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SPIRITUALISM IN BIOGRAPHY:—JOHN BUNYAN.

WHAT an eventful period in English history is comprised in the sixty years in which Bunyan lived—from 1628 to 1688, from the passing of the Bill of Rights to the accession of William the Third! What vicissitudes of parties, what conflicts of men and principles were witnessed!—The turbulent reign of Charles—the Star Chamber and the High Commission, Laud and Papistry, Strafford, and “Thorough,” Episcopacy abolished in Scotland; the Civil War, Edgehill, Marston Moor, Naseby; the execution of the king; the abolition of the House of Lords; the Protectorate; the Restoration; the reign of the saints followed by the reign of the strumpets; Titus Oates and his sham Popish Plot; the Act of Uniformity, which in one day ejected two thousand ministers from their livings; and the Conventicle Act, which made it treason for a vesper hymn to rise from the forest, or a solemn litany to quiver through the midnight air; the Great Plague of London; the accession of James; the conspiracy of Monmouth; the bloody assize of Jeffrey; the butcheries of Claverhouse; and the trial of the seven bishops! And, truly, there were giants in those days, mighty men, men of renown! Pym and Hampden, and Elliot; Russell and Sidney; Falkland and Blake; Marvel and Milton; Cromwell, “the greatest Englishman God ever made,” to quote an emphatic saying of Carlyle; Butler, Dryden, and Herbert; Henry and Owen; Howe and Baxter; Cudworth and More. Such were the times, such the men, in which, and among whom lived the “inspired tinker,” “the divine dreamer,” whose *Pilgrim’s Progress* is alike the delight of youth and age, of the ignorant and the learned, a work as homely as the English Bible, and as life-like as *Robinson Crusoe*; a prose epic, which if it has not the sublimity, has yet much of that force of imagination which we find in *Paradise Lost*.

Of the sixty pieces written by Bunyan, three only retain any extensive popularity,—The *Pilgrim’s Progress*, the *Holy War*, and *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. The last is a

valuable piece of autobiography. In it Bunyan lays bare all the secret workings of his soul: it is a record of his temptations and conflicts, defeats and victories. His own experience was the chief storehouse on which he drew for the materials of his allegories. *He* had fought the Holy War waged between the hosts of Diabolus and the armies of Emmanuel for the town of Mansoul. *He* was a pilgrim on his journey from the city of Destruction to Mount Sion. *He* had fought with Apollyon and been wounded by his fiery darts, and been healed by the leaves from the tree of life. *He* had heard the "doleful voices," and had experienced how "as he resolved to go on, the fiends seemed to come nearer and nearer." And many a time had "one of the wicked ones got behind him, and stepped up softly to him and whispering, suggested many grievous blasphemies to him which he verily thought had proceeded from his own mind." It was doubtless Bunyan's own case which *Hopeful* describes. "Thus it was, one day I was very sad, I think sadder than at any one time of my life, and this sadness was owing to a fresh sight of the greatness and vileness of my sins, as I was then looking for nothing but hell and the everlasting damnation of my soul; suddenly, as I thought, I saw the Lord Jesus Christ look down from heaven upon me, and saying 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.'"<sup>\*</sup> And had not he too even on this side the river of death, in the good land of Beulah, been "met" by "some of the inhabitants of the celestial city, for in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven;" and "here they come to wait for the pilgrims, and comfort them after their sorrow." Doubtless, too, at the close of his pilgrimage, he was sustained by these same "shining ones" in crossing the "deep waters" of that river where there is no bridge, and was by them "compassed round on every side," and conducted with joyful welcome to the golden gate of the celestial city.

Bunyan was born at the village of Elstow, near Bedford, in 1628. He says, he was "of a low and inconsiderable generation," probably of gipsy descent. His father followed the occupation of a tinker, and brought up his son to the same business, but took care that he should be taught to read and write; "though," says Bunyan, "to my shame, I confess I did soon lose that I had learned, even almost utterly." In youth, Bunyan was emphati-

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\* Bunyan was not unaware of the way in which all such experiences are generally received by those who deem themselves, and are called, 'Philosophers,' as is shown in the conversation of *Christian* and *Hopeful* with *Ignorance*. *Hopeful* gives *Christian* the hint—"Ask him if ever he had Christ revealed to him from heaven?" *Ignorance* at once catches at the suggestion, and scoffingly replies, "What! you are a man for revelations! I do believe that what both you and all the rest of you say about the matter, is but the fruit of distracted brains."

This, it will be observed, Bunyan represents as the speech of IGNORANCE.

cally, as Southey has characterized him, "a blackguard," or to use his own phrase—"I was the very ringleader in all manner of vice and ungodliness." But he was not, during this time, without, what he considers, were divine warnings and special providences. He says:—"Even in my childhood, the Lord did scare and terrify me with fearful dreams and visions. For, often, after I had spent this and the other day in sin, I have been greatly afflicted, while asleep, with the apprehensions of devils, and wicked spirits, who, as I then thought, laboured to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid. . . . These terrible dreams I soon forgot; for my pleasures did quickly cut off the remembrance of them, as if they had never been. . . . But God did not utterly leave me, but following me still, not with convictions, but judgments, mixed with mercy. For once I fell into a creek of the sea, and hardly escaped drowning. Another time I fell out of a boat, into Bedford river; but mercy yet preserved me; besides, another time, being in the field with my companions, it chanced that an adder passed over the highway, so I having a stick, struck her over the back; and having stunned her, I forced open her mouth with my stick, and plucked her sting out with my fingers; by which act, had not God been merciful to me, I might, by my desperateness, have brought myself to my end. This also I have taken notice of with thanksgiving. When I was a soldier, I with others, were drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it; but when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room; to which when I had consented he took my place, and coming to the siege, as he stood sentinel, he was shot in the head with a musket-bullet and died."

Soon after this last event, when only about nineteen years of age, Bunyan married. He says, "We came together as poor as poor might be, not having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt us both." His wife's parents, in the language of that time, were "godly people," and she brought him, (her only dowry) two books. *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*; and *The Practice of Piety*. These books, and his wife's conversation, and especially what she used to tell him of the character and conduct of her father who was dead, "though they did not," he says, "reach my heart to awaken it; yet they did beget within me some desire to reform my vicious life, and fall in very eagerly with the religion of the times; to wit: to go to church twice a day, and there, very devoutly, both say and sing as others did; yet retaining my wicked life." It was customary at that time after Sunday morning service for men and boys to engage in games and sports, and Bunyan took great delight in them. One Sunday he listened to a sermon on Sabbath-breaking which for the moment deeply impressed him, but "it lasted not." Before

he had dined it began to wear off, and, shaking the sermon out of his mind, he returned to his favourite diversion, when, to quote his own narrative—"As I was in the midst of a game of cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?' At this I was put to an exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground. I looked up to heaven, and was, as if I had, with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus look down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for those and other ungodly practices. . . . Suddenly this conclusion fastened on my spirit, that it was now too late for me to look after heaven. . . . Then while I was thinking of it, and fearing lest it should be so, I felt my heart sink in despair, concluding it was too late, and therefore resolved in my mind to go on in sin. . . . I am very confident that this temptation of the devil is more usual among poor creatures than many are aware of. . . . Now therefore I went on in sin, still grudging that I could not be satisfied with it as I would. This did continue with me about a month, or more; but one day as I was standing at a neighbour's shop-window, and there cursing and swearing after my wonted manner, there sat within the woman of the house, who heard me; and though she was a very loose and ungodly wretch, yet protested that I swore and cursed at that most fearful rate, that she was made to tremble to hear me; and told me farther, that I was the ungodliest fellow for swearing, that she ever heard in all her life; and that I, by thus doing, was able to spoil all the youth in the whole town, if they came but in my company."

This reproof, from such a person, silenced him, and put him to shame, and, he says, "I did from this time forward so leave my swearing, that it was a great wonder to myself to observe it; and whereas before I knew not how to speak unless I put an oath before, and another behind, to make my words have authority; now I could, without it, speak better, and with more pleasantness than ever I could before."

Soon afterwards he fell in company with a poor man who 'did talk pleasantly of the Scriptures and of religion," and this sent him to his Bible, and he began to take great pleasure in reading it. Soon his neighbours observed a great alteration in his life and manners, and began to speak of him as an honest and godly man. "This," says Bunyan, "pleased me mighty well; for, though as yet, I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly."

But one day, while tinkering in the streets of Bedford, he

overheard three or four poor women talking over their religious experiences. He was now "a brisk talker in matters of religion," but he found their discourse far above his reach. They talked about a new birth, and the love of Jesus, and the suggestions and temptations of Satan, and how they were borne up against his assaults. "And methought," says Bunyan, "they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me as if they had found a new world—as if they were people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours. . . . I was greatly affected with their words, because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true token of a godly man, and also because I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such a one."

He, therefore, as often as possible sought the conversation of these pious women; and soon he "began to look into the Bible with new eyes," and "was never out of it either by reading or meditation, crying to God that he might know the truth. Reading in St. Paul that faith was a gift of the Spirit, he began to question whether he had any faith or not. While thus considering, he tells us:—"The tempter came in with his delusion, 'That there was no way for me to know I had faith, but by trying to work some miracles;' urging those Scriptures that seem to enforce and strengthen his temptations. Nay, one day as I was between Elstow and Bedford, the temptation was hot upon me to try if I had *faith* by doing some miracle; which miracle at this time was this, I must say to the puddles that were in the horse-pads, be dry; and to the dry places, be you puddles; and truly, one time I was going to say so indeed; but just as I was about to speak this thought came into my mind, 'but go under yonder hedge, and pray first that God would make you able.' But when I had concluded to pray this came hot upon me; that if I prayed, and came again, and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then to be sure I had no faith, but was a cast-away and lost. Nay, thought I, if it be so, I will not try yet, but will stay a little longer."

About this time the state of happiness of his poor acquaintances at Bedford, whom he felt to be so much farther advanced than himself in the religious life, he states, "Was thus in a kind of vision presented to me. I saw, as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds; methought, also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain; now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding that if I could I would there

also comfort myself with the heat of their sun. About this wall I bethought myself to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time; at the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little door-way in the wall, through which I attempted to pass; now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain; at last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders and my whole body; then I was exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun. Now this mountain and wall was thus made out to me: the mountain signified the church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the wall I thought was the world, that did make separation between the Christians and the world; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father, John xiv., Matt. vii. 14. But as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow that I could not but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest, and left the wicked world behind them; for there was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul, and sin."

But though he now prayed wherever he was, "whether at home or abroad, in house or field," instead of attaining "any comfortable persuasion" of faith, he was assailed with fresh doubts—especially these:—Whether he was one of the elect, and whether the day of grace was not past and gone. This question, he says, "would stick with me, 'How can you tell that you are elected? And what if you should not be? How then?—O Lord, thought I, what if I should not indeed. 'It may be you are not,' said the tempter. It may be so, indeed, thought I. 'Why then,' said Satan, 'you had as good leave off and strive no farther; for if indeed you should not be elected, and chosen of God, there is no hope of your being saved, for it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy.' By these things I was driven to my wit's end, not knowing what to say, or how to answer these temptations. Indeed, I little thought that Satan had thus assaulted me, but rather it was my own prudence thus to start the question; for that the elect only obtained eternal life, that I without scruple did heartily close withal; but that myself was one of them, there lay the question. Thus, therefore, for several days I was greatly perplexed, and as often ready to sink with faintness in my mind; but one day, after

I had been many weeks opprest and cast down therewith, as I was giving up the ghost of all my hopes of ever attaining life, that sentence fell with weight upon my spirit, 'Look at the generations of old, and see; did ever any trust in God, and were confounded?' At which I was greatly encouraged in my soul: for thus, at that very instant it was expounded to me: 'Begin at the beginning of Genesis, and read to the end of the Revelations, and see if you can find that there was ever any that trusted in the Lord and was confounded.' So coming home, I presently went to my Bible, to see if I could find that saying, not doubting but to find it presently; for it was with such strength and comfort on my spirit, that I was as if it talked with me. Well, I looked, but found it not, only it abode upon me; then I did ask first this good man, and then another, if they knew where it was, but they knew no such place. And this I wondered that such a sentence should so suddenly, and with such comfort and strength, seize and abide upon my heart; and yet that none could find it (for I doubted not but that it was in the Holy Scripture). Thus I continued above a year, and could not find the place; but at last casting my eye upon the Apocrypha books, I found it in Ecclesiasticus, chap ii. 16. This at first did somewhat daunt me, because it was not in those texts that we call holy and canonical; yet as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it; and I bless God for that word, for it was of good to me. That word doth still oft-times shine before my face."

Then came the second doubt—"How if the day of grace is past?" It would, however, be too long to trace here in detail all Bunyan's floundering in this "Slough of Despond," or his distress while shut up in the castle of Giant Despair, and how he finally unlocked the gate of that grim keep with "a little key in his bosom, called promise." Southey, writing of him at this time, says:—"He heard sounds as in a dream, and as in a dream held conversations, which were inwardly audible, though no sounds were uttered, and had all the connexion and coherency of an actual dialogue." As an instance of this I give the following relation of Bunyan. "Now I was much followed by the Scriptures, 'Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desire to have you,' Luke xxii. 31: and sometimes it would sound so loud within me, that once, above all the rest, I turned my head over my shoulder, thinking verily that some man had, behind me, called me; being at a great distance, methought, he called so loud; it came, as I have thought since, to have stirred me up to prayer and to watchfulness; it came to acquaint me that a cloud and storm was coming down upon me, but I understood it not."

