

# THE PRESENT AGE.

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OUR AIM IS TOO LARGE TO ADMIT A CREED OR SECT.

IN ADVANCE.

VOL. II.

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## Selected Poetry.

### BEAUTIFUL STANZAS.

There is no heart but hath its inner anguish;  
There is no eye but hath its tears been wet;  
There is no voice but hath been heard to languish  
O'er hours of darkness it can ne'er forget.  
There is no cheek, however bright its roses  
But faded buds beneath its hue are hid;  
No eye that in its dewy light reposes,  
But broken starbeams tremble 'neath its lid.  
There is no lip, however with laughter ringing,  
However light and gay its words may be,  
But it hath trembled at some dark uprising  
Of stern affliction and deep mystery.  
We are all brothers in this land of dreaming,  
Yet hands meet and eye to eye repel;  
Nor deem we that below a brow all beaming,  
The flower of life in wasted beauty lies.

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## IS IT POSSIBLE?

### A STORY FROM REAL LIFE!

WRITTEN FOR THE PRESENT AGE, BY ANNIE  
DENTON CRIDDE.

#### CHAPTER IV.

In the northern part of Philadelphia, where the population is dense and the houses stand closely to the line of the side-walk, away from the beautiful green squares and parks that bless some portions of the Quaker city, stands a neatly finished edifice called by some the Vegetarian Church, by others, the Swedenborgian Vegetarian Church.

The ground surrounding the church has been dedicated to a grave-yard, and here lie the bodies of its members who have passed to the "farther shore." East and west, high brick walls of houses have pressed to the very verge of the burying ground; like sentinels they stand, their long dark shadows keeping watch over the dead.

In summer, however, the perfumes of flowers, planted there by the hands of love, greet the pedestrian and attract the little children of the neighborhood, who press their noses against the iron gate, or climb the low wall and peep over the fence with admiring glances and exclamations at the nice flowers within, and beyond their reach.

Directly across the street is the residence of the minister. Plain and simple, both in its external appearance and internal arrangements, it corresponds with the limited circumstances of its occupant, who labors in another profession for his daily bread. During a period of nearly forty years he has been the regularly ordained minister of the Vegetarian Swedenborgian church, preaching twice every Sunday to his little flock, but receiving for his labors, no pecuniary recompense. The gospel ministry, he believed, should be "without money and without price;" freely ye have received, freely give.

The minister now an old man, has devoted his life to the inculcation of his religious principles. One fundamental principle—or, perhaps I should say the fundamental principle, is Vegetarianism. In every other respect, it is essentially Swedenborgian. Indeed it is claimed by the members of this church, that Swedenborg was a vegetarian, both in principle and practice, and that vegetarianism was a constituent part of his religious system.

That we may properly understand and appreciate the minister, let us describe him as we find him at this moment in his little parlor reading a letter to his companion, Christians, who has been his faithful helpmeet, philanthropically and otherwise, during half a century. His favorite seat is a black hair-cloth rocking-chair, which was sent him as a Christmas present by an unknown friend. A card attached told all to be known—"The minister's Chair."

He has been out visiting patients; for he believes that the duties of the Christian ministry are naturally co-incidental with those of the medical profession, spirit and body being more or less dependent on each other, and that bodily health and purity constitute the "good ground" wherein the seeds of Eternal truths may freely ripen.

Here he rests, then, in the "Minister's chair." He is rather spare in form, somewhat above medium height; his mild blue eyes and every feature of his face, as well as his voice, are all outward indexes of the peace, kindness and benevolence that reign within.

He had received a good classical education in his native country—England, and when a young man, became convinced, after careful investigation, that it was "unscriptural, physically wrong, and hence religiously wrong to eat the flesh of animals." He was regularly ordained a minister of the Swedenborgian Vegetarian church in England, and some years afterwards, with several of his congregation, came to Philadelphia, where he supported his family by teaching school, at the same time performing his ministerial duties by preaching on Sundays; his school-room, which was also the church, being heated and lighted at his own expense.

