



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

# SPIRITUALISM.

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## PESSIMISM.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE FREE SPIRITUAL  
SOCIETY, AT RICHMOND HALL, PLYMOUTH,\* ON THE  
EVENING OF SUNDAY, THE 28TH MAY, 1882.

BY MR. C. W. DYMOND.

Among the matters of deepest import, of which you are accustomed to receive expositions from this pulpit, perhaps none is more fundamental than that which is concerned in weighing and appraising the worth of life in a spirit of inquiry fostered by doubt as to whether its value is a positive quantity or a negative.

That it is even possible to regard the question from this point of view, is due to the fact, so familiar to us all, that our terrestrial existence is a very chequered one,—its warm and pleasant lights being ever subdued by cold and gloomy shadows; its evanescent joys overlaid by brooding cares; its highest hopes dashed to the ground by dull disappointments; its noblest aspirations quenched by repeated failures; its best efforts frustrated by insuperable obstacles; its most generous advances rewarded by cold ingratitude; its wings of faith weighted by leaden doubts. Were human life devoid of any vicissitudes but those which introduce sufficient variety to preserve and enhance the zest of the prevailing enjoyment, there would be little, if any, scope for differing estimates of its worth; and none for the sentiment which I propose to consider this evening,—that which pronounces life in this world, under existing conditions, not worth living.

This sentiment (which is, perhaps, as old as our race) has recently crystallized into a doctrine bearing the name of "Pessimism":—an inaccurate term, be it noted, as literally expressing only the extreme form of opinion (which it is inconceivable that any sensible being can hold) that this life is the worst possible. It is not with its strict import, then, that the word is generally used: nor is it intended to bear any other than its popular meaning in this evening's discourse. The case is pithily put in the following lines of the

great misanthropic poet of the early part of this century, which, accordingly, I take for my text.<sup>1</sup>

"Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen:  
Count o'er thy days from anguish free:  
And know, whatever thou hast been,  
'Tis something better not to be."

A sad doctrine, indeed, if true. Is it true? It is possible that some in the present company may hear, for the first time, and with surprise, that this has ever been regarded as a subject susceptible of discussion: and yet we know that the sentiment conveyed in the text has weighed upon, yea, preyed upon, the minds of men from ancient times, either in the abiding form of a settled conviction, supposed to have been drawn from experience of life, more or less ample; or in an evanescent, though almost universal form—the product of passing sorrow. Who that has had fierce baptisms of fire, or that has waded through deep waters, has not been constrained, in times of anguish, to exclaim, Oh, that I had never been born!

In either aspect, the convictions of the Past were mainly impressional; springing either from the assumption, that life, as experienced here, in the world, is, in reality, a failure; or, from the other assumption, that individuality is, in itself, an evil. But not until our own time (so far as I am aware) has there been any serious attempt to apply analytical methods of thought to the solution of the problem. This has at last been done by a school of German metaphysicians, represented by Schopenhauer and Hartmann, by whom the creed of despair advocated by Byron, has been elaborated with such intellectual acumen, that it has stirred up other thinkers to follow the inquiry, with the view of discovering whether or no this dark doctrine of Pessimism is true. If it be true, then all that has been said about the love of our Heavenly Father for His children, and the blessings of life, is mere twaddle. Therefore, I ask again, Is it true? It is well to put the question to ourselves; primarily, it may be, for our personal re-assurance; and, secondarily, because we know not at what turn we may have to face it in converse with some hopeless brother. Moreover, we shall do well to remember that, in this matter, we are not dealing alone with the formulated deductions of systematic speculation; but we are also striking at the

\* Since delivered at Christ Church, Devonport.

<sup>1</sup> Byron's Occasional Poems: "Euthanasia."

root of that deep sadness of spirit which, it has often been observed, pervades the most thoughtful literature of the day. And yet our writers (including even the philosophic advocates of the dismal creed) are, usually, not sad people. They live better than they think: their intuitions are truer than their science. They are among those who are quite ready to "catch pleasure as it flies." They belie, by their acts, the negation which they enforce with their tongues and pens.

At the outset, we are brought face to face with the question, What is the abstract worth of life? The answer to this question will depend primarily on the view that is taken of the object of life.

There are four typical ways of regarding this point. (1) That which was harped upon so much by Solomon, with his cuckoo-cry, "All is vanity, and vexation of spirit:" (2) That of Auguste Comte, and the nobler minds of his school: (3) That of the ascetic Gotama, the Buddha: and (4) That of Jesus of Nazareth, who brought life and immortality to light with demonstrations of more convincing power than had ever before been seen or felt;—thus introducing to the world that which, practically, was a new dispensation.

Let us take Solomon as the spokesman of all those who, with large experience in the world, and great mental endowments, have, nevertheless, by hugging to their hearts a spirit of worldliness, so quenched the spirit of the highest wisdom (if they ever really possessed it) that they see only that which belongs to the natural plane; and estimate everything by low popular standards. What says the man, noted in his day, and since, for wisdom? <sup>2</sup>

"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; vanity of vanities: all is vanity."

"I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun? All his days are sorrows, and his travail grief. All things are full of labor: man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered."

"I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem. And I gave my heart to know wisdom; and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit: for in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."

"I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth: therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity. I sought to give myself unto wine, and to lay hold on folly. I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men. I gathered me silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings. Also I made me great works; built houses; planted vineyards and all manner of fruit-trees; and I had great possessions. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them: I withheld not my heart from any joy."

"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit; and there was no profit under the sun."

"Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me: and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity. For there is no remembrance of the wise, more than of the fool for ever. Therefore I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Here was a man eminently endowed with material and mental riches, yet exemplifying, in his own case, the truth of his own warning:—<sup>3</sup>

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that, for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment."

Now, what were the causes of this most eminent failure to form a true estimate of the worth of life? They were, I think, chiefly two,—the one concerned with the heart, the other with the head.

Solomon was intensely selfish. This may be read in nearly every line of his sermons: and it stands openly confessed here and there, as in the following:—<sup>4</sup>

"I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me. Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him."

What nobility of thought is exhibited by the man who can write in this strain, and who thus sums up his conclusions?—<sup>5</sup>

"There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink; and that he should make his soul enjoy the good of all his labor: it is the gift of God."

This is the kind of resolve that a "natural" man, so circumstanced, would make. But one regrets to find that eminent saint, and willing martyr, the Apostle Paul, expressing the same sentiment in almost the same words, as being the appropriate corollary to the hypothesis (which, of course, he rejected) that "the dead rise not." In that case, says he, "let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die."<sup>6</sup>

It is honorable to modern thought, (equally hopeless of immortality as it is, with much of the sceptical thought of the Past) that it should fly higher, as we shall presently note.

This hopelessness of personal immortality was the second, and chief intellectual, cause of Solomon's failure to read aright the riddle of life. Hear again what he says:—<sup>7</sup>

"All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath."

"The heart of the sons of men is full of evil; and madness is in their heart while they live: and after that, they go to the dead. For that befalleth the sons of men which befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other: yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast. All go unto one place: all are of the dust; and all return to dust."

Wherefore, our author is moved to ask,—<sup>8</sup>

"Who knoweth what is good for man in this life,—all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow?"

And, after reviewing the oppressions that are in the world, he sums up his conclusions thus:—<sup>9</sup>

"Wherefore, I praised the dead who are already dead more than the living who are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, who hath not yet been; who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun."

This is precisely the doctrine of our text: and it is clear that either his disbelief in, or ignorance of, the glorious doctrine of personal immortality, coupled with his selfish indifference to the bearing of the present upon the future of the race, prevented Solomon, with all his wisdom, from seeing, as more enlightened men have seen, that, after all, there is something better for a man than to eat and drink; and to enjoy; and to become blasé.

Not quite after this despairing manner thought his father David who—though he, too, regarding man from his own stand-point, pronounced him to be "altogether vanity"<sup>10</sup>—was, nevertheless, able to exclaim, "I delight to do thy will, O my God!"<sup>11</sup>

In contrast to the sentiments of the selfish school of disbelievers in personal immortality, represented by the magnificent and learned Hebrew monarch, may be set those of the modern school of Positivists, represented by Comte, who, though equally dark on the posthumous future of the individual man, regard each personal unit as existing only for the good of the race, present, and to come; and as having no true interests or happiness apart from those of humanity at large.

<sup>4</sup> Ecclesiastes, ii., 18, 22. <sup>5</sup> Ibid., ii., 24; iii., 13.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Corinthians, xv., 32.

<sup>7</sup> Ecclesiastes, ix., 2, 3; iii., 19, 20.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., vi., 12.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., iv., 2, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ps., xxxix., 5.

<sup>11</sup> Ps., xl., 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ecclesiastes, i., 2, 3, 8, 14—18; ii., 1, 3—5, 8—11, 15—17, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., xi., 9.



This is at least a very noble view of life,—and far enough from being a pessimist one,—regarding it as sanctified by high duties, sweetened by those genuine satisfactions which spring from their performance; and, moreover, finding sufficient reward in this, and in a happy sharing, by anticipation, in the increasing blessedness of our posterity, in whom alone, as representing us in the future, it is held that we enjoy any immortality.

The third and fourth characteristic modes of regarding life contrast with the two former, in that both are regulated by a belief in the immortality of the human soul: though, in many particulars of its history and destiny, they appear to differ widely.

The first-mentioned—that represented by the Buddha—regards *individuality* as the great evil; and the cessation of it by complete absorption into the Universal Spirit,—constituting the supreme bliss of *Nirvana*,—as the highest, and final good. The theory of this, and of other kindred eastern beliefs, is, that the temporal life of each human being is but one of a series of lives that have been passed, and, with many, may still have to be passed, in various forms in the flesh, for painful disciplinary purposes. They regard the necessity for the continuance of these successive stages of existence as, in itself, an evil; inasmuch as the soul can be nothing but unhappy until it has attained the ultimate goal, when, not only all of *self* shall have vanished, but the very personal consciousness shall be swallowed up in universal, unutterable bliss. The fundamental Buddhist doctrines are,—that misery always accompanies existence; that all modes of existence result from passion or desire; that there is no escape from existence, except by destruction of desire; and that this salvation is to be accomplished by first awakening the heart; then, successively, getting rid of all evil desires and revengeful feelings; becoming free from ignorance, doubt, heresy, unkindness and vexation. It is held that in but few cases can all this be accomplished in earth-life; and that, where the work is left incomplete here, it may be continued to full fruition in another world.

