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SPIRITUALISM AS IT WAS & AS IT SHOULD BE.

In that admirable Pamphlet by Elihu Rich, referred to in our last, after ably defending the memory of his deceased friend, James Knight, Esq., from various aspersions put forth in the *Monthly Observer*, the writer proceeds to deal with the subject of Clairvoyance and Spiritualism. He says:—

“I have objected to the peculiar phrase under which the writer of the obituary has alluded to our friend's acquaintance with the phenomena of *clairvoyance*, because all the world understands something more or less evil by a *familiar spirit*; though, really, it denotes the spirit *most familiar with every one*, or, in Swedenborg's language, *the attendant spirit*, and whether it be good or evil, when spoken with, depends on the love of the heart, and not on the mere fact of vision or speech with a spiritual intelligence. It is not for me to deny that acquaintance with spiritual powers may also increase our acquaintance with evil, either in conception or act, for the apostle truly testifies, “When I would do good evil is present with me” (Rom. vii. 21.); but I utterly deny that any man has a right to impute evil to experiences of this kind, unless it be ultimated, that is to say, unless it absolutely exhibit itself as evil. No one will dare to say this of any action that can be ascribed to our friend, Mr. Knight, and I have already shown that his inquiries had no relation whatever to his worldly affairs. Under these circumstances the charge of “diablerie” is more than a wrong to the individual, for it strikes at a doctrine and practice which we shall presently see have been co-extensive with Christianity; it is a wrong to the Church, because, in fact, it amounts to a denial of her spiritual character, and, practically, to a mis-direction of her cause.

Show me the church, pretending to the name of Christian, over whose portals you may boldly write, “*spiritualism disavowed*,” and I will show you the dry bones which lay in the valley before Ezekiel prophesied (chap. xxxvii. 1—1). It is no answer to urge that we shrink from

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the follies and trivialities of spiritualism, for it is precisely with the follies of the world that the Church has need to contend, and if God withhold not his countenance, and the breath of his life, from creeping things and reptiles, by what right does the Church presume to gather her garments around her, and pick her dainty way through the world, with a "Stand by, I am holier than thou?" It was not thus the apostles entered upon their mission. Sent forth as sheep among wolves, they understood well that they were the possessors of a kingdom, and not the mere preachers of a doctrine. To cast out devils, to speak with new tongues, to take up serpents, and to drink any deadly thing without hurt, nay, to restore the sick by the laying on of hands,* were among the prerogatives of their office. They went forth to the conquest of their spiritual dominions literally unarmed—no scholasticism or ritualism for a shield; no doctrinal point, forged and polished by theological decision for a sword of sharpness. And if it be said that they went forth the opponents of spiritualism in principle, I deny the fact. Their very strength, on the contrary, lay in its recognition, and they built up the primitive church by demonstrating that all the privileges and gifts that Paganism had ever claimed were comprehended in it, with the addition of a loftier inspiration, and a surer hope. It was in this sense that the demons were dispossessed of their oracles, by the triumph of the cross, and Fontenelle, or his Dutch authority, are very welcome to their learned arguments, tending to prove the contrary, by showing that responses were frequently obtained at later periods. The prerogative of Jupiter-Dodonus, and all the gods of Hellas, had departed for ever, and as the redeemed Israelites spoiled the Egyptians of their gold and silver, so, in a holier sense, the first Christians possessed themselves of all that was precious in the temples of Paganism.

Hence, *the indefinite variety of spiritual gifts* in the early period of the church, *and their unity in one spirit*, are facts which have always claimed the recognition of all classes. It will suffice, at present, to cite the words of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, M. A., Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford, who thus introduces his critique on 1 Corinthians, chap. xii. :—

"One of the chief characteristics of the apostolical age was the possession of what are called "spiritual gifts," the signs that there was moving to and fro in the Church a mighty rushing wind, a spirit of

* Any further allusion to MESMERISM I consider unnecessary, it being universally recognized as a valuable means of cure, and practised by many of the most distinguished members of the medical profession. Yet, his appreciation of this precious gift has been made one of the charges against our deceased friend, Mr. Knight.

life and freedom, and energy which stirred the dry bones of the world, and made those who felt its influence conscious that they were alive, though all around was dead. Before this consciousness of a higher power than their own, the ordinary and natural faculties of the human mind seemed to retire, to make way for loftier aspirations, more immediate intimations of the Divine will, more visible manifestations of the Divine power. Every believer, male or female, old or young, free or slave, found himself instinct with this new life, varying in degree and according to the strength of his natural character, but still sufficiently powerful to be a constant witness to him of the reality of the new faith which it had accompanied. It resembled in some degree the inspirations of the Jewish judges, psalmists, and prophets; it may be illustrated by the extasies and visions of prophets and dreamers in all religions; but in its energy and universality it was peculiar to the Christian society of the apostolical age."

