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## SPIRITUALISM AND SOME OF ITS RECENT CRITICS:

A REPLY TO CERTAIN ARGUMENTS AND OBJECTIONS.

By M. A. (OXON).

The Unseen Universe; or, Physical Speculations on a Future Life. 1875.

The Unseen Universe. By Professor Clifford, F.R.S. *Fortnightly Review*, June, 1875.

Glimpses of the Supernatural. By Rev. F. G. Lee, D.C.L. 1875.

Modern Mysteries Explained and Exposed. By Rev. A. Mahan. 1855.

The Phenomena of Spiritualism scientifically Explained and Exposed. By Asa Mahan, D.D. 1875.

It is useful at times to gather together such a list of books as that which heads this article. It is well to see the increased notice which Spiritualism attracts, to mark the different ways in which it strikes divers minds, and to gather up into convenient compass the reflections which arise from a perusal of objections. None of the works named would individually merit a reply from the stand-point of the Spiritualist. The most pretentious of the writers—Dr. Mahan—does indeed labour hard to crush the noxious thing out of the land, but as he has been engaged for twenty years at the hydra with a similar result to that which befel assaulters of the fabled monster of antiquity, he may well be left to himself. When, twenty years ago, Dr. Mahan rushed forth, a Hercules to the fray, with his exposure of the modern mysteries, Spiritualism was a small matter in England. Few ever heard its name, and it flourished, or rather lingered in silence and seclusion. Its votaries were few, and its apostles of small fame. Since then, spite of many a blow from many an opponent more doughty than Asa Mahan, it has increased and multiplied, until its fame pervades the land, and its phenomena are the talk of all society. Its votaries are to be found everywhere, in the highest ranks of fashion, and in the humblest and

lowliest walks of life, in the centres of educated opinion, among men well able "to give a reason for the faith that is in them," and among the most unlettered, who believe because they have seen, and are little given to casuistical hair-splitting. It flourishes in the busy centres of city life, among practical men who have outgrown the swaddling-clothes of ancient faiths, and among the workers in far-distant hamlets who can boast of little theology, but who have learned of the hereafter and its hopes from the lips of some departed friend who has preceded them to the Summerland. The truth which it enshrines has a vitality which no objection can destroy. The heart and the head both welcome it, and the instinct of affection is strengthened by the logic of fact. If we cannot thank Dr. Mahan for judicious efforts to spread this truth abroad, we may at least condole with him on the untoward results that have followed his first volume, and venture on a complacent hope that his *rechauffé* of it under another title may meet with a similar fate. If the first effort was unable to harm the infant, the second and feebler onslaught can scarcely hurt the grown man.

But Dr. Mahan's lucubrations will come under notice in their due course. We do but notice them here as evidence of the widespread interest which the subject attracts, and the apprehensions which it excites in certain somewhat fossilized types of mind which do not readily grasp new truths.

"*Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*" Let us hear what the Rev. F. G. Lee says of the spread of Modern Spiritualism. "Spiritualism," he says (*Glimpses of the Supernatural*, vol. ii. p. 139), "when first it appeared and took shape, was treated with contempt. The facts urged by its supporters were denied: the manifestations almost universally disbelieved in. It was declared to be the work of acute knaves, or the offspring of idle and imaginative dreamers. Public writers treated it with scornful contempt. Reports of its strange proceedings and extraordinary developments were knowingly and deliberately suppressed. It was hastily hustled off the public stage, refused a hearing, and denied a defence. This policy, however convenient to its promoters, has failed. Sneers have not killed it. Its ideas and theories have been reduced to a formal system, while its votaries have increased to an extent scarcely credited."

This is a candid utterance. If the remainder of the work were as well-informed and out-spoken we should have no reason to find fault with its conclusion. Doubtless an acceptance of the phenomenal part of Spiritualism is spreading very rapidly. Men have not got yet beyond facts: theories will come in due time: but, as to facts, there is much to induce acceptance in our day. Credible witnesses are being multiplied every week. The

manifestations themselves are being placed beyond the reach of cavil by such scientific experiments as those of Mr. Crookes. Careful and well-reasoned accounts of observations at séances are not so rare as they used to be. And (let us not forget to be thankful) Maskelyne and Cook are still kind enough to advertise the subject copiously, and to lend it the valuable aid of their indiscriminate abuse. And so, from various causes, the subject grows and flourishes among us. Even the blows dealt by its friends—far more serious than any its enemies can inflict—do but bring out into clearer view the truth that is in it. The recent Katie King exposures in America, which seemed at one time so ruinous, have furnished Col. Olcott with opportunity of demonstrating to a certainty the reality of the phenomenon which was assailed, and of opening out evidence of a deep-laid plot on the part of influential leaders of opinion to vamp up evidence for the purpose of crushing a dreaded return to superstition. The still more recent raid on Spiritualism in Paris, of which it would have been indecorous to speak at large until the conclusion of the trial, was probably due to priestly persecution; and the means used have been those which are more usually associated with the dark ages and the familiars of the Inquisition, than with the nineteenth century and the administration of justice. That one poor wretch has succumbed to temptation, and has accepted the proffered conditions of escape, by denying his gifts, and branding himself as an impostor, is melancholy, but scarcely wonderful. Many a better man has fallen as low before; and no pseudo-confession of a self-convicted impostor, who would have us to believe that he has traded for years on the holiest and most sacred feelings of his fellow-men, can weigh a feather's weight in the scale of evidence.

It is no secret that the strange book which we have placed first on our list, "The Unseen Universe; or, Physical Speculations on a Future Life," is the joint-work of Professor Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., and Professor Tait, F.R.S., names honourably known, and commanding great respect in the domain of physical science. The review of their work in the *Fortnightly* is from the pen of Professor Clifford, F.R.S., an accomplished and well-known mathematician. Both the authors and the reviewer touch upon Spiritualism, and we have an opportunity of hearing what these eminent men of science have to say upon the subject. It is true that not one of the three has any practical knowledge of the subject to guide him; but they are men of mark, possessing trained scientific minds, and two of them are professors of Natural Philosophy, earnest students of nature; while the third has received a careful mathematical training, by

which the logical processes may be presumed to be strengthened and developed. Place, then, for the men of science.

This is what Messrs. Stewart and Tait have to say. After noticing the religious aspect of different forms of faith, from that of ancient Egypt to modern Christianity, they notice the latest development of modern Spiritualism thus :—

“They [Spiritualists] assert the presence among them of the spirits of the departed, assuming sometimes a visible shape; and they compare these appearances to those which are recorded in the sacred writings. But there is this prominent distinction between the two:—The spiritual communications recorded in Scripture are represented as made to those unprepared to receive them, and also for the most part as taking place in open daylight, or, to speak more properly, having no sort of reference to light or darkness. Whatever be their explanation, they have an open-air look about them. On the other hand, the manifestations received by the Spiritualists take place, as a rule, in insufficient light, if not in total darkness, and in presence of those who are in a state of mental excitement. Now, for our own part, we should not be disposed to credit any communication from the world of spirits that was not made in open daylight, and to those unprepared to receive it, and therefore unprejudiced.”

That is a clear and unmistakeable statement, and we venture to characterise it as one of the most extraordinary ever put forward by sane and responsible men. Stripped of irrelevant matter, it comes to this, that the impressions of a startled person, who has seen a ghost, and has thereby been scared into a fit, are more trustworthy than the carefully recorded observations of a dozen trained and accurate experimenters, who have become familiar with the facts which they observe, and can tabulate and record the most remarkable of them, in face-to-face converse with spirits, without any quickening of the pulse, or the slightest acceleration of the heart's action. That which, by its very nature, is startling at first and discomposing, is of value when it comes suddenly and without warning, but of none when it is waited for, watched, analysed, and recorded by trained observers, on occasions again and again repeated. Is this indeed so? Then is the scientific method of no avail; and Messrs. Stewart and Tait must set their own house in order before they bring the broom into ours! On no other subject would two responsible men have been found to imperil their reputation by writing such nonsense. But hear their reviewer :—

“The other form of the traditional conception is one which the lower races of men have always taught to their conquerors, as vermin are left in a house by the ejected tenant. Witches or wizards, whole impostors or half dupes, support a wretched and criminal existence by preying on the credulity of simple people who would have speech of the dead. To these, frightened or cajoled, they show such lying and pitiful wonders as the sun is ashamed to see. The Spiritualism of our days is a survival of, or relapse into, the low cunning of savage times, none the less disgraceful to our generation because it may seem pardonable in more bestial and less human

types. The coarse and clumsy audacities of women who must needs be in some way talked about are backed by the trickery of keener-witted knaves, clever enough to hunt out and mimic the feats of older fire-eaters and floaters, and thereby to deceive even some of those who have lived so long in the pure air of honest and patient research that they cannot believe in fraud so vile and detestable."

The language contrasts well with that of the previous extract, whose clear and precise sentences leave a sharp impress on the mind, and show that the writer can at least write English, if he cannot write sense about Spiritualism. But this reviewer, who, by education, should be so clear and accurate, is sometimes unintelligible, and always turgid and bombastic, where he is not even worse. Of the nature of the attack on all religion which the Editor has consented to print (in a modified form, if report speaks truly), it is not our province to speak at length. Its character is such as to shock the taste and feelings even of the most iconoclastic, and to cause a universal feeling of regret and surprise that Professor Clifford should have penned it, and that Mr. Morley should have been ill-advised enough to print it. Such a mixture of blasphemy and buffoonery is unworthy of the *Fortnightly*. It is the melancholy product of a soured and discontented spirit, that has rebounded from one pole of maudlin pietism to the other extreme of destructive atheism. With this we do not deal. A choice specimen of the Professor's language may, however, be worth preserving as a curiosity:—

"For you, noble and great ones, who have loved and laboured yourselves' not for yourselves, but for the universal folk—in your time, not for your time only, but for the coming generations—for you there shall be life as broad and far-reaching as your love, for your life-giving action to the utmost reach of the great wave whose crest you sometimes were."

Why all this pother? Translated into English from bad Carlylese, it simply means that Mr. Clifford is vastly indignant that anybody should expect to live after death; that all attempts to prove it are mere rubbish; that Spiritualism is an imposture; and that he imagines himself to have discovered the fraud. Well, he did once, we believe, go to a séance, at which some remarkable phenomena occurred, which were not explicable on any hypothesis that could be put forward; therefore, of course, as the Professor would say, they *must be produced by fraud*. But we are not aware that he has devoted himself further to the study of the subject. If he has, it has been to singularly little purpose, for he is still ignorant of its very alphabet.

Nobody should know better than Professor Clifford the value of an induction from a single instance. Nobody is better able than himself to estimate the value of what he has written. Nobody, if the case were not his own, would be more ready to denounce such words coming from a man who leaves the domain



of mathematical science, in which he holds a deservedly high place, to pour out such vapid criticism on a subject of which he knows absolutely nothing. Mr. Gladstone relinquishing statesmanship for Protestant polemics is a spectacle that "might make angels weep." In a small way, Mr. Clifford vituperating Spiritualism—"slanging like a blaspheming pagan," as W. R. G. says of the man whose tricks of language the Professor burlesques—is melancholy too. Even if he had anything to say worth the saying, we should regret that he should go out of his way to meddle with a subject removed by the whole heaven from his own proper sphere. As he has nothing whatever to say, the pity is so much the greater.

This, then, is what we get from our men of science, who are to us the interpreters of the truths which Nature teaches, and who have spent laborious lives in exploring and expounding them. From these accredited teachers we learn that the true method of scientific investigation is to have no method at all. We are carefully to dissociate the mind from any object of observation; to expect nothing; to be utterly unprepared; and then, if any visitant from the land beyond the tomb should chance to run across us, we may hope to be sufficiently frightened to give our record of the interview a true scientific value.

From the other F.R.S. we learn that aspirations after immortality are survivals of savagery, and investigations in the domain of spirit the pastime of fools, who are the ready dupes of "women who must needs be in some way talked about," or of "keener-witted knaves." Man's noblest end is to recognise himself as a material machine; his noblest aspiration, to do somewhat, perchance to solve some curious mathematical problem, which, when he is done with and would otherwise be forgotten, shall cause another automaton to mention him as a rather good specimen of a calculating machine, considering the age in which he lived.

It may be that our blinded eyes cannot see the full glory of such aspirations. To us they seem as the blinkings of the owl or the bat, which cannot see, and can still less understand, the beauty and brightness of spiritual truth. If to aspire to immortality, and to long for spiritual knowledge, be a survival of savagery, of what, we pray you, Mr. Darwin, is this a trace? From which of the lower brutes came this strange predilection?

We turn from the men of science to the theologian. He, at least, does not disbelieve in the phenomena of Spiritualism; nor is he disposed to under-rate the significance of its teaching. In the volumes before us—"Glimpses of the Supernatural"—he has collected together a mass of ghost stories which would be invaluable (as they say in advertisements) in a country house at

Christmas time. They have astonished the *Saturday*, which, in reviewing the book, for once forgot to be severe, and have even conciliated the *Echo*, which usually gets black in the face at the mention of spirit, but which apparently does not object to a ghost, if it be sufficiently antique, and can be warranted not to interfere in any way. Ghost stories on the lines of fairy tales it does not so much mind; but they must not get out of the legendary into the real.

