



A WEEKLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE HISTORY, PHENOMENA, PHILOSOPHY, AND TEACHINGS OF
SPIRITUALISM.

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“SKIWAUKIE,” THE INDIAN SPIRIT-GUIDE.

The objects sought in presenting this narrative of facts to the reader are various:—First, to show that spiritual phenomena and manifestations existed long before the era of Modern Spiritualism, thirty years ago. Secondly, that these phenomena and visions of the spirit-world or its inhabitants are neither delusions nor tricks, but a department of the great system of nature. Thirdly, that the ability to see spirits and enable them to manifest is a distinct faculty or property of persons of a certain temperament, and that it is as natural for such persons to be spirit-mediums as it is for others with special endowments to be inventors, poets, painters, orators, musicians, or warriors. Fourthly, that the gift of mediumship, like other endowments, is often hereditary, and, instead of being capricious in its development and uncontrolled by law, it is most orderly in its manifestation, and presents the elements of a new science; and fifthly, that the medium for the manifestation of truthful and beneficent spirits is invariably a person of excellent personal qualities, and not infrequently is descended from eminent and illustrious stock. “Spiritual gifts” are indeed the highest endowments of mankind, and have been enjoyed by all distinguished individuals in some form or other.

MRS. MARY J. HOLLIS-BILLING is the medium through whose instrumentality the facts embraced in this narrative have been derived. Her great-grandfather on the paternal side was a Von Kearns, of Heidelberg, Germany, a branch of one of the most illustrious European houses. Her ancestors on both sides have been, as far as history can show, people of independent means, local influence, and high moral integrity. The paternal ancestor just named emigrated with his family to America, and acquired much land in Westmoreland Co., Pennsylvania. Spiritual phenomena appear to have been frequent in the family from generation to generation. More than 100 years ago an interesting example of physical manifestation and seership occurred. In the house of a neighbour the cradle in which an infant lay was in the habit of rocking, apparently of its own accord, at 6 o'clock every evening. This was a mystery which no one could unravel. Our Medium's grandmother, like others, went to see the wonder, and at once perceived a hand, which was invisible to all others,

moving the cradle, and then there appeared to her the full form of the deceased mother of the babe, who was the unseen cause of the manifestation. These gifts were inherited by our Medium's father. After the dispersion of the family to estates of their own the mother still occupied the old homestead, and her necessities were provided for by the sons, who in rotation sent her a sack of flour when their crops were ground at the mill. It was brother George's turn to supply his mother with the produce of his farm, but the night before he was to go with it our Medium's father dreamed three times that his father came to him in the morning, and told him that, as George could not go with the bag of meal, he (the dreamer) would have to go instead. Accordingly he dreamed that his horse was saddled, and he went, but as he proceeded on his way he came to a thicket, when a deer sprang out, which frightened his horse, and he was thrown off, and broke his leg. In the morning he thought nothing of his dream, but being told by his father that George could not take the meal to his mother, he started with it himself. As he approached a certain part of the road his dream suddenly occurred to him, and no sooner had he put himself firmly on his guard than a deer did spring up from the underwood and frightened his horse so, that he only saved himself by the most determined effort. The bag was thrown to the ground, but happily the rider kept his seat, and the only part of his dream which remained unfulfilled was that he escaped with sound limbs.

On the mother's side, one branch of Mrs. Billing's ancestors were named Neiswanger, and emigrated from Switzerland, her mother's great grandfather becoming possessed of a large track of land in Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania. One rather painful incident



“SKIWAUKIE.”

which the history of the family furnishes forcibly the influence of mental impressions on the unborn, and also the high state of nervous susceptibility, and consequent organic refinement of the family. When the original settler died, there was a child yet unborn to him, and the wife deeply grieved at the loss of her husband, never could approach the table at meal-times without being affected to tears, and her appetite left her almost entirely. Strange to say her child, afterwards Jacob Neiswanger, so well

known in Lancaster Co., was affected in the same manner. Till he became too much of a man to be ashamed of the practice, he could not restrain himself from falling down under the table at every meal, and crying bitterly; and though he lived to be an old man, he shed tears at every meal during his life, though by habit he was enabled to control any exhibition of the fact.

Our Medium's grandmother, on the mother's side, was a kind-woman of her husband, and manifested still another phase of spiritual impressibility. She would say to her husband in the morning that a certain neighbour had died during the night, the names in all cases being given, a record of upwards of 100 of which, had been kept. Not a few of the families thus referred to lived many miles away, and no tidings respecting the health of the deceased members had been received. These are only a few instances, derived from the experiences of the family, illustrating the peculiar spiritual gifts possessed by both sides of the house. Volumes might be filled with even more extraordinary facts, but space forbids further addition.

BORN A MEDIUM.—Like many other children, our Medium, when young, was in the habit of hearing and seeing people about the house who were not recognised by the rest of the family. She never went into her room alone but she saw several people in it, and in looking into the mirror several faces would peep over her shoulder. What it all meant she could not understand. She received no enlightenment on the matter when she appealed to her elders. They told her it was "imagination," but she recognised the same individuals amongst her invisible visitors from year to year. One of them, a venerable man, with a long, grey beard, she sees occasionally even to this day. That he was not a creature of her morbid fancy, she had on one occasion ample proof. When a girl, an opportunity presented itself for her to go into town on a special occasion, at which she was much delighted. The vehicle was at the door, but as she eagerly endeavoured to mount it, she suddenly drew back. Three times this reluctance occurred, and though she was in her own mind anxious to get up, it was with the utmost effort that she was at length enabled to mount into her seat. It was the face of this old man which appeared to her on each occasion, as if to deter her from going. Off they went; but when near the city the horses ran away, and it was only by a miracle, as the saying is, that her life was preserved. It is much to be regretted that the spiritual faculties are not better understood and cultivated in the young. There are thousands of highly-talented mediums, whose bright gifts are lost to themselves and to the world, through the superstition and ignorance of this so-called enlightened age, which goes on in its materialistic course, oblivious of the grandest attributes of human nature.

This lack of spiritual knowledge must have occurred in the experience of every one. When about sixteen years of age, our Medium had an instance of it. She was one day reading from a book of ghost stories to an aunt, who, notwithstanding being a religious woman and a church member, said suddenly, "I wonder if there be indeed a hereafter, and if we really do exist after death?" The conversation ended in aunt and niece making an arrangement that the one who died first should return to the other with tidings of the Life Beyond. Two years afterwards our Medium was married, and during the first year of her married life that aunt died at a place nearly 2,000 miles distant. Between twelve and one o'clock in the morning our Medium heard a rapping in her room, and, looking up, saw the apparition of her aunt. She had died quite unexpectedly at that hour, of yellow fever, having been only five or six hours unwell, so that notice of the fact could not have been transmitted a distance of about 2,000 miles.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM. It was not till the year 1861, after all that has been described above had transpired, that our medium first heard of Spiritualism. Three different Spiritualists, with whom she became acquainted, told her she was a medium. Though she had no faith in the pretensions of mediums, and received the opinion pronounced on her, that she would become a public medium, with feelings somewhat mingled with contempt, yet she could not resist the temptation to investigate the subject. She sat with her mother alone, as they were averse to letting anyone know that they were interested in Spiritualism. In this strictly private manner they developed all the phenomena—rappings, by which messages were given, clairvoyance, and writing, the hand being moved by some agency to communicate matter quite foreign to the mind of the medium. It was not till after five years of investigation that she became convinced that spirits occasioned these manifestations. She entertained the prevailing idea that they proceeded from the action of some undiscovered force in nature.

During these investigations the sitters were rather astonished to find that, in passing along any dark passage in the house, they would hear whispers, and ultimately, spoken words. By holding a slate and small piece of pencil under the table the spirits would write messages, amongst other things informing them that if they thoroughly darkened the room in which they held their circles the spirits would be enabled to converse with them in the audible voice. The spirit-voice and the direct writing on the slate were developed simultaneously. This was the first knowledge they had of dark seances.

"SKIWAUKIE." It was at one of these dark sittings in the Medium's family that a spirit first spoke, but in language which no one understood. From his peculiar exclamations, sometimes very loud and demonstrative, but never violent, it was perceived that he was an Indian. He was persistent in his attendance, and having proved himself a true friend and helper in the work, he was always welcomed. He gradually picked up the language till he

was able to express himself in English, so as to be understood. He gave his Indian name, "Skiwaukie," which he interpreted as meaning "Strength, Swiftmess, and Truth." He had been a Chief of the Hatchee tribe, long since extinct, and his hunting-grounds were in the Southern states, where Mrs. Billing was brought up, and where she then resided. He was seven feet high, he said, when on earth, lived till he was 90 years of age, and died 115 years ago. He said he had followed the Medium from the time of her birth, knowing that he would have to manifest through her, and do a work which the present condition of the world requires.

THE PORTRAIT. During the time he has controlled in Mrs. Billing's circle, "Ski," as he is called for brevity, has made many warm friends. One of these, Mr. J. R. Meeker, an eminent landscape painter of St. Louis, without informing the Medium of his intention, was impressed to paint "Ski's" portrait. He had no means of seeing the spirit, not being clairvoyant, but he was so impressible that his mind could be inspired with the idea to be expressed, and the spirit could influence his hand somewhat even to produce the curved lip, indicative of the loss of teeth which "Ski" sustained before he quitted the earth-form. "Ski" told his Medium that she would have to excuse his absence, as he was having his "likeness taken"; and when the artist presented it, Mrs. Billing, though the spirit had not acquainted her with the name of the artist, was not surprised at the result. It is a very excellent picture, considering it was the work of an artist who had not given any attention to portraits, and painted it without a model. "Ski" appears in it to wear a red blanket, which colour our photograph cannot reproduce. The original may be seen in Mrs. Billing's rooms.

THE PHOTOGRAPH is remarkably successful, seeing the difficulty with which paintings are reproduced, and it does great credit to the skill and careful work of the Woodbury Photo Printing Company.

The face is a remarkable one, and, that it is a true likeness of the spirit, all clairvoyants readily testify, as the spirit is to be seen at every seance by those who have the gift of "second sight." The only difference is that he appears to much better advantage than in the picture. No human art can imitate the delicacy, colour, and brilliant expression of spirit-forms. The face is highly characteristic of the name which the spirit assumes; as "strength" is shown in the jaw, "swiftness" in the flexible nose and mobile lips, and "truth" in the piercing eyes and keen intellect. Those who regard such a character as an "untutored savage," are vastly mistaken. He may not have the knowledge of words and phrases, which is too often the major portion of modern philosophy, but such men as "Ski" have a knowledge of *things*—they understand nature, and can co-operate with her more secret intentions. Phrenologically, the brain reaches well forward over the eyes, the central range of organs, culminating at the turban, being particularly full in development. Such a brain and clear temperament can belong to no other than an intuitive observer of Nature's truths. It is this mental endowment which gives "Ski" his great power in the spirit-circle, a power which all the science and philosophy of earth cannot for a moment pretend to grapple with.

"SKI" AS A SPIRIT-WORKER.—The experience of hundreds, during Mrs. Billing's previous and present visit to London, would supply thousands of facts, all classes of which have come under our own observation. Of his ability to transport material objects a great distance we have had repeated examples; let it suffice if we quote one thoroughly verified instance, which took place in the United States a few years ago.

Mr. William L. Vance, an influential gentleman, of Memphis, Tenn., and a friend of his, who occupies an equally prominent position in Louisville, Kentucky—but, not having obtained permission to use his name, we withhold it—were in the habit of sitting frequently in Mrs. Billing's circles, and by mutual arrangement made experiments in testing "Ski's" powers as a bearer of light objects to long distances. The crucial case was as follows:—Mr. Vance had in his house at Memphis a desk, made for him in Paris, which contained a secret drawer, of which no one knew the existence but himself. Without communicating the fact to anyone, he deposited in that drawer an earring that had belonged to his mother and one of his own shirt-studs, wrapped in a piece of paper bearing his name and the date of the experiment. He opened the drawer twice a day to see if they had been taken away. One morning at eleven o'clock he examined it, and found the contents as usual. He returned at twelve o'clock, and again looked into the drawer, but observed that the articles were gone. He went immediately to the telegraph office, and telegraphed to his friend in Louisville that the articles had disappeared from the place in which he had secreted them. His friend was standing in the doorway of his house, about to enter the carriage which was awaiting him, when the telegram was handed to him. He drove straight to the residence of Mrs. Billing, merely saying that he desired a communication from a spirit-friend. They sat down at the table in the light, and Mrs. Billing, putting a slate under the table, to receive a written message from the gentleman's mother, as she thought most probable, received instead this communication from "Ski"—"Me got 'em"—and the articles were at the same time placed upon the slate. All this occurred before three o'clock in the afternoon, so that these articles were transported a distance of about 700 miles in less than four hours. The fastest railway train takes over twenty hours to run from Memphis to Louisville, the points, 700 miles apart, between which these objects were carried in that incredibly short space of time. On hearing the result from his friend, Mr. Vance sent him the duplicates, and, to the satisfaction of all parties, it was proved that the spirit had indeed performed a task which all will agree is quite beyond the resources of man's material means.

to turn up, and what was that but Dr. Dodg's eloquent lectures on "Electrical Psychology." Here, to me, was a revelation. The study of this work was followed by works on Spiritualism, and at once I said to myself: This is what I have been expecting. In Spiritualism I see an explanation of all that pertains to the immortal nature of man. In this statement I do not allude to the physical phenomena merely. It is necessary to begin with these, and, after having become acquainted with the various forms of mediumship and how spirits operate, then the inner philosophy may be studied with advantage. Every family should have a spirit-circle, as a knowledge of this subject should form part of the practical education of every human being. No one can teach you to any great extent; you must find out for yourselves. Form circles at home, and when you are in a position to profit by instruction, some of our band of visitors will give you a look in some evening and see how you are going on. Our Captain has provided for you a little tract, which take home and read, and it will tell you where you can obtain further information. [We re-produce the tract alluded to.]

RULES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.—The phenomena cannot be successfully elicited in very warm, sultry weather, in extreme cold, when thunder and lightning and magnetic disturbances prevail, when the atmosphere is very moist, or when there is much rain, or storms of wind. A warm, dry atmosphere is best, as it presents the mean between all extremes, and agrees with the harmonious state of man's organism which is proper for the manifestation of spiritual phenomena. A subdued light or darkness increases the power and facilitates control.

LOCAL CONDITIONS.—The room in which a circle is held for development or investigation should be set apart for that purpose. It should be comfortably warmed and ventilated, but draughts or currents of air should be avoided. Those persons composing the circle should meet in the room about an hour before the experiments commence; the sitters should attend each time, and occupy the same places. This maintains the peculiar magnetic conditions necessary to the production of the phenomena. A developing circle exhausts power, or uses it up.

PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS.—The phenomena are produced by a vital force emanating from the sitters, which the spirits use as a connecting link between themselves and objects. Certain temperaments give off this power; others emit an opposite influence. If the circle is composed of persons with suitable temperaments, manifestations will take place readily; if the contrary be the case, much perseverance will be necessary to produce results. If both kinds of temperament are present, they require to be arranged so as to produce harmony in the psychical atmosphere evolved from them. The physical manifestations especially depend upon temperament. If a circle does not succeed, changes should be made in the sitters till the proper conditions are supplied.

MENTAL CONDITIONS.—All forms of mental excitement are detrimental to success. Those with strong and opposite opinions should not sit together; opinionated, dogmatic, and positive people are better out of the circle and room. Parties between whom there are feelings of envy, hate, contempt, or other inharmonious sentiment should not sit at the same circle. The vicious and crude should be excluded from all such experiments. The minds of the sitters should be in a passive rather than an active state, possessed by the love of truth and of mankind. One harmonious and fully-developed individual is invaluable in the formation of a circle.

THE CIRCLE should consist of from three to ten persons of both sexes, and sit round an oval, oblong, or square table. Cane-bottomed chairs or those with wooden seats are preferable to stuffed chairs. Mediums and sensitives should never sit on stuffed chairs, cushions, or sofas used by other persons, as the influences which accumulate in the cushions often affect the mediums unpleasantly. The active and quiet, the fair and dark, the ruddy and pale, male and female, should be seated alternately. If there is a medium present, he or she should occupy the end of the table with the back to the north. A mellow mediumistic person should be placed on each side of the medium, and those most positive should be at the opposite corners. No person should be placed behind the medium. A circle may represent a horseshoe magnet, with the medium placed between the poles.

CONDUCT AT THE CIRCLE.—The sitters should place their hands on the table, and endeavour to make each other feel easy and comfortable. Agreeable conversation, singing, reading, or invocation may be engaged in—anything that will tend to harmonise the minds of those present, and unite them in one purpose, is in order. By engaging in such exercises the circle may be made very profitable apart from the manifestations. Sitters should not desire anything in particular, but unite in being pleased to receive that which is best for all. The director of the circle should sit opposite the medium, and put all questions to the spirit, and keep order. A recorder should take notes of the conditions and proceedings. Manifestations may take place in a few minutes, or the circle may sit many times before any result occurs. Under these circumstances it is well to change the positions of the sitters, or introduce new elements, till success is achieved. When the table begins to tilt, or when raps occur, do not be too impatient to get answers to questions. When the table can answer questions by giving three tips or raps for "Yes," and one for "No," it may assist in placing the sitters properly. The spirits or intelligences which produce the phenomena should be treated with the same courtesy and consideration as you would desire for yourselves if you were introduced into the company of strangers for their personal benefit. At the same time, the sitters should not on any account allow their judgment to be warped or their good sense imposed upon by spirits, whatever their professions may be. Reason with them kindly, firmly, and considerately.

INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRITS is carried on by various means. The simplest is three tips of the table or raps for "Yes," and one for "No." By this means the spirits can answer in the affirmative or negative. By calling over the alphabet the spirits will rap at the proper letters to constitute a message. Sometimes the hand of a sitter is shaken, then a pencil should be placed in the hand, when the spirits may write by it automatically. Other sitters may become entranced, and the spirits use the vocal organs of such mediums to speak. The spirits sometimes impress mediums, while others are clairvoyant, and see the spirits, and messages from them written in luminous letters in the atmosphere. Sometimes the table and other objects are lifted, moved from place to place, and even through closed doors. Patiently and kindly seek for tests of identity from loved ones in the spirit-world, and exercise caution respecting spirits who make extravagant pretensions of any kind.

BEFORE proceeding with their investigations, inquirers into Spiritualism should correspond with Mr. Burns, Proprietor of the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C., who will gladly forward a packet of publications and useful information gratis. Stamps should in all cases be enclosed for return postage. Deputations of mediums or lecturers may be arranged for to visit any locality where public meetings or seances can be instituted.

Solon Wiseman, a retired city merchant, said it was a great mistake to suppose that the Bible was opposed to Spiritualism. In truth the Bible could not be understood without a practical acquaintance with the methods of spiritual manifestation. This view the speaker sustained by many illustrations.

Rev. Philemon Jude gave it as his opinion, as a theological student, that the dogmas of all religious systems and their rites and ceremonies were merely symbols, and were not to be believed in literally. Spiritualism was really the demonstration of theological science, and showed what these changes in the spiritual nature of man meant, which are symbolised in the terms salvation, redemption, atonement, punishment, &c., &c., used by the churches.

