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THE  
USE OF SPIRITUALISM

BY  
S. C. HALL, F.S.A.,  
BARRISTER-AT-LAW, ETC.

*Editor (during Forty-two Years) of the "Art Journal."*  
*Author of "Retrospect of a Long Life." 1883.*  
*Etc. Etc.*

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E. W. ALLEN, 4 AVE MARIA LANE, E.C.  
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# THE USE OF SPIRITUALISM?

"For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know, therefore, what those things mean."—THE ACTS.

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."—SOLOMON.

"The true mission of Spiritualism, and it is a great and magnificent mission, is to recall to the knowledge, and to restore to the consciousness of mankind, the Christian faith, with all its Divine and supernatural power. Its business is to exhibit the reality of its connection with God, and His angels, with the life and spirit of the Divine Word, and to open our earth-dimmed eyes to perceive all the wealth of celestial wisdom in the Christian Revelation."—WILLIAM HOWITT.

"We speak what we do know, and testify what we have seen."—ST. PAUL.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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I PRINTED this "Letter" first in 1863; in 1871 I reprinted it, with additions. In 1876 I printed it again: but only for "private circulation." In 1884, at the solicitation of Mr. Nisbet of Glasgow, I *publish* it—much altering its character, but retaining all its essential features.

My motive in referring to previous editions is to show that my belief in Spiritualism has undergone no change. I have as entire conviction of its truth as I had thirty years ago. But I have less joy in it now than I had then. It is, at this time, not only enveloped in mystery, not only confused, and conflicting, and contradictory, but many of its public professors subject it to the vilest influences, while some "spiritual" publications uphold frightfully evil doctrines, taught to them, as they say—and probably say truly—by SPIRITS who have lived in earth-life.

Spiritualism is none the less a fact—a solemn, impressive, and instructive fact. I attribute the decadence in spirit, while the number of "believers" is largely increasing, to this: Those who might guide it, and ought to guide it, keep aloof from it, and leave

the workers for its propagation to their own—often wicked—devices. They are not encountered, or are insufficiently encountered, by the good and able men who are advocates of the Spiritualism that upholds the cause of God and promotes the welfare and happiness of man. There are comparatively few ministers of the Gospel who “take up” the cause; few who inquire, and the few who do, lack the courage to avow belief. Yet Spiritualism progresses, and will progress. There are now millions where, thirty years ago, there were scores. To “stop” it is impossible: as easy would it be to stay the inflow of Ocean by a wall of shingles. Our pastors and teachers leave the mighty power for good—or for evil—in the hands of those who will use, to abuse, it—who do use, and do abuse, it.

The purpose of this “Letter” is, first, to prove that Spiritualism is reasonably, rationally, and scripturally TRUE; and next, that it is intended to be, and may be, a holy safeguard—a “whole armour”—a source of incalculable happiness, a powerful means of strengthening and disseminating the teachings of the New Testament—that is to say, Christianity.

S. C. HALL.

STANFORD ROAD, KENSINGTON, W.

*July, 1884.*

# THE USE OF SPIRITUALISM?

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REVEREND SIR,

I answer the question you have put to me,—What is the “USE” of SPIRITUALISM? whether it be for good or evil, in its origin and purpose?

—:—

If it be of no “*use*,” religious thinkers and men of science are bound to enquiry concerning it. It is only of late years we have discovered the “uses” of a hundred things that our fathers considered either useless or obnoxious. The lever that moves the world—steam—was useless until within a comparatively recent period. Is it so long since an eminent Professor derided the idea of a ship, propelled by steam, conveying a cargo across the Atlantic? In 1843, the House of Representatives at Washington scorned Professor Morse and ridiculed his suggestion as a “chimera.” Yet, who now wonders when he receives a message by the electric telegraph, although he knows the sender, three thousand miles away, is waiting for his reply! Dreams are “admitted facts,” yet of what

*use* are they? Not one in a thousand can be recalled at all; not one in a million is of any worth. Benjamin Franklin asked what was the *use* of an infant? He must have been strangely startled who first saw the magnet draw towards it a piece of iron. When telescopes and microscopes were invented, they were decried as "atheistical inventions." Although Mesmerism is not yet an "admitted fact," it is "believed in" by thousands who a few years ago treated its advocates with hostility and obloquy. These are the comments of Archbishop Whateley on *that* subject. They are as applicable to Spiritualism as they are to Mesmerism.

"I myself was for many years strongly reluctant to believe in Mesmerism; but I was at length overcome by facts. *Any amount of detected mistake or imposture will no more go to disprove a well established fact than the detection of a number of pieces of counterfeit coins will prove a genuine shilling and sovereign not to be genuine silver and gold.*" The learned Prelate adds:—"To suppose that we are all so mad as to believe that things are taking place before our eyes which did not, and all mad in the same way, is utterly incredible. No one, I am convinced, who has seen *what I have seen*, or the half of it, can remain unconvinced that Mesmerism is a real and powerful agent. Those who profess complete disbelief, therefore, must belong, I conceive, to one of two classes: first, those *who have made but a slight and scanty enquiry, or none at all*, and shun full investigation, lest they should be convinced—which is what they do not wish; and, secondly, those who have enquired more fully, and really *are* convinced *but are afraid to own it*, for fear of being laughed at, or of being sent 'to Coventry' by a kind of Trades' Union conspiracy."

—:—

How limited is the knowledge we have even of the simplest things! Take a hundred persons of average intelligence: how many of them can comprehend the

action of a watch; how a machine is so contrived that the hands shall move—the one 60 times in a minute, the other 60 times in an hour—no more, no less? What marvel that a nation of wild Indians should look upon a watch as a God, and think the God is dead when the watch stops. Were our Anglo-Saxon ancestors a whit more intelligent? Witness the huge stones on which sacrificial offerings were made to some Deity who would only accept tributes of blood. “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!”

I am sitting at a window in Kensington. I can discern some objects—indistinctly. I know that many people are passing to and fro on the pavement opposite. I know it, because it is nearly mid-day and it is a general thoroughfare, and now and then I hear the sound of a heavy boot. I can barely distinguish the carriages, though I can hear the rolling of the wheels. It is a dense London fog, and hides from my sight every object I know to be there. That is all!

I am at breakfast. I do not see the feathers, beak, and claws of the bird in the egg I eat—but none the less do I know the bird is there.

Not long ago a renowned microscopist enabled me to *see* an insect so small that a thousand such could stand on a pin's head without jostling.

“In spite of Science, and its five poor tests,  
It *may* be but a part of Nature's plan  
To people other spheres with other guests,  
Ascending as descending—UP from man!”

I might largely augment illustrations to sustain the inferences I naturally draw.

The simple deduction is this:—Our senses are not sufficiently acute to perceive all the things about us. Who will assert that there exists nothing hidden from our sight, that a microscope may not be invented, so powerful, by which we shall be enabled to perceive them? Who will venture to affirm that in creation there exist no beings superior to man, and none inferior to the molecule or the animated leaf that is capable of sensation—pleasure or suffering?

The evidence of the senses may be ignored, but there will surely remain in the mind of the most profound, or the most shallow, thinker, a doubt, at least, that there are beings, in this as well as in other spheres, who are not perceptible, or in any way recognisable, by the means of acquiring knowledge—through the senses—as yet at our command.

—∴—

How rapidly do scientific discoveries and inventions pass from the marvellous to the familiar! The miracle of yesterday becomes the natural law of to-day, and may be the common fact of to-morrow. Thunder was a prodigy to our far-off ancestors. Tell an enlightened native of Siam that you can drive a laden cart over the surface of a lake: will you expect him to believe you? Tell him that the water may be converted into vapour, and that the vapour may be made to move the cart at the rate of fifty miles an hour: will you look for any comment beyond an incredulous laugh? He has never seen ice! He has no conception of the power of steam.



Thus wrote the Christian poet, James Montgomery :  
' Let Science search out every secret of the Universe :  
she has nothing to fear except error : error in the  
guise of truth, or truth adulterated with error : every  
pure truth she can discover must be a new revelation  
of God in His visible universe, and a new confirmation  
of the authenticity of that Word which reveals the  
things that are unseen and eternal."

Truths universally admitted, have been ignored by  
nine-tenths of mankind.

Think how many centuries had gone by before  
any of the later developments of science, passing  
through the alembic of Time, became of any use ;  
that electricity and steam had their long periods of  
incapable infancy, and that it is barely beyond the  
memories of living men when both were regarded as  
curious or amusing toys. How long is it since photo-  
graphy was a secret of the sun ? The date is com-  
paratively recent when the smallest of the insect tribe  
was considered to be the gnat ; science has shown us  
the atom, in perfect and vigorous life, on which the  
gnat feeds.

Who will venture to doubt that a time may not be  
far off when *this* mystery—for so it surely is—will  
be as clear and palpable, as universally accepted a  
truth, as is now the telephone or even the telegraph ?

I am old enough to recall the time when he would  
have been set down as a grossly deluded dupe who  
had foretold that a ship would be seen to proceed up  
a river at the rate of ten miles an hour, against wind

and tide. All know the anecdote of my old friend Stephenson, who gave us a reason why he did not tell the House of Peers he would convey a loaded train twenty miles within sixty minutes—That, if he had done so, “the Lords” would have rejected his project as incredible.

—:—

I am fully aware that in its present immature state, Spiritualism is, at times, not only unsatisfactory and inconclusive, but conflicting and contradictory:—

“Dark and intricate,  
Puzzled in mazes, and perplexed with error”—

I believe that as it *now* exists, it has mainly but one purpose—TO CONFUTE AND DESTROY MATERIALISM, by supplying sure and certain and *palpable* evidence that to every human being God gives a soul which he ordains shall not perish when the body dies; and that the soul, after removal from the earthly house of this tabernacle, is, in some cases, permitted to revisit earth, discharging such duties as the Almighty Father ordains and directs. That is what I shall endeavour to prove to you. If I succeed, you will believe that Spiritualism is doing the special work of God, for the welfare and happiness of man, temporal and eternal. It was our Lord Himself who said—“Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe!”

—:—

I contend, then, that if there be no apparent or probable “*use*” in Spiritualism, inquiry is still a duty: especially if it be shown that believers in Spiritualism

are very numerous, including many of the most intellectual men and women of the age: some whose temperament, education, and pursuits, are the very opposites of those that beget error or nourish enthusiasm—persons whose business in life is to deal with *facts*.

The mockers and sneerers at Spiritualism are almost exclusively those who have seen nothing of it, know nothing about it, and *will not* inquire concerning it. As rational and respectful would it be for me to reprove Professor Owen for saying that a certain mark on a stone was the mark of an antediluvian bird's claw—which to me appeared nothing more than an accidental impression—as it would be for one who has seen and known nothing of Spiritualism, to tell those who have seen and studied it much, that they are deluded and deceived—believing they see, hear, and feel, that which they neither feel, hear, nor see.

Yet I for one am bound to receive these objections in a spirit of charity: not only because charity is ever persuasive, but because for a long time I viewed the subject with extreme and suspicious reluctance: and I can repel none who consider it a delusion or a fraud; for I repeatedly refused to accept, even to hear, the testimony of those whose testimony was quite as unexceptionable as mine can be. Conviction came at length, but slowly: it was certainly not invited.

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Persons who are called mediums are necessary to obtain *strong* manifestations. I use the word strong,

because all persons are mediums more or less. These mediums derive their power from physical conditions, of the nature of which we are as yet ignorant. They are by no means always gifted with large intelligence : sometimes, indeed, their intellectual faculties are of a low order. Neither are they always remarkable for any high moral sense. Yet in their presence, and by aid of their *animal* power—their electricity it may be, and is thought to be—spirits can communicate with us, which, in the absence of such mediumship, they cannot do, the medium being to the “spirits” little more than the table is to the medium :—a means to an end. I shall show, however, that mediums are by no means always necessary.

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It is unnecessary now to defend Spiritualism on the ground I must have taken not long ago, when it was “cried down” as “a mischievous delusion,” “a shallow fraud,” “consummate and disgusting quackery,” “shameless duplicity and fraud,” “a puling prostration of intellect,” “invented by knaves for the wonder of fools,” received “only by persons on the confines of imbecility,” “blasphemous impostors, and their credulous dupes.”

These are extracts from newspapers published twenty years ago.

The *facts* are now generally admitted ; such evidence has been adduced, the witnesses are so thoroughly above suspicion, so entirely removed from all doubt, inferring either delusion or fraud, that its opponents

have taken their stand on other ground—attributing it to demoniac agency.

It has been truly said of Spiritualism by one who is not only a learned man, but a Christian clergyman—“Testimony has been so abundant and consentaneous, that either the facts must be such as they are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.”

“Evidence has accumulated on all sides—so continuous, so multiplied, in every way so overwhelming—that no doubt is any longer entertained on the subject.” That is the view of F. Perrone, an eminent Roman Catholic divine, who decries Spiritualism as devil worship. A writer who quotes him in the *Dublin Review*, a Roman Catholic journal, adds—“Here there is a question of facts and of the testimony of the senses; of facts sensible to the sight, the hearing, the touch; of facts and testimonies repeated over and over again, beyond the possibility of calculation, in the greater part of Europe and America, and recorded year after year down to the present day. *It is quite impossible that about such facts a cloud of such witnesses should be all deceived.* Abandoning that ground, therefore, we proceed to show that it is diabolical agency, solely the devil personating the souls of departed friends and others.”

—:—

I am justified, therefore, in treating this subject under the assumption, that of the reality of the phenomena—the facts on which Spiritualism is based—

there is now no doubt; that, at least, such is the conviction of all who have inquired concerning it.\* As there are many who cannot, and will not, accept this assertion, I shall endeavour to explain the grounds on which it is made. Yet it requires much moral courage to defend Spiritualism, either as a mere fact, a useful fact, or a means by which God works out His high and holy purpose. Its advocates are, even now, often hailed with scorn and obloquy—ridicule is the least of their rewards for a bold avowal of their convictions: for a resolute advocacy of truth; they are met, not unfrequently, by a degree of hostility indefensible—nay, sometimes with a shudder of abhorrence. Many who have as full faith as I have—and on the same ground—shrink from its avowal: they dread the peril in which it may place them, the suspicion of mental incapacity that may prejudice them in their social positions—at best, they are frightened by the contempt they have to endure when their opinions are expressed.

No such feelings affect or influence me; they will not affect or influence you if you are convinced that it is a gift of God to humanity.

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\* The Dialectical Society—a Society instituted to inquire “concerning all subjects with a view to the discovery and elucidation of truth,” but mainly to expose the fallacies of Spiritualism, and concerning which the majority of its members had arrived at a foregone conclusion, answering the matter before they heard it, proclaiming it to be fraud where it was not delusion, and delusion where it was not fraud—unanimously (I believe) abandoned that ground; the evidence submitted to them induced conviction that it was not fraud—that it was not delusion. A majority of its members ignore Spiritualism, although they concede the phenomena to be unquestionable—and inexplicable.