The ghost stories, however, are not of much value. They are more or less accurate records of spiritual manifestations in ages past, such as are occurring all round us now. We are concerned more with the attitude of our author to Spiritualism. It is a singular one. All traces of Spiritualism within the Catholic Church are real; all others, diabolic. Considering the position of the writer—a beneficed clergyman in the Protestant Established Church of England—this attitude is not a little remarkable; and the singular nature of his pretensions is not diminished on further investigation. The title-page of his book bears the inscription, “by the Rev. F. G. Lee, D.C.L., vicar of All Saints’, Lambeth.” Now, the D.C.L. is the distinctive designation of the Oxford Doctor of Laws, as LL.D. is of the Cambridge Doctor. This is so well known among informed persons that any one appending the letters to his name is as surely assumed to be the bearer of a diploma from the University as is an F.R.C.S. to be a Fellow of the College of Surgeons, or a C.B. to be a Companion of the Bath. That diploma is a coveted and valuable distinction, granted only to members who have gained it after residence and examination, or to distinguished men on whom it has been conferred *honoris causâ*, as it was the other day on Sir J. Lubbock and Sir W. Grove. The fact is that Mr. Lee did once matriculate at Oxford, but left without any degree, save that, by virtue of a now obsolete statute, he was allowed to put the worthless letters S.C.L. after his name. Since then he has got a degree from some University of Salamanca, about as valuable as O.P.Q., or any other combination of letters, so far as any one here knows. If Mr. Lee would sail straight, he should cut off his head and tail. The “Rev.” which he uses (rightly enough) as a beneficed clergyman in England would be as much esteemed by his friends in “the Roman Catholic portion of the One Family of God” (as he unctuously puts it) as would the D.C.L. of Salamanca by the University of Oxford. Pretensions which, when looked into, are of such a character, do not predispose us to estimate very highly the mental calibre of the man who puts them forward. The mind which cannot see the folly of stringing together unmeaning letters, mere tinsel counterfeits of the real, is not strong or well-balanced. It partakes of that flighty character which is

usually supposed to be a characteristic of Spiritualists. Perhaps it is hence that the author so readily believes both in the phenomena of Spiritualism and in the Devil who causes them—outside of the “Roman Catholic branch of the One Family of God,” we mean, of course.

The chapters on Spiritualism are very curious reading. The peculiar faculty which Mr. Lee's correspondents have for smelling brimstone is most odd. One clergyman, after witnessing some very ordinary rappings at a table, asked the spirit his name and address. He got it, and because he did not admire the character of the person whose name was given, he says—“This was enough for me. What I had heard and seen convinced me that necromancy was practised. I left the house, protecting myself by the sacred sign, convinced of the sin of the practice.” It would have been more to the point if he had “protected himself by the sacred sign,” and remained where he was, until he had some better reasons for forming an opinion.

Another clergyman saw a table levitated to the height of seven feet. He says—“I was so shocked and horrified at what I beheld, and so firmly convinced that the remarkable actions we had witnessed were the result of the invocation and intervention of evil spirits (!), that I declined, in language most positive and unmistakeable, to have any further part in such unlawful performances.” This very dogmatic and inconsequent person next pulled out “a small silver crucifix, which had been blessed by a high ecclesiastical dignitary” (he does not say whether in the “R.C. branch of the One Family” or not), and set to work to exorcise in the name of the Trinity. Bringing all his dogged will to bear, he paralysed the proceedings, which were, therefore, clearly diabolic. He does not appear to know that it was his will, not his invocation, that did it, and that “Fee, fi, fo, fum,” or any other formula, would have had a similar effect.

Another gentleman seems to have had a funny little table that was (so he found out) possessed by a devil, who simulated his child, and conversed very affectionately with him, until, in an evil moment, on a certain day, it “turned at right angles and went into the corner of the room.” This aroused the suspicions of the gentleman (we are not told why), and he “went for” that table with an adjuration *secundum artem*. It had the desired effect in unmasking the demon; and the gentleman at once got rid of the intruder by the melodramatic utterance, “Accursed spirit! leave the room.” We would give something to see that tableau on the stage, with Mr. Toole, in an attitude of defiance, commanding an accursed spirit to “leave the room.” We should not need any other mirth-provoker for some time to come.



This is a sufficient specimen of the tone of mind in which the editor approaches the subject, and of the way in which he handles it. Brimstone, brimstone, everywhere, except in one place, to whose holy precincts we wonder that he has not long since betaken himself. The Devil is deluding souls to ruin; and, if any further proof were wanting, he finds it in the fact that these "accursed spirits" do not believe in eternal burnings. That is their crowning heresy, if it be not even worse to deny the resurrection of the body. "The principle that men, whether good or bad, righteous or unrighteous, will all be certainly saved, to be for ever hereafter in bliss, is the practical heresy of Spiritualism." This is not accurate, but is near enough for us to affirm its substantial truth. Moreover, "Spiritualism flatly denies the great Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body." Emphatically it does. It will neither raise your body, nor burn your soul. It deprives you alike of the consolation of consigning those with whom you do not agree to the hideous tortures of a physical hell for ever and for evermore, and of the hope that you may one day hunt up the dissipated particles of that old frame of flesh and blood, which the worms will then have claimed for their own. It does that, and a very great deal more, which we need not specify. It is even sacrilegious enough to lay hands on the Devil himself; and that probably, in Mr. Lee's opinion, would be the crowning sin of all. No Devil! No Hell! What next? We may perhaps have a future opportunity of saying. For the present, enough of Mr. Lee and his trifling.

Dr. Mahan occupies a somewhat different position. When, in the year 1855, he equipped himself for a tilt against modern mysteries, he ran amuck against A. J. Davis and Swedenborg, as well as against Spiritualism in general; and he essayed, besides, the difficult task of proving that the Bible as surely comes from the Spirit of God as Spiritualistic revelation comes from the spirits of men. He has seen fit to withdraw these three sections, feeling, probably, that they were not worth reprinting—an opinion in which we should be disposed to agree; and now his theme is Spiritualism in general, its source and tendency.

It may be at once admitted that Dr. Mahan has much to say that is true and telling from his own point of view. He has not penetrated beyond the outskirts of the subject, and has gathered up just such conflicting facts as do bewilder and perplex investigators. There is much in the intellectual and physical phenomena which the author has observed which, if they stood alone, and unsupported by other evidence, it would be impossible to refer to a wise and beneficent source. Nay, there is much that

we recognise at once as undesirable, and in some cases mischievous. Puck-like tricks, contradictory and false communications, foolish and childish remarks—these no investigator can fail to have noticed; and when to these is added the frequent recurrence of that which either is, or at any rate very much resembles, fraud, the web of perplexity is still more closely woven. Dr. Mahan does not penetrate beyond it; and his view of the subject is clouded throughout by the strong mental bias which he cannot conceal. The book, indeed, is an odd mixture of half-truth and erroneous conclusions. Certain facts are stated with great clearness; but the author has not sufficient knowledge of the subject to be able to see how they are supplemented by other facts, or he allows his strong antipathy to lead him into erroneous deductions. His logic, never very strong, is overpowered by the wish to crush the subject which he so dislikes. It would be impossible to go through the points in which this is manifest. A mere enumeration of errors would far exceed the space at our disposal. It must suffice to indicate a few of the most prominent.

Dr. Mahan starts with the fullest admission of the reality of the phenomena of Spiritualism. "We met," he says, "with evidences which we could not resist and maintain our integrity, of the reality of physical manifestations of a very startling and impressive character." The admission is again and again reiterated. "We found ourselves necessitated, in moral honesty, to admit the facts, and then"—what does the reader think?—"to seek an explanation for them on some mundane hypothesis." This is a fair specimen of the tone of our author's mind. He jumped to a conclusion, and then set to work to find facts to support it. We have abundant evidence that many writers on Spiritualism do the same: it is not every one, however, who so naively admits it.

A large use is made of the expedient of ignoring or explaining as frauds facts which are inconvenient. The treatise, which sets out with Odyllic or Psychic force as its explanation of all the phenomena, must get rid of such inconvenient manifestations as cannot be explained by it. Accordingly, the author fastens on "the visible, tangible, and audible manifestations," by which we presume we are to understand materialized spirit forms that speak, and can be touched and handled, and with one fell sweep dismisses them as impostors. "In America, permit us to say, all these manifestations, the latest-invented ones not excepted, are 'known and read of all men' as *detected* and *exposed* impositions." In the same spirit the Davenportes are styled "a family of vile and detected impostors." The Holmes mediums not unnaturally fall in for similar treatment. The author is familiar

only with the half truths published by newspaper writers, whose interest it was to make the case as bad as possible, and who are not altogether free from the imputation of having vamped up Mrs. White's evidence for the very purpose of crushing what they deemed a hateful return to superstition. He has not seen Col. Olcott's triumphant vindication of the reality of the phenomena of materialization through the Holmeses, or if he has, it is not convenient to mention it. Any stick to beat a dog with: and the American Katie King story was not difficult to present in an unfavourable light. But the English Katie King rested on another basis. Her existence and actions had been tested by an eminent F.R.S., and attested by scores of credible witnesses. What of her? Not one word of Mr. Crookes, not one word of the unimpeachable evidence on record: only the most astounding argument that man ever devised to get over a difficulty. It is presented in a series of propositions which we abridge thus:—

1. The identity of Mrs. White with the supposed Katie in Philadelphia is proven.

2. If the Philadelphia K. K. is compared with the London K. K. she will be found "to be quite as mysterious": "and the fact that the former stands revealed to the world as an impostor takes away wholly all evidence that the latter is not of the same character."

3. As K. K.'s manifestations are more wonderful than all others, "*all evidence that ghosts have appeared in any séances is utterly annihilated.*"

This delicious sample of reasoning is too good to be lost. In syllogistic form it reads thus:—

Philadelphia Katie is a humbug.

But she is quite as wonderful as London Katie.

∴ London Katie is a humbug.

Moreover, These Katies are ahead of all other phenomena.

And, These Katies are humbugs.

∴ All phenomena are humbugs.

Q.E.D., Dr. Mahan. We congratulate you on your logic. The man who could deliberately print a page of reasoning such as this is beyond the reach of argument.

Another resource of those who have a weak case to present is to assume it as proven, and to cover its weakness by strength of language in affirmation. Of this patent trick the author avails himself most freely. Scarcely a page of the book does not contain *assumptions of the very points that demand proof*, stated by the writer as self-evident facts. Here are a few culled

promiscuously from two or three pages. "We should dementate ourselves . . . What infinite fools we should make of ourselves were we to believe . . . The truth of this proposition is undeniably evident . . . We may safely assume . . . A moment's reflection will convince any candid mind." . . . *All these expressions apply precisely to those points which are in dispute between the author and Spiritualists.* And to assume that they are got rid of by the use of vehement asseveration is to make use of a logical fallacy—the *Petitio principii*—with which every tyro ought to be acquainted. If the writer is not acquainted with it, he ought to be, before he presumes to argue at all. If he is, then he is at his old tricks again. On the whole, a reference to the unique piece of reasoning quoted above would incline us to the belief that the logical part of his education has been singularly neglected.

Dr. Mahan's theory seems to be a sort of amalgam of Psychic or Odic Force, and Unconscious Cerebration. He credits Psychic Force with all he can, and when he is obliged to call in some external intelligence, he gets it from the minds of the sitters. He is not aware of the cases, so numerous and authentic, in which facts utterly beyond the knowledge of any person present have been communicated. We ourselves, within our own experience, have records of scores of such cases, in which facts previously unknown have been communicated truthfully, and have been subsequently verified. The present is not the time to record them, and space forbids the attempt. In due time they will find their record, and then we fully expect that the author will have his reply. It is a pity that he did not know of the new theory of the duality of the brain when he wrote his book. He could then have added Brown-Sequard to Cox and Carpenter, and so have explained inconvenient facts by another speculative theory. This is his plan throughout, in accordance with his naïve confession at starting. Tables move, therefore there is a force. Tables talk, therefore there is an intelligence, which *may* be got from the sitters. Therefore, it *is* so got. When he comes to find that it cannot be always so got, he will but add another link. Each sitter has a double brain. Who can measure the infinite possibilities?

It is all very simple. For ourselves, we know that no such explanations will hold together when tested by men who do not square facts to suit pet theories. As a plain matter of fact, they crumble to pieces. It is a mental failing of most men to see facts in such a light only as suits them; and this especially if they happen to have a pet theory. Dr. Mahan is no exception; and we shrewdly suspect that these devices which he and others like him adopt are but so many expedients for getting rid of

inconvenient facts. On such principles, anything might be explained away; and the process is so simple as to be, in the words of the advertisers, "within the reach of the meanest comprehension."

One instance of the extremity to which the author is driven in trying to account for the unaccountable, deserves to be mentioned. It is quoted as a means of accounting for strange facts. "We once, in a discussion of the claims of Spiritualism, made before a great congregation in Cleveland, Ohio, the following statement:—The leading Spiritualist in the city, a former graduate of Yale College, had missed an important paper . . . . On mentioning the fact to a gentleman of the city, the latter said, 'Let me see now if I cannot tell you exactly where that paper can be found.' After thinking a moment, he continued, 'Go into the south-east chamber of the second storey of your house: go to the bureau which stands on the north-side of that room, open such a drawer, and in the north-east corner of that drawer you will find that paper.' Following these directions, Mr. S. found his papers. Yet the man who gave the directions afterwards affirmed, and I so stated in the presence of Mr. S., who admitted the facts, that every one of those directions was a mere guess in the dark. The man had never been in that chamber, and did not know that there was a bureau in it."

This is pretty well, we think, for a man who will have no "spirits" at any price. In his favourite language, "We should dementate ourselves" if we believed any such nonsense. Spiritual action we do know, but this power of guessing has a decidedly Trans-Atlantic flavour. We guess we won't swallow it.

"We leave the subject with the reader, with the calm assurance that our facts will not be denied, nor our arguments (!) invalidated, nor our conclusions rejected." With these words the author closes what he is pleased to call his argument. Certainly "the calm assurance" of the statement will not be disputed. For the rest, his facts are but half-facts, used to bolster up erroneous conclusions; his so-called arguments are patent fallacies in the main, and the shifts to which he is reduced to get rid of truths which would expose and refute his theories, betray a pitiable gullibility of which we have given a fair instance above.

Other critics there are who use other means of dealing with us, not less unfair than those already noticed. Dr. Andrew Wynter, in a recently published treatise on the "Border Lands of Insanity," views the matter from a professional point of view. With him everything that he cannot explain is hallucination; and, of course, Spiritualism comes under that designation. The



Shakers he *can* stand, but Spiritualism he *cannot*. He says (page 290):—

“However benighted these poor people (Shakers) may be, there is something really grand in their behaviour, self-denying as it is, compared with the miserable delusions educated members of the upper classes profess to believe, to wit, *mesmeric influence, table-turning, and spirit-rapping*. There can be no possible excuse for such people; and when we see the attempt that was made the other day to declare Mother Girling was insane, we ask ourselves how much more open the *drivelling idiots who participate in such miserable delusions* are to the charge, than these poor uneducated fanatics, who at least practise the virtue of self-denial.”

