



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

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TRANCE DISCOURSE.

HOW FAR IS SELF-ABNEGATION
CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF
TRUE RELIGION?

THROUGH MR. S. DE MAIN BY HIS GUIDES.

(Reported by Mr. C. G. Oyston, Hunwick, Durham.)

If you consult the history of mankind, even from the most remote period of antiquity, you will be compelled to admit that selfishness has ever been at the root of all the evils morally, socially, and politically, that have from time to time assailed the inhabitants of earth. It is like a mighty weight suspended from the neck of the human race, which has been constantly dragging them down to earth, instead of elevating them to a higher degree of development. Now, we maintain that selfishness, instead of producing that happiness which is so eagerly sought after, deprives mankind of the inexpressible delight possible of attainment by all that subdue the grosser propensities of their being. Look abroad on the great expanse of Nature, and you will perceive that all the processes of her manifesting power tend to the sole purpose of contributing to the happiness of man. Deplorable though it may be, as man advances in wealth, knowledge, and civilization, the subjugation of his inferior being is disregarded, and the baser passions are allowed to run riot at the expense of the spiritual principle.

See that individual struggling with the forces of Nature, and who by patient investigation becomes master of his subject. Having become positively persuaded of the mighty power he possesses, instead of giving the world the benefit of his discovery, he resolves to conceal the grand secret in his own bosom. Thus there springs up the baneful influence of selfish aggrandisement, and he trades extensively on the credulity of his fellows.

Look at the nations of the past. The ancient Egyptians, who attained to such an elevated condition of civilization, proud of their great advancement in knowledge, they resolved to make their nation eminently glorious, and in order to augment their power, they

took upon them to keep in slavery a people comprising half a million, according to your present computation. But these slaves determined to cast off the yoke of oppression, rose up to declare they would no longer serve the tyrannical and despotic king, and eventually they departed to another country, thus curtailing considerably the power of a great and mighty nation.

To come down to later times, we can show that self has been the cause of untold sorrow and woe. Look yonder at the ecclesiastical Church of Rome, while blooming in all the loveliness of infantile purity and innocence. True religion smiled upon her followers, and cheered their souls, even as the orb of day gladdens the heart of man with his genial ray: selfishness had not taken root in their breasts, but an individual possessed of a large amount of this pernicious element sought to sow the seeds of inharmony among a happy people. By intrigue and treachery this destroyer of their peace reached not only to the head of the state of Rome, but the church also. Looking down from his high eminence upon the condition of the institutions established, he is discontented and dissatisfied therewith, and he desires to make the church stronger and more enduring. He therefore goes abroad, and beholds its pastors and teachers living in domestic love with their wives and little ones, sweetly enjoying the rich spiritual blessings from on high. He finds this state of things is not consistent with his ideas of grandeur and majestic power, so he issues a mandate, the horrible nature of which might almost cause the hills to shake and tremble—a mandate which never from that day to this has been equalled for cruelty and fiendish monstrosity. Every priest that was married and enjoyed the blessings of the domestic circle, must leave his wife and children, in order to remain within the pale of the church. If they did not comply with his wicked behests, fearful indeed should be the punishment. The result was that after one long wail of agony had ascended from the widows and orphans who were rendered destitute of all that made life tolerable, the hideous monster of celibacy reared his repulsive head, and commenced his career by encircling the human mind with a love of self and that alone.

It has been said, that man must retain a measurable degree of selfishness in order to get on in the material world, but you may rest assured that this principle is the source of the majority of ills that beset you, and is

mercilessly opposed to true religion. Certainly it is right that man should exercise self to a certain extent, if he does no harm to himself or his fellows, but beyond this he must not go. Now suppose that selfishness were general, every individual would be shut up within himself; every pulsation of love would become frozen, while endeavouring to ascend from the inner being; no refreshing streams of sympathy and affection would be enabled to well up from the human soul, and man would be as devoid of the necessary power for producing true happiness as the marble statue just turned out of the hand of the sculptor.

Look at the Nazarene who had not a spark of selfishness in his nature. In spite of the deadly hatred of the world, he strenuously exerted himself and laboured indefatigably for the elevation of the human race, and the influence this solitary individual wielded is entirely beyond the ken of earthly computation. The flame of spiritual power kindled by him is continually shedding its light and glory on the earth, removing every blood stain left by the demon, self. If you wish to live out the purpose of your being, sink selfhood. Then you will live in close relationship with the angel world, and become as noble a being as the seraph who stands like a burning sun before the throne of God.

See that individual who has it in his power to confer material blessings upon his fellow men, and make them happy indeed. He has zealously cultivated this monopolizing principle, and instead of imparting the requisite boon, he wraps himself up and will not permit one ray of sympathy to go out to the distressed and unfortunate soul. It may be that he desires to acquire more of the sordid dross of earth, or that he aspires to worldly fame, and he will not dispose of his superabundant wealth unless he receive something in return. Jesus refers to such natures as these, when he charges his disciples not to be as the Pharisees of their day, who made great feasts in order that they might be invited in return, and receive a greater benefit than they had bestowed; but they were to bless those who hated them, and do good to those that spitefully used them.

The popular form of religion of to-day sustains and fattens its exponents upon the fruits of selfishness, but this is not the pure and spotless truth of God. It is only an external formality, destitute of that vitalising power of the spirit. Now we positively declare that the man who endeavours to fulfil the purpose of existence by subduing the selfish propensities of his nature, and who receives the smile of heaven into his receptive soul, is doing more for the spiritual emancipation of his fellows than all the ecclesiastical institutions of Christendom. You will find all that have risen to eminence among the nations of the earth, have been those that have laid aside this baneful power, and who have gone forth disinterestedly to the object in view. It is impossible for an individual to lead his people to a higher condition of being, if that pernicious element reign paramount in his breast. As it was in the days of Jesus, even so is it to-day. You cannot serve two masters. You cannot serve true religion, and go hand in hand with self, for if you pander to the dictates of this pernicious principle, how can you worship in a true religious spirit.

Selfishness is one of the carnal appetites of your nature. If you conquer this degrading propensity, you become masters of yourselves, and if you accomplish this you are fulfilling the grand purpose of material existence. We would, therefore, recommend you to cast out this deadly serpent from your bosom, and allow him to enter no more, if you value your permanent happiness. It is this principle which prevents your soul from aspiring to the highest degree of development possible. Self points man to earth, where he is ever seeking to pander to his animal propensities and desires. Such an individual fails to receive that divine love which is ever descending in one unbroken stream to earth, and, fearful though it may be to contemplate, he is chaining his spiritual nature to material conditions,

instead of allowing that principle to soar upward into its native clime. He will remain attracted to the earth plane until this insidious foe be overcome, and he can rise upward, free from the trammels of earth. If you wish to accomplish the highest mission of your being while here, you must part with this treasure, no matter how dear it may be.

Self is the bane of domestic as well as public life. You may possess all the wealth material life can possibly afford, but, if you be selfish, all your possessions are incapable of granting you that peace which your superior principle requires. But he who is desirous of making sacrifices for his fellow creatures, no matter how lowly he may be, he is happy indeed, because the angel world smiles upon his loving soul. Though a regal diadem encircle your brow, if you be not true to yourselves you will be destitute of that light and love which should ever stream into the receptive soul. Though you may seek to drink from this pure fountain, selfishness will remorselessly dash the cup from your lips.

Some people inform you that unless you conserve to yourselves a certain amount of selfishness you cannot succeed in your dealings with the world, but we say, that selfishness cannot live in the same atmosphere with pure religion. You cannot be truly religious, unless you become living sacrifices to your fellows, and thus you will work in unison and harmony with the spiritual hosts on high. If you are willing to do this, then we say, that you have joined issue with true religion. Your influence for good will be powerfully manifested, for you will not only receive the co-operation of all pure-minded beings on earth, but you will be perpetually strengthened and invigorated with spiritual power from those noble souls who have passed beyond the veil.

SKETCHES FROM LIFE; OR, Leaves from a Clairvoyant's Note-Book.

3.—POOR JANET.

(Commenced in No. 668.)

[By an oversight the section printed last week was not complete. It should have ended thus:—

"Do tell him I am trying to be more content and steadfast, and ask him to do all he can to hasten the time when we may be together."

"I will," replied Philip; and we passed on.]

After walking for some distance through some pleasant lanes and over some meadows where cows and sheep were grazing, we came to a broad river, and, entering a boat in which sat two men dressed in Highland costume, were rowed by them down the river.

"How strange!" I whispered to Philip; "they are dressed like men—dressed like men still in the flesh."

"Yes," replied he, "that is because they have a natural love for their native costume, and as every love of a man's life is here depicted in himself and his surroundings, be they good or evil, these men and many others wear the plaid of their clan."

We soon reached a large building, which I recognised as one of those places of which there are so many in the world of spirits, where undeveloped spirits are trained and instructed and helped to overcome all their evil propensities. Kenneth was so anxious to obtain light and help that he gladly came here, and is making rapid progress.

"He is anxious to eliminate all the evil from his own nature as quickly as he can, in order that he may help Janet."

"Is he then so fond of her?"

"Yes," replied Philip, and, besides that, as he knows himself to have been the cause of all her wrong-doing, he feels it his duty to do everything in his power to atone for the past and to assist to make the future bright and happy for her."

While he was speaking we approached the house, and perceived Kenneth standing with clasped hands and downcast eyes, patiently listening to Janet's father, who was quoting every passage in the Bible, he could think of, calculated to strike terror and dismay into a guilty soul. As we came up he was saying—

"I tell you, you shall never see her again. She is accursed."

"But, sir," said Kenneth, looking up; "Why will you be so hard? God is not so implacable: he will forgive us—Why will not you. Oh! I pray," he said, casting himself on his knees, "forgive poor Janet, and say—God bless her! As for me, I deserve everything you say."

"Wretch!" cried the old man, spurning him with his foot,

"I might forgive you, but Janet, never. You were nothing to me; besides you never had the pious training she had. No: there is no forgiveness for the sin of self-murder. Is it not written—'As the tree falls so shall it lie'?"

"Have you not been here long enough, old man," asked Philip, sternly, "to see how many of those things written in the Bible are not literally true; and that the spirit-world is altogether different from what you expected to find it?"

"Indeed, is it," replied he, sullenly, "so different that I sometimes think I must be dreaming."

"So you are, when you curse and rage so,—dreaming a horrid hard dream. Come now, my friend, wake up, rouse yourself: go to your poor old wife, and listen to her gentle pleadings for her child."

"There it is again," cried the man, savagely; "you all talk to me as if I never loved her, when she was the very apple of my eye. I loved her too much; that is why God punished me so. I forgot he would have no rivals in the heart."

"You talk nonsense, old man," said Philip, interrupting him. "God planted all the tenderest emotions in a man's heart, intending that he should nourish and cultivate them, to the intent that by so doing he might become more like God himself—all-merciful, all-loving. Let me entreat you to put away these hard thoughts, and try and forgive, even as you need to be forgiven."

But the old man only turned sullenly away muttering.

