



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

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THE GOD OF THE SPIRITS.

AN ADDRESS BY MRS. EMMA HARDINGE, AT CAVENDISH ROOMS, SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 18, 1870.

Our subject this night will be "The God of the Spirits; or, What Information can the Modern Movement from the Invisible World throw on the mighty Problem of Deity?" The world has the right to ask this question from beings who claim alliance with the very nature and substance of Him whom men have worshipped as God—as Spirit. When before we spoke of the origin of man's religious spirit, we reminded you that not with the vestiges of creation, but with those of civilisation, have arisen all our evidences of man's worshipful nature. Again we will remind you that not with the savage man, from the teachings of intuition, but with the man who in the first dawn of civilisation feels the awakening of the intellect: not with him who in the paradise of ignorance waits for the voice of the Invisible to guide him, but with the Adam who has tasted of the fruit of the tree of knowledge—with him who, prompted by the subtle force of intellect, has begun to appreciate good and evil, do we have the dawning evidences that man's first reach after intellectual nature is an inquiry into the One Great Cause. And be it remembered that, with all our pride of intellect—with all the changes that have swept over humanity, moving the race forward in the path of the mighty sun from east to west, spreading the pall of ignorance over the earliest portions of the earth merely as an invitation to the restless energies of the human intellect to remove it, and perpetually drawing aside one after another the curtains which conceal the vast arcana of creation from the craving appetite of this same intellect—with all the progress that we have made—with all the triumphant conquests that have been achieved over time and space, annihilating the darkness, putting a girdle of intellectual power round the world, and scaling the heights of heaven with a ladder every round of which has been fashioned out of the intellect of man—with all these mighty steps forward in search of and conquest over the various forms of knowledge that God has revealed to man, we have never lost sight of the one original idea that we were creatures of an almighty hand, beings dependent upon an invisible mind—that there was a cause adequate to the production of creation, and that that cause we have agreed to call by the various names that signify God our Father. Notwithstanding the fact that it is claimed that many of the leading minds of the age revolt from this idea—refuse to teach or to acknowledge, or even to believe in the possibility of a mighty individualised spiritual existence—we find ample cause for the idiosyncrasies of such minds, wholly opposed as they are to the universal testimony of worshipping man. The great error that has been made by scientists in the direction of this research has been that they have contented themselves with allowing the problem to be resolved by those that are scientific. Those whom we have agreed to set apart as the ministers of religion we have excluded from the realms of science, while on the other hand scientific men have contented themselves with searching into the absolutely known, with exploring the fields of nature, with merely presenting to us the results of observations founded upon the visible, and have never yet attempted to master the mystery of mind. But how much value should we set upon such authority as this? They can destroy, but only in the direction of theological myths; they can subvert the baseless assertions of mere ideality, but they have never yet disproved the existence of God. Their authority is merely negative. With all the deep respect that we are bound to yield to the bold thinker—to him who, popularly called the "Freethinker," dares to face the world, and make of himself a target for public opinion for the sake of maintaining an unpopular truth—we arraign him as we do the scientist, simply on the ground that he proves nothing—that all his shafts are levelled only at theological errors, and never at the broad, grand field of intelligent causation. Neither Atheist, Secularist, Freethinker, nor Scientist has ever touched this problem; but they, in common with the rest, have a right to ask of the Spiritualist, "Have you evidence to offer, and if so, what is the use of it to the practical issues of this working life of ours?" Both subjects we propose to treat of this night, only promising that we speak to you not alone from the realm of assertion on the part of spirits, but from the absolutely defined knowledge which the proven and demonstrated existence of a spiritual world can bring us.

Were we to appeal to reason, we should be able to stand face to face with the Atheist, and require of him to solve the very first problem of intelligence in creation. Where do we see the ivory of the desert, the wood of the forest, the skin of the animal—objects which are brought from different parts? We might, by a strong stretch of the imagination in the realm of possibilities, believe that these objects had

become heterogeneously commingled together by chance; but when we see them formed, organised, arranged, and capable of producing, in the shape of yon instrument, a given purpose, the whole realm of chances vanishes, and we are certain that the unknown hands that fashioned yon instrument were guided by the intelligence that we call "mind." When we hear of the functions which that instrument is capable of producing, and can see that the purpose is answered, and that the end has fully justified the means, it simply carries us forward to a higher condition of mind; and though the whole of the chain of causation may be invisible to us—though the tones produced by the performer, the manufacture which has been effected by the unknown workman, shall all be hidden from us, even in this simple respect do we read the gospel of mind. Nor do we point to one object alone, but to the whole realm of nature, covered with the works of art and the vestiges of civilisation. How much larger and grander is the design which we discover, then, in the magnificent instrumentation that moves forward this night in an oratorio of harmony that has been sounding through the cycles of ages, the sum of which baffles the mathematician to compute! As we listen to the tramping of ages fraught with the voices of humanity, and perpetually sounding forth a grander paean of knowledge and a deeper diapason of the gospel of mind, do we ever lose sight of the fact that the whole of this marching army has been generalised by the power of human intelligence? And can we fail to discover that the same effects must take back to the same causes in that grander and nobler machinery of creation which fails not, whether in the creation and destiny of a worm, the beauty of a rose, or the legions of stars that are marshalled above our heads this night? These positions have never been answered. All that you can refer us to of the law-manifesting atoms—of the inevitable changes that are proceeding with that silent but irresistible power of life and death in the ancient rocks, in the ground beneath us, in the round, rushing worlds about us, only pleads the more powerfully for the action of masterful intelligence. I could not stand in the presence of a butterfly—I could not gaze on the beneficent purposes evolved by the microscope as I watch the infusoria and animalculæ invisible to my eye—I could not speculate upon the life and death of a single daisy, nor gaze away down into the ancient rocks and contemplate the marvellous adaptation of means to ends, without bowing my head before the invisible Mind, and crying, "O, Infinite One, I trust Thee; mighty enough for the scheme of creation, strong enough for me!" Were there no other uses in it, O ye suffering, toiling, struggling pilgrims of earth, that is enough—to know that we are not the creatures of chance; to realise this, and in the midst of all the griefs that have furrowed our brow, the heartaches that have lacerated our spirits, the dreadful life-problems that are distracting and bearing us down, the waves of adversity that sweep over our heads, and the tempests that sigh in our ears, to know that there is purpose, order, design—more, sympathy; for intelligence means something more than law. Ye that are intelligent enough to fashion the instruments and objects that surround us, know that your wisdom is but one of the attributes of mind—that it is but the shining light that guides your steps. It is not the reality of the great throbbing heart full of emotions, and tender loves, and affections within you. Intellect is not all of the man. Therefore wisdom is but one of the attributes of this master-mind whom we worship as Deity. He loves. All our works do syllable us, and just as much as they are gospels of our minds are we gospels of the infinite Mind. And we who love know that the strongest, dearest, tenderest part of our nature is the sympathy that binds us man to man, the pity with which our hearts are stirred by the sorrows of another; and the realisation that every sigh that is heaved this night throughout the world poisons the air that we breathe, and even psychologically bears down upon us with a weight of woe which our brother feels, is the evidence that the wellspring of love that exists for somebody, and that demands an answer from somebody, can never be quite crushed out of the heart. And so the fountain of this great love-nature must be as much adequate to its production as the wisdom-nature of God which shines forth in our intellect.

We have said enough to show you that it is in the influence upon the mind, the character, the heart—upon the intellect as well as upon the love-nature of the man—that the necessity exists that we should know whose we are and what relations we bear to this mighty and unknown Mind that governs us. We will, however, invite you first to recall briefly the God idea, or the development of the thought and purpose of God, as it appears in history, and then compare it with the revelations which proceed from the spirit-world.

We do realise that the earliest remains of civilisation are temples of worship; and these instruct us that the first effort of man to discover

causation inevitably pointed to the larger and grander order of government that was discovered in the heavens. The sun, moon, and stars, as influencing tides, times, and seasons, as connecting themselves even with human destiny—so say the ancient astrologists—naturally appeared to the dawning intellect of man to represent the invisible principles of power and divine government. As the intellect gained strength, the idea enlarged. The ancient Hindoo represented God in all the varied forms of nature. The four arms of Brahma, the thousand eyes of Vishnu, the varied incarnations in every conceivable form of this preserving deity, the power of destruction symbolised in Seva—all these are but recognitions by the human intellect of the immense and limitless power of the unknown God.

The Egyptian idea is similarly a representation of the necessity of Mind to originate Being. Here we find the ancient Trinity—Osiris the father, Isis the mother, Oris the child, representing all the varied forms of human creation—representing in one vast sweep those grand dual principles and results which appear so manifest in the wonder of being.

The Greek and Roman, in the wider and more expansive dawn of art and science as well as intellect, simply received the ancient idea and enlarged upon it. Their mythology alone points to God in all; pantheistic as it has been termed, it is in fact the most deeply spiritual appreciation that the great and infinite Mind pervades all space—that no form of being can exist unvitalised by the Author and Finisher of being.

