



A WEEKLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE HISTORY, PHENOMENA, PHILOSOPHY,
AND TEACHINGS OF

SPIRITUALISM.

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THE DISCIPLINE OF SUFFERING.

A FUNERAL SERMON AT St. PETER'S,
PIETER-MARITZBURG, NATAL.

Archdeacon Colley preached one of his remarkable funeral sermons on Sunday evening last, at St. Peter's Cathedral—the occasion being the death of Mr. W. H. Walters, one of the members of the Choir. Taking for his text St. John, xiv., 1, 2,—“In my Father's House are many Mansions, if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you”—the preacher said:—

Over to the great majority has our friend gone, whose Funeral Anthem has just been sung, which he in this Cathedral Church, has sung for others. It is well. Our turn will come in due time. And, as one by one, disappear from our accustomed seat, and are caught upwards to our primal and eternal home, we, in the transit of our soul from the seen to the unseen, drill another boring in the intervening boundary, rive anew the curtain, pierce another passage twixt earth and Heaven, and let streaming through, a larger measure of the inner world's celestial glory. The sluices of vast eternity open wide, and still wider with every soul's escape from this lower to the higher life, cleaving spaces in the beyond, and winging its flight through the night of time, to the sunrise of the glory-world. For in our departure from this to the better life, mis-termed death, every bodily removal means accretion to the world of spiritual power and benediction. One more bond of union 'twixt the inner and the outer sphere is completed, an added means of communication is opened up, and further messages of peace and consolation may be wired to earth from Heaven by way of the path the latest soul travelled to its blissful rest.

Hence, what our singing has lost in volume, from the voice hushed in the dust, it gains in sweetness of feeling and depth of expression, through the perception on sensitive hearts, of the whisperings of the angelic choir, and the melodies of Heaven poured through us in emotional utterance, when the lip quivers, and the voice falters, and the eye is dim with moisture, at the remembrance of the vanished face and stilled, deep musical breathing, of our friend in the choral worship and service of praise.

Whose will be the voice next lost to us? My voice, as you now know, will shortly be heard no more within these walls, and the Angel will smite us to graveyard dusty dumbness some day. But in the parting of body and soul we trust for an easier separation. His was a rending of a most painful nature; and six weeks of incessant suffering that culminated in the most fearful death agony, was borne with a patience most exemplary; attesting the fact that his soul was ripe for God's plucking; His merciful taking from present evil, and bodily torture, to Heaven's joy and rest and peace.

It is yet a hard matter to understand why the process of death upon some should be so easy and sweet—the pangs sinking into spiritual repose, and sleeping into life—and, with others, as in this case, so cruel a tearing, so fearful a severance, and tragic moaning out of existence. It is beyond us. We cannot understand it. Medical science does not explain it. Psychology vainly grapples with it. Life is full of problems, and death surrounded with mystery. We are forced to use conventional terms. But really there is no such thing as death. 'Tis only a new phase of life. Existence transposed to a higher clef. From the minor mode of sorrow and wail, we syncopate through the intricate movements of Time's grand fugue, and toil through the Great Master's pre-arranged discords. Modulate the plaintive griefs of human nature, and work through the set solos ordained of heaven; our part, at times, being to sustain alone, alone, the weight of earthly trouble, scored out in Divine wisdom and love, to assist the general harmony. But, by-and-bye, the theme expands. The grand design appears. The orchestral power of the mighty chorus grows in volume and sweetness. Now and again a discord is let in to quicken and intensify the harmony; but hallelujahs of the skies are telephoned to earth by way of our throbbing hearts most clearly, steeped in grief and disciplined through suffering, until with a crash death steps in, clutches at the instrument, and slacks down the chords to hideous confusion and dismay. But in the very stroke of evil and wreck of temporal things, physical disorder, and suffering and pain from the toiling marches and pulsing beat of time, we are called to our better, our prepared place among the choirs of the redeemed.

Such, in figure, has been the history of our friend who as a member of the Cathedral choir for many years

at last, through earth-chequered scenes—its sunshine and its shade, its hopes and fears, sweets and bitters, discords and death—has attained the harmony and life of the celestial choir. Let not our hearts be troubled. In the Father's house are many mansions—many mansions, troubled heart! "I go to prepare a place for you."

For we are all displaced, we are not in our proper sphere; we are out of our right latitude. The human zone we inhabit, and region we occupy, are not best adapted for our soul's health and moral constitution. We shall never be thoroughly convalescent of spiritual sickness until we get a change of air, and expire here that we joyfully may respire the purer atmosphere of the heavens, and the native air of our Fatherland above, our ante-natal home. Immortal spirits body-bound we are exiles, and tenants from heaven; strangers and pilgrims here, uncoupled from our proper work and yoked to something uncongenial. Disunited also are we from our true friends, and knit companions of soul. We have missed our true place in the economy of the universe. We have come down here from yonder on a day's excursion, and have lost our return ticket, are lost in the bush, enfolded in the swamp, and are parted from the sister spirit that companioned us from the skies. We are outcasts, wanderers, and alone; our soul's one inspired aim and object, which yet perhaps, we ken not, in our walk through the ages, being to find its lost love, its spirit mate, its other self, its counterpart, its better self—the sundered one in twain through sin, in righteousness, hereafter, being lastingly twain in one. Heaven's true bliss! unity, friendship, love! This realised, no one can miss heaven, or get to hell by mistake. For, with these possessions of soul he has heaven with him already before he quits earth. Ah, but it is no wonder that we sometimes feel unhappy, we hardly know why; for here is the secret—the void within, which the world can never fill, till God transmute it gloriously to heaven, fulfilling it with every spiritual good.

Here is the secret of our daily discontents—our intuitive sense of celestial unity, and our present earthly dislocation, the painful feeling of great Sunderings of soul; heart-strings keyed up to racklike tension, and then the sudden snap; the golden bowl broken; the pitcher broken at the fountain, and wandering twin souls, that have found themselves in this life, perhaps, as conjugal partners, or inseparable friends, separated again! Ah, but only for a time. For the parting now is but the carrying of another life-time to the golden shore, that we, from the wreck of mortal life, may feel the drawings stronger to leave the carnal for the spiritual, and spring through the breakers and billows, and disasters of time, from earth to heaven, to consummate reunions nevermore to be dissolved.

Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By opposite attractions and desires;
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
And the more noble instinct that aspires.

The perturbations, the perpetual jar
Of earthly wants and aspirations high,
Come from the influence of that unseen star—
That undiscovered planet in our sky.

Until which is found—the root and offspring of David, and bright and morning star—the pain remains, the trouble lingers, and the heart is sad. To the end was this the case with our departed friend. And the admirable patience that marked his endurance of grievous bodily affliction, and grievous torture, demonstrated that the day dawn of the new morning, and day star had arisen in his heart. The healthy view of temporal suffering chastening the spirit—the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory is here illustrated. The dreadful pain of the disease that took him from us was no doubt necessary for his perfect ease hereafter. "Perfect through suffering," is the text that annotates the difficulty, and illustrates the discipline of affliction;

resolving unwelcome doubts when for a time we have lost trace of a beneficent providence overruling all things for wise ends and every good. The discipline of suffering has lately much engaged our thought. For the preacher's trouble cannot but appear in his work, colouring too often, perhaps, his thoughts with the pale cast of grief and melancholy. It cannot be otherwise, for we are very human, and you are indulgent and bear with me. Spiritual displacement, however, as the secret of the heart's trouble, I again say is the main cause of our perturbations. And while we tarry here in this life, away from home, we are all displaced, and trouble must be our lot. So in the literal displacement of our friend from his accustomed seat, under the chancel arch, in the choir, he at last, in God's good time—as may be ours when God shall please—has been called to his proper place among the choir of the redeemed.

And now, O All-Father, thus dwelling on the departure of one who humbly practised in time to sing Thy praises in eternity, assist thy remaining servants so to celebrate Thy name in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, that singing we may make melody in our hearts, and so perfect Thy praise, and worthily render unto Thee the worship of our lips, that this our earthly service ended, we may join the heavenly choir and ceaselessly chant celestial praises to the honour, of Thy most Holy Name. Amen.

[From the "Natal Witness," March 3, 1881.]

BIBLE SPIRITUALISM.

IX.—EARTH CENTRALISM.

One great feature of Bible Spiritualism is the enormous amount of spiritual force that has been concentrated at certain times in individual men and women. In three or four doublings of the hands, one could count on the fingers all the mediums that cover the 2000 years of Bible intercourse with the other world in its highest and truest form. The rarity of the necessary conditions meeting in one individual has been evidently one of the great obstacles in the way of noble influence coming downward to earth from the higher regions of the Unseen. It is startling to the student of history to reflect by how few men the real work of the world has been done. The capacity of the race was never greater than it is to-day, and yet, though the leading minds of our age outnumber by far those of any preceding period, how thin are their ranks when compared with the population! Still it is a real sign of progress that the numerical difference between the capable and incapable, the leaders and the led, is becoming less and less.

Now it is only by unit men who supply the requisite conditions that lofty spirits can touch the life of earth. No doubt every living man and woman presents a point of contact to some circle of that spirit-life. But as the majority of men are comparatively undeveloped it is evident that they only form a spiritual basis for low spiritual influence. With this side of the subject we shall deal in our next paper. We confine ourself here to those men who by their harmony and dignity of manhood made a centre of attraction and influence for some of the loftiest spirits that ever trod the earth.

There is a profound truth in Darwin's doctrine of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. It is quite evident that there are men, too rare, alas! who possess a spontaneity of character that makes them strike out new paths, and inaugurate new movements. What was it made Moses strike the Egyptian and fly to the Land of Jethro? An individuality and spontaneity that made the palace of Pharaoh, with all its splendour, an impossible home. I do not remember one single regret ever appearing in the writings of Moses over that step. If the Israelites wept for the flesh-pots of Egypt he did not. Like a pioneer treading

the wilderness of an unexplored country, Moses was consumed by the passion of truth-seeking. Such souls march in the van of human progress. Like the Russian officers during the Russo-Turkish war, their word to their fellow men is ever "Come," not "Go." It is around such men that angels of a higher sphere love to congregate. There is nothing to my mind such a stupendous display of conviction and faith in higher forces than ordinarily work in the affairs of earth, as that lonely soul leaving the burning bush and confronting the foremost monarch of his time. To look at this man boldly entering the desert with a million and a half of souls, weaponless, foodless, slavish and demoralised, presents the most amazing feat of spiritual daring ever seen on the earth plane. Well has the artist pictured the grand form of Moses standing above the cowering Israelites, hemmed in by mountains on either flank, the spears of Pharaoh's host glancing in the sunlight, the noise of the chariots, and exultant shouts of the Egyptian soldiery falling upon his ear, with the briny waters of the Red Sea murmuring their invigorating music as the tidal waves wash to his feet, its breeze flinging his ringlets and flowing beard behind him; well has the artist pictured the noble hero standing there alone, with outstretched rod, his glittering eye upon the serried ranks of the Unseen host of brilliant archangels, their armour flashing in the light of a purer world, their forms surging with the life of a higher sphere than ever before approached the earth; well has the artist pictured that awful scene. Let it stand as one of earth's brilliant triumphs. If the waters divide not at the command of that imperious chieftain, and bury beneath their bosom the driven-in children of Israel, still let it stand as earth's most brilliant failure. If that sea had washed up the body of that hero among the corpses of those who trusted in his peerless genius, it would yet have been a lofty conception of human daring to climb the dazzling heights of the Unknown. But as we watch its sequel, as we see the cloud of darkness roll between the waiting hosts, the waters rise into opposing walls, the bed of the sea becomes "as dry land"; as we see the intrepid statesman of Egypt and shepherd of Midian step into the enwalled path, calm and confident, with the trembling host behind him; as we witness them landed, to the last woman and child, upon the opposite shore; as we see the obscuring cloud roll away, and behold the frantic, blasphemous rush of the insulting Egyptians into the now deserted pathway; as we see the toppling walls of liquid, boiling in their fury, and burying that daring army beneath their deadly wrath; and as we hear the swell of the mighty song coming from a million ecstatic hearts, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation": as we hear and see it all, let us wonder at the centralising power of a single man, when, by sublimity of character, he draws by irresistible attraction the mind, and heart, and strength of a higher world into the affairs of humanity.