When he was gone, Philip turned to Kenneth and said—

"I cannot tell you how delighted I was to see the admirable way in which you controlled yourself."

"Oh!" said Kenneth, "that was nothing. I richly deserved all he said; but it did hurt me to find him as bitter as ever against poor Janet. It makes me tremble for the consequences, should he again find her."

"We hope she will not again encounter him."

We soon after took our leave, and it was not for many weeks that I heard more of poor Janet.

When next I saw the good Philip, he told me in answer to my inquiries, that Janet was very much improved, and Kenneth so far advanced as to be quite trusted with the charge of her.

"If we were only as sure about her," he added, with a little sigh. "However, we shall soon see. Her father follows his niece, Susan, like her shadow, and must soon find Janet. God grant she may not again seek to destroy herself."

"Could you not prevent it if she did?"

"Certainly," he replied, "but, of what use would that be? No: she must herself conquer the disease, or impulse rather, and shun it as a sin against God. Then and then only will she be free from danger."

In about six weeks time, Philip came to me and said—

"Come with me. I am going to Janet. Anne has been to say her uncle has found out her poor cousin's abode, and is watching it. Kenneth is coming, and we shall then see if our poor Janet is stronger than on the last occasion."

"But, suppose she is not?" I asked.

"She is, I am sure," he replied; "or he would not have been allowed to find her."

When we reached the cottage, we found Janet with her hands clasped in Kenneth's, who had just arrived. She was looking bright and happy, and there was a look of strength and determination in her face, which I had never seen there before. As soon as she perceived Philip she darted forward, and, seizing him by the hand, exclaimed excitedly:—

"Is it not nice? Kenneth has built a pretty house; it has a garden and fields and some goats to mind. I wish they were cows; I like them best. But Kenneth says they will come later. Oh!" she cried.

And darting away, ran swiftly for some distance to the top of a little mound, where she stood panting and defiant, while her father, whom she had evidently seen before any one else, had begun as usual to storm and rage at Kenneth.

After standing passive for a few moments, looking as if in silent prayer, he turned and walked towards Janet, holding out his hand to her as he went. At this the enraged father sprang after him, and began to strike him violently upon his back. Janet, at the same moment, darted forward, and seizing the heavy stick from her father's hand, flung it to a distance.

"How dare you! Yes, you may scowl. Thank God, I no longer fear you. The merciful God has forgiven me, and I will not mind if you never do."

The old man stood speechless with mingled rage and astonishment, and Kenneth, taking Janet's outstretched hand in both of his, held it firmly.

"Man," said Philip, advancing to the father; "down upon your knees and thank God your child is at last rescued from the power of the sinful desire for self-destruction, rather than bear your violence. Thank God, I say, that she no longer fears you. She has suffered enough for her faults against you, and Kenneth has suffered, also. In the future they may suffer still, for there is much for them to learn—many evils to overcome; but they can much better do so together, for they can comfort and strengthen each other."

"I do not at all understand your ways here: it is altogether contrary to everything taught in the Bible."

"Only contrary to your understanding of it," replied Philip.

"Why the Bible says somewhere," said the father, "after

death 'There shall be neither marriage nor giving in marriage.'"

"But be as the angels who are in heaven," added Philip, finishing the quotation; "and they are in couples. The man's nature being the receptacle of Divine Wisdom, and the woman receptive of the Divine Love, which, when united, form in the sight of God one perfect being."

"And do you wish me to believe that sinful man and my accursed daughter make between them an angel? I don't believe it, and cannot, will not, believe it. If you had said, a devil, I think, perhaps, I might; but, an angel—"

"Not quite an angel yet," replied Philip; "but in God's good time they will become one."

"Well," said the old man, sullenly; "it is too much for me: I shall never understand; but if you know of any of our ministers about here, do, pray, let me see them decently married."

"Most surely," replied Philip. "If you will then forgive poor Janet and Kenneth, and bless instead of curse them."

Soon after, I went with Philip to a pretty house, where dwelt a good holy man, who upon the earth had been a Presbyterian minister, who went through the prescribed form of marriage between Kenneth and Janet, to the father's satisfaction. When it was over, Janet and Kenneth knelt before the old man and asked his blessing, who gave it in a rather ungenerous manner.

"I wish you may be as happy as you deserve."

"May I not now see my mother?" said Janet. "I hoped she would have come with you."

"I did not choose your mother to come. She is weak and foolish."

"Will you not stay with me for a few days?" said the minister to the old man. "I should like to have a long talk with you, and explain many things to you of which you seem profoundly ignorant."

"Yes," replied he, "I will stay." Then turning to his nieces: "You go and tell your aunt all about Janet, and say I am going to stay here."

"I will," replied Susan. "Aunt will be so pleased to know that you have blessed Janet at last." Then she said to me: "She and Kenneth are to go straight to aunt. My uncle is such a tyrant to her: worse than he was upon the earth, if that were possible."

Several months elapsed without my seeing anything of Janet, although I heard she was going on very nicely, and was happy and content. Her mother had been staying with her, and was so happy that she positively refused to go back to her husband, when he sent a message commanding her to do so. And his friend, the minister, told him she was quite justified in so doing, for said he:—

"Death severed the tie between you, and she never would have joined you here for a single moment, if she had not chosen."

"Very well," he replied. "Then I will live alone. Perhaps she will change her mind some day, then it will be my turn to say—I will not."

I think it was about three years afterwards, when accidentally meeting with the angel whom Janet had asked to be allowed to call "mother," I enquired about her.

"You must call her 'poor' Janet no longer: she is so happy and so useful. She has already had in her charge two unfortunate creatures, who, like herself, rushed unbidden out of life; but has now taken charge of one who drank herself to death, and whose state is so bad that it needs all Janet's and Kenneth's vigilance to prevent her getting back to the earth and obsessing a sister who has a like tendency."

"I am glad Janet is so usefully employed," I said. "I have often wondered what you could find for her to do."

"There is only too much of that sort of employment here for those who are able and willing to do it."

"What a blessed thing it is," I remarked, "that work can be found here to suit all sorts and conditions of people."

"Yes," she replied, "from the simplest little child to the wisest man or woman, filled with goodness and knowledge. All can find scope here for the energy that is within them."

"How different from the earth," I said, sadly.

"Yes," she replied, "that is the place for disappointment and failure: this the region of fruition and success."

When I next visited Janet, it was in her own house—a pretty house standing in a lovely garden, surrounded by orchards and fields. With them were staying two people: a young man and woman, who would have been handsome but for their wan woe-begone appearance.

"These," Kenneth informed us, "were a couple of lovers, who, because they were not allowed to marry upon nothing a-year, and no prospect of making a living for years to come, tied themselves together and jumped into the water. When they first awoke to consciousness here, they ran away from the angels who surrounded them, in hopes to complete the crime from which they thought they had been rescued, and, coming to a pool of water, plunged in. But the water was very shallow, and they only succeeded in severely hurting themselves. When told they were already dead, they could not at first realize it; and when at last convinced, they fell into the wretched state in which you now see them. Janet has apparently more influence over them than any one else."

"So we leave them here," added Philip, who said he was much here, doing what good he could.

"Do these two belong to one another," I asked, curiously.

"No," said Philip; "and by-and bye they will both wonder at the fatuity that held possession of them. Already they are beginning to draw invidious comparisons between each other and those about them."

"What will become of them eventually?" I asked.

"They will each go to their own place, but, at present, we think it best for them to stay here. Kenneth is so kind and judicious in his councils to the young man while Janet is so sweet and tender to the woman, that it can but have a beneficial effect upon her."

"The man looks both sullen and ill-tempered," I remarked.

"He is," replied Philip, and resents the failure of their scheme to destroy themselves, as if the poor girl could help it. Look!" he said, pointing to a figure coming across the fields; "here comes Janet's father again."

"How nice he is looking," I said. "I should not have known him."

"He is much improved," said Philip, "and comes here courting like a young man; and we all think Margery, Janet's mother, you know, is growing as fond of him as she was when they were both young. Look at her coming out to meet him; see, they are turning down to the river. They will sit there and talk for hours. He has grown very humble lately: the good minister's homilies have not been thrown away there, I assure you."

Many years have passed since I first saw poor Janet: poor no longer, but rich in goodness, in happiness, in love. Kenneth truly loves her, and thinks there is not, in all the heavens, an angel more sweet and beautiful than his own dear Janet!

VIOLA.

THE END.

SOCIAL PROGRESS.

DOINGS AT RUSHDEN.

One of the most prosperous and thriving villages in Great Britain is one whose name is scarcely known, except in the immediate locality; and that because it has not a railway station, the Midland line to the North being some two miles to the west of it. The nearest station, Irchester, is a place of no importance whatever, and if the engineers of the line had been true prophets, they would have saved distance and explored Rushden. This place is some twelve miles to the north of Bedford, and five miles further on is Wellingborough, Northamptonshire.

Rushden! Who would think of making a railway through such a place? To the engineering mind, the name must have suggested a kind of Chat Moss, an almost bottomless morass, redolent of stagnant moisture and "rushes," but these are not the commodities to afford a "return on capital." "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" may be applied in many senses to many places, in all ages.

The once straggling, dilapidated village in a valley, is not altogether inappropriately named. It is, however, rapidly becoming one of the most important centres of the shoe-manufacturing trade. In addition to the work once done at home by the shoemakers, large factories are springing up. Men who made shoes a few years ago, or whose fathers did so, are now large employers, and exert themselves successfully to bring prosperity to their neighbours. In this they appear to be quite successful: there are no idle, poor people in the place.

It is some sixteen years or so since we discovered Rushden. If we mistake not, it was through the orders of Mr. Crick for the "Phrenological Journal." That gentleman is the local student of Mental Science, and he is also interested in the Science of Human Nature in general, in which respect he does not by any means stand alone; for those who have somewhat investigated the Spiritual Nature of man have been for many years a strong energetic party in Rushden.

We first visited the place to lecture, nearly twelve years ago, if we calculate aright. The topic was "Spiritualism." At that time the place was in a much more primitive condition in all respects. There was no public place of meeting, except an old ramshackle Vestry Hall, which was under the control of the Church of England, and, illogically enough, could not be used by students of man's Spiritual Nature! Mother Church! Thou must open thy bosom to all of England's sons who seek the Truth, or thou canst not remain the "Church of England!"

But the Almighty Father forbade us not. He has given His earth to all His children, as far as they will permit one another to enjoy it. On that Sunday afternoon we found a place of meeting in an orchard, and said our say, and sang our song of praise under the growing apples. On another occasion a field was used in a similar manner. In process of time a little Temperance Hall was built, immediately on the opening of which we spoke in it on Phrenology, Temperance, and kindred subjects. Since then various speakers on Spiritualism have visited the place, and Dr. Sexton, in debate, once crushed a pretentious opponent.