This is a short summary of the primitive Buddhist teaching. In later times, it has undergone many important doctrinal and ceremonial modifications. In their assertion of the inevitable evil attaching to *individuality*, the Buddha seems, at first sight, to agree with Byron, with Solomon, and with the pessimists of our day: but a clearer view of the position will show that, while he regarded individuality as marking an imperfect phase of existence, and as inseparable from selfishness, with its resulting unrest and misery, he welcomed the prospect of its extinction, as closing the troubled transitions of development, by the full fruition of a cloudless impersonal beatitude. Hence, he totally disagrees with the pessimist in the one point of his morose creed in which all the poison lies, and which bursts into expression when, driven in upon self by the disappointments of life, or becoming entangled in the net of a cold and false philosophy, he scowls gloomily at the Creator, and says that it is better not to exist at all. To such, we may appropriately put a query, to be found in the oldest book in the Bible—a book, too, that bears few, if any, indications of knowledge of a personal hereafter:—<sup>12</sup>

“Are the consolations of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee? Why doth thine heart carry thee away? And what do thine eyes wink at, that thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?”

The fourth characteristic mode of regarding life, which, like the last-mentioned, contemplates the immortality of individual spirits,—I mean, that involved in the teachings of Jesus,—agrees with atheistic Positivism in estimating at the highest value the dignity and importance of our present life; and, singularly enough, finds itself face to face, not with atheists, but with theists (personal, in the case of the Hebrews; imper-

sonal in that of the Buddhists), when contradicting the doctrine that our earthly span of being is, in some sort, an evil.

Now, leaving the opinions of the Past, how should we view this great question (but one among many such) apart from Authority—that threatening, many-headed Monster which has been lifted into the sectarian thrones of the world by the willing hands of submissive slaves? We have but two lamps to light us on the way by which we may safely approach the practical solution of these problems,—the lamp of reason, and the lamp of experience. Let us, then, on this, as on every such occasion, take them in our hands, and, by their light, honestly and fearlessly search for the truth, confiding in a direct appeal to plain common sense, as an all-sufficient guide in every matter vitally affecting our personal interests. But first we must give a wide berth to the bottomless pit of metaphysics, into which, if we happen to tumble, we may flounder therein, for ever, in hopeless obscurity,

“and find no end, in devious mazes lost.”<sup>13</sup>

The first argument which I shall adduce against the doctrine of our text is based upon the joy that children manifestly take in life. No matter how wretched their surroundings, and how hard their lot,—when left to themselves, they find happiness wherever they are. Without the dark tribulations of unhappy years to warp their minds, and mislead their simple judgments;—the untutored instincts which have been bestowed upon them by their Heavenly Father, pronounce that life is, in itself, good; and, to my thinking, these native impressions on such matters are more inspired with Divine wisdom than are either the querulousness begotten by disappointed hopes, or the impotent conclusions of metaphysics. May we not here appropriately quote against himself these words of that accomplished monarch from whose writings I have already made several extracts?—<sup>14</sup>

“Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king.”

Again, he says,—<sup>15</sup>

“God hath made everything beautiful in its time.”

But is this much-reviled terrestrial life of man, God's vice-gerent upon earth, to be the thing, of all others, that is to be excepted?

Farther, I think we may fairly bring to the support of our argument the fact, that there dwells in almost every human being a strong instinct of self-preservation. If life be really an evil;—if, in the words of our text, it would be “better not to be;”—how are we to account for the existence in man of this instinct,—so universally present, that it is blinded by only two conditions; the one, of extreme and unbearable misery; the other, of cerebral disease. In that wonderful ancient fiction, the Book of Job, we find even Satan made to testify that <sup>16</sup>

“Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.”

Let us thank God that He has not left the lot, even of the poor and wretched, altogether without admixture of joy; that He has given, even to these some germs of happiness to season existence here; to make it more desirable than annihilation; and, in however small a degree, to be a foretaste of Heaven.

Exception has been made of those cases of extreme suffering (bearing, however, but a small proportion to the sum of human experience) in which the unenlightened son of sorrow may, like Job, be tempted to curse the day of his birth; to beseech God to destroy him; and to yearn that he might rest unconsciously in the narrow house of death, with the worm feeding sweetly on him, so that he should be remembered no more for ever. But these few exceptions do not, in any wise, support the teaching of our text; and those

<sup>13</sup> Par. Lost.

<sup>15</sup> Ecclesiastes, iii., 11.

<sup>14</sup> Ecclesiastes, iv., 13.

<sup>16</sup> Job, ii., 4.

<sup>12</sup> Job, xv., 11—13.

who hold the pessimist view, without being subjects of the agony which overthrows the judgment, must have either imperfect reason, or moral obliquity, or morbid minds. At least, this is certainly the position of the theist who, while holding this terrible tenet, virtually pronounces the Supreme Being to be either a *fiend* or a *fool*. We are shut up to this. Will anyone here who may have been tempted to curse his own life, dare to accept this conclusion?

The atheist, I do not challenge thus: and, to be credible, this creed should lead to atheism. Yet we have seen that even atheists of the more noble type do not thus darkly look upon the mystery of our terrestrial being; but hold views of it the very opposite of those of the pessimist.

But the denial of the worth of life not only seems to imply denial of the being of a good God (and what other kind of God is credible?) but it withdraws from all the rest of the natural world—from its animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms—the chief reason for their existence: for, no matter how clearly we may be able to trace the inter-dependence of the subordinate realms,—and this is undeniable,—it is equally undeniable that, in their higher ministries they exhibit a yet wider and more wonderful adaptation to the use of the microcosm, man.

What shall we say, moreover, of the possession by man of his many beautiful gifts? By the lugubrious light of the pessimist's creed, what can these be, but mocking phantoms, aggravating, by their suggestions of higher hopes, the terrible disabilities of a heritage of woe?

We have not yet quite done with the pessimist. If he really believes that life is always an evil, then, I say, that it is his duty to do his best, not only to extinguish life, but also to abstain from propagating it. That he does neither the one nor the other, is the best proof we can have that he is not entirely sincere in his professions.

It is passing strange to observe how content the human mind too often is to dance after shadows, and to feed upon chaff. I saw an extreme—but, I fear, a not uncommon—instance of this a few months ago, when listening to an address delivered to a company of secularists. It was truly sad to see the fierce satisfaction of the speaker, as he proceeded, with unsurpassed shallowness of argument, and audacity of assertion, to demolish God, the spiritual world, and personal immortality (yet even he did not descend so low as to pronounce human life to be a great mistake): but it was a still sadder sight to scan the faces of the listeners,—many of them thoughtful, not a few young, and some having, evidently, much ruddy enjoyment in life,—and to note how they chuckled with delight, and applauded to the echo, as shred after shred was thought to have been torn from their traditional hopes, as well as from their traditional fears. Surely, the proper attitude of a well-balanced mind, on such an occasion, after recovering from the first painful shock of conviction, would be, to suppress the spirit of levity, and, with chastened courage to, brace itself up to make the best of this, the only existence it would ever enjoy.

But, begone dark Spectre! Spread thy brooding wings, and flee into the limbo of forgetfulness; and come no more between us and the light!

Where is the light? Friends! has it not been striving to shine into the soul through the long ages of human development,—albeit sadly bedimmed by its passage through intervening vapors; refracted by the individuality of the recipients; and yet all but unrecognized by the careless multitude. It is not the parti-colored ray proceeding from the barred and locked lantern of assumed authority; not the fitful glimmer of dim speculation; nor that seeming sparkle—making darkness visible—of the shallow empiric; still less is it the *ignis fatuus* which lures the worldly self-seeker into mephitic marshes:—but it is the clear

light of Truth, at last gradually spreading over the whole world, dispelling the mists of ignorance; scattering the spectres of superstition; and not only illustrating the Present, but casting its beams into the obscure recesses of the Past, making history intelligible, the passing hour fruitful, and full of promise for the Future. By this Divine light, the full meaning of human life begins to be seen, and its riddle to be read. By it, even the most hidden secrets are waiting to be revealed: and if, to the sinning and suffering ones, this world may sometimes seem to be a prison, it is one in which, through the dimness, we can discern that those held for a season in bondage have written on their foreheads that they are "prisoners of hope."<sup>17</sup> For who shall place limits to the possibilities of progression? If you will carefully consider the matter, you will be astonished to find how very small a proportion of the evil of our lot is inevitable. If increasing wisdom were but to keep pace with increasing knowledge, the sum of human suffering would soon shrivel up to dimensions so small that even the pessimist would not be able to cower behind it "until the day break; and the shadows flee away."<sup>18</sup>

I cannot sum up better than by quoting the encouraging counsel that was offered to Job—the type of all those whom extremity of suffering drives to despair:—<sup>19</sup>

If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear: because thou shalt forget thy misery; and it shall be as waters that pass away: and thine age shall be clearer than the noonday: thou shalt shine forth; thou shalt be as the morning; and thou shalt be secure, because there is hope: yea, thou shalt dig about thee; and thou shalt take thy rest in safety."

And then, in the words of the prophet,—<sup>20</sup>

"Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light; and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

## THOUGHTS ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF PHYSICAL MEDIUMSHIP.

By A. J. SMART, MELBOURNE.