And so for twenty years he labored as a teacher six days in the week, sometimes from eight in the morning until ten at night, kindly and frequently declining liberal offers of fixed salaries as a school-teacher and of pastorships of wealthy and liberal congregations; but through all his trials he remained constant to his principles—vegetarianism and a true ministry.

His efforts have eventually been crowned with success, through all pecuniary perplexities, through all trials and difficulties, he has kept before him the great object of his life; and now we find a well-built brick church, about eighty to one hundred members (many of whom are wealthy,) and the minister liv-

ing opposite in his own house, which was bequeathed to him by a gentleman who was neither a member of his church or a believer in vegetarianism, but a personal admirer of Mr. Meredith, who had formed an appreciative estimate of his disinterestedness and philanthropy. Nearly half a century has rolled away in earnest, arduous endeavor, and now we find him in the evening of his life, quietly resting on his oars. Fully appreciating all conscientious thinkers and workers, however different their views and measures from his own, conveying his opinions suggestively rather than argumentatively, intelligent, cultivated and modest, he was greatly beloved by all who knew him.

This sketch, however, would be very imperfect, did we leave out Christians, his wife, who has, during all these years, stood bravely by his side and fought the great battle of earnest, laboring life. No murmur if the leader was poor; Oh no! but a stern, earnest faith in their principles, and—as a means of their dissemination—a congregation and a church, were ever kept steadfastly in her mind. She is rather tall, well made, and healthy; quick, intelligent eyes, earnest voice and manner; stern in defense of right, scathing in denunciation of wrong, kind, generous, and sympathetic, loved by old and young; "Mother Meredith," she is called, affectionately by every member of the church, and every child in the Sunday-school. How the children run to grasp her hand, and how kindly—how motherly she says, "Bless you, my child!" She is always ready, when asked, to give counsel and advice; of that healthy, life-inspiring, practical kind which imparts refreshment and strength to the seeker. In her were beautifully combined those apparently opposite qualities which, when properly balanced, make completeness of character.

The letter which the minister was reading to his wife was from England. On finishing its perusal, he said, "Christiana, we must try and find Mrs. Allston and her family. I will either go or write to A—; it is not far from here."

"He speaks so highly of them, that we must try and find them, if possible; one only is a vegetarian?"

"Yes, one—Jane; but all of them are favorable to the idea. Here the minister reopened the letter and said, "How nicely he speaks of her. 'Retiring, quite intellectual, and anxious to know and practice truth wherever it may be found.' Being a personal friend of the family, he knows them well; a disposition to try Vegetarianism, may have induced her to continue its practice.' From his description of the whole family, I am quite sure we shall be benefitted by their acquaintance."

"Yes, I believe we would; suppose you take the stage and go to A— to-morrow?"

"Suppose we both go?" said the doctor.

This plan was decided on, and the next day the minister and his wife were in the stage as it rolled along on its way to A—.

The day had at last come that was to bring Jessie to Philadelphia. Jane plied her needle, occasionally looking from the window and listening attentively for the ring of the bell that would assure her of Jessie's arrival.

About evening, Lucretia Carman opened the door of the nursery, saying, "Oh, Jane! thy sister Jessie has come, and what a little beauty she is!" What sweet curls! and O, how sweetly she asked for thee! I love her, I do!

Jane was very soon half-way down stairs, and was met by Mrs. Carman leading the way to the nursery followed by Jessie, to whom she was saying:

"Why, there is a nice little thing; I should think thee smarter than thy sister Jane; I guess thee can hurry, and is real smart about thy work. O, here is Jane!" she continued, as she looked up; she can hurry too, I see, sometimes; walk into the nursery; let me take thy bonnet; why thee has pretty hair; now sit in this chair and talk to Jane while she is sewing. I'll leave you, so that you can talk, for I guess you have plenty to talk about; Jane has done nothing but listen for the door-bell, and look from the window all day."

The door closed and the sisters were alone.

"Oh, I am so glad thee has come!" said Jane.

"And I'm so glad to be here!"

"Tell me about mother; how is her health?"

