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Some reasons why I am a spiritualist :

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SOME REASONS
WHY I AM A
SPIRITUALIST,
AS GIVEN IN A
CORRESPONDENCE
WITH A
CONGREGATIONAL CLERGYMAN.

BY
EVELYN P. GOODSSELL.

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INTRODUCTION.

The following pages were not designed (so far as the author is concerned) for publication. First: because my circumstances in early life were such as to forbid my becoming acquainted with such of the common branches of education, as composition, or the grammatical use of language. Hence, I feel how illy prepared I am to write for the public eye. Second: I felt fully aware that the subject on which these pages treat, was being ably discussed by many who are every way competent to the task, and chose to leave it to such abler heads and hands to perform. Furthermore, I had for a period of forty years listened to the teachings of the doctrines and dogmas from the pulpit, and otherwise of Congregationalism, and had in the meantime become thoroughly imbued with such doctrines and dogmas as have been usually taught from such pulpits, which, although they did not coincide with my reason, were many of them irrational, and others quite contradictory and irreconcilable, yet rather than stem the torrent of popular orthodox sentiment, I reluctantly consented to follow the lead of those with whom I had been associated, and so continued to walk with them and support their preachers. In the years of 1857-8, I was led to consider more and more deeply, the question, whether I ought in justice to myself and my God, to continue to listen to teachings which were subversive of my Reason, which is of God; or come out from among them, and listen only to the teachings of Nature's

Divine Revelations to mortals by her messengers the Spirits. As this is a question of vital importance to the race of mankind, and that just and proper views of the government of our world should be obtained as far as possible, and as it is the duty of all to let their light shine—the humblest as well as the more conspicuous—I yield to the solicitation of friends and place this correspondence, embracing extracts from eminent authors whose lives are now being written on the page of the world's history, before an enlightened public. Should any of my readers conceive the idea that an undue harshness is used in expressing my views, to such let me say, it was far from my intention so to speak, or in any way to wound the finer sensibilities of my learned friend and correspondent.

To all who are disposed to seek the Divine Life, and Light and Truth aided by *Reason*, these pages are respectfully inscribed. If this work shall be the means of furthering the cause of human progress, by diffusing light upon its pathway, and establish its going upon a sure foundation—the immutable principle of God's Truth—then will our labor have been not in vain. That it may shed a benign and healthful influence on the race of mortals, is the humble prayer of a friend of humanity.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HARTFORD, Dec. 27th, 1859.

To the First Congregational Church of Fair Haven, Conn.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with a deep sense of duty to myself and the church to which I belong, that I make to you the following communication:

The phenomena of Modern Spiritualism have engaged my attention somewhat, during the last ten years, and in which time I have had opportunity to investigate, calmly, candidly and thoroughly, its claims upon me as a rational and accountable being. This investigation and inquiry, has led to the belief and knowledge that the spirits of our departed friends are not only permitted, but they are commissioned to become the teachers of the inhabitants of earth. I say commissioned, because the Good Providence of God, which called them into existence, and watched over them while in the Earth Life, still watches over and guides their destiny. Of the manifold Manifestations of Spiritual Communion with mortals, it is not my design to speak in this letter; but to state my own conviction of the fact and truth that the Angels of God do at this present time, communicate to all who will honestly and candidly seek for the words of comfort and instruction which they bring. These words of instruction and comfort are constantly coming to the human family through Inspirational and Trance Speaking, and Writing Mediums. Of the other forms of manifestation of spirit intercourse, all of which evince its truth, yet it is not necessary for me at this time to speak.

Suffice it to say, I am no longer a Congregationalist, and request that by a vote of the church my connection with it may be dissolved. By taking the earliest action upon this request, you will best subserve the wishes of your friend and brother.

EVELYN P. GOODSSELL.

FAIR HAVEN, Jan. 3d, 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your communication of Dec. 27th, I laid before the church at the earliest opportunity. I was appointed to communicate with you, and to assure you that the church earnestly desire that you should see your way clear not

to withdraw from us. We appreciate your wishes and commend the step you have taken in sending us the letter. It looks friendly and noble, and we desire to treat you with the utmost fairness and magnanimity. Your request shall be complied with, if, on our remonstrance and labor with you, there shall be no change in your feelings and wishes.

But we do not see why you should renounce Congregationalism for Spiritualism. The former has been tried for eighteen hundred years, and has given to the world its noble results and trophies. Christianity, under this ecclesiastical system, has built up virtuous families, prosperous communities and magnificent states. Its cultured people, its noble schools and universities, its useful men and women, are witnesses before the world of its truth and power and goodness. It honors Christ and the Bible and seeks the salvation and welfare of the human family. I need not enlarge on it to one so intelligent and observing as yourself.

What is Spiritualism, and what are its fruits? Can it demonstrate its truth before an educated and keen-minded body? Does it honor the Savior and the Holy Scriptures? Is its tendency, so far as good men can observe it, to guard the family relation, to promote true religion and to bless men? Or, do its espousers, generally, deny future punishment, deny the atonement of Christ, and the other cardinal truths of the Gospel? Is it not true that the so-called spirits not only contradict the Bible but also contradict each other? Is there any assurance that the spirits, if they be spirits, are not BAD spirits? Is the *character* of the mediums such that you would trust your family with them? Have not the most intelligent Spiritualists denounced the whole affair and exposed it as a dangerous and wicked delusion? What good has ever come of Spiritualism, compared with its patent and wide-spread evils?

By the direction of the church, I put these questions variously to you, and call upon you as our friend and brother to return to the fold from which you have gone. We want you with us. We feel sure that Spiritualism is an error. We think, if you are willing to be convinced, we can convince you that Congregationalism is right and Spiritualism wrong.

Let us, in a friendly spirit, meet and discuss the subject. Let us stand together, on the same platform, *on the right one*.

We will hear you, we will be convinced by you, if you can convince us. If we can convince you, we shall be happy, for thereby we shall, as we look at it, save our brother.

For the Church,

Your friend and pastor,

BURDETT HART.

E. P. GOODSSELL, Esq.

HARTFORD, Jan. 4th, 1860.

MY DEAR BROTHER :—Your letter dated Jan. 3d, is received. It purports to be a reply to my letter to you, dated Dec. 27th, 1859.

Before I proceed to answer your's, now before me, I shall protest against changing the ground which I took in my letter of the 27th inst. I protest also against a discussion of questions of a Theological nature; because, I am not accustomed to that kind of exercise, and therefore feel my inability to discuss them with you, who have made them your study for a long series of years.

I had a right to expect a compliance with my request that by a vote of the church, my connection with it might be dissolved. I do still insist upon the spirit of that request being carried out. It is a step long contemplated, and had been viewed in all its relations and conditions. In this, I have the support of an approving and tolerably enlightened conscience. Hence, it is the ultimatum of my choice. My reasons for this step I gave in my preceding letter. But I would not be considered uncourteous in this matter; but would in a fraternal spirit answer briefly some of the points which your letter presents.

You say, the church appointed you to communicate, * * that "You shall be treated with the utmost fairness and magnanimity." I am willing to admit the statement that Congregationalism has existed eighteen hundred years, and to give that system of religion the credit in full, for all the good it has done to bless mankind. But that it has built up exclusively, virtuous families, without regard to the influence of other systems of religion, I am not prepared to admit. To assume that Congregationalism has been the means of "building up virtuous families, prosperous communities, and magnificent states," is evidently to ignore all the good that other systems of religion have done during the same time; and would not be treating them fairly to say that they have done nothing at all to ameliorate the condition of mankind, and bring the world to its present state of prosperity and enlightenment. Has the religion of the Methodist, the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, and the Baptist, done nothing to advance the welfare of the human family? If you will look candidly at these several systems, you will see that they too, have had their influence, under God's Providence, in bringing the world in which we now live, to the present condition of weal or woe. If you assume that the other religions have given to the world none of the noble results and trophies—Christianity,—then the Bible has been to them a dead letter; yet they claim to have been guided by its precepts and teachings. But if you say Congregationalism has wrought all the

reformation in the world, the ministers of other religions would doubtless disagree with you. But when the Doctors disagree who shall decide as to the merits of the remedy? You say Congregationalism honors Christ and seeks the salvation and welfare of the human family. This is certainly comely and of good report. But did it ever occur to you, that the ministers of Christ do not sermonize on many of the precepts and the example of Christ, which he often repeated to the people? Do his ministers discourse on the duty of visiting and healing the sick? Christ himself did this. He told his disciples that those that believed on him, the things that he did, they should do also; "and greater things than these shall ye do: because I go to my father." Why is it that the people do so little understand the healing power that is given to mankind to exercise? Would the people know so little as they now do on this subject, if it had been occasionally presented to them from the pulpit? But permit me, my dear sir, to answer your question, "Does Spiritualism honor the Savior and the Holy Scriptures," by quoting a few words of Scripture. Mark, 9: 38: "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us." V. 39: "But Jesus said, forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." V. 40: "For he that is not against us, is on our part." Mark, 16: 17: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues." V. 18: "They shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them, they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover." These and many other passages of like import might be quoted, to show that Spiritualists do honor Christ and the Holy Scriptures. And, my dear sir, permit me to say that very many believers in Spiritualism are in this day of our Lord, 1860, doing the very same things that he did. It is in this manner that they are becoming doers of the Word by the exercise of the powers which are given them from on high, or the spirit world. Which of two servants honors his master most truly; he who is a doer of the Word, or he who is a forgetful hearer? But do the so-called ministers of Christ follow his teaching and example in respect to preaching the Word? It is recorded in Luke, 10: 4. to the seventy other disciples which he was about to send out to preach, that he said: "Carry neither purse, nor scrip nor shoes." V. 5: "And into whatsoever house he enter, first say peace be unto this house." V. 9: "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." V. 16: "And he that heareth you,

heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." Thus it appears that the immediate followers of Christ not only understood the requirements but performed them; and the result was such as might be expected. That they were successful teachers and doers of the Word, is evident from Luke, 10: 17. "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name."

But you say you do not see why I should renounce Congregationalism for Spiritualism. I answer, it is because I believe its ministers have not performed their duty to the Human Family for the last 1800 years, that they especially fall short of their duty to the world at the present time, and consequently God is raising up a vast multitude of other teachers which do better fulfill his will to mankind. The instruments which he is using to this end, are the spirits of both the material and Spiritual Worlds. The Bible gives an account of many visitations of Spirits, or Angels, to our World. Indeed, if you strike out, from the reading of that book, those passages which speak directly or indirectly of such visitations, you would alter very essentially the meaning of the book. But you ask, what is Spiritualism, and what are its fruits? I answer, it teaches a system of not an uncertain or blind faith merely; but first a rational belief, accompanied with a certain knowledge. It teaches that the spirits of our friends, who have lived on the earth before us, and some time with us, do still take a lively interest in our welfare, and are often present with us, to communicate their thoughts and feelings. And yet it is not difficult to see that they cannot address us through the organs of speech, except there be one present over whose organs of speech such spirit friend can get control. When such control can be obtained over the organs of a medium, and the seeker after truth in this way being present, then it is that members of the same household, often experience the delight of communion with each other, as it were, face to face. It teaches, that there is no lake of fire and brimstone in the spirit world, consequently, none of our friends ever have, or ever will be cast into any such lake. It teaches that those who have lived the purest and holiest, and most benevolent lives while in the mortal form, are the happiest immediately on putting off the mortal and putting on immortality. It teaches that not a moment of time is lost between the two states of individual existence, of any individual between time and eternity—that each and all in spirit life do enjoy as much of God and happiness, as their true condition or degree of development of character would permit them to enjoy while here in the form. But those who have abused their physical,

moral, intellectual and spiritual nature while in the rudimental sphere, must of necessity suffer in proportion to the amount of evil that they have done. These are some of the teachings of the Spiritual Philosophy. I cannot see that they form the parentage of such wide-spread evils as your letter seems to contemplate.

But you ask, can it demonstrate its truth before an educated and keen-minded body. I answer, I have never known any system of religion which could at once demonstrate the truth to an educated and keen-minded body; and I might go on to show somewhat at length why this is so, but I prefer rather to be brief in my exposition. And first, I would say, that owing to the great diversity of mind which exists in man, and is the result of his mental and physical organism, that it is impossible to find any two bearing the exact resemblance to each other. Some men will ask for a greater amount of evidence than do others when offered in support of any system of politics or religion. Now, suppose you make up a body of such keen-minded men from any of the orthodox churches, and each body having strong hold of its own party bias, and let such body listen to an able lecturer on the claims of Spiritualism, for the first time, how many of that body would admit the truths which might there be uttered and presented? But if they would not admit its claims to their attention as a system of truth, how then can it be demonstrated to them? But it is not the fault of Spiritualism that it cannot demonstrate its truth to any body of keen-minded men who are disposed to be skeptical. Thus much for the discussion of the system before an assemblage of people. But why do I attempt to argue this question before you who have had practical experience as a public teacher; and yet your system has not been demonstrated to the keen-minded in all cases. But it has signally failed to convince many others who were not so highly favored for mental calibre and keen discernment.

Why then should Spiritualism be able to demonstrate its claims to be a system of truth, while sheer opposition and antagonistic opinions resist it? If you were sincere in putting the question which supposes its ability to demonstrate itself, you indirectly admit the potency of this system, and thus pay to it the highest compliment in your power.

But why should I, obtuse as I am, undertake to offer argument to one so keen minded. But on the other hand your question supposes the system to be fraught with falsehood; and if what I shall say may lead you to the settlement of this question aright, then I shall not have labored in vain, and I cannot see that it would be right for me to hide in the earth the one

talent that I possess. If I be uneducated and obtuse, yet I have a desire to obtain knowledge and acquire a more clear perception of the condition of mankind and his relation to his Creator. The idea that you consider Spiritualism to be untruthful is strengthened, when you ask, do not the so-called spirits, not only contradict the Bible, but also contradict each other? I answer, they do thus contradict each other and also the Bible. In this matter, they do just what mankind do. They each and all have ground on which to stand in their contradictions. But who shall say the one is right and the other is wrong?