### TRUE INVESTIGATION.

I have perused the suggestive comments in the MEDIUM of 17th February last, headed "Some of the Conditions of Spirit-Physicalisation," with great interest, as I do everything relating to this subject, to which my attention has been so forcibly drawn for some years past. As the writer intimates, I have long been familiar with a mediumship which, though its results have gained considerable publicity, has ever been distinguished by the most valuable feature of those fresh and spontaneous private or family circles, which have made so many firm Spiritualists, viz., the absence of incentives, to concealment of the true nature of the results. I have been especially fortunate in the possession of this privilege, (for which I feel unspeakably grateful, and could wish all other sincere inquirers in the great field of research opened up by Spiritualism the like opportunities,) because I am constitutionally a doubter, and had I witnessed the manifestations through professional mediumship, however much accompanied by the most rigid mechanical tests that human ingenuity could devise, it is quite likely that I would for much longer have remained dubious as to their reality, and hovered uncertainly upon the borders of the field of knowledge, from a sense of self-mistrust, a feeling that perhaps after all the tests were not unevadable, although sufficient to baffle my acuteness. This sort of feeling must be the source of the test-mania, which has been exhibited by

17 Zech., ix., 12.

19 Job xi., 14—18.

18 Canticles, iv., 6.

20 Isaiah, lx., 20.



so many investigators, devising tests and then continually repudiating them for fresh ones—an apparently endless task. Happily for me, however, the knowledge which daily previous intercourse had given me of the integrity of the medium, and which being part and parcel of his nature could not be left behind on entering the circle room, combined with the absence of any motive other than that of pure enthusiasm for the truth, sufficed at once to assure me that my confidence in the manifestations was not misplaced, and during the still closer intimacy that has existed for the six years since that time, I have found only confirmation of the conclusion then arrived at, in addition to which the phenomena themselves have long since vindicated their own genuineness, apart altogether from any question of character. In the old Cardiff Circle, the many and varied memories of which are woven so closely into my life, we always strove to make a point of taking whatever came contentedly, though without losing sight of a steady desire for progress, which was gratified in due course. I fully endorse the writer's remarks with regard to the "commercial and promiscuous exhibition seance" at which it is well-nigh impossible to arrive at clear and just conclusions respecting the exact nature of the phenomena, the sitters being altogether outsiders, and alien to the manifestations taking place before them. It is certainly a rather barren method of investigation. As to sitters themselves, and the qualifications they ought to possess, I shall have something more to say further on.

#### THE DEPLETION OF THE MEDIUM.

The process of de-physicalisation of the medium, the depletion of physical atoms to a greater or less extent, which according to theory takes place during form-materialization proper,—i.e., the building up of a separate form—though it is pointed to as a positive fact by much that I have heard of and witnessed, is nevertheless so staggering a fact, especially to those who have been trained in orthodox views of the nature and supposed limitations of "matter," that it is not without difficulty admitted even as a conception into the mind. Yet the theory is fully borne out by the results of the weighing experiments of various kinds that have from time to time been made. These results, indeed, were predictable from the theory itself, and any theory is considered to receive confirmation, as strong as to amount well-nigh to proof positive, when that which has been predicted from it as a basis actually occurs, a method of testing hypotheses which has been carried out in the domain of physical science with the grandest results. Certainly the medium who is the subject of this mysterious process of temporary physical semi-depletion must at such times be in a highly sensitive condition of brain and body, and it is little short of cruelty that they should then be subjected to the discordant and antagonistic influences which can find admission into "commercial and promiscuous seances" (and are often deliberately placed there by Spiritualists with more zeal than thought), and which have fallen to the lot of so many mediums.

The author of the article above referred to surmises that the "transfiguration" idea is much more an hypothesis than a fact. In this I am inclined to acquiesce. "M. A. (Oxon.)", however, testifies unmistakably that he has seen on more than one occasion a clear case of this phenomenon, and the species of manifestation which he refers to is evidently of the kind which the former describes as "the medium brought out bodily," because he, "M. A. (Oxon.)", speaks of it as a manifestation "to be carefully differentiated from that of the building up of the separate form."

#### MATERIALIZATION—ITS CONDITIONS.

The idea that the physicalised spirit cannot melt away at will, but requires conditions to restore the atoms to the source whence they were derived, is in my judgment an excellent and very suggestive one.

One of these conditions seems, in most cases, to be a subdued light; rebel against this condition as we may. This may appear to be in contradiction to what I have in previous articles referred to, viz., the dispersive action of strong light upon the material atoms of which the form is built up, an action which at first sight therefore might be regarded as an aid rather than a hindrance to dematerialization, but then there is the possibility of the too rapid restoration of the mediumistic forces producing injurious results. As intimated, should any experimenter violently grasp or otherwise disturb the medium while the operation of materialization is going on, they would at once see the process hindered or stopped. And for kindred reasons, when investigators go in extensively for tying, sealing, and the like, they are but throwing hindrances in the way of the controls in giving them the very proofs they seek. The wonderful closeness and subtilty of the bond existing between the medium and the form was recently well illustrated here in the materialization circle, when "Peter"—after placing the medium in a deep trance—came outside and called each of the six members of the circle up one after the other to his side, and taking one of their hands in his own placed their other hand through the curtains and upon the hand of the medium. Whenever the sitter's hand came in contact, however slightly, with that of the medium, the form of "Peter" appeared to receive an unpleasant shock, probably through the disturbance of the magnetism, would shrink and droop, and he would cry out with evident pain, and would not for some moments recover from the shock.

The suggestion as to the materialized form becoming more positively physical when violently seized, so as to give the impression that it is the medium fraudulently acting the part of a spirit, is also a valuable one. Could we but gain a more minute knowledge of the mysterious transfer and retransfer of force that takes place between medium and spirit-form, we should better understand the effects of mental influences and physical contact in retarding or distorting the phenomena of materialization, and, also, the perplexing ambiguities sometimes connected with it. I am inclined to believe it will be found that many an investigator has been more deceived by his own lack of knowledge than by the medium.

A question which is very much upon the tapis just now is that of the banishment of all arrangements for protecting the medium, whilst in the highly sensitive condition above referred to, both from the action of light, and from the influence of the magnetic rays issuing from the eyes of the sitters, which appear to be severe and penetrating, and detrimental also to the building up of the materialized form in its initial stages. To this ultimate have some of the prominent Spiritualists in various parts of the world been driven, in consequence partly of a desire to witness more immediately the process of materialization, but more from the complicated state of matters arising out of misinterpretation of the phenomena and the laws governing them, and out of ambiguous manifestations or palpably fraudulent ones. Some, indeed, have gone the unwarrantable length of declaring no medium worthy of confidence who does not in practice adopt their views. I should judge, from the amount of zeal displayed in some American centres of Spiritualism in the exposure of dishonesty in mediumship, that impostors have an uneasy time of it; yet in this hasty hunting down of wrong-doers the chances are—as in all departments of life—ten to one that some of the wheat will be pulled up with the tares, a mischief hardly to be atoned for.

(To be Continued.)

"The Telephone: An International journal in English, French, and German," One Penny, fortnightly, has been commenced in Southampton Row. At the office translations in all languages are made.

## "LORD NELSON" ON THE WAR, AND THE FUTURE OF MANKIND.

A CONTROL RECORDED BY A. T. T. P.

4 p.m., August 20, 1882.

The Sensitive, under control, said:—

Mon. de Lesseps, a great man in his own opinion, has been active, energetically active, with a decided leaning to the Rebel Leader. His advice has been a reproach to himself, and the occasion of a reproach from us. Granted, that his head first of all perceived the practicability of forming that water-way, he must, at all events, own that the idea was not his, and that with him there rests no claim to originality. Is there any one other than himself, who knows what he wants, or can understand, on reading his epistles, what he means? Does he think, that in accordance with the events that have transpired there, that use would not be made of that Canal, or that it would not form the base from which our forces would issue? Does he consider that an army, bordering on twenty thousand men of all arms, was sent by us, without the order to take advantage of every circumstance? He has spoken and we have listened; we have refrained from action from one necessity, and that was, that we were not prepared, but now that our General has taken upon himself the place to which he was elected and entitled, we have done more than listen, we have acted.

However uneventful this day may be here, it has been a day of stirring events in Egypt. Port Said is in our hands, and Ismailia is well in the keeping of our forces; in brief, the Suez Canal is at our entire disposal. What less could have been expected from a strategical General like him in command? The next news which will reach this country, probably will be that Arabi has fled, being attacked in rear and in front, and is on his way to Tripoli; and the sooner the better, say I. The Porte would but hinder us: it has no other policy. When once her forces, side by side with Christian forces, were acting against the Moslem, this would for ever nullify his claim to sovereignty there. The sooner that this Gordian knot was cut the better, for only by swift action can it be unravelled; our forces will, indeed, meet.

The Moslems lifted up their eyes and cried: Allah! Allah! what fools we have been, as our guards defiled before them. The Moslems are the descendants of an heroic race, but their glory is a glory of the past. Well might our soldiers have been astonished, when, in the place of palaces, with gardens filled with gorgeous flowers, they gazed only on blackened ruins on every hand; and all that done in the name of patriotism or religion! What form of religion can lead on the soul to murder, to cold-blooded massacre, with not even the excuse that Mahomed, their founder, had, who, before his sword fell, offered the Koran. There is no race extant that in former days loved their homes more dearly, or enriched them more than the Arab, the son of the East; there were none but what had their garden, and who tried to make life like the life they were led to expect in the hereafter, one of beauty and of bliss; one to prepare them for that intense bliss that awaited them in the hereafter. But their supremacy in arms, like their love of the beautiful, has passed away from them and become but a dream of the past. To-day both the Arab and the Moor are squalid in their habiliments, dirty in their persons, lying and treacherous in their dealings, even with each other, and more so with strangers. It is only by civilization, that they will keep pace with the rest of created man. It is more than a matter of history, that they are deteriorating.

I have heard since my connection with your surroundings that there is a promised time, when all the works of God shall have their rightful use; when man shall, indeed, by his life and his works, be the first fruit of creation. In that day there shall be peace amongst men; there shall be a foretaste of eternity in time, when deceitful actions shall have ceased. In this promised time man shall have a greater nearness of God, shall have a nearer view of Him, and this nearness of view shall be man's greatest blessing. There are those of your surroundings who are very close to Him; to the Majesty and Greatness of the Living God, and their eternity is passed in studying to obey Him. Before Him mortality has neither grandeur nor splendour, as in comparison to God's excellence man possesses nothing. I sometimes realize that it is only after the soul has left the body that God can be fully realized; that the Supreme only then becomes realistic; that there is no prostrating before Him, that there is no degree of excellence, except that obtained by work.