"She has had two very severe attacks of head-ache; the Doctor had to be sent for the last time; he gave her some very strong medicine, for he said she could not live twenty-four hours unless the pain was stopped; since then she has not suffered, but I know her health is greatly injured."

"Poor mother! we must be together, Jessie; I have a plan."

"Has thee tried for any more situations advertised in the Ledger?"

"I answered two by writing, but received no replies. I will give thee my plan: I have become acquainted with a Mary Parker, who is a gaiter-binder; she seems to do well. Now, I think, if we had a little money ahead, thee might learn gaiter-binding; then we could take two rooms, have mother with us and we might all bind gaiters. We would have, I think, more time for study; we would be together and independent, and thee, Jessie, would regain thy health, while mother would be well and happy, if we could be all together. What does thee think of my scheme, Jessie?"

"It looks excellent, if we could only obtain the work to do, but where could I learn?"

"I have been to see a lady who has several apprentices, and she promised to take one of us in five weeks. Thy seventy-five cents and mine will amount to \$7, 50, in that time; this, with what I can earn during thy time of learning, will pay thy board until thee can earn something. I have inquired at several places about the price of board; Lucretia, Mrs. Carman's daughter, went with me; at last a lady with whom she is acquainted agreed to board thee for \$2,00 per week."

"Why, thee has been quite busy; this is such a surprise, and a delightful surprise, that we must tell mother about it."

"Not yet, Jessie, let us see how we will succeed in obtaining work."

Sufficient of their conversation has been given to indicate their plans for independence and bread; let us leave them for the present.

"Jane's sister has come, father," said Lucretia to Isaac Carman as he stepped into the parlor, holding the hand of his daughter whom he had met at the door. "I wish thee could see her, father; she is so beautiful!" Isaac smiled tenderly on his child as she said this. "Oh, such a sweet face and musical voice!—her name is Jessie."

"Is this the sister that Jane loves so?"

"Yes, her only sister, father; I wish thee could help them do something, so that they could be together."

Isaac drew his daughter closely to him, kissed her brow, and said, "Dear girl, I wish I could." Then sitting down with his daughter on the sofa, he continued, "What do they intend to do? What is Jessie doing?"

"She has been helping Rebecca Landon to do her house-work, father dear; and she looks so pale! I know she works too hard. Jane says she wishes her to learn gaiter-binding, and by-and-by they can all bind gaiters."

"Just then Mrs. Carman entered the room, and hearing the word 'gaiter-binding,' said, 'Yes, yes! I know what you are talking about; I do pity that little pale face; but it is nonsense to talk about gaiter-binding; Jane is too slow, and that Jessie is too young; for my part I think both of them ought to be at home; if too poor, then let them be contented as they are; Jane has seventy-five cents a week, her board and washing; I think that is very good.'"

"Would thee think it good for me, mother?" asked Lucretia, sadly.

Mr. Carman turned to Lucretia, saying, "My daughter, I will do all I can for Jane and Jessie. I respect Jane highly; hers is no common intellect; she is fitted both by nature and education for better conditions."

"Come, supper is ready," said Mrs. Carman, who had been to the dining-room and returned while Isaac spoke to his daughter; "go and call Jane and her sister."

"Please don't talk about it at supper table," whispered Lucretia to her mother.

"I won't," was Mrs. Carman's reply, as she gave her daughter a sweet, motherly smile.

Jessie was introduced. Isaac could not conceal his appreciation of beauty. His mild eye and that gleam of sunshine on his countenance as he looked in Jessie's face, might not have been in accordance with plain drab, orthodox Quakerism; but it was only momentary, and would scarcely have brought on him a rebuke, had it been set forth against him at a Quarterly Meeting.

After supper, Isaac invited Jane and Jessie into the parlor. Very soon, as was his custom whenever in conversation with Jane, religious subjects were introduced. "I believe thee will become a Quaker," said Isaac to Jane, in the course of conversation. "I feel distinctly that thee will; I hope one day to see thee among our ministers, and to hear thee speak." This he said to her earnestly though smilingly; and added, "Thee is so willing to be guided into all truth, Jane, that the light within thee will guide thee among us."