Were I to urge the strict applicability of any part of this description to manifestations which have occurred in our own times, it would be replied that the same "divine order" does not attend them now as in the age alluded to, and that whereas they were consistent with the design of Providence, and especially ruled by the Spirit of God in the beginning of the Christian era, they now take place contrary to the intention of Providence, and under circumstances which show that the spirit of God has no part in them; in short, that the good fruit that they bore in the apostolic age was sufficient to prove that they were in order, as their mixed character and often trivial import in our age is sufficient to prove their disorder. In answer to this argument, let us hear Mr. Stanley again:—

"It may easily be conceived," he remarks, "that this new life was liable to much confusion and excitement, especially in a society where the principle of moral stability was not developed commensurately with it. Such was, we know, the state of Corinth. They had, on the one hand, been 'in everything enriched by Christ, in all utterance, and in all knowledge,' 'coming behind in no gift' (i. 5—7); but, on the other hand, the same contentious spirit which had turned the most sacred names into party watch-words, and profaned the celebration of the supper of the Lord, was ready to avail itself of the openings for vanity and ambition afforded by the distinctions of the different gifts. Accordingly, various disorders arose; every one thought of himself, and no one of his neighbour's good; and as a natural consequence, those gifts were most highly honoured, not which were most useful, but

which were most astonishing. Amongst these the gift of tongues rose pre-eminent, as being in itself the most expressive of the new spiritual life; the very words, 'spiritual gifts,' 'spiritual man' (1 Cor. xiv. 1; Cor. xiv. 37,) seem in common parlance, to have been exclusively appropriated to it; and the other gifts, especially that of prophecy, were despised, as hardly proceeding from the same Divine source. To come at this particular exemplification of the factious and disorderly spirit which he had noticed in xi. 16—19, the apostle proceeds to show: (a.) That all the gifts which were bestowed upon the church, equally proceeded from the spirit (xii. 1—30). (b.) That love was to be their guide in all things (xii. 13.) (c.) That therefore the most useful were also the most exalted gifts (xiv. 1—25). and (d.) That order was to prevail throughout (xiv. 26—40.)

In answer, then, to the very plausible objection, that possession of a spiritual gift does not seem to render its recipient more spiritual, but that it rather develops presumption and spiritual pride, I reply, that it is in vain we expect an unmixed good on this side the grave. The case, now, is precisely what it was in the apostolic age, in this particular respect, and no one could be more sensible of the lamentable fact than Paul, who, nevertheless, exhorts the church to "covet the best gifts," and as a cure for every inconvenience and evil connected with them (to shun and denounce them as disorderly? no), to cultivate *charity* (1 Cor. xii. 31; and chap. xiii.) He hits no blot in "the escutcheon" of his fellow-labourer in the Lord's vineyard. much less pronounces it "indelible," but with loving and persuasive words, calls around him the misguided, the vain, and the trifling (as he might justly have deemed them), and acknowledging their zeal in all things, points out the folly of their contentions, and the especial value of all their various gifts. Some are apostles, bearing a message from Christ himself. Some are prophets with inspired utterance, some are teachers, well trained and learned, some interpret, some speak with tongues, some have the gift of healing, and some the discernment of spirits. Alas, why disagree on these points, and why pass such unloving judgment on each other? You who dare to adjudge your brother guilty of trifling with divine things, look deeply into your own heart, and see if your judgment has been influenced by that spirit of love which is not easily provoked and which thinketh no evil. It is thus Paul argues, in the noble exhortation to which I have alluded: "Love alone can give reality to the revelations of prophecy, the intuition of knowledge, the energy of faith * * * Look at her as she stands before you, portrayed in her full proportions; look at her kind unruffled

countenance, so unlike your factions and rivalries ; look at her freedom from the envy with which you regard each others' gifts ; look at her freedom from the display, the false pretensions, the vulgar insolence which disgrace your public meetings ; look at her refusal to press her own rights, to take offence, or to bear malice : how unlike your selfish and litigious spirit ; look at her sympathy with all that is good ; her endurance, her trustful and hopeful character, embracing as it does all that is greatest in her two accompanying graces, FAITH and HOPE. She continues, and so will they with her. For look, lastly, at her imperishable freshness ; what a contrast to the transitory character of all other gifts. The gift of tongues shall cease of itself when the occasion for it is gone. The gifts of prophecy and of knowledge, being in their own nature imperfect and partial, shall pass when this earthly system shall pass away before the coming of that which is perfect. Then, and not before, shall the inarticulate utterances, and the half-formed conceptions of our present infantine state, be exchanged for the full-grown faculties of the man ; then, and not before, shall the dimly seen images of the earthly glass be exchanged for that perfect vision of divine things which was enjoyed by Moses, when he stood with unveiled face on the mount, and received in his countenance the reflected glory of God himself. But till that time is come, we can conceive of the future only through these three great gifts, which exist now, and will continue hereafter ; namely, Faith and Hope, which live as the handmaids of the greatest of all, Love."