When priestcraft declined and Spiritualism became understood and taught, sectarianism on the one hand, and unbelief on the other, would be equally impossible. This speaker went into many particulars, manifesting great erudition on his part.

Several others spoke, when a man rather marred by life's excesses, and somewhat poorly clad, rose in the body of the hall, and said he desired permission to say a few words, though he had not, as yet, sufficient self-reliance to desire a position in the ranks with Captain Kindly. His life had been a wasted one, and yet to do evil had not been his desire. There was something that seemed to impel him into courses that only plunged him into moral ruin and physical suffering. Recently he had been led, as it were, into a family of Spiritualists, who knew nothing of his career. But the wife, a clairvoyant medium, read all his past life like a book, and, by her description, showed him that she was better acquainted with him than he was himself. He became convinced that her theory was correct, that he was a medium without knowing it, and had, in addition to his own foolish and evil acts, been the victim of spirits of a low class. In the circle he had been influenced by the spirit of his mother, who passed away when he was a child. Truly he might say he had become a child once more, and was receiving that loving attention from a mother, though in spirit-life, to which, in the past, he had been a stranger. He now spent his spare coins in promoting moral ends, and found his new occupations for more agreeable than the habits of his past life. To him he could truly say, that Spiritualism had been a power unto salvation.

Sir Charles Cheerful, Bart., then rose and said that he had come up to town to give his experience of Spiritualism down in the shires. For many years he had studied this subject in private, but latterly he had put it to the test, and tried to live according to its teachings. There is, said Sir Charles, no safety for the Spiritualist who plays with the matter of spirit-intercourse, and reduces it to a mere intellectual theory. It is a living truth, or it is a delusion. It is the voice of the Eternal God speaking His will in every fibre of our being, and informing us of the path we must follow in all the relations of life. We have adopted its divine suggestions largely down in our shire. I am free with my land, and the people are equally free with their labour, and as a result we know nothing of bad times. I have expended my rents these five years in an experimental school of agriculture and horticulture. Besides these branches, we have workshops of all kinds. We have more work, more produce, and more of everything, except hardship and grumbling. Talk about farms to let and emigration! why we could occupy the land on both sides if we could only set it up on end, and get at the under surface of it; and the other word must be spelt immigration, for instead of people leaving the district they come flocking to it from every direction. My land increases in value every year, and my people, who live on it, correspondingly increase in wealth and comfort. But I would scorn to set a commercial value on that with which, as a gentleman, I am entrusted for the good of the people. Cheerful Hall is becoming quite an important local centre, and the influence of Lady Cheerful and myself is infinitely increased, and we are far happier. Indeed, I make bold to say, that, under the old system, we suffered more than the labouring classes. We were seldom well, and did not know what ailed us, we had to travel abroad part of the year "seeking health," killing time, robbing our own country and fattening the foreigner. We have found out, like hundreds around us, that there is "no place like home," and aided by such men as our gallant captain, I shall strive my utmost to put that song, with a new accompaniment, into every Englishman's mouth. We have a local Spirit Band, of which I have the honour to be captain, and Lady Cheerful directs the corps of visitors, and when any of you have occasion to pass down our way we will make you heartily welcome at Cheerful Hall.

With speeches and song the night sped on, and a thrilling manifestation of the power of the immortals, which appeared over the platform to everyone present, and struck home the truth to every heart, closed the proceedings with a heavenly benediction. It was some time before we could decide whether we had been in the Land of Fancies or at home in Merrie England: very much merrier indeed it seemed than ever we had seen it before.

NO. 1 CIRCLE, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.—Every Tuesday evening punctually at 8 p.m. Regular medium, Mr. W. Towns. Other mediums at times. Healing, test, and trance. The addresses are almost invariably of a practical and philosophical kind, dealing with the much-needed social and sanitary reforms.

DR. MONCK'S health is in a very critical condition. He is spitting up blood in an alarming manner, and his state of weakness is such that he is forbidden to write. Many kind friends will, therefore, accept this announcement as an answer to their correspondence. The testimonial is being pushed on, and it is imperative that what is done should be effected immediately, as delay during this weather is dangerous. Prince — has promised to contribute, and the friends, who defended Dr. Monck three years ago, do not desert him now. No person who has taken the trouble to observe, for a moment believes that Dr. Monck was guilty of imposition in the matter for which he suffered, and the extraordinary manifestations seen through his mediumship—that of spirit-forms materialising from his side in a good light, since his liberation—prove that he was much more of a medium than he professed to be. For an account of these manifestations, see "The Latest Phases of Materialisation." By Rev. Thos. Colley, now Dean of Natal. Published by J. Burns, 15, Southampton Row, Price 4d.

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Legacies on behalf of the Cause should be left in the name of "James Burns."

BUSINESS AND MEDICAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

MR. TOWNS, is at home daily to receive friends from 10 a.m. till 6 p.m., at other hours by appointment. Address—1, Albert Terrace, Barnsbury Road, Islington.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1879.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

What think you, non-spiritualistic reader, of our Christmas Number? It is the fashion for Christmas publications to be well spiced with ghost stories and allusions to spiritual manifestation and magnetic influence, the writers all the time labouring to impress their readers that they do not at all believe in the appearance of spirits to men still in the flesh. Not to speak too harshly, this is what may be called fooling the reader, an impertinence which no publisher should inflict on his patrons. On the other hand, we know that all we say of spirit-manifestation is strictly true, and instead of making the intelligent reader's flesh creep with weak-minded, superstitious dread, it has the effect of opening the mind up to the beauties of existence, and creating within, the most genuine gratitude to God for spiritual blessings which are now being added to all the conveniences which scientific discovery has conferred upon us. Reader, send to the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, for a Packet of information, supplied gratis, and commence the investigation of Spiritualism.

We direct the reader's attention to the article entitled "Historical Controls," that strangers to our columns may better understand the nature of the communication. These articles have been continued in the MEDIUM for two years, and many of the most notable personages of history have communicated. The subject of this present one is in continuation of that of last week. L., the medium or sensitive, goes to the chambers of A. T. T. P., the recorder, passes into the trance or under control. In that state he is unconscious; but through his organism "Edmund Spenser," the poet, addresses the recorder, giving an account of a conversation which the medium had with a "visitor," who is a materialist. But while L., the medium, who is a mechanic, was holding that conversation with the materialist, he was bending over his machine, and though, unconscious of it, he was all the time under control—entranced with his eyes open, so that the visitor thought he was speaking and answering him in the normal state. The whole argument is reproduced by the Control to the recorder at his chambers, and it is also stated that while the medium, L., was conversing with his materialistic visitor, his hand was, at the same time, writing the narrative of a spirit which passed from the body at the wreck of the *Deutschland*, thus showing that two spirits were communicating through the medium at the same time: one orally, and the other by writing. By will-power it appears that a hammer was made to fall down, being a manifestation after the manner of the power used by Madame Blavatsky, whose work is described in an article by Mrs. Hollis-Billing. The most mysterious part of the matter is that this materialistic visitor is a stranger who has not yet been identified, though these communications have referred to him in several recent numbers of the MEDIUM. The notes taken down from the lips of the entranced medium have not been amended in any way, so that there is a slight irregularity in the use of the first and third person in several instances.

NEXT WEEK we will give Mr. Oxley's article on the nature and origin of the Bible and other sacred books. Our first number for 1880 will contain the succeeding chapter of "The Philosophy of Spirit," illustrated by an engraving of the likeness of "Busiris the Ancient," A. T. T. P.'s chief Control, who it is said wrote the Mahabarata in India thousands of years ago. The engraving is from a drawing done through the hands of L., A. T. T. P.'s medium.

On the wrapper of this number is repeated engravings of spirit-faces, which were given a few weeks ago, but the edition was soon sold out. The descriptive article may now be had in a separate form, price 2d. The medium through whom these manifestations

were obtained is still in London. Letters desiring sittings may be addressed—Mr. A. Furman, 15, Southampton Row, W.C.

WE regret that we have been unable to insert the usual notices this week.

ANOTHER edition of the Christmas Number will be ready on Monday. Orders should be sent immediately.

INTRODUCTIONS to Mrs. Billing may be obtained at 15, Southampton Row, W.C.

MADAME H. P. BLAVATSKY.

By MRS. MARY J. HOLLIS-BILLING.

The Modern Movement, in favour of a new and more extended knowledge of Spiritual and Occult Science, has raised up an order of thinkers and workers of extraordinary interest, of whose modes of thought and powers of performance the awakened intellect is at all times desirous of becoming more fully acquainted. Of these, a unique specimen presents itself in the person of Madame Blavatsky, occupying as she does a foremost place in the department of Work as well as that of Thought. And so many inquiries have come to me respecting her, from widely different sources, that I feel I cannot better answer these questions than by writing a brief account of her visit of two weeks, at my house in Norwood, near London, in January last.

As a companion and friend, I found her to be most genial, pleasant, and reliable, and as a linguist, pianist, and writer, I believe her to be the most extraordinary woman of the age. In saying this, I think I have not in the least exaggerated her powers. To give an instance: I heard her converse with great rapidity in five different languages, and the persons with whom she conversed said she spoke the languages perfectly.

She is a person of massive build and expressive features, more of the masculine than feminine type, capable of gigantic tasks but oblivious of mere trifles; amused at those slight annoyances which would irritate little minds; strong in her likes and dislikes, and, as a consequence, infallible in her intuitive grasp of human character and capability.

Respecting the wonderful things, for the production of which she is famous, I will give the testimony of my own eyes as to the phenomena which were witnessed in my house while she was my guest. I will, in the first place, endeavour to give an imperfect description of what took place one afternoon. As a gentleman and myself were sitting, talking to Madame, we noticed her face and hair growing dark in hue, until her hair was changed from its natural (light) colour to almost black, and her face at the same time became as dark as that of any East Indian I ever saw. While these appearances were being manifested she seemed to be engaged in deep thought. I addressed her, and said: "Madame, are you aware of the change that has taken place in your complexion and hair?" Her reply was "Yes," but she offered no explanation. In a few minutes she went out into the hall, where she remained about five minutes, and then returned. Her hair and face were of their natural colour when she re-entered our presence; all of which seemed very remarkable to the gentleman and to myself.

When she first came to me at Norwood she was evidently in great haste to proceed on her journey to India, and expressed her determination to remain with me only a few days. Many of her friends were not a little disappointed at this short visit, and were clamorous to obtain a further opportunity of enjoying her society. Madame, however, insisted that unless she received orders from her friends in India to prolong her stay, it would be impossible for her to do so. On the Sunday after her arrival she went into her bed-room and there received a message, written on a handkerchief, in which she was granted liberty to stay some days longer with us. This, it must be confessed, was a very curious incident, but to the sceptical mind there was wanted some proof that the inscription was not placed by Madame on the handkerchief by some process known to herself. So I thought over the matter and came to the conclusion that if she really possessed the power that I had heard of her using, and which she claimed to have, there could be no better time for me to see some incontrovertible evidence of it. Accordingly, one evening at the dinner table I asked Col. Olcott to give me the handkerchief on which the message, purporting to come from India, had been written. His answer was: "I never give anything of this kind away." I then turned to Madame Blavatsky and asked her if she would favour me with one of those written messages. She replied "I am tired of bringing these handkerchiefs." She then requested Col. Olcott to ask me what I wanted her to do. I looked over the table to see what I could ask for that would be most difficult to bring. I soon made up my mind, and requested that a teapot, a cruet-stand, or a teacup and saucer might be brought to me. No sooner had I spoken the words than a curious teapot, which I have now in my possession, was placed on the table. Madame only put her hand under the table for it; where it came from I am unable to explain. Of one thing I am certain, that I had no such article about the house, nor till that moment was it proposed that I should ask for such a thing to be produced in that manner.

Mr. C. C. Massey, who was standing just behind Madame, said, "Oh, am I to be slighted; will you not give me something?" She answered, "What do you want?" He said in reply, "A card-case, or a tobacco-pouch—something I can wear about with me." She at once replied, "Go into the hall, and you will find something in your coat pocket." Mr. Massey had come in after we had sat down to dinner, and Madame B. had not left the table. On going into

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THE TESTIMONY OF MR. A. J. SMART, CARDIFF.

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My first acquaintance with our mutual friend, except by repute, was made during visits to certain of Mrs. Billing's seances, at which I was present, by kind invitation, when the extraordinary power which he possesses of acquiring an unmistakable knowledge of the private concerns of the sitters,—whether strangers or not, seemed to make little difference—together with his great command of the "direct voice," were alike strikingly manifested.

Entirely without solicitation he promised to visit the circle at Cardiff, and help in the development there of that class of phenomena with which he is just now more particularly identified, a promise which he has most faithfully performed, and in a way which proves him to be thoroughly master of his task.

The mellow-toned voice, which I recognised immediately at the first sitting held after my return to Cardiff, the characteristic affirmative expression "Soh!" the speech studded with appellations peculiarly Indian, the habit of finding expressive names of his own for people, his execution of the very same work in the very same style, the thorough manner of accomplishing what he undertakes, and his masterly method of setting about it, which shows no "prentice hand," his earnestness, friendliness, and sincerity,—all these, combined with frequent references to mutual friends meeting in Mrs. Billing's more private circle (where also he has spoken of his visits to us), as perfectly stamp and identify the same individuality as anything, short of actual sight, could possibly do in the case of any person whom we meet in two different places.

As in London, so here, he is remarkable for his power of discerning, and relating to the astonished inquirer, occurrences which have transpired in the life of the latter, in the more or less remote past; for naming and correctly describing deceased friends or relatives; for proving himself acquainted for the time with matters affecting the sitter, both of a private and business character, and other things of a similar kind. I have already spoken of the thoroughness with which all this is accomplished. There are no "leading" questions; or, indeed, questions of any kind; no beating about the bush, as if to gain information. On the contrary, he constantly silences those who are prone to be communicative upon matters connected with themselves which he has brought to their mind, preferring to tell the whole story himself, without any hint from them. He takes the initiative himself, and goes to the point with startling directness. This, as a matter of course, increases the satisfaction of the inquirer immensely.

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With us already he has been the means of bringing home to many minds with greater force the conviction of that truth which they already held, and to strangers he has demonstrated conclusively the possibility of cultivating a power which enables the possessor to peer into their past and present surroundings, with which no one present but themselves could be acquainted, and which had, in many cases, vanished for the time, even from their own conscious memory until recalled thereto, at the same moment demonstrating by the independency of voice the independency of his individuality. His "clear-seeing" powers appear also to extend into futurity, but so far as the experience of our circle is concerned, of which alone I am now writing, sufficient time has not yet elapsed to enable me just now to speak as to this with that certainty upon which results so extraordinary should rest. This would seem to be a far more marvellous faculty than the former. He has also proved himself able to discover, from "impressions in the aura," events which have taken place in rooms. He gives ample evidence not only that man carries about with him a mysterious tablet upon which are indelibly engraved "all things that ever he did," a record that can be read with more or less of precision, but that even inanimate objects catch and retain the impression of fleeting scenes and occurrences. This may well be with the more subtle and plastic modes of nature, since a wafer laid for a short time upon the finely tempered blade of a razor will leave upon the bright surface a clear impression of its outline that may be rendered visible for months afterwards by the simple process of breathing upon the steel.

What these facts imply the mind would do well to ponder. One

thing that may be gathered, is the possibility of bringing to light with accuracy the deeds of right or wrong committed by humanity, individually or collectively, in the past. That which is done in secret, may indeed be "proclaimed from the housetops." I should not, however, do "Ski" full justice did I not refer to the fact that he is ever truly considerate in dealing with those matters which might give rise to unpleasant feeling on the part of the victim of his keen scrutiny, but it might be well for those who have secrets to preserve to give him a wide berth.

I may mention that, amongst his other accomplishments, he has evinced considerable ability in diagnosing disease, and the prescribing of remedies for the same.

The form of manifestation of spirit-personality, which "Ski" so well exemplifies, has been aptly described as "the perfection of spirit-communication." With most other phases of advanced phenomenal manifestation, the consciousness of the medium is for the time suspended, and cannot, therefore, be contrasted *simultaneously* with the intelligence of the control, and while they are such as to induce in the mind a train of reasoning which leads, ultimately, to the irresistible conclusion that they have spirit-intelligence as their source, the fact that, in this phenomenon of the direct voice, the medium is perfectly conscious the whole time, converses with the sitters, and also with the control, tends, apart from the striking tests, to a forcible realisation of the presence of other intelligences than those in the flesh, and of the independency of medium and control, with a directness and instantaneousness which I regard as a most valuable feature. This is still more true of that other branch of "Ski's" work, the "setting-up" of spirit-friends of the sitters to speak for themselves, in which he is very successful. More especially is this bringing home to the mind of the reality of spirit-presence effective, when, as occasionally happens, we are favoured with hearing two or three conversing together in the direct voice, in tones of varying character, pitch, and modulation. It is, if possible, still more pleasing to hear the wee voice of children, talking in their artless way, seeking that knowledge of earth-life which their sojourn here was too brief to enable them to gain, and explaining their occupations and recreations in spirit-life, the lessons they learn, their hopes and joys, their beautiful surroundings, their yearnings towards their earthly relatives, the kindness of their friends and instructors in spirit-life, and many other points of interest.

I may briefly refer to the sensations of the medium, which should be observed and chronicled in connection with all classes of phenomena, as a necessary element in the arriving at a sound philosophy of the methods of spirit-manifestation. The temperature of the body is greatly increased at the time—so much so as to induce considerable perspiration. A numbness and loss of use in the region of the throat and vocal organs is experienced, as if vital force were withdrawn, for the purpose, I presume, of materialising to a sufficient extent the corresponding organs in the Control. The state induced in the medium is so sensitive that the mind is highly excitable, and hence it becomes necessary that the most tranquil and harmonious conditions should be secured in the circle if satisfactory results are to be obtained.

"Ski" does not confine himself to the domain of phenomenal manifestations, but is always ready to render his reasonable advice to those who seek it, and his willingness and sincerity invariably win esteem. In closing these remarks, I can only wish him a wider sphere of usefulness, and consequent happiness, and hope that the example which he gives of unflagging industry in the cause of truth may be imitated by those here, upon whom has been laid the solemn duty of carrying forward the work initiated by the wise and beneficent intelligences of spirit-life, and of handing on the torch of knowledge and progress which has been placed in their hands.

A. J. SMART.

From what "Ski" said at the circle in London, we heard frequently of the work being accomplished at Cardiff; but as our spirit-friend is not a talker but a worker, and anything but a boaster, we had no idea that he had been so successful. He is a most truthful and reliable spirit. He has much knowledge and great force, and being wholly trustworthy, he can be of considerable service to those who desire his help. All who sit in the circles and make his acquaintance regard him with feelings of respect and affection. His musical voice rippling forth the salutation "Soh!" (he never uses the word yes), is always the signal for friendly congratulations. He uses the word "soh," in so many different pitches and lengths, that it is made to express the affirmative with an infinite number of extended meanings.

In the course of a letter just received, Mr. James Smyth, Angerville, France, says:—

The stranger who goes to Mrs. Billing's seances, will find no "test" necessary, for the piercing eye of "Ski" can read him like a book, and can tell him of his past, present, and future, and with great discretion and discrimination in speaking of private matters. "Ski" also assists the spirits to consult with their friends, "sets them up" as he calls it. "Ski" has contrived to amass a wonderful deal of knowledge, and to all your questions you can have satisfactory answers. He is a very good and truthful spirit. He takes his place as one of the chiefs of those bands of spirits who are doing all in their power to dispel and disperse the darkness of materialism and orthodoxy, the two great pests of this world.