When we visited Rushden again on Saturday evening, Jan. 20, we scarcely knew it. Our old and constant friend, Mr. C. Denton, was in a new house and shop of his own, in a new street,—the first change pointed out as we drove past. Then came the new place of meeting—a Coffee Tavern, with recreation rooms, hotel, and fine hall with 500 sittings, all under one roof. We found all our old friends in new and pleasant abodes, and advancing in social position and influence. The once persecuted Spiritualists have proved to be good sound men, forward in every good and progressive work, and, though repudiating the use of creeds, still in all respects quite as "religious" as those who profess faiths, laxly held, more loudly.

Our invitation was for the purpose of giving a phrenological entertainment on behalf of the Committee for providing Saturday evening entertainments for the people. The Rev. G. Pung, Baptist minister, presided, a choir sang, and there was an appreciative audience. Heads were examined till ten o'clock, including that of the chairman and the Rev. Mr. Garlick, Congregationalist, who was on the platform. We found these ministers genial intelligent gentlemen: the first naturally a healer, the second a thinker. We learnt, after that, his congregation had cashiered him the week before, because, as it appears, his plane of thought is too high and liberal for them. It is a great pity that the ignorance and bigotry of those who employ preachers, should raise obstacles in the way of men of education doing their duty. It is certain that the preachers of all the sects know vastly more than they dare utter in their pulpits. It is painful to think that the service of man is thus thought more of by the "cloth" than the service of God, Who is constantly pouring out new light on His children, in spiritual matters, as well as in material and mechanical inventions.

At the last moment, the local Anti-Vaccination Society, through Mr. C. Denton, applied for a lecture on that subject on Sunday evening. We gladly consented, notwithstanding delicate health, which was not apparent, however, on the platform. The New Lecture Hall was crowded to excess, some having to stand. It was truly a most respectable and sympathetic audience. The influence was grand and inspiring: it was clearly evident that the Angels of Light had work to perform. The Rev. Mr. Garlick conducted the service in the usual form of a religious meeting. "Dare to be a Daniel: Dare to stand alone," was sung with a will by all. Then Micah, vi., was read: "Arise, contend thou before the mountains, let the hills hear thy voice. For the Lord hath a controversy with his people. Shall I come before Him with calves of a year old? Shall I give my first-born for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good." Then prayer, and "Hold the fort," after which the discourse—"Vaccination as a religious question, or is it in accordance with the will of God?" As a text, the verse in Matthew xviii. was selected: "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones," etc. The discourse reviewed the question in its various bearings, and appealed to the feelings of the people. It was listened to with great attention and evident approval. The Rev. gentleman at the close characterising it as the "Word of God" on that matter. Two fathers, who expected to have their goods seized during the week, came upon the platform at the close, full of enthusiasm at their forthcoming martyrdom. It was altogether a meeting of great power, and must have given an impetus to the Cause.

We have received the following account of the seizure of the goods:—"Dear Burns,—Seizure for goods was made yesterday, Wednesday, at ten o'clock, by five policemen. The signal was given, and the people turned out en masse. Band of music and people formed in procession, and escorted the goods through the village, and right on to Wellingborough Police Court, a distance of five miles: the goods were 'run in.'"

"A band of music and procession with banners met some 200 others, who came by train from Rushden via Irchester, at Midland Station, and paraded the principal streets of Wellingborough, hundreds joining the procession. Our gallant Secretary of the Anti-Compulsory Vaccination League, Mr. Amos Booth, from Leicester, arrived at half past two. We at once took possession of the Market Place, and commenced to Anti-vaccinate the vast band of people there congregated. Meanwhile the Police authorities were busy, trying to get an auctioneer to sell the goods, but, to their credit may it stand recorded, not one man could be found to do the dirty job. Even the old Bellman refused to announce the sale, and I doubt, even if these difficulties had been got over, whether a bidder could have been found, to such a state of indignation did the people become excited.

"From information received at half past three, we learned that no sale would take place, and, after passing a resolution condemning the Vaccination Acts in a crowd of from four to five thousand people, with ringing cheers and not one dissident, we marched off the Market Hill, and made our way home; not to the tune of 'the Girl I left behind me,' for they were with us, but to these tunes, 'Grandfather's Clock,' and 'Old Arm Chair,' which we left in the police-cells.

"The police did their duty admirably, showing us unmistakably their sympathy. It was altogether a most splendid

blow to those abominable Laws, which, I trust, ere long our blind leaders will open their eyes to and repeal. We shall never give in till then.—Yours,
C. DENTON.

"Rushden, January 25."

Possibly the authorities will consider the imprisonment of the furniture for a couple of weeks ample punishment, and that the "sticks" will be returned to their owners, none the worse for undergoing a period of "martyrdom" in Wellingborough Police Station!

We have been informed that on Saturday evening, just before five o'clock, some one was sent round Wellingborough to announce the sale of the goods, at the same time they were removed from the Police Station to the Market place. Mr. J. Pendered, auctioneer; a few Anti-vaccinators, and several policemen constituted the audience. It appears that bidders were provided by some means, the auctioneer having bid for the table, which he called out at 2s. 6d., but being challenged to produce the bidder he was compelled to admit he had none, so that the article was knocked down to Mr. Burrows for 1s. 6d. The sale realized £2 14s. 9d. in all, a great part of which will be expended in costs.

The rate-payers, especially those who profess to be actuated by religious principles, should ask themselves whether they are taxed to support policemen to be occupied in this kind of fashion. The wages of the police would amount to much more than the whole fines, and that part of the expense necessarily falls on the local rates, independent of the ruin incurred on the special victims. If the magistrates had fined the parties 6d., they would equally have performed their duty in the eye of the law, and not violated the Law of God, which no man but a very wicked person would dare to set aside. The conscientious duties incumbent on parents, as the natural guardians of their children on behalf of the Creator, all sane and moral minds will respect. What are we to think of those who would wantonly devastate the homes of such truly God-fearing people, when the law allows them to get out of the difficulty another way? The law is, no doubt, bad enough, and must be repealed, and shall be repealed, but when the narrow-minded tyranny of its interpreters are thrown in, it becomes an engine of persecution and gross injustice.

A meeting will be held at Wellingborough on Monday, to form an Anti-Vaccination League. We hope the friends of righteousness and liberty, which together constitute true religion, will fan the flame now burning so briskly, and do their share to rid the country of this curse, which only the inspiration of a devil could have inflicted on mankind.

We are informed that Mr. Garlick's meeting on Sunday evening was the largest they had ever held, and went off first class. We would like to see Mr. Garlick, and men like him, take an independent course, leaning on the Almighty Arm, and speaking those words of inspiration which may come into their souls, notwithstanding public opinion.

ANTI-VACCINATION.

COMPULSORY VACCINATION IN SWITZERLAND.

To the Editor of "The Times."—Sir,—In August last "The Times" reported the particulars of the decisive overthrow by a referendum or plébiscite of a stringent compulsory vaccination law, known as the *Epidemien-Gesetz*, passed by the Swiss Federal Chambers. It is not, however, generally known that the agitation against vaccination, stimulated by the numerous serious and fatal vaccine disasters both at home and abroad, has been continued throughout the Swiss Confederation until now, and is still going on. On December 17th, the citizens of Basle suppressed compulsory vaccination by a majority of 3,539 against 716, and I have just received from Dr. Scheuermann, of Basle, the intelligence that on the 26th, ult. compulsory vaccination and revaccination were abolished by the Federal Council throughout the Federal Army, and that the cantons of Aargau, St. Gall, Lucerne, Berne, and Zurich are on the eve of following the example of Basle. Who can doubt that after the fatalities at Sheffield, Mirsterton, Norwich, and in other parts of this country, if a plébiscite of the English people were taken compulsory vaccination—to abolish which thousands of petitions have been presented to Parliament, and hundreds of public meetings held—would be rejected by a majority proportionately as large as that of Switzerland? In view of what is happening in Switzerland, the Prussian Government has just approved a Royal Commission to examine the evidence against vaccination brought by the various delegates before the International Congresses at Paris and Cologne.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
WILLIAM TERR.

Devonshire Club, St. James's.—"The Times," Jan. 24th, 1883.

DOCTORS AND INFANT MORTALITY.

One of the Peculiar People was recently prosecuted for allowing his child to die without the aid of a doctor or his poisons. The magistrate liberated the father, as it appeared the child had been of delicate constitution, had been well cared for, and anointed with oil and prayed over. The only com-

plaint was, that it was not poisoned because it was sick. If doctors saved the lives of little children, then there would be some grounds for prosecuting such a parent. But, if he had been punished, on the same ground every doctor should be punished who loses a patient. If all parents did the same as this peculiar family, infant mortality would greatly decrease. The oft-quoted lines will be remembered:—

"A single doctor like a sculler plies;
The patient lingers, and by inches dies;
But two physicians, like a pair of oars,
Waft him with swiftness to the Stygian shores."

The two following paragraphs appeared in "The Echo," January 26:—

We hear that Messrs. Shaen, Roscoe, and Co., solicitors, have been instructed to take legal proceedings against the St. Pancras Union Workhouse surgeon for contributing to the death of a child which he vaccinated when only six days old. A formal application is to be made in a few days to one of the Metropolitan Magistrates.

There is a still more recent case—whether arising out of early vaccination remains to be seen. A child buried yesterday was born on December 24th, and vaccinated on the 26th, when two days old. It was one of several babies born in Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital, where early vaccination is being practised on the advice of the Local Government Board. Dr. Thomas, coroner, delayed burial for twenty-four hours to inquire into the case, but finding that a medical certificate of death from "debility—convulsions" had been given, considered that an inquest was unnecessary. The Lord Chancellor and the Local Government Board are now asked to cause a public inquiry. In the interest of the management of this maternal hospital we think the demand for full inquiry should be complied with.

WHAT IS KNOWN TO BE TRUE CONCERNING VACCINATION!

An accumulation of facts, registered in all civilized countries, and laid by the various delegates before the Anti-Vaccination Congress, at Paris in 1880, and Cologne in 1881, shew that Vaccination does not diminish the death-rate in the general mortality from all causes; that it affords no protection from small-pox; that it has caused a large increase of infantile mortality, falsely registered as erysipelas, bronchitis, convulsions, etc.; that scrofula, and a still more loathsome disease, have been and are transmitted by its means; that while children of a robust constitution possess the power to resist or survive its direct influence, those with constitutions less tenacious of life either succumb to its insidious effects, or linger in debility, to augment (at a later period) the increasing mortality from fever and consumption.

For Statistics in confirmation of the foregoing, apply to—Mr. W. YOUNG, 114, Victoria Street, Westminster, S. W.

THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

THE TEACHINGS OF "MOTHER SHIPTON."

MR. TOWNS, MEDIUM.

To the Editor.—Sir,—On Tuesday evening, January 23, I attended Mr. Towns' weekly circle at the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, the date being the fifth anniversary of communion with the spirit known as "Mother Shipton." Prior to the communications through the medium, Mr. Towns, Mr. King read a few extracts from the history of the spirit's earth life, copied from records in the British Museum, by a gentleman unknown to myself, who was then present at the circle, among which extracts, was an anecdote worth repeating.