It is interesting, in these days, to find a man with a name to lose, who is not ashamed to publish his opinion that mesmerism is “a miserable delusion.”

Some good folk are even warranted, in their own opinion, in dismissing the matter still more simply. At the instance of the Christian Evidence Society, the Rev. C. A. Row, a Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral, has published a book, entitled, “The Supernatural in the New Testament possible, credible, and historical.” The supernatural *then*, which it was his business to affirm, jarred rather with the supernatural *now*, which it was his business to deny. This is the knife with which he cuts the knot. “There can be no doubt that there are an enormous mass of supernatural beliefs which *we feel at once justified in rejecting without troubling ourselves (!) to inquire into the evidence on which they rest*. . . . Others, again, which rest on evidence which would be sufficient to establish an ordinary fact, *we reject, notwithstanding this attestation, on the ground of their inherent improbability.*” (!)

That is to say, we know what may, can, should, and ought to be. Therefore we reject what we do not like, “*without troubling ourselves to inquire into the evidence;*” or, if we do inquire, and find the facts (apparently) proved, we can always fall back on “inherent improbability.” Any way it will be “so much the worse for the facts.” For calm assumption of infallibility, this can hardly be matched outside of a Papal allocution.

These are the expedients which men are not ashamed to use to crush an unpopular subject. There is no other, we firmly believe, that would be so treated in the present day. If, as it seems, this treatment is the lot of every new subject which runs counter to old prejudices, we can but draw from the premises two conclusions. First, the present age is not so much ahead of others in candour, and fairness, and love of truth for its own sake, as it would have us to believe. Secondly, the truths have survived in ages past, and have even thriven on the treatment received. We have all confidence that Spiritualism will do the same.

## SUMMER: A PROPHETIC IDYLL.

*By MALCOLM TAYLOR.*

SUMMER lies peaceful and lovely, her charms all so perfect and peerless,—  
 Fairest of four sister Seasons and Father Year's favourite daughter,—  
 Resting in somnolent state, in the bower of the South so luxuriant,  
 Tranced with the sleepy aromas escaped from the flowers around her,  
 Eyelids held shut with the dewdrops that fall from the vine-leaves above her,  
 Pearled on the lashes that hang like the flags on a glassy lake's margin.  
 Light from her countenance flashes, while with a sensation of pleasure,  
 Dreams she such radiant visions, prolific with vivified phases;  
 One, that she stands as a bride to be wed to the king of the Tropics,  
 Crowned with a halo of gems, and arrayed in a rich robe of beauty.  
 Lulled by the bells of the blossoms, that chime in a glad marriage pealing,  
 Charmed by Æolian music that comes from the umbrageous branches,  
 Where, from their native cove far, find the zephyrs a nice place to dally,  
 Idly she wanders away in the labyrinth vista of Fancy.  
 Thus has she roved in the mazes of happified ideal slumber,  
 While, with the flood-tide of time, by the vision rapt maiden unnoticed,  
 Six times the moon's silver shallop has sailed o'er the sea of deep azure,  
 Six times the white monthly roses their petals like snow flakes have  
 scattered.

But, as the bird for the sunshine, impatient to bask in her glory,  
 Now comes her lover, the Poet, whose song, so pellucid and mellow,  
 Lilted in chord with his lyre, that his fingers touch lightly and deftly,  
 Is as the incense of tune offered up at his shrine of devotion,  
 Or the libation of notes from the well-spring of thought in his bosom,  
 Poured out in fluent effusion, the cup of his soul's true communion.  
 Needing the fire of her eye to inflame him with grand inspiration,  
 Thus he gives vent to his feelings in words of a simple love ballad.

## INTERLUDE.

Sybarite butterfly lolls on the roses,  
 Drunk with the wine of acacia blooms,  
 Lady-bird low in the tulip reposes,  
 Swooned with the strength of the lotus' fumes;  
 While I am waiting, my lover's soul thirsting,  
 Longing to sip of your lip's luscious kiss,  
 Eager to catch from your budding mouth bursting,  
 Words that will swoon me in breathings of bliss.  
 Softly the wind, in the warmth of his passion,  
 Whispers his love to the cactus aflame,  
 Drooping her head, in a maiden-like fashion  
 Flushes her face in a virtuous shame;  
 Where is the face that tinged pale as a blossom  
 Flushed with the fire of my love-talking sweet?  
 Where is the head that hung low on my bosom,  
 Listened and counted my happy heart's beat?  
 Lately returned from the deer hunt, Diana  
 Hangs her bright bow on the ridge of the night,  
 Scatt'ring her arrows like heaven-rained manna,  
 Pierced are the trees with her shafts of pale light;  
 Here like a stag for the huntress I'm waiting,  
 Willing to let her smile's bow, like a dart,  
 Swift at the flash of her blue eyes dilating,  
 Glances of light, to send into my heart.

Pink oleander each petal fold flutters,  
 Like a bird's breast ruffled by the swift air;  
 Pure as a virgin the magnolia utters  
 Low for her lover, yet absent, a prayer;  
 So does my heart in expectancy tremble  
 With a strange feeling of fear and unrest,  
 While prays my spirit dark doubts to dissemble,  
 Eager to greet my loved mate to the nest.  
 High o'er the basin the fountain jet leaping  
 Vails marble Silence in web of spun glass;  
 Dew beads from cup of the jessamine tipping,  
 Flash like as falling stars down to the grass;  
 Heeding the hush of her lip-touching finger,  
 Calmly I sit and commune with the flowers,  
 Stars of hope falling, the long moments linger,  
 Mocking my lonely heart, counting them hours.  
 Up from the depths of the orient breaking  
 Glimmers of promise are shining afar,  
 Where maid Aurora, from slumber awaking,  
 Draws the pink curtains on heaven's gold bar;  
 So, too, there stream rays of light from yon casement—  
 What angel form parts the arbour's close vine?  
 Joy lifts my soul from its doubtful displacement,  
 Love's tender raptures now soon shall be mine.

Forth from her Castle of Indolence now steps the brilliant Queen Summer,  
 Robed in a tissue of yellow, a garment fine woven of sun rays,  
 Looped up in folds at the side, and behind, in a lengthened train, falling  
 Like a loose sea of gold lava the sloped mountain side adown pouring.  
 Narrow and tapered her waist, with a belt of bright metal encircled,  
 And on her breast a large jewel, a ruby with fire iridescent.  
 Crowned with a chaplet of flowers, carnations and roses, deep crimson,  
 Lit by her countenance beaming, illuminated with love pure and holy,  
 Shines her round head as a comet, while from it in radiance streaming  
 Ripples her ambient hair in its long, wavy, unconfined tresses.  
 Thus, like a goddess of light, with her manifold beauties resplendent,  
 Gentle and graceful in bearing, her form so majestic and regal,  
 Comes she to welcome her lover, the Poet, who stands waiting, singing,  
 Longing to greet the bright being whom, as his heart's idol, he worships—  
 Star of his eventide dreams, and the genius of all his noon musings!  
 But as he never before in such loveliness perfect beheld her,  
 Bursting, as sun from some cloud, upon him so sudden and shining,  
 Dazzled his eyes are with glory, and stands he aloof in amazement,  
 Till, by her smile's magnet drawn, he advances to meet and to greet her,  
 Finding in her close embrace all his hope's fullest, fondest fruition,  
 While with the nectar of bliss is the thirst of his lover's soul sated.  
 Now arm in arm, linked together, they start out to take a short ramble,  
 Led by the careless guide Chance, or allured by the sylvan enticements,  
 Loitering thither unheeding, along, out beyond the South's limit.  
 Rapt in the converse of love, and their spirits in purity mingling—  
 Blending as 'twere to one soul, he absorbed as a part of her being,  
 Feasting on sweets of affection, like butterflies flitting at leisure—  
 Mark they not where they are going, till reached is the pleasant North  
 country,  
 Where had her sister, young Spring, as a nursery-maid awhile lingered.  
 There, as she stands by her lover and looks all around and about her,

Seeing the unfinished state of earth's pretty and promising children,  
 Left in forsaken condition at hasty retreat of her sister,  
 Moved with a tender compassion and filled with a motherly feeling,  
 Changing her purpose of pleasure to that of performing her duty,  
 Summer determines to tarry and mingle a little among them,  
 With her fond lover's assistance; to give them her earnest attentions,  
 And by her fostering kindness improve their poor lot for the better.  
 So, one good object pursuing, they pass by the foot of the mountain,  
 Towering high like a giant and holding his head up so haughty,  
 Where, in the sinuous valley, they meet with the rollicking river  
 Running a race with the wind, overflowing with fun and pure mischief;  
 Giving the stream a kind whisper, she spurs it with impetus better,  
 Loading the breeze with sweet spices and sending it on healing errand.  
 Next, o'er the furrowed field crossing, afloat with the grain, high and  
 tasseled,

Casts she her smile sunny on it and mocking her long, glossy tresses,  
 Rippling with waves of pure sheen, it bows low to salute the glad gleaner.  
 Then through the orchard they wander, that, doffing its mantle of blossoms,  
 Hangs she with rich pendant jewels of juice for the decking of Autumn.  
 Next she the forest of trees, by the wave of her hand in weird magic,  
 Turns to a noble cathedral, with arched nave and quaintly carved columns,  
 Each open glade window stained with the prismatic hues of the heavens.  
 Then by the parterres they wind, while she breathes on the poor shut buds  
 softly,

Making them burst from their bondage and open their light-loving petals,  
 Getting in grateful return, the sweet thanks of their heart's exhalation.  
 Next, as she passes the beds where they stand in a firm-rooted phalanx,  
 Touching the plants with her finger, she makes them to show forth their  
 foliage,

Spreading their emerald plumage, like tail of a fine haughty peacock.  
 Meeting the ant, bee, and silkworm, their several vocations pursuing,  
 Lovingly each she caresses, while praising their meritorious labours.  
 Merrily laughing to see all the bird couples moping sedately,  
 Starts she a musical echo from each vernal covert and chamber.  
 Looking all over the land, with a glance full of smiles and love ardent,  
 Lulls it in mesmeric spell to a Sabbath-day rest with her glamour.  
 Thus from her Nature's whole family gains some fond proof of affection,  
 As 'mong them moving, Queen Summer fulfils her pure, unselfish purpose;  
 While as he lends her his aid, and enjoys the reward of her kisses,  
 With his night Winter gone by, to the past's gloomy cloister retiring;  
 With his morn Spring passed away, and her streaks of fine promise all  
 faded;

With his day Summer at hand, in the flush of her warm favour basking,  
 Fair finds the Poet, as lover, the Eden of perfect contentment.

Thus will the Summer of Spiritual Light come in due ready season!  
 Come, as a radiant queen, in the grace of her peerless perfections,  
 Forth from an arbor of flowers, in a clime where the bloom in profusion;  
 Where, hid from gaze, she now lies in a state of indifferent dreaming,  
 While Superstition's dark winter goes by, with its night shadows gloomy,  
 And while the spring-morn of Faith passes on with a glimmer of promise.  
 Like to a beautiful bride, she will rise and array for the bridegroom;  
 Woke by his voice, the true prophet, who, filled with her love and her  
 beauty,

Longs for the beam of her smile and the light of her glorified presence,  
 Hailing her form from afar in a song of glad peace and good feeling.

Coming as angel of mercy, effulgent with charms of great splendour,  
 Robed in fine garments of sunshine and crowned with love's ruddiest  
 blossoms,  
 Decked with the rich gem of truth and engirdled with bright band of  
 friendship,  
 Giving with lavishing hand all the gifts of her holy affection,  
 She with beneficent bounty will bless all humanity's children,  
 Making them join in the praise of her heavenly beauty and goodness.  
 First, to Progression's swift stream she will give an encouraging whisper,  
 Then Mind's invisible wind send on balm-laden mission of healing;  
 Next she the green field of Science will sun to a rich golden harvest,  
 And the Heart's grove dedicate as the temple of real religion.  
 Blessing the orchard of Trade, she will cause it to fill the horn plenty,  
 Freeing the pent-up bud Woman will bid her exhale her sweet merits;  
 Touching Society's plant make it show all its pleasant attractions,  
 And with her loving caress cheer the insects of Industry busy.  
 She will call out all the charms that are hid in bird Harmony's bosom,  
 And make the nations repose in the Christ Peace's holiest Sabbath;  
 This, and more, too, will she do when she reigns in Love's gentle dominion.  
 Beautiful Bride of the Future, and prophesied Star of the Poet—  
 Age of perennial youth, and the time of the soul's happy summer!  
 God speed the glorious day, and the birth of a new Golden Era!

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## CHATTERTON.