It is asked why, if this be a blessing, it has been so long withheld from universal knowledge? I believe that Spiritualism is given us now, because it is now more needed than it has been at any period of the earth's history—now, when Revolution and its close ally, Infidelity, are marching over civilisation: when dogmas, repulsive to Scripture and reason, are preached from the pulpit; and books are issued, and treated with indulgence, if not respect, that strike at the roots of all beliefs, ignoring all responsibility, dissipating all hope of Hereafter—all trust in a superintending Providence. Nay, in one of the prosperous towns of happy England, many hundred men have combined to send an avowed atheist as their representative to Parliament, and on no other grounds than that he is an “avowed atheist.” —:—

I could give you a long list of persons eminent in literature, science, and art, sound practical lawyers, methodic bankers, merchants, and stock-brokers; clergymen not only of the Established Church, but of “all denominations;” physicians, surgeons, accountants, electricians, naturalists, astronomers, chemists—in a word, men whose whole business in life is to deal with facts. I quote but one authority, that of Judge Edmonds, an eminent Judge of New York, who, being put on his defence, thus wrote:—

“It is now over fifteen years since I made a public avowal of my belief in spiritual intercourse. I was then so situated that the soundness of my intellect was a matter of public interest. I had just retired from serving my term in our Court of Appeals

—the court of last resort in this State. I was then the presiding Justice of the Supreme Court in this city, with the power of wielding an immense and destructive influence over the lives, liberty, property, and reputation of thousands of people. The soundness as well as the integrity of the administration of public justice was involved, and all had an interest in watching it. The cry of insanity and delusion was raised then as now. I remained on the Bench long enough after such avowal to enable people to judge how well founded the clamour was ; and for the fifteen years that have since elapsed I have been somewhat before the world as a lawyer in full practice, as a politician, active in the organisation of the Republican party, in a literary aspect as the author and publisher of several works, professional and otherwise, and as a public speaker, thus affording to all an abundant opportunity of detecting any mental aberration if there was any in me.”

—:—

If you inquire as to the number who hold this faith you will be told they are to be counted by millions—that in every part of the world they are continually increasing ; yet that little more than thirty years have passed since a small room held all the men and women who thus believed ; encountering howls of derision, sometimes personal assaults, losses of business, ejection from society, separation from friends and often nearer ties, persecution in all the shapes it is possible to assume in the 19th century, which assuredly would have been the gallows or the stake if they had avowed their convictions two centuries earlier.

Happily, we live in an age when persecution will not be tolerated ; it was otherwise in old times and in times more recent. “For as concerning this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against,” was applied to those who first preached Christ the Redeemer. All who brought new lights to the world have had to



endure the fiery trial of Faith. From the time when Noah built the ark, and was scorned for giving warning of a coming flood, persecution has been the heritage of Truth. Luther, Huss, Fox, and Wesley, all reformers of religion, all heralds of scientific truths, have been thus encountered.

There are few of the leading towns of England in which there is not a "circle" of Spiritualists to be found. More than three hundred volumes record their views in England, and upwards of a thousand in America. Here there are several periodical publications which represent them; and there is hardly a city in the United States that has not at least one.

The matter, therefore, cannot be passed over as insignificant. Though of rapid it is of mighty growth—either for good or evil. Let us see!

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Spiritualists, then, demand to be heard on the ground that their antecedents are such as to justify confidence—confidence in their integrity and in their capacity for arriving at correct conclusions based on the evidence of their senses, sustained by their intelligence; because they have subjected Spiritualism to such tests as the Almighty has given them by which to detect error and discover truth; because these things are not done in a corner; because alleged facts are attested by tens—nay, by hundreds—of thousands, who have witnessed them at various times, in several places, now in one company, now in another: testified to, not by "ignorant and unlearned men," but by men and women

of capacious minds, and of great experience in all the affairs of life—sound and practical thinkers; and they affirm that if their testimony on *this* subject is not to be accepted by just and intelligent judges, it must be considered worthless for any purpose by any public or private tribunal—that they are unfitted for the discharge of any of the duties of citizens, because of either cupidity, deliberate imposture, mental incapacity, or continuous self-delusion.

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Before I proceed to deal with the more important parts of my case, I will make some reference to the minor objections urged against it. Spiritualists are continually met by arguments based on the puerility of the messages they receive and the uselessness of the marvels exhibited. I by no means admit that it is so. I could tell you of wonderful cures effected by those who have “the gift of healing;” of communications out of which have arisen great temporal good: but I confine myself to my main object—that Spiritualism is a mighty helper to destroy materialism, to strengthen Bible-teaching, and lead to belief in Christ.

Yet, if these miracles were all puerile, inquiry is imperative none the less. The “raps” and “tilts” and “dancings of tables,” upon which opponents are perpetually harping, are but the lowest rucks of the Spiritual ladder. They are, perhaps, the most convincing to neophytes: they have their purpose, and that purpose is answered by stimulating curiosity, and subsequent thought and study. It may be that

their very simplicity contains suggestions of truth. Naaman objected to have his leprosy removed by so simple a process as dipping seven times in the water of Jordan: nay, "he turned and went away in a rage" at receiving counsel so undignified; but when his servant argued—"If the prophet had bid thee do some *great thing* would'st thou not have done it?" he yielded, and was made clean. The facility of the means by which manifestations are made, supply to some the most "unanswerable" argument against their possibility. Those who imagine that "table turnings" and "rappings" are the only "manifestations" of spiritual power are very greatly in error: there are manifestations, of which these give no better idea than a single brick may do of the completed building—than the alphabet can do of the printed book. Often a little additional light enables us to discover hidden beauty. Newton had seen many wonderful things in nature before the fall of an apple from a tree became to him a volume of Revelation. When Franklin was flying his kite, he seemed to lookers-on only occupied with the plaything of a child. What was the thought of James Watt, when musing over the cover of the tea-kettle displaced by steam?

The experience of life confirms the line of the poet—

"What great events from little causes spring!"

Fifty-five years ago, I saw my friend Professor Wheatstone exhibit a doll which he made dance about a drawing-room table: when he told us it was "done by

lightning" he was heard with a smile or a laugh ; yet it was the embryo of the electric telegraph. Sir John Herschel said, "The history of all science establishes this—that speculations apparently the most unprofitable have almost invariably been those from which the greatest practical applications have emanated."

The same spirit of unreasoning objection would condemn the Saviour for His "policy" in selecting His apostles from the lower classes of the Jews—"unlearned and ignorant men"—instead of the Gamaliels of the chosen people. They were not "dignified" miracles that changed a rod into a serpent, made iron float, and wetted a fleece with dew while a hot sun was shining.

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Another objection is that mediumship is limited to a few, and these not of the better order of mankind. "Have *all* the gifts of healing? Do *all* speak with tongues? Do *all* interpret?" Why mediums are necessary for these manifestations who can say? I repeat my belief that their power arises mainly, if not solely, from some physical peculiarities not accorded to many: that mediums are to the spirits who "use" them little more than the tables at which they sit. The greater number of these "mediums" are not remarkable for either moral, social, or intellectual advantages—some, indeed, are, in all ways, of a low type. I could, however, adduce exceptions: men and women, as honest and intelligent and upright as any of those who constitute themselves their judges.

But mediums are by no means needed in all cases. There is ample evidence that mediumship is frequently encountered where it is least expected: in private families where none of the marvels of Spiritualism have been seen; sometimes among those who are so alarmed as to shrink with terror from its display; and occasionally among such as have never heard the word "Spiritualism." Those who imagine there are only *professed* mediums are greatly in error. All persons are mediums, more or less; with different gifts.

—:—

Neither have we any means of knowing why "manifestations" are at one time varied and abundant, and at another time there are none—although apparently the conditions are exactly similar, the same persons being together, aided by the same medium. Some "men of science have agreed to "inquire," provided they might previously arrange a "programme"—that is to say, lay down certain "rules" that would, of a surety, prevent the possibility of manifestations. Sir Charles Wheatstone told me he could make a piano play a tune when no hand was near it; but he declined to permit me to examine its vicinage, and cut away any wire that was near the instrument. One of the most eminent of the men of science can show wonderful effects in a room that must be perfectly dry and free from damp: what would he say if I demanded his sanction to bring a boiling kettle into the chamber?

Sceptical "Philosophers" have been repeatedly tendered the power of suspicious scrutiny—the means of

examination by *any* test, before and after. Some have consented and been convinced; others "hold out," and refuse to inquire unless permitted to dictate their own terms. Others, and these form by far the greater number, concede the phenomena, and attribute them to some occult power as yet unknown, but which in no degree interrupts their notions as to a Creator and an Hereafter. As one of them is reported to have said, "Spirits are the last things that I will give in to."

You could direct my attention to many such incidents and results recorded in Scripture. When the apostles asked our Lord why they could not work a certain miracle, they were answered, "because of your unbelief:" when our Lord came into his own country "he could do there no mighty works." The Pool of Bethesda was effectual only for him who was first dipped in after an angel had troubled the waters. Many widows were in Israel, in the days of Elias, when great famine was throughout all the land: but unto none of them was Elias sent, save "to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow."

"Ask of ten thousand things the reason 'why' ?  
And take the only answer—IT IS SO!"

—:—

To me, it is certain that belief in Spiritualism is not only consistent with reason, and sustained by experience, but is sanctioned by Revelation,—upheld by the Book of God: that it is "a glorious truth and a Heaven-born reality."

Belief in supernatural influences seems inseparable from humanity : a part of our universal nature. It has been received and cherished among all nations, in all ages : not only is it rife among refined and cultivated peoples, it is found alike in "farthest Ind," and in the *ultima thule* of civilisation.\* The Old Testament is full of evidence. While, in the New Testament I find frequent references to spirits,—to spiritual power and spiritual influence,—I find nothing that infers peril to mind or soul arising from such belief. "Come out from among them and be ye separate," is one of many cautions against intercourse with dangerous associates in this life : surely it applies with equal force to subtle adversaries unseen. We are warned against "seducing spirits, teaching doctrines of devils," and bidden to "try the spirits, whether they are of God ;" but while there is much to warrant, nay, to encourage, the belief, there is nothing to prevent such belief from being accepted as another proof of the Will of that God who ever

"Moves in a mysterious way."

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\* One of the most eloquent writers of our age, Lord Lytton, affirms that while "the grandest thinkers have sanctioned the hope of the humblest Christian—the man who has no faith in religion, is often the man who has faith in a nightmare," and he quotes the instances of Julius Cæsar, and that type of the elegant sceptic, Lord Herbert of Cherbury : Julius Cæsar, who publicly denounced a belief in hereafter, and rejected the idea of a soul and a Deity, yet muttered a charm when he entered a chariot, and did not cross the Rubicon until he had consulted the omens : Lord Herbert, "writing a book against revelation, asking a sign from heaven to tell him if his book is approved by his Maker ; the man who cannot believe in the miracles performed by his Saviour, gravely tells us of a miracle vouchsafed to himself !"

I know that "concerning spiritual gifts," the apostle Paul "would not have you ignorant;" and that the prayer of one of the most beautiful of the collects of our Church is, that God will "mercifully grant, that as Thy holy angels always do Thee service in heaven, so, by Thy appointment, they may succour and defend us on earth."

—:—

Need I remind you, Rev. Sir, that not only the apostles and their immediate successors, but good men in all ages—and, probably, of all countries—have believed in the direct intercourse and superintendence of angels and spirits—of their "jurisdiction," so to speak, in the affairs of earth, and of the influence they exercise over our thoughts, words, and acts. The annals of the Roman Catholic Church are full of them; yet, strange to say, Roman Catholics are almost universally opposed to Spiritualism; they will acknowledge no miracles but such as are sanctioned by "the Church;" yet who will pronounce all their records to be fictions—"cunningly devised fables"?

That remembrance and consciousness of deeds done in the flesh is with the soul after it has quitted the body, is not only sustained by Scripture and consistent with reason, but without it, indeed, the Hereafter would be a blank, and the soul assume a condition equivalent to extinction.

"For MEMORY thinks and feels—in mind and heart—  
 In 'mansions' where translated spirits dwell:  
 If to REMEMBER be of Heaven a part,  
 So, to REMEMBER is a part of Hell!"



The highest authorities in the Church of England, and the oracles of the Dissenters from that Church, contend that *such* "miracles" have *not* ceased, but that they continue to be wrought, not only by good angels, but by evil spirits. Thus wrote Bishop Hall—"So sure as we see men, so sure we are that holy men have seen angels." And thus Archbishop Tillotson—"The angels are no more dead or idle than they were in Jacob's time or in our Saviour's, and both good and bad spirits are each in their way busy about *us*." Bishop Beveridge contends that "though we cannot *see* spirits with our bodily eyes, we may do so when they assume, as *they sometimes do*, a bodily shape."

I quote these passages from "Bishop Pearson on the Creed":—"If I have communion with a saint of God, as such, while he liveth here, I must still have communion with him when he is departed hence, because the foundation of that communion cannot be removed by death." "First, therefore, this must be laid down as a certain and necessary truth, that the soul of man when he dieth, dieth not, but returneth unto Him that gave it, to be disposed of at His will and pleasure—according to the ground of our Saviour's counsel, 'Fear not them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul.' That better part of us, therefore, in and after death, doth exist and live, either by virtue of its spiritual and immortal nature, as we believe, or, at least, by the will of God, and His power upholding and preserving it from dissolution, as many of the fathers thought. This soul, thus existing after death, and separated

from the body, though of a nature spiritual, is really and truly *in some place*. . . . Again, the soul of man in that separate existence after death must not be conceived to sleep, or be bereft and stripped of all its vital powers, but still to exercise the powers of understanding, and willing to be subject to the affections of joy and sorrow."

"And who will dare to say that God has said  
Repentance shall not pass beyond the grave?  
That He who 'preached' to 'spirits' called 'the dead'—  
The Lord Himself—is impotent to save!"

I give these quotations only, but I might add many other "authorities" equally entitled to the confidence of Christians—all, indeed, who believe that the Soul has continued existence after what is called "Death."\*

So recently as January, 14th, 1884, a statement in the *Times*, entitled "Funeral and Mourning Reform," contains this passage:—"The Church of England Funeral Reform Society aims at giving prominence to the Christian idea of death as a transition from one state of existence to a higher." I rejoice to make

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\* "Spiritualism teaches, on the authority of Scripture, and of all spirit life, that *there is no such thing as Death*; it is but a name given to the issue of the Soul from the body."—WILLIAM HOWITT.