But that "Ski" may be enabled to do this more effectually, Mrs. Billing's seances must be select, that is to say, must consist of thoughtful, earnest, true, men and women. All those who go there to pass an idle hour to amuse themselves, or for mockery, should be put aside. If we would profit, if we would have communications with pure and good spirits, we must prepare ourselves, and hold communion with ourselves, and then, with the assistance of such as "Ski," there is no end to the good we can do, and the comforts and consolation that we can bring to thousands of homes. Let all who attend Mrs. Billing's circles prove that they are not ungrateful for the privileges conferred on them, but, in return for the benefit they receive, may they be impelled to take up this work of Human Progress in their turn, and help to bring spiritual light and joy to their fellow-creatures.

Angerville, Dec. 12, 1879.

Happily, Mrs. Billing is, for the present, in London, and an

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All orders for copies, and communications for the Editor, should be addressed to Mr. JAMES BURNS, Office of THE MEDIUM, 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, London, W.C.

The MEDIUM is sold by all newsvendors, and supplied by the wholesale trade generally.

Advertisements inserted in the MEDIUM at 6d. per line. A series by contract.

Legacies on behalf of the Cause should be left in the name of "James Burns."

BUSINESS AND MEDICAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

MR. TOWNS, is at home daily to receive friends from 10 a.m. till 6 p.m., at other hours by appointment. Address—1, Albert Terrace, Barnsbury Road, Islington.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1879.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

What think you, non-spiritualistic reader, of our Christmas Number? It is the fashion for Christmas publications to be well spiced with ghost stories and allusions to spiritual manifestation and magnetic influence, the writers all the time labouring to impress their readers that they do not at all believe in the appearance of spirits to men still in the flesh. Not to speak too harshly, this is what may be called fooling the reader, an impertinence which no publisher should inflict on his patrons. On the other hand, we know that all we say of spirit-manifestation is strictly true, and instead of making the intelligent reader's flesh creep with weak-minded, superstitious dread, it has the effect of opening the mind up to the beauties of existence, and creating within, the most genuine gratitude to God for spiritual blessings which are now being added to all the conveniences which scientific discovery has conferred upon us. Reader, send to the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, for a Packet of information, supplied gratis, and commence the investigation of Spiritualism.

WE direct the reader's attention to the article entitled "Historical Controls," that strangers to our columns may better understand the nature of the communication. These articles have been continued in the MEDIUM for two years, and many of the most notable personages of history have communicated. The subject of this present one is in continuation of that of last week. L., the medium or sensitive, goes to the chambers of A. T. T. P., the recorder, passes into the trance or under control. In that state he is unconscious; but through his organism "Edmund Spenser," the poet, addresses the recorder, giving an account of a conversation which the medium had with a "visitor," who is a materialist. But while L., the medium, who is a mechanic, was holding that conversation with the materialist, he was bending over his machine, and though, unconscious of it, he was all the time under control—entranced with his eyes open, so that the visitor thought he was speaking and answering him in the normal state. The whole argument is reproduced by the Control to the recorder at his chambers, and it is also stated that while the medium, L., was conversing with his materialistic visitor, his hand was, at the same time, writing the narrative of a spirit which passed from the body at the wreck of the *Deutschland*, thus showing that two spirits were communicating through the medium at the same time: one orally, and the other by writing. By will-power it appears that a hammer was made to fall down, being a manifestation after the manner of the power used by Madame Blavatsky, whose work is described in an article by Mrs. Hollis-Billing. The most mysterious part of the matter is that this materialistic visitor is a stranger who has not yet been identified, though these communications have referred to him in several recent numbers of the MEDIUM. The notes taken down from the lips of the entranced medium have not been amended in any way, so that there is a slight irregularity in the use of the first and third person in several instances.

NEXT WEEK we will give Mr. Oxley's article on the nature and origin of the Bible and other sacred books. Our first number for 1880 will contain the succeeding chapter of "The Philosophy of Spirit," illustrated by an engraving of the likeness of "Busiris the Ancient," A. T. T. P.'s chief Control, who it is said wrote the Mahabarata in India thousands of years ago. The engraving is from a drawing done through the hands of L., A. T. T. P.'s medium.

ON the wrapper of this number is repeated engravings of spirit-faces, which were given a few weeks ago, but the edition was soon sold out. The descriptive article may now be had in a separate form, price 2d. The medium through whom these manifestations

were obtained is still in London. Letters desiring sittings may be addressed—Mr. A. Furman, 15, Southampton Row, W.C.

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With us already he has been the means of bringing home to many minds with greater force the conviction of that truth which they already held, and to strangers he has demonstrated conclusively the possibility of cultivating a power which enables the possessor to peer into their past and present surroundings, with which no one present but themselves could be acquainted, and which had, in many cases, vanished for the time, even from their own conscious memory until recalled thereto, at the same moment demonstrating by the independency of voice the independency of his individuality. His "clear-seeing" powers appear also to extend into futurity, but so far as the experience of our circle is concerned, of which alone I am now writing, sufficient time has not yet elapsed to enable me just now to speak as to this with that certainty upon which results so extraordinary should rest. This would seem to be a far more marvellous faculty than the former. He has also proved himself able to discover, from "impressions in the aura," events which have taken place in rooms. He gives ample evidence not only that man carries about with him a mysterious tablet upon which are indelibly engraved "all things that ever he did," a record that can be read with more or less of precision, but that even inanimate objects catch and retain the impression of fleeting scenes and occurrences. This may well be with the more subtle and plastic modes of nature, since a wafer laid for a short time upon the finely tempered blade of a razor will leave upon the bright surface a clear impression of its outline that may be rendered visible for months afterwards by the simple process of breathing upon the steel.

What these facts imply the mind would do well to ponder. One

thing that may be gathered, is the possibility of bringing to light with accuracy the deeds of right or wrong committed by humanity, individually or collectively, in the past. That which is done in secret, may indeed be "proclaimed from the housetops." I should not, however, do "Ski" full justice did I not refer to the fact that he is ever truly considerate in dealing with those matters which might give rise to unpleasant feeling on the part of the victim of his keen scrutiny, but it might be well for those who have secrets to preserve to give him a wide berth.

I may mention that, amongst his other accomplishments, he has evinced considerable ability in diagnosing disease, and the prescribing of remedies for the same.

The form of manifestation of spirit-personality, which "Ski" so well exemplifies, has been aptly described as "the perfection of spirit-communication." With most other phases of advanced phenomenal manifestation, the consciousness of the medium is for the time suspended, and cannot, therefore, be contrasted *simultaneously* with the intelligence of the control, and while they are such as to induce in the mind a train of reasoning which leads, ultimately, to the irresistible conclusion that they have spirit-intelligence as their source, the fact that, in this phenomenon of the direct voice, the medium is perfectly conscious the whole time, converses with the sitters, and also with the control, tends, apart from the striking tests, to a forcible realisation of the presence of other intelligences than those in the flesh, and of the independency of medium and control, with a directness and instantaneousness which I regard as a most valuable feature. This is still more true of that other branch of "Ski's" work, the "setting-up" of spirit-friends of the sitters to speak for themselves, in which he is very successful. More especially is this bringing home to the mind of the reality of spirit-presence effective, when, as occasionally happens, we are favoured with hearing two or three conversing together in the direct voice, in tones of varying character, pitch, and modulation. It is, if possible, still more pleasing to hear the wee voice of children, talking in their artless way, seeking that knowledge of earth-life which their sojourn here was too brief to enable them to gain, and explaining their occupations and recreations in spirit-life, the lessons they learn, their hopes and joys, their beautiful surroundings, their yearnings towards their earthly relatives, the kindness of their friends and instructors in spirit-life, and many other points of interest.

I may briefly refer to the sensations of the medium, which should be observed and chronicled in connection with all classes of phenomena, as a necessary element in the arriving at a sound philosophy of the methods of spirit-manifestation. The temperature of the body is greatly increased at the time—so much so as to induce considerable perspiration. A numbness and loss of use in the region of the throat and vocal organs is experienced, as if vital force were withdrawn, for the purpose, I presume, of materialising to a sufficient extent the corresponding organs in the Control. The state induced in the medium is so sensitive that the mind is highly excitable, and hence it becomes necessary that the most tranquil and harmonious conditions should be secured in the circle if satisfactory results are to be obtained.

"Ski" does not confine himself to the domain of phenomenal manifestations, but is always ready to render his reasonable advice to those who seek it, and his willingness and sincerity invariably win esteem. In closing these remarks, I can only wish him a wider sphere of usefulness, and consequent happiness, and hope that the example which he gives of unflagging industry in the cause of truth may be imitated by those here, upon whom has been laid the solemn duty of carrying forward the work initiated by the wise and beneficent intelligences of spirit-life, and of handing on the torch of knowledge and progress which has been placed in their hands.

A. J. SMART.

From what "Ski" said at the circle in London, we heard frequently of the work being accomplished at Cardiff; but as our spirit-friend is not a talker but a worker, and anything but a boaster, we had no idea that he had been so successful. He is a most truthful and reliable spirit. He has much knowledge and great force, and being wholly trustworthy, he can be of considerable service to those who desire his help. All who sit in the circles and make his acquaintance regard him with feelings of respect and affection. His musical voice rippling forth the salutation "Soh!" (he never uses the word yes), is always the signal for friendly congratulations. He uses the word "soh," in so many different pitches and lengths, that it is made to express the affirmative with an infinite number of extended meanings.

In the course of a letter just received, Mr. James Smyth, Angerville, France, says:—

The stranger who goes to Mrs. Billing's seances, will find no "test" necessary, for the piercing eye of "Ski" can read him like a book, and can tell him of his past, present, and future, and with great discretion and discrimination in speaking of private matters. "Ski" also assists the spirits to consult with their friends, "sets them up" as he calls it. "Ski" has contrived to amass a wonderful deal of knowledge, and to all your questions you can have satisfactory answers. He is a very good and truthful spirit. He takes his place as one of the chiefs of those bands of spirits who are doing all in their power to dispel and disperse the darkness of materialism and orthodoxy, the two great pests of this world.

But that "Ski" may be enabled to do this more effectually, Mrs. Billing's seances must be select, that is to say, must consist of thoughtful, earnest, true, men and women. All those who go there to pass an idle hour to amuse themselves, or for mockery, should be put aside. If we would profit, if we would have communications with pure and good spirits, we must prepare ourselves, and hold communion with ourselves, and then, with the assistance of such as "Ski," there is no end to the good we can do, and the comforts and consolation that we can bring to thousands of homes. Let all who attend Mrs. Billing's circles prove that they are not ungrateful for the privileges conferred on them, but, in return for the benefit they receive, may they be impelled to take up this work of Human Progress in their turn, and help to bring spiritual light and joy to their fellow-creatures.

Angerville, Dec. 12, 1879.

Happily, Mrs. Billing is, for the present, in London, and an

introduction may be obtained by suitable sitters. No more need be said. This portrait is presented to the reader by a few friends of "Ski," as a slight testimonial to his worth and the respect which they bear him. In this sentiment they include all the Indian tribes, who, now nearly extinct on earth, return to us from the spirit-world to operate upon us for our good in many ways. Spiritualism thus throws new and reliable light on the brotherhood of man, shows that life in this world and the inner state, is so interlinked that even in death we cannot rid ourselves either of friends or foes. Our manifest duty, then, is to be at peace with all in the spirit-world as well as on earth, bearing in mind the truth contained in a poem, written and dedicated to "Ski," by Mrs. Jacob Martin, Cairo, Ill., U.S.A., with an extract from which we will conclude:—

"Life would be yet greater failure,
Were it not that loving angels
Often give us good impressions,
Gleams of hope and inspiration,
Sending sometimes rays of knowledge—
Rays which cheer us and assist us.
And among the watchful spirits,
Few have done such faithful service
To earth's troubled, weary children,
As our noble Indian-spirit;
As our patient friend and worker;
As our hero chief, 'Skiwaukie!'"

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

Dedicated, by express permission, to "Skiwaukie," Indian spirit-guide of that inestimable medium for the direct spirit-voice—
Mrs. Hollis-Billing, of America—

By JAMES KINNERSLEY LEWIS.

*"Oh! beyond that bourne,
In the vast cycle of being which begins
At that broad threshold, with what fairer forms
Shall the great law of change and progress clothe
Its workings?"* BRYANT ("An Evening Reverie.")

The great destroyer and restorer, Time,
Works change incessant in the human race,
But midst this mighty change, in every clime,
The footprints of Progression all might trace;
Old customs die, and thought the bound exceeds
So rigidly defined by narrow creeds.

Adown the vista dim of cycles past,
We gaze on Egypt's greatness—India's glory;
Where are their splendours now?—They only last
In glowing colours of some Eastern story;
Yet he who grieves o'er fate that caused such fall
Mourns over laws that did the mind enthrall!

There rise in Phoenix manner from the dust
Of ruined states and empires greater still,
That to the meanest subjects are more just,
Till fades away the stern despotic will;
And though declared as now extinct a race,
May mingled be with that of fairer face.

The mighty empire, ever prone to boast
That never sets the sun upon its verge,
In ages past held on a narrow coast
Barbarians only,—yet their dying dirge
Was beautifully blent with hopes that sprung
From union with those of other tongue.

Through days of harsh oppression, mental gloom,
These mingled races speed toward the light;
In sure, though slow, succession is the doom
Of laws despotic unreturning night:
The forms that wandered like the beasts of prey,
Transformed and God-like, will His laws obey.

Though peace on earth yet makes not her abode,
Man raises shrines and temples in her name;
These piles are shadows falling on the road
She will if wooed pursue, with power to tame
Tumultuous passions in the human heart,
And blessings of one brotherhood impart.

* * * * *

The breath of God pervades the Indian's breast,
Inspiring tender thoughts of love and truth,
And whispering of the Great Hereafter, blest
By all that renders happy age and youth,—
Where pleasures never pall, and where is found
A brighter and a happier hunting ground.

There he o'er ne'er destroying seas will sail,
In bright canoes with all the speed of thought,
And dwell in wigwams far beyond the wail
Of piercing winds, where all the air is fraught
With sweetest odours of unfading flowers
That deck the shady vales and leafy bowers.

There the Great Spirit is the medicine man
Whose wondrous power of magic quells all ill,
Is the illustrious chief of every clan;
The Evil Spirit works not there his will,
But there the brave and good their fathers meet,
And stories of heroic deeds repeat.

True in the red man's grave are laid his gun,
His faithful dog, and oft his trusted steed,
His bow and arrows, that beneath the sun
Of shores eternal they may serve his need;
They symbols be of faithfulness and truth!
What creed is there from symbols free forsooth?

His heaven the heaven of Nature is, as seen
In glorified appearance by his seer,
Where from oppressive White he dwells serene,
And mingles with all forms he holds so dear;
His sole religion is implicit trust
In the Great Spirit who rewards the just.
Thus God Himself to "heathens" has revealed
His deep paternal nature—love of right;
The doctrine of The Great Hereafter sealed
By visions to their seeking spirit-sight,
As of the realms eternal He has taught
His children ever through their highest thought.

Blank atheism science makes her goal
Full oft in this proclaimed enlightened age;
Theology but offers to the soul
Mere speculation, differing in each page,
And Revelation oft to books is bound,
For which are multifarious meanings found.

Tis then a struggling ray of light is seen,
Which breaks through shadows that the soul enshroud;
More brightly is repeated what has been,
The spirit-world shines through the darksome cloud,
The dead appear! and by their utterance tell
That they with those who seek for knowledge dwell.

But chief among the voices from that bourne
Whence Moses and Elias did return,
Thy voice, "Skiwaukie," bids us cease to mourn,
That voice so rich with lore that we would learn,
And laden with the messages of love
From friends departed to the bright above.

Thou art an earnest student of the laws
That rule in occult beauty spirit-life,
And bind all spirits to the Great First Cause,
With links unbroken through the wildest strife;
Thou mighty art in magic, and canst teach
The seen and unseen interchange of speech.

Thy lofty aspirations, ancient chief,
Should be a load-star for thy struggling race;
It may not be declared their day is brief
If they thine inspiration will embrace:
For thou wouldst lead them by their love of right
To undisputed Liberty and Light!

London, England, Dec. 13, 1879.

HISTORICAL CONTROLS.

(Reported and communicated by A. T. T. P.)

[The medium is a working-man, possessing the scanty education of his class; A. T. T. P. is a gentleman of education and independent means, and hence has no interest in deception, as these seances entail upon him considerable labour and expenses. He has made his mark in the world as a successful lawyer, and is not likely to be duped. The medium passes into the unconscious trance, in which state the spirits speak through him, making gestures appropriate to their character. A. T. T. P. takes down every word thus spoken by the spirits through the medium.]

EDMUND SPENSER.—October 8, 1879.

The medium, as soon as he entered the room, said:—

"I feel the same influence as when that stranger was in my house."

He went immediately under control, and said:—

"There has been much talk about mind-reading or thought-reading; it has long been a vexed question, that of thought-reading, its possibility or impossibility; and I assert at the very commencement of my address to you, that thought-reading with some advanced spirits is, indeed, an actuality. He, the sensitive, has told you that his visitor sat in silence nearly the whole time of his last visit to him."

Before I go further, I think it just as well that I should give some slight explanation as to what all this means. I may state that a few nights previous to this present control I had a control by the celebrated Henry More [published in the MEDIUM last week] on the subject of a dialogue and argument between this stranger and L. the medium, which was so curious in its details that I sent the fair copy to L., with the object of showing it to this stranger, and getting his views on the matter. So when the medium came, I asked him whether he had had a visit from the stranger; and whether he had shown the paper to him, and what passed between them. He said he had, and that the stranger found twenty-three lines of the record corresponded verbatim with the short-hand notes taken by himself, but that otherwise nothing passed between them, and that neither of them talked. The Control went on to say:—

"I was present, and helped the sensitive at the first interview between them. Upon earth I was known as Edmund Spenser, the author of the 'Faerie Queene,' and the thoughts of both of them being primal or intense in their natures, or, in other words, being thoughts with causes, they were easily recognised, received by me, and can be described to you. To me it appeared the thoughts of the sensitive were these: 'Why do I feel so drowsy in this man's presence, so inactive, that my work seems a trouble to me? Why do I feel a difficulty in keeping my eyelids from closing over my eyes?' On the other hand, the thoughts of the stranger were these: 'He (that is L.) is the modern puzzle of the nineteenth century; an artisan fighting the battle of respectable life, and that battle attended with just a sufficient amount of success as to keep him amongst the ranks of honest handicraftsmen; there is an

entire absence in this man's demeanour of trying to deceive, or impose on me, even if there were the wish to do so, the cause for doing so would be a purposeless one, he having nothing to gain. Is there in reality any power of mind over mind? or is it but a fabled dream? or is there any power of intense will over the will of other men? I will try to will that he shall question me. Strange it is that this intense willing should have produced recklessness when all before was quietude. By all I value I declare my will is bringing about an unexpected result.' And then came the first question that the sensitive asked.

"He said, 'With your peculiar ideas I should like to know your opinion of heaven and hell?' The words in which this question was answered were but thoughts clothed with meaning by words, and which I shall repeat.