The next form to which we would call attention is the God of the Jews, who, though appearing more as a tutelary spirit—the God of power, the God of terror, made in the image of man, representing the variable, changeable nature of man himself—is still a representation of the mightiest idea that the Jew could conceive of. He is the grand man of the Jews. It is still the acknowledgment that above all the forms in which the human mind can represent itself there is a higher and a mightier still.

The sweetest, loveliest, nearest to man—the most sympathetic and acceptable that has ever yet been rendered to man—is the idea which incarnates itself in the precious words, "Our Father." It is not for us to analyse the nature of that spirit that was outpoured without measure upon the gentle Nazarene; it is enough for us to know that we have never approached so near to Him who afflicts us and yet sustains us—who bears us up even from Bethlehem to Calvary—who, in the last moments of agony, speaks to us through our dying lips still as Our Father,—we never have realised any God that has so answered the demands of man who is a man of sorrows. Not you who are happy and proud enough in your intellect to stand alone, but those that suffer, that realise all the discipline of life, and know that it is but the dark and narrow section of a mighty highway whose beginning and end are lost in the mystery of two eternities—it is such as these that gladly echo the cry of Christ the spirit, "Our Father."

But from this time the necessities, it would seem, of ecclesiastical organisation have built up around this central idea of a God-man, a sympathetic spirit—a mighty and a loving, as well as a strong and a powerful being. Many strange and various images have reproduced many fantastic shapes, and limited them by the boundaries of the human fancy. Men who have founded sects have presented us the images of their own mind, and bidden us fall down and worship them as God; and it is for this, unquestionably, that the scientific mind, which demands foundation, reason, authority for that which it must accept, has been repelled from the sects, and now wanders in the dark night of Atheism, unconscious even of the existence of spirit at all. However much spirits of men and women like ourselves may have advanced beyond our stand-point of knowledge, they are still human spirits, limited and finite; what knowledge they bring is peculiar to themselves and their own condition, but they are not God. We do not bid you fail to worship them simply that God may not be offended—simply to avoid acts of idolatry—but for the sake of your reason; they are not the Cause of causes. It has been beautifully said, and repeated again but recently by our spiritual teachers, that were our planet at this moment blotted out from the shining page of heaven, and the golden tresses of light that are trailed through the midnight sky of any of the bright satellites that sparkle in space quenched, the vast and illimitable field of glittering armies would still march on, unconscious of the loss of one spark of light. Could we in one single instant obliterate all forms from our planet, do we not know that the same infinite Power that produced them is adequate to their reproduction? Think, then, whether we can conceive of any finite being adequate to instruct us in the fulness of this majestic idea that we worship as God.

But that which does belong to us, and to our spirit-teachers to apprise us of, is this: they bring to us a full and complete demonstration of spiritual existence. Every spirit with whom we commune at the circle, every intelligence that manifests itself, no matter after what fashion, we recognise as appertaining to the organism that we have once known as man. All his attributes point to the identity of special individuals. What portion of man is that which presents itself? Not the outward form that we have laid away in the ground, nor any of the attributes of that form; but whilst the same intelligence is there, and all the powers of the man are there, there are new and higher functions presented to us. First, our spirit-friend proves to us the fact of memory, recalls the whole of the past career of his earthly pilgrimage, and proves to us, therefore, that mind is unchangeable, and that nothing is lost in mind. Unlike the shifting atoms which are perpetually changing, and like a phantasm appear but for a brief moment in the panorama of time to pass away, the thoughts, ideas, and even the first fundamental conceptions of the infant are still there; all that we have gained in life-history is but an addition, like the corridors, and the galleries, and the coronal glory of the upper structure, until the whole temple of life is completed. And all this our spirit-friend returns with. Our spirit-friend brings to our presence the same deep love that bound us to him, and the relations of life are still sustained, and all the holy sympathies of the heart are still perfect. Oh, the deep, dear love of the spirit! Some of us know of it; some of us recognise how this unquenchable, patient love has stood by us for long, long years of unconsciousness. Even when with cold and heartless ribaldry we have scoffed at the existence of the precious debt at all, they have borne patiently with our blindness, and waited for the moment when our eyes should be opened, and we should recognise, like the disciples as they walked with their

Master to Emmanus whilst their eyes were holden, that the risen spirit of our beloved was with us still. And all the wisdom is there—all that constituted the powers of mind are reproduced. Amidst much mistake and much darkness, many failures of the telegraph, many imperfections in the post office through which the messages of love are transmitted, there is enough to show us that every function of mind is preserved, and with it new powers are gained. There is no limitation to the spirit. Here in our midst, at this moment, as we sit with closed doors, or in the wide arena of the city streets, or on the far ocean, or on the distant prairie, the mountain top, the wilderness, the valley—no matter how far we travel, the experiments of modern Spiritualism have proved to us there is no power of limiting the action of the spirit. As the sun shines upon a vast area of earth at once, and the eyes of millions are turned to his glittering light in a single moment, though he is but one, so these spiritual luminaries of love seem to shine upon vast expanses of space, proving at least that the limitations and obstacles of matter no longer hinder them, and the limitations of time have ceased for them. A spiritual existence, then, is proved. The fact is absolutely demonstrated that an invisible soul is here—that this chamber is full of the presence of these beings, though they occupy no material space for us, are invisible to our earthly eyes, and do not appeal to our material senses. Here, then, is the first great problem of causation solved. We know that an invisible intelligence pervades all space; we know that as that intelligence becomes more and more removed from the functions and limitations of matter its powers ascend, and deepen, and broaden—that from the point where we used to be bound and hindered by matter, we arrive at conditions so much grander and higher that in ancient time they may well have called their spiritual visitants gods.

We now follow out our questionings of these spirit-people, and press home to know what tidings they can bring us of a personality. They answer to us even as our own reason would dispose us to believe, that the fragment can never comprehend the whole—that the eye of the finite can never compass the form of infinity, nor can the temporal ever understand the eternal; but it is enough that the spirit brings us assurances that the divine government that surrounds them is still more ripe with wisdom and love and power than it is upon this earth. Here we mourn because we perceive, or fancy we perceive, great injustice, inequality, much suffering; conditions of degradation crowd upon us in every city, misery and wretchedness and pain and death are on every hand; and the great catastrophes which destroy dynasties and subvert empires inevitably appeal to our senses of right and justice, and the most pious amongst us are only able to exclaim, "It is God's will, I must submit." This is no solution. Is God's will death and destruction, and suffering and pain, and injustice? These are questions which mortals will press home when they are writhing in the furnace-fires of transformation. And then comes the answer of the angels, the loving message of those that have themselves trodden the bleeding paths of martyrdom and borne the cross of suffering: "All is well with us; there is a justice which compensates for every pang—there is a transformation which outworks, even from these furnace-fires of suffering and discipline, the brightest and most glorious conditions of spiritual existence." How oft do they tell us that the crown of martyrdom is no fiction—that this dreadful discipline that cuts deep into our hearts, that these catastrophes which destroy now the individual and now the kingdom, now the man and now the army, are but applied to each individual as acts of purification and discipline, that the mighty heart-wrench of every suffering we bear is so much gained for us, so much which has refined and purified our spiritual natures; and that they realise an absolute effect for all those causes which on earth appeared to them but acts of injustice and wrong. Even the good and kindly nature of the lower creatures, which we so constantly abuse, is represented by these spirit-people to make a similar advance beneath the stripes, and suffering, and discipline that we put upon them. Why, it is the means of progress—it is the very footprints in which we march, not only from Gethsemane to Calvary, but from Calvary to Paradise.

This is no fiction, for again we find it the corroborative testimony of every returning spirit; and thus is the justice of this unknown divine government vindicated, that the love is there—for it still preserves intact those sweet affections that form our best and purest joys upon earth; they are carried forward into the spirit-world, and spiritualised and deepened there, and made so great and wonderful a joy in that land of light that we have no sorrow, no pain.

No more desperate endeavours,
No more separating evers,
No more desolating nevers,
Over there.