"There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."—ST. PAUL.

"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the Soul." LONGFELLOW.

"Hast thou been told that from the viewless bourne,  
The dark way never hath allowed return?  
That all which tears can move, with life is fled,  
That earthly love is powerless on the dead?  
Believe it not!" MRS. HEMANS.

record of this important fact, for it advocates a change of which I have long been the earnest advocate, not only in my "Retrospect of a Long Life," but in other publications, that the general (though lately much lessened) custom of reckless expenditure for incoherent and unseemly exhibitions at funerals ought to be largely diminished or entirely abrogated.

Among the Dissenters there are many authorities equally convincing and conclusive. Baxter, in reference to apparitions, says—"I have received undoubted testimony of the truth of such." Who can doubt that John Bunyan was a thorough Spiritualist? Isaac Watts reasons that "the appearance of apparitions is a strong proof of an intermediate state, whence they can return for special Divine purposes." "I know," says good Mrs. Fletcher of Madeley, "our friends are not really divided from us; they are only invisible, and are hidden from our sight lest we should put too much trust in them." The story of John Wesley's father is well known; in the supernatural noises, of which he gives a detailed history, John Wesley fully believed; he could not resist belief, on such testimony. His sermons on "Good Angels" and "Evil Angels" contain nearly all on which the modern Spiritualist insists. The former is preached from the text—"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—the latter from the text—"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual

wickedness in high places." The venerable founder of Methodism contends not only that good and evil spirits worked in the apostolic times, but that they are as busy now as they were then,—to lead and to mislead, to enlist soldiers under the banner of Christ, and to augment the armies of Satan! And he establishes that doctrine by reasoning unanswerable, arguing that "whenever evil spirits assail us in soul or in body, the good are at least equally strong, equally wise, and equally vigilant,"—that "God has in all ages used the ministry not alone of men, but of angels," defeating the rage, the malice, the subtlety, of evil spirits,—and although he does not in that sermon affirm his belief that they appear in visible shape—which he does elsewhere—he contends that evidence of their actual presence is none the less palpable,—concluding his most beautiful and eloquent discourse thus—of Good Angels:—

"They may assist us in our search after truth, remove many doubts and difficulties, throw light on what was before dark and obscure, and confirm us in the truth that is after godliness. They may warn us of evil in disguise, and place what is good in a clear strong light. They may gently move our will to embrace what is good, and fly from that which is evil. They may many times quicken our dull affections, increase our holy hope or filial fear, assist us more ardently to love Him who has first loved us. Yea, they may be sent of God to answer that whole prayer put into our mouths by pious Bishop Ken:—

'O may thy angels, while I sleep,  
Around my bed their vigils keep;  
Their love angelical instil,  
Stop every avenue of ill!  
May they celestial joys rehearse,  
And thought to thought with me converse!'"

Dr. Isaac Watts considered that the soul after its removal from earth "reflects upon its own temper and actions in this life; it is conscious of its virtues and its vices,"—"and," adds Dr. Southey (*vide* "The Doctor"), "it has an endless spring of peace and joy within, or is tormented with the anguish of self-condemnation."

(In 1800 Southey wrote—"I have five children, three of them at home; and two under their mother's care in Heaven.")

The Rev. John Keble wrote:—

"For, in truth,  
Man's spirit knows not death, but sets aside  
The interlinear boundaries of the flesh,  
And in its thoughts, which are its proper self,  
Holds intercourse with those which are unseen,  
As if they were still with us."

Dr. Johnson thus wrote:—"That the dead are seen no more, I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations." Addison spoke of such belief as "confirmed by the general testimony of mankind." Isaac Watts, in allusion to the text, "If a spirit or an angel had spoken to this man," etc., affirms that a "spirit here is plainly distinct from an angel;" and asks, "What can it mean but an apparition of a human soul that has left the body?"

("But may ye not, unseen, around us hover,  
With gentle prompting and sweet influence yet?")

And thus wrote Adam Clarke, in his "Commentaries"—"I believe there is a supernatural and spiritual

world, in which human spirits, both good and bad, live in a state of consciousness. I believe that any of these spirits may, according to the order of God, in the laws of their place of residence, have intercourse with this world, and become visible to mortals."

"This is certain: angels descend from the choirs of the blessed, and minister to the comfort of the suffering; those angels return from their ministry to the choirs of the happy; and can we suppose they will be silent on what they have seen, and to whom they have ministered below?"

I quote the passage from one of the eloquent discourses of the Rev. Dr. Cumming; he was not only no Spiritualist, but a strong—and somewhat irrational—opponent of Spiritualism. Yet, in the following passage from another of his discourses, he preaches and teaches almost all for which Spiritualists contend:—

"Those who are gone before us recollect this world and those they have left behind them. It seems to me an irrefragable conclusion that those who have gone before us must recollect those they have left behind. The life that now is shapes the life that is to be; the impressions we receive in time we never can forget in the realms of eternity. Separate our growth here from our recollections there and you *separate the individual from himself*. Were the past blotted out, for instance, from the memory of some one admitted into Heaven, he could not believe himself to be the same person. As long as I am placed anywhere, so long the *I* must recollect what it was, what it has gone through, what influences it has felt, what motives have inspired it, and what *progress* it has made. Separate in my memory my past from my present, and you will annihilate me,—you create a totally distinct and different being. We cannot conceive memory to be expunged in Heaven, because we cannot conceive the individual to be annihilated there."

"Socrates (I am quoting from John Wesley's "Good Angels") thus writes:—'This (spirit) gives me notice,

every morning, of any evil that will befall me that day."

—:—

If we admit a God—All-mighty—we must admit the *possibility* of miracles,—that He *can* change the conditions which seem to govern, and do generally govern, natural laws; for we only mean by the "super-natural," occurrences that cannot be accounted for by the operation of such natural laws. But we have to contend against those who admit nothing of the kind, —nothing they cannot test by their reason and their senses; "they limit the Omnipotent to acts that Science calls "the possible;" they affirm that what they have not seen God do, He cannot do; and that He does not depart from the laws of what they term "Nature." They are far from conceding that *there are no laws before God but His will*. Yet what does Science know of any laws? The laws they accept as guides now were not the laws that guided them yesterday; and some of them may be utterly abrogated to-morrow.

"Science but cracks the shell to find the kernel,  
And only wants the seed to plant the seed,  
And though it can't admit a God eternal,  
Eternal matter is a simple creed."

Their perpetual and invariable reasoning is, in accordance with the line of the poet—

"What can we argue but from what we know?"

They contend that all nature is comprehended in the visible,—that the same things *must* happen under the same circumstances; "they doubt everything in the

Maker's plan of Creation that cannot be mathematically proved, contending that *our* experience is *all* experience, and will not permit God to depart from the ordinary rules by which He governs Earth;—substituting for a benignant Deity a relentless Fate."

"Can Science gauge the influence that draws  
The needle to the magnet? Can it see  
The perfume of the rose? or measure laws  
By which the flower gives honey to the bee?"

—:—

But what sort of philosophy is that which makes no effort to discover truth, if the attempt infers a departure from old ways and generally conceded facts? It is the philosophy, not of Galileo but of the monks who would have burned him. It is not the philosophy of Jenner, but of the College of Physicians who laboured to prove him an impostor. It is not the philosophy of the unhappy man who first promulgated the notion that steam was a power, but of those who placed him in the Lunatic Asylum of the Bicetre. It is not the philosophy of our Lord, but of the Jews who crucified Him! It is the philosophy of Lot's wife—to look only behind!

"I believe," says the latest among these philosophers, "that water will wet, that iron will sink in it, that fire will burn;" and it would be utterly impossible to convince this philosopher, by any reasoning, that there exists a Being who ever did, or could, prevent fire from burning to death men enveloped in it, cause water to divide and let men pass through it



with dry garments, or prevent iron from sinking beneath the surface of a lake.

The miracles of Spiritualism may yet do for Prof. Tyndall what the written Word and the Teachings of Holy Men have failed to do. He may credit the miracles of yesterday by witnessing those of to-day. It has been so with many of his predecessors in Science.

I need not allude to the theory called "Darwinian," which traces man to his origin in the monkey, and the monkey to his source in mud;\* but I may refer to one of the authors of "Essays and Reviews"—the Rev. Baden Powell. This is his view of miracles—"All facts may be brought under the dominion of some physical law, and thereby become credible;" and he necessarily treats as mere inventions all the recorded miracles of Christ—those that preceded and those that succeeded His mission, as well as those that are affirmed by Spiritualists in modern times. Yet the Rev. Baden Powell was an ordained clergyman of the Church of England. For my own part, I believe there are many ordained or appointed ministers of religion who ascend the pulpit weekly—and do not believe in the Gospel they teach. They ignore Scripture—Divine revelation; they reject testimony; they put aside evidence; they confute experience: in short they deny all they insist upon, when defending any principle, or sustaining any affirmation of Science.

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\* "The whale and shark were oysters once, no doubt,  
And elephants were magnified from—mice :  
Eagles were beetles ere their plumes came out,  
And trees were fungi—when the sun was ice."

This is the reasoning of Ernest Renan, in his book "The Apostles," in reference to miracles :—"The first twelve chapters of the Acts are a tissue of miracles ; such facts have never been proved ; all the pretended miracles, near enough to be examined, are referable to illusion or imposture ; discussion and examination are fatal to miracles." He admits, indeed, that "a miracle before experienced *savans* at Paris would put an end to all doubt ;" but affirms that, "alas ! such a thing never happens." I have hope that Ernest Renan will see the miracles I have seen in the presence of experienced *savans* as sound as any that Paris can supply. If he does, of a surety he will repent him of the book he has written, and admit that miracles may have occurred 1850 years ago.

Yes : to those who will accept Truth only on the evidence of their senses—who altogether ignore faith unsustained by tangible proof—is this new light of Spiritualism sent.

" Science may sneer at Faith, and Reason frown ;  
 May *prove* there are *no* souls—to live or die !  
 May scorn and scout the Creed they argue down,  
 And give the Great Omnipotent the lie ! "

Miracles were the credentials of the Jewish prophets ; and they were adopted by our Saviour and His apostles to prove the authenticity of His mission. "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works." "They were wrought," said our Lord on another occasion, "*to the intent ye may believe.*" That

His miracles did what they were designed to do, we have the clearest and most conclusive evidence; not only after the raising of Lazarus, but on many other occasions, thousands,—who having *seen* the works, and exclaimed—“Surely never man did what He doeth,”—believed in Him, *in consequence* of what they saw, who would not have believed if oral testimony had been all their proof. It is clearly stated, indeed, that, *when one did rise from the dead, many believed in Christ as a direct result of that miracle.* There are other cases—notably that of Tabitha—in which the same effect followed the same cause.

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Yet there are many who contend that miracles have ceased: who, while they admit that miracles *were* wrought to induce conviction of Christ's mission, and as means of conversion to Truth, deny that they are in operation now, when there are on earth hundreds of millions more than there were in the apostolic times, and though they know that Materialism is widely spread and extending throughout the world. But I respectfully say I do not consider them sustained by the teachings of our Church—of any Church. I do not see that the Fathers, at any period, have impressed such belief. Certainly, the Roman Catholics believe, universally, that miracles have *not* ceased.

If they have ceased—when and why? If they occurred, as you know they did, “to the intent ye may believe,” are they ineffectual now that were effectual eighteen hundred and fifty years ago? They remained

in operation at the latest period of Scripture record. Was such power withheld from the disciples of the disciples? Was the mandate, "Go ye unto all nations," and the means to induce belief by miracles, given *only* to the few,—the twelve or the seventy?

"Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe" may be addressed to congregations to-day with as much necessary force as they were when our Lord spoke the words, "Believe me for the very works' sake." "We know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do the miracles that thou doest except God be with him"—the passage is as applicable to-day as it was ages ago. The words of our Lord—"He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works than these shall ye do," were limited to no period and to no place. Such works were done at Ephesus fifty years after His ascension, and by men who had not only never acknowledged the Lord while on earth, but were of those who persecuted his disciples: such at least had been St. Paul.

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What is there irrational in this faith—the faith that the departed from earth can and do communicate with those who remain on earth? Scripture so abounds with evidence in proof, that he cannot be a Christian who doubts it. That angels have appeared in the outer guise of men is clear: Jacob wrestled with an angel: Lot gave entertainment to angels. Our Lord was mistaken for the gardener by the holy women at

the Tomb. He walked and talked with His disciples at Emmaus, and presented Himself to His Apostles when "the doors were shut."

Was it an evil spirit that Cornelius heard and saw that bade him seek St. Peter at Joppa? Was it an evil spirit that said to Peter, "Go: nothing doubting: I am with thee"? Was it an angel or an evil spirit who, when Peter was in prison, asleep, said to him—"Cast thy garment about thee and follow me," led him through an iron-gate, that "opened to them of its own accord," and having set him free "departed from him"? Was the power evil that met St. Paul on the way to Damascus when "they that were with me saw indeed the light, but heard not the voice of him that spake to me"? We are warned—often—not only of false prophets but of false Christs, who "shall show great signs and wonders." But of what use would the warning be, if the true prophets and true Christ withheld the power to distinguish one from the other. The seed of the parable fell upon good ground as well as upon barren rocks and among thorns.

Is it difficult to believe in an innumerable company of angels: that

"Millions of spiritual beings walk the earth  
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep"?

—:—

I address myself only to those—be their creed what it may—who believe in an **HEREAFTER**—in an immortality distinct from present life—in a spiritual as well as a natural body—and of them I ask what is there

irrational in this faith? On what ground do they question it? The soul when it has left the body is *somewhere*. As a good man has said, "Heaven cannot be a state of glorified indolence." God sanctions no idleness in any of His works.

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There are not only those who affirm that "the age of miracles is past"—that the days of supernatural enlightenment are over;" but some who describe miracles as periodical impulses of God: believing that they happen now and then: forgetting the emphatic declaration of our Lord, "I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS!" and, "I am the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever!"

Rev. Sir, our combat as Spiritualists has principally been with those who have faith in *no hereafter*. It has happened to me more than once in my life, to be told, "I would give all I have in the world to believe fully and entirely, and without a shadow of doubt, in a future state." In the Christian, as in the Jewish, Church, there are Sadducees who do not believe in a Resurrection—"for the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, *neither angel nor spirit*." They were not only rulers but learned men, of whom St. Paul asked, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Of the refined Corinthians he inquired, "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" On one memorable occasion he said, "Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question." Rev. Sir,

may there not be in your own congregation some who do not believe in *any* future beyond this life? Nay, may not the pulpit be occasionally occupied by preachers who have no faith in an Hereafter?

