemed a premature death yet to me it was not so. My life had been long enough to enable me to realize the power of love and the amount of suffering woman may endure for the object of her affections.

Mary, no truer love ever existed in the breast of a wife for the husband of her bosom than filled my heart for the father of my boy. Yet, Mary, the circumstances in which we were both placed were such as to make it impossible for us to become man and wife in the eyes and in accordance with the laws of human society. It therefore appeared to me necessary that the birth of our boy should be concealed from the knowledge of those who knew us.

Between the yearning of my heart for my offspring and my desire to hide the shame of its father and myself, there was a trying and prolonged struggle.

When the time for my return home, after the birth of my boy, arrived, my greatest difficulties arose (for I had gone to Tasmania presumed for the benefit of my health). It seemed so easy, as I wandered by the river side with the babe in my arms, to drop him into the water, and my friends would be none the wiser, and I be free of my encumbrance. When the temptation was overcome by the thought that the spirit of my dead mother might be looking down upon me, and my sin was already very great, I hurried away from the river side, resolved to endure the shame and degradation rather than add murder to my other crimes. But the temptation came in other forms, for when on board the steamer for Melbourne the thought suggested itself to me that a mother might accidentally drop her child overboard and none suspect it was designed, but again that dear mother's face was present with me, and the act was impossible. At length we arrived safe in Melbourne, myself and boy. Had my dear father known of my arrival by that boat he would have been on the wharf to meet me; but none of my friends were communicated with concerning my return except the father of my boy, and I had written to him requesting him to see me at a certain hotel on the evening of the day of the arrival of the boat. Thither I went with my innocent babe in my arms, expecting to find a letter awaiting me, but did not find one. My letter might have miscarried or something unforeseen must have occurred, or he whose love to me was that of a husband would never leave me in such suspense. I had no certain plan for the future, but depended upon him whose presence at my present hiding place I awaited with feelings of love and uncertainty.

The day wore on and the night approached, and yet no appearance of him. Had he forsaken me? Was the love he professed for me only animal and selfish? And now that the consequences of such love had become burdensome and disgraceful, had he forgotten his manhood and cast the whole burden upon the weaker vessel. These thoughts began to creep through my brain.

(To be Continued.)

Mr. W. D. C. Denovan delivered the fourth, and last of his series of Lectures on Spiritualism at St. James' Hall, Sandhurst, on Sunday May 25th. The Hall was crowded, nearly a thousand attentive listeners being present. The subject was "An appeal to the people in favor of Free Thought and Spiritualism." It is published at length in the *Bendigo Evening Star*, of Monday the 26th, and occupies seven and a half columns, the following extract is in exact accord with our leading article:—

"With the advance of education, the condition of the producing classes is slowly but surely improving, and the tendency of all legislation as the natural consequence of their increased power, is towards the principles openly taught and practised by Jesus of Nazareth, namely, the abolition or eradication of selfishness from

society, the living for the good of all, as all are our brethren, and making their happiness our highest duty. To secure this, however, we must educate, educate, educate unceasingly, and set our faces against all that stands in the way of this. Therefore, I say that no true spiritualist can engage in any trade or calling that tends to degrade his fellow-creatures. Neither can he live in the practices of immorality. He must, if he wishes to enjoy true happiness here and hereafter, keep the passions in subjection, cultivate a happy, cheerful disposition, be a pleasant instructor and companion in his own home, and be just and beneficent in all his dealings with his fellow men. By this means we may all realise heaven on earth, and live in constant and endearing converse with the inhabitants of the spirit-world, who, let me add, are not far off but near to us, and attracted to us more and more as we become like unto them. But in these days of Mammon worship, how few of us think of such things, far less practice them. Life with us, for the most part, is a race to get rich. We aspire not after Divine things, but rather to increase by fair or foul means our balances at our bankers. It is however, but a "Will-o'-the-Wisp," a mere phantasy leading us on and on until in a moment when our souls have said, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," death comes and calls us away from it all. Our social system, which is rotten to the very core, is the cause of all this. Man is not naturally bad, as the parsons would have us believe, or long since society would have been turned into chaos, for it is so organised as to develop the worst trait in man's character—his selfishness. Competition unnatural and hellish has driven him to cheating and fraud; hence the adulteration of food, and other tricks: the cold-blooded selfishness displayed where money is to be made, the cruelty to the inferior animals, and the shutting out from the mind all other considerations that would interfere with this favorite pursuit. Nor can he well be blamed, for it is but the natural outcome of the system. It is surprising that with such a state of things prevailing amongst so-called Christian nations, who professedly believe in their responsibility to God, and in a future life that spiritualism should seem to them all a delusion? What care they for another world. Let them alone to their idols. Spiritualists, therefore, if they are thoroughly alive to their duty, must grapple with such a social system. Are they prepared to do this? Or is their spiritualism merely a barren and sentimental sort of belief leading to the discharge of no duty, no responsibility, and no fruits? Alas! for such spiritualism. Are they prepared to take up their cross and openly proclaim war against a social system in Europe which, in time of peace, expends annually a sum of three hundred millions of pounds sterling, on the keep of a standing army to support it? A system which in the old world—and even here to a less extent—is filling the workhouses and gaols with paupers and prisoners, which makes poverty a crime, which elevates the drones of society into a privileged class, which retains an immense army of clergymen to subjugate the masses to it, and which by one means or another, keeps the workers—the toiling millions—as its hewers of wood and drawers of water. Are spiritualists not prepared to make war upon such an iniquitous system? With many who call themselves such the answer, I fear, would be in the negative; but with all progressive spiritualists it cannot but be in the affirmative. Spiritualism, our spirit-friends tell us, is to be the Church of the Future, and liberal minds in all ranks of life are being influenced to spread its beneficent and glorious principles amongst all nations."