"The visitor said, 'Your question is a strange one; but more strange still I feel your earnestness in putting it—first, What is my opinion about heaven? Heaven, in my opinion, has its locality only in the feelings of man; we must—and I do accept the word as expressing the highest state of happiness that the soul can conceive; and, therefore, in giving you my soul's highest conception of happiness, I am giving you my idea of heaven: health in every part of my body; perfect vitality in every organ forming it, more especially in the cerebral hemisphere. This, and this alone, constitutes my soul's highest conception of heaven. The other part of your question is my idea in reference to Hell, a word expressed by many as having a meaning, a locality; but to me I merely accept it as expressing infinite misery; the most abject misery; the most abject wretchedness; my soul's idea of misery would then be my conception of hell: therefore, mental or bodily anguish, attended with dire agony, would constitute my soul's conception of Hell. I place them, as you will observe, both heaven and hell, as within the scope of my three score years and ten of life. Earth becomes a paradise to me in the healthy operation of my anatomical structure; but whenever my bodily functions are disarranged or destroyed, then earth becomes hell to me.'

"Then, according to your views a doctor becomes a god,' said the sensitive; and the visitor replied,

"And why not? He gives me a new love of life, and proves how, by dint of the use of his scientific acquirements, he changes hell into heaven by the use of his knowledge: God, in the conception of my soul, is a word expressing Power. There is power in the skill of the medical practitioner: I admire power in every form, even if I do not worship it; therefore, in the sense you mean, why should not the medical practitioner, who assuages the ills of my body, advance himself in my opinion into the position of a god amongst men?'

"Then followed a long interval of silence between them, broken again by the sensitive's visitor, who remarked, 'arouse yourself, and listen to me; I do not know how I am drawn to visit you; I wish to tell you my views; I wish to give expression to my thoughts, and strange as the facts appear to me, I know that all my views will not only be antagonistic to you, but that the defence of your own views will afford me great matter of thought; that I realise; why? I cannot answer. I would speak to you in plain language, being myself a scholar and you a man of labour; but I feel that if I attempted to defend my position at all, it can only be done by a masterly defence.'

"Do you think, sir," (addressing me), said the Control, "that the sensitive heard these words? No; and it is only by the strict rules that you have laid down for the more perfect manifestation of spirit-control; I mean that you have always tried to obey necessary conditions, especially in forced punctuality on the part of the sensitive. This, dear sir, as you have seen, has been attended with nearly a perfect success, because you earnestly persisted in having punctuality followed out. As in these things, so in other matters, your mode has been successfully applied. You have ignored promiscuous sittings on the part of the sensitive; in fact, to sum up all briefly, you have tried to make conditions, and you have succeeded on account of your earnestness, so that now you have this new form of semi-consciousness, so that infidels can be answered without the fact of apparent control being placed before them; this is a step in the right direction. If he was not talking with the sensitive, which he certainly was not, he would be the last man in the world to believe he was not. Such was the position of this new form of communication. I bent the body of the sensitive over the machine in the position of listening, and by extraordinary action kept his eyelids from closing and then I listened.

"You realise,' continued the visitor, 'although your education has not been an advanced one, what paltry excuses, subterfuges, and lies have been used to deny the fact, that an antagonism is now being felt throughout the length and breadth of this land: between science and revelation; between God and the world; that the struggle is becoming final in its issue; that they are grasping each other's throats; and that victory will abide with the strongest. In vain the pastors and masters of the masses assert, that, despite this struggle, God and His word steadily advance, and that the bright example of their martyred saints of old still loudly proclaims the justice of their Cause; but Science, undismayed, unexcitable, and calm, replies, Battle as you will, we have stayed your onward career of lying doctrines which you have authoritatively laid down. Science says, Thou hast travelled far. Thou shalt now find that thy journey is ended; and that this is so, the immense army in this country of free-thinkers loudly proclaims.'

"And through the lips of the sensitive came this question.

'Give me your definition of what you mean by this advancing science; further, give me the professors and their names, and your ideas upon their mission.'

"And the visitor continued: 'A new school has arisen in the world—a school of seekers into nature's mysteries. No journey too long no heights too high, no depths too deep, for their researches; time and trouble to them are but of secondary importance, and their labours have been twice blessed; they have blessed them. They have also blessed the general mass of mankind; they have pointed out the fallacies of creeds and doctrines; it has been a well-contested battle, but victory has declared on the side of science. It proves incontestably and undeniably, that the revelations, in part, are untruthful, being antagonistic to the primal laws of nature; according to the discovered laws of gravitation, and more especially the latest discovery, the *protoplasmic theory*, that gives the same source of life to every animated being. You have asked me in your question, who compose the scientific leaders of the scientific world, and I know that I can name but a few of them, but all those few that I can name, are worthy of being leaders. To their eminently distinguished and thoughtful minds men look up and admire; they are men formed by nature to be men's leaders; men whom all men could respect for their love of truth: names such as Darwin, Tyndal, Mills, Huxley, aye, and many others too; a list of names very numerous, considering the purity of their efforts. These are the great leaders in the fight; these are the masses' great teachers, and it is indeed a worthy task to live upon earth a real and earnest life, not opposing, but obeying, nature's great harmonious laws; teaching that heaven and hell are both within the reach of man; the one to be enjoyed, and the other to be endured on earth.'

"The answer came from the sensitive's lips, saying, 'What do you expect from me, sir? I am no strict theologian, and science to me is a mystery; I cannot talk to you as a scientist, and would not, if I could, talk to you as a theologian. I will tell you why I would not. The theologian would condemn the whole school of scientists, some of whose names you have mentioned, and would brand them with being unconscious tools for the devil's purposes, and that through some unexplained cause they were permitted to work their wicked wills upon earth; and that a century or two back they would have met with all they deserved, being of the army of evil doers in active opposition against Christ and his church; and they would have merited and received death at the stake. But I would not so judge scientists, sir; far from it. Instead of considering them the agents of evil, I should—I should call them—and I do consider them to be the instruments in the hands of the Almighty living God, employed by Him for His own pure and holy ends; entrusted with a great mission; yielding obedience, attended by earthly cares and pains, yet following out God's will; such would be my ideas of these men. The theologians would tell you that these men do but foreshadow the inevitable darkness, that will cover the whole length and breadth of the land, and that evil shall be temporarily in the ascendant; that it shall be—nay, that it is—drawing nearer the time of the general apostasy. No, sir, I would not, if I could, argue with the tongue of a theologian, for his views would not be my views; and, so far from considering a day of darkness looming, I can foreshadow none but the fairest prospects, and that these men whom you have named, instead of darkening the light, are lighting the darkness—leading the way to a reign of brightness out of the world of superstition and error. All these have been at their labours for years; the peculiar germ for their thoughts was born in the past, and does not belong to the present. The inactivity, the improbability, and the mummery of the religion of the land, has brought this class into being; creating doubters; men begin to reason upon their doubts, and when reason and established religion meet there must be war. They have laboured and are labouring to awaken error, to disarm superstition, and to put down priestly arbitrary power. You say, sir, that they have succeeded; if they have not succeeded, I wish them every success; for every soul gained from priestly rule is a soul gained to the cause of reasonable truth; but their labours, when finished, are but at the very commencement of God's approval of them. They are preparing the world for an era of change; I would call them God's first elected pioneers, and they have committed the fault of stopping when the battle is not nearly finished. You scientists are not trying to prepare your hearts for new knowledge; you are not stepping beyond these labours one bit. Their labours being according to the mission with which they have been entrusted, those labours being to undermine the power of the church, which has built up a system of false idolatrous and fanatical bigotry. The weapons they have used being extolling matter at the expense of mind, hence the rush of recruits to the infidel bands; but ask even either of those persons whose names you have mentioned, ask them earnestly, Do you believe that man is a dual being, compounded of soul and body? Do you think that they would use the words that you have used? that such is but the theory of the ignorant and vicious, and that all systems that deal with or attempt to explain things metaphysical are *ignes fatui*. You will excuse me referring to your own words in your own words, but they were impressed upon me; meaning that, although I did not understand the meaning when I heard them, I understand them now. Oh, believe me, sir, that the highest of the scientists would go with you thus far and explain.'

"Then this, sir, came from the sensitive's lips: 'That hammer upon that stone is inert; impossible to move without force; but what is force? what is it composed of? from what is it manifested? a while back, in this interview, you proved the existence of will-force; you exerted your will for an object; your object transpired.

can you tell me the extent, then, of that manifestation of force? from whence derived? for what purpose obtained? can you tell me the limits of its capabilities? No, you cannot. I will prove to you that the force of will is an active force; a power alike over matter, as well as mind; let us join our wills and be of one mind, one with each other. Now, then, let us will, that that hammer leave the stone. What, then, do you not see the hammer has moved and fallen from the stone, which stands on the board? What, then, does this prove? the extent of the power of will-force over mind? No, but it proves that the force exercised and put in motion by the will of man has power to move material objects. But you are startled, and we will not pursue this line of argument any further; but you may draw many useful inferences from these our experiments together. This is better than any of your scientific lectures, for it has proved to you that mind-force has power over matter, and if you reason upon this experiment, it will lead you to the dual nature of man. It is the intervention, evidently, of the Almighty God I believe in that you should know Him also, and learn that a knowledge of God can be obtained otherwise than by a blind, unyielding faith, for I know it.

"The sensitive then said, 'I must ask you not to stay any longer; not that I wish to be inhospitable to you; but I am fatigued with talking, and would not have the little work I have to do delayed. You can come again and again; for I have not the power of denying you, nor the wish to do so.'

"And so the sensitive told you, dear P., that it was a silent meeting; although, on the contrary, it was just the other way; although beyond the actual knowledge of the sensitive. He had a faint dawning that he had better make no comment.

"I allowed his hands, or rather his right hand, whilst sitting at the machine, to be controlled by another spirit, when he commenced talking; and, when the other spirit commenced writing, I commenced speaking, and, by the abbreviated shorthand notes of the visitor, due notice was taken of this strange action; I gave him the paper which was written upon, and after he glanced at the first few pages his hand trembled visibly, for he had noticed the time of the commencement of the answer, which was the exact instant of the commencement of the writing, not only proving the dual nature of mind and body, but proving dual minds in the same body. The spirit that controlled the hand of the sensitive, was one that was unfortunately wrecked, and perished by exposure to the weather, whilst clinging to the wreck. The name of the vessel was the *Deutschland*. It recorded the terrible experience he there suffered, recorded the agonies of the women and the children on board of her, and the courageousness of the stewardesses in trying to allay their fears, and keeping them from despair. It described also the suicides that took place in these awful passing hours—one passenger hanging himself from the saloon beams, whilst another lay weltering in his blood by a self-inflicted wound on his wrists, others flinging themselves into the angry waves. According to his description, four Sisters of Mercy added to the general consternation by their terribly cowardly fears. The nearly universal cry on board being 'Oh God, make Thy will known quickly.' He showed this paper to the sensitive. 'I copied it,' said the sensitive, 'because it is an incident that was graven on my memory. It must have been done to prove the independent power of mind over body.' He did not like to admit that he had been under control.

"One or another of your surroundings, dear sir, have their duties delegated to them of attending every interview between this visitor and the sensitive. May God in heaven bless you, and keep you, and spare you. May your life be a blessing to others as well as yourself. Edmund Spenser, the poet, bids you good-night." Finis.

Every seance I get becomes more and more wonderful. Control after control brings some new phase of manifestation; to me it is quite clear that sooner or later, by such means as those last described ones, the minds of men will be made to realise their independence of soul and body, and to learn that, even whilst living, the soul can be detached from its body and another soul made to take its place, and that the soul, when through its bodily decay or destruction can no longer retain its abiding place, that it exists in space, carrying with it the individuality it formed whilst in the body, and retaining that individuality until, purged by expiation and cleansed from earth and all earthly, it joins those bands of bright and happy spirits that are ever working God's behests in teaching and raising spirits from the earth; raising them from error and bringing them up to their own bright states.

As far as I can see and judge, from the various controls I have had, the obstruction to spiritual knowledge is not so much from the materialist, whose reason has led him to reject what blind faith would enforce without allowing reason to have its play, as from those who have put reason to rest and accepted the blasphemous doctrines of man-made creeds and religions. God has given to man his reason, not to let it lie by the wall, but to use it, to be up and doing, to be active not passive; and, as far as I can see the fallow of the materialist is far better ground for spiritual truths than the field of the religionist whose mind is full of idle and worthless ideas of his Creator. I should not be at all astonished if this visitor became a great leader in this Spiritual Movement. L. has told me he can feel his power whenever he sits with him.

During these Controls I am almost as much a machine as the medium. I almost mechanically record what he says, scarcely knowing what I am writing. I should at the close of the sitting have liked to have asked a few questions, only I was imperfectly acquainted with what passed. The only incident that I did refer to was the hammer. I said to the medium, "Did a hammer fall

whilst you were sitting?" He said, "Not that I am aware of. I saw the visitor pick up a hammer from off the floor that is generally on the stone on the table, and he said something about 'fine wire.'" I expect I shall soon get this cleared up. I will try first and get the writing concerning the wreck of the *Deutschland*.

CAPTAIN KINDLY'S SPIRIT-BAND.

BY THE WIDE-AWAKE DREAMER.

Spiritualism had become a great public question throughout the country, and minds of every class were occupied with the discussion of its principles. It was near Christmas time, and, improbable though it might seem, this same Spiritualism formed part of the attractions of the season. Many meetings were held, addressed by well-known leaders of the Movement, the most prominent party of advocates or teachers being Captain Kindly and his Spirit Band. Ah! here is a large and well-known hall, and the Captain and his comrades are holding forth this very evening. Let us enter and participate in the proceedings.

Around the sides and back of the ample platform, in a double row, is seated a homogeneous party of highly respectable people, many of them women. All ranks are represented, some of gentle blood and elegant manners being conspicuous. The Captain in the midst, and his Band sitting on each side of him, wearing a neat and significant decoration, occupy the front of the stage. The body of the hall is crowded with a respectable and attentive audience, come evidently for the purpose of gaining knowledge.

The double rows on the platform rise and sing, with extraordinary effect a melody, both the words and musical composition of which are novel, yet the effect on the inner mind is pleasantly familiar. Before it is finished most of the audience have joined in as it were intuitively; all seemed of one mind, and in harmony of spirit.

Then Captain Kindly, a tall, commanding gentleman of some sixty years of age, rose to his feet, and advancing to a table on which choice flowers were arranged, thus addressed the meeting:—

My dear countrymen: as you are all aware, I have spent the best part of my life in the service of my country, either in leading her forces on to combat or in repelling the enemy from the occupancy of provinces recently acquired by our armies. In all that I have done, I have acted conscientiously and with energy, and no doubt under the circumstances, and my then state of mind, I did my duty as I knew best. For some time I have retired on an ample pension, derived from the labours and ingenuity of you, my fellow-countrymen. But the study of Spiritualism aroused my attention to the false position which I have in the past occupied, and since I became the humble instrument of spirit-influence, I have been led, instead of conquering foreign peoples, to learn to subdue myself and devote myself to the real welfare of my people, instead of flattering their vanity at the expense of their means, which, in other words, is their liberty. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, every farthing that now accrues to me on account of my military service, I expend on the welfare of my country. As a Spiritualist and a gentleman, I declare that it is impossible for me to subsist upon the price of blood. I see enemies far more dangerous to my country's welfare than the thousands of men of other latitudes that I have helped to consign to a violent death, and all the expiation I can make during my brief stay on this planet, is to use every means at my command to overcome and drive out completely the real enemies of dear old England—ignorance, grossness, and selfishness, which have hitherto, in the national policy both at home and abroad, found too ample expression. These are the foes that grind us in slavery, and, aided by the Lord of Hosts, it is the duty of the true soldier to overcome them. Comrades, are you ready for the contest?

In response, an animating and warlike ditty was sung, which stirred the audience up to a fine pitch of enthusiasm. The speakers were strangely influenced. They rose and spoke, one after the other, as they seemed to be impressed. We can only give a brief notice of their remarks.

John Smith said: I first heard of Spiritualism during the debate between Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Burns, at the Hall of Science. I thought as a freethinker, I had a right to look into this matter for myself, and I can tell you hundreds of secularists followed in the same path. My wife never would give in to my infidel notions, and she was afraid that this Spiritualism was another form of the same thing. She soon found out her mistake. Bless you, boys! I never loved anybody or anything but myself till I became a Spiritualist. Of course I was honest, because of its being the "best policy," but outside of that I regarded all—wife, world, and my own body as playthings, to take as much fun and amusement out of as possible. I soon became ashamed of the social views of the Secularist, renounced the domestic practices recommended by their leaders, and became aware of the glorious fact that my wife is a woman, and ought to be treated as such, and my word for it, our home is now the abode of love and mutual respect. Why, Spiritualism, I say it—and I am ready to maintain it before the world, or both worlds, ay if there were a million of them—that Spiritualism is as much superior to Secularism as the highest type of manhood is to the lowest. There, that's what I have got to say.

Bangor Jones said: I was brought up in a Christian family; but the dogmas of the catechism and of the Church never could come home to me. Though I had no particular religion, yet I never was what may be called irreligious. I felt as if I waited for something

to turn up, and what was that but Dr. Dods' eloquent lectures on "Electrical Psychology." Here, to me, was a revelation. The study of this work was followed by works on Spiritualism, and at once I said to myself: This is what I have been expecting. In Spiritualism I see an explanation of all that pertains to the immortal nature of man. In this statement I do not allude to the physical phenomena merely. It is necessary to begin with these, and, after having become acquainted with the various forms of mediumship and how spirits operate, then the inner philosophy may be studied with advantage. Every family should have a spirit-circle, as a knowledge of this subject should form part of the practical education of every human being. No one can teach you to any great extent; you must find out for yourselves. Form circles at home, and when you are in a position to profit by instruction, some of our band of visitors will give you a look in some evening and see how you are going on. Our Captain has provided for you a little tract, which take home and read, and it will tell you where you can obtain further information. [We re-produce the tract alluded to.]

RULES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.—The phenomena cannot be successfully elicited in very warm, sultry weather, in extreme cold, when thunder and lightning and magnetic disturbances prevail, when the atmosphere is very moist, or when there is much rain, or storms of wind. A warm, dry atmosphere is best, as it presents the mean between all extremes, and agrees with the harmonious state of man's organism which is proper for the manifestation of spiritual phenomena. A subdued light or darkness increases the power and facilitates control.

LOCAL CONDITIONS.—The room in which a circle is held for development or investigation should be set apart for that purpose. It should be comfortably warmed and ventilated, but draughts or currents of air should be avoided. Those persons composing the circle should meet in the room about an hour before the experiments commence; the same sitters should attend each time, and occupy the same places. This maintains the peculiar magnetic conditions necessary to the production of the phenomena. A developing circle exhausts power, or uses it up.

PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS.—The phenomena are produced by a vital force emanating from the sitters, which the spirits use as a connecting link between themselves and objects. Certain temperaments give off this power; others emit an opposite influence. If the circle is composed of persons with suitable temperaments, manifestations will take place readily; if the contrary be the case, much perseverance will be necessary to produce results. If both kinds of temperament are present, they require to be arranged so as to produce harmony in the psychical atmosphere evolved from them. The physical manifestations especially depend upon temperament. If a circle does not succeed, changes should be made in the sitters till the proper conditions are supplied.