Had Paul lived in our day, it is precisely thus he might have addressed the Corinthians of this age—I mean the members of the New Church. It is not because there has been any change in the relation of the true church, internally, to its divine head, that divine visions and extraordinary spiritual gifts have ceased (as some suppose), but because there is no external reception in Christian love ; and the same deficiency accounts for the disorder and triviality of such gifts as occasionally manifest themselves. The divine economy is unchangeably the same towards the church, without favour for the apostolic, or any other age, and all in vain is the labour of the learned to prove that communications of this nature were confined to the times of the Apostles. To quote the words of Mr. Hartley, the personal friend of Swedenborg, ' In so contradicting the current testimony of church history, they show much prejudice and little modesty. The apostolical fathers, Barnabas, Clement, and Hermas (whose writings were revered as of canonical authority for four hundred years, and were read, together with the canonical Scriptures, in many of the churches), confirm the truth of

prophecy, divine visions, and miraculous gifts, continuing in the church after the apostolical age, both by their testimony and experience; and to pass over many other venerable names (among whom Tertullian and Origen are witnesses to the same truth afterwards), Eusebius, Cyprian, and Lactantius, still lower down, declare that extraordinary divine manifestations were not uncommon in their days. Cyprian is very express on this subject, praising God on that behalf, with respect to himself, to others of the clergy, and many of the people, using these words. 'The discipline of God over us never ceases by night and by day to correct and reprove; for not only by visions of the night, but also by day, even the innocent age of children among us is filled with the Holy Spirit, and they see, and hear, and speak, in extacy, 'such things as the Lord vouchsafes to admonish and instruct us by,' Epist. xvi.: and it was the settled belief of the early fathers of the church, that these divine communications, for direction, edification, and comfort, would never wholly cease therein.

"That extraordinary gifts became more rare in the church about the middle of the third century, is allowed by Cyprian himself, and such other writers; both contemporary and subsequent, as at the same time testified to the reality of them; and they account for it from the encouragement given to the pernicious doctrines of Epicurus, and other materialists at that time, which disposed many to turn everything supernatural and spiritual into mockery and contempt. In the next century, when the profession of Christianity became established by Constantine as the religion of the empire, and millions adopted it from its being the religion of the court, the fashion of the times, or the road to temporal emoluments; then Christianity appeared, indeed, more gorgeous in her apparel, but became less glorious within; was more splendid in form, but less vigorous in power; and so what the church gained in surface, she lost in depth. She suffered her faith to be corrupted by the impure mixtures of the heathenish philosophy, whilst the honours, riches, and pleasures of the world, insinuated themselves into her affections, stole away her graces, and so robbed her of her best treasure; inso-much, that many have made it a doubt whether in the time here spoken of, Paganism was more Christianized, or Christianity more Paganized."

Mr. Hartley, who penned this remarkable passage, was called away from the scene of his earthly labours many years before modern spiritualism and clairvoyance were heard of; or he might have added the testimony of his own experience to that of Cyprian and Tertullian;

certain facts within my own knowledge, being of exactly the same character as those which are put on record by the fathers. Tertullian, for example, speaks of a dear sister among the Christians of his day, who had obtained the gift of revelations, which, he says, "*She receives in the congregation, or solemn sanctuary, by extacy in the spirit;*" and he testifies, that "*she has converse with angels, and sees and hears sacred truths;*" nay, that "*she discerns the hearts of some, and ministers remedies to those who are in want of them.*" "Also," he adds, "*according as the Scriptures are read, or the Psalms sung, or exhortations uttered, or petitions presented, so from these several sources materials are furnished for her visions.*" All this, I repeat, has been exactly reproduced in our own times, though not received in "*the congregation, or solemn sanctuary.*" There has been no change in the internal constitution of the church, but its living body has been swathed in the cerements of formalism, and all its holy affections and instincts regarded as the dead.