Moses had thus locked that sphere into his life, and that of Israel and the world. He never, to his dying day, released his hold upon that angel army, and they never lost their hold on him. They made the heavens rain down daily bread, and the rock gush with the following stream. They drove the nations before the dependent host like chaff before the wind. The ears of all men tingled in that day at the sound of that advancing tramp, and the gleam of that fiery night-cloud struck terror into the tribes of the desert. For forty years Moses walked in the presence of that Unseen sphere. Oh, what wonders happen when a single soul listens to the voices of the Unseen! Not for him the beggarly wisdom and forces of earth's braggart life. Tied to the earth by a gross material body his inner spirit revels in the glorious flush of a higher sphere of life. Napoleon stands before the Alps, and commands his generals to erase from their vocabularies the word

"impossible." A spiritually enlightened man stands with intellect, heart, and will gazing upon the mighty forces of the Unseen, and hurls earth's gigantic difficulties into trivial nothingness. Faith is Reason and Will moving among the higher forces of nature. The materialist bounds his universe by what he sees with the flimsy sight of this poor body's optical vision. He sweeps the Milky Way with his telescope, and the dew-drop with his microscope; he reads the antique scroll of the rocks, and analyses the relations of what he calls atoms and molecules; and, with braggart pride, proclaims that he has discovered the Forces that rule the Universe. But a true Reason, darting inward upon the Unseen, reveals a new world, full of potent forces waiting there for him who will wield them. He proclaims that the Unseen is teeming with Force as yet unapplied in the human life of earth. It only waits for centralising men like Moses to flash in upon the opacity of this materialised humanity, the awful expanse of this universe of never-ending Force and wonder. Science! In God's name, what is science? Exact knowledge, you reply. Amen; so say I. But bind me not with the fetters of mere materialism. Is not man like the Prisoner of Chillon, peering through the bars of his prison? Has he not inner sight that says to that spangled firmament, the swelling flood, and towering mountain, "Ye are not all. There is something behind, vaster still. Ye are but the shadow of a yet mightier world, of which ye conceal the glory." No, no! man does rise higher than his present environment. The yearnings of our inner life carry us beyond the sphere of the visible into the Unseen and Eternal.

I dare not trust myself again to describe instances of this centralism which teem in the pages of the Bible: Noah floating upon the waters of the Deluge; Moses praying while the Amalakites contend with his people; Elijah making Carmel awful with the presence of the Unseen; Hezekiah kneeling before the altar of the Temple with the open letter of the defiant Assyrian, whose host already feels the blasting breath of the destroying angel; Gethsemane with its awful agony and comforting angels; Calvary with its veiling darkness and miracle of enduring love; Pentecost with its startling tongues; the Castle of Antonio and its liberated prisoner; Philippi's prison and its shaking walls;—all are witnesses to the splendour which gathers around responsive men to the Unseen. Multifarious is the appearance of this centralising power, but in all there is the proclamation by the angel world of what they will achieve when met with sympathetic hearts.

It is important to reflect on the relation of these men to time and events. "Events, not years, make up our life," says a poet. It is not the three score years that make a man aged, but how much he has put into them. The difference between the age of a great reformer like Cobden, with the crowded events of his career, and that of a peasant, with his monotonous life, is immense. Now these central men concentrate centuries in their lives. They accelerate the course of the world. They give it a momentum in its orbit that increases with its inverse ratio. They are like the stone thrown into the pool, its circle widening at every ripple. Time, after all, is matter of relations. The 18th June, the day of Waterloo, contained within it the future well-being or course of the whole world. Luther did not live to a ripe old age, but he lived centuries of life in those years that by vulgar reckoning counted his age. The wise reckon not as the ignorant. The higher a man rises in life the more he alters the relations of events. One atom out of the world, annihilated, if that could be, and you re-model the universe of matter. That makes planets wheel in another course, constellations veer another way, worlds change their climate, and their inhabitants feel the impulse of a different life. So every birth is a looming change in the world's destiny. The ark of bulrushes hidden in the bank weeds of the Nile contains the possibilities of endless change in human life. The child of Bethlehem contained within his feeble life the

germ force that would sweep the idols of all nations into the sea, and mark the uprising and downsetting of many an empire. Yet man is not an automaton. He is not wholly the subject of conditions. He stands a central point in space, every man, every woman, with infinite possibilities within him. He is free to rise, and free to fall by indolent neglect, or insane sinfulness, into the vortices of hellish life. Every ray of light that is born in the sun, 90,000,000 of miles away, flying onward to our earth, buries itself in our vegetation, or glancing off the bosom of our planet travels onward through space from planet to planet, is altering the appearance of the Universe. So every successful rise or ignoble fall in the heart of man is fraught with infinite, eternal, meaning.

The Fall of Adam!* Sciologists tell us it is an incredible thing. Yet the scene perpetrated in Eden is the greatest fact of human life. Which of us has not repeated that eating of the apple? Which of the 200,000,000,000 of human beings that throng the Unseen has not, again and again, chosen the present enjoyment to unswerving obedience, with its contingent blessing of eternal life? Science tells us as the truest philosophy of life that we should be responsive to our environment. Comte teaches that as his cardinal doctrine of human advancement. But science and Comte have first to define what is our environment. Is it only the Seen, or is it also the Unseen? If our earth has abutting upon it the ascending heavens, from the lowest, teeming with the base and ignorant, to the highest, thronged with the blessed and wise, with the capacity in us of responding to every sphere, then how important is this doctrine of centralism in the Cause of Spiritualism! "None of us liveth to himself." We are oceans of blessing or cesspools of foul miasmas. We radiate from us streaks of eternal light or quivering lines of pestilential fumes. We are centre points by which the angels of healing and blessing work, or centralisms by which the evil propagate their designs of malice and contorted iniquity. There is no truth so profoundly true as this. It is the pivot of Spiritualism. On it is balanced the destiny of human kind.

Now let us for a closing thought see the practical application of this. Inspiration to a Spiritualist is a doctrine that is continuous in all ages, and widespread over all men. Everyone, according to his life, is subject to injected thoughts and purposes from the spirit-world. Inspiration by a well-developed Spiritualism is not destined to run in one channel. It is not to flow through infallible popes and acumenical councils only; nor through fervid preachers of the pulpit; nor be entombed in the sacred pages of a book. It is destined, and is in actual practice, to influence political, and social, and religious reforms. It will sweep over the Cabinet in their councils, the Senate in the flight of lofty debate, the Orator as he advocates new ideas, the Preacher as he sways men upward to heaven and purity of life, and the Laborious Worker in the laboratory. It is meant to be a practical thing. If only it be possible to build up a movement with this multiform expression, earth will soon be swept clear of its debasing influences. But for that a noble centralism is required. The spirit-world waits for a cultured basis—cultured in body, heart, mind, and life. With such central tools the heavens will rain down knowledge, and holy life, and harmonious revelation. The Church has been stupidly exclusive. It has divided days and duties into sacred and secular, an unnatural distinction. It has its Sunday books and its week day pleasures. It has stood away from the world's life, and thus bereft itself of its greatest strength. Antagonistic to that—for extremes beget extremes—stands a materialistic, sensual science and world. The marriage of these extremes must be solemnised by Spiritualism. Let its devotees become central

* The writer thinks the Garden of Eden an Oriental Allegory, embodying the deep truth which he dwells upon in this paper, and by no means endorses the theological speculations which have been built up upon the letter and not the spirit of that beautiful Eastern parable.

men to wise and holy influences, and the work will be rapid and easy. That word "holy" is a fine old Saxon term. It is the same as "whole." A "holy" man is a "whole" man. A "holy" spirit is a "whole" spirit. We want in Spiritualism the intercourse of "whole" spirits with "whole" men. "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD."

This subject would not be complete if we did not consider its relation to man's responsibility. It is a grave charge against Spiritualism, and one, I fear, too justly brought against a great deal of it, so far, that it lowers the idea of sin, and demoralises its practitioners. Whether the Free-Love movement was an outcome of Spiritualism or not, it found most of its supporters among those who frequented seances.

Even had Spiritualism only produced evil fruit, I am not one who would refuse to practice it for that reason. I would rather the more vehemently pursue its study. It is not like God to allow the contact of unseen evil without the counterworking of unseen good; and if so far it had been an unmixed evil, it would prove to me two things beyond a doubt—the fact of spirit-being and intercourse, and the faulty conditions supplied to make such a one-sided series of phenomena possible. A scientific man could not be indifferent to it. It would puzzle him at first, as undoubtedly it grievously did me, to unravel the conflicting facts. I cannot imagine the position of a scientific mind standing indifferent to this subject. A single fact opens worlds to sight. A swinging candelabra reveals to Galileo the law of the pendulum. A falling apple carries Newton into the profoundest secret of Nature. A boiling kettle enables James Watt to revolutionise the civilised world. No fact can wisely and safely be disregarded. Believing as I do that the ignorance of Spiritudism lies at the bottom of a large part of the world's evil, which will be considered in our next paper, a true knowledge of it means the "open sesame" to the unfailing panacea. Any one who observes an unexplained fact and declines to investigate it, incurs a very grave responsibility. If Moses had stood indifferent to the burning bush, the world's loss would have been incalculable. The mere fact that Spiritualism is chaotic, confusing, twaddling, or demoralising is the greater proof that it needs explanation. It proves a gigantic evil if it does not prove a stupendous good. But as over against the darkness of night God has placed the light of day, as nowhere has he allowed evil to be unopposed by good, so if there be a bad Spiritualism, it is a clear inference that there must be a good near at home. Woe is unto him who knows the one and strives not to reach the other.

Instead of lowering the estimate of sin, I know of nothing that so deepens it. This doctrine of centralism reveals how much depends on our every act and thought. Instead of diminishing the idea of penalty, it increases it. It may negative the brimstone hell, and an arbitrary vengeance for sin, but it proves, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that a man suffers to all eternity for wrong doing. He has lost his opportunity, he has failed to rise by obedience to the call of the Almighty voice, and that he never can recoup. In the blaze of that world of light that burns up all self-deception, he will feel the agony of that neglect. That feeling may beget in him a humble, sacrificial love—like that of Mary Magdalene—but he is behind what he might be. Procrastination in the work of soul salvation means eternal loss. "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel," was the burning cry of the apostle. That was the perpetual feeling of all these mediums. It was that which filled them with untiring energy. There is nothing that can so arouse the feeling of responsibility as the truth of Spiritualism. It makes each one feel the dignity of being. On him, as on all, rests the salvation of the world. Let him plant the cross of self crucifixion, death to all lower impulses, life only to the higher; and he will find that the pang of his Calvary is the germ of an eternal heaven. None of us can or ever will live to himself. OURANOL.

MESMERISM AND PSYCHOLOGY.

INSTANTANEOUS THOUGHT-IMPRESSIONS.

Life is a tangled yarn—
Of which, but few
E'er find the clue,
To straighten out the threads.

The question has more than once been asked, in connection with spirit influence, Where does the control of spirits begin?—whether the phenomenon of what is called communication by impression be not of far more frequent occurrence than is generally supposed;—wider in its operation, and simpler in its mode of action, of which many—who are not Spiritualists in any sense of the word, and entirely ignorant of the possession of any dormant sensibilities entitling them to the epithet "mediumistic,"—are, still, the passive recipients?

If this can be answered in the affirmative, it is natural to wonder how much and how many, of our lives and thoughts, are really and truly our own; or, in what degree that, which we call and claim as ours, may be but the incorporation of other lives and thoughts, blending and commingling with our own, and perhaps, powerfully influencing them.