In earth-life I believed that martyred saints mixed with the angel throng, who had never known earth-life; but I know now, that the highest in heaven have been earth-born, and that there can be no individuality without earth birth.

There are none that regret more the necessity of war than your surroundings; they regret it as being opposed directly to the moral law, which says "be fruitful and multiply," whilst war is the direct command to slaughter and kill; but until this time, that is yet to come, supremacy must be jealously guarded, else worse evils will befall. The power and wisdom of God are shown as well in peace as in war, and prayers

offered in your houses of worship will ascend to the throne of the omnipotent from millions of prayerful ones, and the prayers shall be offered for the safety of our countrymen who are sustaining the honour and dignity of the mother country. To Him all things are known; He that made the Universe, and sustains it with increasing care must also know of every difficulty that arises between nations. He that numbers the hairs of one's head, must logically feel interested in the welfare of the many; for what am I? All that I am now, all that I was on earth, with my perishable body and my immortal soul, was from God alone, fashioned in His supreme mind from His hands. From Him I received all the comforts of earth-life, as I am now receiving all the comforts of spirit-life.

I had not when on earth any long reaching hopes of Eternity; I did not exercise my thoughts on the length, the depth, and the breadth of His great loving care; I had never searched in inexhaustible worlds of being for a life of perfection and blessedness after death; I knew that I had vitality, or life power, when in the body; I believed in the visible world, but not in the invisible territories of man, some of which are filled with light and peace and joy, whilst some are full of darkness and misery. Few there are amongst us who know where earth ends and immortality begins. Our comrades in Egypt—I think of them, I pray for them, surrounded as they are by scowling, fanatical enemies who are thirsting for their lives, but I realize how that ruin cannot come to them without the Almighty God permits. Now He that cares for the humblest will care for those who are fighting on His side; there is no dissimulation respecting the cause for which our forces are stationed there. It is to uphold the absolute authority of a constitutional ruler, and He who rules all things can perceive the righteousness of our cause.

The British interest attached to Egypt is very considerable, and requires law and order and not anarchical lawlessness; England's interest is not centred so much in the country, but Egypt is a royal way to the Empire that England has been permitted to conquer, by Him who, as the great Law-giver, permitted her to conquer that she might teach them good laws, for, without partiality to my own nation, I believe, that of all nations there is not one to compare with England as a law-giver; no one that is so well governed; no one whose people are more contented. In fact, there are but two parties in England; the Radical element is but a name, a myth.

I realized on leaving the body that I, as a spirit, as a thinking soul, was not confined to idleness, and that God's purposes still had to be fulfilled by me as by all others. I remember when I entered unbodied (in respect to all you understand of a body) I remember it well; I remember my first promise made to God, when I knew that I had ceased to be: "Oh, Heavenly Father, my creator, all that Thou wilt I will be, I am still thine; my soul trembles yet rejoices at my continued being." This must have been the experience of nearly all men on leaving the earth, because they then perceive that there is but one road towards Him, and that is the road to truth and righteousness; a road which, if not travelled in earth-life, will, in the first place, be bitterly regretted, and obedience must of necessity surely follow; for the spirit cannot, in after life, retrogress like the Arab races. It is only here on earth that man can go back. It is the flesh that betrays the God-nature, for there is God in every immortal spirit: a life that never dies; a spark of perfection; a gem that is changeless in its brightness. It is that of which we are formed; it is all of us that surpasses time and belongs to eternity.

In the infinite wisdom of the Creator this war is a necessity, in all probability it is to save a ruined race, to restore peace and prosperity, and to spread abroad the blessings of the right of free opinion. The drowsy and lethargic scriptural warranty of the Koran will pass away, and with it the negligent and slothful creature it has formed; and reason and the power of thinking selfhood shall be given to them.

I thank God that there is amongst men a knowledge of being beloved, of being cared for by the Supreme, not only in time but beyond it. Your surroundings have told me this knowledge will be general, and that it shall not be confined to the few, and, further, with these God is all in all; He is their supreme joy, and in Him they have endless security. You know this; you are one of those who do not rest your hopes on traditional writings, but on that which is absolute. I thank God for the great love which men, who have realized eternity, have for each other. I thank God, also, for the wonderful change that this knowledge brings in a man. It is the spirit, then, that grows in virtue and grace, feeling through all its actions, uniting with heart and soul his brother man to himself. Every man has a capacity of obedience; every man has also an independent self-will, and this capacity is according to the degree of soul: I mean, that there are some designed for honour, whose acts and services to God entitle them to that honour. Nothing should hinder a man's obedience to God; and, according to his capacity, so shall be his glory hereafter, and as this obedience is rendered so shall the spirit grow in grace and love.

This time, that is promised, when everything in nature shall rejoice, is coming quickly, even as change comes. This, with all my heart, I pray: It cannot come too quickly. The saints of old, according to Scripture, prayed, "Oh, that Thou wouldst



hide me in the grave; that Thou wouldst keep me in secret, until Thy wrath be past; that Thou wouldst appoint me some more years, that I might remember Thee. If a man dies shall he live again? all the days in time will I serve Thee and wait on Thee, until the change comes, then call and I will answer." There is no longing for death in the heart of one who knows God; this would be petulance. God calleth when He willeth, but does not shut him off from the land of the living. I thank God there are many who, through your means, know that man is not hidden in the grave, nor does he await judgment in retired and solitary purgatory, dark as the grave itself; but they know that death of the body is restoration of the health and happiness of the spirit, and the darkness of affliction and overwhelming sorrow ceases, and man is delivered from the world's calamities, and obtains instantly a divine glimpse of another and a higher life. He knows then he is the work of a blessed God, so perfect as to be beyond time's destroying influences.

When I leave you it will be to go back again to view the tides and changes of battle; never, neither on earth nor even now, did I nor do I consider it blasphemous to ask God's blessing on my nation's arms. I ask it now. I consider the tide is now at its highest; I consider that there, in Egypt, rests my country's destiny. Her statesmen know it also. I am certain we shall conquer; I am certain that firm resolve has taken the place of vacillating counsel. Her Majesty, whom God preserve, has been advised to shower honours on the most deserving, nerving the arms to-day of those who, up to the present, have not distinguished themselves. A feeling of restless activity shall prevail, and no keener disappointment could be experienced by them than the news that the rebels did not mean fighting, and it is before us here that our country goes into this war unaided; with her will be all the honour of victory; with her, all the rightful proceeds of success. The European coalition are watchful, but there is a phrase amongst lawyers, of which you must be fully cognisant, namely, that of possession being nine points of the law. Better for our Nation to answer the objections of other Nations with Egypt in her possession, and the all important Canal under our surveillance. I am beckoned to stop, as your Doctor is holding up his hand; he wants sufficient power to be left for healing purposes. So put down your pen.

I asked to have a little conversation, and was getting into a nice little discussion on affairs in Egypt, when he said, "The hand is again beckoning me away."

Although I may be told that there is nothing said in these controls but what living men could say, yet, quite apart from the Sensitive's power to express the idea in the language used, I do not hesitate to say that only living men of high intellectual standard could have expressed themselves so well. It is interesting to me to have the opinion of one who made Aboukir Bay the scene of one of his greatest victories. The "Lord Nelson" out of the body, has still the same fire in action and modesty of behaviour he is said to have had when in the body. I would have my readers to observe that this control took place on the Sunday, the very day the action with regard to Port Said and Ismailia took place, only a few hours before the seance, and, as it was Sunday, the Sensitive had no means of seeing any telegraph.

#### THE MISSION OF NATIONS IN HUMAN PROGRESS.

France, Germany and England, as the three thinking nations of Europe, as M. Taine properly denominates them, as the three nations of the old world which are foremost in thought and ideas as well as in material power (for the world at large cheerfully and gratefully acknowledges their intellectual supremacy), should rather be advancing the interests of civilization than fighting each other or paralyzing each other by mutual jealousies. The co-operation of France, England and Germany would speedily settle the Eastern Question, and put the regions which constitute the Turkish empire in the way of recovering somewhat of their whilom fertility and prosperity. Nations, like representative men, are agents of that "divinity which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will." They have no choice as to the part which they shall play in the historic development of the world. The old Romans, almost from the dawn of their national existence, had to buckle on their armour and take the field to reduce the warring, hostile, disunited, isolated tribes, clans, races and nationalities to a state of subjection

and harmony, and to impress upon them the fact that they were all of one race, and constituted a unity or common humanity, with a community of interests and a common destiny. But those old Romans, with all their sweat and travail, and ceaseless marching and countermarching and fighting up and down the world of their day, only imperfectly succeeded in fulfilling their mission. The world was then too chaotic and too barbaric to be more than imperfectly civilized. The Romans, with their legions stationed everywhere, were the world's police of their day, and the centres of law and order. "Rome," as has been tersely said, "finally disappeared, as leaven, in the mass of her own empire." But the tradition and shadow of her vanished greatness are, even now potent with millions of people at the present hour. And still a vast portion of the earth lies in the shadow of barbarism, of barbaric beliefs and barbaric despotisms. But the enlightened civilization of to-day, with its mighty engineries and its lightning-winged dispatch of locomotion and communication, is so armed as to be able to make itself coextensive with the globe—that is, if the foremost civilized nations will only co-operate in the business. Meantime, England, with all her faults of insularity and contemptuous indifference to the opinions of the outside world, has undoubtedly, more than any other great modern nation, or all other great modern nations together, played the old rôle, so far as the outlying barbaric world in both hemispheres has been concerned, both by colonization and conquest. We will not look a gift-horse in the mouth. We will not too closely scrutinize the motive of England in her colossal territorial acquisition, no matter if it has been purely commercial greed. Still, we shall have to confess, with a distinguished Austrian military authority, that the function of the British empire in the political and intellectual organism of the globe has been high. It is a bulwark of civilization, that precious inheritance we have received from our forefathers. It is a mighty agent, a strong and keen fighter in the great struggle between mankind and all that is hostile to it on earth. To British aggression is due the fact that to-day the vast moiety of mankind which inhabits the peninsula of India is being rapidly Europeanized in art and science and rational thought, and thus added to the domain of enlightened civilization. France, in northern Africa, the seat of the mightiest commercial power of antiquity, is extensively engaged in subduing barbarism. Why should not at last the wretched, over-laboured, plundered fellah, or common labourer of the Nile valley, feel the hand of civilization interposing in his behalf to lighten the immemorial burden of his inherited misery, a misery and degradation which have been his lot from the days of the shepherd kings down? He deserves as much sympathy at least as did the ex-slave of our own Mississippi valley in the time of uncompensated servitude. Let us say, then, as far as France, Germany and England are concerned, co-operation in the interests of civilization and for the speedy extinction of the empire of barbarism, tyranny, cruelty and bloody superstition throughout the East and the dark continent is the part which they ought to play, rather than one of mutual jealousy and obstruction.—"Sunday Herald," (Boston, U.S.A.)