The contempt in which the holy experiences of the *spiritual extatique* are now held, and the utter want of appreciation for other spiritual gifts—for example, the gift of prophecy, or speaking from impression—is a sign of the eclipse of faith, and of the denial of the perpetual inspiration promised to the church, more impressive even than the continuance of sin in the world. "To make way," as Law observed, "for parts, criticism, and language-learning to have the full management of salvation doctrines, the well-read scholar gives out that the ancient way of knowing the things of God, taught and practised by fishermen-apostles, is obsolete,—that they, indeed, required to have divine knowledge from the immediate and continual operation of the Holy Spirit; but that this state was only for a time, till genius and learning entered the pale of the church." "Behold, if ever, the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy place!" Or, as he further remarks, "the kingdom of God entirely shut up, and only a kingdom of Scribes and Pharisees come instead of it."

The very existence of Spiritualism in all its varied forms, within the Church and without, constitutes a demand of no ordinary significance upon her charity, if she possesses that virtue; and a reproach upon her pretensions if she does not. It suggests the necessity of a more social development of the church—a development so wide and loving, as to comprehend all these diversities of gifts and opinions, and eliminate from them all that is true and good. Spiritualism is the proof that the church, even in its official character, is co-extensive with humanity, and this been seen, no enlightened New Churchman will deem it pos-

sible to create orders of clergy, and thus put himself in the singular position of setting up a representation of spiritual gifts, while the gifts themselves are exercised in social circles, where no such distinction is sought, but all are governed by the spirit of Christian love. A social church, with spiritual gifts : a Christian brotherhood in our day, exercising a sovereign influence over the disorderly spiritual manifestations which are taking place around us, is surely not a vain dream ! To me it seems the result pointed at by the great discoveries which took place, and especially the opening of magnetism and clairvoyance, so soon after the announcement of the New Jerusalem by Swedenborg, whose leading doctrines were thus rendered in some sort experimental."

A VISION OF THE NIGHT.

Dr. Doddridge was on terms of very intimate friendship with Dr. Samuel Clarke, and in religious conversation they spent very many happy hours together. Among other matters, a very favorite topic was the intermediate state of the soul, and the probability that at the instant of dissolution it was not introduced into the presence of all the heavenly hosts. One evening, after a conversation of this nature, Dr. Doddridge retired to rest with his mind full of the subject discussed, and in "the visions of the night" his ideas were shaped into the following beautiful form.

He dreamed that he was at the house of a friend, when he was suddenly taken dangerously ill. By degrees he seemed to himself to grow worse, and at last to expire. In an instant he was sensible that he had exchanged the prison house of suffering and mortality, for a state of liberty and happiness. Embodied in a slender aerial form, he seemed to float in a region of pure light. Beneath him lay the earth, but not a glittering city or village, the forest or the sea, was visible. There was nought to be seen below save the melancholy group of his friends, weeping around his lifeless remains.

Himself thrilled with delight, he was surprised at their tears, and attempted to inform them of his happy change, but by some mysterious power, utterance was denied ; and as he anxiously leaned over the mourning circle, gazing fondly upon them and struggling to speak, he rose silently upon the air, their forms became more and more indistinct and gradually melted away from his sight. Reposing upon golden clouds, he found himself swiftly mounting the skies with a venerable figure at his side, guiding his mysterious movements, and in whose countenance he remarked the linaments of youth and age were blended together with an intimate harmony and majestic sweetness. They travelled through a vast region of empty space, until at length the battlements of a glorious edifice shone in the distance, and its forms rose brilliant and distinct among the far off shadows that flitted athwart their path ;

the guide informed him that the palace he beheld, was, for the present, to be his mansion of rest. Gazing upon its splendor he replied, that while on earth he had often heard that the eye had not seen, nor had the ear heard, nor could it enter into the heart of man to conceive the things which God had prepared for those who love him ; but, notwithstanding the building to which they were then rapidly approaching was superior to anything which he had actually before beheld, yet its grandeur had not exceeded the conceptions he had formed. The guide made no reply, they were already at the door and entered. The guide introduced him into a spacious apartment, at the extremity of which stood a table, covered with a snow white cloth, a golden cup, and a cluster of grapes, and then said he must now leave him, but that he must remain, for he would receive, in a short time, a visit from the Lord of the mansion, and that during the interval, before his arrival, the apartment would furnish him with sufficient entertainment and instruction.