If we go to seances, or attend any lectures given by any mediums avowedly under spirit control, we usually see some evidence however slight it may happen to be, that they are for the time being dominated by some influence which, for that time, transcends their normal power, or quickens it into more recognisable action. This, appealing directly to our powers of observation, we at once say—So and So is a very fine medium; and possibly, if we converse with that medium, he may tell us that to him, the evidence of some intelligence, outside his own, is incontestable and certain as the fact of his own existence. A glorious boon this certainly must be to him, and to all who possess it; and may not those who lack this certainty—but yet are the subjects of experiences explainable only on the spiritual hypothesis—suffer much perplexity from its absence?

To me it seems possible that in seeking light for myself, others may likewise receive it, therefore, with that hope as an apology for intruding, as I needs must, a constant reiteration of the personal pronoun, I will lay one or two of my experiences before my readers:—

About four or five years ago, as near as I can remember, on Sunday morning found me on my way to Glasgow, on a Clyde steamboat. I was going to visit some Spiritualist friends, and an ardent Spiritualist accompanied me.

I may mention that from the first sitting I had ever attended, I had been most keenly sensitive to what I was told was magnetic or mesmeric power; and had obtained very good results at my own sittings for investigation, but without obtaining any conviction as to the source from which the influence and results emanated.

My friend had walked to some little distance from me, and I sat alone on the deck, without any one near me. It was a day in early spring, cold but clear, and the sun shone brightly. Suddenly, without any previous frame of thought to lead up to the idea, the following words, which I copy from a note made by me that day, came to me:—

Even as the sun shineth upon the waters, and its beams are reflected from the placid surface, so is the divinity of God reflected in the purity of human life.

If there had been other than perfect silence around me, I must have thought these words had been spoken in my vicinity, but then, and for some time after, the stillness was unbroken. I cannot say I heard these words, for there was no sound at all; and yet, there the words were, perfectly unmistakable outside myself. They roused me from my reverie, just as spoken words would have done, and set me to thinking of the strangeness of the occurrence. In the midst of my thoughts the sentence was twice repeated, as though to fix it on my memory—as it most certainly was—for I do not think, even had I not written the words down immediately on my arrival at Glasgow, they would or could have been forgotten.

My companion joined me, to whom I related what had happened, and after some conversation he again took to perambulating the deck, I preferring to remain seated. In a very short time my former experience was repeated—at least the manner of it was—but the words were different, though the river again furnished the theme:—

The River bears on its bosom, alike, the tiny skiff and the huge ship, onward to their destined haven. So, on the broad bosom of Mighty Time, are all souls—pure and impure, alike—wafted onwards to the haven of Eternity. True, disasters may be frequent and wrecks many, but mechanical appliances can wrest from the hold of the sunken ship the treasure it contains; and tender loving care can draw, from the slimy and loathsome corruption of the setting, the pure gem-like soul, lifting it up into the perfect light of day.

The same process of repetition was gone through with these words, the whole leaving me greatly bewildered. After some time, during which I had been trying very hard to understand how I could possibly define or describe the manner in which these words came to me, my thoughts were again broken in upon by more words, this time—though the words were equally distinct at the moment—I failed to remember them. I only know they constituted part of a rythmical poem, descriptive of the soul's conflict with the inharmonious and retarding influences of mortal life. I thought it very beautiful and instructive, was keenly enjoying the recital, when suddenly, in the middle of a word, it stopped. I looked round startled, much as one would be at such an unlooked for pause in a piece of public oratory, and saw a woman very close to me. She was walking slowly along, passed me, returned once or twice, then sat down some distance off. Whether her coming had anything to do with the abrupt cessation of the poem, I cannot say; I only know that from that instant, the, to me, strange experience, came to an end.

Over two years ago, at King's Cross Station, I was about taking a train for the North. The usual bustle was going on around me, and I was occupied with the usual preparations, when suddenly—as if the words took form and were forced through my brain—came the intimation:

This will not last much longer. Electricity will put an end to all the noise and discomfort of travelling, at considerable increase of speed, and certainty in all operations.

Really, it was anything but pleasant. If I could have had any sensation of entrancement, being under influence, heard any audible voice—in short, had any tangible sensation—it would have been a great relief. If I had been speculating on the possibility of any improvement in the mode of travelling, or felt annoyed or disturbed by the noise,—I might have thought the words the outcome of my own mind, but all was exactly contrary. If there had been any such subject mooted publicly, I had too retired a life to have heard it discussed—having hardly even looked at a newspaper,—and as to the noise and bustle of the station, I have travelled too much and too far not to be perfectly accustomed to them. Whence came the words, and, Why?

On another occasion, one summer's evening, I was walking with two ladies along a narrow path through some fields, at that pleasant time the Scotch call the "gloaming." We were conversing pleasantly on ordinary topics, when, instantaneously, I was turned completely round, and in a most authoritative manner said: "You must go no farther—return at once into the town!" To say we were all astonished is a mild way of stating our feelings. I had no explanation to offer, no reason to give, was perfectly conscious, and certainly as much bewildered as they could possibly be. Far from feeling timid, we were looking forward with much enjoyment to our long walk through the silent lonely fields. If I remember rightly, we did not stop to discuss the matter for more than a moment, but retraced our steps, and as we went talked the matter over. Neither of my friends were Spiritualists, and one had never seen the slightest manifestation. She it was who in the course of conversation said: "You frightened me; the voice was not like yours, nor the face either; you were totally changed." Yet words and action were simultaneous and instantaneous.

One thing more and I have done. When at seances, I have frequently given very minute descriptions of people "not in the flesh"; but I do not see these people, nor am I conscious—by any change in my feelings—that I am the subject of any control; yet, not one word can I speak other than as it comes—on that subject—though on any other, I am in a perfectly normal condition.

The other morning I was speaking to a friend on the difficulty I experienced in obtaining conviction either for or against Spiritualism. In a moment I was speechless, and could only make sounds resembling a child trying to imitate the speech of those around him. There was no pain; indeed the sensation was rather funny, and my condition was the cause of much laughter to myself and friends. I

knew perfectly well what I wanted to say, but could not articulate one word; and, of course, they could not understand why I did not. This lasted some minutes, when I thought of writing an explanation: it was as follows:—

"I can't speak at all. It's awfully funny. I am quite conscious, but can't speak one intelligible—

word—I was going to write; but here my speech returned, so I spoke it. Naturally, we all were interested, and my tongue was kept pretty busy with answering questions and volunteering remarks, when, without the least intimation, I was suddenly dumb again. I tried my hardest to speak, but could not. My friends looked quite concerned; so I thought I would have recourse to writing once more to reassure them. I took up the pen and wrote:—

It's not at all pa—

I could get no further; painful—I meant to write, but it was impossible. Try as I might, I could not form one letter. Speechless and without the power to write—but with all other faculties in a natural condition—I remained some length of time, and, as suddenly as both powers went, they returned. I enclose with this communication the scrap of paper I wrote upon, and it will be seen I made some attempts resulting in scratches, but after that could not keep the pen on the paper at all, or near it.

If any reader of these notes of my experiences can explain them, I think it possible the publication of their occurrence, and also the explanation, may have interest for others as well as myself: in that hope I make them public, thoroughly believing that the fuller and freer all discussion is, the more truth is elicited, and conceiving this subject of spirit manifestation to be important enough to unloose the tongues of all who have ought to say.

"SINCERITY."

THE DIFFUSION OF SPIRITUALISM.

MR. JOSHUA FITTON AT OLDHAM.

"DR. SCOTT" GIVES SOME ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF, AND OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIS MEDIUM.

Being at Oldham on Sunday, May 22, I attended the meeting room in Union Street to hear Mr. Fitton deliver an address, and was asked by Mr. Kershaw (the chairman) to take down a few notes of the proceedings for insertion in the MEDIUM. I therefore have great pleasure in forwarding to you a summary of the evening address, &c.

I may say that Mr. Fitton is going to America during the present summer in obedience to the request of his guides, who say that he will return to England with his spiritual gifts so strongly developed as to throw into the shade all his previous spiritual manifestations.

At the evening meeting, after the medium had gone under control, the guide ("Dr. Scott") said that as he intended before the termination of the service to relate a few particulars concerning the development of the medium, he scarcely knew what text to speak upon.

Looking at an inscription upon the wall for a few moments the medium approached the chairman, and said the spirits had brought tidings of his son, who was in South Africa, to the effect that he was still ill but gradually recovering his health, and that he (the father) would receive a letter from his son about the 6th of August, the purport of which would be that all danger was past. The father was likewise informed that the spirits would from time to time bring him other messages regarding his son.

The control then spoke upon the words that Jesus addressed to his disciples—"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

The guide said these words of Jesus had given room for much thought and doubt in the Christian world. Some men seemed to take the words in a material sense; others took them figuratively. But why should he say the Christian world in preference to any other? Because the so-called Christians have, during the last two or three hundred years, been the most eager to investigate that momentous subject called death, and as a sensible explanation of that change which tends to bring that "peace which passeth all understanding," has been the most taught in Christendom, so he would say that there has been a great deal of good done in the Christian world through this inquiry; but still there has been a deal of dogmatism amongst Christians, and when asking these dogmatic sticklers about the "many mansions" of which Jesus spoke, they can tell nothing. They cannot impart anything on this subject which will give peace and full satisfaction to the human mind, and nothing has more satisfied the craving for the truth of the words than the grand truths of Spiritualism of the pres-

In the time when Jesus was on the earth-plane he spoke of his Father's kingdom in parables and symbols; as the intelligence of men of that time was not so fully developed as it now is. He thus addressed them to explain the life beyond the grave, and in the same style of language told his disciples that as they lived on this stage of existence so would their future life be; Jesus knowing that earthly mansions can be decorated and made beautiful so as to be a source of joy to their inmates and knowing how men prized such in this world he spoke of his Father's glorious kingdom in the symbolical language derived from these prevailing aspirations. Jesus knew their ignorance upon this point, and though he spoke of the "many mansions," he did not tell them that these "mansions" were in one place or in many.

Some think the "many mansions" mean many spheres; others say there are only three spheres; the first one being the one in which you now live, the second being the space which birds inhabit, and the third one being the one in which the angels dwell. He (the control) could tell them that God is everywhere. He fills all space and the whole of immensity, and the many "mansions" spoken of do exist, but not in the way that orthodox people imagine. Those on the earth-plane are now building their "mansions" for the life beyond by their actions on earth; and the words made use of by Christ mean that he has prepared a way to his Father's kingdom by his example and his precepts.

The "mansions" spoken of are just as real and tangible to the inhabitants thereof as the earth is to man. What the orthodox ministers attempt to portray of the life beyond is vague, as if you were looking through a darkened glass, and if asked to picture the future life more clearly, they will try to satisfy you by saying that what you do not comprehend it now will be known to you hereafter; and they will stye you presumptuous for wishing to know more of it than what the Bible teaches. Truly, a peculiar way of telling you about these things at the present day! Spiritualism throws a bright light upon immortality and the "many mansions," but apart from Spiritualism you cannot grasp the truth about them. As said before, you commence to build your spiritual homes while on earth, and it is left to yourselves how you build them; you can build them of jasper (figuratively speaking) or of bricks and stone, or of clay, and you can build them on the rock or upon the sand.

When on earth he (the control) was engaged in preparing people for their spiritual home, and was labouring earnestly at the work upon which he had entered, according to the teachings of his order. He preached a good deal in his day, but when he entered into the spirit-world he found out that a great deal of what he had taught was labour of no avail. He found that where he had used a kindly word it had been of more value for doing good than all his preaching and teaching in Latin and Greek; and that all those angry sentences made use of during his earthly career, and his angry looks, had been of no use at all; and that it was only his kind words, backed by his good actions that had been of value to him in the building up of the spiritual "mansions" of those under his charge, and likewise of his own spiritual home.