At this point permit me, my dear sir, to quote from 1st epistle of John, 4: 1. And this I offer as a text worthy of being always kept in remembrance, in all your investigations, whether they be of Spiritualism or of old Theology. But to the text: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world." Hence, we observe that we are not to believe all nor reject all, but try the spirits. But you ask, what are its fruits? I answer, I think this question comes rather early to one so young as myself, inquiring for the fruits of a system, which is at this moment scarcely believed by many to be eleven years old. In Horticulture, we can do but little in so short a time besides preparing the ground, setting the tree, attending to its wants, and removing noxious weeds. Especially is this so, as regards the more enduring kinds of fruit trees; and by proper industry on our part we shall reap the reward of a plentiful harvest. But I will only say, wait my brother, only a few years with your eyes open, and you shall see for yourself the fruits of this beautiful and harmonious tree. But, again you ask, Is its tendency, so far as good men can observe it, to guard the family relation, to promote true religion and to bless men? To these several points, I answer, the family relation is regarded by Spiritualists very generally as a sacred and endearing one; and so far as my own observation extends, it is most scrupulously guarded, except in comparatively few cases. The latter were so illy adapted by their own physical and mental organism to each others' society, as to be each the source of unhappiness to the other, and under this condition of things it was deemed best by themselves and friends that they should separate. But there can be scarcely a doubt that these same persons would have separated if Spiritualism had not been known; and much as all good men deprecate these changes in the relation of families, yet they do occur as well among those who are not Spiritualists as among those who are. But the causes of separation of families are to be sought for at a period antecedent to the rise of Spiritualism, and hence it is not itself the cause of

the evil complained of. The evil is the result of another and inharmonious teaching, which has led man into inharmony with himself and with his nature. To work out this evil from our world, to promote true religion and to bless men, is now to be effected by the light, and truth, and power of Spiritualism. Other systems have had their day and yet sin exists. As the fraternal, the moral and the spiritual of man's nature progresses, he must from an unalterable law of his being, seek the society of those who are on the same, or else on a higher plane of development of these conditions than himself. His interior sense teaches him that his course is onward and upward, and thus it must ever be in order to develop his own superior nature—the powers and faculties of his soul. And what association is more appropriate than the association with the spirits of those who have lived on the earth before us,—have put off the mortal coil and entered on the second stage of their existence? And what better employment should those with whom we are connected by the ties of consanguinity, than that of coming to us often, and by their gentle influence, assisting us in our onward course of development? Would it not enhance their happiness to be thus engaged in these acts of kindly interest and regard for our welfare? And should we not reciprocate these blessings when we know them to come from those we dearly loved while on earth?

Is there anything demoralizing in the tendency of this association? Nay, more, we believe this association of Angels with man to be the work of God, to have been introduced and carried into effect, and for a long time antecedent to the time of his temporal death. Hence the tendency of this association is both honorable, not only to Him, but also to all mankind, and thus, the poor as well as the rich, have the Gospel preached unto them. Is the experience of our dear departed friends of no value to us—those who lived many years in daily converse with us, while they were in the natural body? And is their experience of no value to us since they were raised a spiritual body? While they were, like ourselves in a corruptible body, they were subject to the ills which flesh is heir to; but now they have passed to the spirit world, we have reason to believe theirs to be the superior state of individual existence.

You ask another question, viz: "Is there any assurance that the spirits, if they be spirits, are not BAD spirits." This leads me to look at the foundation of man's character; and here let me say, the time is too short to make the attempt; it requires a life-time of study and investigation. To assist you however, permit me to give you such things as I have obtained, and which may throw some light on the question. In looking into the

physical and mental structure of man, I find him to be composed of such organs as are exactly adapted to his conditions and wants, as an animal, social, intellectual, mechanical, humane, spiritual, moral and religious being. I find also, that he has of the thirty-eight organs of the brain, not one organ too many. Were he to be deprived of one, he would by such deprivation, be rendered less than a man. I find also, that all men, in different stages of development, partake so nearly of one general type of conformation of structure, that I feel warranted in saying that each and all mankind possess, in infancy, each and all of these organs in a greater or less degree. And yet no two children, nor any two adults can be found, who bear the exact resemblance to each other. And this fact of non-resemblance is owing to the different size and activity of these organs in each and every individual human being. That this is so, I know from personal investigation. But if I was disposed to speculative reasoning, I might ask, why are we made thus to differ; and why cannot we think, and see, and feel, and hear, and act alike, have exactly the same taste, and bear the precise resemblance to each other. Why is it that the flowers of the field differ in their type and shade, and organization. But I must change this view; for, Infinite Wisdom has so ordained, and in Infinite Wisdom has He made them all. But, my dear sir, I cannot say that any of these works of His Creation are *positively bad*, and I cannot conceive of His noblest work, man, as being bad. Man possesses under God, the faculties and powers to make himself happy, and by the right exercise of all, ALL his faculties and powers they render him most completely happy. But much is wanting in the conditions of the organs of many persons, and also in the circumstances which surround them, in order to give them an equal opportunity to advance to an equal state of happiness—yet I cannot say the character is essentially bad. Should we find fault with the condition of the down-trodden, or should we be willing to sympathize with them and lend them a helping hand? Verily, my brother, I believe that were we to cease talking about evil and devil, and in the time allotted to us here try to do good, then we should have no occasion to call on or attract to us any bad or undeveloped spirit. By so doing, we should show to those undeveloped spirits the true way to develop their own spiritual, moral and religious nature, and thus enhance our own happiness and honor God in our bodies and spirits which are His. This seems to me to be the true theory of good and evil. And though evil causes us to feel pain, yet it is God's own method of teaching, as well as the pleasure that we feel from doing good; nor could we duly appreciate pleasure if we had never

felt pain. I thank God that he has introduced just such a system as he has in his Infinite Wisdom, nor will I say that any of His works are positively bad. Evil and pain are negatively good. His character constitutes our highest conception of positive good, and as such, will bring all men to make progress towards that standard both here and hereafter.

You ask, do Spiritualists deny future punishment? I answer, they do not. They have the most positive proof, founded on the testimony of departed spirits that they feel most deeply the sense of anguish and guilt for the wrong acts which they committed while in the body. They tell us that they themselves must atone for their former sins by living purer and truer lives. It is not in the nature of blood to wash away from their memory the stain which sin has made upon it. They themselves must atone each for his own sin. Each individual soul must feel for itself the punishment due to its own transgressions, and each must atone for the past by living pure and holy lives in the future. Nor shall any come out thence till they have paid the uttermost farthing. In this view of the condition of man Christ came into the world as a light shining in a dark place. His holy living, his unbounded love, his self-sacrificing benevolence, his purity, sincerity, truthfulness, his unfaltering aim at the Honor and Glory of God, his Spirituality, in short his spotless and blameless life, rendered him the light of the world. His acts which he did, constituted the atonement or at-one-ment with God, and made him a Savior to us, and not the shedding of his blood. Indeed, the manner in which he was put to death would have been almost lost to history but for the life which he had lived led to the record of it. His life was such, that he attracted to him many of the angelic hosts. His guardian angel was seen by the shepherds at the time of his birth, and by this guardian spirit they were guided to the place near that where the young child lay. As he grew up to manhood he walked on the water. This he did, being held up by ministering angels. Peter did the same thing by the aid of the same higher power. Christ drew around him many warm friends from among those who were so far developed as to become in rapport with him. Some of these were present at the time of his death. But his death was not a punishment to him, for he had done nothing which deserved punishment. Putting him to death was an error of the judgment of those who condemned him. His accusers and judges being themselves undeveloped, they very naturally misconstrued his motives. There was a propriety in calling him the Son of God, but he did not assume that title, but spoke of himself as the son of man. The more we become developed into the spirit which Christ mani-

fested, the more shall we feel our own at-one-ment with him, and that too without regard to those chemical substances which are called blood, that circulated in his physical system.

You ask, is the *character* of the mediums such that you would trust your family with them? I answer, yes, and would heartily rejoice if they would listen to them. I do further most devoutly thank my Heavenly Father for having raised up these inspirational and trance speaking, and writing mediums, in this nineteenth century of the Christian Era. It appears to be a literal fulfillment of his prophecy: "Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man." And permit me, my dear sir, to call your attention to the order of this arrangement. Especially is it desirable, if you still doubt that the spirits of men do, when disembodied, become angels. It will be borne in mind Christ uttered these words, and when he uttered them he was standing on the earth. That they were first to be seen ascending, is evident that they were passing from earth to Heaven; and it is equally evident that the same should descend from Heaven to earth. And why should it not be thus? Is it natural that at the moment of death, and the departure of the spirit from the form, that all love and regard should be banished from the departing one, which was so fondly cherished while in the earth life? Can this be natural? Can this be true? The character of the mediums, so far as I know, is as good morally and religiously, as can be found among any of the separate classes of society. My impression is, that a very large proportion of them have been taken from that class who have not had the advantages of an early education. That an opportunity was not afforded them to develop and sharpen their intellectual faculties, I am quite sure was true of many who are now mediums. I will only mention one case in point, though I might mention others. A. J. Davis did not have the opportunity of even a primary school education, and yet his writings are so fully freighted with thought as to be food for men of the most comprehensive and powerful range of intellect. But, if the mediums had been taken from the society of the rich and the educated, even then I do not see that it would have been very much better for the world. For if God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the wisdom of the wise, I can only say: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

You ask, have not the most intelligent Spiritualists renounced the whole affair, and exposed it as a dangerous and wicked delusion? I answer, that of the four millions of the inhabitants of our world who are at this time holding communion with their departed friends in the spirit world, I do not know of one

intelligent or uneducated man, woman or child, who has ever renounced Spiritualism. I have seen some attempts to show its fallacy, and in these several attempts I have seen the most signal failures. An attempt of this kind was made here last winter by a Second Advent preacher to expose it—hired a large hall for the purpose—continued three evenings—gave due notice to the public—took an admission fee of fifteen cents, and yet not a sufficient number attended to pay for the use of the room. He even went so far as to say that no angel or spirit ever visited this world. And why should he not say so? In a personal interview, he was asked if he believed the statement as recorded in Mark, 9: 4, to be true: "And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus." His answer, "Yes, but it was not a reality; the word *appeareth*, is not to be taken as a reality, nor regarded as such." A gentleman from New York attempted to expose it here some eight years ago, one whose name is known throughout our land as one of eminent attainments in scientific knowledge, and also as a public lecturer, was told by a medium in this city that in three years he would become convinced of the truths of Spiritualism. This prophecy has been literally fulfilled, as also many other things foretold by the same medium, have come to pass. But we have listened recently to a very intelligent gentleman who had prepared himself for the practice at the bar of justice in the courts of our land. But being rather diffident in his address, he, by the advice of his friends sought to acquire more self-possession by traveling and lecturing, and the theme which was chosen and on which to lecture, was against Spiritualism. Accordingly he took his departure and traveled through all the South Western and Western States and Canadas. So he continued, and met with the most cheering support from the friends he everywhere met. In the meantime, however, he found his views very much shaken, and so difficult did he find it to go on that he told his friends he should have to abandon that field of labor. This proposal was met by the strongest remonstrance on the part of his wife and thus he went on again. But not long afterward she became both a rapping and a seeing medium, and then her opposition to the Spiritual Philosophy gradually gave way. He, Mr. M——, is now one of the most earnest and effective speakers in the field.

But you ask, what good has ever come of Spiritualism, compared with its patent and wide-spread evils? Here, let me say in answer, that you place several difficulties in my way. First, the idea that little or no good has ever come of it so far as you can discover. Yet you do not tell me that you have looked at the teaching at all; but the inference is that you have, and

have seen little good, and wide-spread evils. As the first point implies a doubt as to the good involved in the system, I shall not discuss its claims on that point just now ; but I have often noticed the spirit with which mankind will criticise any system of religion or morals, or politics outside of their own cherished opinions. It is lamentably true that a spirit of denunciation and distrust has ever existed among religious sects and parties. Oft' times this spirit is manifested in its milder form, as when it was asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth." Now, I cannot consent to be searching after the evils of any system, neither Congregational nor Spiritual, even if evil is to be found there ; for I have a happier and truer life to live than could ever result from any such employment. But a higher source of enjoyment is found, by seeking to develop a principle of good in myself, rather than searching for another's sins. I have no right to judge my brother as being guilty of sin ; if I do thus judge him I also commit a sin, and this is also a sin, and with my sin I can never eradicate the sin of another. Jesus of Nazareth taught the better way of salvation by his example and not denunciation. But before closing the answer to your question, I will add that some of the good things which come of Spiritualism are its teaching the certainty of the future life, and that that life begins on the same instant succeeding that in which the spirit leaves the body. That there is no more waiting for a resurrection, for the departure of the spirit from the body, constitutes the beginning of the resurrection of the spiritual body.

Thus, I have endeavored to answer by the promptings of my own interior sense, the several points contained in your letter. They are the sentiments which I hold to-day, but I will not be bound by them in any sense so that I cannot change them to-morrow, or when I get more light from the spirit world. You say you feel that Spiritualism is an error, and you think if I am willing to be convinced you can convince me that Congregationalism is right and Spiritualism is wrong. In reply, I would say you can never convince me that spirits who have once lived on the earth do not commune at this time with those who now occupy the physical form. As well might you argue against the fact of my existence. It is not a mere matter of belief ; for I know this is true, from my own powers of observation and means of obtaining knowledge. For this cause I am led to abandon the platform of Congregationalism, and stand firm and erect on the more enduring basis of Spiritualism—the Rock of Ages—the immutable principles of truth and righteousness. Your kind invitation to meet you and discuss the subject—to stand together on the same platform—I shall

respectfully decline. I appreciate this spirit, however, for it evinces a desire on your part to become acquainted with its teachings. This is indeed a laudable desire and I feel that it should be gratified, and I trust that your wishes to discuss it may be answered in a much better way than I am able to answer them. I would therefore, in kindness, suggest to you the fact that there are public lecturers on this subject already in the field, who would be willing to meet you and with you investigate its claims. I would mention Brother H. B. Storer of New Haven, and Brother S. B. Brittan of New York, as gentlemen of acknowledged ability to discuss this subject, and through whom justice is done to it. There are at this time many other Inspirational, Trance, and Impressional Speaking Mediums, through whom you might obtain much valuable information, as well as those who might listen with you to the presentation of the subject while under such discussion, and each and all of such speakers would treat you candidly and with magnanimity whenever you may see fit to hold such discussion with any one of them.

And now, my brother, let me say in conclusion, study nature and nature's God through his works and manifestations of his love to our world, and especially through his angel ministrations, and I know all will be well. I may have better sentiments to offer you at some future day, but the cares of business and other duties are pressing upon my attention and prevent my saying more at present. Your friend and brother,

EVELYN P. GOODSELL.

To Rev. BURDETT HART.

FAIR HAVEN, Feb. 2d, 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your letter dated Jan. 4th, did not reach me till Jan. 18th, since which time I have not had leisure to reply. You insist on a dismission from the church. This we are disposed to give you if you persist in demanding it; but we beg you to permit us, as your brethren, associated with you for many years in Christian fellowship, to give our reasons why we do not wish you to withdraw from our communion.

I cannot follow you to correct what I think are your misconceptions and wrong views throughout the long communication which you claim is an answer to my former letter. I briefly suggest a point or two:

1. You claim for Spiritualism, that its believers can do the "very same things in 1860 which our Lord did" when he was on earth. You claim that they can "take up serpents, and if

they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." You claim the power of healing the sick and raising the dead to life. These are bold positions, and are quite satisfactory to me. My only answer to them, the only answer that needs to be made, is this: Do these miraculous works—do them openly, as Christ did. We will wait for your coming and for the manifestation of spiritual power. I will take you to a sick room, and you shall raise my friend to health. You shall meet us, as we are carrying the dead body of the child of a widow to the grave, and you shall call back the soul to its deserted tenement. If you will make the trial on a Spiritualist, you shall take a glass of hen-bane or arsenic mingled as a deadly draught for twenty men, and he shall escape free and unharmed. Are you ready to maintain your theory by such proofs, proofs which you assume for it? If so, you shall convert a whole church, for we will all turn Spiritualists together.

