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SPIRITUALISM IN SWEDEN.

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PART I.

SPRITUALISM has, as we have lately had occasion to shew, advanced rapidly in its new phase in all directions; it has made strong impression in Spain, and passed over into Africa; it has made Constantinople a centre for its progresses into Asia, and is active in Australia. We have heard less of its condition in the North. In Russia, we know that it has found a ready welcome amongst its princes and nobles, but in Scandinavia we have heard little of it. Yet, I learn from a secure source, that in Sweden it is existing, and exciting in the quiet of domestic life a lively interest amongst the leading minds of the country. We are to judge from articles which have appeared in the *Dagbladet*, one of the most influential journals of Sweden, it is equally to find in the press of that country a more candid and enlightened consideration than it has done from the press of materialized and self-sufficient England. In the *Aftonblad* of May 3, 1864, continued in the same journal in a succeeding number, appears an article on Spiritualism, of the most liberal and philosophical kind. Admitting that the innate love of the marvellous, and of all that relates to our future state, may have often risen, through excitable imaginations, to empty and superstitious narratives of spectral and other phenomena, it finds too many cases of what is called the supernatural fully attested by persons of sound minds and high characters, in all times and places, to allow the writer to cast them aside as of the same class. He says, rationally, that every experience of humanity which is consistent with the race both chronologically and geographically, must be based as much on fact as the existence of the race itself. The race of man having, therefore, asserted in all times and places its communication with the spiritual world, establishes the

fact of that communication beyond the reach of reasoning, or of philosophy itself. No philosophy can banish this fact from the universe any more than it can banish the sun from the daily heavens.

The writer of this article quotes the opinions of some of the most profound minds of Germany, which, as they have not been brought forward here, we may as well now do it:—"Jean Paul says—'Probably, the whole of our earthly life is surrounded by an incalculable host of superior beings and operations, of which we shall know nothing till the earthly body, with its nerve and arterial streams, and with its perpetual buzz of the senses, shall at once stop and become silent.' And what says Schubert? 'As the infinite universe which night reveals to us, with all its stars, disappears again with the light of the sun, so neither can the clear voices of the higher influences of the higher world, which mirrors itself in the depths of the soul, be perceived in the moments of greatest worldly activity.'"

"So long," says the writer in the *Aftonblad*, "as we find ourselves in the bustling throng of the world, the eyes of our souls are darkened; but if we retreat into solitude, and direct our observation and our desires towards the eternal goal, so by degrees our inner sight is opened, and a clear light is diffused over many things which before appeared to us dark and incomprehensible." The words of the celebrated German writer, Hoffman, deserve our consideration—"Never would the legends, which were the dearest of all things to our childhood, remain so deeply and imperishingly sounding in our souls, if their vibrating strings did not lie in our innermost nature. The mysterious spirit-world cannot be denied, for it surrounds us, and is continually revealing itself to us by strange tones and marvellous visions." Such "tones and visions" continues the writer, and all narratives of the kind are glibly got rid of under the name of superstitions. But this is a silly way of proceeding. Superstition is the proper name for a stupid credulity. But does it not often happen that people include under the general term of superstition numbers of things which they neither understand, nor from their habitual habits of thought are capable of understanding? The very knowing ones think nothing has ever happened which has not happened to them, and that nothing exists which they have not had betwixt their thumb and fingers. But how far does the circle of man's senses extend, and how imperfect is his knowledge even within that circle? If then he does not comprehend his own wonderful existence, how does he presume to dogmatise on the eternal laws which are destined by eternal wisdom for the spirit world and its operations? "In our day," says Moritz, in his *Erfahrungs-Seelenkunde*, "even learned people treat everything

beyond their little sphere of inquiry as matters of mere sickly vanity and folly, and thereby betray their own ignorance. They cut the Gordian knot, when the true philosopher would carefully though laboriously endeavour to untie it. Such men will never solve the great problems of the universe." The writer in the *Aftonblad* then quotes another writer without naming him, who says—"Yet for a long time, whilst we remain ignorant of the laws which rule our outward life, and determine their connection with the inward and unknown, we must generally regard the word 'accident' as meaning nothing more than a confession of an ignorance of the true causes of the phenomena which pass before our eyes." He then proceeds to relate one or two circumstances which came within his knowledge, or had been most fully authenticated. The first is this narrated to him by a friend of his youth of a most truthful nature, as occurring to his father, a clergyman of Scania. This clergyman on retiring to rest always locked and bolted the front door, and the door of his own room. One night as he lay awake, just at half-past eleven o'clock, he heard the front door open, and some one came softly up the stairs. This was the more remarkable, as these stairs led only to this particular room. The room door itself was immediately opened, and then he heard nothing further. Astonished at this, he rose and struck a light. The door indeed creaked a-jar, but no mortal creature was to be seen. He hastened down the stairs, and found the front door barred and locked as he left it. Still more amazed at this, he returned to bed wondering what it could mean; but a few days brought him a letter announcing the death of one of his most intimate friends exactly at that hour.

"It just happened so," says the writer, "is the easy solution of such things, especially those who think themselves especially wise. But," he asks, "is there any person really so stupid as to believe that anything in a world ruled by an almighty, all-wise and ever-present Providence, can merely *happen*, especially such things as thus amaze us with amazement? How numerous are the cases where persons, near the point of death, are seized with an intense desire to see once more a dear relative or friend, fall into a deep trance, and during this, become visibly present to the beloved but distant object?"

The English preacher, Joseph Wilkins, he says, dreamed one night, when he was a boy at school, that he travelled to London, went to his father's house, and into the chamber where his parents usually slept. When he reached the side of the bed he saw his mother asleep, and then went to the other side where he found his father awake, and she immediately exclaimed in terror, "Oh! my son, thou art dead!" At this exclamation he awoke and was

more struck by this dream than usual, as it was so complete and connected. Some days after he received a hasty and unexpected letter from his father, which caused him to think something uncommon had happened. On opening it he found his father saying that if he were still living he must write at once and tell them how he was, for that on a certain night which he named, his mother had distinctly heard her son come upstairs, heard him come along the passage, and finally enter the room and advance to the side of the bed, on which she cried out, "Oh! my son, thou art dead!" Thus the mother had seen her son at home, at the same moment that he had dreamed of being there, though he was a hundred miles away.

He next cites the well-known case of Augusta Müller, of Carlsruhe, in 1818, published by Dr. Meier, the physician to the Grand Duke of Baden, and Dr. C. C. Von Klein, royal physician of Würtemberg. This young woman at the age of twenty-five displayed symptoms of consumption, and underwent a course of mesmeric treatment. This produced the most surprising clairvoyance in her. She could tell persons distinctly what was doing amongst their friends at a distance at the moment. To a person who asked her about his father-in-law at Freiburg, fifty German miles from Carlsruhe, she replied, he is dead; died such an hour; and added that she was there at the moment herself. She could make herself visible to her brother who lived in Vienna, at will; and on calling to him, he seemed to hear a voice as it were in his ears. Catherine M., a friend of hers, whom she saw one day, said, "I shall not see you to-morrow, for I feel the beginning of a sharp attack of toothache." "I will come to you to-night," replied Augusta Müller. Catherine M. did not pay much attention to the remark, but at two o'clock at night she lay awake with the toothache, she saw Augusta Müller enter her room. It occasioned her a strange feeling, for she was in her night-dress, and she was surrounded by a light as if the sun shined behind her. As Augusta, however, approached her smiling, she offered to lie down by her she made way for her. Directly she fell asleep, and on awaking in the morning, found herself perfectly free from the toothache. She went directly to the house of Augusta, and said to her, "Thy visits by day are very agreeable to me, but pray don't come again in the night." She was now astonished to find that Augusta had never quitted her bed the whole night. On asking her how she managed to get to her house, she replied that she seemed to float through the air. On all such occasions the body of Augusta Müller lay as lifeless.

It will be seen that this writer cites his cases from all countries probably to shew that such phenomena are not confined to his country. As the modern phase of Spiritualism is more recent

Sweden than in the more central countries of Europe, it does not possess much literature on the subject, but so long ago as 1838 the popular poet Nicander and G. C. Norling published a work on supernatural phenomena and events, entitled *Syner och Röster ur det Fördolda*—*Scenes and Voices out of the Invisible*, a volume which affords ample evidence that Sweden possessed its full share of this universal heritage of the human race. The book contains nearly 300 pages, from which I will select a varied sample. The scenes of some of them are laid in Italy, which Nicander had visited, and to which he was greatly attached. I shall, however, confine myself to such as took place in Sweden. I must also observe that others are related which are well known to us as having occurred in England, and are more fully narrated in our own language. Such is that which is related by Mr. Strutt, as having occurred in a country town, to himself; and which in short is this. He was staying at an inn, and rose early and wandered into the churchyard. There he saw the gravedigger at work, and observing him throw out a skull, he took it up, and found something rattle in it. On close examination he discovered to his astonishment that this was a large nail which had been driven into the temple. Keeping his own counsel, he asked the gravedigger if he knew to whom that skull had belonged. Yes, he replied, to the landlord of such an inn, which was the very inn Strutt was staying at. "But," said the antiquary, "there is a landlord there now;" and the gravedigger informed him that the widow had married again to her own ostler. "What," asked Strutt, "did the first husband die of?" He died suddenly in the night," said the gravedigger. With some difficulty, and by the additional argument of half-a-crown, Strutt prevailed on the gravedigger to allow him to retain the skull for an hour, promising its safe return to him. He then hastened to the magistrate, and shewed him the skull and nail. The landlord and landlady were summoned, and on sight of the skull and the nail, instantly confessed the crime, and each accused the other of being the instigator of it.

The next narrative is but the outline, without names of the parties, of one of the most extraordinary stories which ever saw the light. It is that of a most confirmed gambler, a nobleman who received a gold chain from a stranger, who arrived one evening at his castle, and played with him. This chain the donor conjured him to guard with care, and hand down to his posterity, or with the loss of it would the estate be lost. The particulars of this story, and the names of the parties concerned, happen to be in my possession; and strange, and next to impossible as they seem, I venture to give them, because the gentleman who received them ~~from the present owner of the estate, and who handed them to~~

me, is yet living in London, a retired officer of the army. With this preface I shall now copy the account exactly as it stands in my friend the colonel's own notes in my possession.

"A short account of extraordinary spiritual events personally known to Count Piper, a Swede, some of them having occurred to his own family, and related to me by himself at Nice, February and March, 1854:—

"March 13th, called on Count Piper, who related again to me and Baron Prost, this story as well known in Sweden, and which I believe, has been there published. He also shewed us the chain hereafter mentioned. About 1704-6, a Baron Sparre, who had led the most dissolute life, and ruined his property in the country where he lived, who had nailed up the doors of the church on his estate, believing neither in God nor devil, was visited by a spirit one night, who reproached him most severely, and threatened to drag him away if he did not reform. At the same time he put a gold chain round his neck, and dragged him violently by it, the baron resisting with all his force. The spirit then told him to pay attention to what was written on the chain, and never to part with it, adding that if he amended his life, no harm would happen to him so long as he had possession of the chain. In the morning, recollecting the occurrence as a horrid nightmare, he felt for the chain, and was astonished beyond measure to find it round his neck.

"I have seen another and a more rational version of the concluding scene. It states that Sparre, finding himself in the clutches of a fiend, cried for help to St. Brigetta, and instantly a bright spirit appeared, drove off the demon, and putting the chain round his neck, told him so long as he kept it there, he was safe. After the death of Count Sparre, the property was bought by the grandfather of the grandfather of Count Piper, and is now in the hands of the present Count, my informant. After the property was delivered over, the widow of Count Sparre sent this chain with a letter to the purchaser, giving this account of it, and saying that it belonged to the property, and must go along with it.

"The mother of the present Count Piper has told him of various misfortunes which have happened on the property whenever that chain was left anywhere else—always by fire. The father of Count Piper once lent the chain to a friend to take to the theatre, at Stockholm, ten Swedish miles distant. A fire broke out at his chateau, and recollecting the absence of the chain, he sent a man on horseback to fetch it back. Count Piper left the chain somewhere and went to Stockholm. Fifteen days afterwards they heard of their church being set on fire by lightning, just as the people were leaving it. The fire was

extinguished by them. Count Piper, on receiving the news, sat down and wrote a letter to his mother, in the presence of a great many people of note, desiring her to inform him on what day and hour the fire took place. The answer, on its arrival, named the exact day and hour when he had left the chain behind him.

“On another occasion he left the chain at Stockholm, and a village belonging to him was burnt. Another time he left the chain while he went to bathe in a lake, and during that time a house with other appurtenances of his was burnt.

“Count Piper has been obliged by the priests to insure his church, though he never will insure his house, convinced that so long as he wears the chain, no fire will take place on his property. He has been much ridiculed for this belief, but he does not trouble himself on that score. I said to him, ‘Try the experiment, leave the chain in this house and go away for a day or two, perhaps this house will be burnt.’ ‘Not for the world,’ he replied, ‘this house would not be burnt, but some property of mine in Sweden would be.’ The name of his chateau is Engsö, in Westmannia.

“The chain, when doubled, is just the length of my arm, from the top of my finger to the point of the shoulder, or from a yard and a half to a yard and three-quarters. It is of the purest gold, thin wire, and twisted like a curb, but with the peculiarity that it cannot be laid flat, but twists and serpents while trying to do so. To each end is attached a locket of the size and appearance of the illustration annexed. One side is of black enamel, which has never worn or chipped off, and in it is inlaid in gold a figure of five semicircles, like a blown rose, and at each corner a sort of ornamented half-circle. On the reverse side, engraved in Roman letters, in gold, are the letters A.S.V.P. On each side is a hinge with a pin through it, to which the ends are attached. No jeweller has been able to give an opinion about it, except that the gold is of the purest quality, and it is curious, that having had a new link put in to replace a broken one, at different times, the original always wears away the new link. No one can tell what the letters mean, but the Count has imagined, perhaps in joke, that it might mean “Af Satan’s Vårdiga Pack:”—De la Canaille noble du Diable.