The guide vanished, and he was left alone. He began to examine the decorations of the room, and observed that the walls were adorned with a number of pictures. Upon nearer inspection he found, to his astonishment that they formed a complete biography of his own life. Here he saw upon the canvas that angels, though unseen, had ever been his familiar attendants, and sent by God they had sometimes preserved him from imminent peril. He beheld himself first represented as an infant just expiring, when his life was prolonged by an angel gently breathing into his nostrils. Most of the occurrences here delineated were perfectly familiar to his recollection, and unfolded many things which he had never before understood, and which had perplexed him with many doubts and much uneasiness. Among others, he was particularly struck with a picture in which he was represented as falling from his horse, when death would have been inevitable had not an angel received him in his arms, and broken the force of his descent. These merciful interpositions of God filled him with joy and gratitude, and his heart overflowed with love as he surveyed in them all an exhibition of goodness and mercy far beyond all that he had imagined. Suddenly his attention was arrested by a rap at the door. The Lord of the mansion had arrived. The door opened and he entered. So powerful and so overwhelming, and withal of such singular beauty was his appearance, that he sunk down at his feet completely overcome by his majestic presence. His Lord gently raised him from the ground, and taking his hand led him forward to the table. He pressed with his fingers the juice of the grapes into the golden cup, and after having himself drunk, presented it to him, saying, this is the new wine in my Father's kingdom. No sooner had he partaken, than all uneasy sensations vanished, perfect love had cast out fear, and he conversed with Jesus, as an intimate friend. Like the silver rippling of a summer sea, he heard fall from his lips the grateful approbation :—" Thy labors are over, thy work is approved, rich and glorious is thy reward." Thrilled with an unspeakable bliss, that glided over his spirit and slid into the very depths of his soul, he suddenly saw glories upon glories bursting upon his view,

The doctor awoke. Tears of rapture from his joyful interview were rolling down his cheeks. Long did the lively impressions of this charming dream remain upon his mind, and never could he speak of it without emotions of joy and tenderness.

THE PREVALENCE OF SPIRITUALISM.

We are informed that Prince Adelbert, the brother of the king of Bavaria, is not only a full believer in the facts of Spiritualism, but that he is himself a medium of a high order. He has been for some time informed that an entirely new musical instrument is soon to be given to the world through spirit influence.

It is curious that a similar communication has also been made to a gentleman in England, known to us. We do not know if the performance of these communications is to be expected in a natural sense, but what if the new musical instrument should be the human heart made new, by being put in rhythm with the things of God, and by being opened to receive His Divine harmonies?

THE DIFFICULTIES OF SPIRITUALISM.

It is not many months since I was first initiated into the wonderful mysteries of Spiritualism—I am yet an unlearned disciple, with only an earnest desire to know in full, what is yet very dark to me,—and to realize the promise that is often made to me from the Spirit-world,—*of the prevalence of full light*. I know the kindly spirit existing amongst the recipients of this new manifestation, to help the new and unenlightened among their brethren.—If I may trust to this,—and, by making known my difficulties occasionally,—receive the light I truly desire, my enlighteners will receive a blessing for forwarding in her ascent, one to whom it has been promised that she will be truly strong in the furtherance and advancement of Spiritualism. Some kind friend has just sent me, anonymously, the first No. for this year of "*The British Spiritual Telegraph*," (my first acquaintance with it) and in reading it, I have fallen anew upon stumbling-blocks which I trust, by making them known, may be removed. In the first place, it is asserted in this as in other writings upon the same subject, that the proving of the spirits with whom we commune, may be effected by the directions long since given by St. John. "Every Spirit which confesseth that Christ is come in the flesh, is of God."

At one time, to my sorrow, I trusted to this proving, and continued with my younger sister "Innocence" to commune with those who, by this confession, I supposed to have declared themselves. Our communications often struck me with amazement and great doubt;—yet my ignorance in these matters, I knew to be very great; and mystical doctrines given by one deceiver, to enlighten what had aroused distrust in the last, were received with a certain amount of wondering credulity:—so long as they left untouched the truths of our Bible—and only appertained to mysteries which it does not lighten for us. Additionally, my eyes were closed by the *innocuous* communications received. Our dear-

est ones, many thousand miles from us, were not made mediums for terror, which we were aware evil spirits knew, might have affected some of us almost irrecoverably. Every thing we heard, was only too satisfactory and delightful.

On one night (last new year's eve) this sister and I, and my mother (Truth) were sitting, and received the following startling message:—"Dear Mamma, I am your little child "Bliss," and very happy." This devilish impersonation of a little brother who died almost immediately after its birth,—was carried on in a manner to deceive us all into tears and inconceivable delight. After some time, these arch-deceptions failed signally of their archness, and became more like the jabber of idiots; and so, downwards, when we were suddenly stayed in our danger by a sister at a distance.