2. You claim, among other things, for Christ, "sincerity and truthfulness," and you appeal to the Bible as authoritative. Yet, in this same letter, you, in behalf of Spiritualism, deny what Christ and the Bible affirm. For example, you deny "that there is a lake of fire and brimstone in the spirit world." You deny the misery of the lost, claiming that all enjoy as much happiness in the future state as in this world. You deny the depravity of man, saying that you "cannot conceive of man as being bad." You deny the evil of sin, claiming that "evil is negatively good." You deny that the death of Christ, "the shedding of his blood," constituted the atonement; when he himself says, "This is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins;" when his apostle says, "being justified by his blood, we shall be saved." See also Eph., 2: 13. Heb., 9: 12, 14, 22, 26 and 10: 19. Also 1 Peter, 1: 19. Also 1 Jno., 1: 7.

Saying no more now about your letter, I wish to direct your attention to an acknowledged principle in philosophy, that we are not to assign to supernatural agencies phenomena which can be accounted for by natural causes. We do not deny many of the facts which the Spiritualists set forth; but we do say that there is no occasion for tracing any one of them, so far as we are informed, to disembodied spirits. Even if we could not demonstrate the natural philosophy of the phenomena, that would be no reason for tracing them to departed spirits. It is a gross weakness to attribute common events to spiritual agency. The wonderful discoveries, in our age and in former ages, of the methods and forces of nature, should demand that we reverently inquire of it, as diligent students and patient disciples, for the causes of these things that are transpiring, and not weakly attribute them to "spirits." We know that spirits have no hand in these

things; but if we did not know it, it would be sound philosophy to presume it, and to wait for some more natural and rational explanation. I have patiently and honestly demanded *proof* from the so-called spirits and their mediums. It has never been granted, and I am bold to say *it cannot be*. The spirits are dumb. Not one of them has ever muttered or peeped in my presence. I have demanded of the mediums, bring forward your spirits; they have not done it, and I affirm *they cannot do it*. All these things that are attributed to the spirits can be explained without any reference to them.

The weakness of Spiritualism, is *Spiritualism*. It cannot stand before intelligent and keen investigation. It is not a system. It never can be. It consists of loose and shifting dogmas, having mainly a negative character, and tending to the denial of Christ as the Savior of men, and of the Bible and to a meager infidelity. The results of Spiritualism, as I see them, are enough to condemn it. The radical error of those who embrace Spiritualism is, that they make a religion of it. If they would examine the phenomena as Christian men, as scientific inquirers and explorers, not rashly denying the Lord who bought them, not swinging away from Christianity, but treating the subject as the geologist treats the facts of his study, as the astronomer those related to his science, there would be no harm done.

We cannot deny, I do not wish to deny, that of late years there have been witnessed some new "manifestations." What then? I am not to resign my reason, and cry, the dead are among us! That looks too much like a frightened child. Rather, I calmly approach the facts. I examine them. I find philosophical explanation of some of them, of more and more of them, until there are few or none that I cannot resolve, as the powerful telescope resolves the nebulae. Were there any that I could not yet explain, as there may be, I would only wait and study. I certainly would not renounce my religion, fortified as it is by the experience of eighteen centuries. I would not make a religion of a ghost, much less of a supposed ghost. That is going back too near the old Paganism. There are, I say, some new "manifestations." But necromancy is not new. Why attribute these new things to an old and exploded and dead delusion? Spiritualism is only old necromancy revived and clothed in modern garb. Necromancy was forbidden by the Levitical law on pain of death. The modern necromancy, yclept Spiritualism, is forbidden by the law of reason and good sense.

Thus, hastily, I throw out a few thoughts (I might write a volume) for your consideration; and in view of them, call you back to Christ and his church. We, my friend, are very sorry to see you embracing the errors of Spiritualism. We feel sure

that you will look at it some day as we do. We wish that day might be now. The longer you hold to a delusion, the harder it will be to give it up. It is comparatively easy now. Your family and your friends are Congregational Christians. You can be so too and yet search into as I do, these "manifestations," not religiously, but scientifically, not making a religion of the phenomena, but constructing from them a science.

I appeal to you as an intelligent and fair-minded man to heed what I have said. Christianity is of God and it cannot be overthrown. Delusions arise and flourish for a time and draw away some and then they pass away. So it will be with Spiritualism. We shall await your answer with interest, hoping and praying that you will see your way clear to be in the company of your former brethren and friends. In behalf of the church. I am, with sincere regard, your friend and pastor,
BURDETT HART.

E. P. GOODSSELL, Esq.

"When earnest souls meet—like flint and steel—the elements of thought ignite on the altars of the mind and heart."—BRITTAN.

"It is a sublime and beautiful doctrine inculcated by the fathers, that there are guardian angels appointed to watch over cities and nations, to take care of good men, and to guard and guide the steps of helpless infancy."—IRVING.

HARTFORD, Feb. 7th, 1860.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter dated Feb. 2d, is received and perused, and I embrace the earliest opportunity to reply. You say you are disposed to give me a dismission, if I persist in demanding it; but you try me, to permit you as your brother associated with you for many years in Christian fellowship, to give me your reasons why you do not wish me to withdraw from your communion. I trust I do now, and ever shall appreciate your kind feelings, as expressed in this regard.

In my letter of Jan. 4th, I gave some of the reasons why I wished to withdraw, and one of the reasons which I gave for the withdrawal, was my belief and knowledge of the truth of Spiritualism. It will be borne in mind that I quoted to some extent from the New Testament Scriptures, in support of this belief and knowledge, passages which furnish very strong evidence of its truth, because the phenomena of which these passages speak, are in many respects like unto those of the present day. If this be so, as I shall have occasion to show upon this and succeeding occasions, it will be seen that Spiritualists are not seeking to make a new religion—are not seeking to overthrow true Christianity. But in the 10th and 11th lines of your letter you say you cannot follow me to correct what you think

are gross misconceptions and wrong views. Now, why is it that you, a Bible scholar and a Bible teacher as you are, cannot follow me in this common sense manner of treating this subject. If I have entertained gross misconceptions, and false or wrong views of the many passages which were quoted, it would have been quite revelant to have had you follow me and correct those gross misconceptions and wrong views. But as you have not pointed them out to me, I cannot be expected to find out when and where they occurred.

But you briefly suggest a portion or two of the things which I claim that Spiritualists can do. You say, that I claim "that its believers can do the very same things that Christ did when he was on earth." In this you are correct. You say, I "claim that they can take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." Here, let me say you are correct, so far as the record gives us the true meaning of Christ's idea in connection with, or embodied in these words. But if you say that I claim that Spiritualists of the present day can drink a glass of hen-bane, or arsenic mingled as a deadly draught for twenty men, then you assume that I have taken a position which I deny. But that Christ himself ever set such an example as you seem disposed to set before me, let it be said it does not appear in the record, and we may safely infer that he never took up a serpent nor drank any such deadly draught as your letter speaks of. If such an account is to be found of him as that of drinking a glass of hen-bane or arsenic even to satisfy his enemies, I did not know of it, nor did I claim that he did any such act.

I do not feel disposed to gratify you by drinking any such deadly draught, neither myself, nor to make a trial of it on a Spiritualist, (for the law binds me to love my neighbor as myself,) even though the promise be so great as that in the result of the escape of such person unharmed, I should convert you and the "whole church: for we will all become Spiritualists together." There is a law of nature acting against the idea which you present to me—a law of self-preservation or law of love—but if we do not guard our own life and health, we cannot fulfil the law of love to other members of the same family, mankind. In regard to taking the poisonous draught of which you speak, I would only add, from Rev., 22: 9, I read: "Then saith he unto me, see thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book worship God." And again, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

But the Bible gives an account of raising one from the dead. It is said in John, 11: 4, that "When Jesus heard of the sick-

ness of Lazarus, he said this sickness is not unto death." In 21st verse: "Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." I mention this, to show that Martha and Mary had faith in Christ as a healing medium. Yet, when they came to the grave, (which was a cave, with a stone laid upon it,) the faith of one of them had begun to waver, and it was strengthened by Christ's saying, "Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" But had this circle of friends which surrounded the grave of Lazarus been of such a class of minds, as those who had on former occasions witnessed his manipulations, and had "laughed him to scorn;" or of those living in a certain place, where "he could not do many mighty works, because of their unbelief," then we hold that the case might have been different as regards the raising of the dead form of Lazarus from the tomb. It should be noted in this connection, that the mode of reckoning time among the Jews, was to count a less number of hours as a day, which could by such reckoning be counted as four days, though to us were no more than three days and a few hours. Without wishing to speak in the least possible degree disrespectful of the work of Jesus, but admitting that he had been dead the full "four days," yet it will be seen from a case that I will cite that quite as great a so-called miracle has been performed in our own land within the last three years. The case is substantially this: A gentleman and his wife left Fort Laramie, Nebraska Territory, to go to Oregon. After having traveled three days in that direction the lady was taken sick and could not pursue the journey. Accordingly, the husband dispatched a messenger back to the Fort to procure medicine and medical aid. On his return to the place he was accompanied by two of the native Indians. On their arrival, they found the lady had died, and preparations had been made for the interment of the body. At the solicitation of these two Indians the gentleman consented that they might carry the lifeless form back to the Fort. A rude litter was constructed by attaching a blanket to two poles, the corpse laid upon it, and was borne by them to its destination. But while the body was in their charge, on the eighth day after death had taken place, (so far as common observation could show the fact,) the spirit re-animated it's lifeless form. This lady was still alive last October, and as she said of herself, is in the enjoyment of most excellent bodily health. She says she was near the form after the separation—that she saw the preparations while they were being made for the interment—heard the conversation of those who were making the preparations—of that which led to its being sent back to the Fort—and what was said by those who carried

the body, even to the time they raised it to life. There is also a case mentioned in the Old Testament (2 Kings, 4: 34 and 35) which shows the exercise of the same power—that of Elisha raising the Shunamite's son, which was said to be dead, to life. My only object in referring to it being to show that the idea of raising the dead was not wholly confined to the last three years of the life of Christ. A gentleman residing in the city of New York, stated in a public lecture in this city last October, that he had "raised his own child from death to life no less than three times." Two of these cases show that the popularly-called miracles may be performed in our own land and in our day.

It must be borne in mind that theology is not now under discussion, nor is geology nor astronomy the present theme of our discourse. You object to Spiritualism, because those who embrace it make a religion of it. In this you admit that it has been of some use. As this is not altogether irrelevant to our purpose, I will in reply, resume the positive form of the question, and will now quote to some extent, from an oral discussion of the subject by S. B. Brittan and D. D. Hanson in 1858. "Nevertheless if Spiritualism be altogether in harmony with Christianity, one would naturally suppose that a christian might discover that the modern phenomena constitute a valuable auxiliary in the illustration, defence, and progress of the essential facts and principles of his religion. Indeed, we know that the facts have already convinced thousands of the immortality of the soul, and caused them to consider again, and more seriously, the claims of Revelation. Such unyielding skeptics as Robert Owen of England, Professor Hare of this country, and a multitude of the intellectual men in both hemispheres, who have stoutly rejected all ideas of another life in a spiritual world, have been suddenly arrested by the mysterious facts, and overwhelmed with a conviction that is at once rational and irresistible. They now feel assured that the soul is immortal, and that the essential principles of inspiration, and what are popularly denominated miracles, are neither the phantoms of a diseased brain, nor the inventions of designing priests, but sublime realities." "That the truth of Christianity is going to be subverted by the errors of Spiritualism, which your letter seems to imply, is preposterous to the last degree. How, I ask, shall we overthrow the principles of a rational religion by showing that Nature speaks with innumerable voices to confirm our immortal hopes? Will our faith die in the presence of a living demonstration, and shall we lose our trust in Heaven and in God because divine messengers come to us daily? Shall we weaken the just claims of inspiration by proving that they are in harmony with the fundamental laws of Nature and human

nature? Can we darken the temple of the mind by opening its inward portals to the light of the heavens? Will it desecrate the altar of the sorrowing heart to allow the departed loved ones to return and dwell there? Reason and Religion answer, No! It will be seen that so far as the facts of Spiritualism prove anything, they settle the world's faith on the broad basis of eternally established laws. The phenomena themselves are presented to the understanding through the senses—like the facts which constitute the basis of all physical sciences—and the proper claims of Christianity, and other religions are thereby supported and confirmed by the occurrences of the present time. Indeed, it requires but a superficial investigation to satisfy the enlightened and caudid inquirer that the various classes of Spiritual phenomena which occurred anciently, are represented in the similar developments of the present day." Hence it will be seen that we admit your principle in philosophy "that we are not to assign to supernatural agencies, phenomena which can be accounted for by natural causes."

But it will be our object for the present to show that spirits of departed human beings continue to manifest their presence, power and intelligence to those who still remain on earth and in the corporeal form. Spiritualists have not done the theorizing in relation to this subject; but, on the contrary, the theorists have come to us from the ranks of the opposition. We merely respect and accept the claims which the invisible power sets up for itself. The subtle force and mysterious intelligence displayed through the elements and forms of the material creation—through inanimate matter and the bodies of men—everywhere say the agents are spirits. We are not theorizing because we simply accredit the claims of the invisible powers with respect to themselves. This surely is only treating them with ordinary civility. What right have I to say that an intelligent visitor at my house is not the individual he professes to be, provided he has always been consistent in telling the same story of himself? Suppose I were to insist that my friend Mr. Hart is not himself at all. If I had been credibly informed that he had registered his name at different places in every quarter of the world, that he always passed for Mr. Hart, and refused to answer to any other name, would it not be extremely impolite and uncivil for me—for any stranger—to insist that he was and is somebody else, especially in the absence of any evidence to support the assumption? How much greater the indignity offered if I were to insist that he was not even a *man*? That notwithstanding he manifested remarkable powers of thought, memory, reason, affection and aspiration, he was after all *only some subtle principle or imponderable element!* I

need scarcely remind you that in this rude and irrational manner the spirits are treated. Yet if the invisible powers prove to us (they do prove this) that they possess all the faculties of the human mind, and all the affections of the human heart—prove it by the actual manifestations of all such faculties and affections—then we have no right to presume that they are not the beings they seem to be, much less that they are not human beings at all, until we can furnish some more plausible theory for the solution of the problem and explanation of the facts. Candor and good manners alike require that we should fairly exhibit the claims which are set up and powerfully sustained by the unseen actors themselves. This is what the Spiritualists have done. Their opposers have been exceedingly prolific in speculative theories, all of which have exploded like rockets; and I do not believe that among them all there is one that can number ten unwavering and conscientious believers in this city. While the skeptical world rejects the spiritual idea, it is still all unsettled, having no confidence in its own clumsy and superficial devices."