“Count Piper used to inhabit the second story of his chateau. When he went to Stockholm on business, and was absent from home for some time, he used, during three or four years, always to

write to say when he should return, in order to have his rooms prepared. A day or two previous to his return noises were heard in his rooms as of a person moving about. Examinations were made, but nothing was discovered. As these noises invariably occurred just previous to his return, his mother and a man who served in the army or reserve in the neighbourhood, to whom Count Piper had given a room above his own, and who acted as a sort of overseer or servant, and who heard the same noises, concluded that it was a spirit which indicated the Count's return. In consequence of this, for the last six years, the Count had never written to announce the time of his intended return home, but his mother and the man, hearing the noises, always had his rooms prepared. The noises sometimes sounded like that of a person opening a door, moving about the furniture, walking, dropping logs of wood, as if making a fire, &c., and the Count was sure to appear in a day or two afterwards.

"A young Swedish officer, whom our friend and informant, the Colonel, met with afterwards, assured him that Count Piper was a most truthful and honorable man, and firmly believed all these things. He also said that Count Rosen, whom the Colonel knew, and who was in our navy, went in Paris to a young woman, a somnambulist, as a perfect stranger to her. He asked her where he came from, and she replied correctly. Why he came there? "For pleasure." Where his mother was, and what she was doing at that moment? The girl said that she was in Sweden, &c., and occupied so and so. Count Rosen wrote down the day and hour, and posted a letter to his mother to ascertain how far the girl's information was true. His mother's reply shewed that the girl had been quite correct.

OTHER RELATIONS BY COUNT PIPER.

The trustworthiness of Count Piper being thus vouched for, we may as well add a few more anecdotes, related by him to the Colonel.

"About fifteen years before the Colonel met Count Piper at Nice, a worthy family of the name of Berg, lived at Stockholm, consisting of mother, daughter, and two sons, one of whom was a professor of singing, and taught Jenny Lind, and an orphan girl who was brought up by them as one of themselves. The orphan, whom they all loved, fell into consumption, and died at the age of 19 or 20. She saw death approaching with the utmost composure. The family asked her, if she had the power, to appear to them after death. About a month after her decease, they were all in the bed-room of the mother, who was ill, talking about different things, but never mentioning the name of the

orphan, or thinking about her at the time. The mother wished them all good night, and they retired to their respective rooms. Shortly after, one of the brothers rushed out to seek his brother and sister, in alarm, but met them also rushing out in the same manner. They had seen the spirit of their friend. They went to the mother and found her in a swoon. When she came to herself she said the orphan had just appeared to her. Thus she had appeared to all four almost at the same instant. Count Piper knows the family, and pronounces them incapable of deceiving him.

“Count Piper said that an old gentleman, well known in Sweden, had the power of second-sight and prediction. The late king, Bernadotte, was so much interested in him, that the people did not like it, fearing that he might be misled by him. His name was Saltza, and he was living at the time that the Count related this. It was hoped and believed that he would leave important writings, to be posthumously published. About twenty years before this time, as he was travelling towards Stockholm, he met on the road a rich merchant of his acquaintance, who was also going to the capital. As they travelled on together, the merchant said he was in great anxiety of mind about a ship that he had sent to sea a long time ago, and had heard nothing of. He had been too parsimonious to insure it at first, but had lately written to both Stockholm and Copenhagen to have it insured, but had received no reply. Mr. Saltza said, ‘Leave me quiet, and don’t speak to me.’ He then remained for an hour or so in a fit of reverie, and at the end of that time he said, ‘Your ship is wrecked. I can see it thrown upon the coast into a garden; but the ship has been insured, and the announcement of the fact is on its way.’

It turned out that the ship had passed the Sound or the straits safely, that the people at Copenhagen had seen it pass, and had then accepted the insurance, but it was thrown on shore before reaching Stockholm, and was found at the bottom of the pleasure grounds of some one whose name the Count mentioned.

The king, Charles XIII., being afraid of the power and wealth of his nobles, tried to reduce them by imposing the heaviest burdens. About 40 years before the time of this being narrated, the king laid claim to immense arrears of taxes, as due from one property. The family were perfectly convinced that everything had been paid in due course, but they could not find the necessary receipts, and were compelled to pay what was demanded by annual instalments.

Two distinguished officers were invited to a hunting party at the chateau of this family, the name of which was Thott. Attached to the chateau was a chapel, and a passage led from a room

in the house to this chapel. This passage was never used, and the doors of it were locked. The two officers had this room assigned for their sleeping-room. One of them soon fell asleep; the other lay awake, and saw a figure wrapped in a black cloak and with a lantern, walk into the room from the passage. A bunch of keys was suspended from its waist; one of these keys it took, went to the wall and appeared to unlock a cupboard. The officer, with great difficulty, awoke his friend. He had marked the spot, and the next day he told every one in the house; a man was sent for, who made a breach in the wall, and there found a recess with a number of papers in it, and amongst them the missing receipts for the payment of the taxes. The arrears paid up were returned.

Count Piper's mother returning home at night saw, to her astonishment, the house, which was four stories high, illuminated in front. The coachman saw it also. As they drove round to the other side, the illumination was found to extend thither also. They rang the bell; the servant, after some time, opened the door, yawning and half asleep. They asked him why all the rooms were lighted up? He replied there was no one there, and that they had not been lighted. They found the rooms, in fact dark, and a week afterwards she heard of her husband's death which took place at a great distance from home. It was the first time that the countess had witnessed anything of the kind though she had heard of such things; and it could not be imagination, as she had no cause to expect any death in the family. The count knew a similar case in another family, which was also simultaneous with the death of the absent husband of the lady who saw it.

Having concluded Count Piper's relation, we may now revert to Nicander. The volume contains almost every variety of supernatural phenomena. We have a case of stone-throwing, which I have already given in my articles under that head. We have many cases of second sight and funeral processions seen while the person concerned was in apparent good health. We have an ancient document of 1693, which was laid before the Ting, in the jurisdiction of Elfsborg, by Bishop Carlsberg, and attested as true, namely, that one Märi Monsdotter had been visited by a ghost, soliciting the forgiveness of an injustice done by the ghost to Märi Monsdotter, in her lifetime, and on being told that she had forgiven her, the ghost replied, "No, not from the heart, and till that is done, I can find no rest." The narrative details at length all that was done to satisfy the disturbed spirit, which was finally effected. We have the following curious kind of haunting:—Captain G—— purchased iron works in Dalecarlia, restored the dilapidated dwelling-house, married an accomplished

dy, and promised himself a pleasant and useful life on his handsome and well-situated property. But malicious spirits soon dissipated all his pleasant anticipations. There commenced nightly in his bed-room the constant rumbling as of a heavy ball rolling to and fro on the floor, and frequently striking against the foot of the bed itself. Every possible investigation was made of the mystery; nothing could be discovered; the floor was pulled up, but to no purpose. The captain, a young, active, bold military man, watched with two of his fellow officers, for several nights, with lights burning, but were unable to detect any living creature concerned in the annoyance. Yet still the invisible heavy ball rolled on in its usual manner every night. The ill-lant captain gave up the contest, sold his property at a cheap rate, and quitted the place after only a year's possession.

Professor Dr. Sven Bruhn, who for many years was a lecturer at the Gymnasium in Strengnäs, related to one of the editors the following occurrence. He had been spending some time in the country, and as he drove into Strengnäs on his return, just after sunset, and came into the street in which the bishop's house as well as his own stood, he saw a funeral procession approaching. He wondered at the same time that no bells were tolling, and that there was no throng of spectators usual on such occasions. He drew up to let it pass, and took off his hat. The chief mourner he observed was a gentleman wearing an order of merit, a person well known to him. The coffin was borne by a number of members of the Gymnasium, and all his fellow-members of the consistory, high and low, with many persons, a greater portion well-known to him, were in the procession. As the train had nearly passed him, he turned to look after it, and it had vanished. He asked the driver what he had seen, and he replied "Nothing, but I wondered what caused you, sir, to remain here so long, and such an attitude."

The lecturer kept his counsel, but, on entering his house, his servant-maid told him that the bishop was dead, and he found an invitation to the funeral. This he attended next day, and saw exactly the same procession, consisting of the same persons, as he had seen in vision the day before.

A country clergyman, who was in no degree superstitious, told his friends that he dreamed that on the 24th of the approaching August he should die. The thing being told, passed out of his thoughts, and he went on in perfect health fulfilling his duties. One day he was called to officiate at a marriage at a distance, and as he just closed the ceremony, when it flashed through his mind that this was the 24th of August. A singular feeling came with his reflection, and he made haste to reach home in good time, lest some accident in the dark might realize his dream, for he was

never in better health, and could imagine no fatality, except through some untoward incident. He drove home, however, without any such occurrence, and probably congratulated himself on the emptiness of his dream as he saw his own house, but as he was about to enter the front door, a tile fell from the roof upon his head, and killed him on the spot.

A man of considerable property in Ostergöthland, Mr. H—— (I wish the Swedes, as well as the English, would give us the full names of the people), who was noted for his honourable character and freedom from credulity, had a neighbour, Mr. P——k, who frequently hunted with him. Suddenly this gentleman died of apoplexy, and Mr. H—— found himself his executor. To investigate and settle his affairs he took up his abode at his house, and carefully examined his papers. Many claimants appeared amongst the relatives of the deceased for parts or the whole of the property, and amongst these a creditor, who asserted that a large sum was due to him, but who had no note to shew for it. Mr. H—— refused to listen to this claim, and the assumed creditor shewed himself very indignant and menacing. Mr. H—— remained firm, and told the man he would never pay him a farthing without due proof of the debt, but to make sure he once more went over his friend's papers. In the window by the table which he sat thus employed, stood a large cage, containing a couple of starlings, which he himself had caught and given to his friend. Finding no acknowledgement of any such debt, Mr. H—— retired to rest in the adjoining chamber. He fell asleep, but was soon awakened by a noise in his chamber. Startled by this, he arose, struck a light, and looked about; the door was fast as it was on going to bed. He went out and examined the sitting-room; all was as usual there. He could not more lay down, but a second time he was startled by a noise and a fluttering somewhere near. On rising and taking a light, all was found in order in his room. He unlocked his door and entered the sitting-room, and the first thing which he saw was one of the starlings lying dead and bloody on a piece of paper. He took it up and found it to be an acknowledgment of a part of the sum demanded by his importunate claimant. He the next day informed this gentleman that he had discovered the necessary authority, and paid the money, but it was not till his old age that he mentioned to any one the singular manner of his discovery. The writer says he was one to whom he told it.

A Miss C——, who lived in Stockholm many years, possessed the sad gift of seeing beforehand the death of those she met in company. They appeared to be enveloped in a black cloud. She revealed this sorrowful gift, which occasioned her deep trouble and anxiety, only to her mother. One of her elder sisters was

engaged to a young clergyman. Entering the house one day as he had just arrived, she flung herself weeping into her sister's arms, exclaiming, "Oh! my poor, dear, good Amalia!" Every one was astonished at this outburst, but she gave no explanation. Her mother, however, knew the cause, and within a month the young clergyman was dead.

Here let us pause till next month for the remainder of these Swedish narratives.

THE DEVILS OF MORZINE.

CASES of possession are frequently mentioned in the New Testament, and to that extent some sort of belief is as a matter of "faith" accorded to them by Bible-believers. Otherwise we can hardly be wrong in saying that an active belief in such a possibility is not held at the present day. Possession is a part of the supernatural which has completely died out of all public recognition. The inquirer readily finds, however, repeated cases of it of the most marked kind in all ages of the world, and we have no difficulty in recognizing it as having a not uncommon existence, in more or less decided forms. There are plenty of evil spirits for the purpose, and plenty of human habitations ready swept and garnished for their occupation, and to such an extent that there does not seem to be any necessity now-a-days for their resorting to herds of wild beasts. The subject of individual cases of possession by evil spirits, should be one of the most interesting and anxious inquiry, instead of being ignored and ridiculed and denied. The subjects of lunacy, mania, sudden temptations to enormous crimes, of which even the person guilty of them deemed himself incapable, would receive light from the prosecution of the inquiry. There are, however, cases of possession which are of an epidemic, or of a contagious nature, which are more curious and inexplicable, but equally well marked and certain. They appear to be mixed up with physical as well as spiritual phenomena, and the physical or nervous side seems to be first developed, whilst the other phenomena are superinduced upon it. The strangest instances of this are to be found in the possessions of the middle ages, such as those of the girls of Loudun, of the convulsionnaires of St. Medard, in Paris, of the Tarantula dances, of the Sabbats and the preaching sickness in Sweden, and the possessions in Holland and Italy, the prophets of the Pyrennees, the Irvingites, and the revivals in Ireland and America, all of which are clearly connected together in a common chain of



physical phenomena, and are only differenced in the mental and moral phenomena—in other words, some are cases of possession by bad spirits, and some by good spirits.