According to the narrow dogmas of the churches, you are taught that unless you believe in "the atoning blood of Christ" there is no hope of salvation, no matter what kind of good life you lead; they tell you that if you love your enemies and do everything that morality teaches you to be right, that all will be of no avail for your salvation if "the atoning blood of the Lamb" be ignored. All such bigoted teachings, he might say, were monstrous, and he himself had proved their falsity. What could be more senseless than the belief that no matter how good a life a man led, unless he believed in his prayer-book and went to church or chapel he would be damned in the life hereafter? All such narrow ideas were mere phantasies of the weak brains of bigoted dogmatists. Do you not see in daily life men who are infamously wicked in doing evil to their fellow men by word and deed, and yet who are studiously careful in attending their church and scrupulously adhering to the outward form of what their faith tells them to do, yet whose own inward mind is openly antagonistic to the beautiful teachings of Jesus. The man who leads such a life and thinks not of the world to come till on his deathbed, has little cause to look hopefully upon the future world into which he is about to enter. The minister may joyfully cry out if the man repent at the eleventh hour, and say that his sins are wiped out; but if such things were true—that a man could atone at the last hour for all the wrong he had done during his earth-life, no matter however heinous that wrong may have been,—What occasion is there for him to live as a Christian all his life, if at the last hour he can by believing in the blood of Christ, obtain remission for all his past misdeeds? He begged to say that all such teachings were fallacious. As a man sows during his earth-life, so will his reaping be in the spirit-world. You can only expect to be mercifully and richly rewarded in proportion to how you have been just to others in deeds of love and kindness; and if you are rich in these, so will you reap a wealth of love when you enter into the spirit-world. If your life has been to lift up your neighbour and yourself, your duty will have been done in regard to the "mansions" of which Christ spoke; as he meant that as you pass the present

life, so will your "mansion" be in his Father's kingdom. Cultivate your life here, then, and make it pure.

The same passions that you harbour while on earth will still fling around you, in the next world, their glamour; and so we say, cultivate good associations here that your spiritual associations may be good. All the dogmas taught you by the churches will avail you nothing in the next world, unless your life on earth has been good. If you have a bad feeling to your neighbours, that feeling will cling to you when you enter into your spiritual "mansion," and you will have no peace of mind until that bad feeling is removed. Sow, then, good seed while on earth, that your reaping in the spirit-world may be glorious. If your life here has not been good, you will find in the land beyond spirits who will kindly help you to remove away any impediments to your spiritual advancement. Thought in the spirit-world is real, so those things you enjoyed in thought while here will there be real and tangible, and the beauties of that world are so transcendently lovely that words would fail to describe them. In that bright world children who were carried away while yet young, and who knew little of anything of a mother's love, find there spirit-mothers glad enough to nurse and train them. In that bright world are found none of the dissensions which are so rife here, but everything is there working in unison. All the noble ideas of past ages are there a glorious reality. Whatever be your position on earth unless you strive to build your spirit-"mansion" on the lines spoken of by Jesus, you will there be unmasked, and if your earthly deeds of goodness have been few, you will there be poor indeed.

THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDIUM.

After the address the control gave an interesting account of the different stages of development of the medium. Mediumship, he said, was a gift, and could not be acquired; but in the case of his medium the gift was hereditary. When a child, the medium was weak, and it was thought at one time that he would not live long, as he showed many signs of weakness. These signs recurred time after time, till he was 16 years of age, when it was thought by his own family doctor that consumption would terminate his young life.

He (the control) said the mediumship of the person he was controlling manifested itself when he was about 12 years of age. On one occasion when a number of his friends were assembled, he made the remark that he felt sleepy and lost consciousness, and after he recovered he said that he had had "such a nice sleep." Those around him began to laugh, and one of them said, "Do you call that a sleep? Why, you have been gabbling for an hour." The gift showed itself when he attended school and on other occasions. Clairvoyance afterwards developed itself in the medium. At that time a medium must have a good nerve to stand against all the ridicule cast upon his gifts, and unfortunately mediums have not strong nerves, and consequently feel more the sneers of the world than others. It was not necessary that his medium should sit down at table for the gift to show itself. But the spirits were determined that the medium should not suffer in worldly prospects from this gift, and he had not suffered from the exercise of it.

By-and-bye, the medium obtained a situation as organist at a dissenting place of worship in Middleton, but the conditions to good mediumship failed him there, and the spirits felt it to be their duty to remove him from the place, and yet in such a way as not to impugn his musical capacity, and so, on more than one occasion the piping of the organ was made to go wrong by the spirits. A council of those in authority was called to investigate the subject, but no outward flaw could be seen in the instrument, still something seemed to be wrong; and they called in Mr. Whittaker, an organist of the town, who tested the instrument, and the spirits being still determined to effect the removal of the medium, tampered with the organ even when Mr. Whittaker played upon it, and the gentleman said that something was wrong with the instrument, but he could detect no outward sign of it, and the organ was for a time out of use, undergoing repairs. The spirits, however, were satisfied, as they had caused the removal of the medium, which was what they wanted. Afterwards he went to Littleborough and obtained a situation in a family where his mediumship was fostered by the household, for the lady by whom he was engaged has, through his mediumship, seen, caressed, and talked to her own child, therefore those present may judge how highly prized their medium's gift must be in that household.

Prior to this latest phase of his mediumship he visited London, and had a sitting with Mr. Williams, and through that gentleman's mediumship he saw and talked with "John King," who told him that if he would sit for a few months for materialisations, he ("John King") would try to materialise himself at the Littleborough circle. The medium returned home, and followed the injunctions given, and at last "John King" did materialise himself at the Littleborough circle, and the first time "John King" did appear, the spirit not being fully developed, so frightened the medium that he could not be persuaded to sit any longer that evening. The medium has since sat many times to strengthen the development of this form of mediumship and various materialised spirits have appeared and spoken at his circle, many of which have been recognised

by the members of the circle. He would shortly visit America according to the behests of his guides, in order to develop still more the wonderful gift bestowed upon him, as those across the Atlantic being more in sympathy with Spiritualism than what Englishmen are, a visit to that country will tend to develop his mediumship, and the spirits have informed him that eventually they will be able to materialise themselves in a public circle in presence of himself and of the sitters, and that they (the spirits) will be able to address the audience.

Mr. Drinkwater, Mr. Fitton (the father of the medium), and others corroborated part of what the control had told the audience about the medium, and Mr. Tetlow, of Heywood, said he had at various times seen and talked with his own deceased sister, who passed away many years ago, and words would fail to express the joy that he had experienced from meeting face to face one who was dear to him before she entered the spirit-world.

G. BROWN.

11, Brampton Street, Stockport Road,
Manchester, May 23, 1881.

On Sunday evening, the 29th inst., says a correspondent, Mr. J. Veitch lectured at Quebec Hall, taking for his subject, "The Claims of the Church." He dealt with it in a most lucid manner, completely exposing the fallacious claims, which for centuries have been set up by adherents of the churches. He traced in a most graphic manner the origin of the churches, and showed very forcibly that Jesus on whom these churches are supposed to be founded, gave no authority to them to assert these claims.

RULES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.—The phenomena cannot be successfully elicited in very warm, sultry weather, in extreme cold, when thunder and lightning and magnetic disturbances prevail, when the atmosphere is very moist, or when there is much rain, or storms of wind. A warm, dry atmosphere is best, as it presents the mean between all extremes, and agrees with the harmonious state of man's organism which is proper for the manifestation of spiritual phenomena. A subdued light or darkness increases the power and facilitates control.

LOCAL CONDITIONS.—The room in which a circle is held for development or investigation should be set apart for that purpose. It should be comfortably warmed and ventilated, but draughts or currents of air should be avoided. Those persons composing the circle should meet in the room about an hour before the experiments commence; the same sitters should attend each time, and occupy the same places. This maintains the peculiar magnetic conditions necessary to the production of the phenomena. A developing circle exhausts power, or uses it up.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS.—The phenomena are produced by a vital force emanating from the sitters, which the spirits use as a connecting link between themselves and objects. Certain temperaments give off this power; others emit an opposite influence. If the circle is composed of persons with suitable temperaments, manifestations will take place readily; if the contrary be the case, much perseverance will be necessary to produce results. If both kinds of temperaments are present, they require to be arranged so as to produce harmony in the psychical atmosphere evolved from them. The physical manifestations especially depend upon temperament. If a circle does not succeed, changes should be made in the sitters till the proper conditions are supplied.

MENTAL CONDITIONS.—All forms of mental excitement are detrimental to success. Those with strong and opposite opinions should not sit together; opinionated, dogmatic, and positive people are better out of the circle and room. Parties between whom there are feelings of envy, hate, contempt, or other unharmonious sentiment should not sit at the same circle. The vicious and crude should be excluded from all such experiments. The minds of the sitters should be in a passive rather than an active state, possessed by the love of truth and of mankind. One harmonious and fully-developed individual is invaluable in the formation of a circle.

THE CIRCLE should consist of from three to ten persons of both sexes, and sit round an oval, oblong, or square table. Cane-bottomed chairs or those with wooden seats are preferable to stuffed chairs. Mediums and sensitive should never sit on stuffed chairs, cushions, or sofas used by other persons, as the influences which accumulate in the cushions often affect the mediums unpleasantly. The active and quiet, the fair and dark, the ruddy and pale, male and female, should be seated alternately. If there is a medium present, he or she should occupy the end of the table with the back to the north. A mellow mediumistic person should be placed on each side of the medium, and those next positive should be at the opposite corners. No person should be placed behind the medium. A circle may represent a horseshoe magnet, with the medium placed between the poles.

CONDUCT AT THE CIRCLE.—The sitters should place their hands on the table, and endeavour to make each other feel easy and comfortable. Agreeable conversation, singing, reading, or invocation may be engaged in—anything that will tend to harmonise the minds of those present, and unite them in one purpose, is in order. By engaging in such exercises the circle may be made very profitable apart from the manifestations. Sitters should not desire anything in particular, but unite in being pleased to receive that which is best for all. The director of the circle should sit opposite the medium, and put all questions to the spirit, and keep order. A recorder should take notes of the conditions and proceedings. Manifestations may take place in a few minutes, or the circle may sit many times before any result occurs. Under these circumstances it is well to change the positions of the sitters, or introduce new elements, till success is achieved. When the table begins to tilt, or when raps occur, do not be too impatient to get answers to questions. When the table can answer questions by giving three taps or raps for "Yes" and one for "No," it may assist in placing the sitters properly. The spirits or intelligences which produce the phenomena should be treated with the same courtesy and consideration as you would desire for yourselves if you were introduced into the company of strangers for their personal benefit. At the same time, the sitters should not on any account allow their judgment to be warped or their good sense imposed upon by spirits, whatever their professions may be. Reason with them kindly, firmly, and considerately.

INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRITS is carried on by various means. The simplest is three taps of the table or raps for "Yes," and one for "No." By this means the spirits can answer in the affirmative or negative. By calling over the alphabet the spirits will rap at the proper letters to constitute a message. Sometimes the hand of a sitter is shaken, then a pencil should be placed in the hand, when the spirits may write by it automatically. Other sitters may become entranced, and the spirits use the vocal organs of such mediums to speak. The spirits sometimes impress mediums, while others are clairvoyant, and see the spirits, and messages from them written in luminous letters in the atmosphere. Sometimes the table and other objects are lifted, moved from place to place, and even through closed doors. Patiently and kindly seek for tests of identity from loved ones in the spirit-world, and exercise caution respecting spirits who make extravagant pretensions of any kind.

Especially proceeding with their investigations, inquirers into Spiritualism, should correspond with Mr. Burns, Proprietor of the Spiritual Institute, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1, who will gladly forward a packet of publications and useful information gratis. Stamps should in all cases be enclosed for return postage. Deputations of mediums or lecturers may be arranged for in any locality where public meetings or seances can be instituted.

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SEANCES AND MEETINGS DURING THE WEEK AT THE
SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW.