MENTAL CONDITIONS.—All forms of mental excitement are detrimental to success. Those with strong and opposite opinions should not sit together; opinionated, dogmatic, and positive people are better out of the circle and room. Parties between whom there are feelings of envy, hate, contempt, or other inharmonious sentiment should not sit at the same circle. The vicious and crude should be excluded from all such experiments. The minds of the sitters should be in a passive rather than an active state, possessed by the love of truth and of mankind. One harmonious and fully-developed individual is invaluable in the formation of a circle.

THE CIRCLE should consist of from three to ten persons of both sexes, and sit round an oval, oblong, or square table. Cane-bottomed chairs or those with wooden seats are preferable to stuffed chairs. Mediums and sensitives should never sit on stuffed chairs, cushions, or sofas used by other persons, as the influences which accumulate in the cushions often affect the mediums unpleasantly. The active and quiet, the fair and dark, the ruddy and pale, male and female, should be seated alternately. If there is a medium present, he or she should occupy the end of the table with the back to the north. A mellow mediumistic person should be placed on each side of the medium, and those most positive should be at the opposite corners. No person should be placed behind the medium. A circle may represent a horseshoe magnet, with the medium placed between the poles.

CONDUCT AT THE CIRCLE.—The sitters should place their hands on the table, and endeavour to make each other feel easy and comfortable. Agreeable conversation, singing, reading, or invocation may be engaged in—anything that will tend to harmonise the minds of those present, and unite them in one purpose, is in order. By engaging in such exercises the circle may be made very profitable apart from the manifestations. Sitters should not desire anything in particular, but unite in being pleased to receive that which is best for all. The director of the circle should sit opposite the medium, and put all questions to the spirit, and keep order. A recorder should take notes of the conditions and proceedings. Manifestations may take place in a few minutes, or the circle may sit many times before any result occurs. Under these circumstances it is well to change the positions of the sitters, or introduce new elements, till success is achieved. When the table begins to tilt, or when raps occur, do not be too impatient to get answers to questions. When the table can answer questions by giving three tips or raps for "Yes," and one for "No," it may assist in placing the sitters properly. The spirits or intelligences which produce the phenomena should be treated with the same courtesy and consideration as you would desire for yourselves if you were introduced into the company of strangers for their personal benefit. At the same time, the sitters should not on any account allow their judgment to be warped or their good sense imposed upon by spirits, whatever their professions may be. Reason with them kindly, firmly, and considerately.

INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRITS is carried on by various means. The simplest is three tips of the table or raps for "Yes," and one for "No." By this means the spirits can answer in the affirmative or negative. By calling over the alphabet the spirits will rap at the proper letters to constitute a message. Sometimes the hand of a sitter is shaken, then a pencil should be placed in the hand, when the spirits may write by it automatically. Other sitters may become entranced, and the spirits use the vocal organs of such mediums to speak. The spirits sometimes impress mediums, while others are clairvoyant, and see the spirits, and messages from them written in luminous letters in the atmosphere. Sometimes the table and other objects are lifted, moved from place to place, and even through closed doors. Patiently and kindly seek for tests of identity from loved ones in the spirit-world, and exercise caution respecting spirits who make extravagant pretensions of any kind.

BEFORE proceeding with their investigations, inquirers into Spiritualism should correspond with Mr. Burns, Proprietor of the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C., who will gladly forward a packet of publications and useful information gratis. Stamps should in all cases be enclosed for return postage. Deputations of mediums or lecturers may be arranged for to visit any locality where public meetings or seances can be instituted.

Solon Wiseman, a retired city merchant, said it was a great mistake to suppose that the Bible was opposed to Spiritualism. In truth the Bible could not be understood without a practical acquaintance with the methods of spiritual manifestation. This view the speaker sustained by many illustrations.

Rev. Philemon Jude gave it as his opinion, as a theological student, that the dogmas of all religious systems and their rites and ceremonies were merely symbols, and were not to be believed in literally. Spiritualism was really the demonstration of theological science, and showed what these changes in the spiritual nature of man meant, which are symbolised in the terms salvation, redemption, atonement, punishment, &c., &c., used by the churches.

When priestcraft declined and Spiritualism became understood and taught, sectarianism on the one hand, and unbelief on the other, would be equally impossible. This speaker went into many particulars, manifesting great erudition on his part.

Several others spoke, when a man rather marred by life's excesses, and somewhat poorly clad, rose in the body of the hall, and said he desired permission to say a few words, though he had not, as yet, sufficient self-reliance to desire a position in the ranks with Captain Kindly. His life had been a wasted one, and yet to do evil had not been his desire. There was something that seemed to impel him into courses that only plunged him into moral ruin and physical suffering. Recently he had been led, as it were, into a family of Spiritualists, who knew nothing of his career. But the wife, a clairvoyant medium, read all his past life like a book, and, by her description, showed him that she was better acquainted with him than he was himself. He became convinced that her theory was correct, that he was a medium without knowing it, and had, in addition to his own foolish and evil acts, been the victim of spirits of a low class. In the circle he had been influenced by the spirit of his mother, who passed away when he was a child. Truly he might say he had become a child once more, and was receiving that loving attention from a mother, though in spirit-life, to which, in the past, he had been a stranger. He now spent his spare coins in promoting moral ends, and found his new occupations for more agreeable than the habits of his past life. To him he could truly say, that Spiritualism had been a power unto salvation.

Sir Charles Cheerful, Bart., then rose and said that he had come up to town to give his experience of Spiritualism down in the shires. For many years he had studied this subject in private, but latterly he had put it to the test, and tried to live according to its teachings. There is, said Sir Charles, no safety for the Spiritualist who plays with the matter of spirit-intercourse, and reduces it to a mere intellectual theory. It is a living truth, or it is a delusion. It is the voice of the Eternal God speaking His will in every fibre of our being, and informing us of the path we must follow in all the relations of life. We have adopted its divine suggestions largely down in our shire. I am free with my land, and the people are equally free with their labour, and as a result we know nothing of bad times. I have expended my rents these five years in an experimental school of agriculture and horticulture. Besides these branches, we have workshops of all kinds. We have more work, more produce, and more of everything, except hardship and grumbling. Talk about farms to let and emigration! why we could occupy the land on both sides if we could only set it up on end, and get at the under surface of it; and the other word must be spelt immigration, for instead of people leaving the district they come flocking to it from every direction. My land increases in value every year, and my people, who live on it, correspondingly increase in wealth and comfort. But I would scorn to set a commercial value on that with which, as a gentleman, I am entrusted for the good of the people. Cheerful Hall is becoming quite an important local centre, and the influence of Lady Cheerful and myself is infinitely increased, and we are far happier. Indeed, I make bold to say, that, under the old system, we suffered more than the labouring classes. We were seldom well, and did not know what ailed us, we had to travel abroad part of the year "seeking health," killing time, robbing our own country and fattening the foreigner. We have found out, like hundreds around us, that there is "no place like home," and aided by such men as our gallant captain, I shall strive my utmost to put that song, with a new accompaniment, into every Englishman's mouth. We have a local Spirit Band, of which I have the honour to be captain, and Lady Cheerful directs the corps of visitors, and when any of you have occasion to pass down our way we will make you heartily welcome at Cheerful Hall.

With speeches and song the night sped on, and a thrilling manifestation of the power of the immortals, which appeared over the platform to everyone present, and struck home the truth to every heart, closed the proceedings with a heavenly benediction. It was some time before we could decide whether we had been in the Land of Fancies or at home in Merrie England: very much merrier indeed it seemed than ever we had seen it before.

No. 1 CIRCLE, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.—Every Tuesday evening punctually at 8 p.m. Regular medium, Mr. W. Towns. Other mediums at times. Healing, test, and trance. The addresses are almost invariably of a practical and philosophical kind, dealing with the much-needed social and sanitary reforms.

Dr. Monck's health is in a very critical condition. He is spitting up blood in an alarming manner, and his state of weakness is such that he is forbidden to write. Many kind friends will, therefore, accept this announcement as an answer to their correspondence. The testimonial is being pushed on, and it is imperative that what is done should be effected immediately, as delay during this weather is dangerous. Prince — has promised to contribute, and the friends, who defended Dr. Monck three years ago, do not desert him now. No person who has taken the trouble to observe, for a moment believes that Dr. Monck was guilty of imposition in the matter for which he suffered, and the extraordinary manifestations seen through his mediumship—that of spirit-forms materialising from his side in a good light, since his liberation—prove that he was much more of a medium than he professed to be. For an account of these manifestations, see "The Latest Phases of Materialisation." By Rev. Thos. Colley, now Dean of Natal. Published by J. Burns, 15, Southampton Row, Price 4d.

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Legacies on behalf of the Cause should be left in the name of "James Burns."

BUSINESS AND MEDICAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

MR. TOWNS, is at home daily to receive friends from 10 a.m. till 6 p.m., at other hours by appointment. Address—1, Albert Terrace, Barnsbury Road, Islington.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1879.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

What think you, non-spiritualistic reader, of our Christmas Number? It is the fashion for Christmas publications to be well spiced with ghost stories and allusions to spiritual manifestation and magnetic influence, the writers all the time labouring to impress their readers that they do not at all believe in the appearance of spirits to men still in the flesh. Not to speak too harshly, this is what may be called fooling the reader, an impertinence which no publisher should inflict on his patrons. On the other hand, we know that all we say of spirit-manifestation is strictly true, and instead of making the intelligent reader's flesh creep with weak-minded, superstitious dread, it has the effect of opening the mind up to the beauties of existence, and creating within, the most genuine gratitude to God for spiritual blessings which are now being added to all the conveniences which scientific discovery has conferred upon us. Reader, send to the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, for a Packet of information, supplied gratis, and commence the investigation of Spiritualism.

WE direct the reader's attention to the article entitled "Historical Controls," that strangers to our columns may better understand the nature of the communication. These articles have been continued in the MEDIUM for two years, and many of the most notable personages of history have communicated. The subject of this present one is in continuation of that of last week. L., the medium or sensitive, goes to the chambers of A. T. T. P., the recorder, passes into the trance or under control. In that state he is unconscious; but through his organism "Edmund Spenser," the poet, addresses the recorder, giving an account of a conversation which the medium had with a "visitor," who is a materialist. But while L., the medium, who is a mechanic, was holding that conversation with the materialist, he was bending over his machine, and though, unconscious of it, he was all the time under control—entranced with his eyes open, so that the visitor thought he was speaking and answering him in the normal state. The whole argument is reproduced by the Control to the recorder at his chambers, and it is also stated that while the medium, L., was conversing with his materialistic visitor, his hand was, at the same time, writing the narrative of a spirit which passed from the body at the wreck of the *Deutschland*, thus showing that two spirits were communicating through the medium at the same time: one orally, and the other by writing. By will-power it appears that a hammer was made to fall down, being a manifestation after the manner of the power used by Madame Blavatsky, whose work is described in an article by Mrs. Hollis-Billing. The most mysterious part of the matter is that this materialistic visitor is a stranger who has not yet been identified, though these communications have referred to him in several recent numbers of the MEDIUM. The notes taken down from the lips of the entranced medium have not been amended in any way, so that there is a slight irregularity in the use of the first and third person in several instances.

NEXT WEEK we will give Mr. Oxley's article on the nature and origin of the Bible and other sacred books. Our first number of 1880 will contain the succeeding chapter of "The Philosophy of Spirit," illustrated by an engraving of the likeness of "Busiris the Ancient," A. T. T. P.'s chief Control, who it is said wrote the Mahabharata in India thousands of years ago. The engraving is from a drawing done through the hands of L., A. T. T. P.'s medium.

ON the wrapper of this number is repeated engravings of spirit-faces, which were given a few weeks ago, but the edition was soon sold out. The descriptive article may now be had in a separate form, price 2d. The medium through whom these manifestations

were obtained is still in London. Letters desiring sittings may be addressed—Mr. A. Furman, 15, Southampton Row, W.C.

WE regret that we have been unable to insert the usual notices this week.

ANOTHER edition of the Christmas Number will be ready on Monday. Orders should be sent immediately.

INTRODUCTIONS to Mrs. Billing may be obtained at 15, Southampton Row, W.C.

MADAME H. P. BLAVATSKY.

By Mrs. MARY J. HOLLIS-BILLING.

The Modern Movement, in favour of a new and more extended knowledge of Spiritual and Occult Science, has raised up an order of thinkers and workers of extraordinary interest, of whose modes of thought and powers of performance the awakened intellect is at all times desirous of becoming more fully acquainted. Of these, a unique specimen presents itself in the person of Madame Blavatsky, occupying as she does a foremost place in the department of Work as well as that of Thought. And so many inquiries have come to me respecting her, from widely different sources, that I feel I cannot better answer these questions than by writing a brief account of her visit of two weeks, at my house in Norwood, near London, in January last.

As a companion and friend, I found her to be most genial, pleasant, and reliable, and as a linguist, pianist, and writer, I believe her to be the most extraordinary woman of the age. In saying this, I think I have not in the least exaggerated her powers. To give an instance: I heard her converse with great rapidity in five different languages, and the persons with whom she conversed said she spoke the languages perfectly.

She is a person of massive build and expressive features, more of the masculine than feminine type, capable of gigantic tasks but oblivious of mere trifles; amused at those slight annoyances which would irritate little minds; strong in her likes and dislikes, and, as a consequence, infallible in her intuitive grasp of human character and capability.

Respecting the wonderful things, for the production of which she is famous, I will give the testimony of my own eyes as to the phenomena which were witnessed in my house while she was my guest. I will, in the first place, endeavour to give an imperfect description of what took place one afternoon. As a gentleman and myself were sitting, talking to Madame, we noticed her face and hair growing dark in hue, until her hair was changed from its natural (light) colour to almost black, and her face at the same time became as dark as that of any East Indian I ever saw. While these appearances were being manifested she seemed to be engaged in deep thought. I addressed her, and said: "Madame, are you aware of the change that has taken place in your complexion and hair?" Her reply was "Yes," but she offered no explanation. In a few minutes she went out into the hall, where she remained about five minutes, and then returned. Her hair and face were of their natural colour when she re-entered our presence; all of which seemed very remarkable to the gentleman and to myself.

When she first came to me at Norwood she was evidently in great haste to proceed on her journey to India, and expressed her determination to remain with me only a few days. Many of her friends were not a little disappointed at this short visit, and were clamorous to obtain a further opportunity of enjoying her society. Madame, however, insisted that unless she received orders from her friends in India to prolong her stay, it would be impossible for her to do so. On the Sunday after her arrival she went into her bed-room and there received a message, written on a handkerchief, in which she was granted liberty to stay some days longer with us. This, it must be confessed, was a very curious incident, but to the sceptical mind there was wanted some proof that the inscription was not placed by Madame on the handkerchief by some process known to herself. So I thought over the matter and came to the conclusion that if she really possessed the power that I had heard of her using, and which she claimed to have, there could be no better time for me to see some incontrovertible evidence of it. Accordingly, one evening at the dinner table I asked Col. Olcott to give me the handkerchief on which the message, purporting to come from India, had been written. His answer was: "I never give anything of this kind away." I then turned to Madame Blavatsky and asked her if she would favour me with one of those written messages. She replied "I am tired of asking these handkerchiefs." She then requested Col. Olcott to ask me what I wanted her to do. I looked over the table to see what I could ask for that would be most difficult to bring. I soon made up my mind, and requested that a teapot, a cruet-stand, or a teacup and saucer might be brought to me. No sooner had I spoken the words than a curious teapot, which I have now in my possession, was placed on the table. Madame only put her hand under the table for it; where it came from I am unable to explain. Of one thing I am certain, that I had no such article about the house, nor till that moment was it proposed that I should ask for such a thing to be produced in that manner.

Mr. C. C. Massey, who was standing just behind Madame, said, "Oh, am I to be slighted; will you not give me something?" She answered, "What do you want?" He said in reply, "A card-case, or a tobacco-pouch—something I can wear about with me." She at once replied, "Go into the hall, and you will find something in your coat pocket." Mr. Massey had come in after we had sat down to dinner, and Madame B. had not left the table. On going into

the hall Mr. Massey found in his pocket a card-case containing the signature of a friend. To me this was a remarkable test—one that I venture to say places the power of Madame B. beyond doubt. She does not claim that she is aided in these works by spirits or anything outside her own will. Of course I cannot vouch for the correctness of this theory; I only give the facts as I witnessed them. What I saw during the two weeks she spent with me was unlike anything I had ever experienced; and my knowledge of the phenomena of modern mediumship is not by any means of a limited description.

Madame Blavatsky is doing a great and good work in India. She is a leading contributor to *The Theosophist*, a monthly magazine published in Bombay, and the organ of the Theosophical Society, of which Col. Olcott is president. By Theosophy the members of the Society seek to explain man's inner nature, its relations to the outer universe, and how such miracles as I have just described can be accomplished. The goodwill, kindness, and respectful attention with which she has everywhere been received in the East by all classes, has been somewhat marred by the action of the Government, which, influenced by erroneous information, suspected her as a Russian spy. Madame B., like the Society just named, takes no part in politics, nor does she and her co-workers notice creedal differences. The whole ambition and highest desire of these studious minds is to enlighten Man on the most momentous questions that can engage his attention, and by making each mind acquainted with its highest and immortal interests, thereby elevating it above those sectic differences and unfraternal antagonisms which prevent peace and goodwill from being universal among mankind.

MAY GOD PITY THEM—THE POOR.

As one ev'ning, cold and weary,
I recrossed the river dreary,
By the rails I saw a woman, looking wretched and forlorn;
Drawing nigh I heard her weeping
Bitterly and low repeating,
"O! Eternal One in Heaven, would I never had been born."
Then, as if in tribulation,
She looked up for consolation,
But the only answer to her prayers seemed howling wind and snow;
Then she downward cast her glances
At the river's dark advances,
And its waves they seemed to bellow, "Just a leap and end your woe."
"Sister, pray what is the meaning
Of this misery and weeping?
Oh! why doubt the care of Heav'n?" I asked; "Why seek a wat'ry
shroud?
Tell me, weak and lonely hearted,
Hast thou from thy loved ones parted?"
And before she ventured to reply she wept—she wept aloud:
"In a house, obscure and empty,
Garnished once with love and plenty,
Lies my only child, my darling boy, half famished on his bed:
Not a spark to warm his fingers—
To dispel the cold which lingers
In a chamber ringing with the cry—'Dear mamma, give me bread.'
"Mighty God! oh, hear my pleading!
Angel hosts, by interceding,
Oh avert, avert the doom before! forgive the course that's run;
Save my darling from starvation,
Save myself from degradation.
Oh! if mercy is still exercised, O God! protect my son."
Then o'ercome with deep emotion,
And like one in rapt devotion,
On her bended knees she fell, and fixed her gaze into the sky;
And like April sunshine gleaming
Through the gloom and joys revealing
O'er her features broke a peaceful smile, and soft she said, "I die!"
"Yes, I feel that I am dying:
Spirit-forms are multiplying,
And I hear my mother saying—'Welcome to a home of joy!'
God be praised for this glad meeting—
For the angel's kindly greeting,
Fare thee well! Farewell kind stranger! save and bless my orphan boy."
Reader, 'ere perhaps to-morrow
Fate may launch a shaft of sorrow
That will penetrate your bosom and destroy your happiness;
So remember—Oh! remember,
In this bitter, bleak December,
Those who starve and faint around you—pining—dying in distress.
Let us, heart and hand uniting,
To our Cause all souls inviting,
Stretch a flaming girdle 'round the world of harmony and love!
And our gratitude upwelling,
Like a glorious anthem swelling,
Shall roll onward—blessing as it rolls—to Him who reigns above.