Mr. Denovan stated that arrangements would shortly be made for the delivery of other Lectures on the subject of Spiritualism, and phases of public thought in connection with it, and concluded as follows:—

"Friends, in concluding this series of Lectures on Spiritualism, I have to thank you for your presence here, and the kind attention you have given me. If anything has fallen from me which has given you pain, I ask you forgiveness for it, as I have endeavoured, in dealing with the subject before me, to be as unsectarian as possible. I would feel very glad to see other

lecturers enter the field to give us the benefit of their thoughts, and I am not without hopes of seeing this ere long. In the meantime, I do think the time has arrived when steps should be taken to organise a Lyceum or Sunday School in this city. The circles, no doubt, would provide us with teachers, in abundance, and the expenses of conducting so excellent a movement, would be forthcoming if we took up the matter in earnest. "He that is in earnest if he cannot find means, creates them." So I hope the matter will not be allowed to rest. What a beautiful religion Spiritualism is to teach the young, and what a hold it will take on their minds. The very thought of the good it will do, ought to stimulate its friends to earnest efforts in its behalf. Let me urge upon all who are desirous of seeing a reformation in society, of seeing religion vitalised by a living, active faith, filling us with noble impulses and prompting us to unselfish labors in the cause of humanity; to investigate patiently and perseveringly the principles and phenomena of Spiritualism. It is a noble cause and worthy of our highest admiration and sympathy. It is the old religion as taught and practised by its illustrious founder Jesus of Nazareth, and by all the seers and benefactors of the world before and since. It claims all mankind as its brothers; it seeks the temporal and eternal happiness of all; it desires to hold the closest communion with the departed spirits of our race, as a sure and certain method of winning all hearts to a love of God, and a belief in a life beyond the grave; and on its banner is inscribed as of old, the words: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill toward men." "Oh Come let us worship in its holy temple."

THE BURDEN OF THEOLOGY.

THE burden of all theology has been to find the reason of pain in the present life, and to find hope in a life that shall be joyful, through the unwavering love of God. Theology for the most part, making much of the responsibility, and somewhat of the power of man, will have him win joy through duty, on peril of remediless woe. Our theology, making nothing of the power or responsibility of man, will find God making him continually wiser and freer, whether he seek vice or virtue. It will find God in boundless and unceasing love making man as happy as man himself could do with omnipotence. It will find that there is no sigh of the heart nor quiver of the lip that God would not hinder were it possible. It will find that the finite, now and for ever, must have its trouble; but that no joy shall escape us which omnipotence can compass in our behalf. It will find man's highest earthly hopes to be courage, pride, health, knowledge, reason, and charity,—and his highest hope for all time eternal progression towards an unattainable perfection of wisdom and serenity.

From the first recorded times man's ignorance of the future has clothed God with terror, and knotted his brows with admonition. Yet all ages have said God is good; there is an ingenuity, and a beauty, a utility, a variety, a mitigation, a compensation in all nature, which men have indeed confessed, but partially—for the old question remains, Why are we not continually happy?—and even if such is God that we might be happy if we would, why have we not that wise disposition? Between these two facts; that we injure ourselves in part, and that God is good in nature, and especially to all those creatures wanting in man's high and seemingly responsible intelligence, there has arisen a morality in our notions of action which has made us fear God as the master rather than love him as the lover of our race.

Moderns have found much in the Christian Scriptures (especially those written by the apostle Paul) to relieve this terror of God and the future. It is not our purpose to specially deny or coincide with any Scriptures. But we think we shall not state amiss the orthodox representation of that which is written when we say that thereby the pains, cares, and sorrows of the world find no reason but God's will: He may do what he will with his own: in the sweat of his face, as the result of his sin, is man condemned to labor and to suffer, and for this reason solely. No kindly promise, in plain words of

good assurance, is found to warn him that for all he suffers he shall be repaid with interest,—or to admonish him that all evil is for good.

Some speculators upon providence have made logic serve for the assurance of God's love. They have said, It is the office of reason first to acknowledge that infinite wisdom will choose the best possible of systems; therefore reason should study to reconcile itself to the system, rather than the system to itself. Perhaps this were a good method, were there not a better. We are slow to admit such tremendous premises. Let man see that the universe is working as he would prefer that it should work, and then man will see himself blessed, and will acknowledge the divine wisdom. He thinks God could make all men continually happy if he would, and therefore he does not find God as benevolent as himself. But if we can find that all things are for the best, not only in the light of divine but of human wisdom, were it not a blessed discovery? Answer, ye polished lines of the famous essays which deprecate the apparent difference in our mortal fortunes! It is not the justice of our ills that troubles us so much,—we are not badly perplexed that God should afflict us for our own wilfulness—and we feel that we may thank ourselves for so many of our troubles that the remainder thrown in would scarcely make the balance kick the beam—but it is the good of the whole method that puzzles us. We would question the benevolence that allows one folly on any account whatsoever,—which allows us to suffer for the sins of our ancestors, and allows many a thing to trouble us which neither we nor our ancestors have known how to point towards hope in the future. Life and its calamities we could endure for their own sake, if we saw any love of God in them; but if our evil comes only from the wanton will of a despot, only woe, terror, and judgment can fill the gloomy passages of death.

These are the difficulties, dear reader. And now we shall presume to promise that if you will follow us closely to the end of our little volume, we shall at last defy you in the name of reason to change an atom of the universe, theoretically to fear death, or to murmur at your lot. —“Optimism the Lesson of Ages, E. Blood.”

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