The curious history which we are about to give is taken from a well-written article with the above title, in the April number of the *Cornhill Magazine*. It is surprising to find it there, inasmuch as the present editor's first work was to wipe out the stain of Spiritualism left by its former editor, Mr. Thackeray; and surely its readers will hardly know what to make of so unwelcome a narration. The scene is so near the track of all Swiss tourists—the head of the Lake of Geneva, and the occurrence is so fresh and new—not even yet ended, and the evidence of it is so official and convincing that it ought certainly to attract a large share of general attention, whilst to us it is of abounding interest, as containing within it so many of the current facts of Spiritualism. The writer introduces us to Morzine, and the earliest breaking out of the phenomena, as follows:—

“ Starting from Thonon, and following the course of the river Dranse, a good walker reaches in five hours the ruins of the Abbey d'Aulph, founded in 1107, and until the last century a prosperous Cistercian community. Two hours farther of rough char road the parish of Morzine opens in the form of a shell, round which rise high mountains, thickly wooded, that close in the village to the South.

“ Except that it is out of the way of travellers, there is little difference in the circumstances of Morzine to those of the other Savoyard valleys. The life and customs of its inhabitants are those of similarly isolated districts. Its people are even counted rich in contrast with the people of other communes in Haute Savoie. The parish numbers over two thousand souls, who are chiefly occupied in herding cattle, and are almost nomad in their habits, moving from pasture to pasture with their flocks as summertide ebbs and flows. Hardly any fevers prevail; there is no cretinism, and the goitre never assumes large dimensions. Though marriages within degrees prohibited by the Roman Catholic Church are in large proportion, there are hardly any deaf and dumb, or blind or deformed persons. The villagers are intelligent, and their honest, frank, and religious character strikes strangers who come among them.

“ There was little then in the circumstances of the place or people, except perhaps the dominance of religious ideas to account for the events that have lately startled the medical and religious world of France. The parish priest, though he may have had some old-fashioned notions, had proved himself for many years a good and respectable pastor. Since 1707 there had been no talk of sorcery. Tradition reported that in that year Morzine had been

afflicted by spells, but that was an idea of the past. Year after year the young men emigrated to the plains in search of work, and brought back to their homes a fair share of money and new sights. The elders fed their flocks and cultivated their coarse and scanty oats and rye; the women bore many children; *the parish was quiet and noted for the intelligence and sober piety of its community.* The worst said of the people was, that they loved lawsuits, and were obstinate in their quarrels.

“ In the spring of 1857, the village being in its usual quietude, Peronne Tavernier, a child ten years old, was engaged in eager preparation for her first communion. She was exceedingly intelligent and sweet tempered, and a sort of favour had been made in admitting her sooner than her comrades of the same age, to the mystery of the Eucharist. Religious thoughts occupied her, she says, night and day, and she could speak of little but her joy in the prospect of the event that was at hand. One day, it was the 14th of March, as she came out of church after confession, she saw a little girl fall into the river, and felt strange fright and uneasiness at the sight. A few hours afterwards, as she sat at school, she suddenly sank down on the bench, and had to be carried home, where she remained as one dead for some hours. Three or four days later the same thing happened to her in church, and afterwards, the attacks recurred frequently wherever she might be. Again in April, as she and another child, Marie Plagnat, kept their goats on the hill-side, they were both found insensible, clasped in each other's arms. They were carried home, and after an hour, Perronne awoke and asked for bread, which, however, she could not eat. After that the seizures became frequent, and both children were attacked seven or six times a day. Symptoms that strangely impressed the bystanders began to manifest themselves. The little girls in their trance used to raise their eyes to heaven; they sometimes stretched out their hands, and appeared to receive a letter. *By turns it seemed to give pleasure and to excite horror.* Then they made as if they refolded the letter, and returned it to the invisible messenger. On awakening they declared that they had heard from the blessed Virgin, who had shewn them a beautiful paradise. When the missive, as they sometimes averred, came from hell, Peronne used to complain with terror of serpents that were twisted round her hat. Day by day the attacks became more remarkable. The children began to gesticulate, to speak incoherently, to utter oaths, and blaspheme all they had been taught to revere. Their limbs were convulsed, so that three men could not hold Peronne in her fits. In their trances they accused men in the village of having bewitched them. Among their predictions, they announced that two other girls, and

Peronne's father, would be seized as they were, and that he would die. Their predictions were fulfilled.

"The next remarkable case was that of Julienne Plagnat, a girl of fifteen. One day, as she was out, she felt a sudden pain in her right leg, above the knee; looked for the cause, and found a severe cut across her thigh. A convulsion followed, and from that day she was constantly attacked; she declared herself to be possessed of seven devils, and told their names, which corresponded with the names of men who had died in the neighbourhood. She foretold that there would be many afflicted in the village. Her father relates that, having asked her during one of her attacks how she had cut her leg, a devil answered,—

" 'I cut it with my hatchet.'

" 'Who—you?'

" 'Yes. I, the woodman.'

"For twelve days many remedies were tried to heal the sore, but none succeeded, till at last the devil spoke again.

" 'Too many things have been done for the girl; do nothing more, and in forty-eight hours the wound will heal.' After the time given there was no trace of the wound.

"In the beginning of June, Joseph Tavernier, brother of the first child attacked, fell ill. He was a healthy intelligent boy of twelve, and the premonitory symptoms of pain, loss of appetite, and restlessness that frequently warned others, did not show themselves before he was seized. One day he suddenly seemed scared as one astonished; he took a stick, and going into the middle of a stream close by, he beat the water, and turned over the stones for a quarter of an hour. He allowed himself to be led home afterwards without resistance. Another day, returning from his father's funeral, whose death our readers will remember had been predicted by one of the 'possessed,' the boy had an attack of the nameless disorder that was rapidly becoming epidemic. Under its influence he ran up a pine-tree sixty-eighty feet high. He is said to have turned down the top and to have stood on it head downwards, singing and gesticulating. Suddenly he recovered his usual consciousness, and terrified by his position, he cried out for help. His elder brother called out, 'Devil, enter again quickly into this child, that he may be able to come down.' At once the attack recommenced, the boy seemed to lose fear, and came down head foremost as a spirit might do.

We have said that his father's death, and that he would die by the malefice of a sorcerer, had been foretold. Tavernier, however, had no fit of actual convulsions. He became morose and choleric, and complained that when he was hungry and wanted to eat, the devil prevented him from lifting food to his

He closed his teeth when others tried to feed him. After three months he became like a skeleton and died.

“ One by one fresh cases appeared, more or less different in their phenomena, but tending further to representation of demoniacal possession as it is described in the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church. In eight months twenty-seven persons were under the influence of a disease that the local doctors reported to be abnormal and unaccountable. A physician who went to Morzine, and observed some of the cases that had appeared at his epoch, relates thus an interview that he had with one of the possessed.’ We omit some details of his narrative, which are repetitions of Doctor Constans’ observations quoted further on.

“ ‘ The patient was about thirty years old. She was married, and the mother of a family. She was dark in complexion and of nervous temperament; her health was good. At the time of my visit she was making preparations for going to Sallenches, a town at some distance, where she was to be sequestered. When I went into her room she was leaning over her baggage. I spoke to her, but she did not reply; soon after her head and upper members became convulsed, and she began to speak in a jerking way. *I pinched and pricked her unawares, with a large needle,* as she leant against the table, but she gave no sign of pain. Presently she threw herself on the ground, and rolled about and struck at the furniture and floor with extraordinary violence. Her face was red; her throat swelled; she seemed suffocated. I tried again if she were sensitive to pain, but with the same result as before. She continued to struggle and cry out.

“ ‘ I am from Abondance’ (a neighbouring parish), said the devil by her mouth. ‘ I was cast into eternal fire for having eaten meat on a Friday. Yes, I am damned,’ he continued. *Fortuus est damnatus.* I must torment the woman, I must drag her with me.’ Then, leaping up, with one bound, the woman, or rather the devil, cried out, ‘ I died by drowning; the woman must die that way.’ She rushed out to throw herself into the river, where once before she had nearly succeeded in destroying herself. Three strong men could hardly hold her back, though in her struggles she seemed to avoid hurting them. At last she resisted, and, leaning against the table, she recommenced her abuse. ‘ Ah! bearded wretch of a doctor,’ she said, ‘ you want to drive us out of the woman; we fear you not with your medicines. Come! we defy you. See you, wicked unbeliever, what is wanted are prayers, and priests, and bishops, and pious exercises. We are five in this woman. Now there are only two who speak, but it will be very different when she passes into the country where her forefathers are buried, near the church where the knight innocent: oh, there it is that we will torment her.’

The fit left her suddenly, as with the other woman I had seen, and without any pause of transition. She passed her hands through her hair, asked her husband to give her water, and drank a bowl of it. Her replies to my questions were simple and natural. *She remembered nothing of what had taken place.*

"It is curious that every Friday she went to the maire and asked him for bacon which she ate eagerly and sometimes raw. Our readers will remember that the devil who possessed her had declared himself damned for having eaten meat on Friday.

"Hallucinations beset some even of those who were not convulsed among the villagers. There were women who were constantly haunted by a black dog, and a girl declared that she saw a man change into a bird and fly away. Even among bystanders not otherwise affected, there were strange illusions. They averred that the possessed hung on the leaves of trees and passed from branch to branch like birds. We cannot be surprised that the villagers desired, and that their spiritual pastors allowed, the use of exorcisms. Pilgrimages to neighbouring shrines were also tried, and it is said that these remedies were in some cases successful. It is certain that medicine was powerless, and there is curious evidence of increased paroxysms and convulsions when the simplest sedatives, the common prescriptions were employed. The people turned eagerly to the best means, as they supposed, of cure for the evil that had befallen them. They demanded the rite of exorcism, not only for the 'possessed,' but for their cattle, their mules, and even the poultry that fell sick. There is a story of a pig that could not by fair or foul means be got to cross the village bridge until a priest came and began the ceremony of exorcism. The stole was laid, as directed, on the animal, which instantly became as docile as his owners wished. Persons at Morzine, worthy of credit and not believers in demoniacal possession, assert that some cows would not give their milk to women who were affected by the epidemic, while to other hands they yielded plentifully. It is not easy to imagine how such incidents, trifling as they may seem, added to the public ferment. We have no very detailed account of the progress of the disorder during the languid end of the Sardinian sway in Savoy. The exorcisms practised by the curé were forbidden by Monseigneur Rendu, the bishop of the diocese, a name known to Alpine explorers as that of the first intelligent observer of glacier motion. But the bishop fell ill, the doctors of the neighbourhood confessed their powerlessness, and the Turin Government was deaf to any demand for medical inquiry. The public of Morzine, left to their own devices, determined on having a general exorcism. It was attempted with all the usual ceremonies. The adjurations, sufficiently terrific

any time, were being fervently repeated, when a terrible explosion of profanity interrupted the exorcists. The officiating clergy were assailed by blasphemies and invectives, and a scene of confusions, equal to any recorded during the middle ages, followed. "As might have been feared, the epidemic increased rapidly on this attempt to stay it. The unfortunate people fell into a state of extreme depression, and the few visitors who tried to soothe them from their fear were hooted as 'rogues' or unbeliefers. Convinced that the state of their wives and daughters resulted from the spells of sorcerers, even the elders of the parish began to wish for the punishment of certain persons whom they suspected of pacts with Satan: Four or five men had been denounced by the 'possessed,' and at last public opinion ran so high that the life of one of the supposed wizards was in continual peril. He was a fat elderly shoemaker, Jean Berger by name; but by no means represented the ideal sorcerer. However, on one occasion he was hunted for three hours by a mob armed with scythes and axes, and with great difficulty escaped from their fury. A miller was also suspected of malefice, and he was obliged to shut up his mill. Even the most sensible men in the village did not scruple to tell strangers that Morzine would have no peace until two or three magicians were burned on the village

1. Meantime France had annexed Savoy, and the great nation, to know, interested herself in her new province. Dr. Arthaud, a distinguished Lyons physician skilled in mental disease, was commissioned to inquire into the causes and symptoms of the morzine epidemic. In a very interesting report he recapitulated the facts that we have rapidly sketched, and noted as chiefly remarkable and as certainly existing:—

- The abnormal development of muscular force.
 - The intellectual excitement producing marvellous lucidity of thought and correctness of language.
 - The cries, blasphemies, and imprecations that increased at the approach of a priest, or at church, or during exorcisms.
 - The impressions produced at great distances on the senses.
 - The designation of persons who were said to cause the disease by touch or glance.
 - The prediction by the sick of the term of their illness.
 - Their various hallucinations and demoniacal delirium.
 - The personation of the evil spirits by the patients, who spoke of themselves in the third person always.
- Dr. Arthaud examined and analyzed cases and tried medicines in vain. He went away leaving no greater consolation to the afflicted souls than that they were a prey to epidemic 'hysteroneuro-pathy.'

“But what is demonopathy the Morzinois might reasonably have asked. What was it that had come to their valley? *Healthy and pious mothers, some with child, some nursing, uttered blasphemies and used language which Wapping would stare at. Respectable girls blasphemed all they believed most sacred. Persons notorious for devotion found that their lips refused to pray, and that through some mysterious influence communion was impossible. Children grew strangely and irrepressibly insolent. A general moral disorganization had changed all the habits of the village. Why had this happened at Morzine? The people of the neighbouring parish were entirely exempt, though its chalets were within a stone's throw of houses that had been visited by the spiritual plague.*

“France resolved to throw fresh floods of Parisian light on the mountain valley without delay. On the 26th of April, 1850, Dr. Constans, inspector-general of lunatics, arrived at Morzine determined to restore the due order of a Savoyard commune—

De par science défense à Dieu
De faire miracle en ce lieu.