### WITH NOTES BY HIMSELF.—CHAPTER III.

CHATTERTON's first London lodging was with one Walmsley, a distant relation, living in Shoreditch. He remained there two months, the early weeks of which term were the happiest in his life. For a moment Hope had lit her lamp. He called on booksellers, and met with flattering receptions; he was engaged to write for one magazine, and promised work by the conductor of another.\* On the side of Paternoster Row, nearest to St. Paul's, with its back windows looking up a narrow court, straight at the cathedral, stands an ancient tavern, still retaining the name of the "Chapter Coffee-house." It was in this place that Charlotte Brontë once slept; she has written of it in "Villette." A hundred years ago, half the booksellers' hacks in London met here. Chatterton joined the society, and dated from his new haunt letter after letter, brimming with exultation and boastfulness. "I am settled," he writes to his mother, "and in such a

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\* This is incorrect. In May and June, 1770, I was a contributor to at least four magazines—viz., *The Gospel, The Town and Country, The London, and The Court and City*. Also, I wrote letters, modelled on those of Junius, for the *Middlesex Journal, Political Register*, and another whose name escapes me. The Patriot party pleased me best; but nothing was to be had on that side of the question, and, sorely against my will, I at length took to making my essays Ministerial. What a labour of love it was to attack Grafton, North, and the rest of the incapables!



settlement as I could desire. I get four guineas a month by one magazine : shall engage to write a History of England, and other pieces, which will more than double that sum. Occasional essays for the daily papers would alone more than support me. What a glorious prospect !" Alas for the golden visions ! They withered quicker than the prophet's gourd. The purse stocked with guineas in May was empty before the end of June. He had bought with his gains presents for the friends in Bristol, and accompanied the gifts with magnificent promises. I think there are few sadder things in print than that little collection of letters ; the first dated April 26th, the last August 12th, 1770. Written in his brief hey-day of success, the earlier ones breathe a tone of exultation quite natural and enforced. As time advanced, and Want replaced Prosperity, and Despair, Hope, the letters became but the more unrestrained in their boastful anticipations. The proud poet was determined to endure much, rather than to confess to the friends at home that the "glorious prospect" he had so vaunted had proved but a vapour-born mirage—dissolving in an instant. When months had slipped by, and the inevitable end came close, his letters—though still retaining their air of hectic gaiety—became shorter and fewer. In a brief note, written near the middle of July, he apprises his mother and sister of a number of presents he has just despatched. At this date he must have been himself almost in want of bread. The last letter, as I have said, was one sent on the 12th of August to Mr. George Catcott. When writing this, Chatterton indulged a faint hope, speedily to be dissipated, of obtaining an appointment which would enable him to escape the grave. There occur towards the end of the epistle some sentences that well deserve quotation. The writer is describing a building which has impressed his fancy. "From a hexagonal spiral tower (such I believe Redcliffe is) rose a similar palisado of Gothic pillars, three in a cluster on every angle. The pillars were trifoliated (as Rowley terms it), and supported a majestic oval dome, not absolutely circular—that would not be Gothic—but terminating in a point, surmounted with a cross, and on the top of the cross a globe. The two last ornaments will perhaps throw you into a fit of religion, and give rise to many pious reflections. Heaven send you the comforts of Christianity ; I request them not, for I am no Christian." Such was his mood, even in the hour of death.

Some essays contributed by Chatterton's versatile pen to opposition journals had brought him introductions to a brace of famous mock-patriots—Wilkes, and the Lord Mayor Beckford. Of these two he hoped much, although he knew Beckford to be a fool, and that the other's word was scarce ever his bond. But his

only real gain by the pair was three guineas for an elegy, written when the Mayor died. Evil days were then come on him, and all his wonderful industry could not hinder the approach of want. His pen at this period never rested. He wrote in the month of June songs for Ranelagh, a number of political essays for the newspapers on both sides of the question, tales, etc., for several of the lighter magazines, and furnished a burletta to Marylebone Gardens, that was first performed there ten months after his death. This piece, it appears, sold for five guineas.\* *Tempora mutantur!* Seventy years afterwards the manuscript, in the poet's handwriting, fetched at a sale just one hundred and fifty pounds. And, indeed, it is doubtful whether the poor sum mentioned was ever actually paid. In very many instances, booksellers and others took what he offered and let the debt stand over. By the middle of July the amount thus due had reached eleven guineas. At that date despair had all but mastered the unhappy boy. So mighty an intellect, and yet, though he stooped it to the most trivial themes, it would not bring him bread! He now removed—being determined that those who had heard his boasts should not witness his poverty—to a garret, situated in the house of Mrs. Angel, sacque or mantua-maker, 4 Brooke Street, Holborn.† That dingy thoroughfare still exists, and the houses in it have, many of them, an appearance of respectable antiquity; but the bricks and timbers of the one best worth notice are dispersed as widely as the ashes of the doomed genius whose last agony they shut from view. A hundred years have removed every memento of Chatterton's brief stay among us. Where he died an upholsterer stands, and printers' devils hurry to and fro over the spot where his grave was dug. But it is not the dead whom neglect dishonours. The fame of the poet is as little hurt by a shell and a workhouse graveyard, as it is helped by the chisel of the sculptor, and the proud entombment of the Abbey.

Chatterton entered his new abode knowing that the end was

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\* A vast mistake. I received two for it, and thought myself extremely well paid. It was a prettily-written trifle, and well adapted to the tastes of the day.

† To me the most detested spot in a detested city. I abhor this metropolis—twenty centuries will not efface the recollection of that July and August in London, so long ago. Memories of those miserable days surge up like a flood;—I can recall every bitter ingredient of the cup of affliction I drained. Worst of all—worse than neglect, want, or the thought of death,—was the contrast between the future I had dreamed of, and that reality which was risen to mock my hopes. And the first few weeks in the great city had been so joyous: intoxicating me with delusive promises of success. I can compare my fate to nothing but that of a traveller in a desert, who, perceiving some delicious oasis bright with verdure, hurriedly rushes to repose himself there, and finds, too late for safety, that he is encircled by innumerable deadly snakes, which had lain at first concealed among the flowers.

near. But the unconquerable boy disdained complaint, and wrote from his garret confident letters to the friends in Bristol. With a strange, reckless generosity he expended the last of his guineas in presents for his mother and sister, and sent them pretty, useless trifles of fans and china, when reduced himself to a crust of bread, and a draught of the smallest beer. In the early days of August he made a final effort to escape his doom. The post of surgeon's mate to Africa was obtainable, could he produce the necessary recommendation, and he wrote for it to his Bristol acquaintance, Mr. Barrett, whose medical library had been at his command. This appointment, it seems, Chatterton ardently coveted. So much had he suffered in London, that even the pestilence-haunted swamps of Guinea appeared an Eden by comparison. But the request for a reference was refused, and properly, as he possessed not the least practical knowledge of surgery. The chase was over now, and Death had hunted down this stag of ten. Every hope was gone; his solitary meal for days had consisted of a roll, and a cup of water. With the little money left him the boy purchased poison. He went from bookseller to bookseller during that last sad week of his life, vainly trying to dispose of unsold trifles—the products of a happier season. In every shop a refusal met him. Even the guineas that he could justly claim were denied. Destitute of food, without faith, without hope, far from his friends and his home, the unhappy adventurer returned to the garret where death awaited him, to bear in solitude the extremity of want and despair. A few offers of small charities that were made he gloomily declined. Only once did his pride stoop to the breaking of bread at another's expense. Mr. Cross, a worthy apothecary of Brooke Street, who guessed the straits he was reduced to, succeeded, three days before the poet's death, in making him a sharer of an oyster feast he was giving some friends. It was the last meal that Chatterton tasted.

The day he drank the poison, Mrs. Angel, his landlady, certain that he had eaten nothing for many hours, offered him a share of her own dinner; but the haughty boy, with thanks, assured her that he had no need of food, and retired to shut himself in his room. There, in the sultry quiet of an August night, with none but the unmoved stars to look on its last mournful scene, the brief drama closed. Desperate, hopeless, impenitent perhaps; conscious only of the agony that was become intolerable, the vexed spirit sought the sleep that is in the grave. A stillness nothing seemed to disturb induced the people of the house, late on the following day, the 25th, to force the locked door. On a mean truckle-bed, almost the sole piece of furniture that the apartment held, was stretched an already stiffened

corpse—the livid features distorted with all the spasms that arsenic creates. Scattered upon the floor, by the dead hand that should never grasp pen again, were fragments of many manuscripts—uselessly-blackened paper that had availed nothing in the fierce struggle for life. The bright mind was chaos; the rebellious heart stilled for ever. A light, whose glory might have filled the world, despair had quenched in everlasting blackness.\*

Saved from the cross-roads and stake by a merciful verdict of insanity returned at the inquest, Chatterton's unhonoured remains were finally cast, with such ceremonies as the law of a century back allowed to paupers, into a grave scooped in the burying-ground of Shoe Lane Workhouse. Both *oubliettes*—that for outcasts dead, as well as the den in which some suffered for their poverty while living—are now swept away. Not the meanest stone marks where the poet was laid: his ashes have long been scattered to the winds of heaven. But the time is not yet near when Oblivion shall wholly enshroud his laurels. Indeed,

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\* I am asked to do what I have little liking for—narrate my first experiences on passing into this life beyond. There came—when consciousness again slowly unfolded itself, and it was revealed to me that *I*, the mysterious self my folly had thought to annihilate, existed still—a long interval of suffering: of bitter, unutterable anguish. I was alone in a dreary night: darkness brooded within my soul—darkness, thick darkness, wrapt me as with a garment. Violently reft from earth, I suffered, as all who so depart must in some degree suffer, but my pain was the deeper and more terrible from having by my own act severed spirit and body. For a while I lingered in one spot; but time passed, and my spiritual vision, *the eye of the mind*, grew keener; and I found that what I had deemed solitude was indeed thickly peopled. Hideous things were around me—deformed minds, foul with every crime, who had quitted their bodies, and could do naught but haunt the places where those bodies had been laid. And I dwelt awhile among them, and shuddered to behold in all their incomparable foulness souls that assuredly were lower than the brutes. I was in Hades, and within me gnawed a pain that I thought would never die. Soon I gained strength to flee from this terrible companionship, and with darkness still resting upon my spirit, and my being filled with anguish, I passed from the planet Earth. I journeyed far, and strove hard to render my travels infinite; but there were limits that my wildest efforts could not overleap. Still I was happier; for a strange sense of liberty began to dawn on my soul, and I rejoiced to be free from those noxious beings among whom I had felt as one imprisoned in a dungeon might feel, when snakes writhe and hiss around him, and bloated toads crawl slimily over his shrinking flesh. I was in a dungeon still; but it was wide, and I had found companions suited to my taste. I met with the women and the men of whom I have before spoken, with richly-endowed, irregularly-guided minds, that had left earth—some a thousand years, some a few months before. And I found, by communing with these great in intellect, that it was pride—a pride that would not, could not yield—which held them, one and all, unhappy. For such society was I well fitted, and I have—sometimes with others, sometimes apart—been a sharer of its few pleasures and many pains through a longer period than I care to look back on. What I have suffered it would irk me to reveal. Of late, and of late only, has a change begun to stir in me: gentler and humbler thoughts intrude themselves on my mind. I have glimpses of hope, where once was only despair. Perhaps, before the great convulsion that is already gathering alters the face of all things on earth, I shall have passed from her and her sister-planets for ever.

Southey probably spoke truth when he said that his works and his story together will excite interest while the English language is spoken. They have given during the last century themes to a hundred sculptors, poets, and painters; small or great. Wordsworth's lines alone would preserve at least his *name* immortal; and in his master-creation of Rowley there is genius sufficient to guarantee the poems a prolonged life. They have readers; for the last edition was issued in the by-past year. Many most distinguished critics;—Warton, Malone, Dr. Gregory, Southey, Tyrwhitt, Coleridge, and Campbell,—might be cited respecting the merits of these works; but the words which Sir Walter Scott—a writer not, on the whole, favourably disposed towards Chatterton—has used will suffice:—"The drama called 'Ella;' many parts of the 'Battle of Hastings;' the Ballad of Charity; that of Sir Charles Bawdin (which somewhat resembles the antique style of minstrel poetry); the 'Dirge,' and several of the Eclogues, may rank with the labours of our most distinguished poets." Two passages will prove this praise not overstrained. The poet describes in the first how Sol appeared on the morning of the carnage of Hastings:—

"Forth from the eastern gates the fiery steeds  
Of the bright sun a waiting spirit leads:  
The sun, in flaming pomp enthroned on high,  
Swifter than thought along his journey speeds,  
And scatters night's remains from out the sky:  
He saw the armies met for bloody fray,  
And checked his driving car, and hid his lightsome ray."

The Ballad of Charity—a true poetic gem—contains a vivid picture of the sky's change from fair to foul:—

"The sun was gleaming in the midst of day,  
Dead still the air, and eke the welkin blue;  
When from the sea arose, in drear array,  
A heap of clouds of sable, sullen hue:  
The which full fast unto the woodland drew,  
Hiding with murk eclipse Sol's festive face;  
And the black tempest swelled, and gathered up apace."

The best of the poems are, perhaps, the tragedy of "Ella," and "The Death of Sir Charles Bawdin." Into "Ella" are introduced songs which indicate that their author might have become great as a lyric poet. Of these, the following dirge—a snatch of melody such as Shakespeare at times delighted to indulge in—is the most exquisite:—

#### "LAMENT.

L.

"O, sing unto my roundelay!  
O, drop the briny tear with me!



Dance no more at holiday,  
 Like a running river be.  
 My love is dead,  
 Gone to his death-bed,  
 All under the willow tree.

## II.

"Black his eye as the winter night,  
 White his neck as the falling snow,  
 Ruddy his cheek as the morning light,  
 Cold he lies in the grave below.

## III.

"Sweet his tongue as the thrush's note,  
 Quick in dance as thought was he,  
 Deft his lute, his cudgel stout;  
 O, he lies by the willow tree!

## IV.

"Hark! the raven flaps his wing  
 In the briered dell below;  
 Hark! the death-owl loud doth sing  
 To the night-mares as they go.

## V.

"See! the white moon shines on high,  
 Whiter is my true love's shroud,  
 Whiter than the morning sky,  
 Whiter than the evening cloud.

## VI.

"Here, upon my true love's grave,  
 Shall the garish flowers be laid,  
 Not one holy saint to save!  
 All the coldness of a maid.

## VII.

"With my hands I'll plant the briars  
 Round his lonely corpse to grow;\*  
 Wandering fairies! light your fires,  
 Here my body still shall be.

## VIII.

"Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,  
 Drain my heart's blood all away;  
 Life, and every joy, I scorn,  
 Dance by night or feast by day.

## IX.

"Water-witches! crowned with reyes,†  
 Bear me on your deadly tide;  
 I die! I come! my true love waits.—  
 Thus the damsel spake and died.

Chatterton's allegorical fancies would honour Spenser. The following instance is from a picture of the Seasons:—

"Then Autumn, bare and sunburnt, doth appear,  
 With his gold hand gilding the falling leaf,

\* Grow.

† Rushes.

Bringing up Winter to fulfil the year,  
Bearing upon his back the ripened sheaf."