#### OPEN VISION OF DEATH.

The London Correspondent of the "Sussex Daily News," (Brighton) thus writes, in the issue of August 28, 1882:—

"My old teacher in Divinity, Dean Plumtre, of Wells, is a believer in the 'open vision of death.' He sends a story to the 'Spectator' which is very like a score of others which one has heard. The mother of one of the foremost thinkers and theologians of our time was lying on her death-bed, in the April of 1854. She had been for some days in a state of almost complete unconsciousness. A short time before her death, the words came from her lips,—'There they are, all of them;—William and Elizabeth, and Emma and Anne;' then, after a pause, 'and Priscilla, too.' William was a son who had died in infancy, and whose name had for years never passed the mother's lips. Priscilla had died two days before, but her death, though known to the family, had not been reported to her. This is Dean Plumtre's story. May I add my own, which is as striking as any that have yet been told? When I was a child I remember a Nonconformist minister of a provincial town coming into my father's house on a Good Friday rather early in the morning, and saying, 'My brother Tom is dead.' 'Have you heard?' 'No,' was the reply, 'but I was awakened by him this morning, and know that he died at ten minutes to three, which was the hour at which I awoke. I looked at my watch.' After church I went with my father to the house of the minister. The first news brought by the daughters of the house was that a message had been received in which it was announced that 'Uncle Tom died in London this morning at ten minutes to three.' The death had been expected, the brother was anxious, and the hour may have been a coincidence; but his firm conviction that he had been awakened by the dead, and its verification made a strong impression upon me; and whatever it may be worth, here is the story, and it is absolutely true."

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## SEANCES AND MEETINGS DURING THE WEEK AT THE SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW.

THURSDAY.—School of Spiritual Teachers at 8 o'clock.

Tuesday.—Mr. Towns, Clairvoyance, at 8 o'clock.

## THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1882.

### NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Essay on "Pessimism" is well-timed. We continually hear of persons thinking to "make a hole in the river" because of their "ill luck." Than this resolve there can be no form of insanity more deplorable. Mr. Dymond suggests that temperament has to do with it. That is so. The organic functions consist of two opposite processes: nutrition and waste, life and death, growth and decay. Those in whom the first class of function predominates, never feel aggrieved at "Life," for they have it; and, whether Secularist or Spiritualist, they build not on a "future" life, because, with them, life is an ever-present fact. It is not at all speculative with them, but demonstrably real. Is not the joyous recognition of this fact of facts the highest worship, praise, and gratitude?

Those of the venous temperament, with a superabundance of organic waste in the fluids, have their spiritual outlook enveloped in a magnetic fog, which smells of the grave—not of a fragrant life. These persons frequently have a large back brain, and persistently brood over past joys or future ills, regardless of present blessings. The mental disease and morbid physical conditions, arising from inactivity of the circulation and emunctuaries, go together, and the sphere of such a person becomes the habitat of morbid spirits, just as a dark cave becomes the abode of bats and owls. Remedy: a Turkish bath; plain opening diet, and cheerful occupation in the open air. The orthodox idea of "hell" for gloomy sinners, and "purification by fire," are symbolisms of great significance. Let us wisely take our Turkish baths and purgations in this world!

Mr. Dymond's extracts have set us to thinking about the Book of Ecclesiastes, alias, the Preacher. It has puzzled many how such a spirit-blind production should form part of the "Word of God." To us the reason is clear: it is a satire upon Churchianity, the preaching trade; or, that intellectual products—creeds, science, material wealth, almanac religions, historical facts, and things to be believed generally—can never avail in satisfying the needs of the spirit. We have known trance mediums and clairvoyants in as dark spiritual despair as the veriest "infidel," who generally has a stiff backbone and a vigorous digestion. The seeing of spirits, the conviction of immortality, and other forms of "spiritual knowledge," are simply forms of externalism, which the Preacher pronounced to be vanity. The light of the spirit must be within itself: if that be darkness, then no light derived from the intellect can avail in the dread hour of trial.

All this ought to impress us more deeply with the inestimable blessing of Life; and admonish us to cling to it and obey

its laws, in place of being carried away by mere theories respecting it.

Mr. Wright's poem, "Death," is another argument against Pessimism, and A.T.T.P.'s Control argues in the same direction, especially as regards war, respecting which there are so many croakers. If all of Life be good—its excretory functions, even to biliousness, when the case requires it, as well as its nutritive processes—the same may be said of the Grand Life, the functions of the collective Humanity! Health is preserved by disease;—Mr. Young's letter shows that during epidemics, there is, indeed, a lower degree of mortality: War is the "disease" of the Grand Man, and, as a consequence, is conducive to "health"—peace,—and soundness of constitution—social order. The article from the Boston "Sunday Herald" bears out the same views.

We are glad that the proposed Debate between Mr. Wright and Mr. Stoddart has been abandoned. "Who can by searching find out God?" We sincerely wish there was less familiarity made with the Divine Name. The appreciation of Deity is a holy sentiment, inexpressible by speech, and undefinable by intellect. Who can define "wife," or give logical reason as to why such a woman is my wife or yours? It is the sentiment, the love, that makes the particular "woman" the individual man's "wife;" to all others she is simply a "woman," nothing more. So, whatever intellectual "form" our conception of Deity takes, it is the holy and reverent feeling, altogether independent of intellectual resolve, which constitutes the true Theism. All intellectual efforts, which stir up the holy flame within, are to be commended. In the Order of Spiritual Teachers such themes are treated without dispute, and that antagonism which leads to personal bitterness and, therefore, the extinguishment of love divine.

### A NEW SUBJECT FOR LEGISLATION.

We have received from Sydney, New South Wales, the first two numbers of "The Debater: a weekly liberal penny newspaper; for the free discussion of all subjects, including Free Trade, Protection, Squatters, Free Selectors, Education, Trade Defence, Christianity, Buddhism, Materialism, Free-thought, Anglo-Israelitism, Spiritualism," etc., etc.

Mr. E. Cyril Haviland, in No. 1, has an excellent article on "The Employment of Girls as Barmaids." He says:—

"The evil cannot be remedied without a clean sweep; you cannot have a law to allow a certain class of girls, or a certain class of hotels, special privileges, but to effect a genuine remedy for the multitude of evils at present in existence, it is necessary that the law should make it penal for any female to serve liquor.

"I assert it here, as another fact, that two-thirds of the drinking done in Sydney is unnecessary—that this, the drinkers do not require it, and are not thirsty, but are led, like moths round a candle, from this house to that—a glass of beer here, and a soda and brandy there—for the sole purpose of chaffing and flirting (and sometimes worse than that) with pretty Polly of the —, or Kitty at —, and then when they become old and should be steady and respectable citizens, drink has taken such possession of them that they cannot shake it off.

"How many of our to-day drunkards can trace their beginning to this? Where is the record? And who can say what other crimes have grown out of this same accursed thing? Do not answer me and say, 'No one.'

"And again, the worst of this evil of employing girls as barmaids is that it is a hydra-headed evil. It does not stop at muddling the growing brain and making a large proportion of our men, and women too, drunkards, but it eventually casts on our streets a class of girls whose beauty of feature has passed away, and who are dependent on what they can pick up for support.

"How many once innocent girls can trace their downfall to the public-house bar? The number is far beyond count. More's the pity, and the blame is to be laid to our laws and their makers.

"I say, the whole system is iniquitous; it is worse than that, for I cannot imagine anything more loathsome and degrading to a civilized community than that the law should allow girls to be hired for such a purpose.

"I said in my letter, before alluded to, that I would never rest until it was the law of the land, and if it should ever be placed in my power to serve my country in Parliament, I shall feel that I have not wasted my time if I helped to pass no other law."

This is a theme for some moral legislator in this country to take up and make his own.

SHILDON.—On Sunday, Sep. 10th, two public meetings will be held at 22, Redworth Road, New Shildon, at 2 and 6 p.m., to be addressed by Mr. Scott, Darlington, Mr. Oyston, Mr. De Main, and others. Tea will be provided at 6d. each. A collection in aid of Spiritual Institution will be taken at the close of evening meeting. All are cordially invited to attend.



## DEATH.

I am merciless Death, who robs man of breath;  
But a friend I am to all:  
'Tis but the body, that bit of shoddy,  
I kill, for the thinking soul  
Is beyond my blade, and is not afraid,—  
It defies my art and aim;  
When crushed from the light, it gleams in the night,  
In thought and person the same.

A soul cannot die, how'er it may try,  
Nor dim the pale light of stars;  
All souls must, by law, continue to glow,  
As shines the red planet Mars:  
Immortal it lives, and succour it gives  
To weary ones by the way;  
There's light in the sphere, when goodness is near,  
And sorrow is held at bay.

On the tempest deep my watches I keep,  
Like the man before the mast;  
By the factory's wheels, and shuttles and creels,  
I hold my post to the last;  
In the camp and field like a soldier steeled,  
I joy in the belching fire;  
I laugh at the shell with its hiss and swell;—  
Ruin is what I admire.

I come from the land where the cold damp hand  
Soddenly falls in decay;  
When one life departs another life starts  
Anon, and that is the way  
The atom-soul flows, and rapidly grows  
In functional strength and life,  
It reasons with care, and fights for its share,—  
Its days are tumult and strife.

Man dreams of peace that never will cease,  
And fine golden shores afar;  
He often does pray, and looks for the day  
He shall wear the crown and star;  
The future is bright to his dreamy sight,  
The present is dark and drear,  
His eyes can behold, with pleasure untold,  
All objects which lie not near.