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Yes: there are many who, rejecting miracles of the present, hold fast to faith in miracles of the past. They irrationally strive, indeed, to uphold the miracles of Scripture by denying the possibility of any not recorded in Holy Writ!

They refuse to believe that Mr. Home and others have been raised without hands or any visible power and floated about a room; but they say they believe that Philip was "taken up" and conveyed from Gaza to Azotus; and they credit Daniel when he says, "He put forth the form of a hand and took me by the back of my head, and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven." They will not believe that a simple uneducated peasant girl has written Greek sentences, and a man from the plough delivered a Latin oration; but they say they believe that on the day of Pentecost, apostles and disciples "spoke with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance." They will not credit the healing powers of certain men—to-day living; but they say they believe that at the gate of the Temple called Beautiful a man was made to walk who had been impotent from his mother's womb. They will not believe that a heavy table has been raised from the floor to the ceiling without touch of human hand; but they say they believe that the

stone was rolled back from the door of the sepulchre. They will not believe that voice-music has been heard continuously when no living lips were moved; but they say they believe that shepherds heard voices praising God in the highest. They will not believe in modern trance-mediumship; but they say they believe Ezekiel when he wrote, "And the spirit entered into me, when he spake unto me, and set me on my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me." They will not believe in the cold breezes and violent shakings of rooms that usually precede communications when Spiritualists are "with one accord in one place;" but they say they believe in "the rushing mighty wind" that shook the house in which the apostles were assembled. They will not believe in the audible voices heard by Spiritualists, though they say they believe in the voice heard by St. Paul on the way to Damascus, which the attendants, at his side, "heard not;" and in the voice that hailed our Lord, heard by some although "others said it thundered." They will not believe in "direct spirit-writing," although they say they believe that Jehoram received a written communication from Elijah four years after he had been taken from earth. They will not believe that writings and drawings are now produced without thought, design, or will; but they say they believe that David thus received instructions how to build the temple—"All this the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." They will not believe that, in our day, seen or unseen hands have



been known to write what was afterwards read ; but they say they believe in the handwriting on the wall at the feast of King Belshazzar, and that Ezekiel spoke truly when he said, " When I looked, behold an hand was sent unto me ; and lo ! a roll of a book was therein." They will not believe that a coal of fire has been placed on the head of a white-haired man without singeing a hair ; but they say they believe that three men were thrown into a fiery furnace, from which they issued unscathed. In short, that angels and spirits do *now* communicate with men and women, earth-living, they will not believe, although they say they believe that angels announced to shepherds good tidings of great joy ; that a multitude of the heavenly host heralded them to the manger at Bethlehem ; that Moses and Elias talked with our Lord on the Mount ; that it was a spirit who reproved John when seeking to worship him, " See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." You can multiply such cases ; and I can show that the miracles recorded in Holy Writ are almost identical with those of recent experience. Why they are now more palpable than they have been during centuries past we can no more tell than we can why God in His wisdom has delayed for development in our day many things of which He kept us in ignorance in times past. But I by no means concede that Spiritualism is the birth and growth of recent years ; any more than I do that all the good deeds for which Saints have been canonised, are inventions.

And now, Rev. Sir, I approach another branch of my subject, and address myself to those who, fully believing in the outer manifestations of Spiritualism, attribute them to Satanic influence: resisting it upon that unnatural and unchristian ground: contending that while God *does* allow evil spirits to be with us, communicating with us, influencing us, teaching us, He absolutely forbids just and good spirits from counterbalancing the effects that evil spirits are continually striving to produce. Surely, so to assert, is to arraign not only the mercy, but the justice, of God!

Those who "wrestle not against flesh and blood," but against "spiritual darkness," may contemplate the struggle with dread, for it cannot be without danger. Ordinary means of opposing enemies are not at their command: they do not see the foe they have to encounter: they are without the power of estimating peril, such as reason, the senses, and it may be instinct, supplies to guard against dangers they can foresee or apprehend. Against "flesh and blood" they may wrestle fearlessly; but against "spiritual darkness" they can prevail only by help from God, and His protecting and ministering angels.

Who will dare to say that God will refuse to send them in answer to fervent and faithful prayer? Surely, it is precisely to such the impressive words are addressed,—"*Fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God.*" Who can doubt *their* being also perpetually present with us: reminding us of the penalties of sin and the rewards of righteous-

ness, of the wisdom of virtue and the terrible malady of remorse: impressing the awful truth that while the influence of evil spirits engenders misery on earth, it prepares a future—from which even hope may be excluded and repentance “quite shut out”?

To believe that God *does* permit the evil to act and forbids the good to aid, is to induce not only despondency but despair. Who could tolerate life if he believed himself given over exclusively to the influence of evil: evil which good had no power to counteract or counterbalance: nay, that by the decree of the Omnipotent, good was absolutely withheld from any interference with the operations of evil?

These are truisms, you will say: they are so; but they are needed none the less as answers to those who, while they admit the existence of Spiritualism, contend that it is only and exclusively demoniac. “He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in *all* thy ways!” Especially will that charge be imperative when evil is present with us. “If we could see,” exclaimed Luther, “for how many angels one devil makes work, we should despair!” But despair we should not, if we could see also the good angels by whom the devil and his helpers are controlled, fettered, and foiled.

Yes: well we know that *evil spirits* are perpetually about us: Spiritualism brings only closer and more conclusive evidence that they are ever ready and eager to instil poison into heart and mind, to induce corrupt thoughts, to excite impure desires, to suggest wrongful

acts, to palliate sin, and supply excuses for iniquity. Is peril that is seen more perilous than that which is unseen? Is the whole armour of God more, or less, efficacious for defence when we *know* it is needed and are warned to be ready for the inevitable encounter?

"Shall we admit," wrote Dr. Cumming, "that fallen angels may reach the heart, irrespective of the volition of its possessor, and that good angels may not do so?" and he adds, "Now I cannot believe that an evil spirit would speak the truth or attest the inspiration of the Bible: for if a kingdom be divided against itself how can it stand?"

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Spiritualists believe in PROGRESS, after the soul has left this life. The subject is too large a one to enter upon here. The "many mansions" are prepared for many souls: and inasmuch as while on earth there is no standing still, and those who do not advance must retrograde, so it is in the "places" prepared for us. Southey, writing to one of his friends, alludes to a state "where there shall be no separation and no mutability except that which results from '*continual progression*.'"

That is a point on which you can better instruct me than I can enlighten you.

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I am prepared for the argument that the removed soul must suffer agony by the wrong doing of those who do wrong on earth. My belief is that, often, they do not see them: that they are, by Divine mercy, generally hidden from their sight. We know it is so here.

The wife seldom sees the faults others see in her husband: the deformed child, on whom few look without commiserating grief, is usually the best beloved of the mother. I knew one with whom I have often walked through an English lane. There were foul messes of rejected matter in corners. She *never* saw them: but she *did* see the graceful intertwining branches of the wild rose and honeysuckle. Smaller things indicate the greater.

—:—

Life hath no Finis! life begins on earth,  
 And builds foundations of a future, here:  
 No final death of life can follow birth:  
 Life is PROGRESSION—on, from sphere to sphere.

The same: yet none the same: the body dies:  
 The some-time habitation is but dust:  
 Souls, with continuous memories, will rise,  
 To know the God of mercy is The Just!

If death brings night, the night brings perfect day:  
 Death is the usher to the Inner Court:  
 A beacon—lit to show the happier way:  
 A pilot—who but steers the ship to port.

—:—

My belief is that beatified spirits in the next—a preparatory—sphere know little more than they know when in this: that they *progress* there is no doubt: they did so while on earth; saints to-day were fiends yesterday: the grossly dissipated John Bunyan became the author of the "Pilgrim's Progress"; and Saul of Tarsus who went to Damascus to persecute Christians was the Saint Paul who wrote epistles to the Hebrews.

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Now, Rev. Sir, notwithstanding what I have written

it is possible you may still ask, "What is the *use* of Spiritualism?" I do not think you will ask it—of me, at all events—when you have read a little farther. I could give you the names of many who have been by this means converted to belief from unbelief—of some to perfect faith from total infidelity; I can, indeed, supply abundant proof that Spiritualism is doing God's work, and *may be an all-powerful assistant to his ministers*. I may, without hesitation, name Dr. Eliotson (a name well known throughout Europe) who, in a letter to an esteemed and venerated clergyman of the Church of England (an earnest advocate of Spiritualism), thus wrote :—"You ask me if I am a believer in Christianity? I believe all that you, as a Christian minister, believe—and perhaps more." The opinions of Dr. Eliotson, as they are recorded in his writings, do not demand comment;\* they approached atheism. He expressed his deep gratitude to Almighty God for the blessed change that had been wrought in his heart and mind—by Spiritualism. As noteworthy a case is that of Professor Hare—a very celebrated chemist and physicist of Philadelphia—an avowed unbeliever, who, according to his own statement to Judge Edmonds, had been "all his life long an enemy to the Christian religion, a

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\* Dr. Eliotson left earth after this was written : he had read it, and authorised me to print it, in a letter now before me. I am acquainted with a clergyman who, sitting with him, saw him take the Bible in his hand and say, "This is now my comfort, and hence is my hope." The same clergyman, who knew him at two periods of his life, described to me the expression of his countenance as more angelic than human at its later period.

denier of the possibility of revelation, and a disbeliever in God and in our immortality." He had, indeed, published extracts from the Bible with a view to negative its testimony. Not long before his removal from earth, he said to the Judge,—to the intense happiness of that most excellent man—"I believe in revelation, and in a revelation through Jesus of Nazareth. I am a Christian." He had been taught by a Christian sister, years previously removed from earth. Spiritualism—and Spiritualism only—had done *that* work.

I may be permitted reference to another remarkable man, although I have no right to infer that he was at any time "a sceptic," in the ordinary sense of the term ; but he was not a believer in miracles until he had seen miracles. I allude to Robert Chambers, one of the most estimable, as well as the most enlightened, men I have ever known. He was a thorough Spiritualist, although he lacked the courage to avow his opinions publicly. In a letter from him to me, dated September 1, 1866, he writes, "What a rich thing Spiritualism is, if men of the world could only be induced to take a candid view of it." And he once said to me, "If I did not believe that the spirits of those who have gone from earth can and do communicate with those who remain on earth I could believe nothing." He also told me that after he became convinced by Spiritualism, he destroyed a MS. for which he had been many years collecting materials—a History of Superstition. I do not know if he were or were not the author of "Vestiges of Creation : " but if he did write that book,

I am very sure he would not have published it after he became a Spiritualist.\*

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I do not wish strongly to describe my own state of mind—all my life—until I became *convinced* by Spiritualism—convinced, that is to say, that the dead die not: that there is an eternity of which, what we call life is the beginning and the preparation: that earth is but the first of “many mansions,” to which man is in progress: that, in a word, God creates in each of us a spirit (which we call “soul,”) that He ordains shall never perish.

[Honoured and revered be the memory of the good woman (her life in this sphere was continual preparation for life in another) who, *after she left earth*, was mercifully permitted to continue her influence, to give me counsel, to bring me “messages,” to humble my heart, and lead me to a knowledge of my Saviour—a work she had laboured, while in the flesh, to accomplish, in vain. We had evidence of her presence with us, after her “removal,” as clear, certain, and conclusive, as we had when she was sitting “in the body,” by our side. It was scarcely less palpable than it was when she was *only* an inhabitant of earth.]

*You* will not, Rev. Sir, ask *me* if Spiritualism has been to me of any *use*? I humbly and fervently thank God it has removed all my doubts! I can, and do

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\* It is now admitted that he did write that odious book. Its reprint with his name is not creditable to his successors in honours and position.



believe all the Bible teaches me : in the efficacy and indescribable happiness of Prayer : in the power of Faith : in the perpetual superintendence of Providence : in the mediation of the Redeemer—in a word, I am a CHRISTIAN.

It is no doubt right that you and other clergymen should tell us we have the Bible, and that the Book is all-sufficient for salvation : although they thus, in some measure, ignore the fact that ministers are appointed to be its interpreters. "Understandest thou what thou readest ?" was the question put by Philip. "How can I except some man should guide me ?" was the answer of the Eunuch. I deny, however much I may deplore, that they—not the one, but both in combination—suffice *always* to induce conviction of the mysterious truths of Christianity. They certainly did not suffice in my case ; for I did not, and could not, believe in miracles, although, from my youth upwards, I had been taught to study the Scriptures, and had been "guided" by Christian men of the Established Church. It is needless to say, that while I did not believe in miracles I was not a Christian.

Rev. Sir, is it not something like seeking a quarrel with God to question His judgment if He has seen fit to give the guidance of another light in addition to the lights He had given, when they did not suffice ? and who will dare to complain if he send it to some and not to all ? Jonah was angry with God for saving the Ninevites, whose destruction the prophet had foretold as nigh at hand. Some persons decry Spirit-

ualism on just such grounds, and imply blame to the Almighty for sending a new light to those who had found the lights of Scripture Teaching insufficient, but who, guided by that new light, have found them sufficient. There are some who question *my* right to walk in *this* way, although it has led to Christ—because it is not *their* way. “Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed!” yet surely they are blessed also who believe because they have seen.

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I am far from asserting that Spiritualism has been to all Spiritualists what it has been to me. On the contrary, I believe that to many it is a teacher of Evil: utterly un-Christian: but I am sure that none have been led *from* Christianity, though thousands have been brought *to* it, by Spiritualism. On earth, like seeks like: so it is with those who, having passed from earth, seek intercourse with those who remain of earth. But *all* who believe in Spiritualism are nearer to Christianity than they have been—are in a state or preparation for receiving it, because at least ready to hear, and not eager to reject, the truths of the Gospel.

*All* who *saw* the miracles that Jesus did were not believers in him: some mocked him: others called them delusions and frauds: others exclaimed, “He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils;” others cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!”

Think you that a man will be less inclined to faith in the “diversities of gifts,” of which holy Paul speaks, after he has himself witnessed them? Will he be

doubtful that some apostles had the power to work miracles after he has seen miracles? Will he be more than ever disposed to deny the gift of "discerning of spirits" after spirits have appeared to his visual organs? "To them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up!"

We can but take the advice and caution when we accept the testimony of St. John:—"Try the spirits whether they be of God!" try them by earnest and fervent prayer: try them by the words they utter: try them by the counsel they give: a house divided against itself falleth: and Satan will not cast out Satan.