They speak not of theology, they acknowledge no sects, they build no churches, they worship at no special shrines; but the whole of creation to them is an evidence of the constant presence of the majesty of eternity; the shining worlds that move forward in their paths of light—the constant retrospect into the vast cycles of ages in the past—all proclaim the same ceaseless power, the same magnetic presence, and therefore their lives are a constant worship. You may claim, many of you Spiritualists, that at each spirit-circle the voice of sectarian distraction is repeated again—that you receive communications endorsing your special views and special images. Believe as ye will; so that ye approach nearer to the idea of the infinite—so that ye are brought more closely into relation with the Great Spirit—so that ye realise the God who is your strength, it matters not. These are your means of instruction. And yet amidst the spirit-people who have longest and most faithfully toiled up the steep of progress you will find that there are no images, no limitations of the divine presence to this little dewdrop—this earth; that the conceptions of godhead grow so large and so vast that the spirits but rarely converse about it. Their whole life is a worship—their whole discourse is a song of praise. The progress by which they speed forward in these unknown heights that we are not permitted, mortals as we are, to gaze upon, is all fraught with this love and wisdom and power which form the divine government of which they are a part. I do reach down this night with the eye of the spirit to the lowest depths that are in the great Babylon around us—to the poor, the penniless, the houseless, the outcast, the ignorant. "God help them!" we cry. Oh, He helps them surely—surely He helps them! Shut in as we are by our mortal

sight from the destiny of the hereafter, were there no bright visions of a spiritual retribution, a land of compensation, open gates through which the bleeding feet of the suffering may pass in and sigh no more, we might look indeed with a deep loathing on life—with the antipathy to the conception of a God that so often seems to mark the speech of the kind hearted and loving Secularist—and cry that life is a bitter burden; we might strive even with a hand of force to repair the great wrongs that man inflicts upon his fellows; but we stand, and as we gaze even upon these lowest depths, we perceive the dual mission of the creature we look upon and ourselves. Not a single object that is brought before us, not a single thought that is impressed upon our minds, but comes to us with a low, still, small voice of God, bidding us feed his sheep, feed his lambs. It is a charge, it is a mission, and a permission for us to do the work which we vainly supplicate him to do. We pray for these unfortunates, and He gives us the means to answer our prayer by the sympathy we feel for them and the consciousness of their misery. This is our part in the scheme as far as our means will carry us, and where this fails, our consolation is to know that there is compensation and retribution; and that as for these darkened ones, they are like the black carbon ere the water of crystallisation has taken it up and purified it into the shining diamond—they are like the precious metal that is still undiscovered in the matrix of the quartz—they are like the floating nebulae of the skies still uncrystallised into the obedient satellite; but the power of eternal manhood is in them—the spirit blazes in the deep caverns of the thickest night of guilt, and can never, never be quenched.

These glorious lessons Spiritualism has taught us, and in thus teaching us it has given us many others which we learn by induction. We learn a set of fresh beauties which open up before us in every direction. We are guilty if we look at any point of humanity and do not answer the voice of the Spirit who in olden times cried, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And another of the lessons which it teaches us is to trust—to trust for ourselves, to trust for dear humanity. And another of the lessons is the fatherhood and the universality of this great Spirit. Where shall I go to bind him, to narrow him, to encompass him with human walls, or with the girdle of light that encircles my planet, or with the robes of fire that bound the solar system, or with the grander walls made up of star-dust that encircle the astral system? He fills them all. And yet he is in the sand beneath my foot, for his power has made it; and it is not because in his magnificence I cannot compass him that I doubt that he is enough for me, for I know the nature of spiritual existence, finer and more subtle than a ray of light. The largest and mightiest conception that we can have of spiritual existence is still microscopic enough to pierce my heart and speak to me in answer to the petitions that I put up to the unknown God.

Such are some of the lessons which spirits teach us of Deity. If ye can accept these without branding them as infidel because they do not come to you stereotyped with the authority of John Knox, John Calvin, John Wesley, or any other of the good men who perceived their God only through the reflected images of their minds, it matters not. When ye too are spirits ye will know of God the Spirit; and the fineness of his word, which like a sword pierces the heart unconsciously, shall not slumber even in your hearts to-night, for, as we have borne witness of the God of the spirits, it is thou, O Infinite Mind—thou, O Mighty and Eternal Sun of Being—that can fructify this word this night; and though in apathy or indolence they may scarcely realise the words that have been spoken, O our Father, the testimony we have borne to the God of the spirits shall surely bring them all nearer, nearer to Thee!

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

Q. Why did you pity the Atheist?—A. Simply because we believe that he is deprived of a great joy, because the strength and consolation that the realisation of a strong and infinite Spirit can bring is a joy which the Atheist cannot realise; but if that pity be offensive, let us change the phrase, and congratulate him that he stands upon the threshold of the temple of knowledge, guided thither by that breadth of thought that dares to take exception to the imaginary gods of creeds. Be sure that if he has not yet found the light, the fact that he has explored his way from the thicker darkness which man's superstitions would put upon him is the best evidence that he will yet discover that higher light that shall be a guide to his steps.

Q. If we are beings susceptible to the influence of the food we eat, the water we drink, the planets that control us, and the elements that surround us, how are we accountable, spiritually speaking, for what we do?—A. We are not this night arguing the question of accountability; were we so, we should point to the results rather than to the causes. The results are inevitable penalty for the failure of obedience to certain laws. If those results visit us in pain and suffering, we call the cause that has incurred them wrong; if the results produce nought but blessing, we call the causes that have incurred or deserved these blessings right. We do not this night undertake to determine for you how far man is accountable or not. Granting that he is thus controlled, what controls him, and how far is he controlled? He is controlled by material forces. Planets, airs, food, atmospheric and every other influence affect his body, and that body being the limitation of his mind, his mind sympathising with it, he is happy or unhappy according to the tendencies of the physical system. But measure the conditions of that mind against matter, and what are they? Perpetually overreaching the limitations of matter. There is no material obstacle that can hinder the flight of mind; nothing can bound it, nothing can legislate for it. It is obvious, then, that there is a certain amount of freedom in the mind, even though it be married for the time being on earth to this material body. The body and all the forces of matter are immutably bound, the mind is measurably free, and it is in the struggle between the consciousness of illimitable powers in mind and the perpetual bondage of the forces with which matter hinders us that we so constantly question whether we are bound or free. The question of accountability also answers for the fact that all our trespasses against physical laws of any description whatever are visited by great and heavy penalties. And so we should take the ground that we are both bound and free—accountable to ourselves; and therefore to procure the highest possible conditions of good and happiness, we must needs study the law and obey it.

CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

By A. J. DAVIS.

The Leaders are now requested to select books for the ensuing two weeks. The Leaders, to accomplish this, leave their Groups and proceed to the Library apartment and make the selections. As this occupies some little time, the Musical Director engages the Lyceum in singing, and makes general remarks and gives illustrations on the rudiments of music, the cultivation of which is an essential feature of the Lyceum. Leaders having returned from the Library and resumed their seats, all badges are at once removed, and the boxes containing them returned to the Assistant Guardian at the desk. A member of each Group is selected to remove its Target and form in line at the side of the Hall, under the direction of their Captain (usually a boy member of the older Groups), who duly marshals the Target-bearers in order, and then marches and counter-marches his company through the aisles to the platform, where the targets are deposited. The Captain then dismisses his company, who return to their seats, preparatory to the final march.

The Conductor now requests the entire Lyceum to "rise and form in rank." The seats are moved more closely together by the Guards, to widen the aisles. This done, all "beat time" lightly (not noisily) with the left foot, as a preparation to step to the music when they begin the march. (Well-marked marches, like the "Child of the Regiment," should be performed on the piano.) The Guardian of the Groups, who always precedes the procession in its windings through the aisles of the Hall, now leads forward, with the large silk flag, the Leaders invariably following their Groups in the marches, never preceding them, by which arrangement the members are visible to their Leaders.

By the time the whole line is fairly in motion, the head of the column is passing near the Conductor's stand, when an Assistant gives out one of a dozen silk flags to each of the Leaders as they pass. The foremost, or Liberty Group, immediately following the Guardian, is now passing the Banner Chest,* ten or more feet beyond this point, where each member takes a Flag in his right hand. [N.B.—While the books were being selected, these Flags were arranged in due order, the largest Flags being for the larger members, and the smallest for the little children.] These Flags are taken in succession from the further end of the lid of the Banner Chest, upon which they are laid, leaving the small Flags to be taken last, at the first end of the table, as the small members finally reach this point.

The Guardian of the Groups still leads on in the march through the different aisles, often doubling the column, so that they move in close proximity to those passing the other way, all of whom are now marching with Flags elevated or lowered, as the Conductor directs.

In these windings and counter-marches of the columns, good judgment is required to prevent interference and confusion; and some foresight also, when the aisles are all filled with moving Flags, to bring the column up in proper order for the final singing, or the concluding "Silver-Chaining Exercises."

After a sufficient number of evolutions for the occasion, accompanied, as they sometimes are, with singing by the moving column, they are all led close by the Conductor's stand again, and the same Assistant receives from each Leader the silk Flags—the members depositing theirs in the Banner Chest, a little further on.

The Guardian is still counter-marching, and thus contracting the lines in front of the Conductor's stand.

The older Groups, or those from No. 12 downward, first form a line in length, either to accommodate the Hall or to divide the lines as equally as may be—the smaller members marching to the front. This brings the little ones together and quite near to the platform. All are now in order for the final song, or for responses to questions by the Conductor, or to hear remarks from anyone who may be invited to address the school.