I honour the hope, that can with life cope,  
And cheer up each rugged scene;  
I curse black despair, with its trouble and care;  
I covet the blissful sheen  
Of the golden life, far removed from strife,  
With its love, its joy and calm;  
With its happy streams and glittering beams,  
And its ever-pleasing psalm.

All my bolts are hurled, with a truth untold,  
Which riddle the rank and file;  
The Peasant and Duke alike I rebuke,—  
Mine are the Lords of the Isle;  
The wretch in his cell, in punishment fell,  
I calm with my quiet sleep;  
The limbs which are bare, and loaded with care,  
I hurry across the deep.

The man with the mind, by culture refined,  
Whose wisdom is golden grain,  
Ah! must cross with me, the turbulent sea,—  
To far brighter lands attain.  
All Death is but Life, in its conflict and strife,  
Conditioned in every state;  
All equal must be, and happiness see,  
In a never-ending fate!

2, Sydenham Avenue, Sefton Park, J. C. WRIGHT.  
Liverpool, Sep. 4th, 1882.

## DEBATE—J. C. WRIGHT v. W. STODDART.

33, Earle Road, Tunnel Road, Edge Hill, Liverpool,  
September 3rd, 1882.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—I would thank you to publish a copy of the post card I received this morning, in reference to the proposed debate with Mr. J. C. Wright, and oblige, yours truly,  
J. AINSWORTH.

"93, Corporation Road, Middlesborough, August 31st, 1882.

"Dear Sir,—I have received your note, and beg to say that I have not expressed any desire to debate with J. C. Wright. As it takes two to make a quarrel, so it requires two to hold a debate.—I am, yours, etc.,  
W. STODDART."

BRISTOL.—In response to the invitation published in the MEDIUM of a few weeks since, a number of friends have met for the purpose of forming circles for the investigation of Spiritualistic phenomena, and the development of whatever mediumistic gifts may be latent in the sitters. For the present, the friends meet at 14, Beaumont Terrace, Stapleton Road, on Wednesday evenings, at 8.30. We trust to be able to form a number of circles, and so create a nucleus for an organization. Friends willing to cooperate are invited to communicate with Mr. Young, as above.

## THE REDUCTION OF THE LIABILITIES.

The following kind responses have been received to Mr. Morell Theobald's generous offer, published last week. Further aid should be sent immediately to Morell Theobald Esq., 23, St. Swithin's Lane, London, E.C. :—

Llandudno, September 4, 1882.

Dear Mr. Burns,—Just a line to say, that I willingly respond to Mr. Theobald's proposal, published in the MEDIUM of the 1st inst. Please let him know that I will send him a cheque for £5, on either of the conditions he names. I hope eight others will be found, to send at least similar help.—Yours truly,  
JAMES MYLNE.

September 6, 1882.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—Will you allow me to second Mr. Theobald's appeal to the friends of Spiritualism, to see if it is not possible to get rid of the debt-burden which so persistently hangs about the Spiritual Institution. Compared with many of those who, through Spiritualism, know something of the blessedness of an assurance of a future life, I am but a poor man, but I will give £5 on Mr. Theobald's condition, which is, that £50 be raised within a month. Surely, out of the thousands of Spiritualists there are in England, there are eight more who could give £5 each. Or, if everyone who could afford it would contribute sixpence or a shilling, the thing would be done at once. I cannot help but think the constantly recurring appeals for pecuniary aid, which Mr. Burns, is obliged to make, must have a prejudicial effect on the circulation of the MEDIUM and the Cause generally. If we could get the better of our selfishness so far as to make up the £50, I am sure it would be an occasion of great rejoicing amongst the readers of the MEDIUM.  
E.

34, Willows Terrace, Willows Lane, Accrington, Sept., 1882.

Dear Sir,—I took the opportunity of bringing the question of your liabilities before our meeting on Saturday, and it was decided to give you the sum of 10s.

It appears to us that if someone would only take the matter up and bring it before all the circles in the kingdom, the sum of £50 might be raised. With best wishes from our circle, I remain, yours truly,  
JOHN ROBINSON, Sec.

Mr. Theobald desires us to acknowledge the receipt of £1 1s., from Rev. G. D. Haughton.

Mr. Alexander Wm. Smith, Brixton, remits his weekly subscription of 1s. and 1s. 9d. collected at two seances. Also, received from Mr. Turner, weekly contribution, 1s.

"From A. B., who would gladly give more to help so earnest a worker in the cause of Spiritualism as Mr. Burns, if she had the means." Postal order enclosed, 5s.

## THE CASH SUBSCRIBER.

A cash subscriber (may his tribe increase!)  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
And saw, within the moonlight of his room,  
An angel writing in a book of gold.  
Exceeding peace made the subscriber bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said:  
"What writ'st thou?" The vision raised its head,  
And with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answered "The names of those who love the Lord."  
"And is mine one?" The angel said: "Not so."  
The cash subscriber, speaking then more low,  
But cheerily still, replied: "I pray you, then,  
Write me as one who pays the printer men."  
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great awakening light,  
And showed the names whom love of God had blest;  
THE CASH SUBSCRIBER'S NAME led all the rest.  
—"The Cornubian."

Mr. T. M. Brown, and family, will sail from Glasgow, in the "Shenir," on the 20th inst., for Maryborough, Queensland. They will land about 150 miles from Brisbane, but Mr. Brown intends to reach that city as soon as possible. We hope there are some Spiritualists in Maryborough who will meet the ship and give the immigrants a welcome. Letters should be addressed—T. M. Brown, Myrtle House, Howden-le-wear, R.S.O., Durham. Friends may have Mr. Brown's portrait, price 6d. Any help to the Emigration Fund will be gratefully received. If possible, we will run down next Saturday for a farewell glimpse, and hold a meeting on Sunday.

## MAN'S PHYSICAL CONDITIONS.

### THE LAW OF VICARIOUS MORTALITY.

History, we are told, repeats itself. DION CASSIUS records the fact, that during the plague "many died in another way, not only at Rome, but over nearly the whole Empire, through the practice of miscreants, who, by means of small poisoned needles, communicated, on being paid for it, the horrid infection so extensively that no computation could be made of the numbers that perished."

Had DION CASSIUS been living now, the above description would have well described the *inoculators* of the last, and the *vaccinators* of the present, century.

It is recorded by Thucydides, that during the Plague at Athens, other diseases declined; and recent observers have noted that when Small-pox prevails, other diseases are in abeyance or are less fatal. One of the favourite, *ad captandum*, fallacies of the advocates of Vaccination, is, that it has saved thousands of lives. Dr. George Gregory was the first to detect and expose this fallacy, which has been further elucidated by the researches of Dr. C. T. Pearce in this country, and by Rektor P. A. Siljeström in Sweden. The fact appears to be established, that in any given community, a certain number of the population die of that class of diseases known as "Zymotic," one or another of these being, for the time, in the ascendant.

In accordance with the law of Vicarious Mortality, the *total mortality* is not increased by the prevalence, as an epidemic, of either Cholera, Measles, Scarlatina, Whooping Cough, or Small-pox; indeed it can be proved statistically, that when Small-pox is the reigning epidemic, the *total mortality from all causes is almost invariably below the average*: so that, paradoxical as it may appear, the advent of Small-pox is, nationally considered, rather to be welcomed than dreaded.

Evidence of this fact is afforded by the Registrar-General in his Annual Summary for 1880, where, speaking of the decade, 1871—80, he says:—

"One disease alone in the class (Zymotic) showed exceptionally a rise. This was Small-pox, which gave a death rate of nearly fifty per cent. above the previous average. . . . The decennium which closed with the year 1880, was of lower mortality in London, than any of the preceding decennial periods."

In confirmation of the position, that a very low Small-pox mortality does not indicate any saving of life, or improved state of the public health, or diminish the total death rate from Zymotic diseases, I quote the following from the latest published report of the Registrar-General, dated August 1st, dealing with the deaths in the United Kingdom for the months, April, May, and June:—

"ZYMOTIC DISEASES.—The 125,078 deaths from all causes included—

4,359	attributed to	Whooping Cough.
3,899	"	Measles.
2,817	"	Scarlet Fever.
2,022	"	Diarrhoea.
1,769	"	Fever.
871	"	Diphtheria.
371	"	Small-pox.

Thus the total number of deaths ascribed to these causes was 16,109, corresponding to an annual rate of 2.45 per 1000, against an annual average rate of 2.50 for the ten preceding second quarters." Wm. Young.

114, Victoria Street, London, August 10th, 1882.

## MEDIUMSHIP.

### PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION AT HETTON DOWNS.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—We take the pleasure of writing to you, as you will be glad to hear that we are improving in our circle. Our meeting of the 27th was the best that we have ever sat in. We were four in number. After singing as usual, our spirit-friends came with great power. The first was "Sunbeam," who came and struck the table loudly with the palm of his hand five or six times. The next was little "Polly," a guide of the medium, and sang her favourite hymn in the direct voice. A young woman guide rang the bell, keeping time to the singing. The next to come was "Mary"; she took a watch from one of the sitters, and put it into my hand. She then took a scarf-pin out of the sitter's scarf, went round to each sitter and let them feel what it was. She then put it

back into its place again. "Sunbeam" came again; he had been down stairs and brought up a pair of slippers, which he put into our hands. "Polly" came again. She is very fond of singing. She sang another verse which she had composed herself, and so closed the meeting. I may just say, before I close, although we were in total darkness, our room was illuminated so that we could observe both sitters and medium.—I remain, yours truly,  
DANIEL HARLE.

Francis Street, August 29th, 1882.

[It is in small circles, where there is complete harmony of influences,—no opposing influences—that the grandest manifestations are obtained. We have above an indication of the luminous and glorious phenomena, which will be the striking feature of the manifestations of the future. Keep circles private, and sacred from the intrusion of improper motives and improper characters, and in due course the spirits will vindicate completely the claims of their work.—Ed. M.]