A description even more perfect occurs in one of the acknowledged poems:—

"Pale, rugged Winter, bending o'er his tread,  
His grizzled hair bedropt with icy dew;  
His eyes a dusky light, congealed and dead,  
His robe a tinge of bright, ethereal blue."  
"His train a motley'd, sanguine, sable cloud,  
He limps along the russet, dreary moor."

Is it not patent that the two images were coined by the same brain? And, indeed, inferior as are the remainder of Chatterton's writings to his great conception, lines flash out occasionally that may match the best of Rowley's:—

"He keeps the passions with the sound in play,  
And the soul trembles with the trembling key."

says the poet, praising a Bristol organist. A couplet that, though faulty in rhyme, Pope would have gladly claimed. For the rest, the circumstances in which these poems were written sufficiently excuse their faults. The greater part Chatterton penned in Bristol, at intervals snatched from the labours that alone fully occupied his mind. They were, one and all, hastily and carelessly put together, and considered, even by their author, mere trifles. In London he wooed the Muse but seldom. Political essays contributed to the *Freeholder* and *Middlesex Journal*, with tales and prose sketches for the magazines of the day, mainly employed him until August. His last poems were two short eclogues, composed when the African project began to stir in his mind. That failing, death became inevitable. If aught left the poet's pen during the last fateful weeks in Brooke Street, it was assuredly not verse. He would be a strange mortal who, in the black Valley of the Shadow, should find heart for song.

Analysis of a character so complex as this young genius is scarce possible. His eccentricities have perplexed his every biographer. So noted was he for strict truthfulness in the ordinary dealings of life, that none who knew him intimately could believe he had used deceit in the matter of the Rowley Poems. Yet certain it is that he scrupled at no falsehood which might uphold that imposture. He penned indecencies with the unblushingness of a Fielding, and has left more than one poem unfit to be printed. But the testimony of those most qualified to judge acquits him of the slightest inclination to profligacy, and shows that he shunned the society of all females, whether virtuous or immodest. At school he learned slowly, and was

reputed almost a dunce. Eighteen months after leaving it he had acquired erudition sufficient to deceive celebrated antiquaries. He would write hymns to the Deity in the humblest Christian humour \* one week, contemplate suicide and draw up a mock will the next. It grew, towards the end of his stay in Bristol, a favourite assertion with him that suicide is no crime. Man's life, he argued, being a burden forced on him, he may, without sin, lay it down if it grow unbearable. Chatterton was certainly sincere in propounding this new creed. His conscience, he both said and wrote, would acquit him should he destroy himself. And not improbably it did. Souls are seldom shaped quite alike; and Heaven had cast this one in an uncommon mould. He, moreover, who possesses genius is lifted above, and isolated from his fellows as Simeon Stylites on his lonely

\* Not Christian humour—I was not then and am not now, an acceptor of the Christian creed. Although that which is known to me of its founder, induces me to place him far above man, I cannot think that he was equal to the Deity. "There is one God," say the Turks, "and Mahomet is His prophet." For Mahomet, substitute Christ, and I hold the cry correct. A brighter star never shone in this dark world; but his pure doctrines have surely been marvelously corrupted since he departed from it. Not of himself, but of his disciples was the doctrine of the Trinity born. I cannot assign his true place in the universe: the opportunities of a hundred years have not sufficed to satisfy me respecting the origin of the Messiah; and it is vain to discuss a problem of which I have attained but sufficient knowledge to be perplexed. Of the "hymns to the Deity," assigned to me, I may, however, speak with certainty. On earth, I never wrote but one—a portion of which yet lingers with me. The piece was penned in all sincerity; and happy should I have been had that glow of religious fervour been as lasting as it was ardent. I give herewith what verses I can recall.

O God ! whose thunder shakes the sky,  
Whose eye this pigmy globe surveys;  
To Thee, my only Rock, I fly,  
Thy mercy in Thy justice praise.

The mystic mazes of Thy will,  
The shadows of celestial light,  
Are past the power of human skill,  
But what Th' Eternal acts is right.

O teach me in the trying hour  
When anguish swells the dewy tear,  
To hush my sorrows, own Thy power,  
Thy goodness love, Thy justice fear.

If, in this bosom, aught but Thee  
Encroaching, sought a boundless away,  
Omniscience could the dangers see,  
And Mercy look the cause away.

The gloomy mantle of the night,  
Which on my fainting spirit steals,  
Will vanish at the morning light  
Which God, my East, my Sun, reveals.

The mantle of gloom that has clung to it for above a century is, indeed, at length falling from my mind. I trust some rays of that light which proceeds from the Omnipresent God, may reach me in its stead.

T. C.

column was lifted above and isolated from the crowd. The ways of such a one are not their ways: he perceives from his height that many men take to the beaten tracks of life unreasoning,—mere human cattle, following because others have led. If his lot be poverty, he will unfailingly be displeased with the station Providence has assigned to him. Gifted and sensitive, Chatterton found himself unfit for his surroundings: of a daring, self-reliant temper, he fought hard to break from them, and paused not till he had succeeded. Eagles, it is observed, are, without exception, restless in captivity, and will not accommodate themselves to the cage after the fashion of weaker birds. If this one's flight was short when free, it was certainly brilliant. The marvel is, not that the young poet should have been driven to suicide four months after arriving in the metropolis, but that his pen fed him for as many weeks. Did any adventurer of eighteen risk such a journey in our own day, with nothing beyond genius to recommend him to London publishers, he would assuredly starve in a fortnight. It may be that the means by which Chatterton kept off death were not of the honestest. Did he employ his pen in praise of a man or measure, he was ready, before the article had been printed, to abuse or satirise the cause he had just supported. Of this laxity of political principle he made no secret. It was, indeed, even a subject of boasting with him, for, like most daring and proud natures, his disdain of hypocrisy led him to the opposite extreme of exaggerating and openly parading his vices. If these were many, many virtues counterbalanced them. He loved tenderly his mother and sister; even when himself pinched by want, he had help for them. If his ambition and pride were unlimited, he had conquered the meaner passions, and was a slave to no sensual appetite. He shunned strong drinks; was equally averse to vicious company; and displayed as regards fare the temperance of an anchorite. Like Shelley, Chatterton held that excess impairs the intellect, and he had the strength of mind to follow out his creed. Daring, high independence; a disdain to lean on others; a capacity to judge, and energy to act for himself,—he possessed all these: his death, if it lacked firmness, exhibited courage. But how eloquently well might that death serve the purpose of a moralist who desired to teach that the vainest of earthly vanities is fame. He died, fearing that oblivion would envelop him as completely as any of the thousand paupers with whose dust his own was to mix. His youth had he offered up at the shrine of Ambition; he had served that deity with his whole soul and strength, and the reward was—a suicide's death!—a dog's grave! How he must have remembered, sitting on that fatal evening in his wretched room, with the papers before him that he had torn in

his despairing rage, the other evenings Bristol had seen, when in the still summer's twilight he walked in the shadow of Redcliff, and mused on the immortality the future would bring. And the future had brought him this doom,—to perish at eighteen! If others have known more misery in life, no poet had ever a crueller end. Fiends were the only ministers at that mournful death-bed; the dread of future punishment the sole assuagement of the sufferer's pangs. As I muse on these things I recognise the immensity of the part which "circumstance, that unspiritual god," played in shaping the destinies of the wonderful boy of Bristol. Only eighteen years!—and in them he had concentrated such genius, passion, and labour, as might have sufficed for the term the Psalmist assigns to man. Such a life few boys have lived—such a death, let us hope, fewer still have felt. He tasted for one delicious moment of the pleasures of earth: the doors of Eden were opened, and he gazed on the glories within: then the darkness closed around him, and he passed into that unsearchable night which shall endure until the Judgment Day. Thinking of him I have yearned often for a little light—just such a gleam as should make plain to me the mysteries of the grave. Does this genius, released from his earthy fetters, find in another world the joys that were denied him here? or is it not rather but too certain that he sleeps a sleep which nothing but the Archangel's trump can disturb? "Whom the gods love die young," said old Herodotus; but the Greek no more than the Christians who have repeated his sentiment, included in this class those who perish by their own act. Such truly travel by the saddest of all roads into that eternity which the priests of our creed teach is, for rebels, lurid with unquenchable fire. Whatsoever the doom of the suicide, I dare not credit these awful fables. If they be true, then is there indeed no God, for the Devil rules the universe. The sins of Thomas Chatterton are known,—what he suffered may never be fully revealed until that distant day when the last sleep shall be over, and mankind stand together around the Great Throne. I think with tenderness and reverence of his memory, and deem no words may more fitly conclude this article than those of his own, which, thirty years ago, were graven on the monument erected to him at Bristol:—

"Reader, judge not; if thou art a Christian, believe that he shall be judged by a superior power: to that Power alone is he now answerable."

J. L. VEITCH.



## UNIVERSAL ETHICS.\*

THIS is the title of a work just published, with the aim to place before the world in a concise form a treatise of moral philosophy, gathered together from the different religions of the Earth, in so far as they rest upon the neutral ground of "Universal Ethics." It embodies maxims, taken from the sacred writings of all historical and revealed religions, from Brahminism to Buddhism, and the traditions of the Chinese, from Moses to Christ and Mohammed. "That which brings men together," says the author, "and binds them to one another, is to be found in the moral principles of justice, tolerance, and fraternity; but that which divides them is the divergence of the symbols of the various creeds, though these are but the transient envelopes of moral truths. The absolute spirit of moral wisdom is unchangeable and eternal; while the symbolic letter of dogmas is infinitely varied according to the light and intellectual development of the human race;" and the author fully recognises in the words of St. Peter, that "God is no respecter of persons, but that he who fears Him, and acts uprightly, is acceptable in his sight." The introduction to the treatise commences thus:—

"The study of social morality—that eternal basis of all order, social and political—has been, even up to our own day, much neglected by the schools of the State. Disregarding the universal, invariable, and obligatory character of moral principles, Governments have consigned the teaching of them to the ministers of the various religious doctrines, which are simply the historical and variable coverings of the immutable and eternal principles of a pure moral creed. But the State itself, being a moral institution, ought to direct its attention even more earnestly to the propagation of sound moral principles than it does to the diffusion of intellectual light. It is, therefore, a matter of great surprise that the State, which has so long been busy with educational affairs, should never once have thought of taking control of the department of social morality. Government ought not to abandon the weighty task of the moral instruction of mankind to the ministers of the various religions. It would by no means be a superfluous effort to endeavour to unite the civil and clerical influences, as a means of crushing the evils by which our society is assailed. The more a country has advanced in the career of civilisation, the greater are its political rights, and

\* *Universal Ethics.* By Baron de Guldenstubbé, author of "The Reality of Spirits," and of "The Marvellous Phenomena of Direct Writing," and by his sister, J. De Guldenstubbé, author of "Thoughts from beyond the Tomb." Second Edition. Paris, 1875: Imprimerie Baillet, Questroy and Co., 7 Rue Baillet. On sale at 15 Southampton Row, London, W.C., 3s. 6d.

the more imperative does moral instruction become; for it is but natural that intellectual advancement should be balanced by moral advancement, the only safeguard against inordinate desires. Universal suffrage, having rendered the nation sole arbiter of its own destinies, it necessarily follows that a good moral education should be bestowed upon all its members, as this alone can prevent the sad explosion of anarchy and revolution. It is therefore the duty of every enlightened Government to propagate in its schools the principles of a rational universal morality—the sole basis of permanent political order. It is to the interest of both social and political liberty that the State should diffuse correct principles of morality, on a universal basis, in harmony with the natural instincts of the human mind. In fact, a subject who should understand neither his duties nor his rights would be a disturber both of social and political order, and it would be necessary to deprive him of his liberty, in order to prevent inconvenience to his neighbour; and the money now expended in the maintenance of prisons could be employed in the moral training of youth.

“The State, in elevating man in the moral scale, becomes an auxiliary to the ministers of religion; it renders the citizen more inclined to receive religious truths, which consecrate moral principles, by adding to them the authority of revelation. But the State cannot mix itself up with religious instruction; it must respect the sacred principles of liberty of conscience, and liberty of worship;” and the author adds, “that the authority of the State must pause before the domestic altar, for the State has no right to interfere with liberty of conscience by the imposition of any form of religious teaching, against which the conscience rebels;” and he looks forward to the day when an enlightened and liberal system of moral philosophy will take the place of the educational tyranny now so rife in almost all countries, and in all conditions of society. Neither does the author pass without notice the position of women in the social scale, but in a few earnest words fully recognises that “human progress is an impossibility, so long as the education and the culture of woman is so far below that of man, whose companion she is destined to be. It would create a fearful disturbance in society,” he continues, “if women of the present day were brought up in conformity with the principles of the 13th century, or of the middle ages, or of the ‘*ancient regime*,’ at the same time that men were instructed in the glorious principles of 1789, or the humanitarian tendencies of the 19th century.” Unhappily our transitional state of society but too often offers the spectacle of that discord which might result in a veritable social anarchy, if the Government did not endeavour by the diffusion

of a uniform and homogeneous system of education to bridge over the abyss which separates the two sexes of our species, the one from the other. Such are the fundamental principles of social morality, the diffusion of which would fill up the blank so much deplored by all men of enlightenment both in the State and in the schools.

The maxims, etc., contained in the volume before us, are arranged under various headings, such as "The Duty of Man towards God—The Duties of Children—The Duties of Parents—Marriage—Virtue the Result of Enlightenment—Social Justice—Wisdom—The Peace of the Soul in the midst of the Vicissitudes of Human Life—Death—Immortality and Retribution." From these various chapters we select a few passages, as a specimen of what the curious in such matters may expect to find in the work, which will no doubt be exceedingly interesting to those whose minds lead them to the tracing out of the prevalence of the same religious ideas among the different nations of the earth:—

"The Priests of the Temple of Sais in Egypt said of the Great Spirit which animates the universe—'I am all that has ever been, that is, and that ever will be—no man hath known me.'"

"We may find God *everywhere*. Woe to him, therefore, who is discouraged, and allows his faith in God to wax weak, as though he doubted His universal and sovereign existence. And there is a truth equally certain, that we may also lose God everywhere if we are not everlastingly on our guard." (St. Martin.)