This "very great storm" came down upon him about the

space of a month after, and, he says, "It handled me twenty times worse than all I had met with before; it came stealing upon me, now by one piece, then by another. First, all my comfort was taken from me; then darkness seized upon me; after which whole floods of blasphemies were poured upon my spirit, to my great confusion and astonishment. . . . I often found my will suddenly put upon it to curse and swear, or to speak some grievous thing against God, or Christ his Son, and of the Scriptures. Now, I thought, surely I am possessed of the devil; at other times again I thought I should be bereft of my wits; for instead of lauding and magnifying God the Lord with others; if I have but heard Him spoken of, presently some most horrible blasphemous thought or other would bolt out of my heart against Him. . . . Kick sometimes I did, and also shriek and cry; but yet I was bound in the wings of the temptation, and the wind would carry me away. I thought also of Saul, and of the evil spirit that did possess him; and did greatly fear that my condition was the same with that of his. . . . While this temptation lasted, which was about a year, I could attend upon none of the ordinances of God, but with sore and great affliction. Yea, then I was most distressed with blasphemies; if I had been hearing the Word, then uncleanness, blasphemies, and despair would hold me a captive there; If I had been reading, then sometimes I had sudden thoughts to question all I read; again my mind would be so strangely snatched away, that I have neither known, nor regarded, nor remembered, so much as the sentence that but now I have read. In prayer also I have been greatly troubled at this time; sometimes I have thought I have felt him behind me, pull my clothes. He would be also continually at me in time of prayer, to have done, break off, make haste, you have prayed enough, and stay no longer; still drawing my mind away."

This was followed by the most extraordinary and grievous temptation of all—one so singular that Southey doubts "whether any parallel can be found for him" in this "strangest part of his history." And that was in Bunyan's words:—" 'To sell and part with the most blessed Christ, to exchange him for the things of this life, for any thing.' The temptation lay upon me for the space of a year, and did follow me so continually, that I was not rid of it one day in a month; no not sometimes one hour in many days together, unless when I was asleep. Sometimes it would run in my thoughts, not so little as a hundred times together, 'Sell him, sell him;' against which, I may say for whole hours together, I have been forced to stand as continually leaning and forcing my spirit against it, lest haply, before I were aware, some wicked thought might arise in my heart, that might consent thereto; and sometimes the tempter would make me believe, I

had consented to it; but then I should be as tortured upon a rack, for whole days together. This temptation did put me to such scares, lest I should at some times, I say, consent thereto, and be overcome therewith, but the very force of my mind, my very body would be put into action, or motion by way of pushing or thrusting with my hands or elbows; still answering as fast as the destroyer said, 'Sell him: ' 'I will not, I will not, I will not; no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands of worlds;' thus reckoning, lest I should set too low a value on him, even until I scarce well knew where I was, or how to be composed again. But to be brief; one morning as I did lie in my bed, I was, as at other times, most fiercely assaulted with this temptation to sell and part with Christ; the wicked suggestion still running in my mind, 'Sell him, sell him, sell him, sell him, sell him,' as fast as a man could speak: against which also in my mind, as at other times, I answered, 'No, no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands,' at least twenty times together: but at last, after much striving, I felt this thought pass through my heart, 'Let him go if he will;' and I thought also, that I felt my heart freely consent thereto. Oh! the diligence of Satan! Oh! the desperateness of man's heart!"

He now believed that in thus covenanting to sell Christ, he had committed the "unpardonable sin." This made his life both a burden and a terror to him. Despair was swallowing him up, "Insomuch," he says, "that I could for whole days together, feel my very body, as well as my mind, to shake and totter under this dreadful judgment of God; I felt also such a clogging and heat at my stomach, by reason of this my terror, that I was, especially at some times, as if my breast bone would split asunder." He was while in this desperate state greatly relieved, for a time, by a remarkable experience, which, says Southey, was "so much more preternatural than all his former visitings that he withheld it from the first relation of his own life, and in a later and more enlarged account, narrated it so cautiously as to imply more than he thought it prudent to express." I here transcribe it:—

Once as I was walking to and fro in a good man's shop, bemoaning my sad and doleful state, afflicting myself with self-abbhorrence for this wicked and ungodly thought; lamenting also that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing I should not be pardoned; praying also, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the Holy Ghost, the Lord would shew it me; and being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was, as if there had rushed in at the window, the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I heard a voice speaking, 'Didst thou ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ?' And withal, my whole life of profession past was in a moment opened to me, wherein I was made to see that designedly I had not; so my heart answered groaningly, 'No.' Then fell, with power, that word of God upon me, 'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.' This made a strange seizure upon my spirit; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in my heart of all those tumultuous thoughts, that did before use, like masterless hell-hounds, to roar and bellow, and

make a hideous noise within me. It shewed me also that Jesus Christ had yet a word of grace and mercy for me, that he had not, as I had feared, quite forsaken and cast off my soul, yea, this was a kind of check to my proneness to desperation; a kind of threatening of me, if I did not, notwithstanding my sins, and the heinousness of them, venture my salvation upon the Son of God. But as to my determining about this strange dispensation, what it was I knew not; or from whence it came, I know not; I have not yet in twenty years time been able to make a judgment of it; I thought then what here I should be loath to speak. But verily that sudden rushing wind was as if an angel had come upon me, but both it, and the salvation, I will leave until the day of judgment; only this I say, it commanded a great calm in my soul; it persuaded me there might be hope; it showed me, as I thought, what the sin unpardonable was, and that my soul had yet the blessed privilege to flee to Jesus Christ for mercy. But concerning this dispensation I leave it to be thought on by men of sound judgment. I lay not the stress of my salvation thereupon, but upon the Lord Jesus in the promise; yet seeing I am here unfolding of my secret things, I thought it might not be altogether inexpedient to let this also shew itself, though I cannot now relate the matter as there I did experience it.

The "savour" of this lasted about three or four days, and then he "began to mistrust and to despair again." "Thus," he says, "was I always sinking whatever I did think or do. But one day, he tells us, having "fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to. . . . breaking out into the bitterness of my soul, I said to myself, with a grievous sigh. 'How can God comfort such a wretch?' I had no sooner said it, but this returned upon me, as an echo doth answer a voice. 'This sin is not unto death.' At which I was as if I had been raised out of the grave, and cried out again, 'Lord, how couldst thou find out such a word as this?' for I was filled with admiration at the fitness, and at the unexpectedness of the sentence; the power and sweetness, and light and glory that came with it also, was marvellous to me to find." He was now for the time out of doubt, but the next evening, being still under many fears he prayed with great fervour, crying to God in the words of the prophet, "O Lord, I beseech thee, shew me that thou hast loved me with everlasting love. I had no sooner said it," he relates, "but with sweetness this returned upon me, as an echo, or sounding again, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.' Now I went to bed in quiet; also when I awaked next morning it was fresh upon my soul, and I believed it."

He was thus, though not without many misgivings, brought into "comfortable hopes of pardon." He still, however, at times was swayed to and fro between the suggestions of the tempter and the inspirations of the upper world. He tells us that once when "the tempter laid at me very sore. . . . 'It was but in vain to pray,' yet, thought I, I will pray; 'But,' said the tempter, 'your sin is unpardonable;' 'Well,' said I, 'I will pray,' so I went to prayer. . . . And as I was thus before the Lord, that Scripture fastened on my heart, 'O man, great is thy faith!' even as if one had clapped me on the back, as I was on my knees

before God." Many times when shut up in spirit did words and sentences of Scripture "break in" upon his mind for his encouragement. "The words," he says, "did sound suddenly within my heart." "Methought this word was spoken loud unto me, it showed a great word, it seemed to be writ in great letters." "These words did suddenly with great power break in upon me." "That piece of a sentence darted in upon me." "Oh, now how was my soul led from truth to truth by God! there was not anything that I then cried unto God, to make known and reveal unto me, but He was pleased to do it for me." "One day, when I was in a meeting of God's people, full of sadness and terror, . . . these words did with great power suddenly break in upon me; 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' three times together, I was as though I had seen the Lord Jesus look down from heaven, through the tiles upon me, and direct these words unto me." And now, he says, "I durst venture to come nigh unto those most fearful and terrible Scriptures, with which all this while I had been so greatly affrighted. . . . the which when I began to do, I found my visage changed, for they looked not so grimly as before I thought they did. . . . And now remains only the hinder part of the tempest, for the thunder was gone beyond me, only some drops did still remain, but now and then would fall upon me. . . . One day as I was passing into the field, and that too with some dashes on my conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, 'Thy righteousness is in heaven.' And methought withal, I saw with the eyes of my soul Jesus Christ at God's right hand;—there I say was my righteousness . . . for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed; I was loosened from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away." In the words of his *Pilgrim's Progress*, "His burthen loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back."

Possibly these temptations never wholly ceased though from this time little more is recorded of them, and they were neither so frequent or severe, or of so protracted a kind; spiritual influences, enlightening and consolatory, from the upper spheres greatly predominating; the light speedily breaking in upon the darkness, as in the following—the last case of the kind which he records:—

At another time, though just before I was pretty well savouring in my spirit, yet suddenly there fell upon me a great cloud of darkness, which did so hide from me the things of God and Christ, that I was as if I had never seen or known them in my life; I was also so overrun in my soul with a senseless, heartless frame of spirit, that I could not feel my soul to move or stir after the grace and life by Christ; I was as if my loins were broken, or as if my hands and feet had been tied or bound with chains. At this time also I felt some weakness to seize upon my outward man, which made still the other affliction the more heavy and uncomfortable to me. After I had been in this condition three or four days, as

I was sitting by the fire, I suddenly felt this word to sound in my heart, 'I must go to Jesus;' at this my former darkness and atheism fled away, and the blessed things of heaven were set in my view. While I was on this sudden thus overtaken with surprise, 'Wife', said I, 'is there ever such a Scripture, I must go to Jesus?' She said she could not tell; therefore I stood musing still, to see if I could remember such a place; I had not sat above two or three minutes, but that come bolting in upon me, 'And to an innumerable company of angels;' and withal the 12th chapter of Hebrews, about the mount Sion, was set before mine eyes, Heb. xiii. 22, 23, 24.

The following passage would seem to show that Bunyan, like George Fox, had some perception, of what Swedenborg would call the "Correspondences of the Word":—

I was almost made, about this time, to see something concerning the beasts that Moses counted clean and unclean; I thought those beasts were types of men; the clean, types of them that were the people of God; but the unclean, types of such as were the children of the wicked one. Now I read that the clean beasts 'chewed the cud;' that is, thought I, they shew us we must feed upon the word of God; they also 'parted the hoof;' I thought that signified, we must part, if we would be saved, with the ways of ungodly men. And also in further reading about them, I found that though we did chew the cud as the hare, yet if we walked with claws like a dog, or we did part the hoof like the swine, yet if we did not chew the cud as the sheep, we are still, for all that, but unclean. For I thought the hare to be type of those that talk of the Word, yet walk in the ways of sin; and the swine was like him that parted with his outward pollution, but still wanted the word of faith, without which there could be no way of salvation, let a man be ever so devout.\*

Another singular experience he relates, and which he subsequently regarded as a sinful tempting God, and one of the causes of his own spiritual affliction, was this: his wife was crying in great agony, when Bunyan, as a sign that God could discern the most secret thoughts of the heart, "with all secrecy imaginable" inwardly prayed that her pangs might cease. He says, "I had no sooner said it in my heart, but her pangs were taken from her, and she was cast into a deep sleep, and so continued till morning." During this long course of incessant temptation, lasting two years and a half, Bunyan sat under the ministry of "holy Mr. Giffard," a Baptist minister, and who, like Saul, had been a persecutor of the faith of which he was now an apostle. He was doubtless the honoured "Evangelist," who pointed Bunyan to the wicket-gate—by instructing him in the Gospel.

Soon after the death of this worthy man, at the request of the congregation, Bunyan began to preach: at first only in their private assemblies, not daring "to make use of his gift in a public way." This was attended with such success that in a short time, after some solemn prayer with fasting, he was "called forth and appointed to a more ordinary and public preaching." This brought another kind of trouble upon him. He was one of the first persons after the Restoration who was punished for

\* See also his *Solomon's Temple Spiritualized*, *The Barren Fig Tree*, and other allegorical writings.

nonconformity. He was arrested at a meeting in a private house, where he was conducting religious worship. He was aware of the intention to arrest him, but would neither escape, nor put off the meeting, refusing to purchase safety by the neglect of duty, as he considered it. He was offered his liberty if he would promise not to preach, and the justices used all their influence to prevail on him to do so, but in vain. It was doubtless a severe trial, but he had been forewarned, and forearmed against it in his temptation to *sell Christ*. When told that none but poor, ignorant people, came to hear him, he replied, that such had most need of his teaching, and therefore it was his duty to go on in that work. And so, he tells us, "I was had *home* to prison." Subsequently, towards the end of his twelve years imprisonment, in allusion to his small, damp *den*, situated over the middle of the river Ouse, Bunyan uses this emphatic language:—"I have determined, the Almighty God being my help and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, even till the moss shall grow on my eyebrows rather than thus to violate my faith and principles." Bunyan, with great simplicity, says:—"I begged of God, that if I might do more good by being at liberty than in prison, that then I might be set at liberty; but if not, His will be done. . . . And verily I did meet my God sweetly in the prison, comforting of me, and satisfying of me that it was His will and mind that I should be there."