(To be continued.)

THANKS TO THE GIVERS.

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

DEAR SIR,—I was most agreeably surprised last Wednesday to receive from the hands of Mr. Daw the proceeds of a subscription, amounting to £8 10s. 6d., which he had been so good as to conduct for me; or to quote from the heading of the list, it was "A subscription on behalf of Mr. Morse, as a token of appreciation of the services rendered through his mediumship to the cause of Spiritualism." He also expressed to me that the course of lectures from my venerated spirit-teacher "Tien" had given very general satisfaction. I hereby beg to return my most sincere thanks to the ladies and gentlemen who have so generously responded to the appeal on my behalf from Mr. Daw. It is peculiarly gratifying to me, as it was entirely unlooked for and unexpected; but it gives me renewed strength to go on, seeing that my labours are appreciated; and go on I will, while I have power to work for the spreading of our holy cause; and if I only meet the reward of the great judge—my inward self—I shall deem myself well repaid. Again thanking all most cordially who have been concerned, believe me yours fraternally,
J. J. MORSE, Medium.

December 19, 1870.

* We use what is termed the "Banner Chest of the Children's Progressive Lyceum." It is large enough to take in all the Flags, Banners, and Targets, so that on gala days, all our apparatus can be carried in this chest in the same waggon with the baskets of eatables, to the Picnic grove or playground. Also in the Hall we use it to arrange our Flags on; the lid, when open, serving better than a table for the purpose.

sight from the destiny of the hereafter, were there no bright visions of a spiritual retribution, a land of compensation, open gates through which the bleeding feet of the suffering may pass in and sigh no more, we might look indeed with a deep loathing on life—with the antipathy to the conception of a God that so often seems to mark the speech of the kind-hearted and loving Secularist—and cry that life is a bitter burden; we might strive even with a hand of force to repair the great wrongs that man inflicts upon his fellows; but we stand, and as we gaze even upon these lowest depths, we perceive the dual mission of the creature we look upon and ourselves. Not a single object that is brought before us, not a single thought that is impressed upon our minds, but comes to us with a low, still, small voice of God, bidding us feed his sheep, feed his lambs. It is a charge, it is a mission, and a permission for us to do the work which we vainly supplicate him to do. We pray for these unfortunates, and He gives us the means to answer our prayer by the sympathy we feel for them and the consciousness of their misery. This is our part in the scheme as far as our means will carry us, and where this fails, our consolation is to know that there is compensation and retribution; and that as for these darkened ones, they are like the black carbon ere the water of crystallisation has taken it up and purified it into the shining diamond—they are like the precious metal that is still undiscovered in the matrix of the quartz—they are like the floating nebulae of the skies still uncrystallised into the obedient satellite; but the power of eternal manhood is in them—the spirit blazes in the deep caverns of the thickest night of guilt, and can never, never be quenched.

These glorious lessons Spiritualism has taught us, and in thus teaching us it has given us many others which we learn by induction. We learn a set of fresh beauties which open up before us in every direction. We are guilty if we look at any point of humanity and do not answer the voice of the Spirit who in olden times cried, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And another of the lessons which it teaches us is to trust—to trust for ourselves, to trust for dear humanity. And another of the lessons is the fatherhood and the universality of this great Spirit. Where shall I go to bind him, to narrow him, to encompass him with human walls, or with the girdle of light that encircles my planet, or with the robes of fire that bound the solar system, or with the grander walls made up of star-dust that encircle the astral system? He fills them all. And yet he is in the sand beneath my foot, for his power has made it; and it is not because in his magnificence I cannot compass him that I doubt that he is enough for me, for I know the nature of spiritual existence, finer and more subtle than a ray of light. The largest and mightiest conception that we can have of spiritual existence is still microscopic enough to pierce my heart and speak to me in answer to the petitions that I put up to the unknown God.

Such are some of the lessons which spirits teach us of Deity. If ye can accept these without branding them as infidel because they do not come to you stereotyped with the authority of John Knox, John Calvin, John Wesley, or any other of the good men who perceived their God only through the reflected images of their minds; it matters not. When ye too are spirits ye will know of God the Spirit; and the fineness of his word, which like a sword pierces the heart unconsciously, shall not slumber even in your hearts to-night, for, as we have borne witness of the God of the spirits, it is thou, O Infinite Mind—thou, O Mighty and Eternal Sun of Being—that can fructify this word this night; and though in apathy or indolence they may scarcely realise the words that have been spoken, O our Father, the testimony we have borne to the God of the spirits shall surely bring them all nearer, nearer to Thee!

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

Q. Why did you pity the Atheist?—A. Simply because we believe that he is deprived of a great joy, because the strength and consolation that the realisation of a strong and infinite Spirit can bring is a joy which the Atheist cannot realise; but if that pity be offensive, let us change the phrase, and congratulate him that he stands upon the threshold of the temple of knowledge, guided thither by that breadth of thought that dares to take exception to the imaginary gods of creeds. Be sure that if he has not yet found the light, the fact that he has explored his way from the thicker darkness which man's superstitions would put upon him is the best evidence that he will yet discover that higher light that shall be a guide to his steps.

Q. If we are beings susceptible to the influence of the food we eat, the water we drink, the planets that control us, and the elements that surround us, how are we accountable, spiritually speaking, for what we do?—A. We are not this night arguing the question of accountability; were we so, we should point to the results rather than to the causes. The results are inevitable penalty for the failure of obedience to certain laws. If those results visit us in pain and suffering, we call the cause that has incurred them wrong; if the results produce nought but blessing, we call the causes that have incurred or deserved these blessings right. We do not this night undertake to determine for you how far man is accountable or not. Granting that he is thus controlled, what controls him, and how far is he controlled? He is controlled by material forces. Planets, airs, food, atmospheric and every other influence affect his body, and that body being the limitation of his mind, his mind sympathising with it, he is happy or unhappy according to the tendencies of the physical system. But measure the conditions of that mind against matter, and what are they? Perpetually overreaching the limitations of matter. There is no material obstacle that can hinder the flight of mind; nothing can bound it, nothing can legislate for it. It is obvious, then, that there is a certain amount of freedom in the mind, even though it be married for the time being on earth to this material body. The body and all the forces of matter are immutably bound, the mind is measurably free, and it is in the struggle between the consciousness of illimitable powers in mind and the perpetual bondage of the forces with which matter hinders us that we so constantly question whether we are bound or free. The question of accountability also answers for the fact that all our trespasses against physical laws of any description whatever are visited by great and heavy penalties. And so we should take the ground that we are both bound and free—accountable to ourselves; and therefore to procure the highest possible conditions of good and happiness, we must needs study the law and obey it.

CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

By A. J. DAVIS.

The Leaders are now requested to select books for the ensuing two weeks. The Leaders, to accomplish this, leave their Groups and proceed to the Library apartment and make the selections. As this occupies some little time, the Musical Director engages the Lyceum in singing, and makes general remarks and gives illustrations on the rudiments of music, the cultivation of which is an essential feature of the Lyceum. Leaders having returned from the Library and resumed their seats, all badges are at once removed, and the boxes containing them returned to the Assistant Guardian at the desk. A member of each Group is selected to remove its Target and form in line at the side of the Hall, under the direction of their Captain (usually a boy member of the older Groups), who duly marshals the Target-bearers in order, and then marches and counter-marches his company through the aisles to the platform, where the targets are deposited. The Captain then dismisses his company, who return to their seats, preparatory to the final march.

The Conductor now requests the entire Lyceum to "rise and form in rank." The seats are moved more closely together by the Guards, to widen the aisles. This done, all "beat time" lightly (not noisily) with the left foot, as a preparation to step to the music when they begin the march. (Well-marked marches, like the "Child of the Regiment," should be performed on the piano.) The Guardian of the Groups, who always precedes the procession in its windings through the aisles of the Hall, now leads forward, with the large silk flag, the Leaders invariably following their Groups in the marches, never preceding them, by which arrangement the members are visible to their Leaders.

By the time the whole line is fairly in motion, the head of the column is passing near the Conductor's stand, when an Assistant gives out one of a dozen silk flags to each of the Leaders as they pass. The foremost, or Liberty Group, immediately following the Guardian, is now passing the Banner Chest,* ten or more feet beyond this point, where each member takes a Flag in his right hand. [N.B.—While the books were being selected, these Flags were arranged in due order, the largest Flags being for the larger members, and the smallest for the little children.] These Flags are taken in succession from the further end of the lid of the Banner Chest, upon which they are laid, leaving the small Flags to be taken last, at the first end of the table, as the small members finally reach this point.

The Guardian of the Groups still leads on in the march through the different aisles, often doubling the column, so that they move in close proximity to those passing the other way, all of whom are now marching with Flags elevated or lowered, as the Conductor directs.