On one occasion certain titled officials of the English Army or of the Government, paid a visit to the residence of this renowned prophetess, and after various interrogations told her she would surely be burnt as a witch, when she replied, "Oh! wait a moment and we will see." With that she placed a handkerchief into the midst of a blazing fire, when the article was neither consumed nor injured. She said, "You see that won't burn, neither shall I."

It is not for me to express an opinion as to the identity of the communicating spirit, it is enough for me to confirm by personal experience the teachings of St. Paul as given in 2 Corinthians, xii., that there were spiritual gifts in his day, and of which he desires mankind should not be ignorant; and, if in his day, so in the past and the future of time, the same being foreshadowed in the words of Jesus himself, when he said, in effect, of the people—"Eyes have they but see not, ears but hear not, understandings but understand not; many other things could I tell you, but ye could not bear them."

More than eighteen hundred years have passed away, since these words were uttered and reiterated by Christ and his apostles amidst the mountains and valleys of Palestine, yet ignorance of spiritual gifts is as prevalent to-day as in the days of spiritual martyrdom. To give a reason for this state of things would involve a dissertation beyond the province of this letter, hence, returning to the proceedings at the circle, "Mother Shipton," said through the medium, Mr. Towns:—

Life is a mystery none of us can define or comprehend, and although she had passed four centuries away from earth life, she could not explain to our understanding the sublime mystery of life: for life is as boundless in mystery as time and space are boundless in infinitude, and that neither men nor angels can by searching find out God; warning us that the secret of happiness both here and hereafter is to govern our impulses, appetites, and passions by the rules of wisdom, and strive to keep them in harmony with the ever faithful and beneficent laws of nature, and that all our pains and penalties are the consequences of our own or our progeny's divergence from the strait and narrow path of temperance into the border land of wild extremes, by avoiding which the component elements of our material nature may be so refined and cultured through watchfulness and care, that in fulfilling the duties of mortal life, we may become centres of harmony, with measures of happiness in proportion to our acquisition of self-knowledge, and our steadfastness in the orbit of spiritual duty, by ever looking heavenward as we circle round the throne of Deity.

Many other simple precepts were given by this kindly influence that would be well worth recording, but I have said enough to show that many of our professional religious teachers of reputed orthodox creeds, would do well to investigate the wilfully despised gospel of spiritual revelation, I say wilfully despised because the Romish Church for many ages has been fully cognizant of the truths of spiritual communion or the communion of saints; but because the powers of nature are no respecters of place, position, rank, or person, and because the priesthood are unable to govern, control and bequeath the divine affluence as a church patronage or perpetual family or caste inheritance, they dare to blaspheme the holy and everlasting truth of nature's eternal Gospel, by attributing this glorious and death-destroying dispensation to the powers of darkness and its king.

They may as well strive to extinguish the sunlight or make the ocean a parched desert, as seek to stem this heavenly tide of revelation. We know this divine breath is as universal as the air we breathe, whilst it necessarily fails to germinate and develop on the withered tree, the barren soil, the stony ground, or the wayside, represented by the selfish nature, the proud spirit, the lustful passion and the deceitful heart.

How much then ought we to appreciate the high value to humanity of such men as Mr. Towns, honest in principle, unassuming in demeanour, with no pretence to education or mental culture, yet shining in the darkness of human ignorance with the brilliance and beauty of intrinsic truth. It will be a failure of duty on the part of those who know the value of his exceptional talent, to suffer him to be borne down in the battle of untoward circumstances, before whose ruthless waves the hope, the faith, the virtue, and the spiritual integrity of many noble and gifted minds have sunk to rise no more on earth. I trust the appeal made on his behalf and that of his wife and long family of ten or eleven children, will not be made in vain, and that some kind and capable hand, or the united strength of many benevolent spirits, like the good Samaritan of old, will be moved by the voiceless angel of sympathy to the exercise of charity—the greatest, the noblest, and the purest of all human virtues. S. G.

A LETTER FROM THE EXETER MEDIUM.

To the Editor.—Sir,—In reference to the "Exeter Free Spiritual Church," it behoves me to say a word. My first introduction to the science of Spiritualism was through an announcement in the "Exeter Evening Express," of September 29, 1882, stating that the Rev. C. Ware would commence labours in the city on the following Sunday, at the Odd Fellows' Hall. It was not until the following week that I paid the Hall a visit, attracted by an interesting article which appeared in the same paper, entitled, "A remarkable seance." After the sermon, I went and informed Mr. Ware that I should like to investigate the subject.

On the Monday I was invited to a private seance. After the usual invocation of God's blessing, and the singing of a hymn, questions were put to the unseen intelligence by means of the table; it was then, for the first time in my life, that I witnessed these marvellous phenomena.

During this meeting, which lasted nearly two hours, I was informed, to my great surprise, that I was a medium. In a short time I felt an enormous power influencing me, like I had never experienced before, and which I could not account for. I went from the meeting astonished at what I had seen, and hoped to see more another time.

It was three weeks before I again visited a circle. While there I was entranced, and wrote unconsciously for some time. Since then I have been many times controlled by supposed spirits; the results have appeared from time to time in your paper.

I have given very little credence to the same until within the past week, when, from what I heard at Plymouth, I feel it incumbent upon me, not being personally known to your readers, to state that what has appeared from time to time in your paper, I am entirely innocent of, whether overdrawn or not, and I have from the first discredited these statements, and always expressed a wish that they should not be published.

Again, the late "Judge Edmonds" has been called into question, who is supposed to be my "chief guide," a letter being written through me, has purported to come from him, yet unpublished, as to the real nature and contents of same I am as ignorant as any of your readers. An Editor's work is no mean task, and through the multiplicity of business I assign the reason why it has not yet appeared, or that it is not thought expedient to publish the same. I feel this a painful season and a critical position to be placed in. I have always borne an honest character and been respected. Being only known as "Mr. H." in connection with this paper, it may be thought that I have been aiding this, or playing in a part of which I am innocent, therefore, for the benefit of the public, silence should be no longer on my part, and it calls forth that this "letter" should be made public, that the readers may judge for themselves, and thereby the stigma resting upon me may be removed. I have been a mere instrument in this matter, entering as a child, feeling my insignificance in comparison with the grandeur of the same. I have always been orthodox in my views, and am, at the present time, yet ready to receive the truth from whatever source it may come, whether apparently heterodox or orthodox, and this has been the stand taken by me in the investigation of Spiritualism.

I not only claim for myself regarding these things which have appeared, but also for the gentleman who has communicated these particulars, "Omega," whose interest is certainly at stake, for I have always esteemed him as an ardent, truthful, and faithful worker in this Cause, who certainly is to blame for highly colouring these reports, but which I hope it will be proved as in the past that he is *fidus achates*.

Trusting that you will insert this, with pardon for intruding on your valuable space, I am, sir, yours most respectfully,
Exeter, January 29, 1883. H.

[We are glad to hear from H. We see no grounds for the charge that the reports were too highly coloured. We have seen many instances of mediumship of a similar character. In this investigation everyone is necessarily most deeply impressed with those experiences in which they are personally involved. Outsiders who think greatly of their own affairs, have not the benefit of the enthusiasm and inspiration of those who partake of the influences of the circle. It is painful to think that the human mind is so prone to resort to charges of fraud and unworthy motives in all such matters. We must look in psychological principles for a solution of difficulties. The All-Father is doing all things well. We have had Mr. Ware's introductory letter in type three weeks, and had intended to give attention to the letter from "Judge Edmonds" which it introduces, but an attack of sickness, preceded by a painful crisis in business matters, have taken us altogether out of our own hands. And, yet, it is well! We counsel all to repose an abiding faith in the Great I Am. Then all the little contingencies will fall into their proper places. When we get the necessary light and opportunity to do our duty in the matter, we will do so with great pleasure. "Omega" would have heard from us had it not been for prostration. Throw out all inferior considerations and cling to the Strong Arm. The Spiritual Road is one of trials and difficulties. Let them not disconcert us.—Ed. M.]

EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

The following is an extract from a letter by Mr. John Fowler, in the "Liverpool Daily Post," January 30, 1883:—

"Hitherto I have been unwilling to relate any of my own experiences. I may, however, mention that I have had answers given me to mental questions, and written on an enclosed slate, the said slate being firmly held in my own hands. I have afterwards obliterated the replies, and continued to question, which were answered in a similar way. These were communications of a private nature, and bore the signature of a brother of mine, who had died some years previously in Australia. I have held a bottle filled with water and securely corked by myself, to find that in a few seconds afterwards it contained choice flowers. I have had conversations of mine retold to me when I was hundreds of miles away from the spot where they took place. I have had pictures painted in the dark in my own presence, on my own materials, the paint on which was not fully dry for twenty-four hours afterwards. I have seen tables lifted without contact. I have had my friends to control and speak to me through trance-mediums for hours, not only of things which happened in their earthly life, with which we were well acquainted, but I have been informed of things I was not acquainted with when mentioned, but which afterwards I found to be correct. These are only a few facts in my own experience."

NEWLYN, CORNWALL.—A man who died at this place is reported to have troubled his relatives, because of their not carrying out certain requests he made prior to his decease respecting his burial. Consequently, they have at last exhumed the body, and deposited it where they hope he may rest peacefully, and trouble them no further with visitation. It is to be hoped that after the trouble and expense the friends have gone to, they may meet with success.—"Cornubian" (Redruth).

POETRY.

The two poems printed below, the one in answer to the other, give expression to opposite views of the merits of spirit-communion. How far the negationist may be able to disassociate himself from spirit-influence, of course, he is not in a position to determine. The sentiment of self-reliance is as much inculcated by the Spiritualist as by the Materialist. The former desires to be broad enough to avail himself of the inspiring aid of soul and spirit-life, in addition to the cold comfort of sea-water, even though served up in a "bridal chamber." Both poems are rich in merit of their class, and, if read together, the combined sentiment may more perfectly represent the true line of thought, than if either of them be taken separately. The first appeared a few months ago in a contemporary, "devoted to the highest interests of humanity, both here and hereafter." The reply, by a lady, was refused insertion. We have pleasure in giving both a position on the same page:—

BY GEORGE BARLOW.

Nay, not to a crowd of dead are our live hearts indebted;
We stand not thus enleashed and bound and meshed and netted

By Spirit-hosts. We stand
Each Soul of us alone, and therein lies our glory;
Each brave foot may surmount new Alpine summits hoary,
Yet pay no fee to a guide for helping hand.

Yes: the great dead were great. But are the high summits smaller

For us? Were the black pines upon the hill-sides taller

When other steps than ours
Trod mid their stems and cones, the austere mountains climbing?

Do lesser gods to-day, give ear unto our rhyming?
Have past hands gathered all the stars' gold flowers?

Nay! if I ever met my grey sea's bridal glances,
And knew that at my back surged tasselled spirit-lances,

A host of following spies,
I should feel traitor indeed! Not to my bridal chamber
Shall any, even the highest, of human spirits clamber,
To meet with me, my flushed Song's passionate eyes.