Your letter speaks against making a religion of a ghost, much less of a supposed ghost; and yet this same word ghost is used by those who hold the same views which you hold, which shows that you mean nothing by it when you utter it, with reference to your third person in your Godhead. "But I shall not controvert this idea, nor the idea of the absolute divinity of Christ, nor be diverted from the real issue. I leave every man to cherish his own convictions on that subject, and resign the business of splitting hairs on theological questions to those who fancy the employment. But the objection which you urge would be as applicable to Paul, Peter, John, and the ancient Prophets and Seers who had visions in which the heavens were opened to them, must have been supremely transcendental, and that venerable Patriarch who saw the ladder connecting the two worlds,

" And bright with beckoning Angels,"

Must have been far removed from the domain of "positive science" on that occasion. Paul certainly exhibited the *undue tendency* to transcendental things in imagining that he was "caught up to the third heaven." Indeed, all the old Prophets and teachers were believers in spirits and angelic visitations. They believed that there were spirits innumerable that surrounded the pilgrim in his earthly life. You remember that when the Syrians came in battle array against the Hebrews, Elisha prayed that the eyes of his servant might be opened, whereupon he was suddenly endowed with inward sight, and he saw that the

mountains were filled with Celestial warriors in "Chariots of fire" assembled to protect the Prophet against his enemies. The Apostle believed in the great "cloud of witnesses" who gazed from their sublime abodes on the conflicts of their mortal brothers with the powers of this world. You may suppose that these examples are of a wholly different character from any that now occur. If their exists any such fundamental difference, let that be made to appear. If the power to discern spirits in this age is essentially different from the same power as exhibited by the ancients, my friend has only to point out the difference, and I shall make the appropriate distinction. The spirits that of old came to earth on errands of mercy are often spoken of as men. If Mr. Hart will look into the Gospels he will find the testimony of the evangelists on this point. The Angel that appeared at the sepulchre of Jesus, according to Mark, 16: 5, was "A young man" *clothed in a long white garment*. Luke says: "Behold two men stood by them in shining garments"—chap. 24: 4. There are many other cases of spiritual visitation recorded in the scriptures, where the language is such as to clearly warrant the conclusion that the Angel visitors were *human beings* from the realms of hidden beauty and the immortal life. These cases must be taken to prove that human spirits may manifest themselves to those who remain on earth. If the Bible is to be taken as authority, the examples here cited sufficiently indicate that this intercourse is altogether possible. But there were other cases. Moses and Elias appeared, and the record says, "*they were talking with Jesus.*" But the radiant immortals likewise appeared to "Peter, James and John," on the occasion of the transfiguration; and Peter, addressing his Spiritual teacher, said "Let us make here three tabernacles—one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." We insist that other spirits did appear to mortals—that the Angels of the scriptures were *men in shining apparel*. Of this class was the spirit that inspired the apocalyptic visions. John supposed that the wonderful visions he received were representations from the immortal world made by the direct interposition of the Infinite Mind. Overwhelmed by the sense of the solemnity of the occasion "he fell down to worship before the feet of the Angel." "But he said unto me, see thou do it not, for I am of thy brethren the prophets." The demons that, according to the New Testament, appeared in the early ages of the Christian Church, were the spirits of departed men. The manifestations of spiritual presence at that period were not all dignified in form nor elevated in character. The spirits that found a medium in the Magdalene were not characterized by greater dignity than the familiar spirits of our time. The

demons that obsessed the two persons "coming out of the tombs" entered into the swine, and "the whole herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters."—Matt., 8: 28, 32. There was probably nothing especially dignified in this manifestation of spiritual presence and power, yet it occurred in the time of Jesus, in his immediate presence and at his express command. Because these swine were made media for spirit manifestations, do you propose to disregard the instructions of all the ancient spiritual teachers? Will you reject Paul, Peter, James and John, who were inspired from loftier and purer sources? Will you renounce your faith in the "sermon on the mount," and withdraw fellowship from the beloved disciple and all the saints in the calendar in your pious zeal to escape pollution. Instead of treating the subject in this manner you have been gathering up the drift-wood that has been washed away from the mortal shore by the great river of Spiritualism—the river which you cannot pass over, and which you have never attempted to fathom. My friend "Mr. Hart" has a profound respect for "dignities" and is shocked at the "weakness of attributing common events to spiritual agency" as being things "common or unclean." But to the philosophical observer nothing that occurs in the order of Nature or transpires under the administration of Providence, is either unimportant in itself or unworthy of our careful observation. No doubt apples had fallen on many an empty head before Newton's time, but they conveyed no great ideas to the vacant cranium. But when the illustrious philosopher beheld that simple phenomena, it at once suggested to his mind the central idea of a profound system. It gave into his possession the golden keys wherewith he unlocked the great secrets of the Universe and explained the laws that uphold and regulate the sublime harmony of all worlds. No doubt there were empty heads to laugh at Dr. Franklin because he used a kite to attract the lightning from the clouds. They saw nothing but a pretended philosopher engaged in the unbecoming and childish employment; yet Dr. Franklin thus demonstrated a principle which has given him a world-wide immortality."

You speak of "the weakness of Spiritualism," which you say "is *Spiritualism*." "How would you have treated Christianity had you lived in the first century—being such a stickler as you are for strength and doctrines, and so full of horror and pious zeal against a new Reformation. Jesus of Nazareth, the founder of that religion, was born and cradled in a manger among four-footed beasts and creeping things. He was cast out and spurned by those who were dazzled and bewildered by the splendor of external circumstance, and supercilious dignity of

the men who occupied the "chief seats in the synagogue." They were dignified and pious people who rejected the humble Nazarine and trampled the just claims and the sacred import of his precepts beneath their unhallowed and infidel feet. It has been observed that "every truth is born in a manger;" and I venture to say that Christianity, with all its triumphant power in the world, was as humble and lowly at the beginning, as the present Spiritual Reformation. Perhaps my friend cannot find instruction in small things and in humble places. He may be waiting for some Archangel to descend from the zenith at noon-day clothed with flame and armed with lightnings. If he waits for such an august occurrence before his attention can be arrested, he will, doubtless, continue in ignorance of all that pertains to the realm of spiritual realities, until the dream of the outer world and all that exclusively belongs to our sensuous existence, swims before his vision and disappears. You remember the sublime description of the manifestations that appeared in Mount Horeb. The strong wind that swept through the defiles of the mountain, and the rocks were broken beneath the invisible chariot wheels. "The Lord was not in the wind." And then came the earthquake with gigantic tread, shaking the deep foundations of the mountains and toppling down the pinnacles; but not in this did the Prophet witness the most signal displays of the Divine presence. When the earthquake retired, the fire appeared with its appalling terrors, and its awful glory. Fierce flames, like burning shields, covered the mountain-sides. But not in the fire—not, indeed, in all the imposing exhibitions of conflicting earthly elements, did the Prophet look for a Spiritual communication. No, not in these. But when there was silence in Horeb, it is said that the Prophet "wrapt his face in his mantle," and the communication came to him in a "still small voice."

Your letter virtually assumes "that we must necessarily give up Christianity if we hold to the belief that the spirits of the departed do return to earth. This assumption is equally at war with the facts and with my reasoning. The spirits are the instruments and ministers of Providence, and hence, in admitting their agency in human affairs, we do not deny the Infinite source of action and inspiration—we merely recognize the means and instrumentalities He has been pleased to employ. When I affirm that the sunlight, rain, and the earth are all necessary to the growth of vegetation, I by no means deny that God is the author of all things; I merely express the truth that these are proximate elements employed by the Divine hand to accomplish certain results. In the moral and spiritual departments of human nature and the Divine government, appropriate means and agents are likewise employed. If you admit the ministry of the priest-

hood, you concede the necessity and propriety of thus using subordinate intelligences—"ministering spirits"—to enlighten and inform the world. If this is not proper, why build splendid temples, consecrate altars, and employ a stated ministry. You admit, indeed, the whole Christian world admits the necessity for such means and agents, and have attempted to furnish them according to their own apprehension of the Divine requirements. But you may insist that God would send Gabriel or some exalted angel if he wished to communicate with man. Here, again, you stand on a naked assumption," as likewise in that when you say you "know that spirits have no hand in these things," "while I propose to rest on the facts. The Lord did not always send Gabriel in ancient times. In the history of Ahab we have an account of a false spirit that presented himself "before the Lord," and proposed to be "a lying spirit in the mouths of all his [Ahab's] prophets;" and it is said that the Lord accepted his services and commissioned him to go and do as he proposed.—1 Kings, 22 : 21, 23. We are not responsible for the veracity of Ahab's prophets, (perhaps my friend is,) but take it for granted that their "lying spirit" was neither Gabriel nor Michael. Moreover, many persons are now spiritually warned and instructed for the most benevolent purposes, and communications full of tenderness, beauty, and truth are now received. If the good ones all emanate from Gabriel, why does that angel disguise his presence in so many ways and answer to every name but his own?" But you assume to examine the "facts"—to "find philosophical explanations of some of them—until there are few or none that you cannot resolve." I will cite an example: "A gentleman in this city, one who is well known here and respected by all, (Mr. F. L. Burr of the *Times*,) in a letter addressed to the speaker some time since, detailed the circumstances of a case which occurred at the house of Hiram Wells, in Bloomfield, near this city, and which will serve my purpose as well as any other of the ten thousand examples which might be cited. A table weighing thirty-five pounds was, by means of a rope and a pole placed on the shoulders of two men, attached to the hooks of the Roman balance or steelyard, with which its weight was accurately determined. A little daughter of Mr. W., a medium, only six years old, was then permitted to touch the table, whereupon the steelyard indicated an increased weight, to the utmost limit of the capacity of the instrument; after which the weight increased until the rope was broken. A stronger rope was then procured and the experiment repeated, when the force was increased to such a degree, that the tough iron hooks of the balance were *straightened out, one of them splitting lengthwise through the middle.*

I would like to ask you to what power you ascribe that extraordinary occurrence? Did the gentlemen who upheld the whole weight, the pole resting on their shoulders, at the same time pull down on the hooks? Such a result comes not in the compass of mechanical possibilities. Did the little girl who touched the suspended body break the rope and straighten the hooks? If she did, by what law was the downward pressure increased through her agency, beyond the entire additional weight of her own body? If the little child did *not* produce the astounding phenomenon, who did do it, since no one else was in physical contact? To what cause will my friend ascribe the result? Doubtless, whoever attempts to dispose of the fact without the agency of the spirits, will himself be "weighed in the balance and found wanting." But perhaps my friend still insists that it is necessary to abandon religion and whatever else is most sacred, in order to believe in Spiritualism. You are very positive in assertions, while you are equally negative in proofs. Why the new evidences of our immortality should make any one irreligious, profane, or infidel, does not appear. If there is aught in the subject to influence the mind and heart in any manner, it certainly contains everything that can be necessary to inspire a deeper and truer religious feeling and to excite nobler aspirations after a divine life. The settled conviction that the etherial beings of the Spiritual World are all about us, and that we are never banished from their presence, is fraught with ineffable delight and consolation."

"Christ promised to be with the true disciples alway, even to "the end of the world." Has the promise failed, or are there no true disciples now? And how do you know that Christ is not *here—here in the diversified manifestations of Spiritual power?* Numerous "gifts" of the spirit accompanied the setting up of his Spiritual Kingdom—gifts of "healing" the inspiration of "tongues" and the power of "discerning spirits," etc.—all of which are possessed at the present day. If there are many persons who now possess and exercise the "Spiritual gifts" which were conferred on the primitive disciples, is my friend" Mr. Hart "prepared to affirm that Christ is not vitally present with them?" You say you "have patiently and honestly demanded proof from the so-called spirits and their mediums. It has never been granted." "But does the ancient Spiritualism come to you with the evidence of a demonstration and on your demand? The re-appearance of Samuel, you will doubtless admit to have been a case of this description. Do you want "modern instances" supported by similar proofs? Very well, I have to inform you that there are several thousand persons to-day who see spirits as distinctly as the woman of Endor saw Samuel,

and can describe them as accurately. Must the examples be three thousand years old to render them intrinsically credible? Must the witnesses be dead before we can prove the facts to a demonstration? This is the assumption in fact, if not in form. The testimony of a thousand living witnesses who can be summoned if necessary, who are ready to submit to a rigid cross examination, all goes for nothing with those who go back to the ancient Jews for positive evidence. Why call for the demonstrations and reject them as often as they are presented? I am prepared to cite authentic examples for the next three weeks—facts which prove that spirits do manifest their presence in this world.” They are seen and described in all things that relate to their personal appearance and history, by persons who never saw them while they were tabernacled in the flesh. By such descriptions, given through mediums, they are identified by their surviving friends. Moreover *there are those who paint the portraits* of the spirits and furnish correct likenesses. There is a medium in Ohio who executes pictures of this description—portraits of deceased persons of whom he had never the slightest knowledge. They are said to be accurate images of the persons intended to be represented. If spirits come here and appeal to all our senses—if they lay hands on us, and infuse their thoughts into our minds, are visible in the silent watches of the night; if they illuminate the mind, warm the heart, and beautify the life by the development of new hopes and higher aspirations—what more can we presume to expect or demand? It is in vain to call for positive evidence while we reject such evidence with indignant scorn as often as it is presented.

But my friend Mr. Hart, says: “But if we did not know” (that the spirits have no hand in these things) “it would be sound philosophy to presume it.” “This is in accordance with the philosophical method of a son of the Emerald Isle, who after having searched various historical and philosophical dictionaries, elaborated, at the expense of considerable labor, his theory in reference to a certain natural phenomena. A gentleman who listened while he unfolded his theory, responded by saying: “Sir, I might very readily accept your theory, if the facts did not prove precisely the contrary.” “Well,” said the Irishman, “bad luck to the facts, thin.” In this particular case, it is virtually insisted that it is *no matter what the facts prove*—the theories must stand! If the facts are in the way of the theories, why then, “bad luck to the facts.” The facts must “clear the track” and give place to the theories, and to the mere vendors of speculative opinions. I am surprised that a member of one of the learned professions should suppose that this is a scientific mode of disposing of the phenomena in question. It abso-

lutely *reverses* the scientific method which consists in deducing the theory from the facts after they have been carefully observed and classified. The man who faithfully follows the scientific method never attempts to force the facts into submission to any preconceived theory. My scientific friend on this occasion works by inverted methods. He first makes his theory and then attempts to cram the facts into narrow places and questionable shapes. They must be made to suit the theory. Now, in order to arrive at a just conclusion by the appropriate methods of scientific investigation, we must carefully observe what occurs, noting all the conditions, processes, and changes in the elements and forms of material existence, and all the states, phases and expressions of mind and from a careful examination and precise classification of all these, the theory must be evolved—these furnish the principles and elements from which the scientific builder erects his superstructure."