He found a hundred and twenty cases of ‘possession.’ Immediately he applied himself to observe scientifically sixty-four of them. His account is detailed and interesting, and he successfully disposes of some marvellous stories firmly believed by the people. He does not, however, we think, sufficiently account for what he himself admits, by the physical causes he assigns. He gives us a table of the ages and circumstances of the sixty-four *possédées* that came under his observation. Of these thirty were children, sixteen were married, and two were widows. Thirty were of various ages, from twenty-five to fifty-eight. He puts in a different category four men who were attacked by very similar symptoms. Age therefore, had little to do with the seizures, nor does it appear that any physical circumstances specially determined or alleviated the convulsive attacks. In some cases, they were, it is true, preceded by internal pain, by loss of appetite, and digestive disturbance; but the sick imagination of the ‘possessed’ probably produced sensations that could not otherwise be explained in the excellent state of their physical health. We find a spoonful of water producing ‘atrocious pain.’ A woman, who imagined herself bewitched by wine given her by one of the suspected sorcerers, for a year afterwards daily vomited what she declared to be the same wine, nor could she get rid of its taste. The ‘possession’ appears to have caused impressions peculiar to other disorders, but we cannot find any known disorder determined the ‘possession.’ Dr. Constans notes among other phenomena, that, if questioned, *the possessed*

persons replied to the thoughts to which they attributed the questions, and to the objections that they foresaw he would make, but their sayings were always in reference to their dominant idea. The spirits whom they supposed spoke by their mouth seem generally to have once tenanted human beings, and sometimes related what they used to do on earth, and what they had since done in hell, &c.

“Dr. Constans describes as marvellous their acrobatic feats: he says, ‘*They turn over and over in one bound, and sometimes leaping like a steel spring let go, they fling themselves back, so that head and feet touch the floor together.*’

“‘The attack lasts,’ he continues, ‘from ten minutes to half-an-hour; the pulse is not quickened, but rather becomes slow and weak, and the extremities grow cold, notwithstanding the violent blows they strike.’ The extreme regard to decency of the women, and the absence of the sensual ideas which were so general in the witch sabbaths and sorceries of earlier times is remarkable.

“Dr. Constans observes that *the insensibility to pain of the convulsed persons* was not accompanied by general failure of perception. He, as well as the other physicians who visited them, thrust pins under their nails, and in other sensitive parts of their body, without causing pain. At the same time *the organs of sight and hearing were excited* in the sick persons to extraordinary keenness. There is a case reported of one, who being at Geneva, whither she had gone in search of cure, heard, at a distance of thirty-five miles at least, the bells of Morzine ringing. She announced that they sounded for the christening of the doctor’s baby, without any previous knowledge of the fact. The memory of the possessed is also marvellously developed. *Many of them were able to have spoken foreign languages*—some English, some German, one used the Auvergnat dialect of French, and another was believed to discourse in Arabic. *The invulnerableness of their skin was yet more extraordinary*; notwithstanding the severe treatment it received in the attacks of those diseased, it was seldom bruised or cut. A Genevese clergyman assures us that he saw a child ten years’ old fall seventeen feet from a loft to the stone-floor below without the slightest injury. Our readers will remember that a similar phenomenon was manifested, in a degree that seems incredible, by the celebrated Convulsionnaires of St. Médard. It was made a ground of accusation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We do not know that any physiological explanation has been given of it.

“The consternation that such facts created at Morzine can be imagined. In vain Dr. Constans—who seems to have been given absolute discretionary power by the French Government—dis-

persed the worst cases to hospitals in other districts; in vain he overawed the parish authorities by a brigade of forty gendarmes and a detachment of infantry. He tried the effect of their drums and fifes; and caused the curé to be changed, and threatened all who dared to have a fit in public with punishment. Like failure followed each of his measures. During his presence for a few months the disease appeared to smoulder; but the following year fresh and furious outbreaks, suggestive of the presence of yet more cruel devils, took place, to the consternation of the administration, lay and ecclesiastical, of the Haute Savoie. The Morzinois must not, we think, be accused of extraordinary scepticism if they thought that medicine could do little for them; or of weak credulity, if they believed that spiritual means could best meet the spiritual evil. Several cures seem to have been obtained throughout the epidemic by the use of private exorcisms, discouraged, it is true, by the Bishop of Annecy, but practised by the Capuchins of St. Maurice. We can well believe that the fearful adjurations of the Romish Ritual had power to kill or cure a convulsive patient—the whole ceremony is impressive even on the strongest minds; but it is plain that its repetition worked on the devout peasants of Morzine until they seem to have changed their Christian faith for a sort of demon propitiation. In their excitement they demanded a 'mission' to revive their courage, and the Annecy authorities permitted one to be held in the afflicted valley during the summer of 1863. As usually happened after a religious ceremony of a public solemn nature, fresh evil followed. Within a week of the sermons and public meetings presided over by the reverend fathers of the mission, eighty cases of convulsions were numbered. The scenes that followed were more dreadful than ever. The newly organized authorities were powerless before an evil that seemed without remedy, and that might be propagated indefinitely through the nervous and credulous population of the Haute Savoie as the renown of it spread.

"As soon as the winter snows allowed, the *préfet* of the department determined to visit the scene of this disorder. In March, 1864, he went to Morzine, determined to try what plain speaking and common sense could do. He called together in a room some of the women subject to convulsions, and exhorted them quietly to try and return to their former pious and regular habits. They listened attentively until, at a given moment, some chance word excited them. They all fell into simultaneous convulsions, and surrounding the *préfet*, who, our readers will remember, is a very great personage in his department, they assailed him with abuse, oaths, and blasphemies. They kicked and struck him, and made as if they would tear him to pieces, and leaped with unnatural strength high in the air, foaming

at the mouth, and contorting their bodies as no one had ever seen before. The few gendarmes present tried to help their *préfet*, but they were overborne. A spectator assures us that the women *lifted these strong men as they would have lifted little infants*, and pinned them against the walls of the room, pressing their nails against the flesh of the men's faces. It is singular that *no scratch was inflicted by them, notwithstanding the force they used*. Their muscles appeared to be perfectly under the control of the will that possessed them; their preternatural strength seemed nicely regulated as the soft touch of a healthy finger. With great difficulty the *préfet* struggled for a time against his possessed subjects; then, at a bound, one after another they all sprang through a window and disappeared. The *préfet* made little delay in leaving Morzine. *We have heard that the calmest and strongest men received an impression of singular uneasiness after having witnessed an attack of these convulsions*. A Roman Catholic priest, well used to common illness, has told us that, having been present at a convulsion in one of the Morzine women who had come to Geneva, he was conscious of unusual nervousness for some hours afterwards.

"The experience of the *préfet* did not deter Monseigneur Maginn, who had succeeded Rendu in the bishopric of Annecy, from visiting Morzine in the course of his pastoral tour. He arrived there in the April following the *préfet's* discomfiture, with the usual suite of ecclesiastics who attend their chief on such occasions from parish to parish. There had been no confirmation in the valley for some years; and the bishop resolved to try the spiritual effects of the sacrament on some of the 'possessed.' We may say, by the way, that the excellent and enlightened prelate had, throughout, discountenanced exorcisms. He is a man of great firmness and good sense, and up to this date he is one of those French bishops who have not published, in their dioceses, the late encyclical letter from Rome.

"There was of course a full attendance at the high-mass he celebrated. Their bishop was a beloved and venerated object to the people of Morzine, and we can imagine the respect and awe his presence, in full pontifical dress, must have commanded. Much was hoped from the moral effect of his visit and the influence of confirmation; but what that influence produced we translate from the letter of a trustworthy spectator. It was published in the *Union Médicale* of the second of July, 1864:—

“ ‘ 22nd May, 1864.

“ ‘ DEAR FRIEND,—I went, after all, on the first of May, to see the celebrated 'possessed' at Morzine; and I can assure you I have not lost my time. My imagination could never have

conceived so horrible a sight. I was at Morzine at half-past six in the morning. The ceremony began at seven o'clock. I had not been five minutes in the church when a poor young girl fell at my feet in horrible convulsions. Four men could not hold her. She struck the floor with her feet, her hands, and her head, as fast as the roll of a drum. Then another was seized, and again another. The church became a perfect hell. Nothing was heard but cries, blows, oaths, and blasphemies, that made one's hair stand on end. It was the bishop's entrance that particularly set all the people agog. Blows with the fist, kicks, spitting, horrible contortions, handfuls of hair and caps flung about, torn clothes, bleeding hands, met everywhere my ears and eyes. The most frightful moments were at the elevation of the host, and at the benediction of the holy sacrament after vespers as well as when the bishop first appeared. It was so dreadful that the bystanders were all in tears. The victims of the disease, above a hundred in number, seemed to fall into simultaneous convulsions without any previous warning. The noise was perfectly infernal. Within a radius of two yards I counted eleven. The greater number were young girls and women from fifteen to thirty years old. There was a child of ten, five or six old women, and two men. The bishop confirmed some of them, whether they would or no. As soon as he came in front of them they were seized; but by the help of the gendarmes and some men who assisted he put his hands on them, even in the midst of their fearful maledictions. 'Damned carrion of a bishop,' they said, 'why dost thou come to torment us?' They tried to strike and bite him and to tear off his episcopal ring (which we have heard was actually trampled under foot). They spat in his face; but it was noteworthy that when the bishop touched their heads in confirmation they sank down, and remained in a stupor that seemed like deep sleep. During the sermon when any one was seized with a convulsion, the bishop stopped, and making the sign of the cross, he said, '*In nomine Christi tace et obmutescere.*' The effect was invariably good. Near me was a young and pretty woman of eighteen. She had been married a year, and had been a mother for two months. After having been confirmed, lying in the arms of her father, her brother, and her husband, who all wept bitterly, she cried out, 'Ah, damned carrion of a bishop, thou makest me depart. I who was so happy in this body on the earth. How dreadful to have to return to hell.' Then, after a pause, 'And I, also, I must go. I must leave this fair body, where I was so well off. But when I go, I leave five more, and among them an old devil. It is not to-day that they will depart.' I took the woman by her hand, and questioned her in Latin and other languages; but

she did not reply. The brigadier of the gendarmes having come forward to stop her talking, 'Ah, carrion of a brigadier,' she cried, 'I know thee, thou art an unbeliever. Thou art a ——. Thou art mine.' The brigadier turned pale, and fell back. The gendarmes were all so terrified that every moment they made the sign of the cross.

"I stayed at Morzine until Monseigneur left, that is to say, till half-past six in the evening. The poor bishop was utterly dispirited. Two or three '*possédées*' were brought to him in the sacristy, but he could do nothing. On my return I found one by the side of the road. I questioned her also in a foreign language, but she got angry, and replied by a handful of gravel, which she flung in my face, telling me that I only went once a year to mass, and that I was a busybody.'

"The complete failure of episcopal influence threw the Government back on the help of medical science. Dr. Constans had, since his first visit, published a report, in which he held out hopes of cure if his advice were strictly followed. He was again commissioned to do what he could for Morzine. Armed with the powers of a dictator he returned there, and backed by a fresh detachment of sixty soldiers, a brigade of gendarmes and a fresh *curé*, he issued despotic decrees, and threatened lunatic asylums, and in any case deportation for the convulsed. He fined any person who accused others of magic, or in any way encouraged the prevalent idea of supernatural evil. He desired the *curé* to preach sermons against the possibility of demoniacal possession, but this order could not well be carried out by even the most obedient priest.

"The persons affected with fits were dispersed in every direction. Some were sent to asylums and hospitals, and many were simply exiled from Chablais. They were not allowed to revisit even for a day their homes, except by very special favour. The existing health of the exiles is, of course, not well known, but we have heard of many who have attacks even now when they are far from Morzine. Four or five who were unfortunately kept together in an Annecy hospital, set on the chaplain, a priest who attempted to exorcise them, and ill-treated him after the fashion in which they had dealt with his bishop.

"Whether fear has helped to stay the spiritual plague, as undoubtedly fear helped to produce it, remains to be proved; at present the urgent pressure put by the French Government on the people of Morzine seems to have scotched the snake. There have been no cases of convulsion for four months. The soldiers have been withdrawn, much regretted by the villagers, to whom they made themselves as agreeable as Dr. Constans hoped they would. As we write, the brigadier of gendarmes is on his way

back from Grenoble, whither he had gone to be decorated for his courage and good conduct. The *maire* and the special Government commissioner find their time hang heavy for lack of fresh cases of 'hystero-demonopathy.' Visitors to the place, curious of information, are, we think wisely discouraged; quacks and charlatans are not allowed admission to the commune. Let us hope that this summer may see no fresh outbreak of a disorder so dreadful, in that it appears to 'kill the soul' even more than it weakens the body.

"We need not point out the salient facts of our narrative, or discuss the various theories that have been invented to account for them. We have described no incident that cannot be compared and measured with phenomena recorded in earlier centuries. It is impossible not to see the resemblance of the Morzine epidemic with the demonopathy of the sixteenth century, or with the history of the Jansenist and Cevennes convulsionnaires. Some of the facts we have related are observed in the state of hypnotism or nervous sleep with which physicians are familiar. The hallucinations of which we have given some instances, are too common to astonish us. But the likeness of this epidemic to others that have been observed, does not account for its symptoms. The resemblance of its phenomena to some already witnessed does not, after all, explain them. Can physiologists give the reason for an insensibility that is accompanied by so remarkable development of muscular energy? Can they account for a preternatural acuteness of the senses. Can any physical explanation tell us why the moral marvel exists of virtue turning to vice, and piety to hatred of God?"

"The medical opinions that have as yet been pronounced on the Morzine evil, seem to us remarkably vague. This harlequin malady unites symptoms of hysteria, epilepsy, mania, and gastric disturbance; and yet some principal features accompanying usually each of these diseases are wanting. The excellent bearing of the 'possessed' between the seizures seems to point out that there is no great physical mischief at work. A physician reports of the women whose cases he observed, 'They were fat and fresh-looking, enjoying to the full their physical and moral faculties. It was impossible on seeing them to imagine the existence of the slightest illness.'"