"I think not, Isaac," Jane replied, blushing slightly, "I might, perhaps, have been led to the Quaker church as it existed in the time of George Fox and William Penn, but not to the Quakerism of to-day; besides, I do not believe in sects and parties. I like your idea of stillness; but if your speakers are inspired by one and the same God, how is it that Lucretia Mott can say that inspiration now and that of eighteen hundred years ago is the same; and then another, under the same inspiration, arise immediately afterwards and say the very opposite? Here is a contradiction, and either gives the lie to your idea of direct inspiration, or that they are not moved by the same spirit."

"One is more progressive than the other."

"Very probably; yet both say, 'I am moved to speak thus and so.'"

"No matter," said Isaac, "one is mistaken; intellect and inspiration must go together."

"May not both be mistaken? May not those differences of opinion come from their own spirit? May not their own spirits in the stillness of Quaker meeting be thus led to speak the real convictions of the soul? If the spirit when free from this physical form will, in another world, have the power to know the thoughts of others—have the power to return here to this earth and become guardian angels; if they will then perceive all truth, as many believe; may not some of these powers, by the cultivation of our spiritual nature, be developed here?"

"I think not; I think such powers are especial gifts from our Heavenly Father. I think there is a little skepticism in thy mind, but I don't fear it; for I know, Jane, that

thee only asks for and seeks the truth. Thee will make a nice little Quaker preacher some day."

The latter was said in Quakerish mirthfulness, pervaded, however, by a vein of earnestness.

"Yes, yes," he continued, after a pause, "I shall hear thee as beautifully earnest for Quakerism as thee is now in—what?"

"No isn't?" replied Jane, laughing.

"There, there, Isaac," broke in Mrs. Carman, who had just entered the parlor: "thee better let Jane attend to her sewing, for she won't do one stitch after eight o'clock; so thee can talk to her after that time, if thee wants."

"I'm only telling her, Martha, that she'll be a Quaker preacher some day, and she won't believe me," he said, rising.

"She,—no! For my part, I don't see why thee makes such a fuss over her; she has to work for her living, and she had better be content with that."

Isaac gave her a look so sorrowful, that the good in her soul soon came uppermost; and with a pleasant smile she replied, "Oh, well, Isaac, Jane is good, I know; and I hope her talents will place her just where she should be. We will do all we can for her."

As Isaac left the room, he laid his hand on the shoulder of his wife, and said to her very quietly as he looked into her beautiful blue eyes, "Thee is good, Martha; don't let care make thee appear to forget that good." (To be Continued.)

Reported by Lucretia Mott, for the PRESENT AGE.  
Lecture by Thomas Gales Foster.

DELIVERED AT HARMONIAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA, SUNDAY MORNING, DEC. 19TH, 1869.

I will invite your attention this morning to the xxv. chapter of Matthew, xlv. verse. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Also: John xiv. 2d verse: "In my father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

Our good friend, Fish, said on Friday, that Spiritualists were a light-hearted people and fond of amusement, I thank God for it. In the INDEPENDENT Theodore Tilton says, "If anything would render religion unlovely in the eyes of the world, it is the sanctity used in the pulpit." And the less intelligent have really grown to believe that a thought is worth but little, unless it comes from the mouth of a coffin. And many people always sigh when they thank God. But is it any wonder when they believe the ecclesiastical doctrines propagated to-day, and declared to be legitimate truths? Here lies the fundamental error of Christian teaching—a blind reliance on the authority of the past. The trinity doctrine is but a tangled mass of ideas. If, at the Protestant reformation reason was re-awakened, it was but to return to grapple with creeds. But, you are all aware, that the latter effort turned out as badly as the former; for, though the Protestant claimed the right of private judgment, there is no firm adherence between faith and reason, so that a man in the church, if he cannot prove that he is right, will try to make himself feel that he is. Thus a writer has said Christianity has dwindled down to a burlesque, with horrid ideas of the future, and a crazy infatuation."