That his prayer was answered—that he did more good in prison than there is any prospect he could have done out of it, is almost certain, when we remember that it was there he wrote his master-pieces, and especially that there, while composing his *Grace Abounding*, the immortal *Pilgrim* had birth. This Bedford Jail was the *den* in which he "slept and dreamed a dream," which, as one of its most precious possessions, the world will not willingly let die.

In this den he remained twelve years and a half, (1660-1672) making tagged thread-laces to support his family. The Bible and the *Book of Martyrs* were his only books. Dr. Cheever speaks of the time he thus spent in prison, as "a period of continued and sometimes ecstatic revelations and experiences." So great was the confidence Bunyan inspired in his jailor that he allowed him to leave the prison on *parole* to visit his friends, and frequently did he avail himself of the privilege of the kind-hearted jailor to preach to them at midnight in the woods and villages around. Upon one occasion, having been permitted to go out to visit his family, with whom he intended to spend the night, long before morning, he felt a sudden unaccountable impulse that he must return—return at once; so strong did it become that he could not rest, and at a very late hour he went back to the prison,

much to the annoyance of the jailor, who was angry at being disturbed from his rest to admit him, telling him he might have stayed till the morning. It was well for the jailor that Bunyan returned as he did. For almost immediately after he was again disturbed. A neighbouring clerical magistrate having been informed that there was strong suspicion that Bunyan was not in close custody, had sent a messenger to the jail at midnight, to see that he was there. On his arrival, the messenger demanded, "Are all the prisoners safe?" "Yes." "Is John Bunyan safe?" "Yes." "Let me see him." Bunyan who had just returned was called up, and confronted with the messenger, who returned perfectly satisfied. When he was gone, the jailor said to Bunyan, "You may go out when you will, for you know much better when to return than I can tell you."

On his enlargement, a chapel was built for him in Bedford, where he preached before large audiences. Every year he used to visit London, where his reputation was so great, that even on week days, in dark winter mornings, at seven o'clock, as many as twelve hundred persons would assemble to hear him. Among those who frequently attended his preaching in London, was, Sir John Shorter, the Lord Mayor, and the celebrated Dr. Owen. It is said, that when the latter was asked by Charles the Second, "How a man, such as he was, could sit and listen to an illiterate tinker?" he replied, "May it please your Majesty, could I possess that tinker's ability for preaching, I would most gladly relinquish all my learning." A great part of his time was spent in exertions to relieve the temporal wants of those who were suffering as Nonconformists under oppressive laws; in administering to the sick and afflicted; and in reconciling differences and preventing litigations among professors of the gospel. One of these errands of love was the immediate occasion of his death. A friend of his who resided at Reading, had resolved to disinherit his son. Bunyan effected a reconciliation; but returning to London on horseback through heavy rain, a fever ensued, which, after ten days proved fatal. Over his remains, in the burial ground, Bunhill Fields, is the epitaph:—

"Mr. John Bunyan, Author of the '*Pilgrim's Progress*,' ob. 31st August, 1688, at 60.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* now is finished,  
And death has laid him in his earthly bed."

Did the *Pilgrim's Progress* originate in the mind of Bunyan, or in the spirit-world? The latter cannot be positively affirmed; but looking at the character of the work—at the singular openness of Bunyan to spiritual influx—at the peculiar experiences through which he was put as if to prepare and qualify him for his task in writing it—at the statement he makes that it was not

the result of any plan or forethought on his part, but that "he fell suddenly into an allegory;"—that like so many of his visions and revelations, it "broke in" upon his mind, piece by piece, while engaged in the composition of another work—the digression extending and expanding till he found it necessary to make it a separate book;—looking at all these circumstances, it at least appears highly probable, that, though it necessarily took much of its outward form from the character of the writer—a character, it would seem specially educated into a fitness for the work; yet, in its inception, design, and substance, it was a reflection from that inner world of spirit-life, which, in some of its phases, Bunyan seems to have so faithfully delineated.

Macaulay testifies that "Bunyan is as decidedly the first of allegorists as Demosthenes is the first of orators, or Shakespeare the first of Dramatists." And Cowper thus apostrophises the writer of the *Pilgrim's Progress*:—

O, thou, whom borne on Fancy's eager wing  
Back to the season of life's happy spring,  
I pleased remember, and while memory yet  
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget;  
Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale  
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;  
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style  
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile."

And, truly, with all their outward dissimilarities, in their spiritual experiences, there was much in common between the tinker of Elstow and the poet of Olney. But I must reserve some account of the latter for a separate paper. T. S.

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### VICTOR HUGO A SPIRITUALIST.

WE learn from M. Pierart that Victor Hugo is an earnest student of the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism. The influence of these studies upon his mind may be perceived in the following letter recently addressed by him to Lamartine:—"Dear Lamartine,—A great affliction has stricken you. I wish to place my heart near yours. I revered her whom you loved. Your elevated spirit sees beyond the horizon. You perceive distinctly the life to come. It is not to you that it is necessary to say 'Hope.' You are of those who know and who wait. She is still your companion, invisible, but present. You have lost the wife, but not the soul. Dear friend, let us live in the dead.'"

*The Reader* of August 22, says:—"We observe that our French neighbours, like ourselves occupy or amuse themselves with books about Spiritualism and spirit-rapping. We count some half-a-dozen recent publications of this kind *pro* or *con*."

## THE QUARTERLY REVIEW ON "MODERN SPIRITUALISM!"

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AFTER the sharp rattle of small arms comes the heavy artillery. After the daily and weekly press and the magazines come the quarterlies. But though fired from cannon of the largest calibre the shot has no more destructive force. We may pick up the spent balls and place them in our museums for the inspection of the curious.

The above named article in the *Quarterly Review*, except for its length, might have appeared in any respectable provincial newspaper. The weak platitudes, the old stories, the stale jests, the oft-refuted fallacies, they are all here, greeting us with quite a sprightly air for such old stagers. The only thing about the article that strikes us is that it appears in the *Quarterly*.

The thing itself is neither rich nor rare,  
The only wonder is how it got *there*.

We don't look to the Little Pedlington Luminary as our philosopher and guide, but from the leading exponent of critical philosophy in England, we expected and we had a right to expect, something better than mere superficial knowledge, and crude speculation, and hasty inferences. Such sciolism in any other subject would be scouted; and in this too, were the public mind better informed, an article so discreditable to British criticism would we have little doubt have been consigned to the editor's waste-paper basket.

The reviewer considers it suspicious that the phenomena take place at appointed meetings, as if joint investigations could be carried on without appointed meetings; and as if also they did not frequently take place on other occasions. He talks of them as due to "expectant attention," as if unaware (as perhaps he is) that they often occur when there is no expectancy at all. He thinks it suspicious that tables should be moved, rather than other articles of upholstery. Well, besides that a table is generally most convenient for such experiments, other articles of upholstery are moved—chairs and sofas for instance; we have even seen an ordinary walking stick (which at all events has no "large vacant space under its broad surface") leap at request, we holding it the while, from one end of the room to another, and over the furniture, as if instinct with life. Then, the reviewer wants a "professor of Spiritualism" to inform him "when and how the spirit-language was converted from unmeaning knocks into significant symbols." He need not ask the information from any professor. It has been before the world for years in Capron's

*Spiritualism: its Facts and Fanaticisms*; in Spicer's *Sights and Sounds*; and in Owen's *Footfalls on the Boundary of another World*. These accounts have been quoted so often that we should only weary our readers by here repeating them; but before writing a review of the subject, it was surely the duty of a Quarterly Reviewer to have possessed himself of such very elementary and easily accessible information. Then, "the knocking language" is suspicious because it can be imitated by mechanical means. No doubt: but if the reviewer had read the works referred to he would have known that the most searching investigations have been made by competent men to test whether it was so produced; and that they have shewn to demonstration that it was not. He would have learned also on a little inquiry that this "knocking language" is of most common occurrence in the privacy of home, in the absence of all professional mediumship, and under circumstances precluding the suspicion or even possibility of deception. As apparitions are suspected of being spectral illusions, so "the knocking language" it is insinuated may be audital delusion. It is suspicious—in short, everything is suspicious to a mind predetermined to find in everything an object of suspicion, so—

All looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.

It is not necessary to follow our reviewer through all the small criticisms he has spread over thirty pages, especially after the able reply in Mr. Howitt's letter to the *Star* of July 29th. The review is a Brocken spectre—a magnified reflection of popular ignorance and prejudice. The writer begins by telling us that he does "not possess absolute unbelief;" and ends with an anecdote, the point of which lies in the last two lines:—"Marry," saith Dr. Brown, 'he said he would not have believed it except he had seen it, and no more will I.'" As if the belief of thousands did not rest on just the evidence the reviewer here asks for; and as if his testimony, were he to see and believe, would add a feather's weight to the mountain of evidence already accumulated. It would be met with the same incredulity which he metes to the testimony of others. His brother reviewers would coolly tell him that he was the victim of deception or hallucination; that it was all a "spectral illusion," and, perhaps, counsel him to call in the family doctor. The reality of the alleged facts of Spiritualism must be tried by the same tests as any other class of alleged facts, *i.e.*, by testimony and experiment. We maintain that they have been so tried and proved. Whether caused by spiritual agency, is a question to be determined by a careful examination of the facts themselves. If fairly questioned, we have no doubt as to the answer they will give. That answer,

many thousand times repeated, may be inferred from the all but universal recognition of their spiritual origin by those who have thus inquired of the facts rather than of their critics and reviewers; some of whom, like the eminent caricaturist, whose pamphlet we noticed in our last number, not only have not seen, but have designedly and determinedly abstained from seeing the phenomena they undertake to criticise.

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## EXPERIENCES OF A MEDIUM.

By JACOB DIXON, L.S.A.L.

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### II.

I CONTINUE my extracts from my diary; our circle still consisting of my wife, our young friend, B. L., and myself the medium; sometimes it received an addition of friends, some of them mediums through whom communications were received. My purpose, however, is to limit myself to relating only those which passed through my own hand, simple as some of them may be; let me say they were executed slowly and mechanically, I not knowing even a word until it was completed, the letters being written in an unusual manner, as if to satisfy me that my own thinking did not enter into the process.

*Nov. 24th 1858.*—The following was addressed to my wife:—  
 “My dear sister, you are too much interested in the things of the world. I am Lydia. The interest which I myself felt in the things of the earth was too great. I have now the opportunity of telling you what I had not of having told me—that the things of earth ought to be regarded only as leading to the things of heaven.”  
 “What I do,” said Mrs. D., “is, I hope, always useful.” “Yes, but there is a point at which to stop, and think how far what you are doing is conducive to the end. Sarah is alone in her ministry to you at present, and she says that you are too much engaged continually in handiwork.” “I cannot be idle,” said Mrs. D., and what I do is for the good of some one or other.” “True, but there is a point at which your attention should cease, my dear sister, to be directed to the little things, and be absorbed by the great, which are those of the eternal life.”

*Nov. 27th.*—Here is a communication of a different kind. It was signed “William Hitchcock,” of whom I had no knowledge. “Take care and round recollection with meditation. No one can be a philosopher merely by memory. The memory, in man or woman, is the servant of meditation. No one is a thinker worthy of the name who does not meditate deeply on the things lodged in the memory. No one can properly take the thoughts of another for good without meditating on them and digesting

them with his own powers." On this being read, B. L., said he thought the observations good, and that, for his part, he was obliged to friend William. The pen resumed:—"My young friend is a little, and but a little, too forward to express his sentiments. My dear young friend thinks we do not want to be called by the epithets of the world. So be it; but a discreet observance of the outer forms of respect conciliates regard among men and women of the world; in like manner it is acceptable to us of the spiritual world, who are as really present as if we were visible to him." B. L. apologized. A request was then written, through my hand, that I should read the conversation of a few days before, between Accolti and the spirit, for the information of a certain other spirit. This being done I was thanked in the same way.

*Nov. 28th.*—B. L., alluding to having lost two little sisters, asked the spirit whether children were more favoured in the spirit-world? It was answered: "Children are in love and therefore in happiness. My dear friend, children are the brightest of the inhabitants of this land; some are brighter than others, but all are brighter than adults. Some are lovelier than others, but all are lovely." "Do spirits begin, in the next world, from the same level?" "From the state to which they have matured, they go on brightening as they rise nearer to Divine Wisdom and love. Children are already in love, and have only to develop in wisdom." "Do you teach and influence lower spirits?" "So we are inclined by love and so we are commissioned to do by Divine Wisdom." "The Day of Judgment, what is it as you understand it? (I have said already that my young friend, B. L., was well posted in some sectarian doctrines)." "A return of Christ into the hearts of his mundane servants." "Will you explain?" "The subject requires much explanation: let it be kept in view." "A day of judgment is spoken of in the Scriptures: what is your understanding of that?" "There is a day of judgment for every soul; but that day applies to each soul, not to all souls on a particular day." "Is there diversity of religious opinion in the spiritual world?" "Many sorts of religion are among men, and therefore among spirits who have not long left the earth." "Do spirits ultimately come to one opinion in religion?" "Ultimately, yes." "Does the day of judgment come sooner to some than to others?" "According to most dependable testimony there are spirits who are in evil now who were in mundane existence ages since, and are therefore on this side of the day of judgment to them, while there are others who have lived but yesterday on earth and have already passed it." My wife asked a question about our dear Robert:—"Trouble not yourself as to the happiness of your dear young son; he will be a shining light in the spiritual spheres.