In these windings and counter-marches of the columns, good judgment is required to prevent interference and confusion; and some foresight also, when the aisles are all filled with moving Flags, to bring the column up in proper order for the final singing, or the concluding "Silver-Chaining Exercises."

After a sufficient number of evolutions for the occasion, accompanied, as they sometimes are, with singing by the moving column, they are all led close by the Conductor's stand again, and the same Assistant receives from each Leader the silk Flags—the members depositing theirs in the Banner Chest, a little further on.

The Guardian is still counter-marching, and thus contracting the lines in front of the Conductor's stand.

The older Groups, or those from No. 12 downward, first form a line in length, either to accommodate the Hall or to divide the lines as equally as may be—the smaller members marching to the front. This brings the little ones together and quite near to the platform. All are now in order for the final song, or for responses to questions by the Conductor, or to hear remarks from anyone who may be invited to address the school.

(To be continued.)

THANKS TO THE GIVERS.

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

DEAR SIR,—I was most agreeably surprised last Wednesday to receive from the hands of Mr. Daw the proceeds of a subscription, amounting to £8 10s. 6d., which he had been so good as to conduct for me; or to quote from the heading of the list, it was "A subscription on behalf of Mr. Morse, as a token of appreciation of the services rendered through his mediumship to the cause of Spiritualism." He also expressed to me that the course of lectures from my venerated spirit-teacher "Tien" had given very general satisfaction. I hereby beg to return my most sincere thanks to the ladies and gentlemen who have so generously responded to the appeal on my behalf from Mr. Daw. It is peculiarly gratifying to me, as it was entirely unlooked for and unexpected; but it gives me renewed strength to go on, seeing that my labours are appreciated; and go on I will, while I have power to work for the spreading of our holy cause; and if I only meet the reward of the great judge—my inward self—I shall deem myself well repaid. Again thanking all most cordially who have been concerned, believe me yours fraternally, J. J. MORSE, Medium.

December 19, 1870.

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THE CIRCULATION OF THE MEDIUM, AND TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

The Publisher is instituting the greatest facilities for circulating this paper, and submits the following Scale of Subscriptions:—

One Copy Weekly, post free,	-	-	-	-	1½d.
Two Copies Weekly, „	-	-	-	-	2½d.
Five Copies Weekly, „	-	-	-	-	5d.

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

Wholesale Agents—F. Pitman, 20, Paternoster Row, London, E. C. Heywood & Co., 335, Strand, London, W. C.; John Heywood, Manchester; James McGeachy, 90, Union Street, Glasgow.

The Publisher is desirous of establishing agencies and depots for the sale of other progressive periodicals, tracts, and standard works, and will be glad to receive communications from such as feel disposed to enter this field of usefulness.

CONTENTS OF LAST No. OF "THE MEDIUM."

Address by Mrs. Hardinge at Cavendish Rooms—A Suggestion—Madame la Comtesse Antoinette de Sievers—The "Christian World" and Spiritualism—The Basis of Organisation—A Christmas Parcel—Free Distribution Fund—Mr. Herne's Seances—The Sunday Services—The Dialectical Society and Spiritualism—Mrs. Emma Hardinge at the Beethoven Rooms—Phenomena at a Private Seance—The Spirit Messenger—Interesting Fireside Phenomena—Kilburn Association for Investigating the Truthfulness of Spiritualism—Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, &c., &c.

SEANCES AND MEETINGS DURING THE WEEK.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, Seance at 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, at 8 p.m. Mr. Morse, Trance-Medium. Admission 1s.

Seance at Mrs. Marshall, Sen.'s, 29, Shirland Road, Bristol Gardens, Maida Hill, W., at 7 o'clock. Several mediums in attendance. Admission 2s. 6d.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, Service at Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street, at 7 p.m. Emma Hardinge will speak.

KEIGHLEY, 10.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. Messrs. Shackleton and Wright, Trance-Mediums. Children's Progressive Lyceum at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM, Children's Lyceum at 2 to 4 p.m. Public Meeting at 6.30.

ROSE MOUNT, SOWERBY BRIDGE, HALIFAX, Children's Lyceum, 10.30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Public Meetings, 2.30 and 6.30 p.m. Trance-Medium, Mr. Wood.

BREARLEY, Public Meetings, 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 6.30 p.m. Trance-Medium, Mr. Illingworth.

BOWLING, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, 2.30 and 6 p.m. Hall Lane, 2 and 6 p.m.

MANCHESTER, Grosvenor Street Temperance Hall, at 2.30.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, No Seance at 15, Southampton Row. Mr. Herne will resume the series next week.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27, Seance at Mrs. Marshall, Sen.'s, 29, Shirland Road, Bristol Gardens, Maida Hill, W., at 7 o'clock. Several mediums in attendance. Admission 2s. 6d.

KEIGHLEY, at 7.30 p.m., at the Lyceum. Trance-Mediums, Mrs. Lucas and Messrs. Wright and Shackleton.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, Seance at Mr. Wallace's, 105, Islip Street, Kentish Town.

BOWLING, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, Seance at 7, Corporation Row, Clerkenwell, at 8 o'clock.

BOWLING, Hall Lane, 7.30 p.m.

Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. Seance at 74, Navarino Road, Dalston, at 7.45 p.m. (One week's notice requisite from intending visitors.)

** We will be happy to announce Seances and Meetings in this table weekly. To be in time, all communications must reach this Office by Wednesday morning's post.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1870.

THE SPIRIT-VOICE.

I have been asked to repeat in writing my first experience of the spirit-voice. It was some weeks ago that my husband and I were at a private circle, at which Mr. Herne was medium. After the usual preliminary phenomena by the direct voice, a spirit announced himself as "Bluff Harry," and gave us, we all agreed, the full idea of the character assigned to him in history. "Catherine of Arragon" is often with Mrs. Berry, who was one of the circle, and this lady asked, "Is Catherine here?" Upon the voice answering in the affirmative, Mrs. Berry asked, "Did you bring her?" The answer was, "No; Catherine brought me." Then followed a lively conversation respecting his former life and his wives, in which his repartees were wonderful. Mrs. Berry's niece was with her aunt; she had never yet heard the spirit-voice, and there had been expressed, on the part of Mrs. Berry, some fear lest she should be alarmed, and she asked the spirit not to frighten the little girl. He replied, "The little girl—ha, ha! How do you do, little miss? She is pretty, and will be a fine woman." Mrs. Berry said, "Never mind her being pretty; will she be a good woman?" The answer, given very slowly, was, "Well, it will not be her fault if she is not." At her request the spirit shook hands with the young lady more than once, and with the other ladies in the circle. The tone and language of this spirit is marked by pleasantry and courtliness.

The interest of this seance did not end here. My husband had a friend in youth, named John Hills, who has departed this life some years. He was remarkably jocular. John Hills now announced himself by the direct voice, and soon showed that his love of practical jokes continues. He asked if "Ted," as he used to call my husband, would like an apple. Mr. Ellis said he should be delighted. In a few seconds we heard something fall upon the

table; a light was struck, and there was a large leek. On darkness being resumed, the voice said, "Well, you don't seem to like your apple; will you have a pear?" "Yes; let it be a pear," we said. "You will find two leaves on what I brought—is not that a pair?" After a little more badinage characteristic of John Hills, he left. The leek smelt so strongly that we were glad to put it out of the apartment. Then another voice came, owning the name of George Turner. He asked a lady by name to say the Lord's Prayer, having reference to soldiers who had recently entered the spirit-world. He said that, entering the spirit-world so abruptly, they had not yet thrown off the war excitement. George Turner asked for the door to be opened more than once, to change the magnetic state of the atmosphere, which was affected by their presence. After one of these changes, he asked another lady to repeat the prayer. He gave us to understand that prayer tended to soothe them, and bring them into rapport with spirits above them; and at the conclusion of the prayer he said "Amen," and expressed thanks to us for them.

A. ELLIS.

MR. HERNE'S SEANCES.

There was a seance held at the Progressive Library on Thursday, the 15th, to afford a party, selected by a literary friend, to inquire into the phenomena of Spiritualism. In spite of certain unfavourable conditions, the results were satisfactory. The voices were those of "John King" and "Bluff Harry," and they participated together in the conversation of the circle, and talked and criticised each other. This is a phase of the phenomenon of the voice not before witnessed here.

The first seance of the Tuesday evening series, previously announced, will commence after the Christmas week, namely, Tuesday evening, the 3rd January, 1871, at eight precisely, after which hour none can be admitted.

There will be no seance next Monday evening, but on January 2, the Monday services will be again resumed. Last Monday evening five voices were heard very distinctly. A visitor from the country heard one close to his ear, and as he was a long way from the medium, he charged his right-hand neighbour with speaking through the tube. This second party turned out to be a sceptical investigator also, and warmly resented the imputation. It is generally found that the more investigation these voices receive, the more certainly do the results show the agency of a spirit-intelligence at work in their production. The semi-public seance on Monday evenings is frequently interrupted by novices who would rather hear their own voices than those of the spirits. A select number of inquirers have resolved on holding a series of six private meetings on Tuesday evenings at eight o'clock, the ticket for which is £1 1s. Those who desire to be admitted to this select circle should apply at once. The series will commence as stated above.