THURSDAY.—School of Spiritual Teachers at 8 o'clock.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 1881.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Another of Archdeacon Colley's funeral sermons! Some readers will think we intend making funeral literature a specialty of the MEDIUM, as we have had not a few utterances of that complexion of late. Indeed there is much to commend such discourses; full of sound, instructive, and consoling thought, presenting a great contrast to the usual run of memorial oratory. In this connection we have the principles and teachings of Spiritualism practically applied to the needs of human life. Many an unknown reader has suffered from bereavement, and perchance may find consolation in the words that have been spoken in other cases. Death is a most momentous event, the importance of which cannot be underrated, though phenomena may be denied, and if our oral teachers can throw light on that great transition, they are effecting much good.

We have this week two discourses on the "many mansions" text. It is hard to know why there is so much made of such a vague statement. Possibly because, as a whole the Bible is so barren of information on the state of man after death, that the merest allusion is snatched at with avidity, and spun out into volumes. It was never intended, that any, or all of the Bibles should be a finality in respect to man's knowledge of the laws of nature—spiritual as well as material. There is more claim for finality in principles, which never change, however much man's mind may become expanded in details. On this point the human spirit is quite as infallible as the Bible has been claimed to be. The difference between right and wrong, the admonition to love, to be clean morally and physically, etc., is enforced on, and felt by, all however ignorant of spiritual states and physical conditions they may be. True spiritual teaching then, begins with the intuitions which are infallible, in so far, that they are the only means of self-consciousness, as it expands itself into relation with others. Every man therefore should be his own pope.

The Revised New Testament has found an immediate sale of millions of copies. There is a genuine intellectual interest in the merits of the work. For once in the course of our lives we find points of scripture almost as popularly and universally discussed as the chances of the favourites for the Derby. In all this agitation of mind on New Testament topics, there is solid ground for congratulation. It is a most healthy form of thought, untinged with slavish fear or subserviency to authority. The book and its new edition are taken in a common sense way on their manifest merits. That there is unlimited good to be derived from the study of all holy

writings of the past, we joyously admit; but this study to be useful must be untainted by fetishism, and entirely free from the intolerant doctrines of priestly conclusions.

Some little regret has been expressed in some quarters, that in the Lord's Prayer, the phrase "Deliver us from Evil" has been changed into "Deliver us from the Evil One." It is supposed that this latter reading favours the supposition of a personal devil—an exploded idea, which it is not at all advisable to resuscitate. Now, if it be thought of for a moment, it will be seen that the ordinary translation is sheer nonsense. "Evil" is not a thing, and we cannot be delivered from it, for it cannot assail us. Evil is the property or quality of a thing or person, hence the logical expression of the mind's position is—deliver me from the evil thing or "one," and then I will most certainly escape from the evil quality.

The old form of the petition leaves the source of Evil undetermined. It is all in that condition of satisfactory vagueness so congenial to the theological mind. The revised form traces evil—moral evil—the cause of man's sin, to some "one," some mind, some person. "Lead us not into temptation" is thus shown to mean, "do not bring us into contact with the evil one—deliver us from him or her."

Who is this Evil One? The devil, to be sure. But who is the devil! Why, Satan, Auld Nick, Clootie, and all the rest cited in Burns's celebrated "Address." This throws no light on the subject. Where then shall we look for an explanation? To Spiritualism. In the olden time, Spiritual Teachers knew something of spiritual science. They were not content with patching up old Bibles and making new ones out of the used up material. No, they went direct to the source, to man's spiritual nature and found out its tendencies, its surroundings and their mutual relations. Every human being was thus found to be attended by the Good and the Evil "One," or Spirit. This portion of the prayer was directed to the Supreme Spirit, for spiritual protection and guidance—not in respect to the Good "One," for that was not needed—but to be led away and delivered from the Evil Spirit. The word "one" gives point to the petition, and keeps before the mind of the person repeating the prayer, the momentous fact that in uttering the words he is actually recognising the presence of an invisible antagonist, and seeking aid to maintain an independent spiritual position in respect to him, and be led and delivered by an opposite and therefore good power, to that condition of spirit-life, which will give "power and kingdom and glory" to the divine aspect of things. Thus a knowledge of Spiritualism has manifestly preceded the formulation of the Lord's Prayer.

The article on Bible Spiritualism this week is truly eloquent. Whether Moses was an actual fact, and did what is recorded of him, is little matter for concern, seeing that "Ouranoi" is himself possessed of the ideal Moses spirit. And so are many others at this moment of time. Let us not despise ourselves in comparison with the shadow of antique heroes; but stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight of to-day, feeling and acknowledging one another's worth and value.

The Free-Love movement is no more peculiar to Spiritualism than it is to Christianity. The streets of London are crowded with unfortunates and their patrons, almost wholly derived from Christian families. If "gay" men and women assume to be Spiritualists, they candidly avow their habit of life in spiritualistic society, as they would on the Epsom race course, in company with many noble and honourable members of her Majesties most Christian Houses of Legislature—so spotless, indeed, as not to be able to admit a man candid enough to say he is an Atheist, and publisher of something still more respectable than the morals of the race course, and the Haymarket of our Christian metropolis. Let the Christian sect or country that is without sin, cast a stone at Spiritualism!

A certain proportion of loose characters have rolled into spirit-circles, and there they have the power to aurally contaminate susceptible persons who may sit with them. But the person who is a shade better than themselves is either injured or disgusted, and does not seek such company a second time. The Free-Love phalanx in this country has not even attempted to be a party in our Movement, and the poor creatures who espoused the cause of the apostles of that "principle" (!) are in a state of social isolation and personal abjectness—pitiable rather than censurable. We do not think Spiritualism has made men and women worse in this respect, though it has given prominence in a novel manner to that which was agitating to manifest itself in some other way. On the other hand, we have listened to the testimony of many men and women as to the beneficial and elevating effect which Spiritualism has had on the passions. After all, there is no one any better than he or she should be; and Spiritualism, as an agitation of thought and impulses, requires all our watchful care. At the same time it is far from expedient to attach to our beloved Cause any stigma which belongs to human nature in general, and which the spirit-world is labouring to control.

KIND THINGS SAID BY OUR READERS ABOUT US
AND THE "MEDIUM."

It is not from egotism; it is not from any desire for self-aggrandisement in any form that we print occasionally extracts from kind letters that reach us. These generous words have been said from the heart, believed as true, with a good motive, and hence must effect a good purpose.

We have suffered most cruelly from detraction. The evil tongue has done all it could to blast our spiritual work and ruin our position. Amidst it all we have been sustained, and when support failed and we had to work with our hands day and night, the MEDIUM has improved as it never has done before. All this astonishes us above measure, and has done more to convince us of the power of the spirit world than all other phenomena; for our course has been itself a "phenomenon."

If words of enmity and falsehood can do evil, then words of kindness and truth must do good and "overcome evil." We are therefore impressed to repeat some of the words that come to us, knowing that if a spirit of Love, Union, and Confidence seconded by judicious activity, pervaded the readers of the MEDIUM, they might soon increase by thousands and become a power in the land of unspeakable importance:

A medical gentleman writes:—

"Your late MEDIUMS are GRAND."

A gentleman who is a powerful healing medium, quite unknown to fame, though held in high esteem by the many he has benefited, writes:—

"Last week's MEDIUM is a truly excellent one. Please send me a copy of it to send away, also one of your next week's MEDIUM, or rather, this week's, now."

A Staffordshire Reader encloses stamps with this request:

"I am going into Gloucestershire, and they will expect me to bring something new about Spiritualism, and as I cannot spare any of my own numbers, send me copies of the MEDIUM for April 30, 1880, April 15 and May 27, 1881."

A Lancashire correspondent thus expresses himself, when enclosing stamps for a parcel of this issue of the MEDIUM for distribution:—

"I and one or two others distribute our spare spiritual papers, addressing them to persons by whom we think they will be read; and I must say that the class of articles which have latterly occupied the columns of the MEDIUM are calculated to command the attention of almost any intelligent person, whatever may be his religious belief. For some months past, it seems to me that the general tone of your paper has gradually assumed a more elevated character, many of the articles, both original and selected, bearing the impress of a high spiritual origin, whilst others have been of a grandly progressive and advanced order. Without uttering a single word in depreciation of any of your spiritualistic contemporaries—each of which I believe to be doing a good work in its own sphere—I must say that, so far as my own feelings are concerned it would cause less pain to part with any of the three others than I weekly peruse, than I should experience in being deprived of the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK. I hope you will soon overcome the uphill work that, from personal experience I know to be the inevitable accompaniment of such a venture as that of yours."

A good friend in Co. Durham encloses his "mite" to help on the work and says:—

"It is very, very sad that the heritage of the benefactors of humanity should be that they are constrained to pass through such fiery ordeals. It has ever been so, and it would seem from your own grinding and bitter sufferings that it is likely to continue."

"Pity it is that there is not a better appreciation amongst all classes, but especially amongst those who are what are termed the moneyed classes, of such noble and self-denying efforts, so as to induce them to sustain them with greater generosity. If all could be induced to contribute their mite that derive benefit from the MEDIUM, the suffering if not removed entirely, would be greatly minimised. I hope a better time will come."

These thoughts could be multiplied in the bosoms of thousands of readers whose expressions do not reach us. The best of Spiritualists are not the most demonstrative, and we have no authority to mention the names of the foregoing writers.

Our uphill struggle from the first, and our severe labour and sufferings these few years past have been part of the spiritual programme. Thank God the flag has been upheld when frantic efforts have been made by its assumed friends to drag it down and trample it in the mud of selfishness and dishonour. Certain classes of spirits have been for long striving for the superiority, and the spiritual suffering thereby involved has been even more harassing than physical labour and worldly concerns. Superior to all enemies there has been a spiritual power still superior, trust in which has been a source of strength.

Enclosing stamps a well known Spiritualist writes:—

"Send a few of next week's MEDIUM for circulation. The MEDIUM improves with every number. It is as necessary for the Spiritualist, as food is for the body."

Since the foregoing was in type we have received the following letter from our respected friend in Jersey. We may remark that, as we abstain from commenting on our contemporaries, we take no part in any expression of opinion given below. We have been, it is true, subjected to very gross treatment, but we have felt that there is a vindicating power, and that we may take to ourselves the monition of old—"Put up thy sword into the sheath."

The letter to which we allude is as follows:—

SPIRITUAL TONE OF THE "MEDIUM AND
DAYBREAK."

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—In stating her views with reference to the present high, and truly spiritual tone of the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, Lady Caithness has very kindly made herself the echo of the very large majority of your numerous readers.

Many rejoice with her Ladyship for the change which has taken place in the general contents of your columns; a change which may be taken to date from the time when some of your former very clever correspondents thought that the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK was no longer a fit and proper channel to publish their productions.

I for one at the time thought it a misfortune for you, but that opinion very soon vanished, and now I think you ought to add an article to your litany, and thank God to have been delivered from such friends.

Being always desirous to give a helping hand for any scheme which may be conducive to the good of true Spiritualism, I came forward unsolicited with tangible support to establish a weekly, in which your former clever correspondents would readily find the means of publishing articles which I thought would enlighten believers,—and now what is the result?

Whilst these gentlemen made use of the MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK, they kept within bounds, and some of their articles not always approved of by the religious portion of your readers, still others gave a good deal of instruction, and nothing really objectionable, but (l'appetit vient en mangeant) their boldness has grown to that degree, that many of their articles are such, that they positively shock nine tenths of those who consent to read them; in fact they would not DARE publish what they have written of the Blessed Jesus Christ, of any private individual, for fear of being called to account for libel.

It is to be regretted that men of such talent and profound learning should think proper to publish their outrageous views in a paper which professes to plead the cause of Spiritualism, and what is the result?

Their adopted channel has only existed one year, during which time all the donations have been swallowed up, and the funds so exhausted that the poor Editor is made the scape-goat and dismissed.

But alas, a cause which ought to be held most sacred is brought (through such articles) into contempt by those who might by proper management be brought to be bright ornaments of true Spiritualism.

I say therefore, take courage, Dear Sir, yours is a noble mission, fight with the arms of truth and Godly Spiritualism, teach REAL Christianity in all its beauty, and your reward will be great.