You are a little worn by writing. For a circle of friends and relatives, William Hitchcock, scribe with you. Farewell."

*Dec. 12th.*—At our sitting this evening, Dr. Y. was present. He told us of a case of long-continued pain in the ankle leaving the patient almost suddenly after he had made a manual examination of the foot. He asked the spirit how it could be explained? "The faculty of healing is common to man, where the will is positive to that object." "But in this case no will was exerted." "Here the will was exercised by a spirit." "Was it my own will acting unconsciously to myself?" asked the doctor. Instead of an answer to this, the following came in a totally different writing:—"Most sacred and solemn joy steals on the soul as it becomes conscious of the life eternal. Natural scenes are soon lost to us, and we become absorbed in the new life, unless our sympathies are strong with those we left on the earth. Man's life is troubled with pains and anxieties; spirits' life is harmonious with peace and happiness.—Sarah Warren, 1816." "Is the spirit of that family in Gilbert Street?" was asked:—"I was of the Warrens of Howland Street." "Have you anything to communicate?" "No. Salutation and Peace!"

The following was written the same evening. It is a sample of many others which I do not transcribe, showing the diversity of spirits about us. "The Christian sympathises with miserable man; O, extend your sympathy to the spirit who is in darkness!" "Whence your darkness?" "A cruel destiny. Trial is hard to man but harder to spirit." "Your name?" "To tell my name would do no service. Will you pray? Bring the Bible." It was brought. "Read the Lord's Prayer." It was read. "Take a chapter and explain it." "I am not a preacher." "Some men explain better than spirits. You have explained to some who have been with you: have compassion on me." "You have the Lord's Prayer." "True, I have, and will use it." "How do I know that you do not come in mockery?" "Say not so. Some do, but not I." "Why not apply to some spiritual guide?" "Why do I not? Because I am not sought by such guides." No one made any observation to this. "Say, farewell.—William Thornton." No one present knew any one so named. The next evening, another communication of a somewhat different kind, also from a stranger.

*Dec. 13th.*—"Samuel Cooper. My dear friends, I greet you in the name of the Lord. This is an opportunity I have long sought. The desire of informing fellow-creatures of the state of existence into which they are passing is great in the mind of a spirit who loves them." In answer to questions, the spirit wrote that he was the editor of *Mason Good's Medicine*. "Are your views," I asked, "in physiology and medicine changed?"

“Spirits are oblivious of the subjects which to them were engrossing in the earth-life. The topic I would enter upon is that of spiritual existence.” Mrs. D. was at the moment suffering from facial neuralgia, and said, if the spirit was a physician, he would perhaps have the goodness to suggest a better remedy than what she was then using. “Chloroform will mitigate severity of pain. My opinion is that you should take a dose on lying down and repeat it if occasion arises.” Which would be better to take regularly, asked the patient: the clairvoyante recommends *calcareia*, and Dr. V. *belladonna*? “That which has been recommended by the clairvoyante may be suitable to your constitution; the physician takes a view suggested by experience, and it should be brought under the clairvoyante’s notice. The suggestions of experience ought never to be disregarded.” “Did you know the homœopathic system?” “I watched the practice of Dr. Quin. I saw enough to convince me that there was truth in it. Surgery was my department, and I had no occasion to devote study to a new advance in medical practice.” “Was Dr. Cooper old?” asked Mrs. D. I said that he must have been, for he was an author of repute when I was a boy. The writing resumed:—“The life of man is short at the longest. The time for preparing for eternity is but a fraction of that which is illimitable: my dear friends, make the most of that fraction for the sake of the whole. The first regret the spirit feels, when regret is felt, as it was by me, is that opportunities have been LOST, which can never be regained, of sacredly preparing the soul for its end and object—existence nearer to its Father—GOD. Sacred indeed is the preparation required for such an approximation to the Divine Author of our existence. Sacred indeed the preparation for fraternizing with the good and wise who have gone before us into the nearer fields of peace with GOD. Let me then exhort you, dear friends, to keep this end ever before you; and to think of it whenever you are harrassed with those annoyances and cares which are incidental to the earthly life. The cares of the earthly life are multiplied by you unnecessarily. The life of earth is but the conscious commencement of an endless circle of circles. Though we should like to continue, we have to remember that time with you has to be observed. Farewell for the present.—Samuel Cooper.”

The following evening, this was written:—“James Solly.—Dear friends, a time is coming to all, when you will return to the realms from whence came your souls. To be prepared for that should be your daily and hourly object. Small comfort will it be, should you then say that the opportunity you and all have is lost, as Samuel Cooper said of himself. Samuel Cooper is a good spirit, with wasted opportunities. The subject of spiritual

existence—the life of the soul in another state of being—is worthy of a better thinker than I am ; but I may be allowed to express my thought that it is the very highest that can engage your attention.” Then came, almost without a break, the name and communication. “Tod.—Again, my dear friend, I come to you, after a protracted absence. Oh, what have I not seen ! The excellent work of God, as exhibited in nature, is nothing to the glorious expanse in spiritual ether, of which I scorned the testimony when on earth. I wrote through the medium at Hoxton some time ago, that the old sins had to be repented of—and they are repented of now. Sin is only forgiven from repentance before God ; and I am repentant and forgiven. Sarah D., who is your guardian, and the inter-agent of communication between me and you now, hopes you will give a prayer for me at times.” To the observation, that I had done so, was written :—“ So you have, and my gratitude is unspeakable. Prayer is the means of relegating us to God, who have lost our mainhold on his grace. Christ is the medium between man and God on earth, and I denied him there, and thus lost my *rapport* with the Father.”

Upon these latter communications I would remark, that the spirits might be on the same intellectual plane. J. Solly, in a previous one, not transcribed, declared himself to have been a surgeon, but unknown to me. He usually addressed B. L., whose father, he said, he knew. Tod was also a surgeon, an old acquaintance of mine. The communication alluded to by him was written three years before, about three months after his decease. As I have already said, readers will make their own comments upon what is written : I chronicle what I do only as communications.

I now found the writing, for a time, very rare on holding the pencil or pen ; but I felt the admonitory vibration in my arm on retiring to rest, or on waking in the morning : on then placing my left hand under my finger I could distinguish the writing by my sense of touch, as well as by the formed characters through that of sight, and I transcribed it on rising. On referring to the record, I find, mingled here and there, with the staple moral and religious sentences, spoken of at my commencement, advice about health, and recommendations to alter my position in accordance with my altered views. These recommendations I did not regard, because I did not see their reasonableness ; yet it is striking, looking back, to find that they have been carried out by an unanticipated course of events. These are some of the sentences mentioned :—“ Until the Son of God shines upon the soul of man it remains in darkness.” “ The love of Christ to the soul is as the warmth of the sun to the earth.” “ May the spirit of God illumine the dark side of our souls !” “ Satan is the principle of

evil, which is in man from the impulses of self." "May the spirit of God ever, ever help you to emerge from darkness to light!" "Cultivate love on the ground of spirit; such love never dies: so love one another, and love our memory."

*March 27th, 1859.*—This morning I awoke with the representation on my mind of a boundless expanse of stars, interlaced with rays of electrical light, proceeding from a point central and supernal; these stars being interlaced with paler rays. The conception then seemed to enter my mind of these stars being peopled by beings endowed with self-activity, good flowing to them from voluntary self-subordination to Deity, the supreme centre,—evil from the contrary. Feeling the admonitory vibration, I held my finger to my left hand, and the following was written:—"O, God, creator of all mankind! maker of all worlds! grant to this thy servant more and more light to see and understand thy admirable works.—Matilda." "My dear son, I have long endeavoured to impress your mind with this picture. The admirable work of Jesus Christ's mediation is impossible for me to express by any signs. My dear son, you much need repose of mind and body: we are much and often concerned about you. Farewell. May God give you the light to guide you into a more tranquil way of gaining your daily bread.—Matilda." I would remark that Matilda was not my mother's earthly name; but, through other mediums besides myself, she thus designates herself: some of them who are seers, describing her exactly. Through another medium, she communicated that this, her spiritual name, expresses one of her offices. She is not the only spirit who, writing through my hand, has signed other than her earthly name.

The reflection came to me, on transcribing Matilda's communication, that if a spirit can impress the mind magnetically with such images, a spirit of a lower kind might affect it in like manner with its images. Might this be one of the processes of temptation? According to the state of mind which we cherish, so may we not be unconsciously facilitating the mental *rapport* of this or that order of spirits?

*April 2nd.*—Meditating this morning on the subject of temptation, and thinking that as we depart interiorly from evil we lessen the necessity for the discipline of temptation,—this was written:—"My dear son, some are led into temptation by their own sensuality,—some, by being under the direct control of evil spirits." More was written, which afterwards escaped me: all except this conclusion. "Dear son, say the Lord's Prayer. \* \* \* Some have heard it who would have might to lead you into temptation this day." Then followed a benediction.

*April 4th.*—My wife had to-day, from cold, a return of her

facial neuralgia; thinking whether I could change the remedy with advantage, I perceived the intimation to write, and this came:—"Magnetism directed upon the gum would ease the pain. Depend upon it, and Matilda will help." I asked, "From the mouth off at the shoulders?" "The simple downward pass." "Would not *dulcamara* be better than *belladonna* for medicine?" "No; but give *aconite* also: a dose alternately every hour. You will be better soon." The pain abated under the hand, and what remained disappeared with the medicine.

Looking at these latter communications, I hoped I had at length struck into a better vein, if I may use such a term. But next morning this was written:—"I come in God's name. Charitably receive a wandering spirit. Say the Lord's Prayer in my behalf. Momentary grief and deception made me rush untimely into the presence of my Maker." I did so. Then followed:—"Thanks, my good friend. A speedier means of grace already opens itself to me. May God reward you. Farewell."

Scraps akin to this came now from time to time for a fortnight; the writing with the pen having also returned. I transcribe a few, which are suggestive of thought:—

*April 7th.*—"Many spirits see your mind—your many, many —. Some see the soul, some the spirit, some the brain. O God, Father of all, sinners as well as saints, grant thy grace that all may come out of their darkness! Light the torch of love in their hearts! Dear son, I am here.—Matilda."

*April 12th.*—"Some mourning repentant sinners ask you to say the Lord's Prayer in their behalf." This I did. Then:—"Matilda.—My dear son, lay down the pen." At night, after retiring to rest, similar writing, interrupted by the same injunction.

*April 13th.*—"To-day, I felt at every quiet moment, the writing-vibration, but requiring that any writing should be preceded by the formula, it as often went off. It was written at last, followed by the injunction, "Lay down the hand.—Sarah D."

*April 19th.*—"Another set of influences seemed now to come into operation. This was written:—"I believe that Jesus Christ lifted the veil between God and man. Lay down the hand and reflect upon this."

*April 23rd.*—"Live in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.—Matilda." "Seek the Lord in all your ways.—Sarah D."

*April 27th.*—"Doubts and difficulties are the lot of all. Anxieties about trifles injure mind and body. Have faith in God, and all goes well. Love God more than yourselves. Almighty God! May my dear sister be more reconciled to thy will.—Lydia."

*April 29th.*—This morning I awoke with another mental representation. I seemed to be within a little temple whose pillars and cupola shone with star-like light; the walls were translucent, and through them I saw that my temple was one of an infinite number arranged symmetrically in a vast all-inclusive temple, of which each little temple was a miniature representation. Each little temple, while it had its own light, seemed to be a sharer of the light of its neighbours, while all were more or less penetrated by the light of the all-containing one. I felt the vibration in my arm, and the sentence was again written:—"O Lord, grant to thy servant here more and more light to see and understand thy admirable works.—Matilda." The ideas seemed to rise in my mind,—Microcosms in the Macrocosm. Man is a temple not made with hands. Man is made in the image of God. Man is the image of, and contained in God. Next morning was written:—"The flesh is the temple dwelt in by the spirit. The spirit, to use the term, you understand, monadially builds its temple.—Sommering."

Having entered this in my diary, I felt the vibration in my arm, and this was written, shewing how little my thought or expectation was concerned:—"In the name of God, my good merciful man, pray for the aged sinner who departed your sphere on the second day of this month, Fenning by name—the Sinner." I knew no Fenning. I think, now, that he might have wanted to let in a little of the light, such as it may be, from my temple into his own. This may be one way of interpreting such requests.

*May 1st.*—I find this memorandum. After waking, with a mental representation (which I did not note down), the following thought in correspondence with it infused itself into my mind:—Salvation results from the polarization of the soul to Christ, and thus medially to the Father, rather than of treading at a distance in his footsteps as after an Exemplar. Having recorded this thought, the arm-vibration came on, and this was written:—"My dear son, K. might have a similar demonstration if he would simply place himself in a state of receptiveness by prayer and contemplation. God sees the hearts and souls of all; and he sends messengers of love and wisdom according to the state of those of his children, who thus pray to him.—Matilda." K. was an acquaintance, who, before his conversion to a belief in immortality through witnessing the facts of Spiritualism, wrote a book, demonstrating, to his own satisfaction, that religions did not arise among men through revelations. When I told him that I preferred, for good reasons, not to receive communications, except from spirits who declared they were Christians, he was out of patience with me; but still he would call at times to have a look at my communication-book.