It is difficult for them to tell what doctrines of faith Jesus propagated. If asked "what is Christianity," very few will return the same answer. In Christendom it is answered by some arbitrary assumption, or an appeal to some text of scripture. Hence, Spiritualists are warranted in saying it is an exponent of individual fancy, whatever it may be.

Jesus did not write. His oral teaching and spotless life gave a new spirit and feeling, but gave no new doctrines. During the earlier ages there were seven different sects of Christianity, likewise fifty acts of the Apostles, thirty-six Gospels and twelve Apocalypses. Among these were the Acts of Andrew, the Gospel of Bartholomew, Acts of Paul, Gospel of Paul, Precepts of Peter, Acts of Phillip, Revelations of Stephen, Gospel of Thomas, and others, all of which were believed to be divine by the early church. You must remember my friends, you had a church before you had a Bible. The canonical works were measured by a feeling already adopted, and a number of works were thus tried and rejected; and some that had been rejected were restored again. All we have to-day was the compilation of the early fathers. The New Testament was compiled. The book of Revelations was not added till the year 565.

These are facts given by ecclesiastical historians; and when the philosophical inquirer is told that he has the Bible for his guide, he will very naturally ask "WHAT Bible?" Is it King James' Bible, in present use among Protestants, of sixty-six books, or the Catholic Bible, of seventy-six books. Is it Luther's Bible with the epistle of James and Revelations rejected? Or the Samaritan's Bible of the five books of Moses? Or the Jewish Bible of twenty-two books. The fact is, there are so many, that the mind must first determine what Bible is meant.

Again there are numberless translations. There are some few even in the present enlightened age who think it is *verbatim et literatim*, the expressed will of God as it came from Divinity himself. In the year 1200 was the first French translation of the Old and New Testaments. In the same year was a Spanish translation; 1472 an Italian translation; in 1382 Wickliffe's, the English translator; Luther's, in 1532. During the

reign of Henry VIII, there were a number made into the English language, and each submitted to him; and on the will of Henry VIII the will of God depended! In the time of Edward VI there were two translations, one of which was ruled out. In the time of Elizabeth there were other translations, and as with Henry VIII so with other rulers, they constituted the deciding power. In sixteen hundred and seven James was dissatisfied with the compilations of his predecessors as to the rule of heaven, and he appointed fifty-four bishops of the Church of England to revise it, forty-seven met, and in sixteen hundred and ten, produced the Bible now in use in America; but not the one the Puritan Fathers brought. They brought Calvin's translation. Two hundred and eighty-two years before Christ, a body of seventy-two assembled at Alexandria for the purpose of translating the Hebrew of the Old Testament into the Greek language. It was then in use among all the intelligent people of the world. Thus through the liberality of pagan rule the closed up literature of Judea was opened to the world. In many respects it was an improvement on Polytheism. Thus, little Judea, a fragment of Syria changed materially the religious element. In the middle of the fourth century, St. Jerome translated the Old and New Testament into Latin—called Vulgate, which is now held by Catholics as canonical.

Now, you see I am not so far wrong in declaring that the fundamental error of the Christian world is its blind reliance on the past, I believe that the disposition and determination to make the Bible the rule of right and guidance has done much harm to the world. Under this influence men in the past, through the example of the Israelites murdered thousands. Through its teaching twelve men in the glorious state of Pennsylvania, think they have a right to murder one of God's children. Under its influence millions were murdered in Mexico in time past. Under the same influence the Puritan fathers murdered the Indians, and even the Quakers who had committed no offence except to preach a better doctrine than their own. By it, to-day, mental and physical slavery of all kinds are sustained and justified. If you want authority for the persecution of your nearest and best friend, read Deut., 13th. If authority for physical slavery Lev., 25th. Duties of slaves to masters, Eph., 3d, Colossians 6. Titus 2d and the 1st, Epistle of Peter. Flogging is sanctioned in Exodus 21st, and if the slave die, as the effect, it is sanctioned in another place.