### GROPING OUR WAY.

To the Editor.—Sir,—I am very much struck with a remark recently expressed through the mediumship of J. C. Wright:—"You cannot bargain for any class of proof. A spirit message cannot be sent off as you send a ship through the Suez Canal. Facts and experiences must be perceived, catalogued, if you will, and measured and weighed out, to see what they are worth in after time." When one considers how few have been able, during the interval of confusion, to see clearly, it is refreshing to receive such assurance from the spirit-world. Instead of being repulsed by the irregularity and apparent contradiction of supposed spiritual communications, we ought to go on with our investigation more earnestly than ever, and learn what are the "Laws." It takes a long time before ordinary educated minds can read the riddle. My idea is, that under present conditions it is imperatively necessary to accumulate facts in a more detailed form than before. Let the MEDIUM be ready to record these facts in all their fulness. Let nothing be concealed. Let all the members of private circles exercise more discretion, and express themselves less positively, and they will save themselves a world of trouble. I am astonished to learn from private sources how much disappointment and severe mental agony has been experienced by many thoroughly conscientious seekers after spiritual communion—all the result of not knowing the "Laws" of spiritual intercourse. Have the most of us enthusiastic amateurs not believed that a spirit message could be sent off as easily as an ordinary mundane telegram? And when we did receive messages, how seldom have we (not knowing spiritual language) translated it correctly? Let us persevere, ever forward and upward, and light will arise.—I am, etc.,  
DAWN.

### THE POWER OF MIND OVER MATTER.

The Venerable Archdeacon Colley has enclosed us a proof of the following article from the "Natal Merchantile Advertiser," August 1st, 1882:—

A Durban gentleman, well known for his scientific studies and patient research into some of nature's profounder secrets, has in recent experiments obtained results of a very astonishing character, that seem to demonstrate the power of mind over matter, and the human will controlling inert substance.

A member of the staff of this journal, and clerical gentleman known for his psychological researches, recently witnessed some of these experiments with an hermetically sealed compass; which experiments suggested the fact of the superiority of man's volition, positiveness and determination over nature's fixed laws. The instrument used was a most perfectly made, and accurately fitted boxed, and hermetically sealed magnetic compass. Diameter five inches, having flat, thick-glass top. Needle three inches long, in shape like a small bar magnet. Two spirit levels were fitted inside at right angles with surface of the disc. Three screw nuts were placed at the outer rim of the brass work, in order that the plate might be set level and true, and the needle bar magnet have no dip or inclination. With this delicate little apparatus the scientific gentleman's experiments were directed to make the needle AT WILL, and by passes with the hands and fingers, REVERSE ITS POLES. No other magnet was near, or iron or metal of any sort used. By effort as it appeared of the mind and concentration of thought, passing the fingers of each hand over and upon the glass, but so gently as not to disturb the instrument in the least degree, the operator after a few minutes succeeded in getting the needle bar to leave the north pole and follow his passes to the 90th degree or fourth part of the circle. At that point he fixed it by making a pass in that direction across the glass: his will being so to do; the action being the outward expression of that will and emphasis and ultimatum of his desire. This attitude of mind, touching the position of the bar needle, had, as it appeared, to be maintained and determinately kept; since it was noticed that when the experimenter began to speak of other things, and failed for a moment to keep his mind on the needle, it instantly flew back to the north. Also, it was observed that the results attained were arrived at at first only with great effort, and the expenditure of much energy, not, however, so much in action as in quiet yet intense determination.



After a little rest and conversation, still engaged with the compass though its manipulation by other hands seemed for a moment to destroy the operator's power over it, he essayed a further trial, and in a short time brought the needle bar right round, so that the north pole stood south; and then in the same manner as before fixed it by a stroke across the glass in that direction. This was accurately done with difficulty, but at last to a nicety the needle bar was laid exactly point to point with poles reversed. It was noticed that the magnet quivered and hesitated and wavered first one way and then the other before it was thus laid at rest contrary to its dynamics; and seemed reluctant to yield perfect obedience; its will, according to its very nature as a magnet, (that knew it ought not to swerve in its allegiance from the pole) being as it were in direct antagonism with the will of the experimenter.

Archdeacon Colley then suggested that the operator should will the needle to set itself at various points of the compass indicated, which, now under perfect control, it readily did. Its north or south end also was made to dip, and touch the disc, and maintain or break contact as desired. With one end thus down on the brass plate, the needle bar also was made to move round the disc as though glued to it, yet forcibly pushed forward, scratching the dial plate in its circuit. The needle N. brought south, and S. brought north, was so brought, as it appeared indifferently, either N. by E. or N. by W. Fingers of both hands were used in the gentle passes over and upon the flat top glass, but the writer's impressions were that the fingers of the right hand had greater power over the needle to bring it one way, while the fingers of the left hand had greater power to bring it the other; it was not, however, at the time noticed which. This and other points have been suggested for further experiments, and it is trusted that further developments may attend future researches. Already an account of the matter has been sent to England to the two eminent scientific men, Professor Tyndall and Mr. Crookes; for the question is, are the results produced to be accounted for by the operation of any physical law, or must they be referred to those mysterious laws that obtain in the realm of the psychological?

## PROGRESS OF SPIRITUAL WORK.

### SPIRITUALISM IN THE METROPOLIS.

#### MR. TOWNS' CIRCLE.

Proceeding to the Metropolis from Leicester, I was able to be present, on Tuesday evening, at Mr. Towns' Circle, a privilege I much coveted. It is not without considerable diffidence that I attempt to describe the proceedings; there is not the slightest exaggeration in my saying that my pen is entirely inadequate to do justice to the extraordinary exhibition of psychological, psychometric, and clairvoyant power, realized through the mediumship of Mr. Towns. There were some twenty sitters. Mr. Towns having arranged the circle, opened the meeting with a simple, touching, childlike invocation, which was truly a heart utterance, expressive of perfect personal trust in Providence, and calling forth lively feelings of gratitude, affection, and confidence from all truly filial hearts. Mr. King then read a communication he had received from spirit-friends, which seemed an appropriate and impressive exordium to the lessons of the evening.

The company were then reminded that this was a school for the education of the moral and spiritual nature; they were not there to trifle, or spend a frivolous hour, much less to gratify an idle curiosity by witnessing a performance. They were there to give and to receive, stern and solemn, yet kind and merciful lessons of advice, direction, caution, warning, or rebuke, which the realities, requirements, exigencies, and obligations of life demanded. Then followed mental questions from each sitter in order, which were answered by the invisible ones, when a simple affirmative or negative was possible, through Mr. Towns' hand upon the table. Then would follow, in almost every case, what was really the most striking feature,—advice, information, warning, loving counsel, or severe rebuke, communicated spontaneously through Mr. Towns' mind and lips, from these invisible friends. Could every feature of that circle be presented in print it would read like a fairy tale; one seemed, whilst sitting there, to be in wonderland; everything seemed so much beyond the ordinary experiences of life. We are told that the promise was given, in ancient times, "Before ye call I will answer, and while ye are yet speaking I will hear,"—and here the promise is literally realized in the unspoken thought being answered, and the reserved question being called forth. One person is assured of the improvement of a temporarily insane child, which he declares he cannot but believe, having never known such assurances from that source to fail. Another, after having his affairs particularly considered, testifies that by not following advice previously given he had been a loser to the extent of forty pounds. A third gentleman was reminded of his intention and attempt to commit suicide—a thrill passing through the entire company as the time, means, and circumstances

were particularly unfolded. The gentleman acknowledged that the statements were true in every particular, but that up to that time these matters were sacredly confined within the secrecy of his own breast. Mr. Towns informed the gentleman that the act had been prevented by an unseen hand, and the gentleman acknowledged that he had felt the restraint. Another had his moral motives dissected, and received such a rebuke as must have overwhelmed him with chagrin. In ordinary life it would be almost unavoidable, in such circumstances as those, to give and take offence, but again we were reminded that this was a school, that those who came there to obtain the truth would get it; those who did not want the truth, had better not come there! One thing that struck me was, that nearly every person had more than he expected, and, in some cases, apparently more than he cared to have. It was simply impossible to either gainsay or resist the reality and searching character of the power that manifested. "All things," we are told in the old book, "are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." That is true, but the world wants to be brought to realize that "all things are naked" to those who are around us—our guardian spirits—which will have a far greater practical effect. What impresses the earnest student of this wonderful Spiritual Science is the reality and power of MEDIUMSHIP, Mr. Towns being throughout nothing more than a machine or instrument in the hands of the unseen powers. Mr. Towns disclaims knowing anything of the thoughts or circumstances of those present, he simply sits there, a passive instrument in the hands of others—the wonderful results are simply the outcome of the perfect control the spirits have over his brain and organism.

To a young lady, who had come that day from Winchester, and of whom Mr. Towns knew nothing, he was influenced to say, "Why did you not bring your companion: this circle would have done her good?" The young lady, with the utmost simplicity, explained the reason of her young friend's absence. To Mr. Redmond, a lawyer, from America, communications were given, showing that there were ministering ones who knew of his purposes and desires. To myself, who only asked for good counsel, caution, or whatever the guiding spirits saw was needed, Mr. Towns gave a lengthy and encouraging communication, in poetry and prose, from "John Wesley," whom he saw presenting himself as my adviser.

#### MR. TOWNS' MEDIUMSHIP.

I have another word to add in reference to Mr. Towns' mediumship, in addition to the above description of his "school," at the Spiritual Institution. I had the pleasure on Wednesday of spending some hours with Mr. Towns at his house, 161, Manor Place, Walworth Road, and, in a private circle, I had all I desired, and far more than I expected. I here repeat what I said to himself, that whilst listening to his conversation I seem to know nothing. Mr. Towns is truly a modern prophet; he is visiting, and being visited by, persons from all classes of society, and his own testimony is, that the results transpiring through his mediumship are becoming more and more astounding to himself. It was said of an ancient medium, "The prophet that is in Israel telleth the King of Israel the works that thou, (the King of Syria), speaketh in thy bed-chamber;" and in Mr. Towns' presence one can scarcely have any secrets.

One can scarcely imagine that such gifts are buried in the obscurity of a grocer's shop; the doors of every home should be opened to such a teacher, then would many a household that is now the wrong side up, be turned upside down, and, to reform the home is to revolutionize the world.