"Whosoever associates God with other Divinities is on a false track, far removed from the true one." (Koran.)

Alluding to the necessity, in a moral and hygienic point of view, of having one day set apart for the rest of the body and the culture of the mind, the writer adds—"It is well known that Christ sanctified the day consecrated to God by the performance of good works and the cure of diseases, as well as by *attaching no importance to the outward ceremonies of religion.*"

"Thou thinkest there is but one God, and thou doest well; the demons also believe this and tremble. But Oh! vain man, know that faith without good works is sterile and valueless." (St. James.)

"*Duties of Children.*—Love your mother, child; no love is so worthy as that which we entertain for our parents." (Euripides' Fragments.)

"Fraternal love is the fertile soil in which flourishes the lovely blossom of friendship. It is the basis, the germ, the starting point of all true affection." (Tschoung Young.)

"*Duties of Parents.*—The wise conduct of a father is the best lesson he can give to his children." (Democritus.)

"Individuals the most happily gifted become bad under a pernicious system of education. Can you believe that the greatest crimes and the most consummate depravity are the offspring of a vulgar mind, and not of one full of vigour, whose noble qualities have been perverted by erroneous

culture? Can you believe that a feeble mind is capable either of much good or of much evil?" (Plato.)

"*Marriage*.—Lycurgus commanded that his daughters should be given in marriage without dowry, in order that each citizen, in studying the character of her whom he desired to espouse, should follow no guide but virtue." (Plutarch.)

The few specimens that we have here taken will suffice to show that the book is of no common character, and well deserves the attention of the thoughtful reader, especially of those interested in the great fundamental moral truths that pervade all the religions of the world. It has a tendency to destroy creeds and articles of faith, by demonstrating both from sacred and profane writings, how *universal morality* is the underlying basis of all society, which is spread like sunshine over the world, albeit that it is occasionally hidden from view by the dense clouds of ignorance and error. These clouds will pass away, pierced and dispersed by the refulgent beams of God's everlasting truth, which, triumphant over all, will shine with increasing glory, even unto the perfect day.

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#### HOLY-DAYS.

Come, my bonnies! come, my bonnies! let us hark to wood and dell!  
Lo, the sun is up before us; bird and beast obey his spell;  
On the eaves the grey house-sparrow chirps incessant; whiles, O hark,  
In the rosy light of morning sings his matin hymn the lark.

To-day is holy, O my bonnies! sacred 'tis to peace and rest;  
Not a jot of labour do I till the day hath died i' the west,  
And Night's drowsy wing hath silenced every sound of field or street,  
And at Morning's roseate gateway us again the sun doth greet.

Come, my bonnies! come, my bonnies! let us haste to join the throng  
That on hillside and in meadow fill the air with joy and song.  
O 'twere shame to waste such hours—holidays are all too short!  
See how in the brightening sunbeams myriad mayflies dance and sport.

Ah, my children, this is gladness!—gladness that I fain would see  
'Joyed by all who in the city see nor bird, nor flower, nor tree;  
For amid its gloom and glamour children grow from youth to age,  
Knowing nought beyond the sadness writ upon its dreary page.

There, my bonnies,—ah, 'tis sadness!—morning brings no joyous sound,  
But the toiler's weary patter on the foot-worn, stony ground:  
There the eve with deep-felt silence and the dim night star-enwrought  
Start no mystic tide of feeling burthened with empassioned thought.

No, my darlings—God forgive us if we joy when others weep!—  
There men meet with white, wan faces, hiding sorrows dark and deep;  
And they laugh with mocking laughter, thrilling through our hearts with woe,  
While their souls are sighing, longing for somewhat they hardly know.

God be with them! Heaven forfend them!—would that all could share this  
day,

In its glory and its gladness from the city far away.  
Play, my children, joy while youth is, and there's time for thoughtless mirth;  
For the day comes when man sorrows 'mid his joyance on the earth.

A. T. STORY.

## "THE OLD REVELATION AND THE NEW."

By FRANK PODMORE.

To the Jews, a people who believed themselves to be specially the object of Divine care and guidance, arose one who claimed a mission from God. But at the first God's chosen people rejected God's appointed leader;\* and though they after a while began to hearken to him, the living prophet never received such implicit obedience as his written words in after time. Moses gave the Jews a long and minute ritual, and a code of laws that regulated almost every function in life, public or private. He asserted that in all that he spoke it was the Lord who spoke in him, and that the law which he gave was of divine authority. But though this commandment proceeded from God, Moses yet showed not obscurely that it was not to be received as final or perfect: "for," said he, "the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."† But he also repeatedly enjoins them to keep the law that he had given them, and "not add thereto or diminish from it."‡ They were to keep the law to the very letter, on pain of disaster and death.§ He prepares them indeed for the advent of other teachers, by warning them of false prophets, and showing them how to discern the false from the true.|| But the test that he gives for this is no certain one, it is at best but negative; and the danger of giving heed to the false prophet is far more strongly insisted on than the benefits to be derived from the true speaker.

After the death of Moses, the people began more and more to lose the spirit of the law that he had left them, entangled in the mazes of the letter. They actually dared openly to neglect their highest duties, in the vain hope that they could atone for such neglect by a more strict observance of rites and ceremonies, not seeing that the last without the first are valueless. Prophet after prophet did God send to recall them to their duty, and to show them that the letter which they so slavishly worshipped was but the garment and emblem of the truth, and that the spirit which they neglected was the one thing needful. One after another they delivered their message: that their incense, their new moons and sabbaths, their solemn meetings, were an abomination unto God, for they were but forms from which the life had departed; that God would have mercy and not sacrifice; that He asked not for lip-service, but for the service of the heart.¶ And one fate befel them all: they were despised, rejected, persecuted even to the death, as their great successor was to be.\*\* Indeed not only were the true prophets uniformly rejected, but the false were as uniformly received: "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you,

\* Ex. ii. 13, 14; Acts vii.

§ Deut. xi. 18-22, &amp;c.

† Deut. xviii. 15-18.

|| Deut. xiii. 1-5; xviii. 20-22.

‡ Deut. xii. 32; iv. 2.

¶ Is. i. 11; Hos. vi. 6; Is. xxix. 13; Jer. vii. 21.

\*\* Matt. xxi. 33, *et seq.*; xxiii. 29-37; Heb. xi. 36, *et seq.*



for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."\* So utterly had the Jews misinterpreted the inward meaning of their Scriptures by indolently and slavishly adhering to the outward form. They were frightened because their prophets tried to show them the worthlessness of the carnal ordinances, that were so easy to observe, compared with the "judgment, mercy and faith," that were so hard, and yet alone of any avail.

But whilst the prophets strove to remedy the errors of the past, and infuse new life and vigour into the present, they continually pointed onwards to the dawn of a more glorious future. A king should come to execute judgment, and judge the poor with righteousness; the golden age from which Adam had separated them should be restored to the ruined race; Israel's dominion should be established and his enemies caused to flee before him, "for the Lord will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him." And they were dazzled by all these promises of power and glory, and forgot to look for One who, though "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," was yet destined "by his knowledge to justify many," and to "bear the iniquity of all."† But they saw only the promises of temporal dominion, and looked for a king to arise who should restore the throne of Israel as at the first, and subdue the nations under their feet. Not all the teachings of their prophets had availed to show them that "the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart"—not the experience of so many centuries could warn them to seek for the spiritual truth below its external emblem.

And now the last of the long line of prophets had borne his witness against the blind eyes and unbelieving hearts around him, and had departed, foretelling them of the glory that was shortly to be revealed. For four hundred years there came no message from God to disturb their peace, and doubtless they thought that He had told them all they needed to know. What need to send a message to them? They were not as their fathers who had slain the prophets.‡ If God should think fit to send yet another of His servants, they would not reject him, for they knew already all that he could tell them. God surely had now spoken for the last time, and they waited but for that Messiah to come who should restore all things, and give to Israel her judges again, as at the first, and her councillors as at the beginning. More spiritual than their generation, the prophets had looked through the great gulf of the centuries, and had told of the far results of Christ's teaching, as if coincident with his coming. What wonder, then, if what they themselves but dimly saw, the people to whom they spoke failed to perceive at all?

For four hundred years no voice from God had disturbed the Rabbis as they pondered over their Scriptures, and fed their pride and ambition with the glorious promises of universal dominion for

\* Luke vi. 26.

† Is. liii. 3-11.

‡ Matt. xxiii. 30.

God's chosen people which they contained. For four hundred years undisturbed they had built their theories and conjectures on the splendid imagery of the prophets, and had altogether lost sight of the grand spiritual truths which that imagery but faintly shadowed forth. For four hundred years had the blind been leading the blind, and now the end was near. God's church was a house divided against itself; sect after sect had arisen, each founding its authority on Moses and the Prophets: there were the Pharisees, self-righteous and wise in their own eyes; the Sadducees, intolerant and bitter in their scepticism; the Herodians, renegades from their country's theocracy; the Essenes, who strove by the loftiness of their morality and the purity of their lives to show men how to live when religion could do so no longer. All these we know of, and there were perhaps many more. And whilst their teachers wrangled about the tithing of mint and of cummin, and the washing of brazen vessels and of platters, the poor were left to sink under the "heavy burdens, grievous to bear," which were laid upon them, the kingdom of heaven was shut against them,\* and there was no man to tell them of the rest that awaited the weary, or to guide them to the promised land that now seemed so very far off. And dark as is this picture, it was yet the brightest page in the world's history. If these things were done in the tree that was yet green, what was done in the dry? In the Gentile world all faith was long since dead: their religious ceremonies were become a solemn farce, recompense or retribution beyond the grave a tale that could scarcely frighten children; their very sages but spent their time in ever hearing or seeing some new thing, or seeking after that wisdom which always mocked their grasp. God's chosen people, and the heathen world around them, were alike groping for the light, if haply they might find it; and the Light came, and "shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."

For now heaven and hell alike burst upon this world, which was beginning to doubt the existence of either.† After so long a time there arose once more a prophet in Israel. Now is the time for God's ministers, the righteous Pharisees, to show their faith, and prove that "they would not have been partakers with their fathers in the blood of the prophets." Doubtless they will gladly welcome

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\* Matt. xxiii. 13.

† Whether possession by devils was known at all before the time of the Gospel I do not know; it certainly could have been no common phenomenon, for, otherwise, there could have been no Sadducees to doubt the existence of "angel or spirit." But now it seems to have occurred with startling frequency. Again, we hear of sorcerers and devil-mongers in the Acts; and at a still later time we are warned (1 John iv. 1) against giving heed to all spirits indiscriminately, thus showing that evil spirits as well as good did at this time communicate with mortals. We hear, too, of miraculous gifts being bestowed on vain and foolish persons (1 Cor. xiv.). We are told that there are many anti-Christ's and false prophets even now in the world (1 John ii. 18; iv. 3). So that we must acknowledge that even this Revelation was not without a darker side, though, like spots on the face of the sun, it be lost in the exceeding brightness of the glory.

John, the last and greatest of them all. Alas, no, for "they said he hath a devil,"\* and were only withheld by fear of the people from declaring his mission to be of man, not of God.† But the people heard him gladly, and were baptised of him in Jordan, and "all men counted John as a prophet."

When thirty years of age, Jesus Christ, the long-promised Messiah, came to found his kingdom; and the doctors learned in the law, God's chosen ministers, the men who loved much fasting and long prayers, rejected him. What though "he spake as never man spake"; they had looked for him in all the pomp of earthly majesty, and behold, the Lord's ways were not as man's ways. It was not unnatural that they should so reject him. Read through the prophetic writings, and amongst countless allusions to dominion and glory that should be the lot of the Elect of God, you will find but one or two that tell of the "Man of sorrows." And they had not yet learnt to see that things spiritual are the real substance, things temporal the shadow. They were looking for a king of the royal line of David, with a mighty retinue of captains and councillors and judges: and, behold, the son of a carpenter, with a few poor fishermen for his only followers! Had he not come, too, from Nazareth, a den of robbers, whose ill-repute had passed into a proverb? They were looking for one who should cast off the galling yoke of Cæsar, and trample their haughty foes under their feet; and this man bade them yield to Cæsar the money which bore Cæsar's stamp, and suffered not his followers to fight, because his kingdom was not from hence. But we should wrong the Jews if we supposed that they rejected the light only because their hopes of earthly power were overthrown. They had far better reasons than that. The prophets had said that Messiah should consort with the great of the land, but Jesus "receiveth sinners and eateth with them"; the prophets had told of "abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth," but Jesus said, "I come not to send peace on earth, but a sword"; Moses had said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,"‡ and Jesus said, "See that ye resist not evil"; Moses had suffered a wife to be divorced, but Jesus said that whoso did this committed adultery.|| This fellow, then, taught the people to despise the law of Moses, and perverted the nation;§ he was a blasphemer and a deceiver, and had his power from the prince of the devils. It was in vain that Jesus showed them that the law of Moses was imperfect through the hardness of their hearts;\*\* that it was they, not he, who did dishonour to that law, by obscuring it with traditions and commandments of men; by holding the dead letter, and forgetting the "judgment and mercy and faith," which were its very life and soul; in vain he told them that they, not he, were blind leaders of the blind; he warned them that their blasphemy was such as had never forgiveness, for they called evil good, and good evil, and ascribed to the power of Satan what was in

\* Matt. xi. 18.

† Matt. xxi. 25.

‡ Ex. xxi. 24.

|| Deut. xxiv. 1; and Mark x. 2-12.

§ Luke xxiii. 2, &amp;c.

\*\* Mark x. 5.

very truth the work of God, and known as such to all men, not by the doubtful application of prophetic symbolism, but by the light of the reason within them, and by the unchanging law that good can only come from good.\* In vain: for their eyes were holden, that they could not see.