To-day I have an injunction, signed by my mother, against holding the pen during the day, because it drew too much upon my magnetism.

*May 8th.*—This day I have the following, instead of, as I wished, something in relation to medicine:—"O God, Father of all, grant unto thy creatures all they need for keeping in the path that leads to Thee! Gracious Lord, do as seemeth best to thee with thy servant; draw him to thee, and make him more relying upon thy Providence and Divine guidance! Take the Saviour's advice. Love one another. Farewell."

*May 16th.*—Yesterday I had seen the last of an old patient, who had shortened his earthly days by intemperance. This was written:—"Sad and sorrowful,—oh, how sorrowful! My good sir, say to dear, religious, wise Miss B. that she ought to pray for her old sinning blind master, whom madness made a drinker. Say the Lord's Prayer." Miss B. assisted in his business in the absence of his wife, who was insane.

*May 19th.*—I had taken my watch from the pocket at the bed-head, and in replacing it, it dropped from my hand. To my surprise I did not hear it fall, for there was a space of some inches between the bed and the wall. Looking, I saw it resting on the projecting end of the mattress,—just wide enough to receive it. Speculating upon how it was that, falling where it did, it had not rebounded and fallen, I felt the arm-vibration, and it was written:—"Some spirits move articles by direct handling, others by magnetic agency; by the latter, the watch was directed to the place where it fell safely.—Matilda."

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## BAPTISM AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS: THEIR PHILOSOPHY AND USES.

BY A. E. NEWTON.

BAPTISM, or the application of water in some form as a religious rite, has been practised as a part of various religious systems, apparently from the earliest antiquity. Hindoos, Buddhists, Egyptians, Hebrews, Christians, Mahometans, and others, have, with remarkable unanimity, concurred in recognizing the value and sacredness of this ceremonial. It has been practised in the form of sprinkling, effusion, ablution, or immersion, and by some observed once only, at the outset of a religious life; by others as an oft repeated means of advancement in the same. As a symbol of moral and spiritual cleansing—of the putting away of the pollutions of an evil life, and the entering upon a new and purer one—or even of a change from one religious faith to

another—it is so natural and appropriate as to need no explanation. The human mind, with perhaps now and then an exception, delights in symbols, or visible representations of invisible realities. It is no cause of wonder then that so simple and obvious a rite should have become so prevalent among mankind. Its origin implies no special interposition of Deity; nor is the rite in itself invested with any peculiar sacredness. Its sanctity, like that of any other act, depends upon its genuineness. Does it represent, or is it attended by, a *real* purification of life and heart? If so, it is a “sacred” rite; if not, it is a sham and a mockery. There is, however, so natural and intimate a correspondence between physical cleanliness and moral purity, that where the first is neglected, the second can hardly be supposed to exist. “Cleanliness is akin to godliness,” said the keen-sighted founder of Methodism. If, therefore, frequent ablutions be not practised as a religious formality, it is evident they are a necessity to a pure and true life.

But it is my design to refer more particularly to baptism as accompanied by the serious “laying on of hands” by a person officiating. Has this ceremony any significance or value beyond that of a mere symbolic representation? It has now come to be well known that every living organism, and especially the human body, is a laboratory of vital forces, which it is constantly imparting in the form of emanations, aromas, or atmospheres, which affect at least all other bodies proximate to it. Something like this is true of all inanimate bodies even. Sir David Brewster (a good authority in matters of *material* science, however unreliable he may be when *spiritual* facts are in question) tells us that “All bodies throw off emanations, in greater or less size, and with greater or less velocities; these particles enter more or less into the pores of solid and fluid bodies, sometimes resting upon their surfaces, and sometimes permeating them altogether.” If this be true of all inanimate objects, it must be more markedly so of animate and active organisms; and these emanations must increase in power and intensity as the organism rises in the scale of being—culminating in man, the highest of all. Professor Hitchcock, an American scientific author of note, says, in a Treatise on “The Telegraphic System of the Universe,” (*Religion of Geology*, pp. 409—444),—“There is an electric influence excited and propagated by almost every muscular effort, every chemical change within us, every varying state of health or vigor and especially by every mental effort. . . . The stronger the emotion, the greater the change.” And again: “We may be sure that an influence goes out from every thought and volition of ours, and reaches every other intellect in the wide creation.”

Such are the teachings of the doctors of physical science; and

these facts are fraught with consequences of great moment to the student of spiritual truth. These emanations from human beings, as from all other bodies, may be supposed to differ in quality with every different person; and it is by distinguishing them, by means of an acute sense of smell, that the dog is able to trace his master's footsteps through the street where hundreds of others may have passed. So there are sensitive persons (and many "spiritual mediums," so called, are such) who are able to distinguish these different emanations; and by means of them some can delineate, with surprising accuracy, the mental peculiarities, moral characteristics, and physical conditions, healthful or otherwise, of persons who may be unknown to them, from simply holding in the hand or on the forehead a scrap of such person's writing or any article that has been carried about them. Persons who do this are called *psychometers* (*soul-measurers*). Facts of this character have become very familiar to experienced investigators of modern spiritual and psychical phenomena.

Again, the arms and hands of the human body appear to be the natural poles of impartation of these subtile emanations,—or, perhaps, more correctly, the right hand is the positive or impartive pole, and the left hand the negative or receptive pole. Even the ordinary galvanometer employed in the researches of physical science has been made to detect a current from these poles. Says Prof. Hitchcock, in the remarkable work already quoted:—"Substitute a man in the place of a galvanic battery, making his two hands the electrodes, and there will go out from him an electric current that shall sensibly deflect the needle of a galvanometer, an instrument employed for shewing the presence of small portions of electricity."

The effect of passing the hands of certain persons over others in producing magnetic sleep, and mental exaltation, has been well known since the days of Mesmer. Sensitive persons (who are, in fact, *living* galvanometers) feel sensations akin to those produced by an electric or galvanic battery, when they take the hands of certain others, or when hands are laid upon them. I have met with those who received a shock equal to that of a powerful battery, on my extending my hand to them for the customary salutation, and who have been obliged to make repeated attempts before they could succeed in grasping the proffered member. In fact, the very reason and use of the custom of shaking hands lies in the mutual exchange thereby of vital magnetisms—the very life-essence of friend imparted to friend in the hearty grip. Thousands of persons in this country (America) can testify to the removal of pain and the cure of various ills of the flesh as the result (more or less immediate) of the imposition of hands by those who have the "gift of healing;" and this gift

all possess, in some degree, who are possessed of healthful vitality, with a benevolent disposition to impart the same to others.

One fact more: it has been found that the special feelings, or the mental faculties most in exercise at a given time, impart a corresponding quality in predominance to the emanations given off at that time, so that an acute psychometer will detect feelings of sorrow or joy, pain or pleasure, or perceive any special activity of the intellectual, the devotional, or other faculties, that may have existed at the time a piece of writing was executed, or an article handled, &c.

These facts go to shew that an actual substantive *something* is capable of being imparted from one person to another, more especially through the instrumentality of the hands, and that the *something* possesses a dynamic force, tending to produce, in the one who receives, the same feelings, emotions, activities, &c., as exist in the one who imparts. Here, then, we have a basis for a *philosophy* of the religious rite of baptism when attended by the imposition of hands, as well as of the laying on of hands for consecratory and healing purposes.

The *rationale* of these acts is simply this. The healer, possessing an abundance of healthful vitality, of a refined and penetrating quality, imparts the same through the hands to the sufferer; this, as a real, potential agent, permeates the system, arouses and co-operates with the latent recuperative forces therein existing,—obstructions are removed, and the causes of pain and disease to a greater or less extent overcome. Experience has shewn that the use of water in which to dip or moisten the hands of the operator increases the effect, probably on account of the well-known qualities of this element as a *conductor* of electricity and like agents. So the priest or minister officiating in the rite of baptism, or consecrations of any kind, imparts an actual substance to the candidate. If we have attained to a higher condition of moral and spiritual culture than the subject of the rite, (as is usually supposed to be the case) he is pervaded by a correspondingly purer, and more divinely spiritual aura, (magnetism or vital force) which, in the solemn rite, is poured in a concentrated current through the hands upon the person of the recipient. The use of water upon the hands will increase the effect, for the same reason mentioned above; while at the same time it is a proper visible symbol of the invisible purifying agent. Thus a new spiritual force is actually imparted to the subject, which, if cherished and co-operated with, will work within to bring him into a like spiritual condition with the priest, or minister, whatever that may be. If the latter be "a good man full of the Holy Ghost," the same will be imparted, and may come as a

baptism of celestial aura, to penetrate and purify the whole being; if a hypocrite, a sensualist, or a wolf in sheep's clothing, these same qualities will characterize the aroma imparted, and will be likely to be propagated to all who pass under his unholy hands.

More than this: every person, and especially every representative of a religious body, as a priest or clergyman, is no doubt surrounded by, or in spiritual *rapport* with, a body or society of spiritual beings of like faith and character with himself. This results from the law of association, of like seeking like. Persons who have been the strong adherents of any sect in this world, on entering the other are naturally attracted together, and thus form a society or body of that sect in the world of spirits, to which doubtless they continue to adhere, until in time, perhaps, they expand into a larger and more catholic faith,—a faith which is above all sects while it preserves the truths of all. Thus it is that there are sects of religionists in the spirit-world,—Roman Catholics, Greeks, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Independents, Baptists, Methodists, &c., as well as Jews, Mahometans, Brahmins, Buddhists, Fohites, and all the rest. That it is so, is the united testimony of seers who have penetrated the veil of the unseen world, from Swedenborg to the present time. These societies in the spirit-world naturally seek to concentrate their influence upon their more especial representatives in this world. A priest, then, or teacher of any sect, becomes in fact a channel or medium, in proportion to his degree of impressibility, for the transmission of potent influences from the realm of spirit for the advancement of that particular sect in this world. This accounts for the undoubted evidences of spirit interposition, at some period of its history, which almost every religious persuasion is able to cite in favour of its peculiar faith or practice. The error has been in regarding these spiritual interpositions as direct manifestations of the Divine Spirit, and therefore infallible confirmations of the dogmas or rituals of such sects; whereas they only indicate the favour and co-operation of the particular societies of spirits with which such sects are in *rapport*. The subtle influences or auras thus infused from the spirit-world, through priests, clergymen, and other mediums, are no doubt a powerful means of affecting the minds and acts of men. The scenes of the late "Revival" in Ireland, the "Preaching Mania" in Sweden, the famous "Kentucky Revival" in the United States, and the somewhat common occurrences of Methodist Camp Meetings, may be regarded as examples of spiritual influences, proceeding unquestionably from sources such as have been named. In so far, however, as these influences, through whomsoever administered, are really purifying, elevating, and ennobling to humanity, so far are they truly baptisms of the

“Holy Spirit,” that benign and all-potent agency which, ever and through all, is working to make all things new.

Gifts, or capabilities, of various kinds, can be imparted or quickened by the laying on of hands. Repeatedly have I witnessed the transferring, by this process, of the gift of spirit-seeing, of symbolic vision, of mechanical writing and other forms of mediumship, from one person to another who had never before enjoyed the same. Doubtless, in such cases, the faculties for the exercise of such gifts already exist in a latent condition,—the infusion of an aura of the proper quality of quickening the same into activity more or less permanent. There was then neither superstition nor miracle implied in the words of Paul to Timothy, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery.”

I was present, by invitation, not long since, at a private baptismal service, performed at the house of a neighbour, in which these truths were illustrated and confirmed in a most beautiful and unanticipated manner. The parties were connected with one of the popular religious sects,—the husband and father being on the confines of the other world, and desirous of having this long neglected rite administered to his two children before his departure. The officiating clergyman, though connected as above stated, was an impressible man, of Catholic tendencies, and a believer in spirit-intercourse, yet wholly unconscious of what I am about to describe. By my side was a person who at times enjoys the high privilege of a very lucid opening of spiritual vision; and on this occasion a scene of profound interest and significance was most unexpectedly presented to her view.—During the preliminary devotions, she saw a large circle of shining ones gathered above the little company, among whom were departed friends and ancestors of the family, with others whose countenances beamed with celestial radiance. At first, all seemed to concentrate their influence upon the clergyman, to prepare him for the service. Then, as he proceeded to dip his hands in the baptismal font, and lay them upon the head of the elder child, two bright ones, a male and a female spirit, stood forth from the throng and solemnly assumed the offices of spiritual god-father and god-mother to the child,—engaging to attend and guard it at all times, and to use their best endeavours to guide its feet in the way of truth and heaven. And in doing this, they so placed themselves as to *infuse through the clergyman's hands their own personal magnetisms into the child*,—that, by means of the magnetic connection thus formed, they might be able thereafter to approach more intimately and to influence more powerfully their little ward. A similar scene was witnessed in connection with the younger child,—another pair of radiant ones presenting themselves and

assuming the same responsible offices in its behalf. And it was shown to the seer that the earlier in life such a connection with invisible guardians is established, the more potent the influence held over the child; because the latter is in a more receptive and plastic condition, and has imbibed less of conflicting influences from other sources,—hence the spiritual aura infused penetrates more deeply and pervades more fully every avenue of the being.