My friend says, "The spirits are dumb." "This is an assumption which is not supported by the facts. I have often heard it alleged of a certain class of spirits that "they go down to the pit." But I have not heard it enunciated before, that a spirit must be dumb, if he be refined and exalted, by the mere circumstances of his separation from the body. If you insist that they are dumb it must be impossible for any one of them to have spoken "with tongues," either in ancient or modern time. Precisely here is your theory at war with the facts. The soul is not necessarily dependent, as you allege, on the external organs for all its impressions. If it were so, then truly would the heavens be realms of darkness, and no inhabitant of the Spirit World could have any perception of the conditions of being. If it be true that the soul necessarily and forever depends on the nerves of sensation and action for its knowledge of surrounding objects and its power over them, then indeed, must the future existence be a state of unconscious repose. We have abundant evidence in the facts of human experience that the soul is not thus dependent. Every instance in which a man is temporarily separated from the outer world by the magnetic process which closes the external channels of sensation, while he is at the same time endowed with clairvoyant powers of perception, affords a complete refutation of your assertion. That such interior powers of perception are possessed and exercised by many, is a fact that will not be disputed. Men see, hear, feel, taste, and smell while the sensor nerves are rendered inoperative by the magnetic process, which demonstrates that the soul is not necessarily restricted to the external organs of sensation for all its knowledge of surrounding existences. Every person who, in a vivid dream has seen the face and form

of some distant friend, or visited some well-remembered scene, is not without the evidence of his own experience and consciousness that the soul has power to see without its material instruments. But if you assume that it cannot see without the optic nerve, that all sensation is in the nerve and not in the soul, you locate all the powers of perception and action in the body. The man himself does not amount to much—his corpse is the principal thing. His conscious and voluntary powers are not immortal faculties of the spirit, but the accidental play of natural forces on the nerves of motion and sensation. Some subtile fluid plays on the organs for a little season. Death drops the curtain when the play is over and the existence of the conscious man of course terminates when he loses his senses. You will at once perceive that our respective positions are fundamentally different. The Spiritual idea presumes that the senses belong to the soul while your material theory makes them *inhere in the body*. If I am right, our faculties are indestructible; if your position is the true one, our faculties must perish with the body, and that is the end of man. When death shatters the outer temple of our being, all is over; and thus in defending your material hypothesis you aim a daring blow at the common faith and the last hope of the world. It is manifest that you have not studied the history of animal magnetism and its phenomenal developments with much care, or you would have learned long ago that the facts upset your speculations." If "the spirits are dumb" how then will you account for the utterances given through the organism of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, of Daniel and other ancient prophets, whom the Christian world have admitted to have been inspired? Isaiah says: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because the Lord hath annointed me to preach good tidings.—Chap. 61: 1. "Thus it appears that his "gift" was to be used in speaking. Christ himself speaks of John as one having the baptism of the spirit—as one having "a voice crying in the wilderness." If this be true, and the representation which is given of what occurred on the day of Pentecost, in which it is said: "And they (the Apostles) were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance"—"that every man heard them speak in his own language"—if it be true that Mary did see "two Angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, and they say unto her, Woman why weepest thou"—if it be true that Saul as he journeyed to Damascus, "suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven * * and heard a voice calling him by name"—if an Angel spake unto Cornelius—if Peter while in a trance * * "there came a voice to him: Rise Peter kill and eat; and the voice spake

again the second time: What God hath cleansed * * and the spirit said unto him, Behold three men seek thee"—if there are fifty credible witnesses in this city who are ready to testify to the fact that they do often see and recognize the face and form of disembodied spirits, and many of these witnesses will testify that they hear such spirit speaking unto them, then we hold that these facts show that the spirits do *retain and exercise their faculties of speech*. "A formal argument is hardly demanded since the facts themselves act on all the coarse and fine-spun theories of the opposition with a more destructive energy than a thousand armed battering-rams would exhibit when directed against a corn-crib. *They demolish it forever and sweep away the ruins*. Have you yet to learn that a person in the magnetic sleep can be made to see, hear, taste and smell any and every thing that the operator sees, hears, tastes and smells. Let the operator take any substance into his mouth, and instantly the subject tastes the same. Does this sensation depend on the action of the material substance on the nerves distributed over the palate? Certainly not. What then becomes of the theory that annihilates the soul and makes all sensational perceptions depend on the organic structure? The facts developed in magnetop-psychological investigations overthrow the assumption and establish our philosophy on an incontrovertible basis. But I will cite one more case. As you say, "We know that spirits have no hand in these things." "All these things can be explained without any reference to them." "I was once present at the residence of Alvin Adams, Esq., in Boston, when his grand piano, weighing one thousand pounds with the superincumbent weight of three men (one of them is in this audience) was raised with the greatest apparent ease, and the instrument was handled with such masterly freedom, that the invisible agent therewith beat the time to "Hail Columbia" with as much precision as M. Jullien could have marked the time with his *baton*. No one touched the piano but Mr. Willis—who, while kneeling at arm's length, fingered the keys—and the three men who were seated on top of the instrument and whose united weight was between five and six hundred pounds. I call your attention to the fact that the agent that moved that immense weight was an intelligent one. Moreover, it understood the laws of harmony while it possessed a supra-mortal control over the forms of the natural world. Now, who *moved the aggregate weight of that instrument and those men amounting to one thousand five hundred pounds?* Will you say that the three men who were seated on the instrument raised themselves and it? That were more absurd than to affirm that a man may *lift himself by the waistbands!* Did Mr. Willis—who probably could not lift one hundred and fifty pounds with all the energy of his

will applied to his muscles—raise the instrument from the floor while he only exerted a *downward pressure* with his fingers on the keys? This will not be pretended. No other person in the flesh touched the piano. Who then beat the time to the music? That is the question for my friend to answer, as he says “all these things can be explained without any reference to spirits.” We wait for an introduction to the strong man of Athens who beats time with a *baton that weighs more than half a ton!* Now, such facts have occurred night after night, and have been witnessed by some of the most talented men in New England, by sharp-sighted men of business, by the literati, by members of the press, and all the learned professions, some of whom sitting under the shadow of Harvard University, have been crazy enough to doubt their own senses. I have been informed that one man who had heard of the strange occurrences at the house of Mr. Adams, insisted that they were *impossibilities*, and that the witnesses were all psychologized. A friend said to him in substance: “Sir, you can easily settle that question. When the piano is raised, slip your foot under it, and if your toes are not pinched, you may safely infer that the psychological hypothesis is the true one; but if you find yourself in a trap, you will of course be obliged to give up your skepticism.” It is said that the man had so much confidence in his theory, and so little confidence in his senses, that he was willing to try the experiment. At length it appeared to him that the piano did rise, but he presumed that he was likewise subject to the psychological hallucination. He looked on with astonishment—hesitated a moment—but determined to support his theory. With the Irishman, he virtually said, “The theory must be all right, but bad luck to the facts!” Accordingly, the skeptic slipped his foot under the foot of the instrument which descended with the full force of natural gravitation. The gentleman’s position was plainly defined. He yielded to a deeply-settled conviction, under the *weight of evidence that rested on his understanding*.

Your assumption that Spiritualism shuns investigation appears to be wanting in facts, and I am surprised to hear this assumption enunciated. The present occasion furnishes no evidence to support the statement. When and where did Spiritualism retreat from public observation or get behind the door? When did it refuse to submit its claims to adjudication before the tribunal of an enlightened public sentiment? Never! I have yet to hear of the first instance of this want of moral courage on the part of the recognized representatives of the Spiritual Facts and Philosophy. Even women and little children have submitted themselves to the severest ordeals which

enlightened reason, popular science, and the most obstinate and vulgar skepticism could devise." In my own past experience, it has not been my object to note the facts which support the Spiritual Philosophy, simply that I might be able to show them to others. My object has been mainly to satisfy myself as regards their foundation in truth; and the result has been such as to settle the question with the deepest conviction that the claims of this philosophy are true and just. As these claims are not admitted by the Congregational church, I should not be satisfied with its teachings and attentions thereto, and hence I ask for a dismissal. Should you see fit to continue this discussion, it is desirable that you confine your remarks to the proper limits of the question at issue. The solemn question, "If a man die shall he live again?" That question is answered clearly and finally in the Spiritual Phenomena of the present time. Believing that "the kingdom of God is * * right-
eousness, and peace, and joy."—Rom., 14: 17. If these are the essential elements of the Divine Kingdom, it must be obvious that wherever these exist *there* is Heaven. With sincere regard, your friend and brother, EVELYN P. GOODSELL.

To Rev. BURDETT HART, Pastor.

FAIR HAVEN, March 13th, 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND :—Your letter of the date of February 7th, did not come to hand till toward the end of the month and I have been particularly occupied since. In it, you present two cases of miracles in these days to prove Spiritualism. But the first has no connection at all with Spiritualism so far as you give the facts; and the second depends solely on the word of the man who has "raised his own child from death to life no less than three times." This will not answer. Work the miracles openly, before those who are capable of deciding as to its truth, and you shall be believed. Christ raised the ruler's daughter to life among the very people who "laughed him to scorn!" Christ wrought nearly all of his mighty works before unbelievers and to make them believers. Do such works among unbelievers and you will prepare the way for disciples. Why does Spiritualism which boasts great things fail to do them? Why does it skulk in the dark, among its own believers, always and altogether declining the challenge to work a miracle in daylight and to convince those who give the challenge? Plainly, because it cannot do the things that it pretends to do. Have you seen a miracle bring a believer?

But, you say, tables are tipped, raps are made, heavy pianos are lifted up and let down on the unbeliever's big toe, (so that,

according to your original pun, the weight of evidence rests upon his understanding,) musical instruments are played, communications are received from the dead, and remote events are described; and therefore Spiritualism has its foundation in truth. Has it ever occurred to you that these rappings, and tippings, and liftings are rather low business for "spirits?" We set Irishmen to the moving of furniture in this world generally. If Washington and Bacon have nothing better to do in the spirit world then the present state is far higher than the future. And then what becomes of your theory of "progression" and "spheres?" Has it ever occurred to you that these physical phenomena are wrought constantly and have been for a long time by those who not only disbelieve Spiritualism, but who have a philosophic account to give of them? The experiments of Sir M. Faraday, an experimental philosopher by profession and of the first rank, prove that heavy substances can be moved and turned and made to perform as many antics as are seen in the rooms of spiritualistic circles, by the philosopher in his quiet explorations and trials of natural forces. So of the experiments of Dr. James Braid of Manchester, Eng.

Still, you say, the agents in these operations claim to be "spirits," and it is only common civility to take their word. Who then, on your own ground, do they claim to be? Some of them, Bacon, Franklin, Washington. But is it not noticeable that communications from such as these are often far inferior to their writings in this life? If the communications are from them, they have sadly deteriorated, and the spirit world is a place where first-rate scholars become ignoramuses. The bad spelling and the worse grammar, to say nothing of the nonsense, of many of the communications, indicate degraded scholarship in the invisible regions. Somebody ought to start "Ragged Schools" there. Others claim to be our "relations" who have departed before us. I have not heard that, in this country, the Spiritualists get light from any beings except those who once were human. In your letter you claim that it is the "*spirits of departed human beings* who continue to manifest their power, presence and intelligence to those who still remain on earth." What sort of "spirits" then are these? On the confessions of Spiritualists themselves, they are often "undeveloped," "unprogressed." Your own books declare that they cannot be trusted. They will lie. They have to be "discerned." Judge Edmonds acknowledges that no reliance can be put upon what they say, merely because they say it. Now, what we object to is this, a point which you have not met, the real point at issue between you and the church, viz: that you should accept the teachings of "spirits," and such spirits whose authority is questionable,

who will lie, who cannot be trusted, who need to be "discerned," whose word is good for nothing in itself, as the best Spiritualists themselves frankly acknowledge; and that you should deny and reject the acknowledged Word of God and renounce the Church of Christ. I have shown you in a former letter that you do plainly deny what the Scriptures affirm, and many of your brother Spiritualists go much farther in that than you have yet gone and throw the whole Bible overboard altogether. The religion of Spiritualism, at best, has for its sole authority, the testimony of these unreliable and often lying "spirits." Granting that real spirits do rap and speak, their words are only the words of human spirits and are worth no more than the raps of so many men, and poor men at that! Spiritualism is a religion and for it men are leaving churches of Christ. Yet its only authority is the raps and jerks, etc. of "spirits" who are only departed men and possibly the worst of the race! It may be discovered at last that these "spirits" of yours are only the "lying spirits" whom God sometime has permitted to invade the world. The confessions of Spiritualists are enough to overthrow Spiritualism forever! To exalt the "raps" of departed human spirits above the WORD of the ETERNAL GOD, to adopt a religion which pretends to be only from finite spirits, and for this to reject the religion of *the Infinite Christ*, is a blunder and a delusion which has never had its parallel in history. Mahomedanism claims to be from *God*. Mormonism claims to be from *God*. Spiritualism claims to be only from spirits. "Thus saith the Lord," is unknown in all its communications! My friend, you might as well base a religion on the footfalls of the people on the pavement in front of your dwelling, as on these unreliable raps of spirits. I say nothing of the miserable sense of the communications and the wretched grammar; it is enough that they are from departed men alone, and it may be from men who have departed only to hell! For if, as your best writers assert, the spirits will lie, who can assure us that the whole batch of communications and revelations is not the work of seducing and lying spirits? The peepings and mutterings of ancient witches would make just as good a religion. I take you on your own ground and show the fallacy and absurdity of the claims of your system.

After writing to me twenty-three and thirty-two pages of large letter sheet, you coolly ask me "to confine myself to *the proper limits* of the question at issue." You do this after writing whole pages to prove that spirits are not "dumb," in reply to my remark that I could get no response from them. You do it after long quotations from spiritualistic writers. I will do as you require. The question at issue is this: *Ought a member*

of a Christian Church to leave it, for the sake of embracing a religion whose only authority is that of departed human spirits, so-called, whose communications, on the confession of spiritualistic writers themselves, cannot be trusted? We await your reply.

Since our correspondence begun, the Rev. T. L. Harris, a leading and educated Spiritualist, has abandoned and exposed the whole thing, in a most convincing argument. He ascribes it to "Satanic agency." He holds it up as "the most hideous and horrible thing which has ever come from the nether world." He declares after fifteen years of experience with them, that "the Spiritualists of America are, as a body, Pantheists, rejecting alike the idea of the Scriptures as a divine revelation and of the existence of God;" and further that "they are gross sensualists and utterly immoral in their conduct in all the relations of life." He says that among them are "a few Christian men who have been deluded into the adoption of the system." We, as a church, believe, dear brother, that you are one of the latter. We believe that you are a good man, but on this thing sadly deluded. And it is because we have confidence in you and love you that we wish to turn you from a system which one of its strongest and most intellectual advocates thus exposes and denounces, and holds up to the scorn of the world. I have sent to you a pamphlet, "Counsels on Spiritualism," which I pray may do something toward your restoration. Will you give me your opinion of it? Most truly yours,

BURDETT HART.