Jersey, May 30th, 1881.

"A JERSEY SPIRITUALIST."

THE STORY OF "Y AY ALI'S"
EARTH LIFE.

This Poem was obtained under somewhat peculiar conditions through "Y Ay Ali's" medium, chiefly by means of automatic writing.

One evening, whilst preparing to go out to visit a gentleman who was very ill, "Ali's" Medium commenced to speak in a poetical strain, which attracted the attention of a short-hand writer, who succeeded in obtaining the first sentences without interruption, of the inspirational utterances. When about one hundred lines had been obtained, the Medium went on the intended errand of love, and much regret was felt that work so important had broken off what had been so beautifully begun.

On retiring to bed that night the Medium took a thick copy-book to her room and placed it on a camp-stool by her bedside so as to make a level stand for the candle. Next morning, when she awoke, there were between two and three hundred lines closely written manuscript in the book which had served for her candle stand. The handwriting and spelling were precisely

same as her own, but she had no knowledge of the subjects treated upon, which were deeply interesting to her as well as her friends.

Every night the book was placed in the same position, and the Story at intervals was continued.

The style of composition somewhat reminds one of Longfellow's "Hiawatha," of which the Medium is a great admirer.

There is, however, one point to be noted with respect to the name of "Ali's" father. When a few pages had been written the Medium thought that "Ali" must have been the daughter of Montezuma, and this preconceived notion may have led to an error, as "Ali," it is supposed, did not know the English language, and could only place thoughts in the Medium's mind which may in some cases have been incorrectly expressed especially with regard to proper names.

The beauty of the Poem, with the touching incidents therein so graphically described, has made it much admired by those who have had the pleasure of hearing it read by "Ali's" Medium.

"Y AY ALI'S" STORY.

(Continued from page 330).

At the opening of the temple,
All the people came together;
And, according to their custom
Bringing vessels filled with water—
Water to prepare their food—
That their God might see, and bless it,
Consecrate it to their use.
These they placed before the temple,
And they kneeling lay beside them
With their faces looking eastward,
Watched and waited for the coming
Of their Sun-God in the heavens.

Just within the temple's door-way,
Near the altar, stood the old men
Looking eastward like the others.
Soon their God, in godlike splendour,
Rose, and blessed the kneeling people;
Entered at the open door-way,
Stepped across the shining floor,
Lingered long upon the altar,
Smiled upon his glittering image
That was placed above the altar,
Till the jewels shone with brightness,
That the eye could not behold it:
All his glory was reflected
In the rainbow-coloured fires
That the precious gems held captive.
How they darted forth to praise him—
To express the people's praises,
And the love they bore their God!
Long they knelt and long they waited,
And their hearts grew soft within them;
All dissensions were forgotten—
All the ancient feuds were buried;
There they vowed before the temple,
They would henceforth live as brothers,
Bound by ties of love fraternal;
Work and strive with one another,
For the welfare of the nation.
Thus united and thus striving
They would rise above all nations—
In unity would lie their strength—
Till like a giant among pigmies,
Would they be among the nations.
And a Ruler would be chosen
Who would teach, and give the law:
He would rule, and he would teach them,
And by his laws would they abide.
Long they talked, and long they waited,
Till the water in their vessels
Rose like smoke before their faces;
Then they touched their brows together,
Clasped their hand in sign of friendship,
And waited for the old man's blessing.

There, among the old men, stood one
Who much older was than any;
Very old, he was, and feeble,
And his back was bent and weak—
Stood and leant upon his staff,
With his head bent down before them.
His hair was long, and white like sheep's hair,
On his shoulders it fell clustering.
His eyes were dim and blind with old age,
But his voice rang clear and loud.
When the people were departing—
Raised his voice and thus addressed them;—

"Stay, my children! listen to me,
For, behold! I dreamed a dream;

And, in the vision there came to me,
From the land of the departed,
A messenger from your Sun-God—
From the land of the departed,
From the land of happy spirits,—
And he spake to me in this wise:—

'I, your God, am well pleased with you—
'See your love, and to repay you,
'I will send to you a Ruler
'Who shall teach, and give the law;
'I will send to you a young man—
'Who shall love, and rule my people—
'Tall and straight as young pine sapling,
'As young pine tree of the forest;
'With face as white as wood fire ashes
'When the flame has left the embers;
'And his hair shall be as golden
'As the sunbeams playing round you;
'And his eyes like to the colour
'Of my pathway in the heavens.
'He shall dwell within this temple,
'Heal the sick and teach the law.
'All the poor shall hither come,
'He shall clothe and feed and help them.
'You will love him for his beauty,
'Love him for his truth and goodness.
'You will give your daughters to him,
'You will give him gold and jewels,
'You will give him slaves and cattle.
'Wisely will he use your substance;
'Wisely will he rule my people,
'And his children shall inherit
'All that I bestow upon him:
'Gifts of healing, gifts of seeing,
'Gifts of speaking, and of teaching.' "

Then the old man finished speaking,
And in silence looked about him,
At the people's wondering faces.
Of each other, low, they asked:—
"What is this strange thing he tells us?
"What are these strange words he speaks?"
Sadly, then, they looked upon him,
And in whispering tones they said,—
"He is dreaming, he is doting—
"He is old, and he is dreaming—
"It is ever so with old men."
And they pitied him sincerely,
In their hearts they had compassion,
For they loved the old man truly;
But they doubted—sadly doubted—
That the vision was from God:
For, among the thousand nations
There were none who wore white faces,
None with hair of golden colour,
None with eyes as blue as heaven.

Stepped the old man from among them,
On his staff he leant him downward,
And the people rose to follow;
When their footsteps were arrested
By a rippling flow of water
That from 'tween the marble's crevice
In the floor, before the altar,
Rose up from the old man's footprints—
Higher, higher still it rose,
Till it reached the roof of porphyry.
Dumb with awe, the people lingered
With astonishment, and wondering,
Who, but God, could such a gift send,—
Who but God, who loved his people,
Knew their dearth of cooling water;
Who could such a precious gift send—
Such a precious, priceless gift send—
From the spot, too, where the old man
Saw his vision, and related—
From his very footsteps rose it!
"The old man has spoken truly,
"From our God has come this vision,
"He has set a seal upon it—
"Sealed it with this precious fountain."
Never more would they bear water
From the stream within the mountains;
They would bring their vessels empty,
And at God's own fountain fill them,
For, already had he blessed it
With his presence in the temple.
So, they went their way rejoicing—
Glad in heart and very joyful—
To their daily occupations.

Long they watched and long they waited
For the Ruler and the Teacher—
Waited till their hearts were weary,
Watched until their hearts were sick,
Till the old man's words had faded,
And become as of the past.

At last there came a swelling rumour
From the shore beside the sea,
That a youth of wondrous beauty
Had been seen among the trees,
Dressed in garments strangely fashioned
Of a cloth unseen before,
With a face as pale as ashes,
With long hair like threads of gold,
Tall and straight as forest pine tree,
Speaking in an unknown tongue.
And they said, "This must be he
"Concerning whom the prophet spake
"At the opening of the temple."

Then they brought him to the city.
And the people came to see him.
With one voice they cried and shouted:—

"It is he, our King, our Ruler!
Tall he is as young pine sapling,
Straight as pine trees of the forest,
His face is white as wood fire ashes
When the flame has left the embers,
And his hair is bright and golden
As the sunbeams playing round us,
And his eyes the very colour
Of God's pathway in the heavens;
He's the Ruler who was promised,
At the opening of the temple.
Build the fires around the city
To inform the other nations,
Let the music ring out loudly,
Let the young men praise and sing,
Let the maidens dance before him.
He shall be our Lord and King,
He the son of our bright God is,
He shall dwell within the temple,
He shall rest on softest couches,
He shall eat of finest dishes.
We will give our daughters to him,
We will give him gold and jewels,
We will give him slaves and cattle;
We will love him for his beauty,
Love him for his truth and goodness."

Then there came the very old man
Who had dreamed and seen the vision;
Bent the knee before the stranger,
With great joy his voice was shaking
As he thus addressed the youth:—

"Welcome! Welcome! Son of God!
We for your coming long have waited.
Old am I, and very weary
With the weight of years upon me,
But, now that mine eyes have seen you
An I can give their testimony
To the nations dwelling near us,
That thou art the Lord and Ruler
Whom our God hath promised to us,
I can lay me down in quiet,
And in joy lay by my staff,
Now prepared to take my journey
To the land of the departed—
To the land of happy spirits."

Then they bore the pale-faced stranger
To his home, within the temple;
Saying, each to one another:—
"He is very tired and weary;
"Many days he must have journeyed
"From the Sun, our God, his Father:
"Bring him food of choicest dishes,
"Bring him wine, and fruit, and rice;
"Let him rest within the shadows,
"And our daughters shall keep watch."

April 22 23, 1879.

(To be continued.)

[This Poem was commenced in last week's Number.]

PURITANICAL GLOOM VERSUS SPIRITUAL LIGHT.

In swathings of folly men's minds are made cripples,
And linger through life with no sweet walks in store,
For them the bright wave shows not laughter by ripples,
But life is a pit, and black hell looms before.
Remove error's cloud, and the God of truth shineth,
Purist huggeth his shroud and habitually whineth.

How different the man, trusting God-guided Reason
Despising not angels, the guardians of men,
He thanks God, and fearless through life's chequer'd season:
E'en lighted for him is its furthermost glen.
For the mists of credulity furnish no pall,
False Religion, False Science him cannot enthral.

—CAMBOR.

MEDIUMSHIP—THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

A SEANCE AT WEIR'S COURT, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

MONDAY, MAY 23RD, 1881.

To the Editor.—Sir,—Through the kindness of Miss Wood and the friends at Newcastle, Mr. Edge, of Llandudno, and myself were enabled to attend a seance at the Spiritual Evidence Society's rooms.

The cabinet, which is a square one, is formed on two sides by the solid walls of the building. I examined the interior with a light, and found that a small patch of the mortar had been broken off the wall, doubtless by some one determined to see for himself whether the wall was solid as the Committee say it is. The other two sides of the cabinet are formed by upright pillars of wood securely fastened to the walls and covered with muslin. On one side is a door, the framework of which is made of wood and covered with muslin, all the screws and fastenings are outside, and out of the reach of the medium inside.

After Miss Wood had taken her seat in the cabinet I closed the door and fastened it with two three-inch screws. The outside of the cabinet is draped with green curtains from the top of the room to the floor. The space between the curtains and the cabinet is about half a yard, and in this space the spirits are supposed to build themselves a temporary body.

After having fastened the cabinet door I took my seat and joined in the singing for a few minutes, when we saw a form clothed in white standing at the opening of the curtain, and then she walked into the room. Her method of answering questions was by nodding her head three times for Yes, and she shook it from left to right for No, we were thus enabled to find out that she claimed to be the mother of Mr Edge, and going to him she gave him a kiss. I got her to stand upon a weighing machine so that we might have an idea of the amount of matter taken up. I had seen some weighed on the Sunday, but was not at all satisfied, as the drapery always hung loosely about the machine. In this case I asked the form to lift her drapery up so that we could see the machine. This she did, and taking her hands off the front bar of the machine stood clearly upon it. The weight registered was 26 pounds. I saw her lift both feet on to the machine, and as I was close to the machine I distinctly saw her stride off, one foot following the other in the most natural manner.

She retired behind the curtains, and instantly "Pocha" stepped out and asked me to go and inspect the cabinet, this I did, and found the door closed and the screws just as I had left them. Every one was then invited to inspect the screws, and expressed themselves satisfied.

After "Pocha" came a spirit known by the name of "Bob," quite a muscular fellow, who shook hands with me. I asked him to go to Mr. Edge and shake his hand, and to be sure and let him feel how very material he was. This he did, and very soon made Mr. Edge cry "Hold, enough."