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Rev. Sir,—Faith based on Scripture is to you easy: you have probably never had any doubts. But do you wonder that it has not been so easy to others? Remember the case of one of the associate-apostles of Christ—St. Thomas. There were ten witnesses, all agreeing in evidence: yet Thomas did not believe their words that they had "seen the Lord!" He directly accused the ten of fraud and imposture: for it is not easy to understand how he could have supposed them all deluded, that they did not see what they affirmed they had seen. Yet Thomas had witnessed the miracles that Jesus did, had read the prophecies, and knew that the body of his Lord had disappeared from the tomb in which He had been laid: no doubt they brought reasoning and argument to convince him: yet they failed: he insisted on evidence

of a *certain kind*, dictating to the Almighty one specific proof by which alone he would be satisfied—"Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." And it pleased God to give him that specific proof : he was convinced, and exclaimed in a burst of repentant agony—"My Lord and my God!"

Yet such conclusive means of proof were rarely given by our Lord. There was no response when the mocking unbelievers on Mount Calvary exclaimed—"Save thyself, and come down from the cross!" It is for God and not for man to determine by what evidence He will communicate His will. Testimony depends for its value on the trustworthiness of those who give it. God permits us no *certainities*: our lives are entirely guided by *probabilities*: if we had the former, who would toil for the harvest he knew he should never reap.

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In the earlier editions of this "Letter" I gave in detail a number of facts to sustain my several assertions; the basis on which I ground my belief. These I now omit. They occupy much space, as I think, to small purpose: while, singular and startling as they are, they have been surpassed, as marvels, by others of more recent occurrence. The phenomena of Spiritualism have become, of late, more wonderful than they were when my letter was first printed. Moreover they are related, often minutely, and as far as possible

explained, in the weekly journal, "LIGHT," the leading organ of Spiritualists. Such of my readers as require or desire information are referred for it to that useful and comprehensive work.\*

I have another reason for such omissions. I desire to introduce some details more immediately associated with my own experience, as further illustrating the "Use" of Spiritualism, and the results to which it has led—not only in my case, but as regards thousands of other witnesses as fully entitled to confidence as I can be.

I shall therefore content myself with a sort of summing up: giving but an outline of the facts on which I depend; they can, in all cases, be confirmed and substantiated by witnesses, of whose integrity and intellectual capacity there will not be the shadow of a doubt.

In 1878, when the ingenious conjurers Maskelyne and Cook issued a statement that whatever Spiritualists "did," they could and would do, I put forth this

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\* The SPIRITUAL RECORD, published monthly, for sixpence, by the printer of this book, may be strongly recommended to all who desire or require information. I fully and entirely endorse the advertisement of the publisher:—

"It deals with phenomena, and gives the most intelligent and unimpeachable testimony—treating the whole subject of Spiritual manifestations exactly as it would any branch of natural science. It has no theories to promote, no creed to promulgate, but simply gives the highest possible testimony to the most extraordinary and important facts in human history—the testimony of careful scientific observers who have taken every pains to get at the basic facts—the absolute truth—in regard to these manifestations, which prove that the spiritual part of man lives after the failure and decay of the body, retaining, in greater freedom and a higher intensity, all its powers of consciousness, perception, thought, memory, and love."

challenge to these gentlemen, undertaking to pay the sum of fifty pounds to any charity they would name, if they would do *any ONE of the eight things* I enumerated and partly described.

I thus prefaced the list—I stipulated that what was done should be done in my drawing-room in the presence of four persons invited by them, including themselves, and three persons invited by me, besides myself. I added: the conditions shall—and to that I give my honour—in no degree differ from those under which I have seen that done which I shall call upon them to do—if they can. The eight things I have seen done in my own drawing-room, some of them more than once. The conditions, as I have said, shall be exactly the same. No one shall enter the drawing-room until all enter together; but Messrs. M. and C. shall consent to be searched before entering it, as all the other parties shall be: and also the room, and every article of furniture in it. The three persons chosen by me shall be gentlemen high in position, literary or scientific, and the two brought by Messrs. M. and C. shall be in no way their auxiliaries, but gentlemen whose names will guarantee assurance that they aim only at elucidating truth.

1. Mr. Maskelyne shall take in his hand, from a clear fire in my drawing-room, a large blazing coal; put it on my white head, let it remain there two minutes, without singeing a hair.

2. He shall be seated on one of my drawing-room chairs, and be raised thence to the ceiling, where he

shall make a pencil mark, and descend sitting on the chair. This in sufficient light for onlookers to trace his course.

3. A piano closed and locked, at a distance from the table, shall play a well-known air of three minutes' duration.

4. On a sheet of paper, marked so as to be identified, some power shall write (in the dark) a sentence in Greek—first assuring the persons present that it is a language of which he is ignorant.

5. He shall read a name written by me lightly in pencil on a slip of paper, which slip I will enclose in seven thick envelopes.

6. He shall, in sufficient light, cause a handbell to be taken by a hand (perceptible) from the table, and rung in distant parts of the room, as well as over the heads of the sitters.

7. He shall, in the dark, make a drawing that competent judges shall declare to be of excellence as a work of art, the subject chosen by me or by Mr. M. at the moment: or paint a landscape in oil-colours, the colours provided by me, and placed by me with brushes and (marked) canvas on my table.

8. He shall take *my* accordion, hold it in one hand, his other hand being held by one of the persons present, and cause it to play good, true, and beautiful music, of five minutes' duration.

It would be easy for me to greatly extend this list; but it is unnecessary to do so. I think I could name twenty other things I have seen mediums

do, which I am very sure Messrs. M. and C. cannot do, unless, indeed, they are permitted to make their own arrangements beforehand, which I shall take good care they shall not be in a position to do.

It would be easy for me to name tasks, perhaps more out of "the course of nature" than either of these eight: but I confine myself to those I have myself witnessed, and to which, if Messrs. M. and C. wish, I will testify on oath, sustaining my affidavit by the testimony of at least a dozen persons, whose testimony would be, without a moment's hesitation, accepted as unquestionable on any other subject by all who read their statements.\*

The challenge was not accepted. Messrs. Maskelyne and Cook knew well they could do none of these things. Very different was the result when another famous conjurer—Robert Houdin—received a somewhat similar challenge, and at once admitted that by sleight-of-hand he could do nothing of the kind. "There was," he said, "something in Spiritualism his art could not reach."

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I am tempted to add a few more of the marvels I have seen: condensing them in some instances from details of considerable length. If additional witnesses

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\* I stated that among the names of some of my guests on one or more of the eight occasions, were Lord Lindsay, Lord Dunraven, Lord Lytton, Robert Chambers, Serjeant Cox, W. Crookes, F.R.S., Rev. J. G. Wood, M.A., William and Mary Howitt, Colonel Drayson. It is unnecessary to state that I could now very considerably add to this list.



to similar wonders are required, they may be easily obtained—I do not hesitate to say by hundreds: every one of whom would be accepted as reliable evidence on any subject concerning which he or she deposed in a Court of Justice.

I have seen a German lady who did not know a word of English write more rapidly than I could write a long quotation from Milton without the misspelling of a single word.

[There are plenty of instances of servant maids writing long sentences in Greek—which Greek scholars pronounced correct and translated, and of ploughmen delivering discourses in Latin. I have seen that done several times.]

I have heard a piano played—a most exquisitely beautiful melody—not on the keys, but on the strings, in the manner of a Welsh harp—when the instrument was locked, and the cover piled with books.

I have talked with a spirit, whose voice was clear and distinct, for full five minutes: he answered all the questions I put to him, and concluded the interview by a most touching and beautifully worded prayer.

I have a small landscape, painted *in the dark*. It is, of course, in several colours. It was done, *direct*, under the trance-mediumship of D. Duguid of Glasgow. In his normal condition he is utterly incapable of producing anything of the kind. Imposture was rendered impossible by the tearing off a corner of the card on which the landscape was subsequently painted—which I keep with the picture. The little landscape

(it is so good that I should not hesitate to hang it in my drawing-room) was painted in three minutes. Under the same conditions hundreds of these *direct* pictures have been painted—always in the dark: and always the colours are wet when the pictures are completed.

Once I wrote a name on a slip of paper in pencil, and enclosed it in seven envelopes: the medium I met at the house of a friend: I placed the letter in his hand saying I hoped to receive a communication from one whose earthly name was enclosed. In a few minutes, he said,—“There is a spirit by your side,” adding “His name is Hamilton Hall;” it was the name I had written. He gave me a message concerning a remarkable incident that occurred to us when we were both children and together.

I have sat at my own dinner-table with a party of eight,—the table covered with the usual accessories of a dessert, when the table was tilted to an angle of 45 degrees—and nothing fell off, nor was a drop of the liquid, in full glasses, spilt.

I have seen a heavy table, round which eight persons were sitting, raised from the floor far out of reach, until it touched the ceiling, then carried over the circle, and brought down again, as quietly as a leaf falling from a tree. I have seen this several times, in my own drawing-room as well as in the rooms of friends. There must have been a power by which it was done, but that power was invisible. Once, a small table was suspended for full three min-

utes, the hands of four persons resting on it, while it was raised and depressed at each letter of the alphabet, so as to give us a long message of a hundred letters.

I have many times placed a sheet of paper and a pencil under a table at which eight or ten people were sitting in full light. I have heard the scratching of the pencil on the paper: and found a message written on it. I was not so utter a simpleton as not to watch in order to defeat fraud—if there had been any.

I have seen what seemed phosphorescent lights in several parts—say twenty—of a room, at once: and a perfect halo of light surrounding the head of a boy medium.

I have seen an ordinary table made so heavy that all my strength could not move it: and a few minutes after the same table made so light that I moved it with my finger.

I have seen the hand of one of my friends drawing objects of surpassing beauty from Nature—Nature visible to her eyes, though not to mine.

I have seen a wedding ring placed in a tumbler of water under the table at which we were seated, the ring taken out of the tumbler, and then replaced in the tumbler,—no drop of the water having been spilt.

At a sitting at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt\*—

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\* Mr. Everitt was a respectable tradesman at Pentonville. He has since retired from business. He and his were then, and I believe are now, teachers at a Sunday school, and estimable in all the relations of life—as parents, friends, and neighbours. They are Christians, members of a non-conformist church; and they never sit without prayer, singing a hymn, and a chapter read from the New Testament—always I believe suggested to them by some unseen

Mrs. Everitt being the medium, I held a conversation, continuing for more than half an hour with a spirit calling himself "John Watt," who told us much of his earth-life's history, of his present condition and state, and of his hope and faith in progress to a higher and better. The voice was low; at parting he said this prayer:—"May God and our Lord Jesus Christ bless you, comfort you, help you, and give you happiness in this world and in that to which, in due course, you will come. May His light guide you, and His help be with you here and hereafter. Amen."

There was a cottage piano in the room: it was closed and locked. I removed from the table, the books, a large inkstand, and other things, and placed them on the top of the piano. The medium, Mrs. Everitt, was seated, in a trance, at the end of the table farthest from the piano. The room is a small room, with barely space enough for the ten persons assembled. Suddenly we heard a faint sweet melody, not played on the keys, but *on the wires*: it was as if a harp was played—just such as I have heard from a player on a Welsh harp, where all the strings are wires. The melody continued for full five minutes: those present who are musical, describe it as of much beauty and

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spirit present. To suppose fraud under such circumstances would be to infer an amount of wickedness almost incredible: that they *could* blasphemously implore God's aid and blessing, with *the deliberate intention* to perpetrate a cheat! They are in no way paid mediums; and I am sure they believe in the reality of these manifestations, as truly as Mary and Martha believed in the restoration to life from death of Lazarus their brother.

great originality : it was sometimes louder and sometimes softer : dying away into a murmur of sound, and having an echo, so to speak, of surpassing delicacy and sweetness.

I have been present when a hundred flowers—principally cowslips (a flower that quickly fades) seemingly as fresh as if just gathered, were scattered about all parts of my drawing-room : the medium having been carefully examined by Mrs. Hall and another lady. And I have been present when through the same mediumship a mass of ice weighing at least 30 lbs. was placed upon the table. To the same medium living birds were frequently brought.

I have been present at the house of the widow of an East Indian judge, long stationed in Burmah : when a number of bronze Burmese deities of great weight were heard and seen to be scattered about her room.

I have seen, in my drawing-room, a grand piano, raised a foot from the ground, the instrument locked, playing a tune the while.

This “miracle” occurred in my own drawing-room. I copy the following details from a letter written by Mrs. Hall to the Earl of Dunraven, and printed by him in his book concerning Spiritualism :—“Mr. Home rose from his chair, walked slowly to the fire-place, held his hands over the fire, and then drew out of the fire with his fingers a large lump of red and blazing coal—not from the top but from the middle of the fire ; he held it in both hands, advanced to the table at which we were seated, and placed the coal, red and blazing as it

was, on Mr. Hall's head, ruffling his white hair about it. When it had remained there more than a minute he removed it, and offered it to a lady, the wife of a clergyman who was present. She drew back: Home murmured, 'little faith.' He then tendered it to me (Mrs. Hall), and placed it on my open hand: I felt it to be warm, but not hot: he did the same by one of our guests. Before he took it back to the fire-place, he put it on a sheet of paper on the table: the paper was singed through. I have it now. There was not a hair of Mr. Hall's head singed; but when he combed it in the morning, he combed out about fifty specks of cinder dust the blazing coal had flung off. When this took place, two candles were lighted on the chimney piece, and gas was burning in the next room, separated by folding doors that were open."

I am sure that all the eight who were present would testify to the accuracy of this statement: that fraud was impossible: delusion impossible: and I do not dread that a single person who reads it will hesitate to believe that collusion was impossible. Lord Dunraven was not then present: Lord Lindsay was. Lord Dunraven gives in his book details of three occasions to which he was witness, when facts similar, or nearly similar, occurred—at three different places; and once it took place at my house, when Mr. Sergeant Cox and Mr. Crookes were of my guests. The coal was not then placed on the head of any one, but there were the other phenomena.

I have myself had little or no experience of what

is called materialisation : and I pass over that fertile subject. From others, you may learn much concerning it, that it is impossible for me to tell you, as coming within my own knowledge.

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These marvels will be mere “nothings” to many Spiritualists, who have witnessed wonders infinitely greater. But “I speak what I do know”—and that only.

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Rev. Sir, I have thus endeavoured to work out my purpose—to convince you, and other readers, that Spiritualism, rightly interpreted and understood, is the help-meet of righteousness: that you may not only be its auxiliary, but that you are bound to be so by your pledged duty to God and your neighbour—to all humanity, indeed, and in truth; that thus you will effectually aid to stay the plagues of materialism and infidelity—the special curses of our age. I implore you to help, by the pledge you, as a Christian clergyman, have given to God and to man—that you will do the work of THE ONE for the benefit of the other!

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I have witnessed so many attempts to explain—to “expose”—Spiritualism, by persons who profess to prove it a delusion or a fraud, that I am weary of “exposures.” I humbly think I must be considered better and safer evidence than such witnesses can be—who usually commence their protest by

affirming they know nothing of the subject. It is not within my experience to have met a single person, who asserts that he has studied it, and arrived at the conclusion that it is either delusion or fraud.