T. C. E.

MANCHESTER.—A tea-meeting and concert will take place on Christmas Day, at 83, Chapel Street, Salford.

MR. FLETCHER desires us to announce, that by general desire the Steinway Hall Lectures will begin at 7 o'clock, instead of at 6, as at present.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Rev. W. Stoddart will lecture on Sunday evening on "The Ghost of the Past," and on Monday evening on "The New Era."

GOSWELL HALL, 290, Goswell Road.—On Sunday evening Miss Koeves gave a most eloquent trance-oration, and an address by A.T.T.P. excited much interest. On Sunday next Mr. E. W. Wallis will give an inspirational oration at 7 o'clock.

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THE LIGHT IN THE CLOUDS.

By CAROLINE CORNER.

Author of "Twist Will and Fate," "The Slinkensmirk Family," &c. &c.

"For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: neither hid that shall not be known."—Luke xii, 2.

"And now, men, see not the bright light which is in the clouds."—Job xxxvii, 21.

It was a typical November day, raw-cold and foggy. Little wonder that the city merchants and brokers jostled one another in their eager endeavours to reach the divers conveyances which were to convey them to their suburban homes. Men, middle-aged, old, and young, pushed their way, regardless of interruptions, and invulnerable to the plaintive voice of the youngest and less experienced of the flower-girls, who, with sunken cheek and hollow eye, implored each passer-by to purchase one of her tiny bouquets. Maybe their hearts were chilled by the inclemency of the weather, or that their thoughts and inclinations were far removed from their present uncongenial surroundings; at any rate few purchasers seemingly were forthcoming that evening.

Six o'clock had struck. In the office of Messrs. Biffin Bros. and Shrimp, the clerks were engaged in clearing away and arranging for the morrow, when

"Ting, ting," resounded the hand-bell of senior partner No. 2. N.B.—The firm was comprised of three: Thomas Biffin, or Biffin senior, as he was more generally known, was accustomed to summon one of the staff of *employés* with a single reverberation of the bell, whilst his junior, James Shrimp, was expected to request attendance by a treble repetition, thus, "ting, ting, ting."

In answer, away ran a bullet-headed youth, fresh from the country, who had been deriving infinite amusement from drawing amateurish caricatures on the blotting paper, and carving his initials on every available place with a very inelegant sort of pocket-knife.

"Yes, sir; I am here, sir." With a face as red as a tomato, and pulling at a lock of rebellious hair that would not keep in its place, notwithstanding frequent and lavish applications of a specially prepared, home-made pomade, which had been thoughtfully packed, along with a diversity of luxuries, by his fond maternal parent, prior to his starting for the great metropolis.

"Well, Lumpkin, my lad, I am glad to see your beaming physiognomy." (Lumpkin wondered what in the world that might be; but, standing open-mouthed, made no comment thereon.)

"To be sure it's not one of the cleanest, though. Never mind, my boy; all in good time; we'll make a man of you, Lumpkin," asserted Josiah Biffin, a gleam of the comic glistening in his clear blue eye. Then assuming a more grave aspect he continued—

"And now to business, Lumpkin. Business first, play afterwards, it should be. You see your master is not always right—far from it. Listen to me, lad. Take care to follow in the footsteps of the best example; act up to your conscience; remember 'honesty is the best policy,' and now, tell Mr. Snaffles I want him."

With a muttered acquiescence the youth awkwardly sidled out of the office, and delivered the message to Mr. Snaffles, the confidential clerk to the firm.

"Ah, Mr. Snaffles," quoth Mr. Josiah, when the former made his appearance. "How fares the world with you?"

"Complacently, sir, complacently," was the suave response, the speaker meanwhile pursuing his old habit of chafing either hand.

"And yourself, sir, and Mr. Biffin, I trust—"

"My brother's health continues bad—very bad. I am afraid he will have to remain for the winter in the south of France."

"Dear, dear," Snaffles purred, and appeared much concerned.

"Has that affair of Bentinck and Hodge's been rectified? the accounts made to tally?"

"Yes, sir; it was owing to carelessness—sheer carelessness on their part—as usual. I went myself and discovered the error to their entire satisfaction; they wished me to convey their apologies—"

"Very good; mistakes may easily be made," put in the good-natured Josiah Biffin.

"Not so easily rectified, sir."

"You are right, Snaffles. And now, is there anything else before we leave to-night?"

"There's Munroe—"

"Ah, attend to that yourself. We have every confidence in you. You can best explain and settle matters in that quarter. Has the brougham come? It's late to-night."

"I will make inquiries, and you shall be informed in one minute—in one minute, sir." Exit Mr. Snaffles on tip-toes, closing the door noiselessly behind him. At the expiration of the aforesaid interval an announcement was made to the effect that the carriage was in attendance; and Mr. Josiah, with a genial "good night" to those of his *employés* who yet remained, forthwith prepared to take his departure.

"Hurr-rh! what a night for anybody to be about!" mentally ejaculated Biffin, jun., while poking about with his gold-headed stick to secure the right way in the dingy light.

"Egad! what's that?" he exclaimed, aloud this time, as a feeble cry issued from a corner still darker than the rest.

"Some poor stray kitten, I'll lay a wager. Here, Smedley, bring the lamp this way. I'll send for some milk; poor beast! it shan't starve

if I can help it. I'll take it home with me: it will amuse our baby, May; bless her, how she will crow!"

These thoughts occupied the mind of the kind-hearted, old gentleman, when his servant appeared, lamp in hand, and with a cynical smile on his chiselled features, which had been likened by one of his numerous admirers unto the profile of Marc Antony at the Crystal Palace.

"There, in the corner, Smedley. Look, it moves! My God! it is a human being!"

Josiah Buffin grasped the iron rail, when the dazed and wistful gaze of a pair of large, dark eyes met his own, and the skeleton form of a male child—a mere infant—was disclosed to view.

"Here, Smedley, summon one of the juniors—quick, man. We must have this seen to at once. Brandy—warm milk—anything to keep the urchin's body and soul together. Into the office, and tell them Mr. Josiah—Fetch somebody—quick!"

Smedley did as he was bid; if reluctantly, at any rate precipitately. When he returned his master was still employed in poking the inanimate form with his stick, but all to no purpose.

"We are too late!—too late!" he repeated, brushing a hand across his eye that had suddenly become more dim, whilst a half sigh forced itself from his breast.

"He aint dead, sir, no more nor you nor me. He's a skilinton; but he's a live 'un. Why, sir, me an' Jim Ketch, in our street, saw a worse nor this here 'un at a show down our way, all for a copper a-piece; an' Jim's young brudder he was."

This place of valuable information was furnished by a diminutive, sickly-looking youth of the *gamin* order, who seem to be called into existence spontaneously with any sort of excitement that may be going.

What "Jim's young brudder" was or was not is a fact destined to remain hidden from the world, at least to that portion of it assembled on the steps leading to the offices of Messrs. Buffin Bros. & Shrimp. Symptoms of life were again exhibited by the poor little creature; and Josiah Buffin forthwith determined to put into execution an idea which had seized upon him with such pertinacity that he was fain to regard it as a supernatural impression. Accordingly the forlorn and emaciated infant was enveloped in the warm bear-skin rug, and deposited upon the soft cushions of the brougham, much to the disgust of Smedley, who returned to Highgate with one of his aristocratic features, evincing a decidedly celestial affinity, which had not existed when he set out that afternoon from the pretty villa residence of his master.

"Ha-ha-ha! we have got him, Mr. Snaffles—we have got him! Let us once resign him to the care of the women folks and he'll come round—right as ninpence. Good night to you—good night."

And the last seen of Mr. Josiah that evening was a large proportion of buff-coloured waistcoat, his massive cable chain still shimmering from the effects of hearty laughter as the carriage rolled away.

II.

Years have passed since the foregoing incident. Now everything is wearing its brightest and most cheering aspect, for Christmas is approaching, and even the stolid, matter-of-fact English put forth strenuous efforts to drive dull care away at this festive season.

The drawing-room of a certain picturesque villa at the north of London is one of those rooms that invite persons to enter, and, upon that invitation being accepted, as it invariably is, contrive to make that person so comfortable, that he, or she, is loath to leave. Some subtle spell is there; a charm that 'twere vain to strive to resist; magnetically one is detained; and yet in nowise contrary to one's will. It is not the style and fittings of the apartment, handsome, though in this case they be; neither is it that opportunities are amply presented to gratify intellectual tastes. No; it is an influence which pervades the whole house; a warm genial atmosphere, which, to a sensitive organism, is the best possible index to the mental and moral status of the indwellers.

Holly, laurel, and mistletoe appear in profusion, relieved by many wax candles, which, together with the glow from the blazing log, impart a delightful feeling of homeliness and repose. The sole occupants of the apartment at present are two ladies. The elder, tall, majestic, and handsome, clad in some kind of soft black material, enlivened by a solitary damask rose and spray of maiden hair, is gracefully bending over a piece of wool-work, and only raises her head now and then to steal a glance at her companion on the couch. By these earnest and anxious regards it might well be supposed that the elder lady is wont to exercise a protecting care over the other. Such indeed is the case. Mrs. Josiah Buffin, when dying, shortly after the birth of her only child, May, had expressed a wish that her ever indulgent husband should secure the services of the orphan daughter of her late governess to be instructress and companion to their motherless child.

Thus it was that Isabel Morton had been installed in the home of Josiah Buffin. The little May grew and thrived under such sensible and sympathetic treatment as she had always received, but her constitution, inherently weakly, would never be robust. This distressed her father; he feared that she might be too fragile a flower to bloom 'midst the tempests of life, and by dint of heavy fees he derived a vague sort of consolation from consulting the most eminent of the medical faculty. As time wore on, and the early days of childhood were over, another cause for anxiety developed itself in the mind of the parent; May became subject to "delusions," or, as it was termed, "the victim of delusions." But why those "delusions" were there, the learned physicians of the day could not explain. Her mental capacities were as clear and expansive, indeed, more so than those of the majority of her age; on this point they one and all agreed. Nevertheless she was whimsical, full of fancies, and, at times, the "victim of strange delusions." A name must be given, consequently, it was pronounced a "case of hysteria."

"May, dear, how quiet you are! what are you thinking about? Come, you are most uninteresting company. Do you know I have filled in almost half a slipper since you spoke last? Do let us have a chat, and don't let your thoughts go a-woolgathering any more."

The silence was broken by Isabel Morton, who, having carefully folded her work and put it away in a trim little basket, came and sat upon a stool at her companion's feet.

"Is it really so long, Isabel? I had forgotten you were here; but, tell me, what is the time? I suppose they will be here presently. I wonder if—Frank has grown."

The only remarkable feature in May Buffin's fair girlish face was her eyes. At times there was a far away light in them—a light that seemed to belong to another world—another life. That light came into them now, and illumined her whole countenance with a *spirituelle* radiance.

"Five minutes past seven. Hark: yes, there is the sound of wheels—they are coming, May."

No other inducement was needed for May to arouse herself and adjust her feminine superfluities before the chimney-glass.

Scarcely was this completed, when the door was thrust open and her father appeared upon the scene, wearing his full compliment of buff waistcoat and a face more cheering than the rising sun. Behind him stood a tall, intellectual-looking young man, with dark eyes and mous tache. This latter made a hasty movement in order to greet his "little friend and playmate"; but he stopped short when he beheld that charming little individual now metamorphosed into a "grown-up young lady," with a long dress and hair coiled in a knot at the back.

"Now, children, what's come over you? That's no welcome at all, May. And you, sir—I hope you've not got too learned to notice old friends. Ha-ha-ha," and Mr. Josiah rubbed his hands for very joy.

"Come, my boy, do the honours of King Christmas. I can well remember the time when there was no need to be reminded when a pretty girl was in the way. That isn't so bad for an old fogey, now, is it? Ha-ha; that's the style." Then, aside, in a singularly altered tone, he said:

"How has she been to-day, Isabel?"

"Pretty well, sir; but, in spite of my endeavours to amuse, she has persisted in dreaming more than ever to-day. But this is to be accounted for, I think," continued Miss Morton, "by the anticipation of Frank's return."

"So it is—so it is. Well, we must make everything as bright and joyous as we can for her; and—who knows?—she may grow out of it. Dr. Palmer entertains great hopes: capital man, Dr. Palmer. And now that Frank has left college for good, it will be more lively for her. At the same time I can never thank you sufficiently for your kindness, dear Miss Morton; but if the blessings of an old man be of any value, you have them, my dear, you have them."

As he turned away, Isabel's quick perceptions detected something glistering in the corner of his clear blue eyes. Could it have been a tear, when the next moment his laughter was heard hearty and jolly as ever.

After dinner the junior partner, Mr. Shrimp, joined the party in the drawing-room, and the evening passed pleasantly and all too quickly away. The timepiece struck twelve. James Shrimp arose with a start. He was an ardent admirer of the majestic Isabel—ardent, yet silent. She was so stately and handsome; he was so small and unattractive. But to-night he was feeling desperately brave. Ever since he had known her he would have gone through fire and water for her sweet sake, although for his own life he could not have breathed a suggestion of his love for her. He could and did pay other women compliment but his tongue refused in the case of Isabel Morton, who, in his opinion, was the only one deserving of admiration and esteem. Now, in the moment of desperation, he gave utterance to more sentiments than the sum total of twelve long months. But, unfortunately, his cheeks flushed red as Miss Morton's damask rose, and he felt more than usually awkward while endeavouring to appear at ease and his best. Mr. Josiah, kindly soul, took in the situation at once, and came to his partner's relief with an opportune remark which created considerable mirth; and thereby James Shrimp was enabled to retrieve his self-possession prior to bidding his fair *inamorata* a last "good-night."

When the ladies had retired to rest, and Josiah Buffin and Frank Sinclair were alone, the former opened the conversation by observing:

"Well, my boy, and how do you like the idea of beginning life—life in earnest, now, my good fellow: no droning nor idling, but work—hard work. Ay, that's the stuff to make the man! What were we sent into the world for but development? To strengthen morally, physically, intellectually; to progress, lad—ever striving, ever climbing,—that's the style. You like the idea? That's capital. Now, my lad, there's one thing I'd have you to keep always in mind; its simple, short, and a favourite maxim of mine. 'Honesty is the best policy.' Let this be your motto throughout life, and, egad! you'll never live to see the day when you'll regret it."

The answer was given in a calm, firm voice, the tone one of intense earnestness—

"That shall be my motto and my guide; and, with Gods' help, I will endeavour to bring no suspicion of disgrace on you and yours. There is my hand upon it, Uncle Josiah, and with it is given a promise sacred and sure."

"Bless you, my boy; you are a noble fellow. Yet I would not have you so serious; you speak as if—as if I could doubt you, Frank."

After this silence prevailed for some few minutes. Frank Sinclair was the one to interrupt this time.

"Uncle, there is something that has disturbed me much of late. It has always been in my mind, but of late it seems to have taken a deeper hold, and leaves an impression which I cannot shake off. It is a kind of vision that arises before me, more often when I am alone; a scene of squalor and poverty, succeeded by the glimpse of a half-starved infant enveloped in a bundle of rags, and stowed away in some dark corner. Involuntarily I shiver, and feel chilled, hungered, and faint. Then rest, oblivion, creep upon me, and my senses are apparently wrapped in a deathlike slumber—my spirit struggling to free itself from its fetters of clay. Presently the sound of voices impedes my would-be errant soul, and with a cry—a wail of regret—I, that miserable child, am recalled to this world of probation. Here my day-dream ends, but to begin again and again with little or no variation. Tell me, uncle, can it be some delirium which has clung to me since the days of some infantile disorder? Over-study, an excited imagination, weakness of the digestive organs may account for most morbid affections, but this is different. A picture—a scene repeated and still repeated without a single omission, and the most singular part of it is that I feel myself closely connected with that wretched child, and experience the same sensations, the effect of cruelty and privation, that it must have endured. If this be due to

the unsound condition of the mental faculties, the sooner I have them seen to the better: if you are anxious to make a man of me, uncle," he added, in a lighter strain.

"Ha! Don't give way to sentimentalities; shake them off as one would the effects of a disagreeable dream. It's all them ologies, and onomies, and thingammy-ptolemies—nothing more nor less, Frank. You want rest; and that reminds me of another favourite maxim of your uncle Josiah's when he was a small boy. 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' Ha, ha, ha!"

Josiah Buffin laughed, but to a close observer, such as his companion, it might have been apparent that this laugh was a trifle forced, and the fact of his approaching a side-table and pouring out a glass of port was very suggestive of an excuse, for Uncle Josiah was no wine-bibber.

However, the subject was allowed to drop, and, when next Frank Sinclair was inclined to speak of it, marvellous changes had been wrought. Nevertheless that vision continued to haunt him until the mystery of night had merged into the light of day.

III.

"Mr. Snaffles is a nice fellow, May, and rather good-looking, don't you think so?" asked Frank Sinclair, his dark and penetrating eyes fastening themselves on the countenance of his companion.

"No—that is—yes, I suppose he is;" and May dropped her eyes on to her breakfast-plate.

"Well?" This was as much as to say "Proceed," but the hint was not taken, so the speaker was himself compelled to proceed.

"Silence means consent. I infer that you *do* consider him good-looking. Well, there's no accounting for taste."

"I never said so," she said, gently.

"But you mean it," he answered, determinedly. "I tell you what, May, I don't like that fellow. He is insincere, he is mean, he's a sneak, and—there, I only wish Uncle Josiah were rid of the man; his 'model clerk'—pshaw!" And with this Frank left his seat to pace up and down the floor at a desperate pace.

"Frank," a soft voice whispered close to his ear; "don't be angry, do talk rationally, and now that you have broached the subject, if you'll come and sit down quietly, I'll tell you a secret."

"All right, I will, I'll try at least. You must think me a brute—a fool—to go on like this; but I am thinking of your welfare, and I love you so, May." Again those dark searching eyes were riveted upon her own; this time she turned aside with a nervous little laugh, and the next moment commenced to disburden her mind of that which had for some months past considerably perplexed and distressed her.

"Ever since that evening, now most of a year ago, when papa brought Mr. Snaffles home with him from the city, to dine with us, and introduced him as his 'confidential clerk,' I have experienced a peculiar chill of horror at his approach, and when he has touched my hand at times I have almost cried out. A stifling oppression comes over me as though I had suddenly awakened to find myself in some damp subterranean dungeon; he seems to carry about with him an atmosphere that overpowers me, and, my vision becoming clearer, that atmosphere appears to be laden with serpents and other venomous reptiles of hideous and malignant aspect. This may seem ludicrous, but it is a fact, and I am sure it has been presented to me for some wise purpose. Oh, Frank, you cannot imagine how I have longed to tell you this my little secret; you are the only person who can understand and will listen to my 'odd whims and fancies,' as they call them. I could not confide this to anybody, not even to Isabel, for she would have sent immediately for the doctor, who would have insisted upon my swallowing more of his nauseous physic, and left injunctions for me to be 'watched.' She shuddered as she uttered this last word, and tears came into her large expressive eyes. Like the rest of his sex, the sight of a woman in tears was too much for Frank Sinclair. He drew her gently to him, and in a kind, sympathetic tone, succeeded in leading her away from this to a more agreeable topic. Speedily enough was Mr. Snaffles forgotten, for their minds were too all-absorbed in personal and much more interesting affairs. Nevertheless the other was merely temporarily in abeyance, and was predestined to arise again in more palpable significance than heretofore.