THE CHRISTMAS PARCEL.

The readers of the MEDIUM are not dull scholars by any means; a hint, a suggestion is not thrown away upon them. Last week we lectured them upon the propriety of giving an extensive circulation to the MEDIUM for next week, and we are happy to find that many are prepared to accept our offer of that number at 5s. per 100. Some societies are taking 100, others 200, and some more. It will be, in all respects, a special number. It will contain a very full report of Mrs. Hardinge's Christmas Oration, and a Review of Spiritualism for the year 1870. It will be just the kind of document to put into the hands of those whom we desire to interest in the principles and progress of Spiritualism. We need not repeat the suggestions we threw out last week on this matter, as we find they have taken abundant root already. We hope to receive all orders for extra hundreds by Tuesday morning, so that ample preparation may be made for the increased demand. Let there be an harmonious and universal effort made by our readers to give us a Christmas help in the great work in which we are all deeply interested, and future facts will declare that it will not have been labour lost.

Those who desire to vary the literature distributed are invited to look at the list of cheap publications on the back page, where ample selection may be made.

We must not forget those who are willing to work but have not the money to purchase publications. To such we say, send in your demands; let us know what we can do to assist you with books and tracts, and we leave it to our employers in the better world that our joint labours shall not go unrewarded.

A SPIRITUALIST in Macclesfield desires to know if there are any other Spiritualists in that town or neighbourhood.

THE WOMEN AT CALCUTTA who have joined the Brahmo religious movement have presented to Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen an address welcoming him back, thanking him heartily for the perils he had encountered in behalf of their religion, and assuring him of their kind affection and reverence.

"THE CHRISTIAN WORSHIPPERS."—Our readers will remember that we published some time ago a curious manifesto from a circle of Spiritualists in Manchester calling themselves by the above name. A correspondent asked some questions subsequently, with a view of gaining some knowledge of their rules and results, but they afforded no answer. A letter just received states in respect to this circle: "It is a religious one, and does not get on at all. They appear to be groping in the dark. Spiritualists, the moral is a significant one: do not assume pharisaical and pretentious airs."

THE SUNDAY SERVICES.

The interest at the Cavendish Rooms last Sunday evening was greater than ever; and, thanks to Mr. Humphrey, the audience were nearly all comfortably seated. The place is, however, too small, and more accommodation is loudly demanded by the numbers who have to stand or are turned away.

Of the speaker we need not say one word. She is truly able to speak for herself. We cannot desist from remarking that though Mrs. Hardinge has been reported over and over again in newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets, and books, both in this country and in America, yet she appears again before her old and familiar friends with a newness and freshness that is somewhat astonishing. There is no repetition or serving up of old subjects in a new dress. All her utterances are impressed with the stamp of originality and unlimited resource of power, as if the well-known embodiment of the orator had returned possessed of a new soul. This is an evidence of inspiration which cannot be overlooked by the candid observer—a feature, in fact, which all recognise and warmly appreciate.

A treat is expected on Sunday evening next, when Mrs. Hardinge will deliver a special Christmas oration on the subject of "Man."

We sometimes congratulate ourselves at the moment of waking from a troubled dream; it may be so the moment after death."—Nathaniel Hawthorne.

AN ELEMENT IN ORGANISATION.

Those who look into Spiritualism desire to unite for two purposes—to produce the phenomena, and for mutual improvement and companionship. The first form of union is called a circle: the second, a society or association. Many of our readers are connected with neither of these forms of organisation—a want which some of them heartily lament. Our object in writing is to suggest to them means for the acquirement of one or both of these coveted combinations. Two, three, or more individuals desirous of investigating Spiritualism may form an association for that purpose. But what end is desired, and how is it to be accomplished? First, most Spiritualists desire to witness the phenomena in their various forms—in short, to enjoy spirit-communication. Secondly, mutual spiritual exaltation and improvement of character. Thirdly, intellectual advantages from a study of the philosophy of Spiritualism. Fourthly, the power to improve society by educating its members in the stupendous facts of human existence. These are four clearly-defined and important ends, and they cannot be

RATISBON. 7777. OLD LITANY, 13th Century.

Spi-rits bright are ev-er nigh, Fill-ing earth, and air, and sky;

Bring-ing truth, and joy, and love, From the fount of God a-bove.

ALMA. 8787. ITALIAN MELODY.

When the eve-ning star is steal-ing Slow-ly from the a-zure sky,

And each low-ly lit-tle flow-er Soft-ly shoots its dew-y eye;

CHESTER. 8787. From "MODERN HARP," by permission.

Ho-ly Spi-rit, kind-ly bless us, As we meet in love to-night,

Let no earth-ly care op-press us, May our souls be fill'd with light.

THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

SIR,—I am one of those who have been anxiously awaiting the publication of the report of the evidence taken by the committee appointed by the Dialectical Society to investigate psychological phenomena, and, like your correspondent, "An Indignant Looker-on," I was surprised to find, from your article in the MEDIUM, that the Society declined to publish the report. I should be very glad if possible to hear the real reason that it is suppressed, and if any of your correspondents can suggest any steps that could be taken to induce the Dialectical Society to withdraw their prohibition, and let the "world" judge for themselves of the evidences of spirit-existence and its means of inter-communication with the material world. I consider this, even from a scientific point of view alone, far too important a matter to be allowed to subside as a "nine days' wonder," to say nothing of its bearing upon the theory and principles of religion and morality.—I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

VIGIL.

December 16, 1870.

(Not yet a Spiritualist.)

[We understand that arrangements are being made to publish the report, notwithstanding the adverse decision of the Council.—Ed. M.]

THE COLLEGE OF MEDIUMS sat again on Wednesday night, with very satisfactory results.

attained all at once; but everyone must make a beginning, however feeble. The best method of study is to make progress in the four departments simultaneously. The necessary element to begin with is vocal music—singing. Let two or three meet together in the name of truth one or two evenings in the week, and sing, as well as they can, some truth-inspired lyrics, and they will most assuredly benefit from the exercise. The singing might be alternated with conversation or reading and periods of silence. If any mediumistic person were present, he or she would soon show signs of mediumship. Those who were impressible would receive impressions, and mutual benefit would result from the harmony and action of mind upon mind. Many Spiritualists cannot succeed in eliciting the phenomena because they are too positive, too self-conscious—or, in other words, too opinionated and prejudiced against new ideas or foreign influences of any kind. Singing, when heartily engaged in, has a powerful influence over the whole man, blending intellect with affection, mind with mind, and those in the body with those beyond the veil. The spirits always desire singing, and the most brilliant manifestations occur when this delightful exercise is engaged in. Congregational singing before a lecture or discourse prepares the minds of the listeners for what is to follow. The singing element is also useful in encouraging those who are at work in the vineyard of humanity. Those sects that sing most make the most proselytes. In all the four departments, then, singing is a useful adjunct. Let it be the commencement of all our efforts to promote this movement. To be effective it must be hearty, and all must join in it. If one of the party repels the influence to sing, he will prove a source of inharmony. The effect will also be heightened if the various parts of the harmony be executed. The Nottingham Children's Lyceum has held together against all opposition because the members sing well—the children's voices being sustained by the bass of the men. A club is being formed near Halifax to supply its members with the "Spiritual Harp." This is a wise step—a house being built upon the rock of Harmony. In singing, be careful to select suitable words. The contents of most hymn-books are worse than rubbish. The Spiritualist enjoys an immense advantage in this respect. All true poetry and liberal inspiration are his, and our brethren in America have wisely made several very admirable collections of the gems of spiritual song accompanied by music, such as the "Psalms of Life," the "Spirit Minstrel," the "Spiritual Harp," and last, but not least, the "Lyceum Guide." The first effort at similar compilations in this country has been made in the "Spiritual Lyre," a collection of lyrics free from sectarian taint, and breathing the varied forms of spiritual truth. Our friends have no excuse for not singing in the want of a suitable book. To encourage this practice in its scientific, and therefore most satisfactory form, we give this week the music of three pieces which may be found in the "Spiritual Lyre." Spiritualists should, in all cases, endeavour to secure the services of some person to guide them in this department—one who understands music from the book, and can direct the various voices to their appropriate parts. Bawling should be avoided; the practice of singing others down is a form of egotism which is always attended with inharmony, and any of our enthusiastic friends who are addicted to it should understand that they are opposing the cause by so doing. We might write a long chapter on this important topic, which we hope all our readers will work out for themselves by cultivating this element in organisation.

The Spirit Messenger.