"Inspired": Yes, by the Sea, and by the deep love panting
Within our own deep Souls, and by the green leaves chanting
Their Summer Song to each;

By all the strange wild surge of ceaseless song that ranges
Throughout our Souls, and rings therein its tidal changes;
But never by a dead man's halting speech.

O Spirits, who would seek for ever to be clinging
To dead pale hands, and who would blend your love and singing

With other's love and song,
Ye never have felt the joy of standing grave and lonely,
Where human voices fail, and the high stars sing only.

The great thoughts rise not 'mid a jostling throng.

Not looking right or left, but only at the glances
Of Song, my bride, my steps through joy and pain advances;
Where dead men sang, to-day

I sing. But not by these am I to-day inspired,
But by the universe, this morn as freshly attired,
As if I sang on the first, first of May.

ANSWER TO MR. BARLOW'S LINES.

By "M."

"O Lord, I know that the way of Man is not in himself: It is not in Man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x., 23.

"Not to a crowd of DEAD, are our live hearts indebted,"
But to the LIVING hosts, our Father's love created

With Souls immortal;
Who, passed through life on Earth, with all its sorrow,
Return to help their loved Ones on the morrow,
Through Death's dark portal.

"Yes, the great dead" ARE "great," for now the risen Spirit,
Freed from the clog of Earth, rises to higher summit

Of life in Heaven;
And with the veil uprolled, is brought to view
That love, that caused the Spirit to pass through
The earthly leaven.

By them "inspired" are we? Oh, yes, with inspiration
Born of the Spirit, freed from Earthly aspiration

And worldly nature,
To wisdom higher, leading us in love
To nearer views of Angel-life above,
And life's Creator.

No, not "to DEAD pale hands" and forms would I be clinging,
But to those LIVING forms of beauty ever singing
God's praise on high,

In active service for those left on Earth,
To draw them on to the New Heavenly Birth,
Beyond the sky.

Neither to "right" nor "left," but onward, upward glancing
To emulate those dear Ones, and thus my Soul advancing,

Would I aspire;
Till raised like them from Earth to higher Life,
My Spirit freed from all of care and strife,
I'd tune my Lyre.

Then, with the Angel Choir, my Song of Love upraising,
With all my powers of Soul, my God and Father praising,
In meek endeavour,

To do for others what was done for me,
That others might the joys of Heaven see
For aye and ever!

Oct. 28th, 1882.

SADNESS AND SUNSHINE.

I sat all worn and weary,
With my cheeks all wet and wan,
My heart was heavy and dreary,
For I was a lonely one.

My flowerets had all fled from me,
Like flowerets nipt in the Spring;
Or the birds, at coming winter, flee
On the swift and buoyant wing.

The joy of my heart's young years,—
He too had gone from my side:
My heart was sad, my eyes gave tears,—
I was weary in my eventide.

But as I sat weary and worn,
With tears bedewing my face,
The veil of grim sorrow was torn,
And a brighter one given in its place.

It came with the voices of angels,
That were singing so grandly and sweet,
For my loved ones were singing evangels,
My weary worn soul to greet.

Since then I have never known sorrow,
Bid grief with its terrors begone,
And never from them will I borrow,
Though still I exist all alone.

Alone, and yet not alone;
For the memory of those angel voices
Doth ever bid sorrow begone,
And my aged heart rejoices:

Rejoices to know that, ere long,
I, too, shall be borne from this earth,
To join in that happiest song,
That's sung at the Spirit's new birth.

PERICLES

LONGFELLOW'S LAST POEMS.

"VICTOR VANQUISHED."

As one who long hath fled with panting breath
Before his foe, bleeding and near to fall,
I turn and set my back against the wall,
And look thee in the face, triumphant Death.
I call for aid, and no one answereth;
I am alone with thee, who conquerest all,
Yet me thy threatening form doth not appal;
For thou art but a phantom and a wraith.
Wounded and weak, sword broken at the hilt,
With armour shattered and without a shield,
I stand unmoved; do with me what thou wilt;
I can resist no more, but will not yield.
This is no tournament where cowards tilt;
The vanquished here is victor in the field.

MY BOOKS.

Sadly, as some old mediæval knight
Gazed at the arms he could no longer wield,—
The sword, two-handed, and the shining shield
Suspended in the hall, and full in sight,
While secret longings for the lost delight
Of tourney or adventure in the field
Came over him, and tears but half concealed
Trembled and fell upon his beard of white,
So I behold these books upon their shelf,
My ornaments and arms of other days;
Not wholly useless, though no longer used,
For they remind me of my other self,
Younger and stronger, and the pleasant ways
In which I walked, now clouded and confused.

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

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, FEBRUARY 2, 1883.

A COLUMN FOR THE YOUNG.

We hope to commence, next week, a new department in the MEDIUM—a Column for the Young. This has not been entirely overlooked in the past, "Y Ay Ali's Story," by Mrs. Esperance, and the "Clairvoyant Sketches," having been read with delight by many young people. But now we mean to introduce something peculiarly adapted for children, as, in many ways, the works named presented points far beyond their grasp. This Department, we hope, will serve as a reading book in the Children's Lyceums, and we intend to give some space to reporting the progress and work of these institutions.

We have received two contributions towards this new purpose, one, by Hans Edwards, we have had by us for a few weeks. It is a tale, and one of great interest, and it is full of spiritual illustration. The author says, in his preface, that he undertook the task because of "the very meagre store of literature suitable for the children and families of those who have come to a knowledge of the blessings of Spiritualism." The author is himself a remarkable medium, and his work is replete with inspiration of a high order.

More recently we received a MS. from Mrs. Ramsay Laye, the very same motive being stated for writing it, and almost in the same language. This tale: "Florry's Tree," we hope to give first. We have decided to do so for various reasons: It is adapted for children of tender years, and it is quite short. On the other hand, "Lonely Little Lara, or, Old Will's Waif," is much longer, and carries its hero to a greater age.

We hope all parties will be agreeable to this arrangement. "Florry's Tree" is charmingly written; it is full of interest, teaches needful lessons in most homes, and introduces the Unseen in a pleasing and impressive manner. Florry, and her little brother, Freddy, will present themselves to our youthful patrons next week, and we sincerely trust the little people will receive a widely-extended and hearty welcome.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

There is a remarkable sympathy in the tone of the two discourses given this week; one by Mr. De Main, and the other by Mr. Burns. The pressure of inspiration is taking a very decided turn in that direction, all through the Movement.

The Clairvoyant Sketch—"Poor Janet," finishes this week. It is full of important teachings, showing that man's life is continued on the spiritual plane as it is laid down at death. To confess one's own sins and seek forgiveness, is a much better course than to doggedly blame others, however guilty they may be. We are all guilty of something—many things, in fact. It shows, moreover, that the suicide jumps out of the frying-pan into the fire, as it were.

We cannot say that we feel satisfied with the treatment of the "beast" question in the Lecture reported this week. The term is more expressive of the introduction of earth ideas into religion, than the existence of mere animalism in man. The Creator gave man his passions, but He did not give him false theologies and anthropomorphic godlings to take the place of the Creator Himself. This man-made worship seems to us to be the "beast." Of course, it should be borne in mind that we have cut down the Lecture fully one half in reporting it.

We hope our Rushden friends will hand the MEDIUM round freely, and induce all liberal minds to take it in regularly, and that Mr. C. Denton may have a large parcel weekly. Our religion is to do good to the bodies and souls of mankind, irrespective of creed or belief. In addition to the facts stated in the Rushden Article, we understand, 276 tickets were issued from Irchester to Wellingborough, on the day the goods were seized. The sale, as it took place at last, is questioned as being illegal. The friends should look sharply into all points—there are powerful hands ready to back them up—and not be trodden down by a petty tyranny. These affairs are liable to become a matter of personal vengeance on the part of the executive at last. Many vaccination inquisitors break the law most flagrantly, and are allowed to escape. Few of them really know the law, their chief qualification is to tread down their weaker fellow creatures.

Mr. J. Bowring Sloman writes, in respect to our request for the establishment of agencies for the MEDIUM amongst book-sellers:—"I can give you one name, Mr. Kerslake, newsagent, King Street, Plymouth, who exhibits the paper in his window. Some time since I induced him to order copies for sale, by guaranteeing to take all remaining unsold at cost price. I hope to induce another in some other part of the town to do likewise."

In some towns it is impossible to prevail on a newsagent to procure the MEDIUM at all, but with persistent effort and personal influence exerted, we feel certain that an immense benefit could be conferred on the Cause by imitating Mr. Sloman.

We cull the following extract from the letter of a correspondent:—"It was only recently I began to read your paper, the MEDIUM, and being mystified with some of its contents I discontinued reading it for a while; then after a few weeks had elapsed, I had a strange longing to see it again. So, I gave my newsagent orders once more to get it for me regularly every week, and I am glad I did so, for I now read it with increasing interest, as each new issue comes out; and, I find it always instructive, though I cannot accept some things I find in its columns." We take this opportunity of stating that no reader of the MEDIUM is expected to endorse all he finds therein. In the Old Era a man was expected to be led by authority, now he is requested to think for himself. The MEDIUM is an organ of free-thought, in which the writers give expression to their views of truth, whether in agreement with or contradictory to what has been before stated. How, then, can any man believe it all? We can oftentimes gain more light by differing from a writer, than in swallowing all. Hence we permit a margin for free statement, so that in the friction of thought, the light of Truth may be evolved. The true light comes from within—not from any book or paper.

We have received from A.T.T.P. a batch of controls, the most serious in tone we have yet seen from him. We expect to see the first in next week's issue.

Mr. Walmsley, Barrow-in-Furness, has sent us a report of a discourse by Mrs. Dobson, Batley Carr, which we intend printing in next MEDIUM. We name the matter that Mrs. Dobson's friends in Yorkshire and elsewhere may secure extra copies.

Do not write notices for publication on the same piece of paper with business matters, otherwise the paper goes into our business department, and the notice for publication is not seen till the paper is out. On the last day the pressure and hurry are too great to hunt up such matters.

Mr. and Mrs. Finnemore, from Auckland, New Zealand, arrived in London last week, on a visit to their friends in the Old Country. Mr. Finnemore is greatly interested in Spiritualism, and has had considerable phenomena at home. He is desirous of seeing what there is to be seen during his stay in England. Our visitors brought a note of introduction from our old friend Captain Chas. A. Bydder, who describes them as "the oldest known Spiritualists in this colony." Captain Bydder has astonished the colonists by the narratives of phenomena witnessed by him before he left England.

LEEDS.—Mrs. Hardinge-Britten will lecture on Sunday, March 11th. Further particulars in future announcements.

There will be a meeting at the Spiritual Institution on Sunday evening, at 7 o'clock. Free admission.

MORE ABOUT 666.

While it is true that 666 is the number of the Beast, we may say that 666 belongs to Man, the 6th day being his creation; and he might have entered into the 7th, the Rest or Sabbath of God. Properly speaking, the number of the Beast is that which knows not God, and lives only the inferior part, and temporal or earthly part of man's being, still it should be as it is stated, Rev. xiii., the Beast's number is "six hundred, three score, (and) six;" 600, 3 score, 6.