As I intended writing an account of the seance, I wished to be certain about everything I saw, and to be sure about the height of this male form I asked him to stand shoulder to shoulder with Mr. Thompson, a gentleman present at the seance. This he did, and from being a few inches shorter than Mr. Thompson he gradually grew at my request, until he stood some two inches taller than Mr. Thompson.

A female form tried to de-materialise outside the cabinet, but failed; in making the attempt she lost so much power that she could not get back behind the curtain, and Mr. Hare had to assist her.

Thus ended a most successful seance, at the close of which I unscrewed the cabinet door and found Miss Wood just as I left her at the beginning of the seance.

I cannot close this account without thanking Miss Wood and the Newcastle friends for the kindness shown to Mr. Edge and myself during our stay in Newcastle. These seances are not conducted like a freemason's lodge where you have to give the sign and countersign before you can be admitted, but where they hold out the right hand of fellowship to all seeking the Truth. Mr. Haydock informs me that there are thousands in Newcastle and all over the country, who have during the last nine or ten years attended these seances, and have satisfied themselves of the reality of spirit-communion.—Yours etc.,
4, Preston New Road, Blackburn. R. WOLSTENHOLME.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—Mr. Wolstenholme, of Blackburn, has sent me a copy of his report of seance held at Weir's Court, Newcastle-on-Tyne, May 23rd, at which I was present, and I hereby certify to its truthfulness.—Yours very truly,
May 31, 1881. T. EDGE.

MANCHESTER.—Mr. Wallis will occupy the Grosvenor Street Platform on June 5, and give a farewell address previous to his departure for America. We are anxious for as many friends as possible to be present and give liberally, as Mr. Wallis will receive the entire collection to help him on his journey to America.—W. T. BRAHAM, Sec.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LUMINOUS PHENOMENA.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—In the MEDIUM of May 27th, appeared a report of a seance held on the 21st, at 39, Plane Street, Oldham. As one of the searchers of the medium, I quite coincide with Mr. Tetlow's report with one addition. As the spirit, who purports to come from the planet Jupiter, was passing away, I saw what appeared first as a spark, which gradually enlarged to the size of my hand, but quite round; then from that seemed to add around it all the colours of the rainbow, and went on increasing in size until it seemed to fill the whole room with the most lovely sight I ever beheld (so far as variegated colour was concerned). Then it changed into one mass of white light, when it disappeared and all was darkness. No other sitter saw this. Now, Sir, as I am not aware that I possess any clairvoyant power whatever, I should be glad if you, or any of your readers could give any explanation of this, to me, most extraordinary phenomenon. All circles, I believe, differ in their experiences (more or less) therefore I think it wise to give our experiences occasionally, and some one will be benefited thereby. Some other party may have, at some time or other, had a similar experience to mine, and be able to explain my difficulty.—I remain, yours truly,
Plymouth, May 30, 1881. JOSHUA WOOD.

SHALL I ALLOW MYSELF TO BECOME A MEDIUM?

The air is rife with portents of spiritual work which is almost in our midst. We receive many letters asking for advice, and can afford very faulty replies on account of the severe pressure of worldly affairs. We print one letter that others may read it. The inquiry to which it replies is a sample of many, and comes from a gentleman in an important religious position, but who is mediumistic, and fears that he may be controlled in the pulpit and thus commit himself, if he allows himself to be developed as a medium. The following letter was written in answer to his—

"My dear Sir,—It is only the intense application to work which always subjects me, that prevented my replying to your note of the 16th.

"I realise the importance of your situation from yours of the 27th.

"What shall I say? It is almost beyond my power to advise.

"You will perceive, on looking at the sacred records of the past, that there were those who held themselves of no repute but gave themselves solely into the hands of the Father: They were not their own, but God's.

"So I feel we are to-day, if we are thoroughly spiritual people.

"Once, many years ago, I was in your exact position. I felt that I had the world before me and that I might become something of importance. But Spiritualism took hold of me and frustrated all my aspirations; and yet I must say that without it life would have been a blank.

"We are really all in the hands of the spirit-world, whether Spiritualists or not. The potter hath power over the clay, but some never have the 'honour' of spiritual consecration. If, however, the Lord of the vineyard has work for us to do, we are indeed powerless to resist. We may be taken, like Paul on his way to Damascus, and have the whole current of our lives involuntarily changed. My advice, then, is—seeing that at any time the spirit-world might lay hold of you, whether you attend to Spiritualism or not—be true to the voice within your own breast. If, then, you are made the instrument of spiritual work it will be in such a way as to bring spiritual good and satisfaction to yourself, and with a minimum of worldly inconvenience. But if, like Jonah, you attempt to flee from the face of the Lord, the result will be much more unpleasant.

"I do not dictate, neither does the spirit-world, for all of us find the measure of our deserts. To the spiritual worker there is much suffering, but to compensate it there is a satisfaction which the wealth of worlds could not outweigh.

"Spiritual Institution, May 31, 1881. J. B., O.S.T."

Some of our most eloquent and impressive preachers are Spiritualists and mediums. It is the "control" that gives them excellence. At the same time we would warn all mediumistic persons to be careful as to the circle they enter. The aural inoculation received there may curse, in place of bless.

To all aspirants we would say, that in spiritual work there is neither worldly comfort nor profit. The true spiritual pioneer must regard himself as a spiritual man living on the earth for spiritual purposes, but having a body, and requiring to exercise it by industry to maintain it, because his ministrations are to physical men and he must therefore be physical also. His objects and emoluments are all spiritual—laid up where moth and rust cannot corrupt—but his means to be invested are worldly. The professional method of making the acquisition of these means the end, has covered our Movement with confusion, and entailed much more suffering than true devotion to the work would have done. The true Spiritualist can husband his resources, earn his living, and devote himself to the spiritual work at the same time. That is the kind wanted now-a-days.

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUAL WORK.

RICHMOND HALL, PLYMOUTH.

Spiritualism is essentially a household religion: the ideal "circle" is the family circle. The precious gift of mediumship is a family inheritance, not the monopoly of a favoured few, as is the case with rank, and wealth, and social advantage: but a boon bestowed, as all nature's gifts are, indiscriminately upon all classes, and, in some form or another, upon all persons.

The real value of Spiritualism is seen in the Paradise which it makes of home; and it is here, in the family circle, when the members thereof are earnest and devout, that the real work of Spiritualism is carried on; and not primarily by preaching, lecturing, or the press, nor even by the public display of Spiritualistic phenomena. It begins in the individual, in the awakening and development of the divine elements of individual life and character; the elements of intelligence, wisdom, goodness, love, benevolence, for these are the essential elements of the divine life—and it is well always to remember, that as we are true Christians in so far as we are Christlike, so we are true Spiritualists only in so far as we are spiritual; in the sense above indicated.

Having thus begun in individual regeneration, it attains its ideal of harmonious and comprehensive development in the household that is composed of such characters; and thus, in the completest and most comprehensive sense, it is a family religion. Where such an ideal "family circle" is found the kingdom of heaven is come; there needs no other, there can be no other Millennium than this. But though Spiritualism, like charity, and like Christianity, begins at home, it does not end there, as those do not. "Freely ye have received, freely give": "He that watereth others shall be watered himself"; "The cup runneth over," but not to waste, but like the widow's pot of oil under the magic influence of the celebrated medium, Elisha, it flows from vessel to vessel, filling them, without being in itself diminished.

Upon this principle is based and justified the public propagation of Spiritualism, and we must promote it if we would preserve it; if it be not a flowing stream, it will be a stagnant pool, a curse instead of a blessing. We trust that in our work here, we are striving to realise a combination of all these features of this glorious Truth, so that it shall be in the highest sense a personal, domestic, and social blessing.

A WEEK'S SPIRITUAL WORK.

In giving some account of the work going on among us, we would like to specify more particularly some of its features. Last week's work, including Sunday, may be thus specified:—

Monday. Circle No. 1.—Seven persons here meet weekly for materialisation, admitting no fresh sitters. Last week our friends were able to testify of delightful experiences: rays of heavenly sunlight were streaming down upon them, making them feel that it was good to be there.

Circle No. 2.—Five present. Through the trance-medium, Mrs. R., we were privileged to have for a couple of hours communications of a conversational character with dear relatives and friends, who gave us much admonition and encouragement: with minute instructions concerning health, conduct, and work.

My own beloved father, who is permitted to speak on behalf of the guides who direct me in my work, occupied some half an hour in giving me particular instructions in reference to the formation of a strong select developing circle, to be held at the Hall, and which will meet for the first time this (Tuesday) evening. This will supply a missing link between the home circles and the public and semi-public meetings, and we were assured that if we carried out the instructions given we should realise every possible phase of phenomena.

Tuesday. Circle No. 3.—Five sitting for the development of clairvoyant and trance mediumship; and whilst sitting for a time in the dark our surroundings were vividly realised. Both Mrs. R. and Mr. Pearce possess good clairvoyant powers.

Thursday. Circle No. 4, (Semi-public) at the Hall.—Twenty three present; good spiritual results and some business matters attended to.

Sunday.—Two discourses were delivered: in the morning on "The promised baptism of the spirit, and the conditions under which it is obtained"; in the evening on "What Spiritualism teaches concerning Life, Death, and Immortality."

This latter was the most successful service we have had: the congregation considerably increased, and a larger number remained to the "Circle" than we have yet seen there. There were several specially interesting features in connection with the day's services, the most important was our having among us the presence of Mr. Joshua Wood, of Oldham, who is temporarily staying at Plymouth. As a Spiritualist of many years' standing, this friend is able to relate an experience of a thrilling and marvellous character. We have found his presence truly agreeable, his conversation charming, and his counsel and suggestions invaluable. Being many of us but novices in this work, we cannot over-estimate the advantage of Mr. Wood's visit at this juncture.

On Sunday evening our friend sat with us in the inner circle,

and, at the special desire of those present, his guides addressed the congregation. An unusually deep and solemn impression was produced upon all by what was said. The address was replete with congratulation, exhortation, warning, and counsel, and I believe will have a practical and lasting effect.

They were followed by the indefatigable guides of our highly esteemed brother, Mr. Husson, and with their benediction we were dismissed, with, as we believe, all our hearts filled with thankfulness to God.

OMEGA.

LADBROKE HALL, NEAR NOTTING HILL RAILWAY STATION.

On Sunday next, morning service at 11.30, evening service at 7 o'clock (medium—F. O. Matthews), when the controlling intelligence will give his experience of spirit-life, followed by clairvoyance.

On Sunday last Mr. Holmes, of Leicester, occupied the platform both morning and evening. The hall was well filled at the evening service, the subject being, "Jesus not so Black as Sceptics Paint him." The subject was beautifully handled, and gained the lecturer many rounds of applause for the able manner in which he executed his subject.

A most fitting compliment was paid Mr. Knight Smith by the lecturer for the able manner in which he rendered the pieces from Handel, "Comfort ye my people" and "Every Valley." Mr. Holmes also went on to say if they (the frequenters of Ladbroke Hall) allowed the doors to be closed and those meetings to be discontinued, it would be a burning shame to the city. He hoped they would rally round Mr. Matthews and help him in his noble undertaking.

Mr. Matthews also announced that he would like to hold a special service on Sunday, July 3, it being twelve months since he emerged from Wakefield Jail to face the enemy "Public opinion." Many thought he would fly the country; but no, he was determined as an Englishman to receive that respect from his country for his religious convictions equally so as his country expected him to respect their state religion, and he had worked faithfully from that hour to the present.

Mr. Matthews invites persons to come forward to help him upon that occasion, to help in that service, and will call a special meeting next week to afford friends an opportunity of expressing their opinions as to what sort of service it shall be.

126, Kensington Park Road, W. F. O. MATTHEWS.

A DEBATE AT GOSWELL HALL ON SUNDAY.

When Mr. Holmes spoke at Goswell Hall on his former visit to London, a gentleman—Mr. J. E. Carpenter by name—put some questions, which ended in a challenge to discussion, which will come off on Sunday first at Goswell Hall, 290, Goswell Road. There will be two meetings.