"The messages you receive, believe not; they come from lying spirits who love a lie. Believe them not. If you continue, it will certainly do you great harm. They are infamous inventions of Satan." This, my only and other sister, "Pity," has been attended on almost exclusively from her first development, and latterly entirely so, by good Spirits—as we know from surer authority than our own. May not this unhappy experience then prove that the test given by St. John, is not good for these times, and for these spirits,—but was intended (as I long suspected before this corroboration) for his own times, and the spirits of living men who taught in those first ages of Christianity, when such a confession might indeed be a test:—the incarnation of Christ being the then stone of stumbling, and a truth unestablished, and consequently readily doubted. At the present time, our faith is too strong to admit of a hearing of those spirits who denied it: and the devils' cunning would teach them that, coming with such doctrine, we should revert to the prophecies of Antichrist; and their deceptions would be overthrown. They will certainly take better masks, and come with more insinuating lies. It would be an inestimable mercy to many like some of ourselves, if any of the far-advanced Spiritualists would send us a better guide to the nature of those we converse with. For it is a hindrance to many,—the fear that theirs may be actually the till-now-almost-unheard-of horror, of speaking with devils.

This has brought me now to another subject of wonder and darkness, viz:—the reason—if there is any—for some having the attendance of *only the bad* while others are ever "en rapport" with *only the good*. In the pamphlet entitled "The Ministry of Angels realized," we are given, as guidance, what certainly seems a sure preparation for communion with saints and angels, "Come with confidence; come with elevated thoughts; with the Lord's Prayer engraven on your hearts; come with devout minds—&c. and there are promises of all good attending on those two or three met together. We have been much dispirited and puzzled by the strange and contrary experience of some of us. That sister, "Pity," who has ever had such blessings waiting upon her from the first, is the only one of us who is indifferent to the amazing light revealed to us. She sits only in kindness to us, and in consideration for what she calls our monomania: and she is encouraged by angelic messages of comfort of tenderest love, assurance, and entreaties to believe. The idea of commencing her sittings with

thoughts *prepared*, is quite strange to her, and she receives all, with just so much belief as is forced upon her, and follows it up with simple motives of kindness to us. Just lately, immediately after *Pity's* absence on a visit, my younger sister discovers herself the possessor of what she conceives to be the reward of her persevering development; and our sittings were commenced with rapture and thoughts elevated by the supposed presence of our longed-for angels: and the experiences I have already made, the opening subject of my troubles is the result. From first to last, she has been unvisited by another order.

Is there any one of the more favoured brethren who can and will stretch out a hand to help a young sister who is in sorrow from an experience so truly alarming?

May it be, (as I endeavour to comfort her with assurances of) that there is a *natural* law attendant upon the first development of some, whereby angels are unable to approach and mingle their heavenly-pure atmospheres with that of the child of earth?

Any comfort, any re-assurance, would be a blessing to this one who has received such a shock to all her hopes.—I mention nothing of my own experience in this matter, as I am yet, to my sorrow, powerless, though after months of perseverance. I am only sustained by the ceaseless encouragements and assurances of my unusually great rewards in store.

To the goodness of any one who would send a new Angel's message, or direct us where to seek for aid, upon these matters of darkness,—we can only return our truest thanks.

"TEACHER,"

"OXFORD."

[We have much pleasure in the foregoing because it is not right to put forward one view only of the subject, and what our earnest correspondent complains of, and asks advice in, is by no means confined to her case. The answer is not so easy, for as we have said before, it involves the whole point of Spiritualism. To what extent are spiritual communications of whatever kind, attracted or tinged by the law of their influx, and passage through the mind of the medium, and are they not modified largely by natural conditions not appreciable by us? For instance why can raps and physical manifestations only be produced through some, writing through others, drawing through others? So far as our experience goes it appears that the first difficulty is to find a channel through which the flow of the spirit can be made manifest at all, and that much of what appears in the early days of mediumship, is merely the trying to make and keep this channel open through the heart. It is very frequent that it is said through mediums whose communications are evident nonsense, that it is *for practice to try their faith*, and certainly it is often so sore a trial of it that many stop there altogether, when by going on, the channels would become less and less muddy, till they allowed the spirit to flow through in a pelucid stream. It may even be doubted

what the highest and best state will not be, when these violent and conscious manifestations give place to that silent flowing in and through the soul, which is almost unconscious, or only to be afterwards recognized as the working of the holy Providence of God.