In this narrative we notice that, like all the Revival and other epidemic phenomena, this of Morzine began with one person who communicated the external infection to her companion. At the commencement, it seemed as if it was about to be a religious Revival, but the evil spirits soon got the better, and thenceforth seem to have maintained their ground. The extreme similarity in small points, such as running up trees and houses, will be best

seen by giving some other instances of similar epidemic phenomena which occurred at convents and schools in France, Holland, and Germany during upwards of one hundred and fifty years, breaking out from the year 1494 to the year 1652, each attended with convulsive spasms of the body and mental characteristics, similar in many respects to those of the Morzine possession. It is noticed in that of the nuns at Wertet that it commenced in a notion of witchcraft, and that they were seized with violent fits of sadness and paroxysms of an hysterical kind; that they fell suddenly to the ground as if dead, *whilst others scrambled up trees, clambering with their feet like cats.* Mr. Madden, in his *Phantasmata*, gives a description of these cases, and describes that of the nuns of Kintorp as follows:—At first a few only were seized with convulsions and hallucinations. The symptoms seemed to be communicated, it is said, by contact; but perhaps it would be more correct to say, by close intercourse and sympathy. When the attack burst out they raved, uttered cries imitating the shrieks and screams of animals, felt a strong desire to bite, and became frightfully contorted." At the convent of Cologne in 1564, it began with one nun, and was by her communicated to the one whose bed was next to her, and immediately after to the whole convent. In 1566, the foundling children at Amsterdam were attacked with convulsions and delirium, during which "*they spoke foreign languages, and knew what was passing elsewhere, even in the great council of the city; and they even clambered along walls like cats, and along the roofs of houses.*" The same had happened in Rome in 1555, in the Orphan Asylum in that city, where it is said "about seventy young girls became demoniacs, and continued in that state more than two years." Of the sisters of St. Bridget, who had the disease for ten years, all had the faculty of improvising long discourses under inspirational influence.

The nuns at Loudun suffered from "frightful disquietude of mind; hysterical symptoms, convulsions of extreme violence, producing singular contortions, catalepsy, and hallucinations all bearing on subjects of religious enthusiasm. As to their cries, it was what might be conceived of the bellowing of the condemned." They also spoke in foreign tongues with which they were not previously acquainted, and by that we come to the knowledge of a curious portion of the Roman ritual, by which they were tried, to find "any of the three symptoms required by it as a sign of being truly possessed by the Devil; and which are, divination, *the understanding of languages which the person has not learned,* and a supernatural strength of body." *Six of the clerical and magisterial functionaries* who had been brought into contact with the nuns as judges, caught the disease." There was an unusual exaltation

of some of the intellectual faculties, a power of improvising, and of inner vision or thought reading, as to which Mr. Madden observes, "that they differ in no respect from the phenomena of magnetism."

The cases were all more or less connected with religious ideas, but were also much mixed up, as we might expect, with the prevalent middle age notions of diabolic possession, and they have an especial value in this inquiry as indicating the origin and mode of transmission of these phenomenal states, not less than for shewing that such mental states may be propagated in the same way as the Revival, whether they are exclusively, or not at all of a religious tendency. Indeed there are remarkable instances of this in the dancing mania of Belgium, and in the tarantula dance of Italy, the latter of which is supposed to have commenced in persons bitten by the insect, and to have been afterwards communicated, or the same effects produced "spontaneously in a vast number of cases by the workings of the human mind."

A case similar to those occurring in the middle ages amongst the children of Amsterdam and the nuns in the convents, happened within the last seven years in Piedmont, and went through the Continental papers—"A number of young girls in the district all at once left their schools and homes and went into the fields and woods, roaming, and screaming, and behaving in the wildest way. Exhortations to return being insufficient, the clergy were called to exorcise the poor girls, who repelled them, calling them devils and sorcerers; *many of them got up trees and on the roofs of houses, and refused to come down.*"

Dr. Kerner relates that, "At the village of Neuhutte, Wurtemberg, which is situate among the mountains, a sort of St. Vitus' dance becomes epidemic chiefly amongst young people, so that all the children of the place are seized with it at the same time. Like persons in a magnetic state, they are aware of the precise moment that a fit will seize them, and if they are in the fields they hasten home and immediately fall into a convulsion in which condition they will move for an hour or more with the most surprising regularity, keeping measure like an accomplished dancer, after which they awake as if out of a magnetic sleep."

SPIRIT NAMES.

IN the present state of spiritual knowledge the communications given through different mediums are like showers of fruit, grain, and meat poured from a full storehouse through channels of all sorts and sizes into vessels of every capacity. Each kind of food, to become nourishing, should be taken with reference to the wants and assimilative power of the recipient, but a hodge-podge of all, indiscriminately given, would be likely to do at least as much harm as good. And this last, from the prevailing ignorance of the laws of spiritual transmission, is like what occurs in the reception of spiritual communications at the present time.

The bad effects of this unavoidable ignorance are nowhere more apparent than in the matter of *names*. Well-informed Spiritualists, who know that this is one of the most difficult and perplexing parts of a difficult question, agree that the names given by spirits are not all to be received without reserve, and see with regret the hindrance opposed to the spread of knowledge by the ignorant assertions of mediums on this subject. If what I venture to say on the names attached to communications do not agree with the experience of most experienced inquirers, it may call forth fresh facts, and be the means of bringing more light to bear on the inquiry. It cannot be doubted that at present the crude perceptions and rash assertions of some spirit writers are likely to raise a barrier where it is most desirable to clear the road for investigation, namely, in the minds of studious and reverent men, whose lives have been spent in the study of God's Word, and whose religious feelings are alive to the grandeur of Hebrew prophecy, and the glory of Christian truth. When such men are told by some medium, stronger in self-esteem than in grammar, spelling or sense, that the prophet Isaiah, or the apostle John, nay, even the Lord himself, is ready to come at a moment's notice and write by his or her hand, can we wonder that the assertion is received with disgust? Neither ought we to condemn too readily the seeming prejudice of the theological scholar who is asked to throw aside his long-cherished though indefinite ideas on the nature of matter and spirit, and to take in their place a system beset with difficulties, and full of contradictions resulting from ignorance on the part of those who profess the greatest means of enlightenment. Moreover, men of the class to which I refer not only believe they can arrive at the same truths by a safer and better trodden pathway, but are likely to reject as illustrations of spiritual laws those material and lower phenomena, which, if lowest in the scale, appeal most

strikingly to the perceptions and senses. One who has probably experienced in his own person instances of far higher and deeper spiritual action than that which is manifested in raps or movements of any kind, has no thought of connecting the two; and though he would find on examination that the internal experience held by him too sacred to be discussed in such a connection, is at one end of a chain linked on to earth, he cannot recognize the existence of such a chain, and so to him the value of the material phenomena, its connecting link, is lost.

If, by reasoning from the action of spirit in the body to that of spirit in the disembodied state, we can arrive at a law which will reconcile the seeming incongruities of spirit-communication, this great obstacle to inquiry may be removed, and the absurd pretensions of professional mediums rendered harmless.

And first, to consider the law of association between spirit and medium, and between spirit and spirit. We know well, that in this world of mixed matter and spirit, the law of spiritual association must and does govern the feelings of men in their relations to each other. Sympathy, affinity, or whatever we like to call it, is universal in its action, and seems in the sphere of spirit, exactly analogous to the law of affinity and attraction among the atoms of the material world. We cannot in all cases tell on what spiritual affinity depends, but all friendships and affections, in short all degrees of association arise from it, and it always implies a similarity of feeling or thought, or some resemblance in character or identity of pursuits in the parties among whom it exists. In this life the natural or blood relationships constitute the earliest affinities, and form the associations of family. Then come the associations of intellect, taste, and feeling, and on these friendships are founded. The highest bond of union is religious sympathy in its true sense, by which I do not mean similarity of doctrine, which is merely an intellectual bond, but the felt and participated brotherhood of all relations, which makes us all children of the loving heavenly parent. I will suppose this law of assimilation and attraction, and its opposite repulsion, admitted. Now we have every reason for believing that the spiritual man, after casting off the husk of the flesh, is, as to his affections, feeling, and tastes, the same as he was on earth. If this were not so, the identity of each one would be lost, and we must give up the hope of meeting and knowing our friends in heaven. But I need not spend time in trying to prove what will readily be granted, even by those to whom a spiritual body within the body of flesh, its development during life, and escape at death, are new ideas. The spirit out of the flesh, then being, as to his tastes, feelings, and affections, the same as he was in the body, is governed by the same laws of assimilation and attraction, or dislike and

repulsion. But where no external barriers are interposed as on earth, these spiritual attractions and repulsions, like magnetic *rappports*, will exert a stronger power over the *spiritual atoms* which obey them; and thus the laws of associations or societies in the next state, appear to be only a necessary consequence of the nature of spirit in its recession from matter. The experience of every medium, I believe, whose development has begun and proceeded in an orderly manner, will confirm these views. First come the associates of affection who are the members of the family—fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters; the nearest and dearest first, then the more distant ancestry and relations. These all come to us, bound by a sympathy and love which cannot be feigned, and whose power, strong in the spirit-world as in this, is a sufficient warrant for identity and genuineness. I take it for granted that all spirit-communications, professing to come from those to whom we have been strongly bound by affection, or by that natural resemblance which exists among members of one family, are to be believed genuine unless some discrepancy should appear; and such may almost always be recognized, and a spirit giving a false name detected. We often find in families that the sister in the spirit-world can communicate most easily, and can give messages, and even hand-writing most like *her own*, by that brother or sister on earth whom she most nearly resembles in temperament and character. In this way it is that we find one person the medium for one spirit, and others for another, and if the medium be very sensitive it will be found that the magnetic spheres or aura of the spirit who usually influences, is always recognized. This affinity or magnetic relation is often spoken of by spirits as nearness to the medium, for to them it appears as absolute proximity, as in *this* world persons who are in the same place are near to each other. And this is one illustration of Swedenborg's doctrine, that *state* in the world of spirit is as *place* in the world of matter.

In the communications coming from relations and friends, then, we have always a principle to apply, which, provided that the affection between mortal and spirit be strong, and the name of the spirit be *given*, not asked for, will save us any painful doubts of their genuineness. We now come to a class of communications that have been met with by all writing mediums, and that cause greater perplexity and trouble than the first: those giving the signatures of known characters, political, scientific, literary, or even mythological. We have seen numberless Goethes, Byrons, Shelleys, Swedenborgs, and Bacons, Franklins, Voltaires, Albert Durers, and an interminable string of others, given seemingly in the most incoherent order, and in utter disregard of all reason or law. But a reason and a law, nevertheless, prevails throughout

all these, and though from ignorance of the feelings most active in the medium's mind we cannot always guess the cause of *rapport*, yet we shall be helped in some measure out of the confusion by remembering the principle of affinity in combination with the law which regulates *names* in the spirit-world. Next to the family affinity and the affection of friendship, comes the affinity of intellect. A poet of original and powerful genius on earth draws round him those whose minds are mentally near his own. Often this intellectual sympathy forms a bond of personal friendship and association; sometimes it is only manifested in imitations, such as we see in the rhymes of the present time, all whose productions have more or less of a Tennysonian ring, or of forty years ago, when all the periodical scribblers who could write lines ending with "scorn" and "forlorn," shaped their thoughts in a lower mould, and fancied themselves Byrons. In the spiritual world each of these classes, just as far as it is assimilated in *kind*, not in *degree* of power, with its ideal, would be *near* him, or of the same society, on the outermost circle, perhaps, but still drawn to that centre of attraction, and, as on earth, giving its *class-name* to persons more interested in that than in the family appellation.

This I believe to be the explanation of all the numberless philosophers, poets and statesmen who have tried to enlighten us through all kinds of mediums, and whose pretensions have been very unequally supported. Each spirit will attach himself to the medium with whom he is in closest mental and magnetic relation, and through whom he can, therefore, best say what he wishes. Names will be given in this way through mediums who are quite unconscious of any special sympathy with the spirit-type, and, as I imagine, for the following reason: every character during the earthly life is developed in a traceable order, and in that order the intellect comes after the affections. And in the growth of every mind a leaning may be seen at different times to different lines of study and thought; the matured taste often differing widely from the early tendency. It is to be expected, therefore, that in every growth of medium power, which is in reality a pouring of the inner spirit into its outer channels, every portion of the mind (or its organ the brain) must be exercised, and thus many types of spirit will in turn exert their power during the process. The spiritual "Swedenborg" and "Bacon" of Judge Edmonds are perhaps only partially assimilated with their centres in the spiritual world. The same may be said of the "Byrons," "Shelleys" and "Keatses" of Mr. Harris, but each has an element in common with his ideal, and the brain through which he acts must in some measure resemble his own in kind, if not in degree of power. So a spiritual "Byron" writing through Mr. Harris will produce poetry bearing a better impress of its type than one

writing through a less poetical channel, and a "Bacon" transmitting his doctrine through a fair reasoner will be rather more like the real original philosopher than one of the same spiritual class influencing a worse qualified brain.

Besides these, which I may call the *class names* of spirits, and which are given in the process of development through earnest, humble, and truth-loving mediums, there are names bearing the same value on earth, which may be traced to an opposite spiritual source. I mean the Platos, Napoleons, and William Pitts, &c., who are ready to come *when called for* by any medium whatever. Let but a writing medium be fanciful and conceited enough, and he or she will at once be surrounded by a crowd of spirits of the same tendencies, ready, like the would-be kings and queens in bedlam to take on themselves any name or character. Only experience and knowledge of the medium will help us to judge of the fate of these self-named illustrious people in the spiritual world.