[A seance is held every Friday evening, at eight o'clock, at the office of the MEDIUM; J. J. Morse, Trance-Medium. By our reports of these or other circles we do not endorse or stand responsible for the facts or teachings given by the spirits. Our desire is, in brief, to give a faithful representation of what takes place, for the benefit of those who cannot attend.]

December 16.

(The answers were given by Tien-Sien-Tie, the guide of the medium.)

Q. Sitting alone one evening, I had a sensation as if I was being pricked all over with fine needles; it lasted more than an hour. Since then I have often felt as if there were cobwebs about my face and hands. Can you tell me the cause?—A. In all probability it is some spirit-friend trying to make himself known by external means. The cobweb feeling may be the action of spirit-hands. Our questioner should sit in congenial company for development.

Q. Are not the lights seen at a dark seance caused by electricity?—A. No; it is certain physical elements taken from the medium and sitters, and acted upon by the spirits so that the result appears light to you.

Q. One evening you stated that a spirit could only manifest through appropriate means. What do you think of Balaam's ass?—A. We should class it with the fable of "Puss in Boots." [During the evening another spirit thought it might be the spirit-voice, but that Balaam thought it proceeded from his ass.]

REMARKS ON DEATH.

As there were a number of strangers present entirely ignorant of psychology and spiritual science, the controlling spirit entered upon a lucid and valuable disquisition on the phenomenon of death. He traced the formation of the spirit-body from certain refined elements derived from the physical body, its growth and maturity, and the laws by which it was finally separated at death by twitchings and convulsions of the muscles, which were not at all painful, as was generally supposed. The spirit-world was likewise made up of elements refined from the natural world. Those which were comparatively coarse constituted the lower portions of the spirit-world, while the more refined passed upwards to a higher formation. The spirit-body of man at death obeyed the same law. In some instances it took only a few seconds to reconstitute the spirit-body at death; in other cases it took hours, or it might be days. It then passed on, assisted by companions, to its proper place in the higher world.

Q. A visitor asked, Explain why I saw a dark cloud around Mrs. Hardinge as she spoke on Sunday evening?—A. We presume that your spiritual sight is passing through a state of development. It is not dark, but a halo of a golden colour. It proceeds from herself and the intelligences that control and inspire her.

We have scarcely ever seen such a perfect control as on this occasion. The spirit spoke with great deliberation and clearness.

WALTER ROBERT KELSALL.

It was a considerable time before the medium got under influence, and the spirit had some difficulty in controlling his mental organism. He said, "Good evening. I have come to have a say for myself. About sixteen months ago I became an inhabitant of the spirit-world. Now, I cannot say that I was in a better position religiously than anyone else. I hoped to be saved by grace, as I had all the assurances of the Christian faith; but as I approached the hour of death, I began to reflect seriously, and I found I had no hope to rest upon. I seemed to pass into a sleep, but it was not a sleep, for I was busy thinking. I wished to have some evidence that I should live again. I had lived a busy life, and had not taken time to think of these things; and I felt that I would have given all I possessed to know if I should live again; yet my friends were confident. The blackness got darker, and I seemed to live in my head. I became unconscious, and when I came to myself again I began to speculate as to where I was. I rubbed my eyes, as was a habit of mine, and found three others with me, whom I recognised as friends who had been dead a number of years. This surprised me much; but they took me by the hand and walked me out of the room and out into the open air, and we seemed to ascend through the atmosphere till we came to a country to which we seemed to descend. It was like the fancied home of the angels. There was a magnificent town. I always had a great desire to know about India, and I found that it was after the style of an Indian town." The influence was disturbed by some persons getting up and moving about the room, and the spirit had to conclude abruptly by giving his name as "Walter Robert Kelsall; I left the earth in August, 1869, at 68, Warrior Square, St. Leonards-on-Sea, and was between 39 and 40 years of age."

THE STROLLING PLAYER

controlled, and spoke to a question on theatres in the spirit-world. He was asked, "Is the drama of use, or is it merely to pass time pleasantly? We hold that everything amusing should be instructive. The drama is one of the most powerful agencies that mankind possesses, and if rightly carried out, it would be a powerful means of education. In the spirit-world instruction and amusement are blended; and in these places, the beautiful, the intellectual, and the aspirational are united in a most useful manner. This afternoon, while the medium was under my control, I took his spirit to a theatre in the spirit-world, and he remembered something of it when he awoke out of the trance. He saw a representation of the life of a Grecian peasant, who, from infancy to death, made the best use of all his opportunities, and did much good in the world, almost without knowing that he did so. He became a man of letters, and attained great eminence. The motto of the piece was, 'As you sow, you shall also reap.'"

It was asked, "Why did they want such a lesson in the spirit-world?" "Perhaps some of the spirits present may come to your aid, and the ideas brought before them may be of use to you. All that takes place in the spirit-world is for the benefit of humanity."

[In the afternoon Mr. Morse was entranced, and when the spirit was

about to leave he said, "Now I must go and bring back the medium." "Where is he?" it was asked. "In a theatre; ask him about it when he awakes." When Mr. Morse came out of the trance, the first thing he said was, "I have been to a theatre, and it seemed to be a Grecian scene;" but he could not remember the details.]

Mr. Morse's seances continue to increase in interest.

BELLS RUNG BY SPIRITS, &c.

"The bells will be set a-ringing." These were words uttered by a spirit-friend who speaks audibly through the mediumship of Mrs. Everitt, and is known by the name of John Watt, and were addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Bell, of Carlisle, who were on a visit to London a few weeks since. Their interest in Spiritualism had just been awakened, but they had never seen any manifestation, or scarcely heard of the subject till within a few weeks of their visit. As might be expected, they were astounded at the remarkable phenomena at the seance referred to, opening up, as it did, an entirely new field of thought, disturbing many of their old notions, and substituting, in several points, *knowledge* for blind faith. I should not, however, trouble you with this letter merely to state these facts; but, for the encouragement of those seeking spirit-communion, I wish to show how prophetic John Watt's words were when he said the *bells would be set a-ringing*, for on returning to Carlisle, my friends formed a circle consisting of themselves and their daughter Annie, who is about seventeen years of age, and with what results the following extracts from Mr. Bell's letters will show.

In his letter dated December 10th, he says, "I have been many a time worse off for material than I am to-day; the fact is, I do not know where I left off in my last. I can, however, begin from this day week. We have certainly had a few remarkable manifestations of spirit-presence and power."

"Saturday, December 3rd, 11.30 a.m.—Mrs. Bell and I were sitting in the parlour, Annie had gone to get her German lessons, and Lizzie (servant) was in the garden, when all the bells in the house were set ringing at once, to our great consternation. * * * I had been saying to Mrs. Bell, 'I wonder Georgy (a son who has been in the spirit-world some years) does not ring the bell instead of using the table and tugging at the bell-rope.' Then I said, 'Georgy, ring us the bells if you are present.' This was no sooner said than it was done. Then a considerable-sized basket, that had only three minutes before been set down on the stairs-foot, disappeared, but was found resting near the ceiling, on the top of an oil-painting of my father, in the other parlour, the door of the parlour being all the time shut; and while we were at dinner it was brought back to its original place, the bells being rung again to let us know it was done."

It would occupy too much space to make more extracts from his letter, but I may observe that many other remarkable phases of mediumship are being developed in this family—such as the table and other objects moving without contact; raps being given in answer to questions; the production of perfumes and lights; and curious markings upon a slate or paper *direct*. Several persons have seen and tested the manifestations, and have become thoroughly convinced of the presence and doings of an unseen intelligence. Thus it is that communion with the spirit-world is opened wherever it is sought and the mind is prepared for it.

Brixton.

J. F.

MORE INTERESTING PHENOMENA.

DEAR BROTHER BURNS,—Our friends met again on Tuesday, the 13th. The lights being put out, the tubes began to move about, and were carried up in the air; sometimes being laid gently on some of our heads, at other times thrown at us. At one time Mr. Williams's cane was thrown on the table. After this our spirit-friends brought my large Bible, and laid it very gently on the table around which we sat. I wish to state that we had the Bible removed from its usual place on the harmonium, and placed on the sideboard amongst other books, for we desired our spirit-friends to produce some fresh manifestation; however, they pushed the other books on one side, and brought the Bible. A small hand-bell was taken up by the spirits, and rung round the table, at our request. The spirits walked round the room with a heavy step, causing a trembling under our feet; and we were each of us touched by spirit-hands. My wife saw three beautiful spirits, standing in a row; the one in the middle with its arms over the necks of those standing on each side. They were arrayed in garments of golden light, and at the back of them were mountains of gold, and underneath clouds of silver and gold. She cried out, "Oh! look, look! Can you not see them?" Then clasping her hands together in a transport of joy, she exclaimed, "Oh, ye lovely ones! oh, ye spirits of the blessed! come nearer still, or take me, oh, take me to yourselves! Oh, how I long to be with you!" She then cried out, "Hold me! Oh, take hold of me, or I shall fall!" Two friends took hold of her, and led her to a chair, for she had been standing up all this time gazing at the lovely sight. She describes it as like unto what we read of in the Transfiguration on the Mount; and allow me to say here that it was not the work of imagination, but real matter of fact. What she saw she will never forget as long as she lives, for she never saw anything on earth like it for beauty and glory.