At the first meeting, at 11 a.m., the question for discussion will be—

"Does the Spiritualistic hypothesis satisfactorily explain the phenomena and the circumstances connected therewith?"

In the evening, at 7 o'clock, the subject for debate will be—

"Do the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism prove the existence of God, or 'Supreme Mind'?"

These are interesting subjects, and will no doubt be well handled on both sides, Mr. Carpenter being, as we are informed, connected with a London newspaper, and Mr. Holmes's abilities are well established.

HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.

THE DALTON - IN - FURNESS APPEAL FOR THE BLIND MEDIUM, MR. PROCTER.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—Would you kindly acknowledge the following subscriptions in your valuable journal:—

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Brought forward from last List	...	1	10
A Peterborough Friend	...	0	1
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With many thanks to the sympathetic brethren,
 J. RODGERS, Hon. Sec.
 R. TOWERS, Treasurer.
 Ulverston Road, Dalton-in-Furness.
 May 24, 1881.

A correspondent writes:—"We have Mr. Joshua Wood, of Oldham, here with us. He is a fine fellow, and his guide gave a beautiful address last evening. Our friends were delighted; the presence of such a man amongst us just now would be invaluable."

CIRCLE & PERSONAL MEMORANDA.

Mr. T. M. Brown is kept busily at work in the North, and will remain at least another week. He will visit as many places from North Seaton to Newcastle as time will permit. He will call at Gateshead, Felling and Blackhill; other places in Co. Durham en route home next week. Address letters till Tuesday, June 7, care of Mr. E. J. Blake, 49, Grainger Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne; on Wednesday and Thursday, care of Mrs. Walton, Grocer, Walton's Row, Blackhill, Co. Durham.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD SPIRITUALIST SOCIETIES.—On Sunday, June 5th (Whitsunday) Mr. Wallis of Nottingham will give two trance addresses, afternoon, at 2.30, Grosvenor Street, Temperance Hall. Evening, at 6.30, at 269, Chapel Street, Salford. This being his last visit prior to leaving England for America, we hope our friends will attend in good numbers, and show our sympathy towards this most deserving and earnest worker in our Cause—giving him God's speed, and wishing him a safe journey.

J. CAMPION, SECRETARY

"ANOTHER MEDIUM WORKER." To the Editor.—Sir,—It is with much satisfaction that I notice this "move ahead" in your paper yesterday. I speak from much personal knowledge of "Miami's" medium. Your readers and friends can rely on truthfulness in all they may obtain through this mediumship. I wish there were more of these. I could give interesting details of "Miami's" work, had I time now. Such opportunities to obtain help and comfort are not frequent, and should not be missed.

May 28th, 1881. ONE OF YOUR CONSTANT READERS.
 (With card to identify.)

OLDHAM.—On Sunday, May 29th, Mr. Wallis of Nottingham gave his farewell addresses previous to leaving for America. His guides took for their subjects: Afternoon—"Endless Torment, or Eternal Progress;" Evening—"Spiritualism the Key of the Bible." Mr. Wallis treated the subject in the afternoon in a very forcible manner, leaving little or no room for discussion. In the evening the room was crowded; it was one of the best meetings we have had for some time. The lecture was eloquently delivered, and it was conclusively demonstrated that the Spiritualist would read the Bible more understandingly than any other person. A few questions were asked at the close of the discourse very satisfactorily, and all that were present went away with smiling faces as if they had received something that had really done them good.

On Monday night Mr. Wallis read a paper he had prepared upon Materialisation, stating that in his opinion seances would be more satisfactory to the public, if there was more light and better conditions observed. ALFRED FARRAR, SEC.

MANY years ago intelligence was received of the loss, off the Irish coast, of an emigrant vessel, with nearly all on board. A person called Phillips, his brother, and cousin, all natives of Illogan, being among the passengers, the mother of the former, believing them to be drowned, became greatly distressed. At this juncture a neighbour informed her of their safety, stating that he had received a message to that effect by table rapping. Two or three days subsequently a letter was received from one of the sons, confirmatory of the alleged spiritual communication. Here is an instance of the benefit of spiritual intercourse.—"The Cornubian."

QUEBEC HALL, 25, GREAT QUEBEC STREET.
 MARYLEBONE ROAD.

On Sunday, June 5, at 7, Mr. Macdonnell will discourse on "Signs of the Times."

On Monday, at 8.30, Comprehensionists will meet.

On Wednesday, at 8.30, Mr. F. O. Matthews will hold a meeting for clairvoyant descriptions.

On Saturday, at 8 punctual, the usual seance; Mr. Hancock attends half an hour previous to speak with strangers. Mr. F. O. Matthews, medium.

A.T.T.P. will deliver an address on Sunday, June 12, at 7 P.M.

J. M. DALE, Hon. Sec.

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- I.—The abolition of Compulsory Vaccination.
- II.—The Diffusion of Knowledge concerning Vaccination.
- III.—The maintenance in London of an Office for the publication of Literature relating to Vaccination, and as a Centre of Information.

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HON. SECRETARY.

Mr. WILLIAM YOUNG, Gray's-inn-chambers, 20, High Holborn, W.C.

The June number of the "Vaccination Inquirer" will, besides the usual items of interest, contain a supplement with full report of the proceedings of the Annual Meeting of—

THE LONDON SOCIETY FOR

THE ABOLITION OF COMPULSORY VACCINATION,

including the speeches of the President of the Society—

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P. | Mr. Alexander Wheeler. |
| Rev. Dr. Seddon. | Dr. Thomas L. Nichols. |
| Mr. William Tebb. | Mr. W. J. Collins, M.R.C.S., & C.S.C. |
| Professor F. W. Newman. | AND |
| Mr. Enoch Robinson, M.R.C.S. | Mr. Thomas Baker. |

To promote the wider circulation of the "Vaccination Inquirer," the price has been reduced to ONE PENNY. Orders for extra copies of the June Number, an excellent manifesto of Anti-Vaccinators' principles, should be sent at once to

Mr. WILLIAM YOUNG, Secretary,
Gray's Inn Chambers, 20, High Holborn, W.C.

N.B.—The "Vaccination Inquirer" will now be sent, post free, to any address for 1s. 6d. for twelve months. If not already a Subscriber, please let Mr. Young have your name.

VACCINATION WORSE THAN SMALL-POX.

[From "The British Friend."]

Dear Friend,—Referring to the letter of our friend, Joseph Hopkins, on this subject, in the last number of "The British Friend," I should like to be allowed to say, that whilst good vaccination may be a good thing, bad vaccination is a fearfully bad thing.

Last month I visited a man and his wife who had applied for membership; a granddaughter, of about seven years old, was living with them; she had been quite healthy all her life until she was vaccinated about eighteen months ago; since then she has never been well, and now suffers from boils and blotches on various parts of the body. She is weak and languid, and her cure seems to be impossible.

In the house next door is a boy eight years old, equally healthy until vaccination two years ago; he has never been well since, and it is not expected that he will ever recover his health.

A friend of my own was vaccinated some months ago, and suffered subsequently from boils and whitlows, and was so affected that he had to pay a long visit to Harrogate before he recovered a fair amount of health, being not yet recovered. Had he not been able to go to a watering-place, it is probable that worse consequences would have ensued. Many other cases, more or less resembling these, have lately come to my knowledge; and I am now satisfied that "compulsory" vaccination is wrong.

I am confirmed in this by the following:—A friend of mine was at Smedley's establishment at Matlock, and on speaking of small-pox, Smedley told my friend that no one ought to die from the disease, the water treatment was a certain cure; that he had hundreds of cases through his hands, and never lost a patient. My friend named this to a practitioner of the "old school," who admitted that the treatment would be likely to succeed. He said—"Then, why do not you doctors adopt it?" The reply was—"Oh, it would not be approved by the profession."

I hope that "compulsory" vaccination will shortly be abolished.—I am, respectfully,

GEORGE TATHAM,
(Mayor of Leeds.)

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CIRCLE A

Will meet every Wednesday, at 8 o'clock, in succession at
Mr. Brown's, 33, Downing-street;
" Braham's, 392, Stretford-road;
" Dawson's, 27, Ellesmere-street, Moss-side.

CIRCLE B

Will meet every Thursday, at 8 o'clock, in succession at
Mr. Thompson's, Trinity Coffee Tavern, 836, Chapel-st., Salford
" Greenwood's, auctioneer, Windsor-bridge, Chapel-st., —
" Taylor's, 48, Harrison-st., Pendleton.

CIRCLE C

Will meet every Friday, at 8, at
Mr. Gidlow's, 21, Gt. George-st. (back of St. Luke's Church), Miles Platting.

Due notice will be given as other Circles and Districts are open.

President: Mr. Shaw, 2, Little Gold-street, Pendleton.

Secretary: " J. Campion, 33, Downing-street.

MANCHESTER ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS,
Temperance Hall, Grosvenor Street.

President: Mr. G. Dawson, 27, Ellesmere-street, Hulme, Manchester

Secretary: " W. T. Braham, 392, Stretford-road,

Plan of speakers for June:—

Sunday, 5.—Mr. E. W. Wallis, Farewell Address.
" 12.—" Brown.
" 19.—" Lithgow.
" 26.—" Tethlow.

Service commences at 2-30 p.m.

A society for the free distribution of spiritual literature in connection with the above association. Literature and donations thankfully received by Miss H. Blundell, 5, Summer Villas, Stretford Road, Manchester, treasurer.

Members belonging to the Home Circles will kindly bear in mind that no strangers will be admitted except by ticket bearing the introducer's name, and on no consideration will they be admitted after 8 p.m.

Plan of speakers for June:—

LEICESTER.—SILVER STREET LECTURE HALL.

On Sunday last, May 29, Mr. Bent gave a trance address in the evening. The guides took for their subject "The Angelhood of Man," in which they gave us great delight in listening to them on the condition of this world's religion of the nineteenth century, and the enlightenment they gave us of the spirit-world in which they live.

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JOHN SWINDIN, Treasurer.

MR. J. J. MORSE, Inspirational Speaker, 53, Sigdon Road, Dalston London, E.

APPOINTMENTS.

London.—Sundays, June 12 and 26. Belper.—To follow.
Keighley.—19. Stamford.—July 24.

MR. E. W. WALLIS, Inspirational speaker. For terms and dates apply—13, Lake-street, Forest-side, Nottingham.

APPOINTMENTS.

FAREWELL VISITS.

June 5.—Manchester. Grosvenor-street, at 2-30. Salford, at 6-30.
" 12 & 13.—Glasgow. June 26.—Barrow-in-Furness.
" 19 & 20.—Newcastle-on-Tyne. July 3.—Belper.
" 22.—Darlington. " 10.—Keighley.
" 23.—Ulverston. " 17 & 18.—Nottingham.

Mr. Wallis will accept calls to deliver trance orations in all parts of the United Kingdom.

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MR. J. HOLMES, 58, Cranbourne-street, Leicester.—Appointments:—London—Goswell Hall, June 5; Walsall, 12; Stamford, 19 and 20; Sowerby-bridge, 26; Newcastle, end of July.

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Goods can be forwarded to the Committee as follows:—

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 Mr. J. VENABLES, Mount Street, Walsall;
 Mr. W. ROBERTS, 8, Mount Street, Walsall;
 Mr. J. THIBBITS, Junction Street, Walsall;

or the Secretary—

Mr. T. BLINKHORN, 16, George Street, Walsall.

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 Secretary: J. J. Walmsley, 40, Brighton-street.

OLDHAM Spiritualist Society, 176, Union-street.—Meetings, Sunday at 2-30 p.m., and 6 p.m. Mr. Alfred Farrar, secretary, 7, Dawson-street, Lees, Oldham.

KIRKCALDY Psychological Society, 13, Oswald's Wynd.—Tuesday evening at 8 o'clock.

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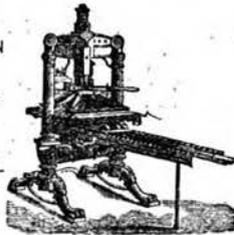
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