But amongst the common people, there were many that heard him gladly. They could not discern subtle questions of the law, they could not bear the grievous burdens of forms and ceremonies that were laid upon them; and they were fain to go to one who promised understanding to babes and sucklings, rest to the weary and heavy-laden, and whose only law was love. And many more followed him, not for the comfortable words that he spake, but because they saw the miracles that he did; because they did eat of the loaves and were filled. And very many followed him, whose goodness was as a morning cloud, and passed away as the early dew; who were ready one day to cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David," and the next, "Crucify him, crucify him." And there were a few who heard and believed, and bore fruit a thousand-fold. And these their Master, ere he left them, sent out into the world to bear the good tidings he had told them to every creature. He promised that he would "be with them alway, even unto the end of the world." He assured them, too, that whosoever believed on his name, should do the works that he had done, and greater works than these.† And they went out, speaking with the burning eloquence of truth, and thousands turned to hear them.

The new faith had no formal creed, stereotyped and fixed for evermore. Jesus had said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now," and had promised that the Spirit of Truth should come and guide his disciples into all truth, but he had fixed no limits to the operation of that Spirit; he had prescribed no channels, or seasons, or persons, for it was the free gift of God, "who distributeth to every man severally as He will." Nor had the apostles ventured to set bounds to what their Master had left free. Nowhere do they claim to have said all that Jesus had left unsaid; they saw that they could but "know in part, and prophesy in part,"‡ and they welcomed the same inspiration in others that they had in themselves,§ and feared only lest that inspiration should not be used aright. So even the last of the twelve, writing sixty years after his Master's death, looks forward to yet further revelations in the time to come, but warns his hearers to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits."||

But as Moses had warned the Jews of false teachers that should come into the world, and hardly alluded to the long line of true prophets that should supplement the law that he had given them, so Christ's disciples warned their hearers again and again of the false prophets that should arise after them, to undo the work that

\* Matt. xii. 22-27.

† John xiv. 12; Mark xvi. 17, 18.

‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

§ 1 Cor. xiv. 1, 5.

|| 1 John iv. 1.

they had done,\* and left the true to fight their way by the might of the truth that was in them. There may have been a further reason for this: the disciples may have thought that the Church had enough to do in assimilating the spiritual food that it already had, without looking for yet more at the present. For there were many and weighty differences of belief, mainly arising from ignorance, and these, perhaps they may have thought, should be removed by using the light they had, ere they sought for more. Some had not so much as heard of the Holy Ghost; others maintained that the resurrection was already past; yet others were in doubt whether they were still bound by the law of circumcision, and the old carnal ordinances; these said they were of Paul, those of Cephas, or Apollos, or Christ. Again, just as Moses had foretold only of the grandest of what was to come, and had pointed only to Christ, who was in himself the sum of all else; just as the prophets had condensed into one great whole the long results of centuries, and had spoken of "abundance of peace," and "the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth as the waters cover the sea"—events which have not yet come to pass—as if they were to be signs and accompaniments of Christ's coming;—so when Jesus and His apostles foretell His own second advent, they, too, thus foreshorten their view, and represent as instantaneous, events which will really come to completion as slowly as the glorious promises of the prophets, which are yet in course of being fulfilled. And this is made the more manifest in that they seem to have expected the end to come in their own lifetime, thus giving to us no obscure indication that in prophecy all perspective is lost.†

But the spiritual gifts the great Teacher had promised to all who should believe in His name grew less and less frequent, till at last they disappeared altogether. Down to the beginning of the fifth century, the early fathers of the church testify to having seen miracles performed—even the dead raised to life. And after, through a night of long centuries, we hear of no more, but of ignorance and superstition, and blind worshipping of lifeless forms, and of priestcraft and avarice, and of bloody wars and murders, and cruel tortures, all carried on in the name of a God of Love. Save that here a Pagan emperor, and there a monk, whose very name is forgotten, spoke words that have lived till now, because they breathe something of the spirit of that Master, of whom the first had heard only as a fanatic, who had died a felon's death, and the last only knew after twelve centuries, and through a foreign tongue.

Once more God's ministers are troubled, and another prophet arises to tell them that they are worshippers of Mammon, not of God; that they have betrayed their trust, and proved false at heart

\* 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Peter ii. 1; 1 John i. 18.

† Matt. xxiv. 29, 34; 1 Thess. iv. 15, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 John ii. 18; Heb. i. 2, &c. Also, in interpreting the prophecies we must remember that much of the language is symbolical, just as was much of the language of those in the Old Testament, some, indeed, being actually borrowed from thence. Compare Matt. xxiv. 20 with Is. xiii. 10; Joel ii. 31, iii. 15.



to the Master, whom with their lips they served. Much, indeed, had Luther of the old regenerating fire, the spirit of the prophets of the fore-time; but, alas, with the tares he rooted up some of the wheat also. Miraculous powers had often been falsely assumed by the Church, had often, when real, been prostituted to the vilest uses, but they were none the less of God; but Luther and Luther's followers have put a ban upon them for evermore. After the Reformation, saintly miracles and witchcraft disappeared together, and were heard of never again. Only here and there a sect sprang up, claiming a renewal of that inspiration, and that wonder-working power which the Church had forfeited. Quakers, Swedenborgians, and in this last century Irvingites, each condemning all others as sorcerers, in the spirit of those who cried, "Lord, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us."

But miracles, recognised as such by the Church at large, have ceased. "The king has forbidden God to work a miracle here"; the priests have sealed His lips, and buried Him in His own temple, as in a grave, for evermore. "Henceforth," they say, "if God speak at all, He must speak through our mouths, for to us He has entrusted His oracles." Be it so, then. How have they fulfilled their trust? Where is now the love which was to be the sign unto all men of Christ's disciples? Is it gone, and have we left in its stead only that *odium theologicum* which has become a bye-word to the world? God forbid. But, at least, love has ceased to be thought the one thing needful. Whilst those who should have fed us with the bread of life are wrangling about the manner of the knife which is to cut it, and the fashion of the platter on which it shall be served, the ministry is passing on to other hands than theirs, for—

"The people are weary of vestment vanities,  
And litigation about inanities;  
Why comes no pilgrim, with eye of fire,  
To tell us where pointeth minster spire?  
To show us, though critics sneer and scoff,  
The way to 'the land that is very far off.'"<sup>\*</sup>

The priests tell us that they are our God-appointed guides. But the Master who gave them this authority, when His spiritual power was questioned, established it by a material sign: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins . . . arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."<sup>†</sup> Will our self-styled ministers of God submit to such a proof of their ministry? Will they "pray over the sick, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord"? It is but a few years since that Sir Wm. Thomson challenged the Church to just such a trial as this. "You call on us," he said, "to believe in the efficacy of prayer: prove, what you can prove, that prayer has power to save the sick, and we will believe, what you can not prove, that it has power to purify the soul." Why did they not then accept the challenge? They did not need

<sup>\*</sup> From *Punch* on "John Bunyan."

<sup>†</sup> Matt. ix. 6.

an unbeliever to ask them. They had Christ's warranty for so doing, and that of his disciple.\* And if they cannot prove that they have the less, how shall they be believed when they lay claim to the greater? But the Church has been weighed in a higher balance than this, and found wanting. Listen to their own evidence against themselves: The director of a Church Mission in the Barbican said lately that twelve or fifteen years ago, when first the mission was set on foot, he found amongst all those thousands but one who was really an Atheist—but one who was fully persuaded of his unbelief. Now, he knows of hundreds such—the good tidings which he has preached notwithstanding. Do I blame him? No. The fault is not his alone; it is the fault of us all. One of the great Church societies confesses with sorrow that “the majority of our intelligent artizans and mechanics are Secularists,” a sect who look for no future, and acknowledge no God. Or hear Prof. Clifford urge us, with mournful stoicism, to work whilst we may, for, this life done, we have no other to hope for.† Not one, but all, are crying, “Who will show us any good?” And because no answer comes, some are content to drift on aimlessly and hopelessly—

“Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,  
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives;  
And each half-lives a hundred different lives,  
Who wait like thee, but not like thee, in hope.

“Light, half-believers of their casual creeds,  
Who never deeply felt nor clearly willed;  
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,  
Whose vague resolves never have been fulfilled.”

And others spend their lives in a feverish race for knowledge, wealth, or fame—

“No shelter to grow ripe is theirs,  
No leisure to grow wise;”

for they see that there is infinity to gain, and do not know that they have eternity wherein to gain it. Much learning has brought us much sorrow. The world is very weary, and turns with eager longing to “Wordsworth's sweet calm,” and the simple trust of childhood. “The need of a new revelation was never greater than now.” Was Emerson wrong when he said these words? Is our science so humble? our philosophy so sure? is our religion so real? Above all, is our life so earnest, that we can say we have no need for this?

And see, now, just when our wise men are telling us that spirit is but the shadow of matter, and life and thought properties like heat and electricity: that we have no heaven to hope and no hell to fear: that we must work for others of our race, who, in the time to come, will live their little day when we ourselves “shall have

\* James v. 14, 16.

† See the last page of his article in the *Fortnightly Review* for April of this year.

melted, like streaks of morning cloud, into the infinite azure of the past," where the good and the evil shall alike be forgotten: that Christ's resurrection is a Jewish fable, and Paul's burning eloquence and glorious hopes were founded on a lie;—just when the Church is utterly at variance with itself, sect warring with sect, and creed with creed: just when the sacred office of a cure of souls has become the convenient means of earning a lazy subsistence; when men have lost the spirit, and are clinging most blindly to the letter; when all who are earnest and far-seeing lament most deeply their own utter helplessness; when, not the love that Christ came to teach, but doctrines and commands of men are made the only sure passport to heaven,—just now, in our sorest need, our help has come. Not as the sign for which the Church looks, not as the wisdom which our wise men seek; but to the one a stumbling-block, and to the other foolishness; but to us the glorious dawn of which Christ and the prophets told, to us the sacred fire which shall regenerate the world.

To our men of science, foolishness; the one or two who have seen and believed are ridiculed by all men as dupes or liars. Yet, if Spiritualism were of the devil, it should be well spoken of by the world, "for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

To God's elect a stumbling-block. They were looking for the "Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven," for legions of angels and the trump of God; and they see only the tilting of a card-table, and the clumsy conjuring tricks of an ungrammatical "medium." And they hear of the damnable iniquities of a spirit-seance. So Marcus Aurelius, holiest of the Gentiles, heard of the pestilent seditions and damnable iniquities of the followers of one Christ, a Jewish felon, and persecuted them even to the death. And they say, "This is of the devil." So said their fathers unto Christ. But Moses proved his mission of God in that his serpent devoured the serpents of the magicians; Micaiah showed, by his true prophecy, his divine inspiration;\* Christ testified that his power was of God by overcoming the agents of the devil; and Christ's disciples were stronger than the sorcerers who opposed them. Let now the Church prove this of the devil, by using the power that the Master has promised to his faithful followers; let her do the "greater works than these"; and if not, "choose ye this day whom ye will serve," the God of the Church, who is asleep or on a journey, and hears not his servants' cry, or the God whom we preach, who has sent us fire from heaven in answer to our offerings.

But Christ gave another proof of His ministry. By this, too, let our cause be tried. If the teachings and the fruit of this New Revelation are good, then has it in very deed come from God. And, first of all, what has it done? It has brought many thousands, who before saw in the world only blind chance, or the iron rule of law, and in death the end of all things, to recognise everywhere the hand of a living Father, and to believe that only at death

\* 1 Kings xxii.

do we truly begin to live. It has given to those sorrowing without hope for loved ones, whom they deemed lost in blank annihilation, the full assurance that those loved ones are "not lost, but gone before." It has healed the sick, it has cleansed the leper, it has only not raised the dead. It has brought comfort to the mourner, and preached deliverance to the captive. It has given a purpose to our efforts, and a nobleness to our lives, which they had lacked without it. It has taken from men's sight the triple veil of pride and ignorance, and prejudice, born of both; and has opened the eyes of the spiritually blind. The dead in soul it has quickened into newness of life.

Spiritualism teaches us that our work-time is not ended here, but shall last for ever; that hope shall be the swift forerunner of conquest through all eternity; that our souls, the asymptotes of Deity, shall go from strength to strength, and from glory to glory, through the long years of the unending future. It tells us that there is hope for all, not only in this life, but in that which is to come, for that "He who loved us into life" is indeed "a Father infinitely fatherly;" and

"With loving-kindness will he wait,  
Till all the prodigals of fate  
Return unto their fair estate,  
And blessings many;  
Nor will He shut the golden gate  
At last on any."

It tells us that we are not changed at death, but that all our joys and sorrows, all our hopes and fears, all our deeds of good or ill here, are weaving the garment that must clothe us there;—that the judgment which all men look for is going on now, and has been going on from the foundation of the world;—that all we think, or do, or say, brings with it its own sure reward, not at some far-off day of reckoning, but here and now;—and that we stave off this retribution for a time, only to fall with a heavier weight hereafter. It brings before us, with all the conviction of sight, the awful fact that our every movement is watched by other than ourselves, and self-registered for eternity. It makes many *feel* what they only *believed* before—that there is a Power above to mourn over us sinning, to comfort us sorrowing, to guide us erring, and to strengthen us when sore distressed—

"For ever round our head  
Are hovering, on viewless wings,  
The spirits of the dead;"—

that much of our own work in that other life will be to help those here, as we have here ourselves been helped;—that "righteousness is not in creeds;" and that not belief, but love acted out in the life, shall bring a man happiness in that other world, where nothing seems, but all things are;—that our highest aspirations, here unfulfilled, are laid up in store for us there, where the outward world is but the reflection of the soul within—

"All we have willed, or hoped, or dreamed of good, shall exist;  
 Not its semblance, but itself: no beauty, nor love, nor power,  
 Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,  
 When eternity confirms the conception of an hour.  
 The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
 The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,  
 Are music sent up to God from the lover and the bard.  
 Enough that He heard them once; we shall hear them by and bye."

Finally, it can tell us no more about God than we knew before; the great white throne, and the sea of glass, and the golden crowns, are but figures and emblems of the True, for that neither man nor spirit "hath seen God at any time," but that we shall know Him more and more, and to that knowledge there shall be no end.