They speak of the realms of the blest,
That country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed,
But what must it be to be there?

We requested our spirit-friends to try and speak to us through the tubes, but raps were given out to conclude. A light was brought in

and direct spirit-writing was found on the paper: "We have not power yet. Wait." This was in answer to our request for them to speak; they had made several attempts, but could not succeed.

On Thursday evening, the 15th, the small table was brought by spirits, and put on the table around which we sat, as they did last week. Spirit-forms were seen. My two children, Charles Frederick and little Anne, came and touched me on the hand, and many other spirit-friends touched us most distinctly. There is no mistake or imagination in this matter. The fingers of spirits are so soft and velvety there is no mistaking them; the impression is left for some time on the hand or face, or wherever they may have touched us. We know it to be real, and I am sure we can never forget such things as long as we live. If some of our doubters on spirit-manifestations were handled by spirits as freely as I have been the last three weeks, they would cease to cry out, "It's all bosh and delusion!" It is a very easy matter to cry out "Delusion," but not so easy to prove it to be so. If such persons would only try for themselves, and see if these things be so, as the noble Bereans did, they would find by perseverance their reward. But perhaps this is a digression. Mr. Adcock asked the spirits if they could touch him on the reasoning faculties, and shortly he was startled by a large spirit-hand being placed right over his forehead. I then asked if they would touch me on the same organ, and immediately I was touched by three fingers on my forehead; and when I was singing they touched me on the organs of time and tune. The question was asked if phrenology was a true science. Knocks answered, "Yes." My daughter's ear-ring was taken out by spirit-hands without her knowledge, till she happened to put her hand up to her ear, and then she exclaimed, "Oh, one of my ear-rings is gone!" and as soon as she said this the spirits took up the bell from the table and rang it violently; and when a light was procured, the ear-ring was found under the bell—put there by spirit-hands. After a while spirit-forms were seen to pass the looking-glass; these were seen by my wife when the room was perfectly dark to all the rest. The musical box was brought by spirit-hands off the harmonium, and put on the table. I wish to state that it had been wound up, and left playing until it ran down—it only plays four minutes, but I heard it start playing again; this so astonished me that I called out, "The musical box is playing; I wonder if our spirit-friends have wound it up." Just as I said these words the box was brought past my ear, playing all the while, and laid on the table. The box kept playing and then stopping at intervals; then it would start again, playing for upwards of half an hour. The tambourine on the table was taken hold of and shaken, and played on by our spirit-friends—indeed, they appeared to be very fond of music, for the bell, musical box, and tambourine were all playing at once. The tube at the same time was taken hold of, and it hit us all round. Mr. Williams was awoke up out of the trance by the spirits gently tapping him on the face, on purpose that he might hear the music; and I can assure you he was very much delighted with this, for he is generally fast asleep, and quite unconscious of what is going on. After this we had a very clear manifestation of spirit-voices. While we were singing, several attempts were made by our spirit-friends to speak out distinctly, and I am glad to say with great success, loud and clear, "James Achanna." Then I asked my friend Bonnick to speak, and after a little effort he spoke out clearly, "Bonnick." Then Mr. Adcock's grandmother called out "Anne." Each time the voice spoke the tube fell on the table. The time was now getting late; four knocks were given, which is our signal to conclude, and thus ended one of the most interesting meetings we have ever had as yet. A thousand thanks to our heavenly Father for such blessed times! We may truly call them "times of refreshing."—Yours faithfully, C. P. B. ALSOP.

2, Great Turnstile, Holborn, December 17, 1870.

THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF CHRIST.

The following letter is from the *English Mechanic*. We remember seeing the extract which it contains printed as part of a chart on Bible topics which hung on the wall of our parental home in the days of our early boyhood. Perhaps some of our readers can give an account of its history and origin:—

SIR,—As I notice you allow any sort of query to be made through the columns of your valuable newspaper, I should like to ask if any of your readers can inform me where I can find the original of the accompanying paragraph, which I have found written on the flyleaf of an old Bible, printed at Oxford in 1679, now in my possession:—"A Description of the Person of Christ.—It being the usual practice of the Roman governors to advertise the people and the senate of such material things as happened in their respective provinces, in the days of Tiberius Caesar, Publius Lentulus, at that time being president, wrote the following epistle concerning Christ:—"Conscript Fathers,—There appeared in these our days a man of great virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is now living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted as a prophet of truth; but his own disciples call him the Son of God. He raiseth the dead, and cureth all manner of diseases. A man of stature somewhat tall, and comely, with a very reverend countenance, such as beholders may both love and fear; his hair is of the colour of a filbert fully ripe, plain to the ears, whence downwards it is more orient of colour, somewhat curled and waved about his shoulders. In the midst of his head is a seam or partition of his hair, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead is smooth and delicate; his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a comely red; his nose and mouth exactly formed; his beard thick, the colour of his hair, not of any great length, but forked; his look innocent; his eyes grey, clear, and quick; in reproving, terrible; in admonishing, courteous; in speaking, very modest and wise; in proportion of body, well shaped. None have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep; a man for his singular beauty surpassing the children of men."—C. W. BELL.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT.

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

SIR,—As an inquirer, would you, or some of your readers who are competent, be kind enough to answer me the following questions? I have attended a few circles, and been repeatedly told, by persons under influence, that I should become a medium. Did I reside in London, my best course would be to attend the "College for Mediums," as related

in to-day's MEDIUM; but as that is not the case, and I have few opportunities of attending circles here (of which there are but very few), I should like to know if you, Sir, would advise my sitting at my table alone and unaided, and if so, what are the most advantageous circumstances for so doing, and what are the manifestations I may reasonably expect? Will a medium always have favourable indications when he sits at a table with believers or otherwise? Are mediums ever mesmerists, or does the "developing" remove the power of the magnetiser? Is health impaired or otherwise by the subject becoming a medium? Excuse me for troubling you with the above, all of which I have no doubt could have been readily answered had it been possible for me to have put myself under Mr. Cogman or any of his confrères.—I am, Sir, yours respectfully, MANCUNIENSIS.

December 9, 1870.

[We have heard mediums state that they have sat alone and received development thereby. As we have had no experience ourselves, we will be glad to hear from those who have tried it. It does not matter whether sitters are believers or not, if their temperaments are compatible with each other, and of the kind favourable to the phenomena. The most powerful mesmerists are mediums while under the influence of spirits. In the MEDIUM we have given a number of instances of health being restored by the development of mediumship. Sometimes development induces very unpleasant symptoms unless superintended by a competent person well skilled in psychological laws. To be too much under spirit influence is exhausting to the vital powers. We shall be glad to have the observations of our readers on self-development.—Ed.M.]

"THE NUN OF BLOIS."—HER PROPHECY COMING TRUE.—The *Spectator*, which is very much given to the supernatural, but cannot yet quite, bring itself to believe in modern Spiritualism, is eagerly watching the case of "The Nun of Blois." We gave a long article from its pages in our columns about a month ago. Here is our contemporary's last week's allusion to the matter:—"The 'Nun of Blois,' if she should prove a false prophet after all, has certainly been what the children call, in the game of magical music, very 'warm.' She predicted, it will be remembered, that Blois would not be taken by the enemy, who was to cause such rivers of blood in Paris and in many parts of France; but the approach of the enemy was to be so close at hand that the nuns were to be all ready to leave their convent. 'At last three couriers will come. The first will announce that all is lost.' The second will arrive in the middle of the night, in hot haste, en route for the Berry (a district south of the Loire, where the chief part of the Army of the Loire is now encamped), and will give hopes of good news by a third courier to arrive in the morning. The nuns will be praying at six in the morning, and be told that two couriers have passed, when the third, fire and water (*feu et eau*), will arrive, and be due at Tours at seven, and he will bring the good news, and a Te Deum will be sung. Possibly on the night of Thursday the first messenger may have arrived, taking news of the Duke of Mecklenburg's 'severe but victorious engagement,' and saying all was lost. We do not venture to speculate on the second or third, who would, however, be very likely to be going to the Berry and to Tours—whether they take good news there, or, as seems decidedly more likely, bad. But right or wrong, for a prophetess speaking in 1808, the Nun of Blois has come curiously near her mark. No one could have guessed in 1808 that during a time of invasion, when the Seine was to run with blood, Blois would be seriously threatened, and messengers going through it in hot haste to Tours (a place then quite unlikely to be the seat of Government) and to the Berry, precisely the two points to which messengers would have been sent by General Chanzy during the last three days."

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