E. P. GOODSELL, Esq.

HARTFORD, March 14th, 1860.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter dated March 13th, is received, which purports to be a reply to my letter dated February 7th. Before proceeding to reply to yours now before me, I will again state the question, the only question at issue between us, is this: Do the spirits of departed human beings continue to manifest their presence, power, and intelligence to those who still remain on earth, and in the corporeal form? This question forms the basis of this discussion. In my former letters I have both alluded to some cases, and cited other cases, on which believers in Spiritualism are accustomed to rely in support of their belief. But in reply to my letter of twenty-three pages of large letter sheet, you say you have not had leisure to reply, and when the reply is given, it is found to consist chiefly in evasions, naked assumptions, and denials of the cases and the facts which support them. To that letter containing facts and proofs, you have not adduced facts, proofs nor arguments, to

maintain your position. It was incumbent on you to offer something more substantial than evasions, assumptions, and denials. This is precisely what you have not done. In my letter of Feb. 7th, I called your attention to the propriety of confining your remarks to the proper limits of the question at issue, and expected to have had by this time, some "natural and rational explanation." For, according to your mundane theory, "all these things that are attributed to the spirits can be explained without any reference to them." Why then have you not explained them? Again, if "the weakness of Spiritualism is *Spiritualism*," why do you refuse to show its weakness?

In your letter of March 13th, you say that I "present two cases of miracles in these days, to prove Spiritualism." Here let me say, you misquote my language. In the cases alluded to I qualified the word miracles by prefixing the words (so-called) and still insist that the raising the dead to life is not miraculous, but is strictly in accordance with natural law, which is God's law. But you have denied by saying that "the first has no connection at all with Spiritualism;" "the second depends solely on the word of the man who has" raised his own child from death no less than three times. It is by such human testimony that the facts in these cases are already established, and the word by which the first case is shown, was given in a public lecture in Union Hall, in Nov. 1858, and corroborated by Prof. Brittan in Oct. 1859, before highly intelligent audiences who remember the citation, and which has so far as I know, been nowhere denied save in your letter. The testimony in the second case rests on the word of a single witness, for the present, as it was given in American Hall in the manner already mentioned—is believed by many persons who heard it and are acquainted with its author. You say: "Christ raised the ruler's daughter to life among the very people who "laughed him to scorn." That "he wrought nearly all of his mighty works before unbelievers and to make them believers." But the record says that he "put them all out," "he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel and them that were with him," "Peter, and James, and John," (who were supposed to be believers,) "and entereth in where the damsel was lying." If the statement is true, then those who "laughed him to scorn," he had "put them all out," before he raised her to life. If he did "his mighty works to make them believers," then he did them to gratify their curiosity, and had not the principle of benevolence actuating him upon this occasion. But you ask, "Why does Spiritualism decline a challenge to work a miracle?" My answer is: because Christ never accepted a challenge to raise the dead. Saying no more at present about your misrepresentations, about "tables

are tipped," "raps are made," "remote events are described," (passages which did not occur in my manuscript,) I call upon you as an exposé of Spiritualism to explain the case which I cited, in the which a rope (which suspended a table weighing only thirty-five pounds) was broken, and when a stronger rope was procured and the experiment repeated, the hooks of the steelyard were straightened out, one of them splitting lengthwise through the middle. Until you have explained this occurrence your denials will avail nothing—you are in the balance, and found altogether wanting. Until you have explained the phenomena of the piano which was handled with such masterly freedom that the invisible agents therewith beat time to the tune which was being played on it by a medium, while he was kneeling at arms length and three men seated on the top of the instrument, you must consent to have your "big toe" remain under the foot of the instrument with its aggregate weight and those three men resting on your understanding. You say you "set Irishmen to the moving of furniture in this world generally." By this, it may be supposed you first seat them on the top, and then set them to lift themselves and it. You maintain that a certain "M. Faraday, an experimental philosopher by profession and of the first rank," has done certain things in the way of moving "substances," etc. Now if his philosophy is in accordance with your own, which I have before shown to be unsound, then I do not care to go to England to inquire what M. Faraday thinks about the spirits. For according to your own showing, Irishmen could be employed to move "furniture." You say "the Spiritualist's only authority is the raps and jerks, etc. of "spirits." This is grossly absurd, false and foolish. Your nameless pamphlet I return to you by return mail without perusal. You wish me to give my opinion of it. Other matters engross my attention, and therefore I give no opinion of such a communication.

You ask: Has it ever occurred to me "that those rappings, and tippings and liftings are rather low business for spirits?" "You probably entertain the idea that most men go from this world to a state of endless perdition to dwell with fiends, where they must be forever surrounded by the degraded conditions and characteristics of an infernal world—yet object to the Spiritual origin of the manifestations on the ground that they are too low in character, and too undignified in form to have emanated from that world. But why should you expect such spirits, as your own theology consigns to the realms beneath, to be very dignified? Do you presume that the most stupid Hottentot would instantly become a very wise man by going into the other world? Do you imagine that clowns and cannibals have polished manners and a high

sense of propriety and dignity? If you really suppose that they are immediately clothed upon with all the splendors of seraphic grace and angelic wisdom, I have to inform you that the facts of Spiritual Intercourse by no means sustain the assumption. No one loses his individuality when he leaves the physical form. An accidental blow on the cranium may separate the spirit from the body, but it does not make a man any wiser. It does not wash away the stains from his moral nature to hold him under water for fifteen minutes, though his consciousness be restored on the other side of Jordan. It is necessary to bear in mind that the other world is being peopled continually by the innumerable millions who live and die here, most of them beneath the shadow of the deepest moral darkness and Pagan superstition. Even *here* there are multitudes who frequent the lowest sinks of depravity—we need not go far to find them—but who would expect them to be translated to heaven, exalted to the plane of celestial angels, in the hour that terminates their dissolute lives? Your objection seems to assume this. The implied assumption involves an abandonment of your own religious creed and an apparent obliviousness with respect to all moral distinctions. As all men go into the other world precisely what they are on leaving this world, we may expect that the manifestations will be as diversified in character as the individual authors of their production. When the clown becomes a polished courtier by stepping over the royal threshold, we may expect saints and sinners, fools and wise men, to exhibit equal grace and dignity in their deportment."

You allege that I "deny what the Scriptures affirm." I need not argue this point with you, for I have shown you on a former occasion that you have denied the source of Inspiration by the positive assertion that "The spirits are dumb." I shall not stop to inquire as to the beauty or the grandeur of the place which you call "hell," of which you discourse so eloquently in the letter now before me; it is quite evident however, that it is a delightful place to you, and from the description of the company so often spoken of, that it is every way adapted to your feelings and wishes. You say some one "ought to start Ragged Schools there." Perhaps you may find employment in that branch of business when you take up your Eternal Residence there, and should you prove an apt teacher, why then you will be justly entitled to the "wages"—besides, it may be an agreeable task for you to perform in teaching the young and undeveloped how to speak. No doubt that they all will wish to learn "grammar," when the fact is proved that they are not "dumb." The "witches" too, will doubtless be there. As

you have shown the condition and wants of the spirits, it is evident that you are competent to teach somebody in "Ragged Schools."

The vindictive and intolerant abuse which is at this moment being hurled at Spiritualism both in this country and in England, which has called for some out-spoken sentiments on the part of its friends in both hemispheres, I proceed to give you the views as ably expressed in a portion of a letter from the pen of Wm. Howitt, and recently published in some of the London journals. "I care more to atone for the past injustice and unkindness, than I do for all the sermons that were ever preached and the literature that was ever penned, and if we have minds amongst us yet muscular enough to grasp the faith of Luther, of Milton, of Paschal, and of Fenelon—minds which are not completely emasculated by the frivolities of a literature of mere amusement or rendered deaf by the mere squibs and crackers of the poor pantomime of our superficial life—they may yet feel a sense of that tender spot left often in the most callous and secularised heart, when they think of all the souls who have gone into eternity, who would give years, aye, cycles of their existence, to carry back to those on earth words of reconciliation, confessions of forgiveness, or assurances of pardon; to wipe from the sacred ground of life the pollution they have left there to fester and become pestilence; to rekindle faith in the souls of beloved ones which they have darkened with words of materialistic death—such minds may then conceive perhaps why the poor despised table has become in thousands of domestic circles a genuine family altar through which still flow the oracles of God and the "communion of saints" so continually prayed for in our churches. Why thousands and tens of thousands, by means of this reassured and confirmed faith, care nothing for the sneers and mockeries around because they have heavenly light in their dwellings, and the peace of eternity in their souls. Take my word for it, that this despised power will yet dash to atoms the mere figure of traditional faith, all its form of brass and its feet of clay, and will roll over the mere shell of a defunct formalism, crushing it into the dust. Let us see whether we have yet masculine minds among us capable of receiving its great truths, or the mere weeds of the literary stubble field, which will be burnt up in it as the weeds of a tropical plain by the sun—whether we are yet capable of the heroic daring of a Paul, and the child-like but deep souled faith of a Newton, or merely of grimacing on a rubbish-heap of rats, cats, old hats, rusty weather cocks, and vulgar Ikeys. I am sir, yours, etc., WILLIAM HOWITT."

West Hill Lodge, Highgate, Dec. 26th, 1859.

You ask: "What sort of spirits then are these?" * * *

"Your own books declare that they cannot be trusted. They will lie. They have to be "discerned." "Judge Edmonds acknowledges that no reliance can be put upon what they say, merely because they say it." But is this all that Judge Edmonds says about the spirits and the intrinsic evidence of the character of their communications? Does he convey the idea that all their communications should be rejected, from the mere fact that some of them are untrue? I have before shown you that there were lying spirits in Ahab's time, and Paul warned his readers against believing "every spirit." You say that "since our correspondence begun the Rev. T. L. Harris, a leading and educated Spiritualist, has abandoned and exposed the whole thing in a most convincing argument. He ascribes it to "Satanic agency." He holds it up as "the most hideous and horrible thing which has ever come from the nether world." He declares after fifteen years experience with them, that "the Spiritualists of America are as a body Pantheists, rejecting alike the idea of the Scriptures as a divine revelation and of the existence of God;" and further, that "they are gross sensualists and utterly immoral in their conduct in all the relations of life." He says that among them are "a few Christian men who have been deluded into the adoption of the system." Here is a verbatim copy of your report of Rev. T. L. Harris' abandonment and exposure of the "whole thing." And who does not see that the above report is indeed a meagre one of what a "leading and educated Spiritualist" might be supposed to utter in one hour, or an hour and a half? But in the absence of any further declarations ascribed to Mr. Harris in your report, I proceed to copy a few other passages from the "*Banner of Light*" which seem to have been overlooked in the quotation. "He could not speak of English Spiritualism, but he could of American." "He regarded it in every form as deleterious and productive of no good result. Nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand who devote themselves to Spiritualism, either become inmates of lunatic asylums or are led by its inculcations into vices not to be mentioned. The literature of Spiritualism *except in one or two instances* is tedious and vapid, or striking only because of its vitiating tendency. The Spiritualist manifestly had no religion or religious belief—scoffed at virtue and derided the divine beauties of the Savior—that more homes had been desecrated and destroyed by the system than by any other *visitation*." Such are a few of the remarks made by the gentleman, and they will serve very fairly as a type of his entire discourse. Yet Mr. Harris advertises himself as "that eminently eloquent *Spiritual* preacher of America." "Let us review the little we

have cited. He should be allowed to judge after fifteen years experience, and of what? that Spiritualism is the ladder that has elevated him to his present condition, that without the aid of the spirits themselves he might have been still the independent of former days; this had been better surely than to admit that it took him fifteen long years to find out how bad the system was. His next assertion as to the unheard of percentage who either graduate from devotion to Spiritualism, to the insane asylum or to the practice of unmentionable vices, is simply false; and no person is more familiar with its falsity than himself, as however poor his memory may be he cannot but remember that he has defended Spiritualism, and in quite a masterly manner, from the same wholesale and unwarrantable assertion." "Again, as to the literature of Spiritualism, while we are quite ready to admit that some of it is vapid and worthless, and have too great a respect for our publishers to accuse them of issuing under the cloak of religion, works only striking for their vitiating tendency, it argues nothing against the system, for perhaps no movement has been more prolific as regards its literature." "We are forced to regard the above exceptions as the peculiar literature of Harris. It is as bold an assertion as it is unwarranted, that the Spiritualist has no religion. No being is more forced to a religious belief, and no class of Christians can so fully understand and appreciate our Savior. We are ready to agree with Mr. Harris whenever he will assert that it is the abuse of Spiritualism that produces unfortunate results—never the use—and the greatest error he was guilty of, was not in what he said so much as in what he left unsaid, for there are two sides to almost everything, and while he pictured so strongly the dangers, if you so please to class them, he failed to do justice to its beauties." * * * "I understand that William Howitt has expressed his ideas regarding T. L. Harris' sermon, and that his article is to appear in a few days; also, that Harris contemplates bringing out a pamphlet to qualify his statements, which doubtless he finds are daily becoming more obnoxious among a class who are not so utterly ignorant of American Spiritualism and Spiritual literature as he may at first imagined. I shall forward both for you to lay before your readers as soon as they appear."

SQUIRE.

London, Jan. 25th, 1860.

Rev. T. L. Harris and Spiritualism.

EDITORS OF THE BANNER OF LIGHT:—Some time in January last the London Morning *Advertiser* contained an account of a discourse delivered by Rev. T. L. Harris to the Spiritualists of London. In that article, Mr. Harris is represented as having

made a violent assault upon Spiritualism and the Spiritualists of America, and the article has been copied into other papers in England and America, and made the subject of offensive comments upon us and our cause. Those papers in particular who have ever been ready to publish anything against us, have seized upon the occasion with avidity, and not only heralded Mr. H. as a seceder, but quoted him as authority for heaping many slanders upon us.

The London *Spiritual Magazine* of February contradicted that account, pronounced it false and garbled, and represented Mr. Harris as in full communion with our friends in London and lecturing to them acceptably twice every Sunday.

We hear thus two accounts of the transaction and in the absence of anything from Mr. H. himself, it may be difficult for some to tell where the truth is. Knowing, as I do, the persons who conduct that Magazine, I have no such difficulty. But to others who have not that advantage it must be a matter of regret that Mr. Harris who was on the spot when the report of his discourse was made, has not himself taken some pains to free himself from the imputation of being the foulest slanderer of Spiritualism and its followers in America, that it has yet encountered.

It seems to me, however, that Mr. Harris has not said all that is imputed to him, though, as to some things, the report may well be true. He is made to speak from "his own personal knowledge and experience," yet he is alleged to have made the broad assertion that Spiritualism was "the most horrible and hideous thing which has ever come from the nether world;" that "the Spiritualists of America are not only, as a body, Pantheists, rejecting alike the idea of the Scriptures as a divine revelation and of the existence of a God, but that they are gross sensualists, and utterly immoral in their conduct in all the relations of life. Mr. Harris added that this was not only true of the trans-Atlantic Spiritualists as a body, but that it was true of every nine hundred and ninety-nine of their number."