Even supposing that "the jabber of idiots" is the work of evil spirits in the instance given, and which we very much doubt, it could do no harm to the soul, whilst its origin is so readily detected, for it is not the attacks of Evil Spirits which hurt us, but the carrying out into our lives of their suggestions. Prayer and a reliance on the providence of God, will prevent our falling under their temptations and it is not unfortunately confined to Spiritualists to be in contact with evil powers. Our Saviour had his temptations, and he is our pattern. Besides are they not always attacking us whether we believe in Spiritualism or not, and is it not better by the aid of Spiritualism to be thus put on our guard against them and to know and feel that it is they who attack us, instead of being blindly influenced by them. Spiritualism appears to give us an experimental religion instead of a vague one, to bring us face to face with the mysteries of our being and thus to guard us against our being, taken unawares.

Whatever comes to her, "Teacher" must not abdicate her power and duty of judgment, or be blindly led by any influence. Still less must she expect that a stream of heavenly truth will run through her heart, until it is freely cleansed by many trials and by many prayers. She has already realized what she should be deeply thankful for—the great fact of spirit intercourse, and of the immortal and continuing life in the great Spirit-World of those who have gone before. This fact alone is worth many disappointments, for it is the gem in our earthly crown. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." "Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it, for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Ed.]

SPIRIT DRAWINGS. The *Daily News* in passing its remarks on the "Exhibition of the Society of Female Artists," which is now open at No. 7, Haymarket, thus notices the two drawings, which we mentioned in our last as being accepted at the Exhibition:—

"Two subjects, entitled 'From Dreamland' (Nos. 240 & 245) are, we believe, what are called 'Spirit Drawings,' and the skilful and practised artist, only imagines herself the 'medium' for some defunct flower painter. Certainly such flowers never grew on earth, and Botanists would be sorely puzzled to find their stamens and pistils. Not having consulted the oracles of Dreamland, we can only refer one of these night-mare, though elegant fancies, to a late supper and view of the Comet, and a convolvulus paper-hanging—the other we give up altogether."

Had the worthy critic read our last number, he would not have so readily conceded the true point of Spiritualism in these pictures, by speaking of "the skilful and practised artist." We there said that they were produced through a lady who has never received any instruction in the art, and that knowing nothing even of the mixing or the harmony of the colors, she receives all her directions either by impression, or by writing done through her hand. The critic also mistakes as to "The defunct Flower Painter" being anything but a dream of his own. For a first attempt at "consulting the oracles of dream-land" the critic has been tolerably successful, and if he goes on in this way, he will soon be able to enlighten his readers with a description of the second drawing also.

THE LONDON COMMITTEE. We are happy to announce that the subscription towards defraying the expenses of the Free list of 200 copies of the *Telegraph* is daily increasing, and that the movement has been very generally approved, 200 copies of our last issue were sent to addresses furnished by the Committee, who earnestly request our friends to send them names which may be usefully put on the free list, addressed to Dr. Dixon, 25, Bedford-row, London, W. C.

We hope that those friends of Spiritualism, who are enabled to subscribe, will send a subscription, large or small, to the Treasurer. It is not intended to publish the amounts, but only the names of Subscribers, (who do not object) "Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering."

We re-print the resolutions passed at the meeting of the 6th February last.

Resolved,—That a twelve month's subscription be entered into, to enable a Committee to subscribe for at least 200 copies of each issue of the *British Spiritual Telegraph*; and for providing for the expense of disseminating by Post or otherwise.

Resolved,—That the following gentlemen compose the Committee: Dr. Ashburner, Messrs. Allman, Bielfeld, Dixon, Fawcett, Jones, Turley, and Wilkinson.

Resolved,—That Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, of Hampstead, London, N. W. be the Treasurer.

NEW WORKS.

"**THE USE OF CLAIRVOYANCE IN MEDICINE**, by Dr. Mill, 90, Great Russell-street: White, 36, Bloomsbury street." Price 1s. This is a Work in direct connexion with Spiritualism, and foreshadows one of the holiest uses, to be brought out in brighter light, when man shall be in deeper spiritual communion with the source of all physical and mental health. Its facts are not less wonderful than well attested, and are put forward in well-reasoned and quiet language.

"**GHOST STORIES**—by Mrs. Catherine Crow: Newby, London." This is another collection by Mrs. Crowe of Stories similar to those in her former Work, "The Night side of Nature." Some of them are very striking, and all are well told, but it is only right to say that Mrs. Crowe, who in her Preface "declines to

say whether or not she has ever seen a ghost," merely retails stories told to her by her friends, and that sometimes she is not quite careful to confine herself to what she hears, nor herself to make sufficient inquiry into correlative facts which would materially strengthen the stories. We reverence only proved facts, and are not so credulous as the world judges us, but wish our readers to use all prudence before giving themselves up to entire belief of an Author who does not herself take sufficient precautions.