The highest and most trustworthy signatures are those appended to writings of an unmistakable heavenward tendency. These denote the feeling which inspires them. I call them the most trustworthy, for in the language of good spirits, among them is no deception, nor *seeming*, name and nature are the same; and "Love," or "Truth," or "Constancy," are more certainly descriptive of the writer than the christian or surname which he once bore on earth. Very often we find that those good, loving relations who first announced themselves by their earth-names, drop these, and as the state of the medium rises, and he becomes receptive of influx from a higher sphere, write under signatures expressive of their spiritual natures.

There is one application of the law of spiritual association which may not at first present itself. In the course of a medium's development, Scripture names sometimes appear, and in trying to account for this fact, I leave out the case of fantastic spirits and ambitious mediums. Besides the gradual ascent from family affection to intellect, and from intellectual to heavenly affinity, there seems to be a physical process like that through which material nature has passed, and is passing in the several stages of creation. It will be thought that I am carrying analogy too far, and I can only ask for observation to confirm my statement. Creation itself is a process of development, and we may look for divine order in all spiritual as in all natural processes. Agreeably to this expectation, it is seen that the drawings of some of the best mediums pass in the beginning through stages in which they resemble the forms of antediluvian vegetable and animal life, rising gradually to the more perfected forms of later times, and passing at length to human and even angelic representations. Like the drawing, the writing follows the same order,

and the "Adam" and "Eve" of spiritual writing mark a distinct period in medium life; and though it is not easy, among the complicated elements which are at work, to find out how these names apply to the writer's state, we may feel sure that they bear a real relation to it, and must neither be confounded with the signatures of false spirits, nor with the Scripture characters by whom they were borne. The "Moses," whose signature is attached to teachings by which the medium is led from a lower to a higher sphere, is the spiritual deliverer guiding a bewildered mortal from the Egyptian bonds of ignorance through the wilderness to the promised land of spiritual freedom. But the meaning, both of names and of spiritual states, is in every case a matter involving many elements, and only to be arrived at by patient and prayerful seeking, and the guidance of the Comforter by which we are led into all truth.

A little thought on these things will help us to set their proper value on the claims of some mediums who profess to have received long and important letters from departed great men and women of every degree. Such persons, unless they shew a very marked resemblance in mind or character to the spirit whose message they profess to give, are like unaccredited envoys whose communications are to be held valueless. Our Lord's test is universal in its application—"By their fruits ye shall know them; men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles."

S. E. DE M.

SPIRITUALISM IN BIOGRAPHY:— BENJAMIN BROWN.

PROBABLY but few readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* are very conversant with Mormon literature. Indeed, as literature it is not very attractive. Whatever may be the case in other respects, the Mormons are not strong in the department of *belles lettres*, nor do they aspire to be. With one notable exception—that of Mr. Orson Pratt—their leading men are not of marked intellectual mark; at least, so far as literature is concerned. Like the Shakers whom, with strong points of contrast, they resemble in many respects, the Mormons are eminent for industry, shrewdness, and practical ability, rather than breadth of mental culture; prosperous and well to do, despite all the hardships they have gone through from the persecution of the "Gentiles," they fancy that they, at least, well understand "how to make the best of both worlds." The Mormons, too, like the Shakers, believe and claim that their whole system and policy, civil and religious, have been built up and are sustained by *un-*

iate and continuous spiritual revelation, and the direct exercise among them of spiritual gifts, such as were manifested, according to the New Testament, in the primitive Christian Church. I have no special sympathy with either Mormon saint or Shaker devotee; it is, however, but justice to remark that in many respects, the records of both these singular communities are well worthy of study, especially by those who take an interest in the question of spiritual communion and influx, and their operations both in matter and in mind. Testimonies among them are full and abundant as to spiritual visions and revelations, and the gifts of healing, of exorcism, and of utterance in tongues both known and unknown, and of special providences, and answers to prayer. It is not, however, my present purpose, nor would it be possible within the limits of an article, to lay these before the reader *in extenso*; but, as one out of many illustrations that might be given of Spiritualism among the Mormons, I present a few passages from the experience of "Benjamin Brown, High Priest in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Pastor of the London, Reading, Kent and Essex Conferences," these are given by him in a pamphlet of 32 pages,* published in 1853, in the hope and prayer that it "may do something towards moving the great darkness and unbelief that prevail relative to revelations through the medium of visions, or other miraculous gifts, convincing some of the unchangeableness of the God of heaven in these respects, as well as helping to confirm those who already believe in these truths." Much of this pamphlet reads like an excerpt from the journals of George Fox.

Benjamin Brown was born in 1794, in Queensbury, State of New York. His father, he tells us, was a farmer, who belonged to the denomination of "Friend Quakers." As his parents were constantly removing from place to place in new settlements, where land was cheapest, young Benjamin got little education, and being thus also out of the reach of sectarian influences, "my ideas of religion," he tells us, "were just those which are naturally inculcated into the mind by the statements of Scripture, where no superstition exists to pervert them, diminish their force, and cloud their meaning, consequently I believed in the Bible just as it stood, where the self-evident rendering of the context did not give it figurative or parabolic. The idea that revelation from God was unattainable in this age, or that the ancient gifts of the apostles had ceased for ever, never entered my head until I gathered

* The title is *Testimonies for the Truth: A Record of Manifestations of the Power of God, Miraculous and Providential, witnessed in the Travels and Experiences of BENJAMIN BROWN, High Priest in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Pastor of the London, Reading, Kent and Essex Conferences.* Liverpool: RICHARDS, 15, Wilton Street.

the notion from the creeds of churches with which I became acquainted in after years. I can remember many times, on occasions of sickness amongst my relatives, while yet quite a boy, retiring to some barn or other convenient place of the kind, and their being suddenly restored to health, in answer to prayers offered there by me in their behalf."

He continued thus until about fifteen years of age, when coming to live amid the older settlements, he, unfortunately it seems, went to the churches of the different sects, and hearing their preachings and contentions, he soon lost his "pure, simple ideas of God," and "found the hitherto simple Bible a perfect mystery." Nor was this all: his simple faith in God, and understanding of the Scriptures being shaken, he "began to mix with light or vain company," and "gave way to folly; but still in moments of reflection," he says, "the spirit of the Lord would often shew me the folly of my conduct, and bring to my remembrance the goodness of God manifested in past times." He still retained a deep anxiety to find the truth, and mingled with those who professed religion, and took part in their meetings, but yet did not join any denomination.

When about twenty-five years of age, he married, and settled on a small farm of his own. Nothing of interest seems to have occurred to him for the next nine or ten years; then an incident took place which he thus relates:—

After a fatiguing day's labour, I returned home one evening, and having partaken of my supper, turned my back to the fire, as my custom was, and leaned, with my head on my arms, on the chair top, to rest myself, and dry my clothes, which were moistened by the perspiration caused by the heat. My wife retired to rest, expecting me shortly to follow. Thus left alone, I was musing on things generally, but not particularly on any religious subject, when a vision of my brother, who had died some fourteen or fifteen years previous, appeared before me, praying. I heard his voice clearly and distinctly, and listened attentively. In the course of his prayer, he referred to a great work to be done on the earth during the last days, quoting several Scriptures. . . . Soon he disappeared, from my view, when suddenly, to use a Scripture phrase, a sound, as of a rushing mighty wind, with an accompanying influence, seemed to fill the house and myself, and I heard a voice saying—"This is the spirit of understanding." An open Bible appeared before me, so peculiarly placed, that I could see portions of several books of the Prophets and Apostles at once. Directly I heard the above words, I began to read, understanding and intelligence burst upon my mind, and the glory and beauty that seemed to shine forth in the subjects treated of, no language can describe. The despatch with which I read astonished me, for I seemed able to read a chapter in the time usually occupied in reading a verse, and the contents of a whole book were laid before my mind about as quickly as otherwise I could have perused a single chapter. With the rapidity of lightning, various truths of the Bible were presented to my mind, and what each Prophet or Apostle had said on each particular subject met my eyes in consecutive order, concentrated and connected, shewing that each and all of those men were inspired by the same Spirit, and had a distinct knowledge of the same grand events and glorious truths, particularly those which I had heard my brother pray about. I never before saw such a connection between the Scriptures. What one Prophet had said on a subject met my sight, and directly, with the quickness of thought, I read what

each of the other Prophets or Apostles had said about the same thing. I saw the whole at a glance, brought as it were to a focus. Such a chain of testimonies, and an interweaving of evidences, accompanied with that perception and comprehension which the Holy Ghost alone can give, none can realize but those who have received that Spirit and revelations unto themselves. Such persons know just how it is. I was disturbed, apparently in the midst of my vision, by my wife's calling to me, when the vision left me, and I felt just like a hungry man who is called or snatched away suddenly from a feast. But the joy and peace with which my spirit was filled remained with me, and I glorified God.

About a year after this he had a singular dream, which, as it had bearing on his future life, is here quoted :—

I dreamed that I had been called to preach the Gospel, and the first time I thus officiated, it was in a school-house, in an adjoining town, with which I was well acquainted. I saw all the members of the congregation, which was small, and when I awoke I could distinctly remember the position each person occupied in the room. This so impressed my mind that I told my wife of it, and said I believed it would be realized, but she scouted the idea. What was I, a working man, to do with preaching! Well, at other times, it would have appeared equally foolish to myself, but it had been given to me that her mother, living at the place, knew by a dream the same thing, and I told this to my wife. At last she consented that if it turned out to be the case, she would believe the dream to be true. In a day or two we paid her mother a visit, and found that she had dreamed that night that I was coming to preach in the town where she lived, and we learned from her friends that she had been entreating one of her relatives to carry her to my residence that she might tell me of it. Although the truth of the dream was thus evidenced to me, I little thought what doctrines I was to teach, and in connection with what people or church. But I was to have clearer evidence of the truth of my dream, as will be seen hereafter.

Five years later, from often hearing of the religious services then very popular in America, (called "Protracted Meetings" from their continuing days, and sometimes weeks), and of their magnificent results, he resolved to attend one. This resolution must have called up in his mind some very serious thoughts, for he tells us—"I humbled myself, and determined to divest my mind of all prejudice, and put myself at least in a position to receive all the good that could be obtained. Before going, I covenanted with the Lord, that if He would reveal his mind and will unto me, whatever sacrifice or duty He might require at my hands, I would do it. Little did I think of the day my truthfulness would be tried, or possibly I might have runned such a contract."

What occurred to him at this meeting, with his immediate subsequent experiences, is thus told by him :—

As soon as I began to attend, I felt the Spirit of the Lord operating upon me, that I seemed filled to overflowing with its teachings, a continual stream of glorious truths passed through my mind, my happiness was great and my mind was so absorbed in spiritual things, that all the time the meeting lasted, which was about fifteen days, I scarcely ate or drank anything. At other times, that which I subsisted on during these fifteen days, could not possibly have sustained me, but the Spirit of the Lord so operated on my system, that I felt full at the time, and had no desire to eat or partake of anything.

The subject of "Freemasonry" was just then agitating the public mind, and that many of the churches were divided about it, more especially the one to

which most of the members attending this meeting belonged, being divided into "Masons" and "Anti-Masons." This meeting was called the "Masonic party." The other minister of the same church held Anti-Masonic principles, and refused to meet with the Masonic party, and kept most of his party away. This caused a great deal of quarrelling and contention, and much anger and bad feeling, of which I knew but little until afterwards. I had heard of the two parties, but had not interested myself in the matter, and consequently did not care much about it.

While sitting in the meeting, listening to the preaching, being much interested in what was being said, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and revealed that I was to visit the minister of the Anti-Masonic party, Judge Cushing, and tell him of his foolishness and wickedness in increasing the spirit of division between those who ought to be united as brethren in one common interest. It rained hard at the time, and feeling rather taken up with the preaching, I thought I would delay until the close of the meeting. This mission to me was a very hard task. How was I, a man from the threshing-floor, to reprove a minister, and moreover a judge? But a few minutes had scarcely elapsed before the Word of the Lord came to me again with greater power than before, that I was to go *at once!* I had covenanted with the Lord, and I felt determined to fulfil, if it killed me; so I sprang to my feet, took my hat, and departed from the meeting.

I found the Judge at a public inn, engaged in making some purchase. I requested to speak with him for a few minutes in private. He said he would attend to me presently. I sat down, but I had hardly done so before the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, like fire in my bones, commanding me to deliver my message directly. I again requested to speak with the Judge, stating that my business was urgent. He complied this time, and retired with me outside the house. The Spirit of the Lord gave me utterance, and filled my mouth with words, and I laid before him, in language which was given me, the impropriety of his conduct. The same Spirit bearing witness, the Judge acknowledged his folly, said he would amend, and told me that he had had many sleepless nights on the same subject. He also said that directly I sat down something told him for what I had come, although I was a stranger to him. In fact he knew me as well before I had spoken, as after. This confirmed my faith that the Lord had sent me, but it was a great trial to my feelings at the time. However, I had another trial to undergo, which occurred some days after, during the same meeting. While the minister was preaching, it was revealed to me to rise up and declare to the congregation, that they, before coming together to pray for the conversion of others, ought first to be reconciled one to the other, so that their gifts of prayer might be accepted by the Lord. The Spirit also said, that some in the congregation were guilty of oppressing the poor, taking unlawful wages, oppressing the hireling in his wages, and many other sins of the kind. I wanted until the preacher had finished his discourse, during which the idea of having to rise and speak before this congregation of about fifteen hundred people, most of whom, being members of Christian Societies, I considered better persons than myself, filled me with fear, and the perspiration rolled off me profusely. Could such a thing have availed, I would sooner have given five hundred dollars than have buckled up to this task, but there was no escape, I had covenanted, and the moment the minister ceased speaking I delivered my message. It was received very well by the congregation, many fancying I was converted to their faith, and being blessed with such gifts, a bit of a prize. On coming out, two men, one a justice of the peace and the other a colonel, came up to me. The justice asked why, if I had anything against him, I did not, as the Scripture directs, go to him privately, and not expose him before all the congregation. The other said, "If you have got a man by the throat, you need not think that because it is pleasant to you, it is so to him." I told them that as the cap seemed to fit, they might wear it. But I was much surprised, for I was not aware that they were present.