Now it must be as well known to Mr. H. as to any one, that there is not one of our public lecturers who is so little able to speak for the whole body of "trans-Atlantic Spiritualists" as he is. For the last two or three years, during which great numbers have been added to our ranks, Mr. H. has had little intercourse with any but a small congregation of some two hundred persons in this city. He has lectured to them alone during that time, and has had little social intercourse with them, and less even with others out of his own congregation. Of his own congregation alone can he speak from "personal knowledge and experience," and no one knows better than he that these denun-

ciations are not and cannot be true of them even, and he cannot know them to be true of others. Prior to the forming that congregation, Mr. H. had for some time been one of our public lecturers in this city and elsewhere in our country ; but he then seceded from us, confined his attention to that small body out of thirty or forty thousand believers in this city, and gradually became, apparently from choice, rather a preacher of Swedenborgianism and editor of a *New Church Magazine*, than a Spiritualist. And when he lately left this country on a mission, as he proclaimed it, to reform the whole world, he was not regarded by us or by himself as a Spiritualist, and had no warrant, either by our consent or from communion with us, to speak of us or of any but his own congregation. So it can hardly be true that he denounces "the Spiritualistic literature of America, with one or two exceptions in a thousand, as Pantheistic, feeble, driveling, nay, almost idiotic," for, with one exception he has been the most prolific contributor to that literature. Nor can it be true that he said that the Spiritualists were utterly selfish as well as sensual, and grossly immoral ; that they are destitute of all human sympathy, and never were known to perform a single benevolent action, for he cannot have forgotten that on one occasion when he was lecturing for us, he enjoined upon us the propriety of doing something for the poor during that hard winter, and within one hour of the close of his discourse an association was formed of one hundred and fifty members, with some sixty visitors of the sick ; money was raised to carry on our operations, and at least six hundred persons were relieved ere winter closed. He may not have known of the extent of the good then done, because he associated so little with us, even then, and from that cause he may not have known a fact in the connection, namely, that when the next year, it was contemplated to revive the association, on going around among the Spiritualists of means, it was found that every family supported at least three or four poor families, some of them more, and one as many as twenty-seven. Nor can it be true as is alleged, that he said that "The marriage vow imposes no obligations in the views of the Spiritualists." A man who has twice taken upon him that obligation, and one of those times when he was an avowed Spiritualist could not have said so. He knew that it was not true of his own congregation, and he had abundant reason for being aware that it is not true of the whole body of us or of any considerable part of us and it cannot be that he said so. Yet the editors, who have been so ready to republish the slanderous article from the *London Advertiser*, or make it the basis of their own remarks have in effect said so, and I for one am not willing for a moment to submit to the imputation.

We are not the sensual, Infidel, depraved or profligate crew that is charged. If we were, how could we be, as we are, tolerated a moment amid a refined, moral and intellectual community! How could the cause hold its own, and advance so rapidly as to swell to millions in less than fifteen years, and number in its ranks many—divines as well as laymen—of the highest position and intellect in the land? The idea is simply absurd, and though we may not be surprised at its originating among those who are ever ready to sneer at everything American, we may be shocked at its obtaining such ready currency among our own people.

Spiritualism is comparatively a new thing with us. Many of us look into it at first merely from curiosity, and become interested in the physical manifestations. With some of these, the gratification of curiosity is all they aim at, and they go no further than this—the mere A B C of the matter, and it is quite probable that there are some who are not aware yet that there is or can be anything more in Spiritualism. So there are some among us who look upon it only as a science or a philosophy, and do not go beyond that in their researches or their thoughts. And there are some, who having become satisfied of the reality of the manifestations and having studied the philosophy till they are content, now look for something more, and that they find in devotion, in the religious element of Spiritualism. It first appears to the senses and awakens the affections. It next addresses the reason and convinces the understanding. It then speaks to the heart for then the heart is suitably prepared to hear and to heed, and in speaking to the heart it awakens devotion. It has not yet produced that effect with all. It takes time to do that—longer or shorter with different persons. But give it time and it will do it with all. How can it be otherwise? The great object of the movement is, to reveal to us what is the state of existence into which we are to be ushered after death. That work it is performing just as fast as we are fitted for it. Already has this object been attained with far greater numbers than the unthinking world has any idea of. And the reason of this ignorance is that we do not believe in public displays on the subject. There is not one out of thirty of the believers in this city who ever attend our public meetings. It is in the private circle where the work is done, and where the Beneficent Father is worshipped. It is where two or three are gathered together in His name that we feel His presence most vividly among us. It is not pretended that the injunctions of Spiritualism have produced their whole effect upon us all, and we do not claim that we are yet free from the fate common to all new movements, which is that the uninstructed and the unworthy

may pervert it. But even in this respect we are not alone in the history of mankind, for we read in the Scriptures that the Apostle Paul had to censure some of his followers for getting drunk at the communion table; and in his first epistle to the Corinthians he says, "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles that one should have his father's wife." Yet Christianity arose above this burden imposed upon it by the errors of its professors or the detraction of its enemies and why may not we? But our best defence against these assaults, come from what source they may, is in the appeal we can make to those amid whom our daily lives are spent, and on the answer to that appeal "the trans-Atlantic Spiritualists as a body" can safely repose.

J. W. EDMONDS.

New York, Feb. 23d, 1860.

The *Banner of Light* publishes under date of March 3d, a copy from the *Spiritual Magazine* published at London, the following notice of Mr. Harris:

THE REV T. L. HARRIS.—This eloquent Spiritualist preacher has now removed to the Marylebone Institute in Edward St., Portman Square. The service commences at 11 A. M. and 6½ P. M. His audiences have largely increased, and will no doubt soon overcrowd the large room of the institution. Those who wish to hear the highest flights of eloquent and poetic preaching to the heart, should avail themselves of the opportunity which the next few Sundays will afford them. One of his recent sermons in which he presented in bold relief the dangers of giving ourselves up to the productions of the physical phenomena and allowing our minds to be held captive by the teachings of low forms of Spiritualism, which has led to an article of a very rampant kind in the *Morning Advertiser*, which has been reproduced, of course with the usual additions in other papers. It is enough to say that the delinquent writer, whom we are fortunately able to point out as Mr. James Grant, entirely misrepresented the purport and statements of the discourse, and that he amusingly erred in treating of Mr. Harris as a seceder from the holy cause. So far is this from being the case, that Harris is himself one of its highest examples and most eloquent exponents, being a highly developed and inspirational medium and constantly the subject of magnetic trance. This very discourse was delivered by him in a mediumistic state, as are all his prayers and sermons, and in this fact lies the wonder not less than the beauty of his high poetry and preaching. Mr. James Grant, we suppose, will be as much disconcerted at this discovery as those who read his article will be surprised to hear

that Mr. Grant himself has been a frequent seeker after and devotee of the physical phenomena. It was only on the Friday previous to the sermon which he so misreported that he was assisting at these same manifestations, which it now suits him—or perhaps, rather, his masters in the newspaper—to condemn, at a company in the city of London, composed of fourteen of its leading merchants and others. So much for newspaper editors! But even if Mr. Harris had so grossly perverted known facts, as Mr. Grant reports, we should deem it of little consequence to any one but himself. The golden rule for Spiritualists and for their revilers is not to allow themselves to be taken captive either by spirits out of the flesh, or by spirits in the flesh; and the same rule which Mr. Harris worthily insists upon as to spirits out of the flesh, applies with equal force to his own teachings. Spiritualists will only accept his inspirational preaching so far as it is consistent with facts, with their highest reasons, and with the Word of God.”

Since our correspondence began, I have written to you more than seventy pages of matter, the object and design of which has been to illustrate and defend, as well as I could, the facts and principles which support the theory of Spiritualism. The testimony which I have adduced has been that of some witnesses who are known to some of our readers. This testimony must be taken to show that there is a future immortal existence—an immortality of all the God-given faculties and powers of the soul—that no one of its faculties or powers is destroyed by the mere fact of its separation from the body; but when separated from its outer sensuous existence may become greatly enlarged, refined, and elevated in the spirit world. The consciousness of this fact is of itself sufficient to lead the soul to make the most earnest effort to obtain advancement and growth, even while in its clay tenement. So far is it from being true that the soul is materialistic, or that any one of its faculties or powers is annihilated or destroyed, or rendered useless or oblivious by its separation from the body—it is on the contrary, quite consistent with our ideas of the glorious perfections and attributes of the character of God, to believe that the soul with all its noble faculties and powers still lives, and may become more and more enlarged, purified, and elevated—not only beyond the power of human language to picture—but beyond either the power of the pen or the tongue of an Archangel to describe. It is with these views of the race of mankind, and the goal which is ever set before them, not only in the rudimental sphere, but in future spheres, the duration of which may be compared to cycles of years multiplied by the drops of water in the ocean. Such being the sacred import of the teachings of God’s mes-

sengers—the spirits—and believed by a vast multitude of the truly devout souls of those who have the peace of God which passeth understanding, because they believe the truth, I am quite content to cast in my lot with that of those who entertain and hold to this belief. With much regard, I am yours, &c.,
EVELYN P. GOODSSELL.

To Rev. BURDETT HART.

NOTE.—In reference to the case cited on the beginning of the sixteenth page, it is deemed proper to add that however much of interest may have been manifested to witness the exposure of Spiritualism, or how much less attention was drawn to the subject than its importance demanded at the time, it is evident that the state of feeling in the public mind could in no wise affect the main question, as to whether spirits do or do not commune with mortals. That the gentleman who gave this exposition did (what many others have done) gain complete Psychological control over some of his subjects, and which rendered his experiments interesting to those who did attend, is unquestionably true. These experiments show the power of mind and spirit to control mind and spirit. As such they are quite illustrative of the possibility of spirit control of mortals.

FAIR HAVEN, April 3d, 1860.

EVELYN P. GOODSSELL, Esq., Hartford.

DEAR FRIEND:—At a meeting of the First Congregational church last Friday evening, (of which you were a member,) action was taken upon your request of dismission from the church. The vote taken was unanimous in favor of granting your request, although we very much regret being obliged to take such a course with you. Very truly yours,

WILLIS HEMINGWAY, JR.

APPENDIX.

A DEAD WOMAN BROUGHT TO LIFE.

EDITORS OF THE BANNER OF LIGHT:—Thinking you would like to publish so remarkable a case of spirit power, and as we have accounts of persons that were dead having been brought to life in ancient times, it would not be uninteresting to your readers to hear of nearly if not a parallel case in their own age. Mrs. D. R. Judkins (medium) has the written certificates of persons who were present on the occasion, testifying to the truth of the following :

A woman came to this city last spring. Her name was Elizabeth Cordell. Soon after arriving here she was taken very sick. One night about 9 o'clock the girl who had been attending her went to the house of Mrs. D. R. Judkins and told her the woman was dead, and asked her if she would go and help lay out the corpse. Mrs. J. said she would willingly do so. Arriving at the house, she found several persons congregated in the room. They said she had been dead about one half hour. As soon as Mrs. J. stepped into the room she felt the power of the spirit with her, and was immediately controlled to make three passes from the head to the feet of the inanimate form before her, then took the hands in her own for a short time, when they became life-like and limber. The medium's hands were then raised above her head and brought together with a quick, sharp slap, accompanying the act with the words, "Come out," when, strange and mysterious as it may seem, the eyes were thrown open, she began to breathe and talk, and from that time gradually recovered her usual health. There were some half dozen persons present, who had examined the condition of the body, and pronounced it dead. The names of three witnesses of this manifestation are: Wm. Trow, A. T. Wilkins, Julia A. Trow. These persons all live in this city. I should state that this woman was not a patient of Mrs. D. R. Judkins. Mrs. J. has been practising five years as a healing medium. She has astonishing success and great power in healing, not having met with a failure where the directions have been followed. Yours for truth,

D. M. LAPHAM.

Springfield, Ill., Feb. 26th, 1860. [Published March 24th.]

[From the Banner of Light.]

"WHAT IS MAGNETISM?" DICTATED BY A SPIRIT.

This is the question we have received and which we purpose to answer, although we do not purpose to fully elucidate it, for time has not been given us in which to do so. Magnetism when properly understood is the life of all things. It may be the mighty sun, source or centre of life. Everything that lives at all, lives by magnetism; without it there would be no life. There are four kinds of magnetism—the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, the spiritual. What is that which pro-

duces the change in the mineral particles from year to year, month to month? Magnetism, we answer—a life principle we may call divine. During certain conditions of yonder King of Day, it is possessed of positive magnetism—positive to the earth. While this is the case the earth is negative or receptive, capable of absorbing the rays of the sun, that it may yield forth its treasure. In the spring time yonder sun possesses positive magnetism. The earth is then in a negative state. Then it easily yields up its treasures. When the sun sends forth its magnetic rays, the earth yields forth her fruits by the law of magnetism. Again, during certain portions of your seasons, the animal form and all other forms are constantly changing, and magnetism produces it. Could you live without the rays of yonder sun? No; your earth would be a barren waste—you cannot exist under lawful conditions, unless you exist by the law of magnetism, and future ages shall acknowledge the power of this law.

Some animal forms possess a large share of positive magnetism. They are peculiarly organized and capable of drawing the positive force from the sun, the earth, the moon, and they are capable of exercising their force over one less positive. Law sanctions this course, for this is but the outgrowth of law. All media are possessed of a very large portion of negative magnetism. They are capable of drawing that, and that only from the elements. You rarely ever find them otherwise. They are negative and receptive, constantly capable of being used by parties communicating—capable of being used as I would use a pencil. The pencil has magnetic life in its composition; yet it is so far negative to the animal that it can use it at will.

Let us go beyond—to the magnetism of spirit life that governs every creature of God in spirit. That magnetism is made up or derived from the minerals of earth, the animal, and the vegetable kingdoms. Thus the spiritual is but an outgrowth of the lower order of the magnetic forces on earth, it is however more positive, more powerful. Thus the spirit is capable of using far greater power on mortals than mortal man is capable of using over his brother. Spirits have a greater share to diffuse over earth's people; and as each spirit in the shadowy life has a law to guide himself, he has a perfect right to use it as he pleases. If I, as a spirit, know how to use my magnetism, the law that gives me understanding gives me full power to use it as I please.

What is it that gives life to the monarch of the forest? You see it in spring-time put forth its buds and leaves. God gives it life you say. Yet has he no agents in the great workshop of life? Yes, he has many, and the greatest of all is magnetism; the buds, the leaves, the flowers, all come forth at the call of magnetism.

Our questioner doubts the power of mind to control mind—of one department of life being able to control another. How strange to doubt God in one of his grandest manifestations. We ask our questioner if he is not able to control certain portions of the lower orders of life? He will answer he is. How does he control? we ask. Perhaps he will say by a greater share of intellect. Has intelligence strength?

has it power to speak into existence the flower? No, we answer. The law of life—the magnetic power that thrills all life—has this power. It is not found more in intellect than elsewhere; and when man shall understand it, he will know how to use it. In years gone by a Franklin toyed with the subtle element. By his superior intuitive powers he conceived a grand idea. He was like the child who takes a watch; it pleases him yet he knows not how to use it. In after years he learns the value of the watch, and how to use it. So it was with Franklin.