However, let us look at 666; thus— $6+6+6=18$, 1 and 8: 1, the Holy ONE, and 8 the resurrection number, 1 and 8, 13. $8=1+7$. See John xxi.: There were 7 disciples gathered together on the shore after the resurrection, and Jesus Himself, who is the Resurrection, makes the 8. Again, the $18=1+8=9$. 9 is said to be the true number of the Man, according to some ancient writers, J. B., for instance.

Taking, therefore, Lady C.'s and your 666, I venture to enclose $6+6+6=18$ s., or two nines, or twice three square. Perhaps some other of your many readers and inquirers will follow in this path, and so make a little practical use of this interesting way of looking at the subject of numbers. I might contribute somewhat to this, perhaps.

I thank you for your very interesting words on the "Worship of Jesus or Christ."—Yours truly, J. M.

[Though this question of mystical numbers is rather perplexing, yet we have no difficulty in appreciating the genuine kindness of those friends who have made it the occasion of lightening our load. It simplifies the task of comprehending the power of these numerals very much, when they are associated with the well-known exponents—*E. S. D.*—Ed. M.]

A KIND LETTER FROM KEIGHLEY.

Dear Sir,—It is with pleasure that I have the honour, on behalf of the Committee and the Spiritualists, generally, of Keighley, to hand you herewith P.O.O. value £1 4s. 5d., being the amount collected at our services yesterday, less cost of P.O.O., etc., which amount I trust will be of service to you, and will give you some encouragement in the labour of love that you are engaged in.—Yours fraternally,

SOLOMON COWLING, Secretary.

Marley Street, Keighley, January 22, 1883.

This brings us in mind of the good old times, when we visited Keighley to assist Mr. Weatherhead to open the Lyceum. We are very grateful for this kindness: it came at an opportune moment, as if God-sent.

INSTITUTION WEEK COLLECTION.

Collected by Mr. John Miller, Ladykirk:—Miss Fairly, 1s.; Robina Benton, 6d.; Margaret Benton, 6d.; Helen Skeldon, 6d.; Catherine Skeldon, 6d.; Peter Dalgliesh, 6d.; John Miller, 1s. ... 0 4 6

The foregoing was collected late in December, but circumstances have prevented acknowledgment till now. We hope to give the completion of lists next week.

Mr. James Dunn has removed to 22, Redworth Road, New Shildon, via Darlington, to which all communications should in future be addressed.

LIVERPOOL.—On Sunday, February 4th, Mrs. E. H. Britten will give two orations in the Concert Hall, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool: Morning at 11, evening 6.30.—JNO. AINSWORTH, Secretary.

A Spiritual Enquirer would be glad to be allowed to join some family circle, W. or S.W. district, where no professional help is used.—Write: Lex, 29, Walpole Street, Sloane Square, S.W.

MIDDLESBOROUGH.—A very pleasant social meeting on Sunday last. Mr. S. De Main will visit us on Sunday, Feb. 4.—H. GOODCHILD, Secretary.

Miss Chandos Leigh Hunt will lecture for the Balloon Society of Great Britain, at the Royal Aquarium, on Friday (this evening) at 8 o'clock, on "The Philosophy of Health and Disease." The usual admission of 1s. admits to the lecture gratis.

SUNDAY LECTURE SOCIETY, St. George's Hall, Langham Place.—The third series will commence on Sunday, February 4, at 4 o'clock. E. R. Aveling, Esq., D. Sc. Lond., will lecture on "The Ape-men or Microcephali. A Chapter on the Darwinian Theory." Admission: 1s.; 6d.; 1d.

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER.

THE NEW DISPENSATION: ITS NATURE AND TIME OF INTRODUCTION.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY J. BURNS, O.S.T., AT THE SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION, SUNDAY EVENING, JANUARY 28, 1883.

Reading from OAHSEE: Book of Ben, ii.

That a New Dispensation has dawned, or is about to appear, is admitted on all hands; various Christian sects are quite decided upon it; Spiritualists regard their Movement as the thing itself; and even Atheists proclaim a new age, in which the gods hitherto most worshipped shall be known no more.

The uncertainty is as to the time of this New Advent, and the true signs of its appearing. One party derives its proximity from the number of 1881 when added together forming 18, which is constituted of 3 times 6, or 666, the "number of the beast." Others look for remarkable spiritual phenomena in the clouds and amongst men. Some prophets foretell great disturbances upon earth. As to its results, when it does come, opinion is not unanimous. It is made to appear by some that the New Dispensation is simply the Old, with the previous objects of worship accentuated by additions and modifications. Others would wipe away all higher considerations than political and social reform. There is yet other grounds held by those who regard the New Age as a complete re-construction and substitution of all that has been previously accepted as the permanent machinery of man's spiritual life.

That any marked change occurred in the first year of the present era, 1883 years ago, there is no satisfactory proof. The time of the era was fixed long years afterwards, when men's minds had become possessed of foregone conclusions. That some prophetic power transmitted the impression to men's minds to fix the commencement of the era so that, 1881 years afterwards, certain other matters should occur, is not improbable; but it does not appear that 1881 years is the accepted duration of any era. Two thousand and three thousand years have been named as the time of a cycle, marked in its inauguration by remarkable spiritual phenomena, and great teachers upon the face of the earth, but there is no reliable chronology at hand to establish such conclusions.

The biographical incidents of 33 years, recorded in the Gospels, do not necessarily apply to a human being. That a spiritual teacher lived in those Eastern countries in that age is quite feasible, but it is not so certain that the record as it stands is that of his life. It looks more like a compilation, possibly from spiritual sources, as to editing, written for ecclesiastical purposes and in the interests of an aggressive spiritual principality, which thereby sought to perpetuate its influence on earth. Even if a typical man then lived, the era must have been in existence some time previously, to produce conditions for his coming forth. To the discerning reader it looks much like a reiteration of ancient lore respecting previous occasions of the kind, and reproduced to serve the purposes just named.

In 1881 we pointed out that the past 33 years of the Spiritual Movement had greatly resembled the 33 years of the Gospel narrative. The whole course of the work had been physical, sensuous, sensational. During the culminating years, the form of mediumship prevalent was publicly put upon its trial, and its previous condition broken up. Since then it has taken on an altered form. The manifestations yet remain, but the underlying thought and motive respecting them is more of a spiritual character.

But why 33 years? These constitute the average life of man on earth; it is the period of a generation. Every babe that is born is the beginning of an indivi-

dual spiritual career, extending throughout eternity. That career is marked by stages and changes. The first of these is the death of the mortal body, or the First Resurrection, the numerical indication of which is 33, or the number of a man. As a man has his physical stage, so has an era or Dispensation; for every human soul is, indeed, an individual dispensation of creative volition and divine purpose. Hence all eras are introduced by a time of Dawn; and man's earth-life is the "dawn" of his real existence, during which period of imperfect light he only perceives the grand truths of existence in a faulty and uncertain manner. Spiritual truths and aims have, similarly, been ambiguously set forth during the 33 years of modern Spiritualism, which coincides with the recorded statement in John, that the visible man would go away, but would send the Spirit of Truth to lead the way into all truth. Thus, from actual experience to-day, and the most ancient traditions, we perceive that 33 is applicable to the physical or dawn stage of a new spiritual era.

That the "number of the beast" is 66, or any number of 6's, is apparently derived from the same rule. Man's normal number, or spiritual degree, in passing out of the body is 33, the number of the Man. But he may be far below it, and have to progress to that number in the spiritual state, no doubt involving certain unavoidable relations with the conditions of earth-life. At the same time, he may be vastly above that degree, and be able to assume a position in the spiritual state far in advance of those of the 33rd degree. At that point, we may presume, the disembodied spirit still retains many of the selfish considerations and attractions of earth-life. He is away from the earth, yet still very much of it. He, however, proceeds in the work of development till he attains the 66th degree, when he is fit for a move up higher, which is the Second Resurrection, having completed the "number of the beast." This number may be completed while man is still on earth, at which stage a man is enabled to manifest powers and perform duties which were hitherto beyond his reach. The question remains for us to determine how this individual state can be made to apply to the earth's atmosphere at large, so as to render it the indication of an era.

To our mind, the work of preparation for a new era commenced at the time of the Reformation. The right of every man to think for himself on religious matters, is a mighty power: one which the Church has not yet attained to the exercise of. It is not our purpose to-night to institute a contrast between the Gospel and Christianity, otherwise it might be pointed out that the work of Luther and those of his time sounded the death-knell of the latter. All the progress and discoveries since then have been right in the teeth of the Church. It was necessary to clear her as much as possible off the ground, before any new erection could be undertaken.

If we allow that the New Era actually came in 33 years before 1881, then there is a remarkable coincidence with those who regard 1881 as the actual beginning; for they date from the end of the period of Dawn, whereas the view we are inclined to take starts at its commencement. One thing we know, we have been in the work much longer than some of those who speculate on this matter, and we found the Light of the New Dispensation beaming most powerfully, when our eyes had the blessed privilege of being opened to it, upwards of 20 years ago. If personal experience goes for anything, then on this point we are clear.

We can never forget the remarkable mental experiences of that time, the most memorable of our whole earthly existence. It was also a time of great earthly labour and trial, and culminated in a violent attack of acute disease, fever and dysentery, which nearly put an end to mortal existence, and caused the tide of life to start again afresh, as if it had been a babe just born. It was, indeed, a being "born again."

Unspeakably vast were the issues, to the individual, involved in that awakening. The noontide of life had not then reached us. A past of work and study had enhanced a position which promised much for the future: wealth, power, popularity, relaxation. But the New Light came, and like a transcendently charming lover, that wins the soul in preference to all other candidates, it took us captive. It was not phenomena, or mediumship, or theology, or eloquence, which induced this outpouring. We had been brought up at the "feet of Gamaliel," but his theories of God's government our minds never would receive. And yet we could not be won by the sceptic, though he was frequently our warmest friend and co-worker in social reform. We felt that none of these things satisfied the soul, but that it would be satisfied we had a quiet aspiring hope.

That hope received its fruition in the teachings of the New Dispensation, as set forth in Dr. Dods on "Mesmerism," and the Harmonial Philosophy of Andrew Jackson Davis. When once the idea was awakened, like a child newly born, it grew of its own inherent vitality. We realized much more than any book or teacher of earth could convey. To the mind it was at once clear, that at last the All-Father had formed a means of revealing Himself and His purposes unmistakably to His human children. It was not a question of what had been said and done in the past, nor what men thought in the present; but it was the Light and Voice of the Almighty informing the Inner Part, that all things necessary for the guidance of man were deeply implanted within his own spiritual nature. To that inestimable wealth, no treasures of earth could add. It was the greatest of boons to possess it; and with it, the roughest, hardest, most toilsome pathway in life would be enjoyable.