These are some of the evils growing out of reading the Bible as the infallible rule of right. Spiritualists are charged with rejecting the Bible. Not so. Spiritualists as a class believe more in the bible than before they were spiritualists, because they now perceive more of its spiritual truths.

"But what has that to do with the text?" I have not forgotten my text. I am warranted in making these preliminary remarks. There is plausibility in my assumption that the present age is as well calculated to judge of the decrees of the Almighty Father, and even better, in regard to this book, than the minds of 1800 years ago. It is an error of many minds, that the words of every language has an interchangeable equivalent in another. Linguists will tell you it is not so, that in French there are words that cannot be expressed in any other. For example we have "cognett" "boquet," "depoit." Ask any French or German scholar if there is not an immense and incalculable loss of beauty and purity in translation. How many you hear regretting that they are not German scholars, that they might the better appreciate Goethe and Schiller. And is it unfair to suppose the same holds true in translations of the Bible?

In the early centuries there were differences of opinion among the fathers in regard to the duration of punishment. It continued for centuries, and I may say is not decided yet; for those who take the Bible as their guide, differ as much among themselves as Spiritualists do from them all. But they give each other the right to differ among themselves. These words are handed down to you by those who believed in eternal punishment. Nothing is said by the translators of the opinions of the opposite side. Some few honest commentators have merely mentioned them. The word translated for eternal punishment is *ione*. The meaning of *ione* does not convey a possibility of meaning eternal punishment. It conveys an entirely opposite meaning. *Ione* is one of those words in the Greek language that it is impossible to express in another. It is this: that it is a condition that receives according to the virtue of its genius. The "ione" of a pear tree or a plum tree may both be full and perfect of themselves and different from each other. There may be the "ione" of infancy, childhood, and manhood, each one perfect in and of itself. Does that sound like eternal? The "ionic" suffering would be in proportion to the offence that created the suffering. So with the "ione" of enjoyment. The translation of King James, is more liberal in other words than with this one. For instance the Greek word "baptizo." Some contended that it meant to sprinkle, and some to pour, others to plunge, as the means to take one to heaven; and so they Anglicized the word, Why not Anglicise "ione" in reference to its origin? If they had, they would not now have to bear the gloom, and such a pall of mental night as the doctrine of eternal punishment has thrown over them. It would then have accorded with the second text. "In my father's house

are many mansions, etc." If many mansions, then there are many "ionics," or conditions. The Catholic is teaching three places, the Protestant two, neither of which are particularly attractive. Spiritualists, following the example of Jesus, teach that there are many; and that they are "ionic" conditions—determined by men and women themselves. They teach, as did Jesus, that man is not arbitrarily punished, but that there are laws co-existent with Deity that express His presence, power and attributes; that suffering is the natural effect of their violation. Man inflicts his own punishment by performing the deed, and from it there is no escape. This is in accordance with the teachings of Jesus. You may ask the best Greek scholar in Philadelphia if I have not given the true version of the word "ione." All clergymen ought to know it and preach what they know. Men would not then have such fearful ideas of God. Spiritualists are the advocates of God and man. For daring to assert that God is better than they have represented Him to be, and that man is not totally depraved they are called infidels.

They are right when they say that Spiritualists are a light-hearted people. If they are not, they ought to be. Yet, there are some Spiritualists who will go sighing and moping. They must learn that God is love, and every atom is impelled, propelled and inspired by Infinite love, and that future "ionics" awaiteth them. Old Theology teaches that death is a grim monster, standing ready to grasp God's children. No wonder they sigh. Spiritualism teaches that death is the pale angel of a father's love, hovering along the paths of earth to gather the roses and transfer them to heaven. The idea of Spiritualism is based on "ionic" conditions. Your system of faith is alleged to have a demoralizing influence on men and women. I feel assured that of all systems of ethics none show more rectitude. Not only are they inspired by the thought that the best beloved who have gone before are near to soothe, but the general proposition, that no such thing as forgiveness can come between cause and effect, must have a direct influence for good. It must be a slippery code, indeed, that teaches an escape from the legitimate results of acts against neighbors. A man or woman who attacks the character of another is sitting in the studio of the divine artist for his or her own daguerreotype.