Man is impelled by progression to search out the truth, and that progression is magnetic, calling for a corresponding life to that desire in his spirit which leads man to toy with strange mysteries; and when intelligence comprehends the man receives good thereby. If man, the great temple of animal life, only understood one thousandth part of his power, what a God he would be here, even on earth. But a wise God says, "Here shalt thou come, and no further;" when thou hast received one ask for another and receive it. Our God giveth to each in time, and to each his due.

If man but understood his superior magnetic power, he could at any time use that power over any subject of the animal creation and it would quail before it. He could say "go," and it would go; "come," and it would come. It would yield implicit obedience to the superior magnet. Now the lower order of animals frequently conquer the man. The time shall come when man shall understand this power and use it. But that time is in the future—brightness and glory surround it. Our questioner need not go into the past to learn what magnetism is. Every lesson God gives to man is first transcribed on the page of man's soul, and the man has but to turn within and read. Then, wherever he goes he shall have an understanding of magnetism or the law of life, for such it is.

We shall ask our questioner to inform us, if he can, why it is that certain plants that flourish in other climes, cannot in this? Why then yield their fragrance under certain conditions? Can he tell us? The flower, born into existence in a foreign clime, flourished in that clime far better than it can here under your conditions. It was born at the call of magnetism peculiar to itself, or, the sun and surrounding elements were positive to the plant. Remove it, and you take it out of its sphere of action—you strive to rear it under conditions foreign to it—you are thwarting a magnetism peculiar to itself—you have taken it from the bosom of its mother and given it unto a stranger. It lives by a magnetism well adapted to its element. It can find it nowhere else as well as at home, under the same conditions that spoke it into existence. This law has the same power over animal life, but to a less extent. Man wanders to a foreign clime; if his forces are moving high, he lives there; yet could you see the mighty change, the terrible revolution the natural passes through, and the spiritual also, you would wonder why he was not called higher. But man is possessed of stronger magnetic forces than anything else you can find in animal life. He can endure more hardships—he can ward off more arrows from the enemy than any other of God's creatures; and thus he can trespass upon God's

laws further than anything else. But so sure as he goes out of the condition he was born under, he suffers to some extent.

We will beg leave to point out some of the bright Jewels of magnetism that exist in your spirit. Bright buds are there waiting to be called into existence—waiting to come forth that man may be blessed therewith. War no longer with truth, but render to God his due, using all things for his honor and glory. Render to the earth and the surrounding elements their due, also, and while you give to each their due, oh, fail not to be just to yourself and to that law you so poorly understand. We will not censure, for ignorance is not a sin, but is the mother of all evil. It begetteth no perfect children—it produceth no harmony. So, then, get Truth and then you shall understand what magnetism is, and shall render justice to yourself, to others, and to your God.

COMMUNICATION—1st.

The following communication was received at the hands of H. E. Monell, a writing medium of this city, Jan. 19th, 1861. Accompanying which was a book entitled "The Healing of the Nations," by Charles Linton, Spirit Medium. Other messages of similar character, both oral and written, have come to me from time to time, through several other mediums. Besides the chirography and style, being strong evidence that the spirit of my father was the controlling spirit in writing this communication, I have his description as given by the same medium. Other seeing mediums have given an accurate description of him, not one of which ever saw him while in the mortal. Other friends from the Celestial Spheres, have spoken to me through speaking mediums, upon the subject of healing, and have given their aid and encouragement in this seemingly miraculous, yet perfectly natural work, the work of healing the sick:

"MY DEAR SON:—Pleasant greetings flow down to you from the spirit land. That bright and beautiful sphere which has so long been my home, yet cannot be wholly so, while my dear children and their dear mother are still confined to earth. How happy I am to be able to communicate to you a few words through the mediumship of a friend. Could mortals realize the exquisite joy it gives us to be able to communicate to our loved ones of earth, they would not so often chill our loving and sensitive hearts by cold disbelief of our presence and identity. I would like you to read the chapter in the book as specified.* You will find it very suggestive of thought. While reading it, a new, a purer, a more harmonizing influence than any you have yet had, will be attracted to you from which you will receive much benefit. You will soon be sensible of new developments in your mediumship. And when the right time comes you must give lectures upon your system of *Healing*! The world needs much light upon that subject, and as you progress from day to day new light and instruction will come to you, which you will treasure, and give forth to those ready to receive

*The chapter here referred to is the 16th. SUBJECT—The Physician.

it. Your field of use will be much larger than you now anticipate. Your spirit friends wish you to publish what you have written, your correspondence, etc. There is so much of it different from anything that has yet come before the public. It is of a character to please and enlighten many minds who can be reached in no other way, and who are spiritually and intellectually starving for suitable nourishment. Nothing yet written comes so near meeting their wants. Yes, my dear son, there is a call for its publication, and it will make a good impression, and have a wide circulation. You are daily developing a finer susceptibility to spirit impression, and could you see the actual good you circulate in your daily walks, your daily life, you would be greatly encouraged. Through all the apparent discord in the great human elements at the present time there moves one grand universal harmony. Our plans are working, and there is much work for you. You are not idle, but are gathering strength for future use. The spirit must gain full control of the physical. God has given you a mighty healing rod. With it we see you.

We see you lift the lowly up,
Refresh them from your brimming cup,
That cup, a commissioned Angel fills,
From God's own *pure exhaustless* rills.

Though mortals to whom you would do good turn coldly away now, yet you have the love, the aid, the encouragement, of noble, progressed inhabitants of the Celestial Spheres, who bid you,

Still on the water cast thy bread,
It shall return countless blessings on thy head.

I hope soon to communicate with your mother, and I still hope that all my dear children will receive my messages with the kindness and the faith that you do. Ours is a peculiar family; probably there are none, in whom ancestral traits are more conspicuously delineated in each member. Something will come home to each one and cause their minds to be led to the beautiful truths of Spiritualism.

YOUR FATHER."

COMMUNICATION—2ND.

The following verses were received from the hand of Mrs. Rebecca E. Miller, through whose mediumship they were written, on the 10th day of February, 1861:

“Friend, as thou in the morning forth shall go
Bearing the precious seed, which thou must sow—
Bringing the golden sheaves at eventide,
Wilt thou return with labors satisfied.

Thy hands can soothe the sick and banish pain,
Remove disease and make them well again—
A blessing to the race, thus wilt thou be,
While laboring to lift up humanity.

While many do the seeds of discord sow,
Whose fruit is untold misery and woe;
An antidote through thee we fain would give,
Remove the cause and bid the dying live.

Thy sympathy shall unto all extend,
In thee the poor and needy have a friend;
What has been given thee at duty's call,
Thou wilt with willing heart impart to all.

Spirits whose hearts do overflow with love,
Are drawn to thee from their bright homes above;
They joy to see one pure unselfish soul,
Laboring for something more than sordid gold.

Thy labors brother all will go before
To judgment. Till thou dost work no more,
Thy good deeds will a mansion here prepare,
Where you may rest from every grief and care.

The robe of righteousness to thee be given,
And treasures which thou hast laid up in heaven
Will be enjoyed; pleasures without alloy
Shall fill thy soul with never ceasing joy.”

THIS IS FROM SPIRITS, FROM A CIRCLE OF LOVE AND HARMONY.
To MR. GOODSSELL.

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM.

From the book entitled "The Healing of the Nations," the introduction to which is furnished by Nathaniel P. Tallmadge, late United States Senator and Governor of Wisconsin, I give the two following brief extracts in support of Spiritualism:

"No cause in the history of the world has made such rapid and unprecedented progress as "Spiritualism" since its first introduction. Unaided, and without an effort on the part of its friends and advocates, and with an opposition unparalleled for its perseverance and its bitterness, it has moved onward with a momentum as resistless as it is overwhelming. It already numbers in its ranks talent of the highest order in every department of science and the arts, the most distinguished of the legal profession, the most elevated of judicial functionaries, the most eminent of legislative bodies, the most enlightened of the press, and the most pious and learned of the pulpit; and above all, it enrolls among its votaries the purest and most intellectual of the female sex, whose modesty and whose virtues would sanctify any cause, and whose advocacy, when openly proclaimed, will put to flight and to shame the unmanly attacks of ignorance and bigotry, and tear from the great "MOKANNA" of hypocrisy the unhallowed veil which has so long concealed the horrid deformity of its features! It already numbers more ably edited and better sustained newspapers and periodicals than any religious sect or denomination in the country; and it has presented to the public mind specimens of "spiritual literature" unsurpassed in beauty of style and sentiment, and unequaled in profundity and sublimity of thought.

Notwithstanding all this rapid progress and wide-spread belief in "Spiritual Manifestations," there is nevertheless a pervading ignorance on the subject amongst the masses hardly to be anticipated in this enlightened age. At the same time the fault is not theirs, but is chargeable to those whose duty it is, and whose position requires, that they should enlighten and instruct their fellows in what concerns their temporal and eternal welfare, namely, those who control those mighty engines for good or evil, the Pulpit and the Press.

As I have already said, there are high and honorable excep-

tions in both these departments. But the public press, as a whole, is without excuse for the manner in which it has treated this subject—a subject presenting phenomena the most extraordinary in the history of the world, and vouched for by names, whose testimony, if the facts were in issue on the trial of a man for his life, would convict and execute him. Yet with these facts staring them in the face, and with this testimony before them, they have in the most violent terms denounced not only the subject, but the investigators. When called upon to publish the views of its friends upon which their comments have been made, they have not only refused, but have made that reasonable request the ground for renewed attack, and still more violent assault. Their readers have therefore remained in ignorance not only, but have been plunged into deeper darkness by reason of the one-sided and distorted views which have been presented by the boasted intelligence and the enlightened liberality of the American press! Whatever may be the origin of these extraordinary phenomena, whether they be spiritual or philosophical, they are equally entitled to the consideration of every intelligent mind, and more especially of those minds that control and direct the public press, because to them the masses look for information on all subjects, whether spiritual, philosophical, or political.

In saying this I say it in all charity, and in a forgiving and Christian spirit. At the same time, charity, the brightest gem in the crown of Christianity, requires that the truth shall be told, let its crushing weight fall where it may. The following remarks of Lord Bacon to me and others are peculiarly applicable to all denouncers of "Spiritualism" without investigation, and were given by him whilst recommending charity toward those who did not, for want of information, believe.

'Let the dog bark, the cat mew, or the ass slavishly toil for mere animal existence, still nature will assert its just claims whether in man or brute. And to him who, without evidence of either right or wrong, can denounce that as untrue which he has not investigated, you may justly attribute the true prerogatives of his nature. He will bark dog-like to the compulsion of his brute-like organization, and he will toil like the ass to perpetuate the slavery of opinions to which he is bound by error and prejudice.'

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

"I will now show that the manifestations justify the belief in direct communications :

*First, * * ** Here were tables moved without any one touching them or being near them ; the table was raised wholly

from the floor with a great weight upon it; it was riveted, as it were, to the floor, so that it resisted the efforts of four persons to raise it till the top gave way, and then, by permission of the spirits, was raised by myself alone without difficulty; bells were rung and made to chime in with the beating of time to a march; the guitar was played by an invisible hand, as by the most accomplished performer; deep indentations were made by the tip end of the handle of a bell (being pointed with brass) in hard cherry wood, which could only be done by a power that could thus wield the bell, and by an intelligence to direct that power; the bell and a hand were impressed on various parts of the person; finally, a sentence was written purporting to come from JOHN C. CALHOUN, which his most intimate friends testify is the perfect handwriting, or a perfect *fac simile* of the handwriting of Calhoun. All these manifestations were made by an invisible power and intelligence, the room being well lighted, and where there was an utter impossibility for the interposition or agency of any human power. Dr. Dods upon his theory might undertake to say that the persons who relate these things were psychologized, and supposed they saw them, when in truth they were deluded. If they were in a psychological state, and merely imagined these things to exist, when they come out of that state these imaginary facts would vanish with the delusion that produced them. But it so happens that the indentations in the table are still to be seen, and the handwriting is still preserved, and in my possession, and has been shown to hundreds of persons. Dr. Dods, then, has "no philosophy to reach the case," to use his own language, and must become a Spiritualist. There are thousands of similar facts, and many vastly more astounding than those above related.

In the month of June last I attended a select circle in the city of New York, composed of the very *elite* of the city. The room was darkened, and an accordeon placed under the table by direction of the spirits. The circle sang several beautiful airs, and the accordeon played the accompaniment as perfectly as the most skillful performer could have done. "Sweet Home" was then played on the accordeon by an invisible hand, without voices accompanying it, in a style as beautiful and exquisite as I ever heard it in my life. All the members of the circle felt the impressions of hands upon their persons; some had their handkerchiefs taken from their pockets, and afterward returned to them; one gentleman had letters taken from his pocket, and one by one returned to him; I felt a hand on different parts of my person, and then it passed over my face, so that I distinctly felt the fingers; my eye-glass was taken from one pocket and transferred to another, together with various other

manifestations unnecessary here to repeat; and made, too, whilst the members of the circle joined hands as they had been previously directed.

On another evening the same circle met. They had previously been directed to bring three guitars. I was directed through the rappings to place the guitars under the table, the room having been darkened as before. They commenced tuning the guitars, which, it was perceived, were badly out of tune. I remarked it was a pity they were so out of tune, but if the spirits could tune them the manifestation would be still better. I could hear the keys turned and the strings touched as plainly as I ever heard such an instrument tuned. In a little time the alphabet was called for, and it was rapped out, "You will perceive they are in tune;" and they were in perfect tune. The circle were then directed to chant the Lord's Prayer, which they did, the guitars playing the accompaniment. In like manner they were directed to sing "Old Hundred," which they did, with the same accompaniment. They then sang several fashionable airs accompanied by the guitars, as perfectly and as exquisitely as I ever heard them at the most celebrated concerts. They were then directed to sing "Hail Columbia." They commenced singing; one of the guitars came out from under the table, moved by an invisible power, and as it passed over the circle, beat time on the head of each one with the body of the guitar as it passed, whilst the strings were playing the air above! It then returned under the table as before. During most of these performances one of the guitars, which had been, by invisible hands, placed between my feet and rested on my knee, was played at intervals until it was finally removed from me.

One of the guitars then played successively "Old Dan Tucker," "Uncle Ned," and "Lilly Dale" most exquisitely. A gentleman sang the air to each. The guitar then struck up what is known as the "Shaker Song" in Ethiopian minstrelsy; and when that was finished, the alphabet was called for, and it was rapped out, "My name is Luke West, formerly of Christy's Minstrels." One gentleman remarked that he believed there was a performer by that name at Christy's, but was not certain. The next day I caused inquiry to be made, and was informed there had been a performer by the name of "Luke West," but that he had died within a week, on a recent tour to Boston! Now let skeptics account for this manifestation. Here was a person unknown to any of the circle—no such performance was anticipated—and still his disembodied spirit manifests itself both by the music and the name in a manner that leaves no room for doubt, and which perfectly identifies the spirit! I might multiply these physical manifestations to any extent."