Yet my experiences, startling as they may be, are very minor indeed compared with such as have been obtained by others; those who require information are again referred to the publication "*Light*," and to the several works that have been published on the subject.\*

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\* In a book I have recently published—"Retrospect of a Long Life. 1820 to 1884." Bentley & Son—I have recorded recollections of four eminent Spiritualists—Edward Lytton Bulwer (Lord Lytton), Mr. Sergeant Cox, William Howitt, and Robert Chambers. I have there given full and free (I presume to add *brave*, for such declarations demand courage) expression to my belief concerning Spiritualism; there, as in this book, recording my belief that my beloved wife, so long my companion, counsellor, friend, and guide, continues to be in Heaven what she was to me in earth life. Much I have said in this, I have said in that, book.

I have done the same in a gracefully printed and bound little volume—published at half a crown by Griffith & Farran—St. Paul's Churchyard. It is a collection of 185 "aphorisms versified" entitled "Rhymes in Council." I had the great honour of the Queen's permission to dedicate that little book to her grandchildren—which she graciously gave me "with much pleasure." But though chiefly, it is not exclusively, intended for the young, and I think it will be acceptable to many of my present readers as

"An old man's Legacy of pen and tongue."

The book was inscribed to the memory of my wife: thus:—"Since this was written—while it was passing through the press—the partner of my pilgrimage, the participator in all my labours and cares, my companion, friend, counsellor, and wife, during fifty-six years, has been removed from earth and from me, from many friends who dearly loved her, and from a public by whom she was largely appreciated since the publication of her first book (followed by, I think, two hundred and fifty books) in the far off year 1828. These verses are hardly less hers than mine. If I have striven—in humble, but fervent and prayerful, hope—to inculcate rectitude, goodness, love, sympathy, gentle and generous thinking, humanity, patience, virtue, and piety, Faith, Hope and Charity—my work was suggested, encouraged, sustained—I will reverently add, inspired, by her."



Before I close this "Letter," which has grown into a book, I desire to detail some farther results of my own *personal experience*, in the hope, and, I will add, the belief, that I may convince you it is your duty to encourage, and not discourage, the faith I profess—that you may help, and not embarrass me, on the road I am treading—in the footsteps of the Divine Master.

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Since my wife was removed from earth on the 30th of January, 1881, I have frequently received messages from her. They are in number about 160, delivered to me through five or six mediums—with one exception, not professional mediums; but some thirty-five of these 160 are by "direct writing"—written, that is to say, not by a medium, but by herself, under circumstances when delusion or deception was sheer impossibility; generally they are brief, but some consist of over 150 words. I recognise the handwriting of my wife; I cannot be mistaken. They are conclusively convincing to any person who will examine these "direct messages" side by side with letters written by her while she was in "life." They contain frequent references to persons and incidents that could have been by no possibility known to any one present except myself; and there are other, but less obvious, means of identification. In short, I am as sure as I can be of any simple act under the guidance of my will, that these messages, "direct," and those dictated to a medium, are what they profess to be—communications from my wife, intended and calculated to be

for my instruction, as to what I should think and do ; my comfort in sorrow, my consolation in trouble, and especially designed to stimulate and encourage faith and trust in Providence ; and submission, with confident hope, to the Divine Will.

But that is not all ; several times my wife has been permitted to prescribe medicine for me in illness, and to relieve me when suffering from accidental ailments, to strengthen failing eyesight by applying moisture of some kind to my eyelids, dispelling apprehensions on that score ; and in other ways making it manifest that she is, by Divine permission, or appointment, the minister to my natural requirements and needs.

But she has a far higher and holier mission ; its nature, purpose, and end, will be better understood and appreciated by those who read the "messages" than they could be by any explanations I might give.

But this communication to readers, and to all who take interest in the subject, would seem to have no loftier purpose than gratification of curiosity, if I did not lay stress on this important fact ; I express my firm conviction that communications, similar to those I so frequently obtain, would be given to a vast number of persons if there existed power to give them. And that, as a consequence, many who desire counsel and comfort from beloved friends, in the higher sphere we call Heaven, may feel assured that such messages *are* sent, although they are unable to hear or read them. To bear such comfort and consolation into the homes of those who are "bereaved," and so to make

them by comparison happy, is indeed my main purpose now. Let them believe that beloved friends "gone before" are giving them messages such as I receive from my beloved friend gone before. It will not be a great stretch of fancy to conceive they hear or read such words as I hear or read so often.

Through "L. M." Mrs. A.,\* September 5, 1881 :—

"My own darling, I am allowed to be constantly about you, and to impress you with the consciousness of my presence, and the assurance of my unchanging and undying love. I rejoice to see that you, who were ever tender hearted, have been made more so by the trial through which you have passed; grief has not made you selfish, for which I thank God. I am with my darling mother, and other dear ones; and when the night of your natural earth-life has passed, you will join us in these higher spheres of endless day. Remember we are not, cannot be parted! Let your dear heart rest peacefully on God, and bide His time. Human wishes are blind, and we must trust to His goodness, whose wisdom is infinite, whether He makes your time long or short on earth. Let us pray morning and evening—you in the shadow, and I in the light, that we may be both moulded according to His most perfect will."

Through Daniel Home, at St. Petersburg, January 30th, 1882, the first anniversary of the day of her leaving earth :—

"My darling, to you the year has seemed long, and at times void of interest. Your soul has communed with mine from time to time, and your every prayer, every high and holy aspiration, I have been cognisant of. To me there is no year; but I know you consider this as a birthday. You are ever mine as I am yours—unchanged, only nearer to my Redeemer, and our loved

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\* Formerly a medium of great power: that power has been in abeyance for some years in consequence of her weak health. So it is with my dear friend, Daniel Home—by far the greatest of the mediums God has given to humanity in later times. He is now in continually depressed health; consequently, his communications are rare. I have received from him but three during the last three years.

ones, who with me wait and watch your coming. 'My Marie' is thy Marie still, and for eternity."

Through Mrs. Jencken, May 23rd, 1882:—

"I see before you, darling Carter, a long vista of work which has to be done before I can stand at the golden gate to clasp you in my arms, and say, 'forever now we tread through the summer land.' It will take me time to guide you round our world, and so many will be here to greet you, so many who loved you on earth—my mother, your mother, my father, your father, sisters, brothers, friends, servants, all will accompany me to the golden gate when God's time comes for you, my darling; but work patiently on; do not hurry, you have work to do."

Through Mrs. Jencken, November 19th, 1882:—

"My dearest Carter,—Give me no thought of sorrow; give me back for my love happy thoughts. Let us to-night take a short walk—say by the Lakes—and there let us exchange our thoughts. I will give you back the happiest thoughts. When we were stepping in the paths of success, and our praises were echoed far and near—my love, those early days let us never forget—for they were very precious. Those happy hours when we kept all care aside, and made our plans for the future. I love to have little children to greet me as I walk through my flower-filled garden."

On the 6th January, 1883 (her birthday), I wrote to her a letter (as indeed I had habitually done for many years). The same day I received the following answer. It was at two o'clock in the afternoon, *in full light*. Mrs. Jencken only present. I was told to place paper and pencil under the table. I did so. Almost immediately, I heard the paper rustle, and received the message, "Take it up." I found the paper covered *on both sides and folded*; it was a direct message, "direct writing,"—*in her handwriting*. The whole transaction did not occupy above two minutes. I was talking to Mrs. Jencken all the time. It is the

most emphatic and conclusive evidence—by “direct writing”—I have yet received. I humbly and fervently thank God for it:—

“This is my birth-day and I rejoice to come. Our child is here. I have read your letter, and now with my own hand I am answering it. Let not your heart be troubled: we here see so clear. We know that all will be well. I am young, no longer old, and my life is not an idle one. I find much to do; my visits to you are frequent—and teaching little children who are hourly entering this world immortal occupies much of my time. Some feel so lost when relatives are not here to receive them: in such cases I take them in my arms and carry them to their mothers, and nurse them, and teach them how to commune with their parents. I love this life, and, conscious as I am that you will be supremely happy here, I wish you to remain on earth to do good, to bless those who need you, to help those who require your help, and so be glad that night is passing into day.—Your own MARIE.”

On the anniversary of the day of her “death,” January 30th, 1883:—

“Dearest Carter,—Can you realise that two years ago I was a sufferer in mortal form, worn out with pain. You felt my loss. The vacancy was great—irreparable. But if you could have seen me when my spirit took its immortal form, you would have said, ‘Thank God my Marie is free from all suffering—united to her child and mother, her relations and friends—how happy she is.’ And if you could have seen me about you, in your very presence, by your side, with my hands on your eyes, and whispering in your heart these words, ‘Weep not, I am here,’ you would have rejoiced. But now I am two years old in the sunlight of Heaven, with Angels of everlasting life. My flowers are all blooming fresh. My pet bird is here, and my little Blackie,\* and my child—our child—Carter; and when are you not with me?”

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\* “Blackie” was her pet dog, who was always with her; on her bed when she died. Its name was “Minnie,” but she frequently called it Blackie to distinguish it from *my* special pet, a white Maltese that was called “Whitie.” I do not think half-a-dozen persons ever heard her name her little pet “Blackie.” It died not long after the mistress it dearly loved.

March, 1883 :—

“Together we are travelling towards the Eternal City, where there is no parting. Be not disheartened, God is so merciful, and you are earnestly trying to please Him; for are you not ever trying to help others? Before the Incarnation the world might have doubted the love of God; but after the coming of the Son of God, and His death on the Cross, who can say that our Father’s love is not unbounded—God in Jesus, and Jesus in God? ‘He is mine; and I am His.’ Even human love—yours and mine—what has it not done? What glorious work our love has achieved; and God’s love for His children is so far greater. Trust in Him, my beloved.”

September 16th, 1883 :—

“You have much to look forward to, and all that is bright to look back upon. You will have all you require, and more, with which to do good. You are watched over, guarded, and guided. I am so happy—supremely happy. Could I be so if a cloud darkened your future?”

October 7th, 1883, direct writing :—

“Bear these words in mind, ‘Let not your heart be troubled :’ believe in the promises of our Great Master. He will not forsake you, neither will He let trouble weigh you down. He will guide you and guard you to the end. Whenever you see the light remember it is my signal of love and devotion, for I am ever near you; and many different tokens I will give you, and you will no longer feel that you are alone, or that I have gone before.”—Yours for ever and ever, MARIE.”

The following most beautifully eloquent “message” I received from my beloved wife, at mid-day in full sunshine, on Sunday, the 4th of September, 1883, by *direct* writing, no one being present but Mrs. Jencken and myself. I was told (by the usual process of “raps”), “Place some paper under the table.” I did so, and immediately heard the paper *rattle*, so to speak. Then came a message, “Take up the paper.” I did so. Barely two minutes had passed between my

putting the paper down and taking it up. This message was written *on both sides* of a large slip of paper. It is no disparagement to the intellect of Mrs. Jencken to say she could no more have written language so eloquently beautiful, than she could have written "Paradise Lost":—

"When you come to our home so bright, you will rejoice; but you cannot come yet: be patient. I have left all sorrow, for earth is full of sadness. No weary wasting of life here, no shrinking from the bitter winds, no threat of coming evil, no grief, no cheerless homes, no despair, no vain prayer for speedy relief from suffering, no broken hearts are here, no severed friends over mournful memories to weep, for all are re-united, no bed of death for loving eyes to watch the pulseless sleep, no parting here, no death, no blasted hopes, no faded flowers, no destruction, no fierce battle startles with fear and dread the peace of Heaven, but the loving choir sings through the celestial sphere,—'Look up, thou weary stricken one, thy wounded heart shall grieve no more at earth's decay and death's shadow, while you have faith in the Great Master.'—Your own MARIE."\*

—:—

Darkness, though by no means essential at "sittings," is often a valuable accessory and auxiliary: to some mediums it is a necessity, others decline to be thus aided. Daniel Home generally objected to sit in a darkened room. Some experienced Spiritualists surmise that Light is motion, dispersing and not concentrating the magnetism, on such occasions the acting power. Stars are always in the firmament, but they are seen only at night. The photographer can obtain no result unless he is aided by darkness. In a word,

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\* Any person examining the writing in this message, and comparing it with her MSS., written while "living," would not hesitate to pronounce that both are by the same hand.

darkness, although an auxiliary, is not a necessity. All the most marvellous of the things I have seen, and the written communications I have received, have been in full light: either of a mid-day sun or from gas or lighted candles. —:—

All advanced Spiritualists have heard of the appearance of *lights* in darkness—many have seen them—I have done so often—in the presence of Daniel Home frequently, and also when the medium was Mrs. Fox Jencken. During a sitting I have seen perhaps as many as twenty flitting about at one time. But to see lights *when no medium is present* has been,—if I am rightly informed—the privilege of few. It has become mine: but only recently.

It may delight some and astound others, possibly repel a few, if I say in one sentence—*I see my beloved wife frequently* after I lie down on my bed. I describe the circumstances as clearly as I can, but I cannot do so very clearly.

A few minutes after I lie down, when I have said prayers, read two of the consolatory psalms, and repeated the evening hymn of Bishop Ken, and a hymn of my own—

“How can I for a moment doubt  
The loving mercy of my God?”

the space between the foot of my bed and the wall becomes slightly illuminated (previously, it was utterly dark), dark clouds pass across it. Soon they are chased away, and light clouds take their place (obvi-



ously, unless there was light as a background, dark clouds could not be distinguished): a number of such light clouds seem to be fitting about: gradually they combine and assume form—the "human form": the upper part of which is light, the lower, white drapery.

This vision, so to call it, appears to me in more or less power nearly every night, excepting when I have been greatly fatigued during the day: then I see nothing. It is well known to Spiritualists that when exhaustion of the atmosphere of "living" women and men would abstract too much of the elements of life, no manifestation takes place.

My readers will ask how I *know* the form to be that of my wife. I will tell them. I have received through the mediumship of Mrs. Jencken several "messages" from my wife: making pointed reference to this "light"—to these lights. I will copy passages from them:—

"Doubt not my presence when you have the proof in the most beautiful of all signs—the light that always accompanies happy spirits. Only few behold that light as you do."

"This is another delight added to my crown of happiness to be able to give you a sign of my presence in light: thus I feel a new happiness, such as one feels after a long separation when clasping a beloved one in fond embrace."

"In the light you see, I come."

"The lights are mine, I come with a light, a visible proof of my presence: they will grow brighter as I grow stronger in power. I shall soon be able to come and place the light on you, and answer you by the lights."