Doubtless what was witnessed on this occasion was but the counterpart of what transpires, unseen by mortals, at every like administration. At least, it is easy to believe what is so worthy to be true, as manifesting the interest of angelic hosts in the children of earth. It is evident that this rite may be and doubtless has been used as an instrumentality of evil,—as when it is applied to the holding of minds in bondage to narrow and superstitious ecclesiasticisms. But, being based in a law of our being, it may also be employed for the nobler purpose of aiding and strengthening the weak and tempted,—of guiding the young and wayward in the onward and upward path.

The church, for the most part, equally with the heathen world, has practised this rite from prescription, or in blind obedience to authority, supposing some mysterious value to be arbitrarily attached to its observance by the pleasure of Deity. Blind obedience may be very proper during the stage of childish ignorance; but when light and wisdom have come, it is time to “put away childish things,” and to act as men and women from an intelligent understanding of intrinsic uses. The church of the future will differ from that of the past, in that it will substitute rational convincement for blind faith, and the demonstrations of science for the commands of authority. Yet in the order of nature and of Providence, intuition, authoritative revelation, and faith, necessarily precede observation, science and philosophy,—as childhood precedes manhood. We need not, then, quarrel with the past, though we set our faces hopefully to the future.

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### SOME NEW PHYSICAL FACTS.

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WE have received the following from a lady in whose testimony we place entire confidence, and though we are not at liberty to publish her name, we feel safe in asking the reader to give the facts stated by her implicit belief. They are especially valuable as occurring in private life, amongst persons who disbelieved their possibility, and without the presence of any publicly-known medium:—

“SIR,—As I am a believer in the truth of spirit-manifestations, and also of their proceeding from the Divine Author of all

good, I am anxious that the truth which I have found so full of comfort to myself, should be spread abroad for the benefit of others. To add my mite, therefore, to the evidence on the subject which you have already collected, I enclose an account of two *séances* at which I attended last June. They seem to me to differ sufficiently from the ordinary manifestations to be worthy of notice, and, perhaps, of insertion in your magazine. I must request that my name may not appear; but if it would be likely to add weight to the account, you are at liberty to state that it is from a lady of rank, well known in society.

“One morning, last June, I spoke to a lady, who chanced to call, on the subject of Spiritualism, of which she had previously heard nothing. I proposed our then sitting together at a table, when I found that this lady, or, perhaps, our united atmospheres possessed strong medium power. We agreed to meet for a *séance* at the house of a mutual friend, an unbeliever in spirit-manifestations; and it was at this gentleman’s house, and afterwards at mine, that the following phenomena occurred:—

“The first *séance* was on the 11th of June. Besides the lady above-mentioned and myself, there were five other persons present—three gentlemen and two ladies—none *but myself* being believers in spirit-manifestations. At first we sat round the dining table, but soon we found that neither a circle nor hands on the table were necessary to produce phenomena. In addition to the usual manifestations where there is strong medium-power, such as those of a heavy table being lifted, chairs moved, &c., my braclet, necklace, and ear-rings, were taken from my arms, neck, and ears, and carried about the room. My chair was gently tilted back, and I was taken by unseen hands and placed on the floor, and an arm chair was moved for my head to rest on. The hands were felt so tangibly, that in order to test their material power, I requested that my arms should be pinched: it was done harder and harder, as I desired, till I could not bear stronger pressure. In the morning there were bruises from finger marks on my arms. My left hand was then held, and sprinkled, till quite wet, with a strange and most delicious perfume, which scented the whole room. It was like the scent of fresh flowers, but strange and different from any known to me. The perfume remained on my dress for several days. There were paper and pencils on the table, and the words, “Be faithful and true,” were written in the well-known hand of a very dear friend, now passed from earth. We heard sounds as of some person whistling, and then singing; and, finally, on one of the party repeating the Lord’s Prayer, it was echoed by murmuring voices round the room. At the next *séance*, the power appeared so strong that I requested to be lifted up to the ceiling; and I was almost immediately raised in my

chair from the ground, gently and gradually, to the ceiling, on which I wrote my initials, and was then brought down to my place so gently, that I felt no jarring sensation. When the chair reached the ground, it was, by my desire, taken up to the ceiling a second time, when I added a large cross to my initials. My head-dress was then taken off and placed on the head of a person standing at the other end of the room. My hair was smoothed by warm flesh-like hands, and then plaited.

“Notes and chords were then struck on the piano; and, to our great astonishment, “Home, Sweet Home” and “Rousseau’s Dream” were played by unseen hands. No one being near the piano. An air from the opera of Norma was whistled most beautifully and clearly. It sounded like a duet on the flageolet. I then went, being desired in the usual way by raps, to the piano, and played the “Portuguese Hymn” and “Pestal.” I was accompanied by the most exquisite voices; two others joined in chorus at times. We could not distinguish words, but the melody was perfect, and full of expression.

“I have mentioned only the chief phenomena, as the other manifestations of hands seen, furniture moved without any one being near, flowers brought from an adjoining room, &c., &c., have been often described. All present on these occasions witnessed, and can corroborate the accuracy of my statement; and as, until these manifestations left them no power to discredit the evidence of their senses, none were believers in direct *spirit-communion*, their present convictions of its truth proves how conclusive they found that evidence. At these *séances*, although the lamps were lowered, and the candles extinguished, the room was not dark; and while the concert of voices was proceeding we re-lighted the candles, which did not stop or interfere with the singing. Each person present had some manifestation addressed to him or herself; but I have only described those which I experienced or which seemed intended for us all.

“I have briefly described two *séances* of merely physical manifestations of spirit-power, because they alone are of general interest; but it is not from these that a Spiritualist derives consolation and instruction. No doubt they are important in arousing scientific inquiry, and have been the means of awaking many from the dark slumber of Materialism. But it is from the comforting and admonitory communications received from those passed away from mortal life that real consolation and peace is bestowed; and I am thankful to be able to add my experience to those who testify of the Scriptural and holy nature of the communications received.

“ P.”

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## DR. CAMPBELL'S, "CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER."

IN the *British Standard*, of August 14th, is a long and temperate review of Mr. Howitt's *History of the Supernatural*, in which Dr. Campbell thus sums up "the conclusion of the whole matter:—"

The conclusion of the whole matter is this: we believe in the existence of angels and of devils, in the existence of the spirits of men both good and bad; we believe that all are capable of acting in their disembodied state on the minds of men still in the flesh; we believe in the possibility of intercourse between man and these disembodied intelligences, whether good or bad; we believe, on the authority of Scripture, that spirits are capable of entering human bodies, of speaking through them and acting in them; and hence we believe in the possibility of spirits operating on matter in the way of rapping out the letters of the alphabet, or in the way of writing with the pencil. We see nothing in Scripture or in the nature of the case that militates against these conclusions. All that we require is proof, *indubitable, sensible proof, from our own eyes and ears*. On that condition we at once give full credence. We would also treat respectfully the testimony of intelligent, upright, and honourable men; but we should require personal experience to work out complete conviction.

This is a limit beyond which our judgments cannot go: we attach no importance to mere material movements such as Mr. Home's flight in the air, or pieces of furniture being moved or suspended: we set no value on anything apart from *intelligence*. If a harp, a piano, an accordion, or any instrument shall send forth sweet music apart from human hands, we at once acknowledge the presence of *intelligent power*. The tying of knots on handkerchiefs and the removal of objects from one place to another, and such-like things, in their measures demand the same recognition. The principle applies with the utmost force to table-talking. That is an affair involved in the deepest mystery. We never saw but one exhibition of this sort ourselves, but it was certainly an extraordinary affair. We heard a multitude of questions put and answered of a character which required wisdom more than human. These are *indisputable facts, as attested by our own ears and eyes*. The source of that wisdom we know not; but the questions were beyond doubt correctly answered. On one point the intelligence appeared to be at fault. A question was put respecting a gentleman supposed to be in the country; this was denied, and he was affirmed by the table to be upon the premises. All present were surprised, deeming it a mistake; but on making enquiry he was found to be actually there! Explanation of such phenomena we have none to offer, but *we stand by the facts as here stated*.

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## MRS. FLETCHER'S "THOUGHTS ON COMMUNION WITH HAPPY SPIRITS."

IN accordance with the promise in the article on Mary Fletcher, of Madeley, in a former number,\* we present the reflections given by her under the above heading. They were occasioned by her husband, the Rev. John Fletcher, having recently become one of those "happy spirits" with whom she delighted to hold "communion."

"He feels no more from the fear of losing me. Perhaps he is nearer to me than ever! Perhaps he sees me continually, and, under God, guards and keeps me. Perhaps he knows my very thoughts. The above reflections, though under a *perhaps*, give me some help; but could they be confirmed by reason, and, above

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\* *Spiritual Magazine*, No. 4, Vol. IV.

all, by Scripture, they would yield me much consolation. I will try if I can find this solid ground for them.

“ It appears to me no way contrary to *reason* to believe that the happy departed spirits see and know all they would wish and are divinely permitted to know. In this Mr. Wesley is of the same mind, (from whose writings I shall borrow some of my ideas,) and that they are concerned for the dear fellow-pilgrims whom they have left behind. I cannot but believe they are; and though death is the boundary we cannot see through, they who have passed the gulf may probably see us. Some small insects can see but a little way; an apple would appear to them a mountain; but we can see a thousand of them at once, crawling on what we call a small spot of earth. When an infant is born into this world, how many senses, till then locked up, are on a sudden brought into action! and could the child reflect, a variety of new ideas would be awakened, by which it would discern such a capacity of becoming useful and comfortable to its mother, as it never before had any conception of. It could have no communion with her but by one sense, that of feeling; but now it is enabled both to see, hear, and to make itself heard by her. There was an apparent separation from the mother; but in reality, it has gained a more valuable possession, which every day increases its ability of entering into her thoughts, and bearing a part in all her feelings. And may we not suppose, if the use of sight and hearing, as well as the powers of understanding, are so improved by our birth into this lower world, that some powers analogous to the above are, at least, equally opened on the entrance of a spirit into a heavenly state; though perhaps small in the beginning, like the infant, compared with the measure that is to follow? Nor doth it seem contrary to reason to suppose that a spirit in glory can turn its eye with as much ease, and look on any object below, as a mother can look through a window and see the actions of her children in a court underneath it. If bodies have a language by which they can convey their thoughts to each other, though sometimes at a distance, have spirits no language, think you, by which they can converse with our spirits, and, by impressions on the mind, speak to us as easily as before they did by the tongue? And what can interrupt either the presence, communion, or sight of a spirit?

‘ Walls within walls no more its passage bar,  
Than unopposing space of liquid air.’

“ But may not our reasonable ideas be much strengthened by Scripture? Some encouragement on this head I have lately drawn from the account of Elijah and Elisha (though I do not offer this as a proof, but rather as an illustration); for, as Elijah was to enter glory without passing through death, it is probable

he was favoured before with more than common intercourse and communion with the world of spirits; as we see in the works of Providence there is a gradual ascent: and I rather believe this from some passages in his story. Near the time of his translation, it was revealed to the sons of the Prophets, who said to Elisha, 'Knowest thou that thy master shall be taken from thy head to-day?' But to Elijah himself, perhaps, it was revealed long before; and it seems to me, he referred to this when he was in the deserts of Arabia, under the juniper-tree (1 Kings, xix.,) where he requested for himself that he might die; saying to this effect, 'It is enough, Lord; I am not better than my fathers. The Prophets before me have sealed thy truth with their blood, and why should I be exempt from the common lot of man? I had rather die and come to thee *now*? Why should I live any longer? Thou hast enabled me to maintain thy cause against the worshippers of Baal; yet my word hath little weight with them. They have slain thy Prophets, and I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away. Let them have it; for it is far better for me to depart and to be with Thee.' However, quite resigned to the will of God, he lays him down to sleep, till awaked by an angel of the Lord, who bids him arise, and take the refreshment a watchful Providence had provided for him.—Here we have no account of any alarming fear. He doth not, like Daniel, fall down as one dead; nor, like Zacharias and the shepherds, become sore afraid; but after a moderate repast, he lies down to sleep again, and then receives a second visit from his bright messenger, for aught we see, with the same steady calmness as before. From which I am led to suppose he was accustomed to such communications.