About a day previous to the close of this meeting, I received a most important communication than either of the previous ones. A knowledge was given to me that the ancient gifts of the Gospel—speaking in tongues, healing the sick, the spirit of prophecy, &c., were about to be restored to the

believers in Christ. The revelation was a perfect knowledge of the fact, so sure and certain, that I felt as though the truth had been stereotyped upon me. I knew it from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot—in the whole of my system, being filled with the Holy Ghost. I can compare it to nothing better than the change made on a clean sheet of paper by a printing press, leaving an indelible impression behind.

As the spirit did not tell me to *whom* these things were to be restored, I at first fancied in my ignorance, that the people with whom I had been meeting were about to be blessed with these things, so I joyfully visited the minister of the meeting, and laid before him the intelligence I had received. But to my great astonishment, I met with an utter repulse. He told me "It was all of the devil, for such things had ceased for ever!" Had any one knocked me down with a beetle, I could not have felt more sensibly the opposition between the spirits by which we were actuated. I soon found, by the bold and determined way in which he fought against the principle of present revelation, &c., that it was not to him or his people that these gifts would be given, so I sought for them elsewhere. A few days after, curiosity led me to visit the Latter-day Saints, amongst whom I witnessed a fulfilment of the prediction, for I beheld a manifestation of the gifts of prophecy and tongues, and received the latter myself.

Notwithstanding that the above confirmation which I received of the truth of the Church of the Latter-day Saints, was very great, I did not feel sufficiently convinced to be induced to join them at once. I had experienced the Spirit of the Lord in a similar way elsewhere, so that when the Elders of the Church, at this meeting, urged upon me to yield obedience to the Gospel they preached, which possessed such evidences as the manifestation of the ancient gifts, I treated the Elders very lightly, and replied, that as for the gift of tongues, I could speak in tongues as well as any of them. So I could, for directly one of them manifested this gift, the gift of tongues rested upon me and gave me the same power. . . . However, I procured a Book of Mormon, and took it home to read, determined to investigate until I was fully satisfied. But I had scarcely begun to read, before I felt greatly to dislike the book. Ere I had perused ten pages, I rejected it altogether. Acting in this bigoted manner, I had resigned myself to the evil influence that was gaining power over me, so that directly after, I felt a similar dislike seize me towards the Bible. Its statements of miracles, &c., appeared to me to be compounds of the grossest absurdity possible. I could see no light or good in it at all! and actually resolved never to read it again! But oh! the darkness that seized me as soon as I had made this resolution! The light that was in me became darkness, and how great it was, no language can describe. All knowledge of religious truth seemed to forsake me, and if I attempted to quote Scripture, my recollection failed, after the first word or so. So remarkable was this that it excited reflection and caused me to marvel, and finally I determined to repent of my resolve respecting the Bible, and I commenced to read again. The book was hardly in my hand, when as in a moment, my light and recollection returned as usual. This made me rejoice and immediately the idea flashed across my mind, "What have you done with the Book of Mormon? Behave as fairly to that." I soon reproached it. But, even this time, I felt prejudiced against the book. I resolved, however, to read it through, and I persevered in its perusal, till I came to that part where Jesus, on visiting the Continent of America after his resurrection, grants the request of three of the twelve whom he had chosen to permit them to live until his second coming on the earth (like unto John spoken of in the Bible). Here my mind half yielded to the belief which arose within me, that perhaps it might be true, whereupon I took the book and laid it before the Lord, and pleaded with Him in prayer for a testimony whether it was true or false, and, as I found it stated that the three Nephites had power to shew themselves to any persons they might wish, Jews or Gentiles, I asked the Lord to allow me to see them for a witness and testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon, and I covenanted with Him if He complied with my request, that I would preach it even at the expense of my life, should it be necessary.

The Lord heard my prayer, and about five days after, two of the three visited me in my bed-room. I did not see them come, but I found them there.

One spoke to me for some time, and reproved me sharply on account of my behaviour at the time when I first attended a meeting of the Saints, and treated so lightly the gift of tongues. He told me never, as long as I lived, to do so again, for I had grieved the Spirit of the Lord, by whose power that gift had been given. This personage spoke in the Nephite language, but I understood, by the Spirit which accompanied him, every word as plainly as if he had spoken in English. I recognized the language to be the same as that in which I had heard Father Fisher speak at the meeting. Such a rebuke, with such power, I never had in my life before or since, and never wish to have again. I was dumb before my rebuker, for I knew what he said was right, and I felt deserving of it.

After these spirits had left him, it was said to him, (by what he believed to be "the Spirit of the Lord," but we may say by an invisible spirit) "Now you know for yourself! You have seen and heard! If you now fall away there is no forgiveness for you." This vision and the subsequent voice was the turning-point in his history; he was not at once baptized into the Mormon Church, as he was anxious to convert his wife, that they might enter it together, but he was in heart a convert, and soon became a zealous advocate of the new faith.

After he and his wife had joined the Mormon Church he was ordained an Elder, and went to Kirtland to visit the Mormons there. While on the lakes he was attacked by the lake fever, and became so ill that he was taken home and put to bed. The same day two Elders of the Church called to see him, and laid their hands upon him. "Whilst their hands were yet upon my head," he says, "I felt the disease remove from my body, commencing at the pit of my stomach, moving gradually upwards toward the hands of the elders, and I was made perfectly whole. The same day I was out at work milking my cows, and went round to invite my neighbours to hear the preaching in the evening. This was the first case of healing (of this kind) I had ever witnessed."

Another time, while on a visit to Nauvoo, he was taken ill, and remained so for two or three weeks. He tells us—"Doubtless, I should have died, but one day Joseph Smith was passing by my door, and was called in, and as I was afterwards informed, laid his hands upon me, and commanded me to rise and walk, in the name of the Lord. The first thing I knew was that I found myself walking on the floor, perfectly well, and within ten minutes afterwards I was out of the house visiting my daughter, whom I had not seen for nearly a month."

As an Elder of the Church he was himself sometimes called upon to exercise this gift of healing by the laying on of hands. The first instance of this he mentions is that of "a sister named Crowell, in Chautauque County, New York:"—

Her life was despaired of by herself and all her neighbours, when she sent to me, and I was told to come that night if I wished to see her alive! Not being able to go then, I prayed the Lord to give her a good night's rest. I visited her in the morning, and found that she had had a better night's rest than usual. I found her head, where the cancer had broken out, a dreadful sight, full of cancer

worms, which were eating into the skull, three pieces of which had come out! I ointed her head with oil, and prayed the Lord on her behalf, and, being obliged, immediately to attend to my hay. The next time I saw her was the following Sunday, when I met her at the meeting. She pulled off her cap and showed her head. It was entirely healed, and the flesh was as sound as ever. She said that within half an hour after my administering to her, she felt all the pain, which had previously been intense, and, to use her own expression, "like a thousand gimlets boring into her brain," leave her entirely, and the wound healed up readily.

Here are two other instances of healing, perhaps even more striking, which he relates:—

One of the fourteen persons converted at Portland, was a young man, named Jesse W. Crosby, and, as he is well known to many in England, having since been President of one of the British Conferences, and as it may prove interesting to many of the Saints, I will relate something that particularly affected him, occurring in his history.

He had been engaged with his brother and brother-in-law, in felling trees in a wood in an adjoining township. These three had felled some trees, and as they were standing very thick, one had, in falling, struck another, and broken one of its limbs, which hung suspended by the other branches. It is a very common thing in forest country to see dry detached limbs hanging in this way for months, and sometimes years, without falling. This one was about ten or twelve feet long, and as thick as a man's thigh, and very high up the tree. Some of these trees grow from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet high, and seventy feet above the ground before a single branch is found. Not apprehending danger, Jesse was working without his hat, just under this branch. Suddenly a movement, caused by the wind, shook the tree, and the loose branch fell from a height of at least sixty feet, striking him on the crown of his head, crushing him to the ground. The violence of the blow broke in a portion of his skull, forming a hollow about as large as the palm of a man's hand. His neck and shoulders were also broken and injured. Altogether, a more deplorable object I never saw in my life. He was carried home by his friends, most of whom were members of the Church and his father, who was not a member, procured a doctor, who pronounced Jesse's case desperate, unless, on removing the broken part of the skull it should be found that the skin of the brain was still entire, when, by using a silver plate to cover the exposed portion, a chance might still exist of his life. The doctor proposed to cut into Jesse's head for that purpose, but was stopped by his mother, who strongly objected to this experiment, and sent for me to administer to him. I was then eight miles off, and at the time of my arrival he had not spoken, nor had he any other way indicated any signs of life. Going into the room where he lay, I found him surrounded with the neighbours, who were mostly enemies of the Church. Sneers, and jeers of "Here comes the Mormon, we'll soon see whether he can heal now," were on all sides. From a sign which I had received while on my journey, I knew Jesse would recover, and being minded, on account of the reason given in the previous remarks, that such characters should not be privileged to witness a manifestation of the power of God, I, like Peter of old, cleared the house, but Jesse's relatives, and administered to him in the name of the Lord. Jesse then recovered sufficiently to speak, after which he fell into a peaceful sleep, and before morning, was altogether better. In less than four days, from the time of receiving this terrible accident, from which there seemed no human probability that he could recover, or, if he did, only to survive the loss of reason, he was again at work in the woods, hauling timber, the wound being entirely healed up. Since then, he, as an Elder of this Church, has been on missions to various parts of the world, including England, and has lately fulfilled a mission in Nova Scotia. The above case of healing occurred in the winter.

Another very remarkable case of prophecy and healing came under my observation the following Spring. A revelation was given by the Spirit, in answer to prayer, to the effect that one of our number would be poisoned by the enemies of the Church, and be brought nigh to death, but that if she was faithful and obedient to the Elders of the Church, she should be restored.

This warning was repeated twice at intervals of about a month. On the last occasion, in addition, it was stated that the person giving the interpretation would be the sufferer. This terrible idea so affected her that she was completely overcome. After recovering she proceeded home, and the weather being warm she drank of some sweetened water which she had prepared in the morning, and had left in an exposed situation for use. When she had done this the next time she felt her mouth burn. She immediately declared she was poisoned, and commenced retching violently until she became blind. Her husband, after procuring a person to stay with her, left for one of the Elders, but as he had to go some six miles before he returned with myself, she was, to all appearance, dead and had not been perceived to breathe for an hour. Upon arriving at the house I asked the Lord to cause her to breathe, if she was to recover. Upon looking at her closely, I perceived that she gave two distinct gasps, such as are usually given when the breath is leaving the body. Had I not seen this, I should have concluded that she was dead, for the women who were watching with her, and directly we entered, that she was dead, and had been so an hour. I then administered to her in the name of Jesus, and prayed the Lord to preserve her life till my son-in-law returned with some oil which he had gone to procure. As soon as I had done this, she was able to speak sufficiently, in a whisper, to ask for some water, but so great was her weakness, she fell over on her face, and I raised her to receive the water. The oil arriving, we administered some of it internally, in the name of the Lord, when she arose without any assistance, saying, "I am healed! I am well! but I am blind!" I then anointed her eyes, telling her that she should see the light of the day. Her sight immediately returned, and the next day, she, with her husband, was on her way to Lima. The cause of her going there so suddenly was that it had been given in testimony directly after her recovery, that unless her husband departed at once from that place, both of them would be poisoned! With what had just occurred before their eyes, they needed no second warning this time. This was the same woman that was healed of the cancer, and she is now, I believe, in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

If mesmerism is offered as an explanation of facts like these, I can only say of those who offer it—"I wish they would explain their explanation," and not imagine that in merely calling them by a particular name they are presenting us with a solution of them. Whatever the power may be called which produces effects of this nature, it certainly would be well for the interests of humanity if it were more generally recognized; it is possible that patients might prefer being cured even by persons without diplomas, and by irregular methods, to being killed by licensed practitioners and in strict conformity with the articles of medical orthodoxy. But to return to our narrative.

Among their spiritual endowments the Mormons recognize the gift of exorcism, for even the "Saints," by their own acknowledgment, are sometimes troubled by evil spirits. Mr. Brown relates the following instance:—

The case was that of a sister who was possessed, and whom I with two other Elders was called upon to visit. Directly we entered her room, she called out "Take your shoes from off your feet, this is holy ground, the Prophet Elijah is here." I saw the spirit by which she was influenced, so I walked up to her and said, "I am the servant of the Lord, I obey no command of the Devil." She became uproarious directly, for all who had gone in previously had complied with her directions. As soon as we attempted to rebuke the evil spirit, in the name of the Lord, she arose up from the bed, on her feet without apparently bending a joint in her body, stiff as a rod of iron. From this we saw the power

h which we had to contend; and, failing at first to eject the spirit, we bowed ourselves in prayer before the Lord, and asked him to assist us. The evil spirit came out full of fury, and as he passed by one of the brethren, seized him both arms, and gripped them violently,* and passing towards me, something which by the feel appeared like a man's hand grasped me by both sides of my head, and attempted to pull me sideways to the ground, but the hold appearing slip, I recovered my balance immediately. My face was sore for some days after this. The other brother that was seized was lame for a week afterwards. Soon as this was done, the sister partially recovered, so much so, that she would do anything I chose to tell her to do, whereas before she was perfectly governable. Still she seemed to be surrounded by some evil influence. This troubled us, for we knew the spirit was cast out, but we learned the cause afterwards. Just then it was revealed to us, that if we went to sleep, the devil would enter one of the brethren. My nephew, Melvin Brown, neglected the warning, and composed himself to sleep in an arm chair, whilst we were watching with the sister. Directly he did so, the devil entered into him, he became black in the face, and nearly suffocated. He awoke immediately, motioned for us to lay hands on him, for he could not speak. We did so, the evil spirit then left him, and he recovered at once.