For the present, it must suffice to say I no more doubt that in these lights I recognise the actual personal presence of my beloved wife than I doubt

that I am now writing with pen and ink on white paper. I am as capable of exercising sound judgment as to the one as I am as to the other, and have equally reliable evidence as regards either. I believe a time is coming to very many of us—I have shown it has come to me—when mediumship will *not be required*.

—:—

I have given none of the messages I have received from loving friends and dear relatives gone before, but my readers will believe I have had many. I might print several pages of such. Some from persons whom I had not thought of for perhaps half a century, and whose names startled me. Some with whose names I was unacquainted, but concerning whom inquiry elicited knowledge. Some from those who had very recently left earth: among them our doctor\* (who was an avowed freethinker while in this sphere, but who is not so now); to enter at all fully into this matter, would be to greatly exceed the space to which I am limited in this book.

—:—

Yes! Certain! This life is but a state of prepara-

\* Generally, I have asked for tests by which to try the spirits, and have in nearly all cases received them. I copy one of the messages sent to me by Dr. L. :—

“Your dear wife is as kind to me as ever: I often see her. God is so good to let her help me up higher and higher. You know that I believed nothing when on earth. I was an unbeliever, though not a confirmed atheist. Your wife has helped me into Light out of darkness.”

We had vainly striven while he lived to convince him of the immortality of the soul.

tion for the higher life. Happy are they who build the bridge by which they may cross the river. It is on this fertile theme of PROGRESS I desire to make some remarks that may, I humbly hope, be for the guidance of my readers.

—:—

During this state—or, rather, these states—of *progress*, the soul, after removal from earth, retains much of its earth nature. I by no means accept the spirits of even the best and purest men and women as incapable of error—less so, no doubt, than they were on earth, but still liable to be mistaken. They *progress* as they would or might have done had they remained on earth; and as they “ascend” upwards, so to speak, and are removed farther from the earth sphere, they may see and do more than they could when their corporeal and mental vision was bounded by earth influences.\* But in some respects they seem to have less power to aid us *there* than they had *here*. Yet who shall say how much our guardian angels—loving friends—have done, of which we know nothing, at the time or afterwards? A slate may have been falling from a house-

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\* Many years ago I was sitting with the Mrs. A. to whom I have elsewhere referred. A message was given to me at the table that seemed to me nonsense: it was utterly incomprehensible. The message Mrs. Hall and I received by repeating the letters of the alphabet was this: “The blessing of the Redeemer be with you, my dear children.” “Ah,” I said, “that message is given to us by our dear mother” (Mrs. Hall’s mother, one of the best, purest, and most upright women I have ever known: she had often given to us messages similar to that I record). The answer, to my surprise, was “No,” by the usual single rap. After more than once repeating the question, and receiving the same answer, it was explained to me. “From whom then does it come?” The answer was this: “THOODCLAMB,”

top that a hand unseen has turned aside from its death errand. A compartment in a railway train may have been full when a traveller sought to enter it, such compartment being crushed in its transit. I have heard and read of many cases of the kind, and I know that my life has been more than once saved by such interpositions as those at which I barely hint. The theme is far too large to receive adequate treatment here. Think what a joy it must be to those who know they are watched, guided, and guarded in peril, by the beatified spirits of beloved friends they have loved and continue to love! What a stimulus to do God's work for the service of man! What a warning to do no evil, but to do all the good we can do!

—:—

I might give much more in which I think my readers would be interested, but I have said enough to manifest my conviction, amounting to certainty, that my beloved wife is directly communicating with me, not only frequently but continually—still to me the companion, friend, counsellor, guide, and helper, she was when in what is called "life." Of that, I

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the letters thus running into one another. "Oh," I said, "that is nonsense. Thoodclamb!" "No." "I pray you let me understand the meaning." It was given to me to understand it. The letters, with pauses between, the conjunction "and" being added, made for me the response. "Who gives me, then, that message?" "T. Hood and C. Lamb, who act for your greatly progressed parent." Both these master spirits of humanity had been my personal friends. The simple and natural interpretation was this; they were near enough to her to receive her message, and near enough to us—her "dear children"—to communicate it to us. She had "progressed," and was too far removed from the earth-sphere to be in *direct* communication with us.

repeat, I have no more doubt than I have that I am writing with pen and ink on white paper. And I am as sure that any rational person, with reason and senses under control, would arrive at the same conclusion, if sustained and instructed by evidence such as I have received: that he or she would be assured of the immortality of the soul—of the Hereafter when that soul is placed in a state of continued “life,” and that under certain conditions, of which as yet we know nothing, or nothing essential, such soul is permitted to hold intercourse with those who remain on earth, on the way to a future state; such future state, whether for happiness or misery, depending on himself or herself, God having

“Left free the human will.”

—:—

I have many times expressed my conviction that Spiritualism at present does little more than this: inculcates belief in a Creator, arrests the spread of Materialism, and sustains the evidence of Scripture—borne out by that of all nations and peoples of which any records are preserved; that there is a life after life has been closed on earth: in a word, immortality; that Hereafter is not a sound signifying nothing; that “millions of spiritual beings” are in constant communication—though unheard and unseen, except in rare instances—with those who, for the intervening time, wear the garb of mortality; and that consciousness and memory are not obliterated by death. “Little more than this!” Ah! but it is a mighty work.

As I have said, these papers would be idle and useless if they did not aid belief that spirits of the "just made perfect"—the beloved friends "gone before," who are no more "dead" than they were when plain to the ear, the eye, the touch, in mortal guise, are continually communicating with those who wear the garb of humanity in which the soul was sometime clothed. As yet, they cannot see the forms I see; hear or read the words I hear or read. But they *may do so*, in answer to appealing prayer. The "means and appliances," we call Spiritualism, may not be, as yet, at their command or under their control. The new revelation, that which, rightly construed, so effectually upholds the teaching of the Divine Word, is of very recent birth; that is to say, in its present form or aspect; for in reality it is as old as creation.

—:—

I add these lines from a small poem—"Hereafter."

"Change there will be: as flowers from branches burst;  
But I shall see thee—as I see thee now:  
Yet more resembling what thou wert, when first  
I kissed thy smooth cheek and unwrinkled brow:

'As in the glory of thine early prime:  
Through all thy earth life: bright at every stage:  
THE SOUL IS NEVER OLD: and knows not Time;  
GOODNESS IS BEAUTIFUL AT ANY AGE.

'Together still: if one have earlier birth  
In Paradise: divided: and yet near:  
Though one in Heaven may wait for one on earth:  
A guiding, guarding spirit: THERE AS HERE!'"

—:—

How greatly we may augment the happiness of dear

friends "gone before," lessening their affliction, by leading pure and upright lives, by doing all the good we can do, by resignation to the Divine Will, and by strengthening the "Faith that is but confidence in God." Yes! Spiritualism may—nay, cannot fail to—teach that the blessing it *receives* from, it, in return, *gives* to, the Beloved removed from earth: it is "twice blest."

—:—

In taking leave of this branch of my subject—special as to my intercourse with my beloved wife—I will ask you to let me introduce a poem, to which I have given the title of MY GUARDIAN ANGEL, *which I know her to be.*

I have said I see her nearly every night, when no medium is by; but that is not all. Sometimes she writes messages to me when I am sleeping: as yet, these messages are brief: I quote but two of them—"I am here to watch and guard you," "My beloved, sleep in tranquil peace, I am near you." I find them written on slips of paper placed on a table by my bed-side. Of a surety this power will increase. She will be able to "keep her word" with me, and at night, while I sleep, write answers to the questions I shall ask.

It is not always in a cloud of light that my wife appears to me; sometimes it is as a star from which rays issue, and sometimes as a single spark of marvellous brilliancy—

"Like a diamond in the sky."

## MY GUARDIAN ANGEL.

My darling, in the happier sphere,  
 My guide and guardian, there as here,  
 Come from your home of tranquil bliss,  
 And let me feel an Angel's kiss:  
 See you : and hear your sweet, low voice  
 Bidding my very soul rejoice.  
 Chase the dark clouds that hover o'er me,  
 And smooth the rugged path before me ;  
 Dispersing gloom that saddens earth,  
 To day of death from day of birth.

The Muster-Roll is thinning fast :  
 The Future soon will be the Past.  
 My angel-guard, in good or ill,  
 Your shield and arms protect me still.  
 Through the dark valley, dearest, guide  
 My Soul—by suffering purified.  
 Teach me that boundless trust in God  
 Educes comfort from His rod.  
 Breathe in my ear the words that bless—  
 " I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS ! "

Who doubts the loving Master sends,  
 As mission-bearers, loving friends ?  
 Who doubts that happiest spirits yearn—  
 Again, awhile,—for earth return,  
 Heaven-ward to lead a struggling Soul ?  
 Again to counsel or console ?  
 Who doubts the Souls that cannot die  
 Are sent from Homes beyond the sky—  
 Angels—preferred above all others—  
 To warn and succour sisters, brothers ?

—:—

I add to this memory of my wife. God gave us but one child, a daughter, who lived but ten days in this life. She now (I believe invariably) comes to me with her mother. I have had letters from her—*direct writing*—and her mother has described her to me, thus :—



"You cannot realize that our daughter is a young maiden, a lovely maiden: she has blue eyes, and hair a little lighter than my own" . . . "she is a link between our two souls" . . . "she is one of my blessings" . . . "to-night when you sleep I will fold you in my arms, and our darling child will rest on one side and I on the other."

Surely and certainly, it is my daughter who writes to me, who often kisses my brow, and who—I can have no doubt—comforts and helps me, who companions her mother when she comes in Light, and who, of a surety, will be *my* dear, loving companion, when I am in my home removed from earth life.

I make this record, not only as a confirmation of another of the cheering and comforting consolations to be derived from Spiritualism, rightly understood and interpreted, but in the hope that I may thus console parents whose children have been taken from them: in infancy, childhood, or youth.

I quote from Southey—from memory:—

"O, when a mother meets on high  
The babe she lost in infancy,  
Hath she not then for all her tears,  
Her days of woe, her sleepless nights,  
An overpowering of delights?"

I leave to mothers the happy task of enlarging upon this subject: there is no one of them who cannot do it better than I can—to her own mind, heart and soul.

It will be hard to conceive a greater amount of happiness than will be derived by a mother, from the conviction that her child "removed" has become one of her guardian angels—appointed by the Master to aid, comfort, and console her through the dark valley,

and lead her to the "great white throne," where she may kneel in adoration and hear the words—"Good and faithful servant, enter thou!"

I call to mind the lines of the poet Longfellow:—

"She is not dead; the child of our affection,  
But gone into that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ himself doth rule."

And I add to them this verse from Moore:—

"Weep not for her whom the veil of the tomb  
In life's happy morning hath hid from our eyes,  
Ere sin threw a blight o'er the spirit's young bloom  
And earth had profaned what was meant for the skies."

—:—

Resuming this fertile topic, I quote a passage from Sir Theodore Martin's "Life of the Prince Consort," who is known to his age and the country of his adoption—to the whole world indeed, as

"The Good Prince,"

a far higher and loftier title than the Queen of England, and Empress of India, could have conferred upon him. To doubt that his influence now influences the mind, heart, and soul of his Consort would be to doubt the love and mercy and wisdom and justice of God—so much of whose work he did while a dweller on earth.

"Death in his view was but the portal to a future life, in which he might hope for a continuance, under happier conditions, of all that was best in himself and in those he loved, unlogged by the weaknesses, and unsaddened by the failures, the misunderstandings, the sinfulness, and the sorrows of earthly existence."

When a good man is called from Earth,  
To have, in Heaven, a second birth,  
And hear the loving Master's voice :  
Millions of brother-saints rejoice !

The " Welcome " words we also hear :  
(Earth-friends who pay the tribute tear)  
" Good, faithful servant, enter thou ! "  
He is not gone who leaves us now :  
The good man chants a joyful Hymn,  
In train-bands of the Seraphim !

Who can believe that he whose wisdom, forethought, consideration, charity, and love, so largely aided her when he " lived "—her guide and guardian, here—can be either unable or unwilling to be both now that he is in Heaven—with infinitely greater power to be both !

The theme is too delicate for treatment, here ; I leave what I have written to be continued by my readers—in faith and with thankful prayer.

Of the millions who love and honour the Queen is there one who will love and honour her less because of the knowledge that she is watched over, guided, and guarded, and perpetually prompted, by the good Prince who is one of God's angels now.

—:—

And now, Rev. Sir, to my main purpose in addressing you, and, through you, other clergymen, ministers, pastors, and teachers, of any Christian Church. You may be sure I have not written this pamphlet without earnest prayer to God for guidance : that He would send His angels and the spirits of just men made perfect to aid me as I wrote ! My prayer has been, I humbly think, answered.

I say again, you *cannot* arrest the progress of Spiritualism ; but you *can* guide it. You can make it a helper to Christianity. It is, as I have shown you, spreading largely over earth—this “ new revelation of an old power :” of a surety, it will increase.

It is in the hope that you, and men like you, whose solemn and bounden duty it is not only to pray, but to give practical effect to the prayer—“ that it may please Thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived ”—that you, and men like you, will stand by the side of Christian Spiritualists in their combat with “ spiritual wickedness ” in places high and low—to sustain in fighting the good fight of faith those Spiritualists who are emphatically Christians—as hostile as you can be to the propagators of infidelity.

You, and men like you, who have made a solemn contract with God and man to impress and extend and interpret the holy, and comforting, and happy truths of the Gospel, must come to the van and no longer loiter in the rear, or rather by keeping altogether aloof, be indirectly, yet certainly, aiding and abetting those who are our foes as much as they are yours. Will you see us warring with powers of darkness and render no help to those who bear the banner of light ?

—:—

And now, Rev. Sir, I draw to a close. I have told you of my entire faith—without the shadow of a doubt—that not only does God send to earth His holy angels, ministers of His will, but that He permits to

visit earth, and to hold intercourse with those who are yet of earth, those who have been "in the flesh:" I have told you I have had such clear, ample, continual, and conclusive proof of this, that, if I did not believe it, I could believe nothing for which I have the evidence of my senses sustained by reason, analogy, and reflection: I have presumed to tell you also, that my faith is supported by testimony in all ages—by God himself in the inspired writings of His prophets—by the testimony of our Lord and Saviour, and by the repeated and emphatic declarations of His apostles. I have shown that hundreds of thousands, nay millions, receive and cherish this faith: believing it to be sent of God, and that we are, more or less, the means He adopts for its propagation; that "the dead die not"—that there is another state of being, and that we step into it at the instant of our leaving what we call life; that permission for the departed to communicate with the living is a part of God's merciful dispensation to humanity—that He permits us to have evidence that it is so.

Rev. Sir, you will not tell me there is no meaning in this passage from the prayer we of the Church of England offer up at the grave-side of one whose earthly tabernacle we bury out of sight: sown a natural body: to be raised a spiritual body: "Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of those that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh are in joy and felicity."