* * * * *

Time rolled on—winter had passed and summer had come—yet few changes had taken place in the household of Mr. Josiah Buffin.

Frank Sinclair had been initiated into mercantile life in the city of London, and, naturally of a studious turn of mind, was accustomed to spend the greater part of his leisure in scientific research, which was far more according to his taste than the humdrum of commerce. His was a disposition that to attempt meant to succeed, for intensity and perseverance were the predominating qualities; failure was a thing altogether foreign to his curriculum. Instead of Talleyrand's famous maxim: "*Surtout, point de zèle*," to him "*Zèle, plein de zèle*," would have been more applicable. A faithful friend, he would have made an implacable foe, for his was one of those natures that must love or hate with vehemence, and know not the meaning of *dolce far niente* in their perpetual state of activity.

Josiah Buffin was the same as ever—genial, and well-beloved; and although the inevitable buff waistcoat could not conscientiously testify to such frequent repetitions of audible hilarity, yet he was as ever open-hearted and indulgent to the whole world. A keen observer might have remarked some additional wrinkles on his large, square brow, and a few hard lines about his mouth when in repose. Moreover, his eyes had acquired a habit of fixedly regarding the countenance of his adopted son as though disturbed in mind by some vexed and difficult problem, while his, Frank's, every movement was remarked with anxious concern.

May was the first to note this peculiarity in her father, and, experiencing some kind of instinctive dread, made a confidante of Miss Morton, who, in order to set her young friend at ease, "pooh-poohed" the idea, and would not be persuaded that anything was troubling Mr. Josiah. At the same time this communication had made an impression on the strong-minded Isabel, and she resolved to mention the subject to her ardent admirer, Mr. Shrimp (that gentleman's courtship being in the same condition of stagnant advancement, though more than once he had rehearsed in the privacy of his chamber,—an eloquent offer of his hand and heart; but, alas! upon finding himself alone in the com-

pany of his majestic lady-love, both eloquence and ease had vanished, and left him dumb as any mute, awkward, as any other man who is in love).

"Mr. Shrimp, I wish to ask your advice on a matter that is causing us, May and myself, great anxiety. Shall we go on to the grotto? we shall be free from interruption there."

"With pleasure," gulped the modern Romeo, with an unmistakable glance of admiration at his beautiful Juliet. "Anything I can do for you, Miss—Miss Morton: anything in this world that would relieve you of pain, I would willingly go through fire and water to accomplish, as—as I believe I have told you before."

Poor Mr. Shrimp never exceeded this degree of regard, for at this junction his face became a match in colour with his Solferino tie, and, for the next few minutes, he experienced a sort of semi-asphyxiation.

"Thanks so much; you are very kind," returned Isabel, placing her hand through his arm, as a matter of course, for there was a tacit understanding between them, though, as yet, no binding word had been given.

"Will you sit here, Mr. Shrimp? and I will join you. That's right. Now, are you comfortable?" she asked with true woman's archness when they had gained the grotto, and looking up from beneath her broad-brimmed hat, which, by-the-bye, was exceedingly becoming.

Comfortable! how could he be otherwise? And yet, everything seemed to whirl distractingly before him, and his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth. He was enduring a species of delicious torture, and the only response he was just then able to make was a pitiful look of adoration that told more, far more than many an able speech could have done.

"And now, I'll begin; please pay attention for I am in earnest," and the half-smile, which had hovered over the handsome countenance of Isabel Morton, was exchanged for an expression of intense earnestness.

"And so am I, Miss—Miss Isabel; can you doubt me?" broke in Mr. Shrimp, starting to his feet, and gazing at his companion as though about to pounce upon and devour her.

"Really, Mr. Shrimp—James—ahem!" (this was the first time she had called him by his Christian name; how sweetly it sounded from her lips; anything but commonplace!) "I—I never dreamed of doubting you" (he verily believed he could detect an emphasis on that last pronoun!) "If my words would imply aught but what they were intended I really am very sorry," and she looked it, and this very sympathy softened and sanctified her manifold charms in the eyes of her admirer.

"No; it is I who am a—ass," burst forth the lover, in defiance of the elementary rules of grammar, and waxing uncomfortably warm.

"You must allow a difference of opinion on that score, Mr. Shrimp. However, we'll not enter into argument, but, with your permission, I will at once commence what I have to say."

"For some weeks," pursued Isabel, "I have remarked a change in good old Mr. Josiah. He does not laugh so much as formerly, nor take such an interest in our pleasures and domestic affairs. More than once I have interrupted him in grave thought when his countenance has been enshrouded in a grey, grim cloud; so unusual for him. Now, can you offer any clue to the solution of this? I fancied that business losses might account for this. Tell me, Mr. Shrimp, has anything gone wrong in the city?" She leaned forward now, clasping her hands, and fastening her irresistible, black eyes on the pale blue orbs of her adorer.

"My dear Miss Morton—Isabel, there is, as you say, at least," he hesitated, and, drawing forth a silk pocket-handkerchief, wiped his forehead, again and again, as though to encourage inspiration.

"You said you would 'go through fire and water' to relieve me of pain."

"And so I would," he spoke up manfully.

"Then, why not place confidence in me? Do you not remember those lines of Tennyson:

"'Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all;
Then trust me all in all, or not at all'?"

Those are my sentiments. Now, will you tell me?"

James Shrimp would have been more than man had he proved invulnerable. The situation, the state of his emotions, the fascinating grace of his fair *inamorata*, severally would have sufficed to manifest his human frailty, but conjointly!

"The—only thing of which I am aware, Miss Morton, in connection with business affairs, and which may tend to engender anxiety is that owing to some mistake having been made, there has been, and is still, difficulty in balancing the accounts. Mr. Snaffles is diligently going through all again, and the fault, I trust, indeed, I have no doubt, will soon be rectified. Matters of the kind, however trivial, are a source of worry and annoyance to everybody concerned."

"But, surely, an error made by a careless book-keeper cannot be the cause of such an alteration in our estimable friend, Mr. Josiah," added Mr. Shrimp, doubtingly; for at the office the affair had been reckoned a mistake and nothing more by senior partner No. 2.

"Well, it does seem absurdly trivial," replied Miss Morton; then regarding the matter through those far-seeing and practical spectacles of hers, she continued:

"But, supposing all does not come right by-and-bye; that the defalcation cannot be accounted for; how then, Mr. Shrimp?"

"Hum! it would be awkward, very awkward indeed. But, thank goodness, there's no fear of such a contingency; so pray do not distress yourself, Miss Isabel" (it always demanded an effort to get that name out, although it was indelibly inscribed on his heart).

"And now let us talk of ourselves—of each other—of both," he stammered. "You are not in a hurry to get away, are you?" he went on, gradually inclining nearer and nearer till his arm rested on her own. "You don't want to go back to the house just yet, do you?" While this was being said his hand had traversed her sleeve, and now lay lightly upon her wrist. "I think it—we are very comfortable here, don't you?" Now there was a slight pressure, so slight she was scarcely sure of it. "Aye!" No longer dubious, the pressure had developed into an unmistakable squeeze!

"I am very comfortable, thank you; I hope you are the same."

"By Jove! I am. I—I never was so happy in my life. I never knew what happiness is until now, Isabel."

"Certainly the scenery about here is very pretty; that bit over there is charming; this grotto is a favourite haunt of mine at this time of the year. Who would think that we are so near London?" was the lady's reply.

"Who, indeed?" echoed James Shrimp; at present he was in paradise.

"But it is not the place; it is the state," he endeavoured to explain.

"Oh, indeed." Metaphysical abstractions were not Isabel's forte.

"And the cause—the origin—the fundamental principle: that is yourself, ahem." With this he stopped short to observe the effect; and, deriving encouragement, he pursued in one uninterrupted strain—

"Yes, Isabel, you are the cause—the origin—the fundamental principle of my happiness. You are my life, my soul, my existence. Without you—no! such were an impossibility and unworthy of consideration. But with you, this world would be an elysium; my life would be the quintessence of bliss, and you should exist and reign in an atmosphere of adulation. Isabel, I love, I adore you." And now his arm encircled her waist; his lips were close to her cheek.

"Tell me, Isabel," he whispered, "tell me my love is not in vain." Whatever the answer may have been, James Shrimp availed himself of the opportunity to imprint a long, lingering kiss upon that blooming cheek, and the shades of evening had already subdued the glory of the summer's day, when it occurred to the enamoured couple that it was time to return to the house.

"Oh, Isabel, I am so glad. I always said how it would be; and yet I am awfully surprised and so delighted," exclaimed May impulsively upon hearing the news. "And papa," she went on, "won't he be glad when he hears of it; how I wish he would come home, so that I might be the first to tell him. I wonder if Mr. Shrimp—I shall call him Jimmy now—I wonder if he has told Frank; we left them together in the library. But, Isabel, you'll be getting married," she added ruefully, "and I shall be left—alone." Those large expressive eyes, which an instant ago had been radiantly blue, now changed to a soft and limpid darkness like those of the gazelle.

"So long as I can be of any use—so long as you want me, May, I will never desert you. Have I not been like a mother to you, my child?" and Isabel's firm protecting arm was instinctively employed to support her youthful charge. Isabel Morton's nature was positive; it was her disposition to give, not receive; her mind was clear, steady, and reliable; her heart brim-full of affection of a patronising order, though none the less tender and sincere; whereas May was decidedly negative—that is, she was susceptible to outside influences and inclined to be swayed thereby; it was inherent in her to yearn for protection, sympathy, support, and incumbent upon her to give in to a superior, or rather more dominant will. It is hard for such as her to compete in the arena of life; like sensitive plants, they recoil from contact with the gross and uncultured, and wither and oftentimes die should the force of circumstances compel them to exist in an atmosphere that is uncongenial. Again, they are seldom appreciated, for they are so seldom understood, and are invariably permitted to remain on the threshold, whilst others, less deserving, very probably, enter and are regaled.

Verily, they have their reward.

IV.

Some twelve days had gone by since the incidents recorded in the last chapter. Business was going on as usual in the offices of Messrs. Buffin Bros., and Shrimp. Clerks tall and short, lean and stout, old and young, were perched on high, uncomfortable-looking stools, scratching away as though life depended upon it; and, in many instances, life did depend upon it. As every hive has its drones, so, of course, drones were to be found here; these came under the denomination of juniors fresh from school, who were entertaining one another across the desks with facial impersonations and pantomimic gestures, characteristic of their more sedate seniors. Numerous were the caricatures drawn of "Hezekiah Snaffles making love to a pretty young girl," which feat elicited roars of suppressed laughter from the whole force of juniors.

Mr. Josiah has just arrived; it is later than usual, being close upon eleven o'clock; and has made a request that he may not be disturbed unless something of importance demands his attention. Alone, in his private office, he proceeds to loosen his neck-cloth, then, with trembling hand, he draws his silk pocket-handkerchief across his brow with a weary, restless action.

The atmosphere seems exceptionally confining to him this morning. He turns towards a smoke-begrimed window, which opens on to sooty leads, and, throwing up the sash, thrusts out his head, thirstily inhaling what small proportion of fresh, summer air that survives in so densely-crowded a neighbourhood. After this he returns to his seat—an old-fashioned elbow-chair—and, with both arms planted upon the desk before him, gives himself up to profound meditation. Some minutes elapse, and then he speaks in a low, hoarse tone; apparently he is unaware of thus giving utterance to his thoughts:—

"And it must end thus! the dream of my old age is shattered in its very fulfilment! What have I done to deserve it? Did I not act as I thought for the best—for his welfare? I imagined I was doing my duty—the duty of a Christian—when I rescued him, an infant, from destitution and vice; and I have been the means of leading him into temptation—temptation such as he has not been strong enough to resist. I, who fancied I was implanting the good seed in his young mind when I besought him to keep that maxim for his own throughout life, 'Honesty is the best policy.' Honesty? Can there be such a thing in this world? My God! I begin to doubt, to doubt at three-score years and ten; now when my race is almost run! No, no, it must not be; I will not doubt, and doubting not, I must believe. Oh, Frank, my boy, my boy!" and the old man's voice breaks into hard, irrepressible sobs, each adding its contribution to his aged and sorrow-stricken countenance.

Presently a light illumines his tear-dimmed eye, and he raises his head while his thoughts continue to materialise themselves into words.

"No, I cannot; I will not believe it. Frank, my boy, something tells me you are not guilty; some unseen presence is here, I feel it, and it speaks to my soul. Hush! what does it say?

"He is innocent—innocent—innocent! Dark clouds may gather; but look—look long; see'st not the bright light in the clouds?

"And now it has gone; that still small voice is hushed; so sweet, so

soothing, it was as an angel's voice; and I must—I will believe, for my soul has heard and felt."

A calm quiescence came over him, and Mr. Josiah remembered no more until he was disturbed by a repetition of loud knocks at the door.

"Ab, Lumpkin, my lad, is it you?" he said, suddenly awaking from his trance-like slumbers.

"Yes, sir, if you please. Telegram, sir, just come," answered the lymphatic Lumpkin, now considerably advanced on the high-road to maturity, and improved accordingly, since our first introduction.

"Ah! From Hezekiah Snaffles.

"Taken suddenly ill last night—shall not get up to town. No alarm—will write further particulars in a day or two."

Josiah Buffin read in a low voice; then aloud—

"So, poor Mr. Snaffles is ill. Dear, dear, I am very sorry for him. Moreover, it's most unfortunate—most unfortunate, just now, too," he pursued, relapsing into his old habit of clothing his thoughts in words.

"Any answer, did you say, sir?"

This recalled him from a perplexing labyrinth of speculations. Mr. Josiah looked up, and replied:—

"No; no answer. We must wait, Lumpkin; there's nothing for it but to wait, and hope and trust," he added, in a fervent undertone. The clerk withdrew: Josiah Buffin was left alone.

Presently the grim, devouring spirit of doubt again creeps in. Stealthily it advances, like some rank weed snapping the germs of choice exotics—those highest efforts of the human mind—and engendering nought but chaos where simplicity and harmony once had reigned. Stealthily, yet surely, until an atmosphere, thick and impenetrable, is gathered 'twixt the poor old man and the guardian of his happiness and welfare.

"Strange! everything turns against me," he wails forth in his distress. "Has my good genius entirely deserted me? deserted me now when I have attained my allotted number of years, three score and ten? O God! it does seem hard that a lifetime's trouble should come upon me now! Why am I deserted at this, my eleventh hour? Heaven have mercy on a miserable old man!"

His bald head is laid low on his breast, and scalding tears rain down his furrowed cheeks. Three score years and ten; and yet, in the hour of trouble he is but a child—an infant. If we did but search more deeply should we not perceive that these very trials, which, in our blind ignorance we deem so fruitless—unjust, are the most blessed offerings that a merciful Providence can accord?

"Tears and smiles alike are sent
To give the soul fit nourishment."

Ay, and to remind us of our weakness, our dependence, our human fallibility!

The first passionate outbreak of grief subsided, the clouds more on, the light once more appears. Josiah Buffin is arranging his neckcloth at the glass; he is resolved upon going home: useless is it to remain in that office nursing his agonising fears.

He starts at his own reflection; so altered, he scarcely recognises himself. Simultaneously a sound as of music thrills his ear. He listens; he is absorbed, although the air, the chant, is an unfamiliar one. And yet the refrain is sweet—sweet and entrancing. It runs thus:—

"Reap, reap, reap,
The fruit of the seed that is sown."

V.

When Josiah Buffin reached home that afternoon he went direct to his study, with the request that Miss Morton should be informed that her presence was urgently desired.

He had not been seated many minutes when Isabel appeared, looking handsome and queen-like as ever. But her happy expression vanished immediately, and was replaced by one of grave solicitude when she spoke.

"Mr. Josiah, I am afraid you are not well. What is the matter? has anything occurred to trouble you?"

"Yes, Isabel, my dear, something has occurred. I am in unutterable grief, and have sent for you. You are a good woman, sensible and true, and will keep my secret, I know; only forgive me, I must have your word, your promise first. Say, Isabel, that which I am about to confide to you shall never be divulged to mortal ears. Ah! you cannot sanction this; and why? Have you not implicit confidence in me? have I not always proved your friend?"

Isabel's countenance had betrayed her most inward feelings; she was sorry, distressed, and yet she was determined to adhere to the voice of duty, hard though it be at times. It required an effort, but she managed it.

"That you have always been to me, sir, and more; nevertheless I cannot make any such promise; it would neither be just nor right."

"Ah! it is Shrimp whom you are thinking of! Good girl, forgive me; I had forgotten. Of course he is not included under the ban. Now will you give me your word and attention, Isabel?"

"I will, with pleasure, Mr. Josiah."

He commenced—

"For some time it has been a struggle to appear the Josiah Buffin of former days. I have had a worm-gnawing, gnawing here at my breast, Isabel, and I believe you were able to detect it. The storm which threatened has broken at last, and in its fury has crushed an old man's heart."

"Things have gone wrong in the City; cheques have been presented and cashed to the sum of £1500."

"Fifteen hundred pounds!" echoed the listener aghast.

"Ay, my dear, fifteen hundred pounds; not that it would have mattered materially had it been twice that amount, could the—the delinquent have been another, and not him, my boy—"

"Frank—do you mean?" broke in Isabel still more amazed. "Is it possible that you can suspect him?"

The old man's chin fell on his breast; his voice was low and husky when he replied—

"It is. Mr. Snaffles, our confidential clerk, and the only person who knows of it beyond ourselves, Isabel—Mr. Snaffles found proof sufficient in his (Frank's) own desk. A small bottle of some chemical preparation, to eradicate ink marks, stowed away at the back of a drawer." His breath came and went in gasps as he said this, the perspiration meanwhile breaking out in drops upon his brow.

Isabel Morton was really alarmed at the appearance of her old and valued friend; how she wished her James were here. At any rate she must not show trepidation; now was the time when strength of mind was most required.

"And is that the proof, the only proof?" she inquired calmly.

"Is it not sufficient? sufficient to convict and transport—"

"Rubbish! it's proof to me of his innocence. Would it be probable that he, or any other sane person, would so compromise himself by keeping the tools which he had employed locked up in his own desk? This is too absurd!"

"Is that the bottle? 'Watson, chemist, Rotherhithe: Poison.'" She read from the label, then continued in a firm, resolute voice: "That, of course, goes for nothing. We must have the whole affair carefully searched into, for that Frank is not the guilty one I am as positive as I am of my own existence." With this she uncorked the bottle and vigorously inhaled the unwholesome aroma of the contents.

After a brief silence Josiah Buffin awakened from his reverie, and said—

"Ah, Isabel, my dear, I know you too well. You wish to relieve my aching heart; but no, it cannot be. I am beyond that now. My grief has gone—gone in a moment. I feel insensible to pain—almost lifeless. Isabel, when I am gone, tell him all. That I fancied I was doing my duty, doing all for his good. It was a mistake, and I am to blame. Yet, ask his forgiveness; it was my ignorance. I should not have put temptation in the lad's way; he was young and—never mind—never mind, now. You, my dear, and Brother Thomas, and Mr. Shrimp, and Snaffle, and myself; these alone must know. Not May, poor child. Promise me this, Isabel, and that May shall be cared for and looked after by you as—now."