We see at once that Spiritualists ignore all sorts of ideas bearing on the myth of the past—hell and damnation. Those ghosts of early centuries still startle the inhabitants of the present. We believe that love and goodness and wisdom are the manifestations of God's character in matter and mind.

(NOTE:—Mr. Foster concluded with an inspirational poem, which was impossible to correctly transcribe to paper. The above are the leading ideas of a most interesting lecture. Should any of the dates in statistics prove to be incorrect, the reader will please attribute them to the reporter, and not to the speaker; as the former would be most likely to be at fault.) L. M.

From Human Nature.

Spirit Manifestations at Clifton through Mr. Home.

TO THE EDITOR: Dear Sir.—I have for many years made it a duty to carefully embrace every opportunity for the study of spiritual manifestations. My mind being naturally metaphysical, I was led away from my early religious bearings, and restlessly passed through every phase of thought peculiar to a freethinking mind, and found no resting place. Refusing to believe fully that the universe was nothing more than the play of mechanical and chemical forces, or that these were only one unintelligent force moving through all things, exhausting all conditions, yet itself unspent, unsatisfied, I still kept groping after something that would convince me that the infinite universe must have an intelligent Creator and Governor. At that time I was led to think that if there was but one force moving behind all phenomena and doing all analysis, the real and only type of that force must be Mind. The more I read and thought upon the subject the more I saw it to be right that causation must be pushed from nature, and, as I thought, must be delegated to the spiritual plane. I was introduced about this time to Swedenborg's books, which did much to reduce my spiritual chaos to order, and teach me the difference between spiritual and natural existence; yet all seemed to me merely pleasing hypothesis. On careful inward examination, I found my mind did not and could not realise such as positive knowledge, until Spiritualism came to my aid. My mother then "passed away," and while doing so (although in body two hundred miles distant) visited me. Henceforward, as above stated, I lost no opportunity afforded me to sift the phenomena. My long acquaintance with mesmerism well prepared me for such study.

I am not here going to give a history of my spiritual experience, which I hope some time to be able to do, but simply to state that, after about three years' fruitless inquiry as to positive results, I was blessed by many rare opportunities granted me for examination. The only difficulty remaining was a desire for more evidence as to the identity of spirits.

For many years I had desired to see Mr. Home, and to be the witness of the strange manifestations I had so often read about, but I never had the vanity to believe that I should have the privilege of having that remarkable man as my guest. Yet it is to give the history of his residence with me that I now write, and I purpose doing so chiefly because it bears considerably upon the question of the identity of spirits.

I arranged for Mr. Home to give readings in Clifton, and on the 13th of September he came to reside with me. He was then totally ignorant of all connected with me and my relations.

At our first seance, on September 16th, manifestations took place of a physical character, which would have told strangely upon material thinkers. At the second seance there were four persons present besides Mr. Home. We had been sitting but a few minutes when heavy pulsations were felt in the floor, the table heaved violently, and loud raps were heard. I observed that Mr. Home became affected, much as a subject would be when passing into a mesmeric trance; the pupils were locked backwards, and the whole man seemed for a time in a state of complete unconsciousness. Shortly, as if some invisible magnetiser were influencing him, the head which had fallen backwards, slowly began to take its proper position, and the muscles of the face to lose their passive and lifeless appearance; and to assume a most sweet expression; then rising from his seat, he walked round the room in conversation with beings invisible to us. His eyes were completely sealed from physical light, yet he walked, as if by sight, into the next room, removing objects out of his way, and apparently talking with individuals; he returned and came to me, laying his hands on my shoulder; then began a conversation with my father, mother, brothers, uncle and aunts, long since passed away, while their names and individualities were most familiarly given. An aunt's name was given, but I did not know that such a relative had ever lived. Much connected with my mother that I had long forgotten was mentioned; her manner of sitting, and "trotting her hand" when speaking of anything sad; her very mode of expressing endearment was significantly her own; and her whole idiosyncrasy was so completely rendered that I could not doubt of her presence. Mr. Home's attention was here attracted as by some strange or approaching, when he said, "What is this man doing here? His name is Hunter"—(the brother of a lady present who passed away many years ago.) "There is an old man, David Beattie." I then thought of a brother who passed away when about fifty years of age; but I found afterwards, from the appearance so minutely described, that it was an uncle, who passed away at ninety years of age. Mr. H. then went to a young man present, weakly in his health, and prescribed for him. Turning to me, he said—"Tom" [a brother] "has much to say to you, but we cannot keep Dan longer now." He (Mr. Home) then sat down and said—"Don't tell Dan what he has done." He shortly passed into a similar state as when passing into the trance. To those who had never seen the trance state it was most strange. The head slowly moves forward and gives signs of returning consciousness; the eyes begin to come forward and the pupils reach the centre, and then remain fixed on vacancy; at this moment, when his own self seems laboring for possession, it is a relief when the eyes begin to move freely, and Mr. Home is himself again.