"When his faith had gathered strength by his miraculous preservation, forty days and nights without food, full of holy expectation he arrives at Horeb, waiting a further manifestation of the glory of God, as Moses, the *giver* of the law, had done in this very place before him.—Nor can we suppose this illustrious *restorer* of the law could be totally forgetful of that prayer, 'Lord I beseech thee, show me thy glory!' The place would remind him of the great discoveries made there. What intercourse he might have with the spirit of Moses, we know not; but it is certain they knew each other some time after on Mount Tabor. Waiting thus, like his great predecessor, for a time, the glory of the Lord was displayed before him, and the question put, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' In his answer to which he seems to intimate, 'I have nothing to do *here*. Israel has departed from thy ways, and why should I abide on earth any longer? Let me *now* come up!' As a pledge, his prayer is heard; he is commanded to anoint Elisha, to remain a prophet in his room. And

when the appointed time was come, walking with Elisha, he seems desirous of being alone, (perhaps the powers of darkness now made their last assault, endeavouring to shake his faith with regard to the great event just ready to take place,) and bids his friend again and again to tarry behind. But Elisha, unwilling to lose any part of his blessing, answers, 'As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.' He then asks him, 'What shall I do for thee before I am taken away?' Elisha answers, 'Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.' To which Elijah replies, 'Thou hast asked a hard thing.' Now, if a double portion of holiness was all Elisha meant, it was an odd answer; for we know there are no limits to that petition. We may ask as much of the nature of God as we please, and he will do 'exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think.' And no doubt Elijah knew enough of the mind of God to know that. But might he not mean, 'Let me have the two portions of thy spirit; not only thy communion with God, but let my intellectual sight be opened as thine; let me also discern the heavenly company wherewith we are surrounded, and commune with 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' though as yet I only by faith behold the Gospel day?' This therefore did seem a hard thing; for, as Elisha was to die like other men, the Prophet might not know whether this favour was to be granted to him or not; and therefore, as referring to the thing itself, he says, (as it were,) 'If thou seest me when I am taken from thee,' when the spiritual change hath passed upon me, 'then it shall be so, and then thy inward sight will be opened. But if I become invisible to thee, as to the sons of the Prophets who stand afar off to gaze, it shall not be so. It is not the will of God concerning thee.' But the 'effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availed.' Elisha saw both him and his heavenly convoy, while the sons of the Prophets saw neither, and therefore went on the mountains to seek Elijah. And that this supernatural sight remained with Elisha we have reason to believe; for, being in Dothan, and surrounded with a great host come to take away his life, his servant said to him, 'Alas, master! what shall we do?' and the Prophet at once answered, 'They are more that be with us, than they that be with them;' adding, 'Lord open the young man's eyes, that he may see!' 'And the Lord opened the young man's eyes, and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of chariots and horses of fire round about Elisha.' It is remarkable, this spirit which rested on Elisha was more conspicuous than that which rested on Elijah,—perhaps to prevent the thought, that, though the man who was to enter heaven alive was thus favoured, no other must expect it. Nay, but God, who delights to confer his greatest favours on the weakest objects, can confer on us all

that which he bestowed on Elijah and Elisha. And if under that dark dispensation, why not in this Gospel day, concerning which it is foretold, 'Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams?'

"The Apostle tells us, 'We are not come to Mount Sinai,' where Israel both saw the power and heard the voice of God; 'but to Mount Sion,' where we have communion 'with the general assembly of angels, the church of the first-born, the spirits of just men made perfect with Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant;' yea, and have access 'to God, the Judge of all.' And were we better acquainted with the privileges of our dispensation, we should become in a more full manner inheritors with the saints in light. But though it is allowed we may have communion with angels, various are the objections raised against the belief of our communion with that other part of the heavenly family, the disembodied spirits of the just. I shall consider these objections one by one. Lord, help me in so doing! Let me at least strive to comprehend something of the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of the great victory obtained for us over death; give me to see a little into that truth, "We are brought from Mount Sinai to Mount Sion!"

"*Objection I.*—'If a good spirit loves those which it loved before, and is acquainted with all their proceedings, will not the sins and miseries of those they thus know and love render them unhappy, or at least mar their happiness in some degree?' I answer—There are two kinds of love. If the persons they loved continue sinners, there will doubtless be a separation of spirit; yet I believe a remembrance and a pity will continue. It is said of the Almighty that, 'it repented the Lord He had made man,' and that 'it grieved Him at the heart;' and again, that 'He was grieved with their manners in the wilderness forty years.' Nevertheless, His own immutable happiness was not interrupted thereby. Now, as the saints yet on earth are made partakers of the Divine nature, and much more 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' so I should imagine their happiness would, in that respect, remain as immutable as that of the holy angels does, when so many of their once dear companions they now daily behold as devils. I cannot let it into my thoughts, that ignorance makes up any part of celestial glory, or that forgetfulness can be entered into by their nearer approach to Him 'before whom all things are open and manifest,' and 'in whom is no darkness at all.' But if an entire alienation of affection from the wicked should be needful, that is no proof it is the same with the righteous; for, if the sins of obstinate sinners would afflict them, the growth of grace in the righteous would augment their joy: and our Lord Himself tells us, "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

If you say, 'But this joy is only among the angels,' I answer, Can we suppose those faithful attendants on the heirs of salvation so carefully to conceal this joy within their own bosoms, as to exclude the heavenly spirits who stand in a much nearer relation to us? Can we believe they have not all their joys in common? No, no! in the church of Jerusalem they proved that 'great grace was upon them all' by their community of goods. And shall our narrow hearts let in the thought, they have not all their joys in common in the church above? Yea, verily, 'the general assembly of angels, the church of the first-born, and the spirits of just men made perfect,' are but one innumerable company, concerning whom it may well be said,—

'Lift your eyes of faith and see  
Saints and angels joined in one!  
What a countless company  
Stand before yon dazzling throne !'

If, then, there is joy throughout all the realms above, yea, 'more joy over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance;' how evident it is to an impartial eye, that the state both of the one and the other must be known there, together with the progress of each individual!

" *Objection II.*—'Is not a spirit divested of the body become of a quite different nature from what it was before, so as to be incapable of the same feelings?' I answer, Certainly *no; the spirit is the man.* The spirit of my dear husband loved and cared for me, and longed above every other desire for my spiritual advancement. Now, if it were the body, why doth it not love me still? You answer, 'Because it is dead.' That is to say, the spirit is gone from it; therefore, that which loved me is gone from it. And what is that but the spirit, which actuated the body, as the clockwork does the hand which tells the hour? It therefore appears quite clear to me, that every right affection, sentiment, and feeling of mind we have been exercised in here, will remain in the spirit just the same *immediately after death.* Nevertheless, as with the righteous, heavenly light and love will daily grow stronger, and with the wicked will be an increasing darkness; so there may be, perhaps in a few days, a much greater change on the newly-glorified spirit, than in the understanding of a child in seven years. The point, therefore, to be considered is, 'Will not a continuance and growth in the heavenly state erase those affections and ideas so strongly impressed on the spirit at its first entrance therein?' To which I reply, As spiritual union arises from a communication of the love which flows from the heart of Christ, I cannot but believe a nearer approach to its centre, and a fuller measure of that divine principle, must increase and not diminish the union between

kindred souls ; and that their change will consist, not in the loss, but in the improvement, of all that is good. Whatever agrees with the nature of heaven, cannot be destroyed, but increased, by their abode therein. Now are not *love* and *gratitude* natives of heaven, which dwell for ever there? If, in our present state, an abundance of grace is poured out on the soul, what is the effect? Doth it make us forgetful of kindnesses received? Doth it not rather raise the soul to such a pitch of gratitude, that it is ready to see favours where really there are none? And shall not the same love, when perfected in heaven, have the same effect in a more perfect degree? The mistake lies here: we forget that Christian love and union below are the same in kind, though not in degree, with those above; and we might as well suppose, that, when we enter into the realms of light, we shall plunge into darkness for want of the natural sun, as that Christian love and union must be destroyed by an abode in that kingdom where the very element we breathe shall be eternal love. Doubtless we shall know, and gratefully acknowledge, the ministering spirits who have served us here, and be sensible that gratitude is immortal, and does not change its sentiments with its place. I think all this is clear from those words of our Lord: 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail on earth, they,' (*viz.*, those whom you have helped) 'may receive you into everlasting habitations.'

" *Objection III.*—'But are they not so taken up with admiring Jesus, as to lose every other affection in Him?' I answer, That love of Jesus which fills the soul with the admiration of his graces, is a love begotten by that which reigns in the heart of Christ himself; consequently, it is of the same nature. But is the love of Jesus a barren and inactive love? Did it produce in our Lord such an enjoyment of His own pure nature, or such a shutting up in the glories and delight of the Trinity, as to render Him forgetful of his creatures? Or did it bring Him down to 'die for His enemies, and receive gifts for the rebellious?' When a powerful effusion of grace is poured out on our souls, are we not then most willing and ready to help our neighbour, and to cry out with that good woman, Jane Muncy, 'Methinks I am all spirit! I have no rest day or night but in gathering souls to God.' Surely, then, we may with safety believe, that a holy disembodied spirit feels the same effect from a fuller effusion of the same love, and that as soon as he hears that word, 'I will give thee many things to be faithful over,' he immediately enters more fully than ever 'into the joy of his Lord;' which is the joy of doing his creatures good.

" *Objection IV.*—'But though it may be allowed that the angels are ministering spirits to the saints, in honour of their Lord, who hath taken our nature upon Him; we do not know

but the spirits of just men made perfect, being of a higher order, by their near relation to their Head, may be exempt from that servitude.' I answer to this objection, May not those words of our Lord be applied, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of!' 'He that will be greatest, let him be servant,' saith Jesus Christ, who came Himself, 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister:' and if our Lord washed our feet, shall we be above the same employment? Jesus, our Master, though in His glorified state, calls Himself the 'Shepherd of the sheep,' and walks with jealous care amongst His candlesticks of gold, holding the stars in His right hand; and I can no more believe the divinest spirit in glory above the service of mankind, than I can believe there is pride in heaven. Abraham is represented as receiving Lazarus to his bosom, and as giving a mild answer even to a damned spirit! And when souls at the foot of the altar cried, 'How long?' they were told to wait till their fellow-servants came also. Did they not then remember their fellow-servants? When the heart is full of grace, it delights in the meanest office, and feels pleasure in yielding happiness even to an insect. We are sensible no part of our worship is more pleasant in the sight of God than obedience; and no employment more delightful to the saints than that of promoting the glory of God. Now, the Lord hath said of His creatures, 'I have created thee for my glory; I have formed thee for my praise!' Shall not, then, the blessed spirits be very zealous in promoting that glory? The glory of God and our interest are inseparably one. And are they not 'one spirit with the Lord?' And is not their highest delight in that in which He most delights, which is the salvation of His people? So that an exemption from serving the church would rather create pain than give satisfaction. Again, the highest honour that can be conferred on a creature, is to have the nearest resemblance to its creating head. Now, He hath said to the believer, 'I will dwell in you—I will come and make my abode with you.' The soul who hath felt a small degree of pure love, can answer this objection at once from the feelings of his own heart; the language of which is, 'I love Him continually, and, therefore, I will feed His lambs.'

"*Objection V.*—'But as Paradise is a place as well as a state, and finite beings are not omnipresent, any more than omnipotent, how can they be there and here in the same moment?' I answer, I do not suppose they can. But if I were to tell you of a minister who daily visited his flock, inquired into all their concerns, and knew their whole situation, would you say it was impossible, because he lives in that house, which is his home, and he cannot be in two places at the same time? And yet it is certain we are perfectly acquainted with the situation of many

who do not live with us in the same house. If we see them but once a week, our shallow capacities can take in all they tell us of their past and present state. But if, instead of waiting for the slow and imperfect conveyance of words, we could, by a cast of the eye, read every thought in a moment, and without labour visit them as early as the sun shines in at their windows, (though it still remains in its proper place), our acquaintance would be much more perfect. We are now in the body, and have senses and faculties suited thereto; therefore, our human eye can at once measure the body of our child, and discern every wound or bruise, or even a speck of dirt thereon. And have not spirits faculties suited to spirits, by which we may suppose they can as easily discern your soul, as you could discern the body when they were in the same state as yourself? And may there not be a way by which a spirit, actually before the throne of God, may still see and serve the souls committed to its care, supposing them to act as ministering spirits? I ask, 'If you had never heard of a looking-glass, would you understand me if I said, 'Though you stand at one end of that long gallery, and I at the other, with my back towards you, I can discern your every action and motion, and know every change?'' And yet such a knowledge the looking-glass would convey to me. Now, if all things on earth are patterns or shadows of those above, may not something analogous to the glass represent to the world of spirits as just a picture of the changes of posture in the spirit, as the glass does those of the body? Some have supposed the appearance or representation of every soul still in the body to be constantly seen in heaven. That this may be without the knowledge of the person concerned, is evident; because Ananias knew nothing, till God said to him (speaking of Saul,) 'Behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.' Various dreams of pious persons, who have thought they saw their appearances in Paradise, over which the heavenly company mourned or rejoiced,—as well as the amazing instances of second sight,—seem to strengthen this opinion.

"If this seem strange, let us consider how strange it would appear to us, if we had never heard of letters, to be informed there was a method among many nations of wrapping up their thoughts in a bit of paper, and by that means conveying them hundreds of miles into the bosom of their dearest friends! As little could you conceive of the faculty of speech, had you never known it; or the commanding knowledge which the eye gives you over a large space, and a number of persons, in one moment, had you been born blind. But though I mention these similes, because some can only conceive of spiritual matters by gross

ideas, I believe our union to be far more close with the heavenly host than to need these representations. What else do these words of the Apostle mean, 'We are come to the general assembly, to the church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect?' And if 'He maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire,' cannot a spirit be with me in a moment, as easily as a stroke from an electrical machine can convey the fire for many miles in one moment, through thousands of bodies, if properly linked together? That the devils are about us, and know our thoughts, is evident. A sinful thought is suggested; we answer it by a scripture; immediately it is answered again. And shall not departed happy spirits, who are so much more of one nature with us, have the same power? Mr. Wesley has a beautiful observation in his sermon on those words, 'Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?' He says, 'That the guardian angels know our thoughts, seems clear from the nature of their charge, which is certainly first for the soul, and but in a secondary sense for the body.' And are not our kindred spirits more nearly related to us than the angels? Why then should they not have the same discernment?