There is little new in all this, perhaps some will say. No! it might not be true if there were. Christ told the Jews little that was new; but he brought out the old truths with ten-fold brightness. So, Spiritualism has but come to establish, with speed and enduringly, the kingdom of freer life, and fuller light, and love more divine, that else had come so slowly. And if this seem to any unworthy of the Most High God, remember what was said of old—"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; and base things of the world, and things that are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are." And if this seem to any unlike what Christ told of his second coming, remember that, to the eye of prophecy, all scattered rays are blended into one transcendent whole, while to us, who see in part, they can only be separately discerned. Just so, astronomers tell us, our Earth, to us so vile and common, shines out to distant planets with a brightness above the brightness of the moon. For the future, like the past, to our dull, partial sight,

"—— Can only win  
 A glory from its being far,  
 And orb into the perfect star.  
 We see not when we move therein."

Lastly, let none say that he is too busy to meddle with this thing—that this thing has no concern for him. You are invited to listen to that which claims to be the voice of God; you are asked to examine the credentials of His messengers. You dare not say that you have not time or concern for *this*; or, if you do, bethink you that for those who, when bidden to "prove all things," have yet rejected that which they have not proved, there is reserved a heavier retribution than for such as have never had the opportunity of acceptance.

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#### THE ANCHORITE.

HAVE I not fled from all the world holds dear,  
 And quenched the unhallowed longings of my breast,  
 Hoping amid these mountains stern and drear  
 To find a foretaste of eternal rest?



Shaking the dust of Sodom off my feet,—

My loves, my hopes, my friendships all forgot,—

I sought this loneliest, most unkind retreat;

Yet in the desert, Lord, I find thee not!

Only I feel a wayward heart within;

Only I hear a mocking voice without;

Some demon servant of the Prince of Sin,

Who comes my heart-wrung penitence to flout.

O direful craft, O skilful to deceive,

Gently with gentle voice reproaching me:

"And was it well," he whispers, "thus to leave

Those who so love and who so long for thee?"

"If it be true the world is doomed to perish,

Bethink thee, is it generous, is it brave,

To fly the wreck a selfish life to cherish,

Seeking apart thy single soul to save?"

Even thus, with show of virtue, he entices;

Puts sweet for bitter and for bitter sweet.

I tremble lest I fall through his devices,

And backward turn once more my sinful feet.

O Lord, how long art thou in silence hidden?

Have I not ceaseless for Thy Spirit prayed?

It comes not; but the Tempter comes unbidden:

I perish if Thou yet refuse Thine aid.

Still day by day at morning's call I breathe

My unaccepted offering of prayer,

And when my pulses 'neath the hot sun seethe,

And when night fans me with her cooling air.

All vainly flow my tears at morn or even,

In vain are poured my penitential sighs,

Nor sigh nor tear can please offended Heaven,

And evermore that taunting voice replies:

"How long these listless prayers, this idle fasting

Heard'st not the sound the echoes waft to thee,

The psalm earth's true sons from everlasting

Chant while they march to the land that is to be?"

And ever and anon that sound doth break

Upon my ears and will not let me rest;

Strange power is given that demon voice to wake

Earth's smouldering fires in my rebellious breast.

I hear them—ay, I see the long procession,—

The patriot and the poet and the sage,

Fired with the hope to gain a fair possession,

And win for men a happy heritage.

Forward they march, the foremost ever falling,

Careless of life, if but they clear the way;

Heart unto heart, age on to age is calling:

On life's grand journey I alone delay.

Forgive it, Lord; I know the narrow road

Is better than the path vain mortals try:

But while I linger in this lone abode,  
 Still bursts that vision on my glistening eye.  
 And still that sound my startled ear engages,  
 Rolling in thunder-tones from hill to hill;  
 The tramp of feet that echo down the ages  
 Deep through my soul reverberating still.

ST. GEORGE STOCK.

## REVIEW.

THE INDUCTION OF SLEEP AND INSENSIBILITY TO PAIN BY THE SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF ANESTHETICS. By John M. Crombie, M.A., M.D., late Resident Medical Officer, Cancer Hospital, &c. London: Churchill.

THE whole question of drug medication will be regarded as disputable by many of our readers, and the use of narcotics to induce sleep will be, no doubt, particularly condemned. The use of these render the patient insensible to symptoms, without in any way removing the cause, and this leaves the sufferer in a worse condition than he was found at the commencement of the experiment. The natural anæsthetic is animal magnetism, and it regulates and controls the action of the nervous system, rather than the contrary. Drugs depress and destroy the nervous function, while magnetism invigorates and sustains the nervous forces. But there may be cases in which the use of drugs is an act of humanity to the sufferer, tortured with the pains of an incurable disease, or punished beyond endurance with sleeplessness. In such cases the use of narcotics may be permitted under skilful administration, but it remains a point for investigation whether such treatment has not a deleterious effect on the future state of the immortal spirit. To a materialist the condition of physical repose is the one end to be achieved; but, unfortunately for this line of practice, man is a spirit, and it remains to be discussed whether pain or coma is the least injurious to the welfare of the inner man. Perhaps the decision would be given in favour of a wise application of the narcotic,—chloroform, opium, or some other; but this is a very different thing from the habit of sleepless wights dosing themselves to procure unconsciousness, rather than obeying the laws of health or securing such magnetic treatment as would lead to the normal induction of balmy sleep. Many deaths occur through the injurious use of sleeping drugs, even under the supervision of medical men. This Dr. Crombie seems to admit with great force, for he says, "The dread of chloroform as a narcotic is just in regard to the administrator; unjust in regard to the agent." When people begin to stupefy themselves, the evil is increased. Even in the case of highly intelligent and scientific men the danger is immense, as the following experience of Mr. Varley, as given in the "Dialectical Report," at page 162, fully sets forth:—

"I had been experimenting with earthenware, and was attacked with

spasms in the throat from the fumes of fluric acid, which I had been using largely. I was very ill, indeed, and used to wake up with contraction of the throat; and I was recommended to have some sulphuric ether beside me to breathe, which would procure instant relief. I used this six or eight times, but its smell was so unpleasant that I eventually used chloroform. I kept it by my bedside, and when I had to take it, leant over it in such a manner that when insensibility supervened I fell back, and the sponge dropped down. One night, however, I rolled on my back, retaining the sponge, which remained on my mouth. Mrs. Varley was in the room above, nursing a sick child. After a little time I became conscious; I saw my wife upstairs, and I saw myself on my back with the sponge to my mouth, but was utterly powerless to cause my body to move. I made by my will a distinct impression on her brain that I was in danger. Thus aroused, she came down and immediately removed the sponge, and was greatly alarmed. I then used my body to speak to her, and I said—'I shall forget all about it and how this came to pass, unless you remind me in the morning; but be sure to tell me what made you come down, and I shall then be able to recall the circumstances.' The following morning she did so, but I could not remember anything about it. I tried hard all day, however, and at length I succeeded in remembering first a part, and, ultimately, the whole. My spirit was in the room with Mrs. Varley when I made her conscious of my danger. That case helped me to understand how spirits communicate; what my spirit wished she saw, and Mrs. Varley has had similar experiences. On one occasion she told me whilst in trance—'It is not the spirits that now speak; it is myself. I make use of my body the same as spirits do when they speak through me.'—*Report on Spiritualism*, p. 162-3.

This extract is interesting in more respects than one. The merit of Dr. Crombie's method is that the patient can administer this anæsthetic with more safety than a physician could. The Doctor argues that a man can feed himself with more regard to his wants than he could be fed by another; he alone knows or feels when he has enough. So with this chloroform. Dr. Crombie has invented a kind of funnel to fit the face, to which is attached an india-rubber ball and tube, into which apparatus a small quantity of chloroform is placed. The sleepless or suffering patient lies comfortably down, holds the inhaling funnel to his face with one hand, while he presses the rubber ball with the other, and thus with each pressure forces a small quantity within reach of his inspirations. When enough has been inhaled to cause sleep, the muscular control of the hand ceases, and no more of the drug is pumped into the funnel, so that an overdose is impossible. The pamphlet treats very fully of the uses and effects of chloroform, which Dr. Crombie regards as occupying a first place amongst anæsthetics.

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#### PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

DEAR MR. BURNS,—In the current number of *Human Nature* I find an article under the title "Cui Bono," based, I believe, upon the "startling fact" of my being cured of a cancerous tumour of ten years' standing through the direct agency of Spirits, by the means of Mediumistic prescriptions given through my much valued friend, Mr. Slater.

The article to which I allude contains these words, which I cannot allow to pass altogether without notice: "The refusal to authenticate by name is deprecated as hindering verification, and we have seen that the readers of the *Medium* have remonstrated against the anonymous form under which the author of the article 'Cui Bono' has concealed her personality."

Now, sir, you are well aware that the concealment of "personality" arose from no desire to "hinder verification"; on the contrary, I felt, and still feel, most anxious to give free scope to enquiry on the subject, and should have esteemed it a privilege to have answered any questions which your present correspondent, or any others interested in the matter, might have honoured me with, but it will be remembered that *my initials, A. C. B.*, were given, and it was also observed in another number of the *Medium* that any communications addressed to these initials, through your Institution, would meet with attention. Several letters were so addressed, and, through the never-failing kindness of Mr. Slater and his friends, received satisfactory replies, either in the form of prescriptions given by the Spirit or answers to questions asked. In withholding my *full* name, I was actuated by motives of consideration for those nearest and dearest to me; as being entirely opposed to Spiritualism themselves in every form, felt extreme repugnance to having their name publicly coupled with it. However, sir, although the *disbelief* in Spirit communion is still as strong as ever, the repugnance is weaker, and I no longer feel the same hesitation. One point I still adhere to, and that is, that I do not *intend* to give the names of the medical men who treated the case prior to the intervention of Spirits. This I regard as a point of duty, and not of that only, but of honour as well as gratitude, for all the kindness I have experienced from them; and though, indeed, they stand far too high in their profession and in society for such a trifling thing as this to injure them, still I could not be guilty of such a breach of honour and gratitude. It will also be remembered that in the article to which your correspondent alludes, Mr. Slater's name occurred several times as the medium through whom the cure was performed, and, as I said in a former reply, I should have thought *his name* quite sufficient to stamp as truth any communication in which it stood. But, alas! the world is full of Thomases; even as of old, and now even as then, will not be content unless it is said to them—"Stretch hither thy finger and feel my side, and be not faithless but believing."

I shall feel obliged if you will kindly insert these few words either in the coming number of *Human Nature* or in the *Medium*, and in signing them with my full name your readers will understand that to the article "Cui Bono," to which your correspondent alludes, the same name may be transplanted.—I remain, sir, yours obliged,

ANNA CHRISTIAN BURKE.

141 Cornwall Road, Westbourne Park, W.

## HYDATID LIFE ON THE LIVER CURED BY MESMERISM. 1

(To the Editor.)

SIR,—The following account of the treatment during 22 weeks I was in St. Thomas's Hospital, and my subsequent cure by Mesmerism, may, perhaps, interest some of your readers.

After the disease had made steady progress for a period of ten years, notwithstanding the best advice and treatment of many eminent doctors, I was induced, by the advice of my friends, to go into the above-named establishment to undergo the operation of tapping. I was admitted on the 27th of

December, 1873, and the first operation was performed on January the 8th, when 35 ounces of fluid containing hydatid was drawn off; but I filled again rapidly, consequently, tapping was again resorted to. Peritonitis having now set in I became delirious, and very little hope was entertained of saving my life; but ultimately recovering I was again tapped, on what date I cannot remember, having taken large doses of opium to lull the intense pain. The complaint, to the astonishment of my attendants, seemed to disappear, and I was expecting to be discharged daily. The medical gentlemen, however, upon further examination, discovered that suppuration had ensued, and that further operation would be indispensable. An incision was now made in the region of the liver and an india-rubber tube inserted. This having failed to drain off what was expected, another incision was made some few inches from the first, and a perforated india-rubber tube threaded, as it were, in at one opening and out at the other, both ends terminating in a receiver. This having also failed to draw off the cysts of hydatids, it was proposed to burn the seat of the disease open by means of galvanism, the doctors stating that this operation was the only chance of curing me. Judging from the previous operations, I felt sure I should sink under the one proposed, and my mother, who was communicated with upon the subject, came to the Hospital and took my discharge; the doctors and nurses assuring her that I should never reach home alive. Upon reaching home I was taken from the cab in a perfectly helpless condition, carried indoors and placed in bed, where I lay for fourteen days unable to straighten myself, expecting each day would terminate my earthly existence. At this stage my mother was desirous that Mesmerism should be tried, but, not understanding the nature of it, I thought it sheer nonsense, or, at most, some device to get me to undergo some further painful and fruitless surgical operation, and was, therefore, decidedly opposed to its being tried; but upon Mr. Johnstone being introduced to me, he overcame my objections, and I was operated upon at once. There was no decided result till the third time, when I was thrown into a violent shivering, during which 6½ lbs. of cysts of hydatid life were forced past the outside of the rubber tube, each bag or calony being the size of a full-grown walnut; and in a few days I was able to walk about the house. Mr. Johnstone continued to mesmerise me for three months, during which time the sensations produced by the passes varied. At first they produced a beautiful cool sensation, but after the cavities containing the hydatids had been emptied, I felt a burning effect on the parts where they had been, which seemed to me as if intended to kill any germ of life that might have been left behind.

During my progress to convalescence I visited the Hospital, and saw some of the doctors and nurses who attended in the ward in which the operation took place. They were all much pleased to see me so far recovered, but shook their heads and predicted that the complaint would return. I am happy to say that this prediction is not at all likely to prove true, as I am now in such perfect health that it would be impossible to be better; and although I must ever give to Mr. Johnstone full credit and my grateful thanks for his gratuitous attendance, which resulted in my life being saved, I should not like those who attended me in the Hospital to think, from anything I have stated in this letter, that I am unmindful of the amount of medical skill, attention, and kindness, brought to bear upon me whilst there. —I am, sir, yours, &c.,

ELIZABETH SUMNER,  
Usher Road, Old Ford.

Mr. R. Johnstone devotes the afternoons of Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in each week to healing. His address is 25 Cadogan Terrace, Victoria Park, E., London.