To glory in such a possession, alone, would have been the deepest selfishness. But the chief grandeur of possessing this Light was that it could be communicated to others for their spiritual awakening, mental edification, and moral elevation. The Ever Present had not only revealed Himself to the soul, but the barriers had been broken down between the spiritual and the natural worlds, so that emissaries from the one to the other, could pass to and fro, like brethren from county to county. We had no fear of evil spirits, elementaries, or demons of any kind, and in all our experience we have never met with any such. Our aim was to labour with the Angels of Light for the elevation of mankind, and to all who are truly actuated by this motive, no oblique influences can come. It was at the behest of no spirit that we took up the labour: it was a pure labour of love arising from the divine impulses of our own spirit, and to that highest power all lower influences had to become subservient.

Lately, we have been asked whether we are yet so far emancipated as to be able to endorse a certain book. Yes; much more emancipated than that. Over twenty years ago we were so far emancipated as to no longer submit our judgment to any book, ancient or modern, or that which may yet be written. All books, as far as they are records of human experience, are in some degree profitable to that mind in the state to receive assistance from them; but the true standard of Truth, the Divine Light that scrutinizes all thoughts, words and acts, is the Image of the Ever Present within the soul. This All-Person once enthroned there, superseded all the gods, saviours, or personalities held by all sectarians, Christian or Pagan, ancient or modern. There could be no mistake about the truth of this unspeakable Presence; it was an actual experience, and scattered to the wind the traditions and notions of men, and of the spirits that had enslaved them.

It is not to be implied that on this account any claim is set up for moral superiority, or saintliness. There is none perfect; all human beings are human—flesh! But what is their motive? Is it selfhood's crooked ways, or is it truth and self-abnegation? The meanest babe in the All-Father's family may partake of the

true nature of His spirit, and yet be weak, ignorant, and inexperienced. Such we confess ourselves to be, and yet, notwithstanding, we have been accounted worthy to endure much that our best advisers have deemed us fools for pursuing. The simple fact that weak humanity is able to lose all, toil unceasingly, and be requited with persecution, hardship, and disease, is, in itself, a phenomenon. Nothing in this world do we possess. All of these things are confiscated, and even our bodies and their efforts for long years to come, are mortgaged to atone for Liabilities incurred in respect to matters in which we have no self-interest.

Thus is exemplified in an imperfect way the genius of the New Dispensation. The Old is to strive to attain one's selfish ends at all hazards; let others sink or swim. The New is to first earn a living, and then do all that lies in one's power for the alleviation of the physical, mental, and spiritual wants of others. It requires no theology, philosophy, or authority, to do this; only the Light within. If all of our high, wise, and mighty lords and ladies, who are so intuitive on the points of philosophy involved in the present condition of mankind, will pawn all they have in the interest of human needs, and in addition take on all the burdens their backs can bear, the true nature of the New Dispensation will at once become clearly apparent to them.

There are grandly gifted persons on earth, possessing spiritual gifts, who have the power of working miracles! They will take a few handfuls of soil, plant in it a seed, water it, cover it with a cloth, and in a few minutes a plant has grown. The cloth is again replaced, and the plant speedily dissolves away.

In the New Dispensation much greater "miracles" will be performed by those possessed of a much higher order of spiritual gifts. Those who have land and wealth, which they fondly call their own, will allot portions, and procure not one seed, but many seeds—sackfuls of seed; and they will say to him who is without home, or food, or honest occupation: Come with me, my Brother! And they will proceed to this land, and place the seed therein, and together tend and culture it all the summer, till the time of harvest. Then will the produce be given to him and his little ones, who had neither home, nor food, nor honest occupation. Such performances will have great power of working conviction in the human mind.

These "miracles" are much greater than the growing of one plant in half an hour, and then dissolving it into nothing again: and unfortunately they are of very rare occurrence. When anyone is seen labouring in the performance of such "miracles," all men will know that that one believes that the New Dispensation has arrived; otherwise the critically minded will be disposed to say:

IT IS ALL TALK!

HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER'S TESTIMONIAL.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—Will you kindly inform your readers that I have been appointed Honorary Secretary to the above. Friends wishing to contribute to the same will kindly forward their subscriptions to

J. F. Young, Trafalgar House, Llanelly, South Wales.

Acknowledgement will be made by your kind permission in your columns.—Yours truly, J. F. YOUNG.
Jan. 30, 1883.

Mr. J. Burns.—Dear sir,—I am much pleased to see that friends intend to give Lottie Fowler a Testimonial, socially and financially, and I believe that about the 20th of March next would be a good time for it to take place. I think that some gentleman of London ought to offer himself as business manager, and I feel sure that such an offer would be very gratifying to Miss Fowler. I regret that being an entire stranger in London, I cannot offer to assist personally myself in the management, but I shall feel much pleasure in contributing by all means within my power towards the success of what I regard as a most praiseworthy undertaking. I have known Miss Fowler, very well, many years past, in the United States, and can fully testify to the general esteem in which

Lottie was held for her many good qualities. My stay here being very limited I shall not be able to render that active assistance which I should otherwise have done, but wish with my whole heart that the undertaking may prove a grand success.—Yours truly,
J. D. R., Barrister.

THE PRIZE MUSICAL COMPOSITION.

Dear Mr. Editor,—The mass of music which you have handed to me, in answer to my offer of prizes for the best composition for "Song of Love" by "Lily," has fairly astonished me. My circle of musical acquaintances is strictly limited, consisting only of a few whose names are not known beyond the domestic circle. I am quite incompetent to decide on the merits of these compositions. The one from Bristol is an oratorio in itself, and Mr. Sparrow's is quite voluminous. The Piccadilly one seems most suitable for congregational use, and the bard of Cardiff has done well. But I leave the matter of the selection in your hands, assisted by your musical friends, of whom, no doubt, you have many. Try them over carefully, and let me know that the prizes have been duly paid—that is all that concerns me. If you can get a party of musicians capable of rendering one or more of these pieces in a fitting manner, it will make Miss Fowler's benefit one of the most memorable of spiritualistic entertainments. If you invited the musical friends in the Cause to try these pieces, it might lead to a combination which would secure their public performance. I am, very truly yours,
J. A.

London, Jan. 31, 1883.

[We have placed the matter before several musical friends, but would be glad to have the pieces submitted to as many as possible.—Ed. M.]

SUBSCRIPTIONS TOWARDS MISS FOWLER'S FUND.

"Lily"

£1 0s. 0d.

THE TESTIMONIAL TO MR. TOWNS.

Mr. Wootton has handed in the following letter:—"My dear Mr. Wootton,—I have been commissioned by a friend to forward the enclosed postal order towards the fund for Mr. Towns, and it gives me great pleasure to do so, for I hold him and his mediumship in high estimation, and I hope that a sufficient sum may be raised to help him through the difficulties that are pressing upon him. Will you kindly enter it as "The Energiser," per Miss Houghton, £1.—Believe me, yours sincerely,
GEORGINA HOUGHTON.

"20, Delamere Crescent, Westbourne Square, W.,

"January 29th, 1883."

Mr. Wootton, 33, Little Earl Street, Soho, W., will gladly receive further contributions.

THE WISDOM OF GAMALIEL'S DAUGHTER.

An unbeliever once said to Rabbi Gamaliel, "Your God is a thief! God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and while he slept he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof."

The daughter of Rabbi Gamaliel, who was present and who had heard this, requested to reply to this reproach.

"I ask for a judge," she said to him.

"What has happened?" he enquired.

"Robbers attacked us last night, stole a silver vessel and left behind a golden one."

The unbeliever smiled and exclaimed, "I wish that such robbers might come to us every day."

"And was the theft not advantageous for Adam," continued the defender; "a rib was taken from Adam and a partner was given to him."

My question is this: "Why did God take it in sleep, therefore by stealth; why not before his eyes?"

The defender asked for a piece of raw meat, it was brought to her; she fried it on coals in his presence and waited on him.

The unbeliever, who was disgusted by the appearance of the raw meat, sent back the serving.

"You understand now," the learned daughter informed him, "that God concealed indeed the formation of the woman, for the raw appearance would have interfered with the enjoyment of the beautiful possession."—(Vide Mid. Rab.)—J. L. HANAU.

COMMUNITY OF SENSATION AT A DISTANCE.—We make the following extract from a recent letter from Mr. A. Duguid, Kirkcaldy:—"I have had the feelings of some patients who have written to me for advice. In trying to find the nature of the disease, I have been led into their conditions, and, after some have written, I have felt very ill; it is not the effects of the letter but the attempt to enter their condition. Of one lady I realized in my own body, although six hundred miles away, all her aches and pains and infirmities, and gave diagnosis accordingly. It astonished me to read that account after I had written it, and it was perfectly correct as to the details of her own troubles. The anguish of mind, in which many write, is felt long after the epistle has gone. It is a beautiful study to enter the invisible domain of those psychic forces. It tends to illustrate the beautiful mechanism of the human being, and looks on man from diviner heights than the struggling mortal in this natural vale of cause and effect."

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUAL WORK.

A VISIT TO BIRMINGHAM.

To the Editor.—Sir,—If I do not encroach too much upon your space by relating a visit to Birmingham, it may be of interest for many to learn something of the Cause in that radical and progressive town.

It is interesting to note the marvellous change that has slowly taken place in the criticisms of the local papers, as well as in the public feeling toward the subject. In that town (as in others), it has received most vehement attacks and powerful opposition. Conjuror and lecturer have come to show and tell the people "how it is done," crushing articles and bitter denunciations have been showered upon its advocates and the subject in general. Pious Christians have left their holy altar and beloved pastors to disturb public meetings.

A few years have wrought a mighty change, and be it said to the well-earned credit of a few, that have withstood the disunion of members and the crises of societies every few months, whose tenacious love for its truth, and undaunted courage for its advocacy, have succeeded to keep the "ball a-rolling" until now, and whose special effort it has ever been to keep its higher and purer aspects before the people, free from the fanciful theories of wild fanatics, that have too often blighted its growth and checked its progress. The press and the public have recognised this fact, as evidenced by recent criticisms and public attendance.

On [Sunday last, at Oozell Street Board School, Mrs. Groom addressed a large audience under inspiration: subject—"Let there be Light." The control spoke at length, of the various departments of art and science that had given light to mankind, that in every age it came to meet the wants and capacity of man; and, finally, that Spiritualism was destined to be the great beacon light that would yet dispel the cloud of spiritual darkness that enveloped the nation. It was followed by a delivery of three poems, chosen by the audience, on "The Mind," "Justice," and "Love," which were received with sympathy and applause.

Mrs. Groom then proceeded to give clairvoyant descriptions of spirits related to many of the strangers present. This was done with extraordinary success in more than a dozen cases (with one only that was not recognised). One lady in deep mourning recognised seven spirits. A gentleman unmistakably recognised his father (with military figure, a Wellington nose, etc.), also his wife. Two brothers recognised their mother, the wife of one, a child, and many others, if names and addresses were obtained, would furnish an important chapter of evidence for the public, as these people were quite unknown to the clairvoyant, which fact they publicly acknowledged, as well as the recognition of their spirit friends; while tears rolled down their gladdened cheeks, which spoke more potent than the loudest speech.