"THE HERALD OF LIGHT: Editor, Rev. T. L. Harris, 447, Broome-street, New York." Price 8d.—Agent: White, 36, Bloomsbury-street, London. This is a Monthly Journal of a high phase of Spiritualism, conducted by Mr. Harris, the Author of "Arcana of Christianity," and whose prolific pen, and tongue have been loosened by the deep sympathies roused within him by the inflow of Spirit-life. He is the representative man of Christian Spiritualism in America, and his writings are full of hope for all those who are looking for larger charity and more love. He raises true Spiritualism to the dignity of a "New Church" which he says in the motto of his Journal, "is the body of Christ, including within itself the good of every sect and persuasion throughout the world, excluding none. In its visible form it embraces all who confess that Jesus is the Lord, who receive the Holy Scriptures as His own word, and accept his doctrine of regeneration through obedience to its commandments, and in the use of a godly and self-denying life."

"SWEDENBORG: A Lecture by I. N. Fletcher: W. Tweedie, 337, Strand, London," Price 4d. An eloquent and condensed view of the life and philosophy of this great Son of Science, and of his subsequent high office when the mysteries of spirit-life were opened in his soul, and he became the great Seer of the "Things that are," and brought the future to the present. It is a sketch from which every Spiritualist will get rich ideas, and more knowledge of the greatest "medium" of the latter days.

Our last two volumes are now on sale, price 1s. each, at 20, Paternoster-row, also back numbers, as well as the Essays by Dr. Aahburner.

EIGHTEEN YEARS A TRANCE PREACHER.

The Cadiz (Ohio) *Republican* says that Mrs. Burney, of Tippecanoe, Harrison county, Ohio, a highly respectable lady, and a member of the Presbyterian church, during a peculiar condition of her physical and mental organization, has preached a sermon half an hour long, every other Sunday at ten o'clock, for eighteen years. While preaching she reclines upon a bed. Her instructions are generally excellent, and abound in spiritual quotations; but when she recovers her consciousness, she has no recollection of what she has been saying. Several years ago her case excited the attention of several medical gentlemen, who, while they had the utmost confidence in her sincerity, could give no satisfactory explanation of the mystery. Modern Spiritualism, however, throws a clear light upon all such phenomena.—*Spiritual Age*.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. B. Bristol. Your suggestion of forming a lending Library of Spiritual Literature is a very good one, and the books you offer will make a good beginning. Dr. Dixon, 25, Bedford-row, London, has promised to receive them. Any contributions of Works in connexion with Spiritualism will be taken care of by him.

W. L. York, recommends that each copy sent gratuitous, should contain a notice to the effect that only a few would be thus distributed, so as to "give them an opportunity of judgment on the Work, that they may decide for themselves whether they would wish to become subscribers, giving them to understand the terms" &c. The suggestion is a good one. Respecting the dates for publishing, they are, the 1st and 15th of each month, and for a time, we shall be necessitated to publish a Supplement to each No. the same price as the Telegraph. Twelve copies, will invariably comprise one Vol. Subscriptions for Telegraph and Supplement for twelve issues, are, 3s. including postage, or two copies of each, 4s. 6d. The present Series of Essays by Dr. Ashburner on the "Connexion between Mesmerism and Spiritualism" will be made up in a separate pamphlet. Future Articles will be embodied in the Telegraph.

ANCIENT. We heartily coincide with you in the production of well authenticated ancient manifestations; we are collecting some material of that nature and are also in expectation of an article shortly from the pen of Mr. Howitt which will meet your wishes.

ENOCK. Mr. R. D. Owen will return to America; his Work is in preparation. We know of no man living with less symptoms of that kind. We expect to be favored with an article from his pen shortly.

"Economy." You can obtain a copy of either J. S. Rymer's or E. Rich's pamphlet by enclosing six postage stamps to W. White, 36, Bloomsbury St. London, W. C., or both for twelve stamps.

J. S. R. His letter is thankfully acknowledged, and if possible the lecture will be used in the way suggested. We shall be glad to hear from him with other material. The lecture has reached us.

AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT. Please forward two copies of 'Practical Christian,' No. 20, and debit.

RECEIVED. "Brother Spiridion." E. P. G., (his should have been acknowledged in our last.) An Essay upon the Ghost belief of Shakespeare, by A. Roffe, with thanks.

Just Published, Price 2s. 6d.

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BY EDMUND H. SEARS,

"Works like these are much wanted among us. They are destined to exert a considerable influence upon the world, and while they bring a divine peace to the sorrowful heart, they inspire a strength and hope that lift the soul above the sordid temptations, and weary cares of ordinary existence.—INQUIRER.

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