"But to return to our first question, 'Can they be here and in Paradise at the same time? Otherwise, how can they constantly minister to us?' Perhaps we shall not be able to comprehend this till that word is accomplished, 'Then shall I know even as also I am known.' But if this cannot be, then we must give up all the agency of angels; for the same argument will hold good against that. And yet our Lord hath said, 'Despise not these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.' . . . He hath broken down the wall, removed the veil—and through Him we 'are come to the church of the first-born, to the spirits of just men made perfect.' 'We are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.' And having overcome the sharpness of death, He hath already opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Perhaps some may say, 'But if it be thus, why do not the Scriptures plainly tell us, death is no division but on our side; and that our friends still see, hear, and are about us?' I answer, There may be many reasons why a veil should be drawn over this heavenly secret. It is probable the Primitive Church knew it more perfectly: but what was the consequence? When they left their first love, they no longer held the Head, but ran into the false humility of the worship of angels, instead of worshipping God only, and adoring Him for the angelic ministry. Perhaps some communion with departed spirits caused the first step into the egregious errors of the

Papists; and man, ever prone to extremes, knew not how to throw away the abuse without throwing away the use of this heavenly secret. Nevertheless, the secret of the Lord is still with the righteous, and His ear is open to their prayers. He will manifest Himself to them, though not unto the world: and He will grant to heavenly minds, when He sees good, a heavenly communication with the Church triumphant."

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ROMNEY MARSH.—A GHOST STORY.

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We are informed by a contemporary that the quiet little villages of Bilsington and Bonnington, in Romney Marsh, have recently been thrown into a state of great excitement, owing to a report that the house occupied by a Mrs. Gates, her son, and a servant girl, had been the scene of strange, supernatural operations.

It is stated that the furniture has jumped about the rooms in a most unaccountable manner until it has dashed itself to pieces against the walls. The crockeryware has danced about the place like puppets hung upon wires, and after performing some extraordinary evolutions, has sprung with a sudden jerk up to the ceiling, and destroyed its usefulness for ever. Pails of water have flown about the house like soap bubbles in a high wind. The flour crock, without any visible cause, was broken to pieces, and the flour scattered in all directions. Boots and shoes galloped out of one room into another, as though they were looking about for some one to put them on and wear them. Bedroom ware has walked down the stairs step by step. The beds that were made in the morning ready to receive their occupants at night were found long before that time turned topsyturvy, with the sheets and blankets tangled together like a colt's mane after it is said to have been ridden by witches. A book put away at the very top of the house came rumbling and tumbling down the staircase, and on reaching the bottom, with a sudden bound cleared the kitchen, flying straight through the already smashed window out into the garden. A great number of persons have been to the house to investigate this mysterious affair, and one very esteemed minister of the Church of England came and grieved at the "wreck of matter and the crash of"—crockeryware. Absurd as this story may appear, there are a great many persons in the neighbourhood who gave credence to the whole of it, and also to a great deal more than is here stated. One thing is quite certain, there are the broken things; but by whose agency they were destroyed at present is only known to the destroyer.

A correspondent, after narrating many of the above circumstances, says:—"Strange as these things may read, it is equally strange that so many living in this age of enlightenment, the 19th century, should be found to have faith in the monstrous supposition that the house is haunted. There is evidence, however, that part of the events enumerated are true, as the remains of the crockery are open to inspection, and also the damage sustained to many articles of furniture. The extraordinary communications have actuated many persons from Hythe and other places contiguous to repair to the scene. Some are satisfied with an exterior view of the house; and the fright with which it is viewed by the credulous is really amusing, and yet pitiful withal to witness."—*South-Eastern Gazette*, June 23, 1863.

The *Sussex Express*, of September 5, adds that the correspondent of a morning contemporary took the trouble to visit the place on the 22nd of August, to personally investigate the matter. It says:—"He found that the cottage had long been occupied by the families of two labouring men, Gates and Luckhurst, whose humble occupation in life has been that of shepherds, or 'lookers,' as shepherds are called there. Gates at one time had been well to do in the world, having some sheep of his own; but he had become chargeable to the parish, and requiring medical attendance, he had been ordered into the union workhouse, where he subsequently died. The occurrences in question, or whatever formed the foundation of the reports, commenced before his death and soon after his

removal. The substance of the facts, prosaically told, was that for several days in succession, beginning on the Saturday and ending on the Tuesday or Wednesday, and chiefly when no one was on the premises (or known to be so) but women and children, strange noises were heard in the house; sometimes in one room, sometimes in another; after which furniture was found thrown down or displaced. Bed clothes in confusion, articles of wearing apparel, with bowls, pails, &c., tossed about, and glass and crockery broken, principally the window panes (fifteen in front and some at the back), and five or six large earthenware milk jars, the fragments of which and other utensils are lying in the yard. These things always happened in the day time; sometimes in the presence of scared neighbours; nothing occurred at night; and the annoyances were confined to the side of the house in which Gates lived, and which was still occupied by his wife and son—the wife (Miss Gates as she is called, the Kentish peasantry ignoring among themselves the use of the word mistress) being an old woman of 75, very feeble, walking with difficulty on crutches, unable to mount the stairs without assistance, and dependant in smaller matters upon the services of a little maid-of-all-work, Ann Smith, a girl of 14.

“The correspondent, however, pushed his inquiries farther, and inquired what had been seen when the different articles moved were in actual motion. ‘I was informed,’ he says, ‘that when the Bible flew down the stairs (the proper place of which was on the bed-room drawers), it struck, as it passed, one of the Luckhurst’s children, a girl of 11, with sufficient violence to leave a black mark on her shoulder. The girl herself, coming forward, pulled up her sleeve to show me where the mark had been, and her word might be taken for it; but there was nothing to prove that the Bible had not been thrown at her from the stair-head. The two families, living in the cottage, have their own separate front and back doors, but the same staircase is common to both; and the rooms thus communicating internally, offer great facilities for the unobserved ingress and egress of any active person playing a mischievous trick. We have to get up, however, another theory to explain some parts of the evidence. Mrs. Luckhurst was standing in the yard by the paling when the earthenware crock was broken, and the flour it contained scattered. She saw (as she says), Ann Smith carrying the crock, and setting it down by the kitchen door, when the crock seemed suddenly jerked out of her hands, and the flour ‘steamed up’ to the ceiling in a sort of cloud. Ann Smith at the same time crying out, and turning pale with fright. Mrs. Luckhurst (a striking contrast to her neighbour), is a fine specimen of a strong hard-working woman, in vigorous health: although the mother of nine children living, mostly grown up, and on their own hands, without counting those she has lost, more than she could remember; and she stood before me with her arms a-kimbo, denouncing with an eloquence which Gladstone might envy, the absurdity and injustice of the suspicions that had been directed against Ann Smith. I was not the person to tell her that she was romancing, or ‘saying the thing that was not.’ Nothing would persuade Mrs. Luckhurst that what was done was not the work of an evil spirit; and she regretted she was no scholar, for she had ‘heard say there was a certain chapter in the Bible which, if properly read, no evil spirit could stand.’ What chapter it was she did not know, and unhappily I could not inform her. Luckhurst, the husband, was in the fields at the time, and laughed at what was told him of ‘the goings-on’ at home in his absence, but became as grave and frightend as the rest on his return. The excitement increasing, the new rector of Bilsington and Bonnington, the Rev. F. Cameron, came, and saw the broken things, was shown the disturbed beds, had them re-made, locked the door, and went away with the key in his pocket, returning at ten, when he found everything as he had left it. Another girl has replaced Ann Smith, and since she left, and Gates died, there has been no renewal of the disturbance; but a subsequent investigation through the police has failed to bring them home to their author.

“The correspondent we have quoted seems to think that there is room for inquiry into the above facts, and sneers at the Kent magistrates for believing that the noises heard and mischief perpetrated originated in natural causes. They will at any rate be an acceptable present to Spiritualists as an independent testimony—the Romney Marsh peasants, though ignorant and superstitious, having never heard of spirit-rapping or the *Spiritual Magazine*.”

## TO MY LOVE IN HEAVEN.

Hear me where in heaven thou livest, hear me, O my angel-love !  
Thought of earth, of him that loves thee, will not mar thy bliss above.

Hear me, for I weakly mourn not that thou art no longer here :  
No, I rather will exult that thou hast reached a nobler sphere ;  
Nobler than this earth of trouble, nobler than this earth of change,  
Where the spirit from its prison freed from bliss to bliss may range ;  
Range from glory unto glory, never knowing shame or pain ;  
Such a life thine own for ever, could I wish thee here again ?

\* \* \* \* \*

And thy memory in my bosom burns to keep it pure from sin :  
When thou fill'st my breast, all vainly evil strives to enter in.  
For thou art my guardian-angel, strong with holy strength from heaven,  
And before thy sword celestial evil thoughts with shame are driven.  
And when good thoughts on the threshold linger, knocking at my heart,  
And the fiend within me rises, proudly bidding them depart,  
Thou, a heavenly guide, descendest, leading them with gentle hand,  
And the fiend cowers disappointed, and the portals open stand.  
Thus thou strivest still to fit me for thy pure abode above,  
That I may at death rejoin thee, where we may for ever love.  
Death ! that word ! how mortal frailty shrinks from thought of leaving life !  
How it dares to live in anguish, bearing trouble, braving strife !

\* \* \* \* \*

To the good he is an angel sent to guide them to the shore  
Where the troubled waters vex not, where is calm for'evermore.  
Foolishly we think them parted from us, and for ever gone ;  
Feeling not the soul dies never,—living, and not all alone ;  
For it watches from its heaven those that were on earth its care,  
And the love that here men cherished, think not that it leaves them there.  
For it is their highest bliss, while those on earth they tendered dear  
Live, to sin exposed and sorrow, prey to chance and doubt and fear,  
'Tis their bliss the most ecstatic, thrilling through the inmost soul,  
Them to watch and guard and comfort, till they reach life's welcome goal ;  
Then they hover round the bed, or sea, or wild, or battle-field,  
—Wheresoe'er Death gives his summons, there they strengthen, soothe, and shield :  
And they catch the spirit flying from the body into air,  
Bearing it with hymns to heaven, partner of their glory there.  
—So may'st thou, my sainted love, in pain, in danger by me stand !  
In temptation guard, and aid with spirit-voice, with angel-hand !  
And if in some hour of gloom thy memory e'er make dark my heart,  
Whisper that we soon shall meet where souls once joined can never part !

WILLIAM FULFORD.

## Correspondence.

### A FACT FOR SCEPTICS TO EXPLAIN.

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR,—It may be interesting to record a curious circumstance which has recently taken place, as it goes to show that spirits have the power, at times, to see material objects. I must explain that I have been recently seeking a new abode and am now in occupation of the house to which this little fact relates. I had been to C— several times to look over the house, but from several impediments had been unable to view it. On the 16th of May, however, I was conversing with a spirit, by means of the involuntary writing method, and I mentioned that my lady relative who resides with me, and who is the medium, and myself proposed to go over to C— the next day (Sunday, the 17th), to see the house, and I requested S. J., the spirit (who has formerly contributed to your pages), to accompany us. He consented to do so, and we went the next morning. However, another obstacle had occurred, the landlord not having received the key from the outgoing tenant, so we had once more to return without seeing the house. On the evening of Friday, the 22nd May, we were again conversing with S. J. and the following questions and answers were put and given. I transcribe them from my spiritual diary in which, as usual, I had recorded them at the time. "Did you go with us to C—?" "Yes, I was with you. I hope you will get your house, it will suit you, if you can." "You know we could not see the inside?" "Yes, I did see it." "Do you mean that you entered it?" "Yes." "Can you tell us anything of the interior?" "You know it by what was told you. The back drawing-room has much window, small panes in them." I said to the medium:—"Did Mrs.— tell you anything about the inside of the drawing rooms?" She answered "No." I myself knew nothing of the interior, save that it was a very quaint house, with an oak parlour and many staircases in it. Of course we had seen the outside, but it was impossible for any person to see the back as it is isolated by high garden walls on that side with no outlet.

We again visited C— on Sunday, the 24th of May, and on entering the back drawing-room, found *one large window with thirty-six small panes in it*. The expression, "much window," had struck me as odd. We looked at each other in astonishment, for despite my belief in Spiritualism, I had scarcely expected so literal a fulfilment of the expression of our spirit friend. To meet the objection that we might have heard the window spoken of and forgotten it, I may add that I had not made any inquiry of that kind, nor had any statement been made about it to either of us, as the circumstance was, in fact, too trivial to mention. Here is a small fact for sceptics to explain—they are fond of inventing ingenious solutions more difficult to believe than the truth. Will they again oblige us by some happy effort of imagination?—I am, dear sir, yours truly,

O—d House, C—k, W., June 15, 1863.

K. B. H. M.

A contemporary, commenting on the strange occurrences at Romney Marsh detailed on another page, observes:—"We know absolutely nothing of the source and nature of our vital powers, and while it is perfectly true, we shall not clear up the mystery in which they are involved by referring everything new and strange to the supernatural, it is equally certain that we shall never extend our knowledge by generalising and dismissing one set of effects, as those of 'involuntary motion,' (which explains nothing), and getting rid of others which we do not understand, by the too easy method of attributing them to imposture. When some friends of Dr. Black were first shewn the buoyancy of a bladder, inflated with hydrogen gas, they had to be taken into a room above the laboratory of the chemist, to be convinced that there was no hole in the floor through which the bladder might have been drawn up to the ceiling by a fine thread. There was, however, no fine thread, and there was nothing in the bladder distinguishable to the friends of Dr. Black from common air. We now admit gases as 'things invisible' that may yet act as efficient causes. May there not be others?"