Isabel Morton was gazing fixedly out of the window; abstractedly gazing through an impenetrable mist. Mechanically she turned, and, placing a hand lightly upon the old man's shoulder, she answered,

"I give my promise, Mr. Josiah, sacredly and surely."

"God bless you."

Then there was silence. By-and-bye Josiah Buffin aroused himself from his attitude of inert dejection, and remarked in a singularly strained voice:

"And Frank? what must be done with him, Isabel? I cannot permit him to continue living here in close companionship with little May. I *did* think; but no, that is over; he must go away—abroad—to Australia—anywhere; and with another name forget the past and its associations. Frank Sinclair must be no more."

"Frank Sinclair must go away—abroad—to Australia—anywhere. Frank Sinclair must be no more. Who has spoken those words, and what can they mean?"

The door was thrust open, and May, with crimson spot on either cheek and eyes full of fire and enthusiasm, rushed into the room.

"Father—Isabel, what do I hear? Some false accusation against Frank? For it is false—a base calumny—a cruel wrong. Believe, oh, believe what I say; it is true. I have heard all that has been said. Forgive me; 'twas against my will that I was drawn hither, and forced to remain; and yet, I see it now, it was for a beneficent purpose. Hark! there is singing; an angel's chorus. Hush!"

"Reap, reap, reap"

"The fruits of the seed that is sown."

"Ah! a beautiful light; a 'bright light in the clouds.' It opens. Look, look. She comes; my good genius, enveloped in heaven's own light. She comes, my guardian angel. She smiles upon me, and draws near. I feel her presence, calm and soothing; her breath fans my cheek. She whispers in my ear, 'Frank, Frank.' Ah! it is to save him she comes. Yes, dearest spirit, I am ready. Oh! sweet, entrancing sleep. I see, I see."

The young girl's countenance has become glorified with light not of this earth; her soul beams forth from its casket of clay; the flesh is for the time subjected; the spirit reigns supreme. Presently this *spirituelle* serenity is disturbed by a quivering of the lips, while the eyelids flicker for an instant, are raised, and the balls appear to pass upwards into the head. Then succeeds a deathly immobility of features; the fair skin is blanched to an alabaster whiteness. She sighs: a slow, prolonged breath. A smile passes over her countenance; her lips again move, and in a soft, somnambule voice she speaks:

"A little room. It is so foggy, I scarcely can see. Stay! he brings a candle: yes, it is a man. Oh, such a wretched place! What is he doing there? Ah! it is dark again—dark, shadowy, and confused. I must rest awhile."

Again her senses are enthralled in a brief trance: again both lips and eyelids are affected with nervous twitching; again a long-drawn breath prefaces the following remarks:—

"More distinct now. There is a window high up in the roof; I can see the stars shining—so bright, so beautiful; they seem to look down upon him and weep!—why should they weep? Ah! they will not let me go near him—why?"

"The candle burns away—it is in a draught—and the stand—a brass one, is bespattered with grease."

"The man is enveloped in clouds; his head is a globe of mist; and everything about him is dark—so dark; it makes me shudder."

"Now he gets up. How thin! his clothes hang loosely: he looks miserable, and yet—determined. He takes something out of his pocket—examines it—it is a bottle. He smiles a grim, hideous smile, and walks with a slow, measured step. I know that walk; it is familiar, and yet—If only I could see his face! He keeps his eyes lowered, and only cautiously steals a glance behind—around—as though fearful lest he should be observed. He is at work now; he touches certain parts of the thin, crisp papers with the stoppers of the bottle; then proceeds to fill up the space—there are figures, but I cannot read them—it hurts my head. Clouds gather betwixt that man and myself: I can see no more. Let me sleep: sleep off this pain; to awaken calm and refreshed."

And now expressions of alarm, distress, horror, pass in succession over the clairvoyante's face. It is as though antagonistic influences are at work.

In singular contrast to the former, and more natural, purity of repose, are the wild contortions of countenance provoked by malignant forces resolutely striving for the mastery. The struggle is a fierce one; the conflict evenly maintained. The lookers-on tremble at the spectacle before them; and well they may! It is a case of human obsession: the indwelling spirit is dormant, whilst others—good and evil—are determined to enter in. Which shall triumph? The answer is all important. Now that the gates are opened, these next moments will decide the future course for weal or woe, of an incarnated soul!

Meanwhile, the contest rages; the spectators look on with bated breath. The powers of darkness and light are waging a war against right and wrong: the contention is terrible: what shall the issue be?

All is over. Again that sigh, and the features relax into unruffled quiescence. With the graceful languor of trance, the clairvoyante rises from her prostrate position on the couch, and passing a hand lightly before and across her closed eyes, recommences to speak.

"Such a large ship! and a great many people." It is the same curious, far-away voice. She continues:—

"Sailors—sailors everywhere. Turks, Chinese, Malays, and Negroes all are there. Some are busy; others are idling about with their hands in their pockets and smoking. They all appear gay and good-tempered. Stay! there is one different from the rest; that one I must follow. I do not like him; and yet—I must—I must follow him! He makes his way towards one of those big ships; it is a steamboat. Hark! I must not go so near; he chills me. Does he not see me? He seems to fancy someone is behind, for he looks around. Ah! he is afraid; I feel it. But, listen! he speaks; he asks a question. Oh! I have got it. There is another man; this one wears a cap, amber and black. I like that man; he is generous and good-natured. He, also, doesn't like the man with the ginger whiskers, though he doesn't know why."

"Wednesday night—eight o'clock, I heard him say. . . . The sun is setting; the sky is crimson and gold; such a glorious summer's evening! And now—all is over. I must sleep."

Gently her head falls back upon the cushion; a smile hovers over her youthful and happy features, and for the next few seconds the clairvoyante remains in a deep trance. At the expiration of that time she awakens, rubs her eyes, sits up, and asks:

"What has occurred? has anything been said?"

VI.

The sun was shining brightly next day when Josiah Buffin, having indulged in a brief rest after his journey from London to Liverpool, ventured forth upon a strange mission.

Turning to the right, then to the left, up one street and down another, eventually he arrived at his destination—the Docks.

The imposing sight of a small fleet of vessels lay before him; vessels of various sizes, accommodation, classification and tonnage; some with their cobwebs of rigging, others with their engines and funnels.

It was towards one of the latter that he directed his footsteps. He paused to make inquiries of a sailor, who was smoking a short "clay," and surveying his ship with an amount of British pride. The answer was so far satisfactory that it enabled the inquirer to lend an ear to an oft-repeated "yarn," and thereby while away an idle half hour or so.

"Capital, capital, my man! and so you hauled her in, safe and sound—eh?"

"Shiver me timbers, we did! and the like was never known afore. Me and my mate, we was—"

"Egad! the very man!" ejaculated Mr. Josiah, fumbling in his pocket for a loose coin for "Jack." Without waiting to hear more he, with a nod to his communicative friend (who received the memento with a grin and a knowing wink), hurried off in the track of the "ginger-whiskered" individual.

"By George, it is true! it *must* be true!" he repeated vehemently to himself, waxing warmer and warmer each time.

"By the powers there is the 'cap'!—'amber and black'—marvellous, marvellous!" and in order to satisfy himself that he was not dreaming, the old man stamped his foot, then pinched himself.

No! he was wide awake as ever he had been in his life. Great drops of perspiration broke out upon his brow. No heed was taken thereof, for a fixed and engrossing attention was bestowed upon that slight, eccentric-looking personage with a profusion of hair and stealthy gait, who constantly turned to "look behind, around, as though he fears to find someone there."

Mr. Josiah took all in at a glance. He perceived in a moment that each circumstance in detail agreed with that described in vision by his daughter. With impunity, then, might he echo the exclamation "marvellous."

"Wednesday night; eight o'clock." The very words; this was conclusive. With a step forward he seized the arm of the "ginger-whiskered." Their eyes met; both were amazed; the former spoke, his voice trembling with agitation—

"My God, it is Snaffles!"

The game was played out. Hezekiah Snaffles had lost. Little use for him to bear up now; it would only be to kick against the pricks. His complexion, never very brilliant, now turned to a dull leaden hue. He grasped the hand of his late employer, and in guttural accents whispered in his ear—

"I confess. It was I—I, and not Frank Sinclair."

"You—you!" Mr. Josiah gasped hoarsely, still retaining his hold. "Villain that you are!" he continued, a paroxysm of long pent-up wrong towards another taking possession of him.

"Be merciful. It was for others, not for myself," pursued the craven one. "You yourself are a father; I ask you, could you see your child, the beautiful May—"

"Silence! let not her name issue from lips so polluted and vile! You may go, wretched man, and may the wrath of heaven be not visited in full justice upon you—you who have been the means of crushing an aged heart, of shortening an old man's days, of bringing his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave!"

"Help! help! I am choking!" (Snaffles had seized the opportunity

and was gone). "Water! water!" With this Josiah Buffin fell a dead weight to the ground.

It was sunset: a glorious sunset such as May had described in her prophetic trance. A crowd collected: a doctor was summoned, and the information spread wide and fast that it was a partial paralysis of the brain that the old gentleman had been suddenly attacked by.

Some dozen or more were ready to fetch a cab, and in due time Mr. Josiah was conveyed to the nearest hotel, a medical practitioner in attendance. Upon further examination, it was deemed expedient to communicate with the gentleman's friends; his entire constitution was proved to be in a terribly shattered condition; the action of the heart irregular and feeble.

"What the consequences of the attack may be upon one of his years I cannot undertake to say; but it were better to telegraph immediately to the address on this card: 'Lawn Villa, Highbgate.'"

* * * * *

It so happened that Frank Sinclair had returned from executing a commission of his "Uncle Josiah's" some twenty minutes previous to the delivery of this telegram. Without delay of any kind whatever, and with only a vague explanation of the cause, he hastened to catch the train from London to Liverpool. Arriving at the Castle Hotel, early next morning, he was informed by the two doctors, who had been closeted in earnest consultation, that little or no hope of their patient's recovery could now be entertained. A second telegram was dispatched without loss of time; and by expeditious measures both Isabel Morton and May contrived to catch the early morning express. In the excess of grief which had befallen them May was stunned—petrified. Throughout the journey she sat with glazed eyes, staring into nothing, and seemingly unconscious of the loss she was about to sustain. A superficial observer might have imagined her devoid of those fine sensibilities which help to make up the noblest of earth's born, so unconcerned did she appear to all around her. But in reality it was that stupefaction, which is only experienced by the most sensitive and susceptible organisms, and so little understood, so harshly misjudged by the ordinary and commonplace. A shock has paralysed the nerve-action; it only needs a trifle to restore it to its vitalised and more natural state, to bring back the wandering soul, as it were, to endure the cares and trials incidental to its incorporation.

VII.

All was quiet in the dimly-lighted chamber of the hotel to which Josiah Buffin had been conveyed, and from which it was His will that the fine old man should not go forth until he was carried to his last resting-place here upon earth. Mr. Josiah was dying—dying; but would leave a name behind, and many sweet reminiscences of a kind and generous heart—impressions that would live for ever in the minds of young and old; no matter how hardened their nature might become through contact with the world, there would always remain one soft, warm spot for the memory of a noble old man. Who does not cherish some tender recollection, hallowed and sacred as the years roll on, of a few words of encouragement; a simple yet kindly offering, it may be, or an endeavour to aid when in trouble or disgrace, and feel a debt of inexhaustible gratitude towards his childhood's friend long since passed away?

Upon a large, old-fashioned, four-post bedstead lay Josiah Buffin, now calm and free from pain. During the afternoon occasional difficulty in breathing had been perceptible; now that was passed and stillness akin to that of death had taken its place.

Isabel and May had arrived early in the evening, and, from all appearances, not one whit too soon; the end was fast approaching. A return to consciousness broke the solemn silence, and drew the anxious watchers more closely round the bed; each trusting to be recognised and to receive some token of regard. Silence again; those short, irregular breaths sound hard and ominous; life is ebbing; the spirit would fain be freed.

"Children." The lips of the dying were seen to move, and, instinctively, for the voice was faint and indistinct, they came nearer to catch what might be said.

"He has forgiven—forgiven the cruel injustice. Isabel, I have told him all; he was prepared. Those strange visions of his, which I laughed at, and scoffingly termed hallucinations—ah, I thought to efface the past, but He—He willed it otherwise. I see now; it is for the best. Isabel, he is still my boy. God bless him!"

The ghastly hue of death was again discovered after the effects of this effort; the eyelids closed; the extremities grew cold; the vital force was so reduced that the heart now seldom beat. Still was it not time yet; the white-robed angel stood aloof.

A smile beams forth—the "bright light in the clouds"—sensitivity returns, and the old man is once more himself.

"May, my darling May, weep not for me. Could you but see my heavenly home you would rejoice, my child. I have had a dream; in that dream your mother appeared to me. I could not approach her; she was so radiantly fair; but she beckoned me on—on. My spirit grew light, I felt disencumbered, and able to penetrate the vast unknown. We journeyed together; she leading, I following. It was as though I was borne on the wind, and drawn by some subtle magnetic power. Eventually she paused; uplifted the veil, and I beheld, for one moment beheld, a tithe of those glories which 'it hath not entered the heart of man to conceive.' May, there is a way—a bridge which connects this world with the next. Some there are who hold a passport to that bridge. The Great and Wise Father has entrusted these, His favoured children, with a special talent. You are one of these; guard that talent, develop it for the good of your fellow creature. Hide not your light under a bushel, neither keep that talent covered up in a napkin. The world has become hard and materialistic; darkness, as of night, usurps the place of faith; intellect, that of simple trust.

"But a little while and men shall see 'the bright light in the clouds.'"

"Remember these words; and pray—let your aspirations be pure and lofty, and inspiration will be the answer. 'Prayer is the voice of the soul; it ascends to the throne of the Father, and is there heard as the cry of helpless infancy is heard in the mother's heart.' Then cease not to 'trust in Him at all times,' my child; 'pour out your heart before Him,'"

"And now, farewell; my mission on earth is accomplished. I have other work to do. Kiss me, darling! Good-bye! Good-night!" And with one long breath, a sigh of relief, the spirit is released; the good, the faithful, has passed on to a higher and brighter sphere.

Two years have gone by. It is summer time again—a soft evening in July: one of those listless gloamings when everything seems half entranced, and no sound is heard save the sweet, low song of the insects, which lulls one to rest, and, to the imaginative, may recall dreams of fairy love, so airy and soothing is the effect.

The villa at Highbate is wearing its old aspect again. Those eighteen months of mourning are over, so far as conventional custom goes, and the house and grounds have, this day, put on their brightest adornments. At present a group assembled on the lawn are expatiating on the charms of two ladies, both of them brides; and opinions are at variance as to which should bear the palm, the imperial and handsome Mrs. Shrimp or the *spirituelle* and fascinating Mrs. Sinclair.

Meanwhile, one at least of the happy bridegrooms comes in for a share of the admiration; both, for the commendation of the fair sex.

Nature has done much for Frank, but a careful and judicious training has done more: *L'instruction fait tout*, the French poet has it. Had Frank Sinclair's lot been cast amongst the depraved, great would have been the harm accruing, not to himself alone, for, trivial though the influence of one mind may appear, it is none the less weightily freighted for good or ill. Josiah Buffin had turned the scale in the right balance, even so was it ordained; and Frank Sinclair, the infant, who was found 'twixt life and death on the steps of the offices of Messrs. Buffin Bros. & Shrimp will live to

"Reap

The fruit of the seed that was sown."

May is looking stronger, and more womanly, nevertheless she retains her *petite* figure and dreamy eyes. The physicians consider her case a complete success, as they no longer hear of those delusions to which she formerly had been subject, and which (though this they would never acknowledge) had baffled all medical skill. Others who can understand and appreciate are permitted to join that harmonious circle who hold converse with beings of another and a better world; and the poor, the afflicted, the conscience-stricken and sorely oppressed, have cause, indeed, to bless the "Medium," through whom they oftentimes derive rays of hope and encouragement to press on, on to noble ends and aims—the talent is *not* allowed to rust.

It is now some months since Mr. Shrimp has cast his shell. Some vow he has grown both in height and circumference since that memorable day when he led his beautiful bride from the altar.

Whatever truth there may be in this, his smile has certainly expanded until its proportions have become so comprehensive as to leave no room for those blushes that were wont to suffuse his physiognomy in the presence of a certain *demoiselle*. In short, he can now stand up and make a speech of prolonged eloquence; and what though people do persist that he rehearses the same to his strong-minded help-mate beforehand? Will not envy try to undermine everything?

* * * * *

Thomas Buffin had been obliged to return, with his wife, to the South of France immediately after the funeral of his brother Josiah. Although his name is still included in that of the firm of Buffin, Shrimp, and Sinclair, he, Thomas Buffin, has withdrawn all pecuniary interest in mercantile concerns, and has retired to enjoy his few remaining years in peace.

Nothing more was heard of Snaffles, the "confidential clerk;" doubtless he has suffered, or will suffer, for the wrong that he has done, for justice compels that each shall "REAP THE FRUIT OF THE SEED THAT IS SOWN."

ZANA, THE SLAVE MEDIUM.

By LUCELLA.

In a southern country, where the climate is warm and balmy with the odours of flowers, there lived in a grand mansion in the midst of vast estates, a lady and gentleman and their son William. The home of this rich man was filled with a profusion of servants, all of them of a dark colour. The care of his infant boy was confided to a woman of very dark brown complexion, by name Zana. She had been in the family since her childhood, and had devoted all the energy of a faithful nature to the service of two generations. Little Willie did not see much of his proud and elegant mother. The family held great possessions to which their souls were wedded, and the lady's delicate health made her easily reconciled to relinquish the maternal duties to a well-tried and trusted servant.

The good Zana had never known what it was to love till this treasure of a little fair-skinned boy was confided to her tender care. Oh, how she loved him! so purely, so disinterestedly; for he was nothing to her—the offspring of a master who owned her as a chattel; and so her love had no taint of self in it, but in heavenly radiance it shone alone for the benefit of her little master.

Willie's mother pined away. Her beauty faded, her elegant form shrank to a shadow. She sickened and died. Before she passed away she called her servant to her bedside, and made her promise to take care of her little son, and be a mother to him after she was gone. The child scarcely missed its mother, but the faithful nurse increased her attentions to her charge. She could read his very soul, and anticipate all his little needs and avert annoyances that crowd the path of childhood, and mar the beauty of the budding mind. Her charge reciprocated this affection, and learned to lean upon her loving attentions and her wise counsels as essential to his existence.

And what was there in this poor slave to enable her to confer such advantages upon the boy to whom she gave the sweetest gifts of woman's heart? Was she educated? No. Was she versed in philosophy and skilled in science? No. Knew she the man-made creeds and doctrines of theology? No. Though devoid of all that the world sets value upon, even liberty, yet she was possessed of a prize that the world knows not how to appreciate; and, glorious fact, she was free to use it. She was endowed with the purest love in unstinted measure, the

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"Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these little ones ye did it unto Me."

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