"Like seeks like."

It is so in this life: good people make other people good. Surely if the power to do this had been granted during the earth sojourn, it will not be denied to those who are infinitely more anxious (in the sphere where they now live) for the welfare, happiness, virtue, and usefulness, of the beloved friends they have not ceased to love:

"Happy in making happy: ah! how few  
Enjoy on earth the chiefest joy in Heaven!"

—:—

I have shown you that the belief I cherish I share with some of the most enlightened men and women of the age—of intelligence unimpeachable—upright, conscientious, and good—utterly incapable of fraud, and, as far as humanity can be, not liable to self-delusion or exposed to the influence of deception.

—:—

Alas! our pastors and teachers leave the mighty power for good—or for evil, in the hands of those who will use, to abuse, it—who do use, and do abuse, it. I solemnly warn such as are inquirers, neophytes, or acolytes, to avoid, as they would contact with a plague-spot, fellowship and communing with "mediums" who, under the sway, influence, and dictation of spirits, low, or base, or evil, inculcate principles repugnant to natures that are good—and sometimes teach "Doctrines of Devils."

—:—

We believe—I repeat—that Spiritualism, the foe of

Materialism, may lead to inconceivable, immeasurable, good. And we pray God that, having enlightened us, we may be made His instruments for distributing that light to our fellows on earth—that BEING CONVERTED, WE MAY STRENGTHEN OUR BRETHREN.

—:—

Spiritualists, then, demand to be heard on the ground that their antecedents are such as to justify confidence—confidence in their integrity and in their capacity for arriving at correct conclusions, based on the evidence of their senses, sustained by their intelligence; because they have subjected Spiritualism to such tests as the Almighty has given them by which to detect error and discover truth; because these things are not done in a corner; because alleged facts are attested by tens—nay, by hundreds—of thousands, who have witnessed them at various times, in several places, now in one company, now in another; testified to, not by “ignorant and unlearned men,” but by men and women of capacious minds, and of great experience in all the affairs of life—sound and practical thinkers.

I repeat: it is not enough for me to say I have had palpable, convincing, and conclusive evidence that those we call the “dead” are “living,” and can and do communicate with us—those who are yet living. I *have* had such evidence, not once, but many hundred times, in various places and countries, in the presence of persons who had never before met, and were totally unknown each to the other, under circumstances that rendered collusion out of the question, and fraud an

impossibility—such intercourse with “spirits” continuing to be repeated year after year for thirty years.\*

—:—

I am aware that, in the earnestness of my desire to impress your mind, I have occasionally “repeated myself” in the pages you have read: it will certainly be so as regards those that are to come. Be indulgent, I pray you, and call it by the simple term *stress*.

—:—

To me it seems marvellous that people who believe in a Creator—GOD—and in the existence of a *soul*, linked with every *body*, that does not perish when the body perishes,—that such persons should refuse to believe, or find any difficulty in believing, that the soul after separation from the body can and does visit and communicate with the souls that yet continue “in the flesh,” awaiting their own removal to that other sphere which they are to inhabit when the bonds that bound them to earth are in force no longer.

—:—

Lazarus, perishing at the gate, may become the ministering spirit—nay, the guardian angel—of some

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\* The details I have given are insignificant compared with some that have been given by others. Statements of a like kind supplied the theme of a lecture recently delivered to the “London Spiritualist Alliance” by Mr. Morell Theobald: they astounded even me—notwithstanding my experience in kindred matters. Yet Mr. Theobald is a man in a business that specially demands freedom from the imaginative. He is a public accountant. He thus writes to me, “As you suppose, I am a man of business: accustomed to weigh evidence. I never take anything for granted.” The little book is entitled “Spiritualism at Home,” and is published by E. W. Allen, 4 Ave Maria Lane.



sympathising Dives, who "did it unto ME" when the hungry, naked, and full of sores, appealed to him, and *not* in vain. Humanity has to record many cases such as the mouse and the lion of fable—many *here*—is it hard to believe there are infinitely more *there* ?

—:—

The soul when gone from the body is *somewhere*. Probably, there are now very few who accept the old theory, that the soul remained—not dead, but torpid, like a stone—until a final award of happiness or punishment at "the day of judgment." Those who have that faith are consistent and rational in answering that there can be no communication between the "living" and the "dead"; but, surely, it is far otherwise with those who hold that the soul does not lose consciousness when its earth-life ceases. Such consciousness to be retained makes the Heaven or the Hell of hereafter. "The deeds done in the flesh," when they become *retrospect*, must be sources of joy or misery, or the soul would be, to all intents and purposes, a new creation, and the promises of Scripture signify nothing; while all inducements to act righteously, to fear and love God, and do His work for "neighbour," would be utterly *nil*, except inasmuch as they might influence us for evil, or for good, in the life, brief or prolonged, the united soul and body is commissioned, or permitted, to pass on earth.

If the soul, on its departure from the body—its sometime tabernacle, the house in which it has dwelt—loses all consciousness of the past, what can be its

future? If it cease to take any interest in things of earth—if the affections are to die when the body dies, and although parents, children, friends while “living” enjoy the bliss that memory brings, the souls removed are denied all such sources of happiness,—surely, to maintain such a doctrine would go very far to destroy all honour and glory to God, all faith and trust in Him, in His justice and His mercy, and all the hope that sustains more or less every human being born into the world, and what is so especially, the inexpressible blessing of the Christian.

“All Nature lives to love: the law He gave—  
 ‘Love one another’—rules in every sphere:  
 ‘Lives through all life:’ but ends not with the grave:  
 His words, the perfect just, and Angels, hear.  
 Love is the boon of all created things:  
 All worlds: on Earth: in Heaven: below: above:  
 Who love the Lord of Lords and King of Kings,  
 Hymn the great Hymn of Nature—‘God is Love.’”

—:—

I am limited as to space: yet upon this fertile theme I could fill many pages: and may do so if my life is sufficiently prolonged *here*; if not, my faith is that I shall be directed to do that work hereafter.

I am as sure that the “dead”—wrongly so-called, for there is no death, “what seems so is transition”—can and do communicate with the “living,” as I am that my right hand holds the pen with which I write. I could give a hundred proofs in evidence. I have given some in this “Letter”; but they are to be had by thousands in the hundreds of volumes that Spiritualists have written: and those who desire or

require conviction may obtain it from "authorities" at least as unquestionable as I can be.

That souls "departed"—that is to say, removed from positive "contact" with our senses (though I by no means admit that it is so, for, as I have stated, I have seen, heard, and touched "spirits" I knew to be the spirits of those I had known when I and they were living on earth), are continually about us, as "vital" intelligences, comforting, consoling, helping, advising, protecting, teaching—I no more doubt than I do the power of the Creator.

He or she who seeks to deprive me of this source of incalculable happiness is a cruel and needless enemy: but a worse enemy to the soul that is freed from the flesh than to the soul that continues encumbered by flesh.

Such an enemy would take from us all responsibility—all stimulants to good, all faith, all hope in this life: but that is comparatively little of the evil he or she who so teaches us would do.

Picture a soul departed—a mother taken from her child—a husband from his wife, a child from its parent, a friend from a friend—and imagine its condition, *if* it is permitted to retain consciousness, and has still the power of memory and the gift of reason, shut out from all intercourse with the objects of affection, anxiety, hope, with only the horrors of suspense, despondency, fear—I add one word, *despair!*—and ask yourself, if there can be Heaven for a soul so circumstanced!

Surely, if the soul, after its departure from earth, retained no remembrance of "deeds done in the flesh," no consciousness of a past, with its light or heavy records of good or evil, it would be, to all intents and purposes, a new creation: in no sense the soul that made happiness or misery to many or few, during its habitation of the body—for minutes or a century, as it may be—in this sphere. It would be, in short, tantamount to extinction, for we know the body is destroyed; and, if the mind be obliterated also, there could be no Hereafter of rewards or punishments. This life would be all in all: the "be-all and the end-all" would be of earth and on earth.

God keep us from a faith so utterly miserable—so entirely opposed to revelation and to reason: a faith that would extinguish hope as a delusion: that would make the Christian of "all men most wretched," render the sensual enjoyments of life the duties of a season, and justify men who say "let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die."

—:—

Possibly I am fighting with a shadow; there may be none who believe in God, and in the soul's immortality, who hold and cherish so foul a doctrine.

But my purpose is to show that, if there be not such an annihilation of all we associate with the soul, there must outlive *this* life, affection, memory, reflection, comparison, intelligence—to use a familiar word, REASON: that these faculties are not lost or lessened, but vastly strengthened in the Soul after its removal

from the body. They *must* be exercised: there *must* be a continual recurrence to the events of this life: there *must* be meaning in the words, "well done good and faithful servant," and in these, "depart from me ye wicked." Only by the unlimited exercise of these powers could there be reward and punishment; without them "Hereafter" would be a sound "signifying nothing!" \*

—:—

Let imagination then follow a departed soul into the sphere it occupies—in *progress*—after leaving life in the flesh, and ask whether it is possible for a soul to be happy, with memory strong and love stronger, as regards those who continue yet on earth: fancy the perpetual anxiety to know something of the beloved ones: the yearning desire to help them: the continual conviction that when they go wrong they might, if helped, go right: that danger, physical and moral, *might* be effectually averted—if God would permit the advanced soul to give aid to souls that are in peril. And ask yourself, if Heaven *could* be a place of bliss, if you, believing you *could* help, were debarred from efforts to help, notwithstanding your deep longings and your earnest prayers!

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\* "Butler argues expressly that there is no ground for supposing that the exercise of our present powers of reflection is even *suspended* by the act of dying."—See "*Analogy*," ch. i., *ad fin.* "Unless the act of dying is to effect some magical change—which there is nothing in Reason or Revelation to suggest—such as the sinner was when he passed from Earth, he must wake in the World Unseen. . . ."  
—*The Rev. H. N. Oxenham in the "Contemporary Review."*

Is it hard, then, to believe that a God of love and mercy will permit to the spirits for whom He designs happiness Hereafter—to whom His promises have been emphatically given—and to whom He has sent THE BOOK that “they might have hope converted into certainty,” that “by patience and comfort, of His holy Word,” they may have reliance and faith, that can by no possibility infer disappointment—is it hard to believe that God does permit such souls to revisit earth as the guardian angels of those they loved when clothed in “humanity,” and whom they love, still more dearly, when dwellers in Celestial spheres?

—:—

I have said, I *know* that the spirits of those who have gone from earth can and do communicate with those who remain on earth: that such belief is not only borne out by Scripture, “written for our learning,” but sustained by Reason: that, in a word, spirits departed, “gone before,” *could not be happy*, unless such was the Will of God.

—:—

When our Lord said, “I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do,” He did not mean it to be inferred that there would be no more “work” for Him. *After* the crucifixion He preached to the souls in prison, and taught disciples on the way to Emmaus; it was *after* He had “risen from the dead,” “when the doors were shut,” He appeared to the eleven, breathed on them, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost!”

There are many passages of Scripture (if they

are needed) to show that the Divine Master is still working. So it will ever be while man needs a comforter, a helper, a mediator. Christianity is based on the belief that God permits no idleness to *any* of the works of His creation.

The most beautiful of the Church Collects prays that "As Thy holy angels always do Thy appointments, they may succour and defend us on earth," inferring that they may work for us and with us; and surely the prayer would apply quite as strongly to the "just made perfect" as to "holy angels." Can we conceive a state of existence where there are thousands of millions of souls with "nothing to do"? Surely some of them will "walk the earth"—

"Both when we wake and when we sleep."

Can we suppose that God has no occupation for them? Can they see the beloved ones, and render them no help? Hear them, and give no response? Are they less capable in their state of beatitude than they were when clogged by human infirmities—

"Puzzled in mazes and perplexed with error"?

Always assuming that consciousness of the past is not obliterated, will they be useless when mortal has put on immortality, and nothing but the earthly tabernacle is dissolved? The WILL is strong—stronger than ever. Is the power weaker—weaker than ever—to guide, to counsel, to comfort, to console, often to protect and preserve from perils seen or unseen? "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" surely

as much the God of Moses and Elias, when communing with Him on the Mount, as when they were doing the earth-work He had given them to do.

—:—

O blessed faith that keeps us ever watchful, knowing ourselves to be perpetually watched: that gives us conclusive and continual evidence how very thin are the partitions that separate this world from "the next"—the next where ingratitude is a crime, and "sins of omission" exact penalties as do "sins of commission:" where those who, having neglected their "talent," are guilty as those who misused it. "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of these ye did it not unto me," implies condemnation for opportunities neglected, as well as abused.

"For what we will, yet lack the power to do,  
Be it for good or ill, God counts as done."

O blessed faith! that brings closer and nearer those whom death has, not even for a time, separated from us: that makes certain sure the actual presence of those we love: sharing our daily walks, our hourly talks: watching us with hopeful love: participating in all our anxieties: in all our joys: guiding us, helping us: averting from us evil and the influence of evil: bringing around and about us the holy and the good: giving us a foretaste of that "overpowering of delights" of which the poet speaks as the recompense of death: bringing palpably to our hearts and minds "the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen:" and prompting to continual prayer,



that when our Lord cometh He may find our lamps bright and burning in the Household of Faith.

O blessed faith ! that enhances a thousand-fold the joy that is given by the Christian dispensation ; that removes all doubts of Hereafter—teaching us that angels who do the will of our Father which is in heaven, “ may by his appointment succour and defend us on earth,” and that the perfected spirits of the just are not only permitted, but directed, so to aid us—that we also may inherit the “ mansions ” prepared for us !

That is the faith of all Christians. But it is not the happy privilege of all to have palpable and convincing evidence of their companionship on earth ; the absolute and positive *knowledge* of their continual presence, hearing all we say, seeing all we do—nay, cognisant of our most secret thoughts : “ to us invisible or dimly seen,”—yet sometimes seen and heard and felt by us while we dwell in our habitations of clay. It is not belief,—it is certainty !

Is not death thus deprived of its sting ? are we not thus taught to dread

“ The grave as little as our bed ” ?

Shall we not, therefore, strive so to live that we may be the associates of the good and the happy when we leave earth—when the loving and beloved will meet us—“ the souls of the perfected just released and relieved from the burthen of dust”—not with the ailments and weaknesses that clog mortality,—the

draperies of Earth that entangle the soul—but freed of them all!

And we, hoping in faith that God will, in our turn, make us His messengers—it may be His missionaries—to those we have left behind, amid troubles, griefs, and temptations, to be *their* consolers, *their* comforters, *their* counsellors, during the remainder of their journey through this life to another life, the second, but not the last, home of the Soul that cannot die!

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FINIS.

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