About a week afterwards the same spirit re-entered the sister, and this time he confessed his character. In answer to our inquiries, he said his name was Legion." This explained how it was that the woman, after we had cast out the evil spirit was under an evil influence, for there must have been many spirits.† He also reviled our priesthood, but he had to submit to it at last, saying to us, "you have the priesthood, have you? Well then, cast me out, command me to come out," trying to shake our faith, and thus incapacitate us to rebuke successfully. Failing in this, he tried another method by entering me. I was seized by a strange influence, and to every question put to the woman, I gave the answer she was going to give, for I was possessed by a similar spirit. This broke the chain of our union and strength, consequently I requested the brethren to rebuke the evil spirit from me, after which, at our united rebuke, he left the woman.

The reader will remember Mr. Brown's dream that he was appointed upon to preach the Gospel, and how circumstantially it appeared to him. The following passage shews how exactly the dream foreshadowed the event.

At this time (the winter after he had been ordained Elder), most of the members of the Pomphret Branch into which I had been baptized, were moved up to Kirtland, the first gathering-place of the Saints; and I was left out any one to counsel or direct me as to the way in which I should devote my labours in spreading the principles of truth, when one day the Word of the Lord, by the power of the Spirit, came unto me, saying, "I have fourteen sheep in Portland: go and gather them; then go South, where I have twenty-two sheep, and gather them also." I then began to preach for the first time, for that purpose procured the school room in Portland, and, through the friends, circulated a notice that I was going to preach. This gathered a large congregation of some thirty or forty people. At the time appointed I stood up to address them. As soon as I rose on my feet and looked on the congregation, the dream which I had had five years before, but which I had entirely forgotten, flashed across my recollection—there was the identical scene I had seen, with the very people and children just in those positions in place that I had described them to my wife years before, when I informed her that I dreamed I was called to preach the Gospel. This was Summer-time.

Mr. Brown adds:—

continued preaching at Portland until the winter came on, when, having

For similar instances of power see *Elder Kimball's Journal*.

See case of Mary Magdalene, Mark xvi. 9. The Lunatic, Mark v.

baptized a few out of the place, they met at my house at Pomphret on the Sundays, and on the week days I extended my labours in the truth. As I was told, I found just fourteen in Portland willing to obey the Gospel, and by the exertion of mine could I get any more! I also obtained in the South, twenty-two previously spoken of, but it was a year and a half before I completed the number.

The Saints that I gathered at Portland, and that met at my house, were richly blest with the various gifts of the spirit—tongues, interpretations, prophecy, &c. I will relate an instance or two. One Sunday morning, when opening the meeting with prayer, the gift of tongues came upon me, but thinking of Paul's words, that it is sometimes wisdom not to speak in tongues, when one is present who can interpret, and forgetting that a sister possessing the gift of interpretation was present, I quenched the spirit, and it left me. Immediately another brother broke out in tongues, the interpretation of which was, that "The Lord knew we were anxious to learn of the affairs of our brethren in Missouri, and that if we would humble ourselves before Him and ask, He would reveal unto us the desires of our hearts." Missouri was some thousand miles from Portland. We accordingly bowed again in supplication before the Lord, after rising from our knees, and reseating ourselves, the same brother broke out singing in tongues, in a low, mournful strain. But judge our feelings when interpretation was given, and was found to be some thirteen or fourteen verses of poetry, descriptive of affairs in Missouri, the murder of our brethren, and telling us that just at that time—

"Our brethren lay bleeding on the ground,
With their wives and children weeping around."

We had so often proved the truth of similar communications, that we were assured of the truth of this shocking news, as though our eyes actually beheld the horrid sight. Our hearts were filled with sorrow. In a fortnight afterwards we received a letter from John P. Green, a faithful Elder of the Church in Missouri, who was, at the time he managed to write, secreted in the woods. His letter detailed and confirmed all the events previously revealed in testimony proving that on the very day we had been informed of the transactions occurring a thousand miles off, the bleeding corpses of our brethren lay stretched on the ground, after the slaughter. It was either at or about this time that the massacre at Haun's Mill took place.

When Elders Orson Hyde and Heber C. Kimball visited England, on their first mission to this country, and while we were yet ignorant of their secret, it was revealed in tongues, at this same branch, that, just at the time when the gift these Elders were standing with a large multitude round some were attending to the ordinance of baptism. Information afterwards received from England confirmed this statement in all its parts.

While preaching at Lime Town, Jefferson County, New York, he tells us: "I felt very anxious to know of the position of our affairs at head-quarters, and besought the Lord to enlighten me on the subject. He did so, revealing unto me, through the gift of tongues, the interpretation of which was given to myself, many things concerning the church, the temple ordinances at Nauvoo, and several other things that I found on my return to that place to be strictly true." He also relates the following case of prophetic speaking in tongues. Previous to his departure on his mission to Nova Scotia, he had a farewell meeting with the saints. He says, "It was a delightful meeting, and they rejoiced much, for the spirit of the Lord was greatly poured out. During the meeting a little boy stood up and spoke in tongues, the tears rolling down his face all the time. The interpretation stated that

after leaving that place I should go to another, where I should be mobbed and left for dead, and that the blood should run down from my head on my clothes and the ground."

Mr. Brown took this for a timely warning, and thought that by prudence he might escape; and he considers that by great caution he did escape much that he might have suffered. But at New Brunswick the prediction was literally fulfilled: he was waylaid by an infuriated mob, who knocked him down, jumped upon him, broke his ribs, and belaboured him about the head until he was covered with blood, which ran down on to his clothes and the ground; and it was only by feigning death that he at length escaped. By some, however, he and his companion were here badly treated. They were particularly encouraged by one circumstance, which he thus relates: "At the close of the meeting, at which I preached, and Elder Crosby bore testimony, we were invited to dine with a family resident there. The wife of our host told us that, about two or three months before, the minister that had preached in that part of the country left, and they were without any religious instructor, when she prayed the Lord to send some faithful person to supply his place. Thus engaged, she was shewn in a vision two men, the elder of whom was preaching, but the other delivered an exhortation of a different kind. The doctrine, she said, was new to her, but it seemed true. She also recollected distinctly the clothes and appearance of these men, and, to her great surprise and pleasure, recognized them in Elder Crosby and myself, directly we entered the room. Of course our hearts were cheered at hearing this, and we felt assured that the Lord was working in the vineyard with His servants."

The particulars of the Mormon exodus, and of the extreme privations and sufferings of the people on their thousand miles' journey across untracked plains and mountains to the Salt Lake City, have been often recounted. I shall therefore only transcribe from Mr. Brown's account of this journey (in which as one of their bishops he took a leading part), the following incident. At the time in question affairs were at the worst, starvation seemed imminent. "In fact, naturally speaking," says Mr. Brown, "things looked alarming, and just calculated to dry up our hopes and fill us with fears."

Matters were at this crisis, when one day Elder Heber C. Kimball stood up in the congregation of the Saints, and prophesied that "in a short time" we should be able to buy articles of clothing, and utensils, cheaper in the Valley than we could purchase them in the States. I was present on the occasion, and, with others here, only hoped the case might be so, for many of the Saints felt like the man spoken of in the Scriptures, who heard Elisha's prophecy at the time of a hard famine in Samaria, "that before to-morrow, a measure of fine flour should be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel." We thought that "if the Lord would make windows in heaven, then might this thing be," but without an absolute miracle, there seemed no human probability of its fulfilment.

However, Elder Kimball's prophecy was fulfilled in a few months, and in a most unexpected, though perfectly natural manner. When news of the gold in California reached the States, large companies were formed to supply the gold diggers with food, clothing, implements, &c. Wholesale quantities of everything the Mormons needed were sent in waggons for California, in expectation of enormous profits. Just as they got in close proximity to the Mormons, the companies learned that ships from various parts of the world had been dispatched with goods for California, so that the market was likely to be glutted. Here was a fix: it would neither pay to carry the goods through nor to take them back. The Mormons were opportunely at hand, and the companies were glad to let them have all they wanted for whatever they could get, and rush to the diggings. To the "Gentiles" this deliverance of the Mormons from their troubles, and perhaps, destruction, might be regarded as a merely lucky coincidence, but to the poor "Saints" themselves, it was a manna in the wilderness, or water from the rock—a significant manifestation of Divine protection and favour.

At the Mormon Conference, in 1852, Mr. Brown and over a hundred others were called upon at a week's notice to leave their homes in the valley of the Salt Lake, on missionary labour. Mr. Brown's mission was to England, and with his arrival in that country in January, 1853, his pamphlet abruptly closes, and his knowledge of him ceases; but I think the facts of his experience are worthy to be known to and are likely to interest a large circle of "Gentile" readers, especially as his is far from being an isolated experience in the body to which he belongs. Mr. Brown assures us "There was not a branch in the whole of the Church that did not possess abundance of such testimonies. Here (he says) is the testimony of one individual only; but, could I crowd into this little work *all* that I have witnessed of the kind, and then add to it the collected testimonies of the thousands in America alone, leaving out Europe altogether, it would present a flood of testimony of a mightier and more conclusive kind than has been given to authenticate any truth ever submitted to the world."

Mr. Brown reiterates, "Such things as these are testimonies for the truth!" "What truth? may be asked," and to this question, he, in answer, responds unhesitatingly, "The truth of Mormonism." But, if he looks to the Shakers, he will find "The collected testimonies of thousands in America alone," to the same class of facts, in their communion, and dating from an earlier time. If he turns to the Irvingites, he will find in their history testimony to the gifts of healing, of utterance in the tongues, of the interpretation of tongues, and other gifts of the Spirit. If

goes back to Wesley's journals and the Arminian and Methodist magazines, he will find there, too, testimony in abundance of remarkable providences, dreams, revelations, visions, trances, ecstacy, and other facts similar to those now recorded by the Mormons. The Moravians, Quakers, Swedenborgians, and other sects also give their testimony to like facts in their several communions. The Roman Catholic Church claims spiritual gifts as her peculiar and pre-eminent endowment, and presents in her history and the lives of her saints a multitude of well-authenticated facts to attest the exercise of miraculous powers in her communion, from the earliest ages of the Church to the present day.

No, here is indeed "a flood of testimony," but it is not to any particular doctrine, or the specialties of any Church; but "to the truth" that there are latent faculties in the soul of man capable of being quickened into an activity in which they shall put forth powers that may well startle the superficial and *pseudo*-philosophy of the age. These facts are "a flood of testimony" to "the truth" that man is a spirit, in alliance, both for good and evil, with outstanding and invisible, but kindred intelligences, and that it is by their influx, adjunction, and co-operation that those wonders are produced which so puzzle our *savans*, and which science finds herself so unable to explain. They are "a flood of testimony" to "the truth" that there are perennial fountains of inspiration to refresh the thirsting soul that holds itself open like an empty cup to receive the living waters from on high. Ah! we complain that our souls are parched and barren, is it not because we, by our hardness and unbelief, have done all we can to thwart and destroy those receptive conditions in ourselves which the Divine Order has established. When these truths with all their consequences are fully apprehended, the sects will cease to attempt to enforce the utterance of their respective shibboleths; they will re-consider their creeds, and re-construct their sheep-pens; and extend their borders, and enlarge their gates, and broaden their sympathies. It will be seen that the true "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints" consists of all sincere, honest, and devout souls of every communion and creed. "For a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him."

T. S.

THACKERAY A SPIRITUALIST.

NOTHING is more surprising than the manner in which persons of education and keen perception are either deluded by the tricks of jugglers, or are favoured by real spiritual manifestations. I remember well meeting the late Mr. Thackeray at a large dinner party, shortly after the publication in the *Cornhill Magazine*, then edited by him, of the paper entitled "Stranger than Fiction." In this paper, as will be remembered by many readers, a detailed account was given of a spiritual *séance*, at which Mr. Home performed, or caused to be performed many surprising things, the most astounding being his floating in the air above the heads of persons in the room. There were several scientific men at the dinner party, all of whom availed themselves of the earliest opportunity to reproach Mr. Thackeray with having permitted the paper in question to appear in a periodical of which he was editor—holding as he did, the highest rank in the world of letters. Mr. Thackeray, with that imperturbable calmness which he could so well assume, heard all that was said against him and the paper in question, and thus replied:—"It is all very well for you, who have probably never seen spiritual manifestations, to talk as you do; but, had you seen what I have witnessed, you would hold a different opinion." He then proceeded to inform us that, when in New York at a dinner-party, he saw the large and heavy dinner-table, covered with decanters, glasses, dishes, plates—in short, everything appertaining to dessert—rise fully two feet from the ground, the *modus operandi* being, as he alleged, spiritual force. No possible jugglery, he declared, was or could have been employed on the occasion; and he felt so convinced that the motive force was supernatural, that he then and there gave in his adhesion to the truth of Spiritualism, and consequently accepted the article on Mr. Home's *séance*. Whether Mr. Thackeray thought differently before he died, I cannot say; but this I know, that every possible argument was used by those present to endeavour to shake his faith in Mr. Home's spiritual manifestations, which were, as they declared, after all but sorry performances compared to the surprising tricks of Houdin or Frikell.—*Weld's Last Winter in Rome.*