Such cases as these have been going on in public and private for a number of years, given with equal freedom "without money and without price," alike to the poor in their humble cot, as to those that shape the social and political affairs of that town.

In "organization," Birmingham has failed because of the many "obstructors" and few "workers." The meetings are now being carried on by Mr. and Mrs. Groom, and Mr. Gray, who are unquestionably doing great service to the Cause they love.

A. J. SMYTH (late Hon. Sec.).

Liverpool.

PLYMOUTH, RICHMOND HALL, RICHMOND STREET.

SUNDAY EVENING, JANUARY 28th, 1883.

Notwithstanding the very unfavourable weather, there was a fair attendance, with a sprinkling of strangers. Mr. R. S. Clarke's guides gave a powerful and well-arranged address on the claims and mission of Spiritualism as a religious movement, directed toward the establishment of a religion developed from primitive Christianity. But while promoting this legitimately constructive work, it had also a destructive work to do, in removing the errors and abuses which had gathered around Christianity from the earliest days to the present. The discourse was admirably suited to the occasion; and corrected some misapprehensions which had existed in the minds of strangers who were present.

C. W. DYMOND.

On Wednesday, February 7th, at 7.30 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis will deliver an oration. Mr. Councillor Uglov will preside. Free admission; collection at the close.

LEICESTER—SILVER STREET LECTURE HALL.

On Sunday last, Mr. Wallis, of Nottingham, occupied the rostrum morning and evening. The morning service was thinly attended. The spirit-guides of Mr. Wallis took for their subject: "The Bible of the future," in the evening: "The power, purposes, and principles of Spiritualism;" both addresses were well received and very much appreciated. The evening service was well attended.

R. WIGHTMAN, Sec.

74, Mostyn Street, Hinckley Road, Leicester.

NOTES OF PROGRESS.—BATLEY CARR.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—I told you in my note of the 20th instant, that I anticipated us having a "livener-up" on the 28th. I am glad to inform you that my most sanguine hopes were fully realized.

Mrs. Butterfield, of Blackpool, was our medium; and as it was the first time she has occupied the platform at Batley Carr, not only new faces were present to hear her control, but a number of old faces showed up, notwithstanding the weather being very wet.

I had the good fortune to secure the services of this lady at our afternoon School, when her guides addressed themselves to the scholars on the beauties and Truths of Spiritualism; the advantages of being placed in a position to learn something respecting the construction of their little bodies, how these are repaired; and a little respecting the various organs of the brain, and the power these have over our actions. In short, had my own organism been used for the address, the guides could not have hit on nearer the course of advice and good counsel given them regularly than what they did. A large number of persons being present, consisting of parents, friends, and strangers, gave a zest to the occasion not soon to be forgot.

The evening was no less a success than the afternoon, although the weather continued very wet. The controls spoke for upwards of an hour on "The Religion of Humanity." If a creed was necessary for humanity, the controls would suggest that it be "pure food and water, plenty of fresh air, plenty of water and soap for the external man, and twenty shillings to the pound." In conclusion, they would say, let your creed or dogma be what it may, belief avails nothing, do that which is right if you wish to be right when this life's scenes close on your mortal eyes.

ALFRED KITSON.

4, TALBOT GR., LADBROKE GR. RD., NOTTING HILL.

Meetings Sunday mornings, at 11 o'clock prompt; evening at 7 o'clock prompt.

Tuesday evenings, developing circle for members and friends

Thursday evenings, Mrs. Treadwell, trance and test. At 8.

Subscriptions, sixpence per week, admits to all meetings, Spirit-mediums and friends are invited to assist in the work.

On Sunday, February 4th, Mr. J. Burns will lecture.

All information may be obtained of

W. LANG, Sec. West London Spiritual Evidence Society.

MANCHESTER.—Mechanics' Institute, Major Street. On Sunday last, Mrs. Groom, of Birmingham, occupied the platform in the morning. Several subjects were handed up, and the following was selected by the audience:—"Where is the spirit of a medium at the time he is under control." The spirit-guides discoursed on this subject in a very able and eloquent manner, shewing by analogy that the control of a medium by spirit agency was similar to the control of a sensitive by a powerful mesmerist, and that in the same way, the medium worked out the impressions cast upon his mind sphere. After touching upon the various phases of mediumship, the discourse was brought to a close by the comparison of Spiritualism with Christianity, and Mrs. Groom brought the service to an end by giving several remarkable clairvoyant readings to persons in the audience, and in delineating the character of a young lady from a letter which a gentleman in the audience had received from her. The attendance was large, and the meeting a great success. In the evening, Mr. R. A. Brown, of Manchester, occupied the platform, and his control discoursed on the following subject:—"When will the Jews be restored to their own land,"—which was attentively listened to by the audience.—J. E. LIGHTBOWN, Secretary. M.S.S.S.

ROCHDALE.—During the last ten years the Rochdale Spiritualists have passed through a series of vicissitudes. Within the last two years, however, the society has assumed a somewhat more prosperous condition. Great efforts have been made by Mr. Lewis Firth, the secretary, ably supported by the other officials. There is now every likelihood of these efforts being crowned with success. On two occasions, recently, Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten, under the auspices of the Society, has paid two visits to the town, and been the means of creating a greater interest in the subject of Spiritualism. She will pay another visit on Sunday, Feb. 11th, when it is expected that she will address large audiences, the lectures on this occasion being free, reliance being placed on voluntary contributions for the payment of expenses. She will speak, as before, in the large room of the Central Stores. In the morning a social gathering will take place at the Society's rooms (corner of Milnrow Road), when it is anticipated several Spiritualists from the surrounding localities will relate their experiences in connection with their investigations into the spiritual philosophy.—COR.

Mrs. Hardinge-Britten will lecture at Liverpool, the first and third Sundays of February, March, and April; Rochdale, February 11th; Belper, February 25th; Leeds, March 11; and Bradford, March 25th.—Address: The Limes, Humphrey Street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

THE CAUSE AT HALIFAX.

Dear Mr. Burns,—I have pleasure in saying that the Spiritualist Cause is gradually improving at Halifax. For months back there has been more inquiring and searching into it; and people are beginning to see and feel that it is a reality, and a grand foretaste of the Life Beyond, if lived up to here. Our Meeting Room is generally full, which will hold about 80 to 100, and when we are favoured with the presence of Mrs. E. H. Britten, we have to take a large hall. She is well known to be one of the finest speakers of the day, and no doubt she has done a large amount of good in Halifax, and the surrounding towns. All our other supply of mediums is much improved. We are often favoured with our old and tried friends, Mrs. Illingworth, of Bradford, Mr. Armitage, of Batley Carr, and others, who are very good.

Last Sunday we had Mrs. Yarwood, of Heywood. She is a fair good speaker under influence, and a good test medium. On Sunday she gave about 40 tests, and about 30 were acknowledged in a very satisfactory way. On Monday, the 29th, she gave twenty tests, fourteen were acknowledged at once. She is one of the best test mediums we have ever had at Halifax, and I think it is a good way of setting people to see there is something more than has been preached by other societies; when full descriptions are given, one after another, of their near friends and relations by a stranger, and so clear that they are identified at once; also, in many cases, how they left this life. She points out those who are mediums of various kinds, and those who did not know it are going to try it for themselves. By so doing, I think, Mrs. Yarwood is doing a good work.

If the Spiritual Cause progresses as fast the next few months as the last, we are looking forward to be compelled to look after a larger meeting room, and I think a great many more towns and villages would have to do the same, if its members would unite more and be more of one brotherhood.—
Yours affectionately, S. JAGGER.

QUEBEC HALL, 25, GREAT QUEBEC ST., MARLBORNE ROAD. Sunday, Feb. 4, at 11 a.m., a Seance, Mr. Savage, medium. Mr. Fabian Cristus also attends same time, and will exercise his Healing Powers for those who may be suffering. Evening, at 7 prompt, Mr. MacDonnell on "The Progress of the English People."—Monday, at 8.30, An Address by Mr. Wilson.—Tuesday, at 8.30: Conversational explanation of Diagrams in Hall.—Thursday, at 8.30, a Discussion on "Social Questions of the day."—Friday, at 8 prompt, a Seance: Mr. Hagon Medium.—Saturday, at 8.30, a Seance, a good Clairvoyant medium attends. Mr. Hancock is present half-an-hour previous to speak with strangers.

CIRCLE & PERSONAL MEMORANDA.

Mr. Dowsing exercises his talents very usefully in newspaper correspondence, having discussed the subject of Spiritualism single-handed in five county newspapers. This is a form of work which is greatly overlooked by most Spiritualists. Mr. Dowsing says, in respect to the trials connected with this work,—“As physical labour strengthens the muscular powers of the body, so spiritual work enlarges our souls and spiritual sympathies.”

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One of our readers says in the course of a letter:—"I have just finished reading 'Sartor Resartus,' by Carlyle. A wonderful book it is, truly. It would do Spiritualists good to read it; as also the works of Ruskin and Emerson. I wish some of your correspondents would take up the subject of these men's writings and elucidate them in your columns after the style of 'Pictor' some years ago. What has become of him?" The works of these authors, with the exception of Ruskin, are now so cheap that it would be best to peruse the originals. Every Spiritualist should put a penny or sixpence or some small sum into a book club weekly, and thus become possessor of a choice library.

The "Bendigo Advertiser" reports that "Little Tommy" had lectured on "Peter, Paul, and Judas: Judas the best of the three." This superiority the lecturer based on the fact that Judas having done wrong repented, tossed up the shekels and went and hanged himself. The lecturer was apparently proud of his patron saint; but, unlike him, he glories in his iniquity. Sticks to all his ill-gotten gains—£300 in the South African Diamond Fields at one sweep—and has not as yet hanged himself. No doubt he consoles himself by attributing this divergence to the march of progress, and that the men of to-day are vastly superior to the apostles.

OBITUARY.

MADAME RIVAIL, ALLAN KARDEC.

Madame Kardec, widow of the late Allan Kardec, passed away on January 21, 1883, at her house, 39, Avenue de Ségur, Paris, at the ripe age of 88 years. The intimation of the interment at Père la Chaise Cemetery on the 23rd, was issued by the Society for continuing the Spiritual Writings of Allan Kardec; English translations of several of which have been made by Miss Anna Blackwell.

NUMBERS OF THE "SPIRITUALIST" WANTED.

To complete sets, the following Numbers of the "Spiritualist" are wanted immediately:—The whole of the Numbers, for 1874. For 1875, Nos. 129, 130, 131, 132, 138, 139, 140, 147. For 1878, No. 329. For 1879, No. 332. For 1880, Nos. 389, 390, 404. Send to J. Burns, 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C., with a note of cost.

RULES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SPIRIT-CIRCLE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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PLAN OF SPEAKERS FOR FEBRUARY.

February 4th—Mr. A. D. Wilson, of Halifax.

" 11th—Mr. R. A. Brown, of Manchester.

" 18th—Mr. W. Johnson, of Hyde.

" 25th—Mrs. Groom, of Birmingham.

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