A seance took place at Miss Jones', on September 21st, when eight persons were present. They had been seated at the table but a short time when the room began to pulsate and shake; the table, a large one, after strong movements, was raised from the floor full eighteen inches, and suspended for about one minute, then gently lowered down; after which Mr. Home became entranced, a soft pale light playing over his face, which the half illuminated state of the room enabled us to see clearly. His eyes were closed, yet he walked round the room placing his hand on the head of each as he passed, and removing any impediment from his path. He then seated himself in the chair by the side of Miss E. Jones, remarking that there was some difficulty in communicating; for they were surrounded by such a number of friends and ancestors of many generations back, all anxious to be understood, but strangers to that mode of communication; his trance state being much the same to them as it would be to us to see a person for the first time in a faint. Then their brother William was near, whom he represented to us by certain peculiarities of manner and address, which were exactly characteristic of him and known only to themselves, for he had passed away twenty years ago. Their mother wished to communicate with them, and turning to Elizabeth reminded her how she [her mother] had before told her that she was not called Elizabeth after any friend or relative, but that circumstances attending her birth had caused her mother great mental suffering, from which she had been relieved by the promises of holy writ; which likewise induced her mother to call her Elizabeth, after the mother of John, in the hope that her life might be holy and blameless as her's had been. She then spoke of her long illness, great weariness, constant yearning for rest, their watchful care and love, to which she had always responded, though to them it had sometimes been obscured by the suffering and weariness that had worn her frame away. She then reminded them that she had passed away in her sleep, and spoke of the rest into which she had entered. At this time Mr. Home leant forward and placed his elbows upon the table, and clasping his hands together, he seemed to be transfused, his face becoming indescribably beautiful, while upon and around it played a pale bluish light. He then breathed forth one of the most sublime prayers they had ever heard uttered, and Mr. H. returned to a state of consciousness. They had seen Mr. Home for the first time but a few days previous to this, and had never spoken to him of any personal friend or circumstance. They could not therefore avoid the conviction that they were in direct communication with the glorified spirit of their mother.

October 4th.—About eight o'clock, while myself, Mrs. Beattie, and Mr. Home were sitting, writing, and chatting, raps were freely heard. The alphabet being called for, the following communication was given:—"You must be taught, but not until eleven o'clock. I sent for four individuals to be present. At 10.50 we went into the drawing-room, and by the time we were seated eleven o'clock was striking. The manifestations at once began [in fact, Mr. Home seemed in a state of semi-trance from the time the intimation had been given.] The house was shaken, and the table strongly moved. Mr. Home saw an individual walk across the room. I was repeatedly patted and stroked by soft hands; four individuals were similarly treated. An accordion, which had been procured shortly before from a music shop, was held by Mr. Home in one hand, the other hand being on the table, when music of the highest order was heard, sometimes like a concert far in the distance, then it would swell and come near. The alphabet was called for, and the sentence given—"We are waiting to welcome you to our"—as the last letter was rendered, the instrument began to play "Swanee's" (the most lovely manner, thus making the sentence complete, "We are waiting to welcome you to our sweet home." The instrument

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