In thus somewhat lengthily bearing testimony to Mr. Towns, I have simply done my bare duty in reference to him, as a representative of Spiritualism in the Metropolis; and if any person considers the picture overdrawn, I need do nothing more than recommend them to visit Mr. Towns when they have opportunity.

#### MEETING AT THE SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION.

In returning from my tour in the North and the Midlands, Mr. Burns had arranged for me to meet a gathering of friends at the Institution. Results were realized that we little anticipated; my meeting with Mr. Norman, late of Exeter, is likely to lead to important consequences, as regards Spiritualism in the West of England.

I gave a resumé of my experiences during my tour, and the results of my observations and impressions concerning the Spiritual Movement in the different centres.

#### MISS HOUGHTON AND HER WORK.

On Friday I was favoured with the privilege I had much desired, of paying a visit to the gifted authoress of "Evenings at Home in Spiritual Seance." I make no apology for this reference to that lady, as she is emphatically one of the "Lights" of this Movement—one of the most illustrious representatives of Modern Spiritualism. Her wonderful books, mentioned above, show what her work has been and is; in those volumes we simply see herself—they are the outflowing of her own life: without ostentation or noise, yet there has been a quiet, steady development of the highest form of spirit-communion in her life, extending over an experience of twenty-three years.

Though not much before the world, she has the satisfaction of knowing that she is a lamp conspicuously shedding forth a world-wide radiance of the electric light of this New Era.

#### GOSWELL HALL SUNDAY SERVICES.

I had the pleasure, on Sunday, of attending the meetings at Goswell Hall, and the friends gave me their fraternal recognition by making me chairman both morning and evening.

At the morning meeting an address was delivered on "Comprehensionism," by Mr. Wilson, which was, in every sense an intellectual treat. As illustrating how prone we are to unjust and erroneous preconceptions, I had thought of "Comprehensionism" only as a mere matter of words and names—mere bones without any marrow. The hearing of Mr. Wilson's address, however, gave me quite an opposite impression; at least, in what we were favoured with on Sunday morning, there was an abundance of marrow and very little bone.

Mr. Wilson's "Comprehensionism" is simply a comprehensive view of man's relation to God and the Universe; showing that the human soul, which is God in man and man in God, is the centre of all things, the axis upon which the Infinite Universe revolves; showing that all reform and progress, individual, social, national, and universal, spring from the development of the inner life, the power of the human soul, which is simply the divine energy of love, goodness, and justice, manifested in the individual; and setting forth the principles which should govern the life of humanity, in all its relations, harmonizing it with God and the Universe.

"Comprehensionism" thus seemed to me to be only another name for the teaching of Nature, and Mr. Wilson's address was a masterpiece of thought, eloquence, and mental and moral power.

I have long desired the privilege of hearing the eminent trance orator, Mr. J. J. Morse. This privilege I had on Sunday evening. The subject was, "The influence of the spirit-world upon the progress of Spiritualism."

The address was, throughout, an earnest plea for a recognition of the real determining, governing and operating power in the Spiritual Movement, viz., the Spirit-world; in view of which was shown the worthlessness of the theories and methods which individuals, cliques, and parties were so fond of originating, to gain personal credit and influence. There was also an earnest defence of Mediumship—irrespective of individuals—as the foundation-stone for the objective expression and manifestation of the spirit-world.

The reality and importance of Mediumship being admitted, the injustice was pointed out of the suspicion, imputation, and hyper-criticism to which mediums were so much subjected.

OMEGA.

#### GOSWELL HALL SUNDAY SERVICES.

290, Goswell Road, E.C., (near the "Angel").

We had two excellent lectures last Sunday. In the morning Mr. Wilson addressed us, and in the course of his lecture detailed the "Morality of Comprehensionism"; a most grand and comprehensive system. The Rev. C. Ware, of Plymouth, who kindly consented to preside over the meeting, expressed himself as being deeply impressed with the richness and grandeur of the philosophy contained in the lecture. He would like to hear Mr. Wilson again and again, 'o learn more from him.

In the evening Mr. Morse occupied the platform with an address on "The influence of the spirit-world on Spiritualism." He said that Modern Spiritualism was the direct result of the labours of the spirit-world, that everything in Spiritualism which constituted its beauty and spirituality was owing to the influence of the spirit-world, and that trusting to the power of truth, it waited the time coming when men should stand forth united in the bond of divine brotherhood, and claim as one common creed, the greatest good to the greatest number, the brotherhood of humanity, and the fatherhood of God.

The Rev. C. Ware then made a short address, followed by a few words in reply from Mr. Morse in his normal condition.

Next Sunday evening Mr. Veitch will lecture on "The Doctrine of Devils."

R. W. LISHMAN, Corres. Sec.

#### QUEBEC HALL, 25, GT. QUEBEC ST. MARYLEBONE RD.

Sunday, Sep. 10th, at 7 p.m. prompt, Mr. MacDonnell on on "Our Civilization." This address will be unusually interesting and of importance.

Monday, at 8.30, Comprehensionists: "The Doctrine of the Principal" will be read by Mr. Wilson.

Tuesday, at 8.30, a Lecture by Mr. Wilson—"The World as Comprehensionists."

Wednesday, 8.30, a Developing Circle. Doors closed at 8.15.

Friday, 8.30 to 10, the Secretary attends to speak with any one and supply literature.

Saturday, a seance at 8 p.m., a good clairvoyant medium attends. Mr. Hancock is present half an hour earlier to speak with strangers.

J. M. Dale, Hon. Sec.

Mr. Colville's visit is postponed.

Middlesbro', and some other notices, too late.

#### LEICESTER—SILVER STREET LECTURE HALL.

On Monday evening, the 28th ult., a Tea Meeting was held at 6 o'clock, on the occasion of the Rev. C. Ware's visit to Leicester. It had not been thought of till Sunday evening, yet there was a good gathering of friends—48 sat down to tea. After tea, Rev. C. Ware lectured to a well filled hall on "How I became a Spiritualist"; afterwards the lecturer answered questions with great satisfaction.

On Sunday evening, the 3rd inst., Mr. Bent delivered a trance address; the spirit-guides took for their subject, "What must I do to be saved." There was a large congregation present, and the discourse was much appreciated.

56, Cranbourne Street, Leicester. R. WIGHTMAN, Sec.

#### THE HIGH PLACES OF BAAL.

A remarkable illustration and confirmation of the truth of the Old Testament records has been furnished of late, by the survey being carried on to the east of Jordan. As long as sixty years ago, notice had been taken by Captains Irby and Mangles of rude stone monuments to be met with here and there in the land of Moab and Gilead, strongly resembling the cromlechs or dolmens scattered throughout the British Islands, most parts of Europe, and even large tracts of Asia. Whether these structures, generally consisting of three upright slabs in the form of a chest, and a flat cover of stone, as a rule slightly sloping, were designed for the purpose of interment, or of sacrifice, has long been a standing theme of controversy with archaeologists. The more systematic explorations of Captain Conder and his party have resulted in the enumeration of between 600 and 700 monuments of this kind, which he thinks capable of being divided into seven distinct groups, each occurring in the neighbourhood of fine springs of water and of hill-tops commanding an extensive view, the cromlechs making up each group appearing systematically arranged round a central point on a hill-top. The most typical examples are met with at Hasbân, 'Ammân, Mareighât, and 'Ain Minyeh, photographs of which have been sent home, and are among the collections of the Palestine Exploration Fund, in whose "Transactions" some have been engraved. One conspicuous feature of these cromlechs or dolmens, which they have in common with those elsewhere, is a number of cup-shaped hollows in the surface of the upper or cap-stone, often with channels running from one to another. This, joined with other pieces of evidence, points to the conclusion that we have here the altars in high places set up for the worship of Baal Peor, and other deities—such as Astarte (Asherah, or the Phœnician Venus)—to whom the Israelites prepared a table in the wilderness (Is. lxx. 11; Ez. xxiii. 41; 1 Cor. x. 21). Such doubtless were the altars prepared by Balak for Balaam. The cup-shaped hollows were probably intended to hold the blood of the victims, or libations of wine or oil, poured over the slanting surface of the table-stone. The name of one of these stones (El Mareighât, "smeared") seems to indicate a tradition resting upon this usage. A sketch of the site shows three or more groups arranged round a centre, the outlying ones forming rude stone chambers, in most respects similar to those in other countries, especially in Brittany and Norway, used as burial-places, disposed around the central holy place, as in the case of the groups around Stonehenge. On the whole, it may be thought that four great centres of rude stone monuments south of Hesbân may be plausibly identified with Bible sites, that at El Maslûbiyeh above Wady Jedeid with Bamoth Baal, that at El Mareighât with Baal Peor, that at El Minyeh with the "top of Baal Peor that looketh towards Jeshimon," and that at the Ghôr, near Kefrein, with the sanctuary of Baal Peor in the Jordan Valley, where the Israelites worshipped while in Shittim. The name of Zophim still survives, Captain Conder is inclined to believe, in Sufa, and Nebo in the existing Neba; so that we have reason for the belief that our surveyors have had before their eyes the sites and the relics, weather-worn, but erect and massive, of the altars reared by Balak at the behest of Balaam upon the high places of Baal. That monuments of this kind are met with exclusively, so far as yet appears, upon the eastern side of Jordan, in Moab and Gilead, may be safely taken to bespeak the effects of the zeal and energy of the prophets of Jehovah in casting down and destroying these monuments of Canaanitish idol worship within the limits of Israel.—"The National Church," September.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD SOCIETY.—On Sunday next, September 10, the above Society intend holding a Memorial Service in their rooms at the Mechanics' Institution, Princess Street, (Major Street entrance), when several addresses will be given, to commemorate the life and labours of one of our oldest workers in the Cause of Spiritualistic Truths, who has recently passed into the spirit-life, in the person of Mrs. Ainscough (late Miss Hall) the beloved daughter of one of our oldest workers in this corner of our Movement, viz., Mr. John Hall. We hope to have a full meeting, and cordially invite all who knew her to be present, bringing with them bouquets of flowers, whereby we may blend the beauties and perfumes of the garden with the harmony and sweetness of the spheres. Service at 6.30, p.m.—OWD JONATHAN.



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